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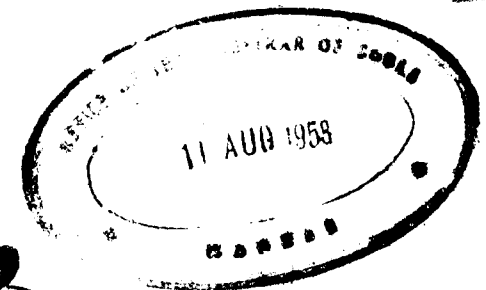
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The Atman is not attainable by the weak

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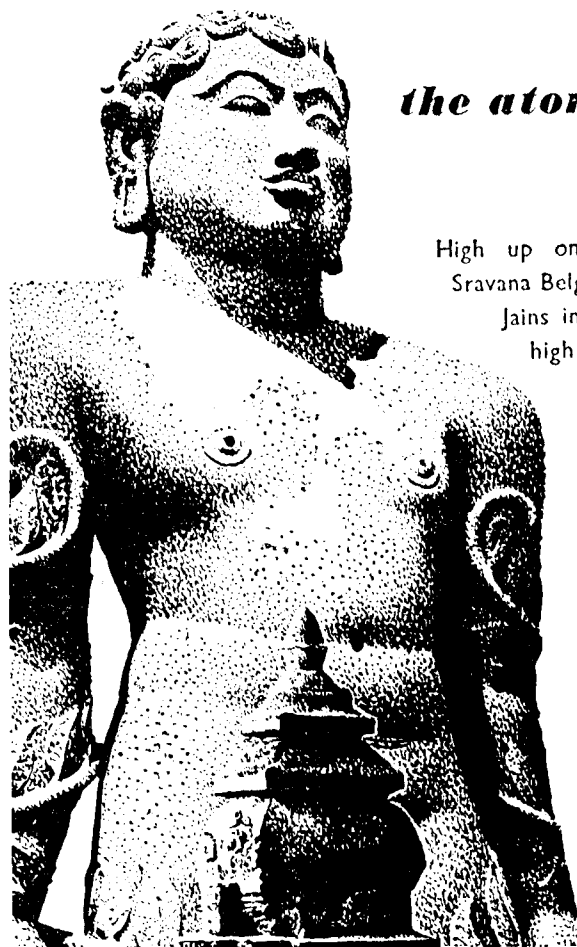
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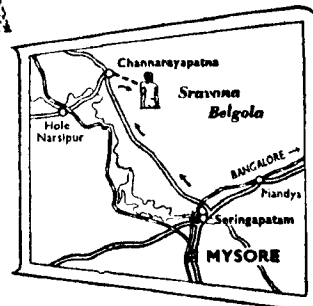
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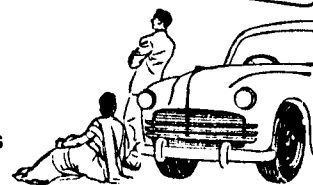
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*... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.*

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XL

JULY 1953

No. 3

SAVING SUCCOUR OF THE HOLY MOTHER

The mind is everything. It is in the mind alone one feels pure and impure. A man, first of all, must make his own mind guilty and then alone he can see another man's guilt. Does anything ever happen to another if you enumerate his faults? It only injures you. This has been my attitude. Hence I cannot see anybody's faults. If a man does a trifle for me, I try to remember him even for that. To see fault of others! One should never do it. Forgiveness is *tapasyā* (austerity).

He who has a pure mind sees everything pure.

I tell you one thing. If you want peace of mind do not find fault with others. Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child, this whole world is your own.

*

*

*

One should not trifle with a thing, though it may be very insignificant. If you respect a thing, the thing also respects you. Will you not again need that broom stick? Besides it is also a part of this family. From that standpoint also it deserves to be treated with respect. Even a broom stick should be treated with respect. One should perform even an insignificant work with respect.



ONE KEY-IDEA IN HINDU PLANNING OF LIFE

A modern government, totalitarian or democratic; a 'modern' war, hot or cold; a 'modern' peace, cold or hot; a 'modern' expedition to the top or bottom of the world; a 'modern' man's family—one just cannot think any of these without an awe-inspiring word which has assumed tremendous prestige in recent times. That all-purpose inevitable word is PLANNING.

The great recent prosperity of Russia is a triumph of planning. Defeat of Hitler, who was at one time considered invincible, was the result of planning. Future of emerging India, it has been said, rests squarely on its national planning. Man's conquest of the Everest has been acclaimed as the victory of planning. If future humanity in this over-fecundating world was to find food for all the mouths, it would be, we are told, only through that one method—'family planning'. There is no modern state, society, organisation, association, or individual that does not swear by the word, 'planning'. All modern drawers have some blue print or other.

But with all his planning where does the typical modern man stand? Has he succeeded to his own fruitful satisfaction in harnessing purposively the entirety of that mysterious velocity called life? Has the habit of planning even superficially surveyed life in all its depths, dimensions and frontiers? If life is not mere economics, planning,—with all its prospective blessings of sizing artificially the family of *homo sapiens* and raising the standard of living—has but touched the fringes of it. Vast mass of life in most individuals runs wild and remains an unpatterned

lump waiting to be fashioned by mere chance exigencies. How many such people are there as can claim to have patterned their entire life after the requirements of their own will? Like helpless, rudderless, shuddering yachts we are mostly the play-things of the frantic waves in the tempestuous ocean of the unknown.

Unnumbered millions breathe the tales of their secret tragedies in the deaf ears of the indifferent winds of the Sahara of life and drop dead an ignoble mass, a heap of frustration. Even few among those who are considered 'successful' in life, know how to utilize the entire span of life with progressive purposefulness. Only during an one fourth or one third period of his life when he is young and vivacious, an individual seems to feel that he has life in his grip. He pulls things of the world to him by the power of his senses and casts an insignificant portion of matter after his own mould. But ere long sands begin to run out. Things of the world which he attracted previously by the power of his senses, and would fain attract even now, elude his grasp. Perforce he has to make a painful discovery that he was by now clearly a dispensable entity, a back number, a pitiful deficit, a mere hanger-on.

The modern man is unabashed in his search after mere pure sensuous values unadulterated by any thing likely to be dubbed as spiritual. He has decided long ago that it was obscurantist and mediaeval to make life a wild goose hunt in the absense of any 'scientific' proof of the Divine. His one object of corporate life seems to be raising the standard of life in sensuous lines. And when millions

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ONE KEY-IDEA IN HINDU PLANNING OF LIFE

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welter in the mud of pig-standard, working for higher standard of life indeed appears to be one of the highest virtues. To work unselfishly for securing higher standard of life for others looks like a spiritual probation. But few are those who are bothered with 'others' unless it is by compulsion of one's own selfish interest. And among those who work for others, how many are those who understand the real purpose of life, so as to be able to correctly ascertain as to what constituted genuine standard of life in reference to the cosmic existence of man. When this corporate aim of higher standard of life is couped in his personal locus the modern man does not see why he should not reject the 1952 model car and secure a 1953; why after having a radio set, he should not hanker after a T. V. set; why there should be any ceiling to his income, enjoyment and wilfulness. The rub is not all over there. In this world of diminishing resources, extravagant wastage by way of occasional wars and ever-increasing population, X is always there to compete with Y, Y with Z and Z with the entire host that people the world. For advanced thinking even 'national planning' has already become an obsolete idea. To feed the hungry mouths in India or Pakistan you have to plan wheat cultivation in America. You have to grow cotton in Egypt to keep the looms of a far off country humming. Modern planning attains intelligence only in the international context. It is a happy augury that there is growing awareness of this fact in knowledgable spheres.

But what happens to the personal man who pursues the ideal of higher standard of life in his individual sphere? As soon as the meridian of life is crossed, he feels

a slackening in his sinews, a discord in his temper; he discovers more vigorous men in the field. His own son stands above his shoulder with his young muscles. Her own daughter sparkles in new youth before her very eyes. What then exactly is the psychological situation of those who, have or have not asked for, the 'scientific' proof of the Divine and in the absence of it, have in all self-righteousness turned downright materialists and gone rabid sensuous and in that sense seekers after higher standard of life? In such a situation, as noted by the celebrated Psychologist Dr. C. G. Jung:

For the most part our old people try to compete with the young. In United States it is almost an ideal for the father to be the brother of his sons, and for the mother if possible to be the younger sister of her daughter.¹

How pathetic and problematic! From his deep and wide studies in the field Dr. Jung lays bare in the same book the problem as follows:

Statistical tables show a rise in the frequency of cases of mental depression in men above forty. In women the neurotic difficulties generally begin somewhat earlier. We see that in this phase of life—between thirty-five and forty—significant change in human psyche is in preparation. (p. 120)

The wine of youth does not always clear with advancing years; often times it grows turbid. (p. 120)

The very frequent neurotic disturbances of adult years have this in common, that they betray the attempt to carry the psychic disposition of youth beyond the threshold of so called years of discretion. Who does not know the touching old gentleman who must always warm up the dish of their student days, who can fan the flames of life only by reminiscences of their heroic youth—and who for the rest, are struck in a hopelessly wooden philistinism? (p. 121)

...Thoroughly unprepared we take the step into the afternoon of life; worse still, we take

¹ Vide: *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, Chapter on 'Stages of Life,' 1944, p. 126, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., London.

this step with the false supposition that our ideals will serve us as hitherto. But we cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life's morning—for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true at evening have become a lie. (p. 124)

It takes a morning, a noon, an afternoon and a night to make a full day. There cannot be any all-morning day or all-noon day. No part taken separately can make the whole though every part has its own individual significance and contribution. Under equal scenic conditions the declining sun need not necessarily look less beautiful than a rising sun. The analogy can be aptly applied in the case of human life. Old age need not necessarily be less beautiful and significant than youth. An octogenarian seer, who has realised the Self, pierced through the veil of *Māyā*, broken the shackles of all desires, discovered the tap source of *jñāna* and *ānanda*, and become the fountain head of perennial love for aught that lives—has an unexcelled beauty of his own though he might not have a single tooth in any of his jaws or he might not even care to put on a loin-cloth. In his presence one feels uplifted, transported and transformed. The beauty of youth is of flesh that perishes; the beauty of the sage is of the Spirit that abides eternally.

Dr. Jung makes some very sensible points in the context:

A human being would certainly not grow to be seventy or eighty years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species to which he belongs. The afternoon of human life must have a significance of its own and cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life's morning. The significance of the morning undoubtedly lies in the development of the individual, our entrenchment in the outer world, the propagation of our kind and the care of our children. This is the obvious purpose of nature. But when this purpose has been attained—and even more than

attained—shall the earning of money, the extension of conquests and the expansion of life go steadily on beyond the bounds of all reason and sense? Whoever carries over into the afternoon the law of the morning—that is, the aims of nature—must pay for so doing with the damage of his soul just as surely as a growing youth who tries to salvage his childish egoism must pay for this mistake with social failure. Money-making, social existence, family and posterity are nothing but plain nature—not culture. Culture lies beyond the purpose of nature. Could by any chance culture be the meaning and purpose of the second half of life?²

This could easily be done provided within human mind could be set in motion an urge for propelling human beings ever onwards to larger attainments in the ambit of which all our previous attainments found a contributive meaning in reference to the ultimate consummation of life. Dr. Jung rightly hits:

...I have observed that a directed life is in general better, richer, and healthier than an aimless one, and that it is better to go forward with the stream of time than backwards against it. To the psychotherapist an old man who cannot bid farewell to life appears as feeble and sickly as a youngman who is unable to embrace it. As a matter of fact, in many cases it is the question of the self-same childish covetousness, of the same fear, the same obstinacy and wilfulness, in one as in the other. As a physician I am convinced that it is hygiene—if I may use the word—to discover in death a goal towards which one can strive; and that shrinking away from it is something unhealthy and abnormal which robs the second half of life of its purpose. I therefore consider the religious teaching of a life hereafter consonant with the standpoint of psychic hygiene.³

What Dr. Jung is represented to be envisaging in his own remarkable way in the above citations from his book *Modern Man in Search of A Soul*, is after all but a faint reflection—quite likely Dr. Jung himself is unaware of it—of a perfected system of Hindu thought as old as the Vedas. Has the entire life of man any

meaning? Can life be made progressively more purposeful? In fine, can life be planned in such a way as to provide every period of it a fresh meaning and purpose of its own which was again integrally connected with a higher over-absorbing purpose where life and death attained a Everest-purpose and all-satisfying significance? Hindus answered these questions by their well laid out *āśrama* scheme of life.

What is this *āśrama* scheme of life?

The word '*āśrama*' is derived (आश्रमयन्ति अस्मिन् इति आश्रमः) from *śram*, to exert, to labour and etymologically means 'a stage in which one exerts oneself.' (From this senses arose the meaning of hermitage)⁴

Though the word '*āśrama*' does not occur in the *Saṁhitās* and *Brahmaṇas*, *Mahāmāhōpādhyāya* P. V. Kane has clearly shown⁵ that the content of that conception of life which in later period came to be formulated as *āśrama* scheme was not unknown in the Vedic period. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣads* 11. 3. 1. we have clear reference to three *āśramas*. In the later *Upaniṣads*, *purāṇas*, *sūtras* and *Smṛtis* we have abundant reference or exhaustive treatment of the theme. As we are not concerned here with tracing the development of the *āśrama* Ideal of life, we shall not go into further details in the line. It will suffice to indicate from a representative law-giver like Manu, what exactly *āśrama* mode of life came to mean in its full-fledged maturity;

The span of life is one hundred years (सतायुर्वै पुरुषः). All do not live upto that age, but that is the maximum age one can expect to reach. This should be divided in four parts. As one cannot know beforehand what age one is going to reach it is not to be supposed that these 4 parts are each of 25 years. They may be more or less. As stated

in Manu IV. 1. the first part of man's life is *brahmachārya* in which he learns at his teacher's house and after he has finished his study, in the second part of his life he marries and becomes a householder, discharges his debts to his ancestors by begetting sons and to the gods by performing *yajñas* (Manu V, 169). When he sees that his head has grey hairs and that there are wrinkles on his body he resorts to the forest, i. e. becomes *Vānaprastha* (Manu VI. 1-2). After spending the third part of his life in the forest for some time, he spends the rest of his life as a *Sannyāsin* (Manu VI. 33).⁶

This is broadly the *āśrama* scheme of life, the ultimate end of which was accepted to be the realisation of the Self or liberation. Another Hindu concept which one cannot help mentioning in this connection is that of four *Puruṣārthas* or values of life, viz., *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, *mokṣa*, which can be respectively translated as righteousness, lawful earning of wealth, enjoyment of unforbidden pleasure of life, the attainment of liberation. Of these *mokṣa* was considered the highest *puruṣārtha* which was to be sought through all other *puruṣārthas* or values of life and to which all other values were to be subordinated. Of the four *puruṣārthas* *artha* and *kāma* could be sought only in *Grhastha āśrama*. All the other three *āśramas* were to be exclusively devoted to *dharma* and *mokṣa*. It is also to be noted that *artha* and *kāma* could not be sought even in the *Grhastha āśrama* without reference to *dharma* and *mokṣa* in a most urgent sense. The *āśrama-cum-puruṣārtha* scheme of the Hindus is thus a wonderfully integrated and comprehensive plan of life in which man is taken at his bottom and worked up spirally, if one may say so, until he is brought to that point of regeneracy which is known as liberation. While Dr. Jung speaks of the stages of life he does not

4 Vide : *History of Dharma Śāstras* by Min. P. V. Kane, Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, Poona, 1941 Vol. II. Part I. p. 425.

5 *ib.* Chapter VIII. p. 418-426.

6 *ib.* p. 417.

seem so much to suggest that the various stages of life could be used as ascending steps for reaching one ultimate end of life where all hungering, hankering, ignorance and misery and futility, which seem to be the lot of man, vanish, and instead one is ultimately irrevocably established in a state of perennial knowledge and bliss. But the āsrama scheme of the Hindus definitely postulate such an ascending order in the stages of life. A *Mahābhārata* passage has it:

The four modes of life form a ladder or flight of steps. That flight attaches to Brahma. By ascending that flight one reaches the region of Brahma.⁷

Santi-parva CCXLIII. 15.

It can be claimed in all seriousness that in the history of human thought nowhere else we come across such a sane, sensible and sublimating planning of human life as we find in the Hindu āsrama-cum-puruṣārtha scheme. Acknowledging this fact Deussen says in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* under 'āsrama',

...how far the practice corresponded to this theory given in Manu and other law books, we do not know; but we are free to confess that in our opinion the whole history of mankind has not much that equals the grandeur of this thought.⁸

Again, in his *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* he remarks:

The entire history of mankind does not produce much that approach in grandeur to this thought.⁹

Whether or not the modern Hindu retains his enthusiasm for such a scheme of life, whether or not he succeeds in adjusting this scheme with the modern conditions of the world, the fact remains

that humanity has not yet succeeded in producing a plan for human life which could be comparable to this ancient plan. We make bold to claim that if we go the way of 'national planning' or 'family planning' which goes counter to the basic principles of the āsrama-cum-puruṣārtha scheme, we will not be ultimately solving the problems of humanity in any fundamental sense. One should not think that we are decrying all modern thought and action in an obscurantist manner. We are simply drawing the attention of the modern thinkers, in whichever part of the world they may belong, to this vast and urgent treasure of ancient wisdom which can be wonderfully utilized for planning human life in a sane and sublimating manner even under our ultra-modern conditions.

As we go into the details of the duties prescribed for the various āśramas one common feature emerges in a striking manner and that is the ideal of service. Every āśrama had no doubt its special specific duties. But the golden thread that connects all the various duties of different āśramas, was the inevitable ideal of service. And service is essentially a horizontal urge. In spite of the verticality of his inner temper, the mokṣa-minded Hindu is not unconcerned about his responsibilities to the world. Neither is he preoccupied with the world to such an extent as to be oblivious of the ultimate purpose of life itself. This was why he planned his life in such a wonderful manner that his personal vertical advancement simultaneously meant a horizontal social betterment. (xxx)

THE IDEAL OF RELIGIOUS UNIVERSALISM AND HARMONY

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

CAN RELIGION BRING HARMONY?

Has religion any chance of bringing harmony to a world in which, it is said, we have enough religion to hate and exploit one another but not enough to love and serve one another?

As university students, many of us, too, were sceptical about religion, seeing the meaningless quarrels and theological warfare between the Hindu, Muslim and Christian religions and between the various denominations. Some of us doubted the presence of God in what were called the houses of God, and felt no interest in them, like the small boy of the story whose mother was rebuking him for not going to church willingly: 'You go to the movies for entertainment, and you go down to Freddie's house, and over to Tommie's house and have a nice time. Now, don't you think it is only right that once a week you should go to God's House, just for one Hour?' The boy replied: 'But, Mummy, what would you think if you were invited to somebody's house and every time you went, the fellow was not there?'

We were becoming sceptical about the utility of religious worship though we did not think that religion was 'the opiate of the people'. We felt within us a deep longing for the Truth but did not know how this longing could be satisfied. At such a transitional period of our lives, through good luck or divine grace, we came in touch with several of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. All of them possessed a remarkable broadmindedness, intensity and extensity happily combined. They looked upon all religions as paths leading

to the same Godhead and taught us that the followers of the different religions are not enemies but fellow-seekers after Truth, and are to be served as much as possible. Their Master's life itself was a veritable parliament of religions. He had realised that although the paths are different, there is only one God towards whom all are travelling.

THE UNIQUE RELIGIOUS UNIVERSALISM OF INDIA

It was not an accident that Sri Ramakrishna, the latest world-prophet, was born in India. Religion has ever been the central theme, the key-note of Indian life—individual and collective. In spite of an amount of narrowness, there has existed in India a great universal spirit, a unique freedom of thought in the field of religion, the like of which does not exist in any other part of the world. As late as the end of the last century, Robert Ingersoll told Swami Vivekananda, who had gone to America to spread the message of Vedanta,

'Forty years ago you would have been hanged if you had come to preach in this country, or you would have been burnt alive. You would have been stoned out of the villages if you had come even much later.'

If, in the West, any one declares that only the Christians shall be saved while others shall suffer eternal punishment, he may be called a good Christian. On the other hand, if in India, a Hindu would think in such a narrow way, he would be called a bad Hindu.

In ancient India there was a school of materialists of the extreme type. Even they were left free to propagate

7 चतुष्टयी हि निःश्रेणी ब्रह्मण्येषा प्रतिष्ठिता । एतामादृश्य निःश्रेणी ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ।

8 Quoted by P. V. Kane in his H. D. S. Vol. II. Part I, p. 423-4.

9 *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, Tr. by Rev. A. S. Genden, 1908, p. 367.

their opinions though few were influenced by them. Among the orthodox schools of philosophy themselves, there are some in which God as Creator, does not find a place. Mahatma Gandhi once said :

'A man may not believe in God and may still call himself a Hindu.'

THE REFUGE FOR VICTIMS OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

True to her universalism, India gave shelter to the Jews when their temple was shattered by Roman tyranny and they came seeking refuge. Hindu kings gave them a charter granting freedom of worship.

When the Persian emperors started to persecute the Christians, a large body of them came with their bishops and clergy and were given shelter by the tolerant Hindu princes in the South. Old copper plates indicate that the Christians were granted freedom of worship and even the privileges of the highest caste. The first Christian church in the Hindu state of Travancore was built through the generosity of the Hindu king.

Later, when Persia itself was invaded by Mohammedans, and millions of Parsis were converted by force, a large number of them fled to India seeking refuge. They, too, were received with great consideration by the Hindu kings who helped them to build their first fire-temple in India. India, and not Persia, has thus become the home of the Zoroastrians and their ancient religion.

RELIGIOUS HARMONY—THE KEY-NOTE

Religious harmony has been, in the main, the central theme of the Eternal Religion of India, even though some fanatics have at times raised a discordant note.

The earliest of the world's scriptures, the *Rig-veda*, contains the greatest declaration of religious harmony :

'Truth is one but sages call it by various names.'

The *Bhagavad-Gita* contains the teachings of Sri Krishna, the great harmoniser, who gave all paths a Godward turn :

'In whatever way men approach Me, the Supreme Spirit, even so do I accept them. Whatever path they choose leads to Me alone.'

Buddhism was an attempt to reform Hinduism at a time when it became degenerated; but it was never spread by fire and sword as was done by Christianity and Islam later. Buddha's message of enlightenment penetrated everywhere in a peaceful way. King Asoka, who was a staunch follower of Buddhism, put up the edict :

'He who out of respect for his own faith disparages the faiths of others inflicts the greatest injury on his own.'

The spirit of dynamic universalism enabled Hinduism to assimilate within its fold a number of races—native and foreign—with their variety of customs and cultures.

THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY

In the early centuries of the Christian era, many Christians came to India as refugees, but later many came as conquerors, and in trying to convert others to their faith sometimes used force and various unfair means. Many missionaries supported by the foreign rulers grossly misused India's hospitality and vilified the Hindus who were tolerant to a fault. The Indian atmosphere with its religious harmony, however, has been changing the attitude of some of the missionaries and their Christian followers.

At first this attitude was one of wholesale denunciation and destruction whenever possible. The Hindu religion was considered 'a weltering chaos of darkness,

terror and uncertainty'. It was 'the work of Satan'. Later, some of the leaders of Christian thought came to hold: that in Hinduism,

'there is much that is worthless, much also that is distinctly unhealthy; yet the treasures of knowledge, wisdom and beauty, which they contain, are too precious to be lost.'

The next attitude was :

'Other religions are broken lights; Christianity is the perfect and complete light. Other religions are preparations for the reception of Christianity. Christianity is the fulfilment. Christ is the crown of Hinduism!'

A new outlook is gaining ground regarding different religions as 'legitimate' just as different types of human languages are legitimate products of local conditions; but the attitude still maintains a sense of superiority. This reminds one of the Englishman's remarks about the language of the Americans: 'They speak the same language as we do, but not as well.' 'You speak what our cousins in America call English!' Something of this snobbishness is still there among the best of the Christian missionaries in India, but the spirit of universalism is undoubtedly at work.

MILITANT ISLAM TONES DOWN

This is also partly true of the Muslims who came as conquerors and finally settled in the land. In spite of occasional outbursts of fanaticism, the militant faith of Islam, too, has become somewhat toned down in India.

Hindu universalism has been working on Islam. Under its influence, the Moghul emperor Akbar attempted to lay the foundations of a new, broad and eclectic religion. He declared :

'Each person according to his condition gives the Supreme Being a name, but in reality to name the unknown is vain. There are sensible men in all religions.'

His son Jehangir held that the science of Vedanta is the science of Sufism. Dara

Shuko, a grandson of Jehangir, acknowledged the universal spirit of Islam and Hinduism and was instrumental in having the Upanishads translated into Persian. This was later on translated into a jargon of Latin, Greek and Persian, and drew the admiration of Schopenhauer who declared :

'That incomparable book stirs the spirit to the very depths of the soul. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death.'

Muslim fanatics destroyed many Hindu and Buddhist temples and converted many persons by force but still the Hindus, on the whole, continued to allow them and others perfect freedom of worship. In this connection, what the Persian Muslim ambassador to the Hindu court at Calicut, South India, wrote about the middle of the 15th century is very revealing :

'The people (of Calicut) are infidels; consequently I consider myself in an enemy country, as the Muslims consider every one who has not received the Koran. Yet I admit that I met with perfect toleration and even favour; we have two mosques and are allowed to pray in public.'

The Muslim could not understand that the Hindu attitude is something more than that of toleration. It is the acceptance of all religions as true, of the fact that God can be realised through many paths.

ESSENTIAL UNITY AND HARMONY OF THE DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

All religions hold before man the ideal of perfection, which is termed variously as God, Allah, Tao, etc.. They stress moral purification and spiritual striving as the means for realising the ideal. Even a brief survey of the essential points of the various world-religions reveals this underlying unity of purpose and harmony.

Zoroaster, the founder of the religion bearing his name, believed in the ultimate triumph of good. He sang:

'I attribute all things to the Wise Lord,
The Good, Righteous, Holy, Resplendent,
(Glorious;
To Whom belong all good things,
The world, righteousness prevailing in the
world.'

'By good thought, good word and good deed
keep body and spirit pure. That is the way
to impair the power of Satan and stay in
the sight of goodness.'

Judaism, representing the religious experience of the Jewish prophets, believes that man was made in the image of God. It declares:

'The Lord, He is God. There is none beside Him...There is none else. Therefore thou shalt keep His statutes. The Lord our God is One Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.'

Christ taught:

'To the Lord thy God thou shalt do homage. And to Him alone shalt thou render worship... Ye must become perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect...And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and with all thy strength...Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.'

Islam is the religion of submission to God. A Muslim is one who submits to God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God. Says Mohammed:

'Your God is one God. There is no God but He, the Compassionate, the Merciful... All on the earth shall pass away. But the face of the Lord shall abide, resplendent with majesty and glory...Call upon your Lord with lowliness and in secret. Call on Him with fear and longing desire. Verily, the mercy of God is nigh unto the righteous.'

Lao-Tze, the founder of Taoism, declares:

How pure and still is the Supreme Being!
How deep and unfathomable! Knowing the eternal, means enlightenment. Not knowing the eternal causes passions to arise, and that is evil. There is a Being wondrous and

complete. Before heaven and earth It was.
How calm It is! How spiritual!

Confucius, the main inspirer of the Chinese civilisation, declares:

To find the central clue to our moral being
which unites us to the Universal Order, that
indeed is the highest human achievement.

Buddhism holds Truth as God and stresses moral life and self-effort. Freedom is to be attained by right comprehension, right speech, right conduct, right meditation.

Let one conquer wrath by love. Let one
conquer wrong by goodness.

By the complete destruction of lust, hatred
and delusion, devout men are no longer liable
to suffering and are assured of final salvation...Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Work
out your own salvation with diligence.

Hinduism—a confederacy of faiths
covering a variety of spiritual paths—
holds the Atman-Brahman or the Supreme
Spirit as the ideal of Self-realisation.

He is the One Deity, hidden in all beings,
the All-pervading Self, abiding in all beings,
the Controller of all activities, the Indwelling
Self of all, the Witness, the Enlightener, the
Absolute beyond attributes.

He who, having been established in oneness,
worships me dwelling in all beings,
lives in me.

EXPERIENCE UNITES—DOGMA DIVIDES

The life and teachings of the illumined souls of all religions point the way to the Supreme. There is no dearth of spiritual and moral ideals in the religions of the world. The trouble is that we, the followers, do not care to live up to the ideals. While we use the names of great teachers, we reject their teachings. If they revisit the world, they will certainly not be pleased with what we are doing. This recalls a story about Raphael. While he was engaged in painting his celebrated frescoes he was visited by two cardinals who began to criticise his work and find fault with it without understanding it

'The Apostle Paul has too red a face,' said one. The angry artist retorted: 'Yes, he blushes to see into whose hands the Church has fallen.'

The essence of all religions as reflected in the lives of their great mystics and prophets is the same, always leading the sincere follower towards purity, strength and harmony. It is the later accretion of creed and dogma introduced by selfish or ignorant priests that has produced discord. The religion of dogma divides; the religion of experience unites. Spiritual streams have been polluted by the selfishness of those who profess to follow religion and protect it.

PHASES IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

In the history of religions, we see five phases:

(1) *Destruction and denunciation*: One thinks that one's own religion is the only true and good one; others are false and wicked and are to be destroyed by all means.

(2) *Syncretism*: Men of different religious beliefs dwell together in a spirit of live and let live, stressing more their common points than their differences.

(3) *Eclecticism*: An attempt is made to incorporate what are considered the good points of other religions along with one's own, rejecting the bad. It is like taking the limbs from different bodies and trying to form a new body, to which, however, no life can be imparted.

(4) *Toleration*: While one holds that one's own religion is of course the best and truest, one does not condemn others but merely tolerates. Usually, this is the attitude of patronising.

During the war both the Catholic priest and the Protestant clergyman were ministering to the soldiers. One day the two met and had a very friendly talk. Before they parted, one told the other: 'Both

of us are serving the same God—you in your own way and I in His!'

(5) *Acceptance*: In this there is no negative attitude at all. All religions are heartily accepted and respected as equally true paths leading to the same goal.

ATTITUDE OF ACCEPTANCE VOICED BY MAHATMA GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi gave expression to this attitude of acceptance which is the spirit of Hinduism when he wrote:

I believe in the Bible as I believe in the Gita. I regard all the great faiths of the world as equally true with my own.

I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible, but I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.

In another connection he said:

If in my innermost heart I have a suspicion that my own religion is the truest and that other religions are less true, then although I may have a certain kind of fellowship with the others it is an extremely different kind from that required in international fellowships. Our attitude toward the others ought never to be: 'God, give them the light Thou hast given me', but 'Give them all the light and truth they need for their highest development.'

When some one asked him, 'Can I not hope to give my religious experience of God to my friend?', he replied: 'Pray rather that God may give your friend the fullest light and knowledge—not necessarily the same that He has given you.' He said to another: 'Pray simply that your friends may become better men, whatever their religion.'

Before Gandhiji, Sri Ramakrishna, who in his own life practised various religions and tested them, declared:

You may say that there are many errors and superstitions in another religion. I should reply: 'There are'. Every religion has errors. Every one thinks that his watch alone gives the correct time. But no watch is strictly correct. It is enough to have yearning for God. He sees the longing of our heart and the yearning of our soul.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION WIDENS MENTAL HORIZON

A comparative study of religion, sometimes called comparative religion is revealing new facts and is challenging the exclusive claims of any particular religion to be the sole custodian of truth.

The ancient religions of Assyria, Babylonia and Egypt have ceased to exist, but some of their texts have still been preserved. As these texts are being deciphered, new light is being thrown and we are being forced to revise our conceptions of the uniqueness of our own faiths.

In the ancient teachings of India, particularly in the Upanishads, the seer sometimes speaks of God or the Ultimate Reality as beyond all name and form. Many consider this unique. Comparative religion, however, reveals that an unknown Egyptian seer or poet spoke of God as beyond all expression:

He is not seen; He hath neither minister nor offerings; He is not worshipped in temples; His dwelling is not known. There is no habitation which may hold Him; unknown is His name in heaven, and His form is not manifested, for every image of His is in vain. His home is in the universe; not in any dwelling made by human hands.

It is being revealed that Christianity resembles Mithraism in many respects. December 25, the day on which Christmas is celebrated, was originally the day of the festival of the winter solstice, the day of Mithraic feast, the birthday of the unconquerable Sun god. Mithra was a mediator between God and man. The Mithraists also believed in a moral law and in future life.

Pious Christians of later times who attributed the resemblance to the workings of the devil were shocked to learn of the ancient Mithraic rite of consecration of bread and wine. Many autho-

rities hold that Christianity borrowed this rite from the ancient faith.

Historians tell further that the cross is many thousands of years older than Christ. Some of the ethical teachings of Christ are found in the ancient teachings of the Hindus and the Buddhists. We learn further that the faith of the ancient Persians with its dualism of good and evil influenced the Jews during their Babylonian captivity. From Judaism the idea of good and evil passed on to Christianity.

THE FROG-OF-THE-WELL MENTALITY.

Many of us have the mentality of the proverbial frog-of-the-well and want to continue it. This is positively due to ignorance. It is, however, no new phenomenon.

At a famous meeting of the Free Religious Association of America held in Boston during the latter half of the 19th century, a somewhat over-zealous Christian minister quoted some passages from the Christian gospels and added that those could not be matched in the sacred books of any of the other religions. At this point, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was well-acquainted with Indian thought rose and said quietly: 'The gentleman's remark only proves how narrowly he has read.'

Thoughts influence one another. Through contact with other religions we can all appreciate the practical religious ideal of Zoroastrianism, the living faith in God of Judaism, the burning love of Christ for God and man expressed through the social service of Christianity, the religious fervour and democratic spirit of Mohammed, the ideal of living in harmony with the Cosmic spirit proclaimed by Lao Tze, the stabilizing and humanizing moral and social ideal of Confucius, the message of righteousness and peace of Buddhism and the ideal of the potential divinity of

man and the spirit of unity-in-diversity of Hinduism.

VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF UNIVERSALISM

The message of universalism at its best which Swami Vivekananda learnt sitting at the feet of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, he proclaimed in 1893 at the Chicago Parliament of Religions:

...if there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite, like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahmanic or Buddhist, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for every human being....It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realise its own true, divine nature....The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

His concluding words were:

'Help and not Fight,' 'Assimilation and not Destruction,' 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.'

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE—THE INDISPENSABLE MEANS TO HARMONY

The reality of religion, its universality and harmonizing influence cannot be proved by the sword or by theological warfare, but by one's own spiritual experience.

Continuing the tradition of the great seers of the Vedas who declared: 'Truth is One, but sages call it by various names', in the 15th and 16th centuries, Kabir and Nanak proved the reality and essential unity of religions by their own spiritual experience. Kabir declared:

God is one whether we worship Him as Allah or as Rama....There is one Father of Hindu or Mussalman, one God in all matter; He is the Lord of all the earth, the guardian in my breast.

Hari dwelleth in the South (Banaras); Allah has His place in the West (Mecca). Search in thy heart, search in the heart of hearts, there is His abode and peace.

Like Kabir, Nanak, too, stressed upon the common bond between Hinduism and Islam. It is said that Nanak went to Mecca on pilgrimage and when some one reproached him for sleeping with his feet towards the sacred Kaba, he replied:

'Show me a direction where God is not.'

He further declared:

God has said that man will be saved by his work alone. He will ask a man not his tribe or sect, but what he has done.

He alone is a true Hindu whose heart is just, and he only is a good Mohammedan whose life is pure.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S DIRECT EXPERIENCES

In a line with these God-men, these prophets of universalism and harmony, came Sri Ramakrishna. He followed many religious paths—Hindu, Sufi, Christian—and attained the same Godhead who is beyond all name and form and yet manifests Himself through all names and forms. He proved in his own life the eternal verity of religions. Writing about him, Mahatma Gandhi has declared:

The story of Ramakrishna's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. No one can read the story of his life without being convinced that God alone is real and that all else is an illusion. Ramakrishna was a living embodiment of godliness. His sayings are not those of a mere learned man but they are pages from the Book of Life. They are revelations of his own experiences. They therefore leave on the reader an impression which he cannot resist. In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men

and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light.

From his own direct experience Ramakrishna proclaimed the universal spirit of religion :

The unilluminated man in his ignorance says that his religion is the only true one and that it is the best. But when his heart is illumined with the light of true knowledge, he knows that above all the wars of sect and creed presides the One indivisible, eternal, all-knowing Divine Spirit, who is Bliss itself. It is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari and by others as Brahman.

I see people, who talk about religion, constantly quarrelling with one another. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Brahmins, Shaktas, Vaishnavas, Shaivas—all quarrel with one another. They haven't the intelligence to understand that He who is Krishna is also Shiva, and the Primal Energy (Shakti), and that it is He, again, who is called Jesus and Allah....There is only one Rama (God) and He has a thousand names.

Truth is One; only It is called by different names. All people are seeking the same truth; the variance is due to climate, temperament and name.

I had to practice each religion for a time—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity. Furthermore, I followed the paths of the Shaktas, Vaishnavas and Vedantists. I realised that there is only one God towards Whom all are travelling; but the paths are different.

Every one is going towards God. They will all realise Him if they have sincerity and longing of heart.

An intelligent study of the various religions brings home to us their special features and their underlying harmony as paths leading to the same goal. However, Sri Ramakrishna realised this harmony not through study but through spiritual experience of the same Godhead attained by following the different religions in form and in spirit, by transcending the forms and reaching the Spirit. He has thrown us the challenge: Let the truths of religions be proved by spiritual experience.

THE TEST OF TRUE RELIGION

To Sri Ramakrishna religion was the experience of the eternal¹ relationship between the eternal soul and the eternal God; all particular religions were paths leading to the same goal of spiritual experience of realisation.

The various religions are like radii leading to the same centre. They come closer to one another as they approach the centre in which they all meet. That was the great experience of Ramakrishna. All religions can be reduced to three approaches to God-realisation. He experienced them all and demonstrated that they are the three phases of spiritual illumination. He said :

I have come to the final realisation that God is the Whole and I am a part of Him, that God is the Master and I am His servant. Further-more, I think every now and then that He is I and I am He.

The time has come when we should ask ourselves; 'What good is religion if it cannot bring us closer to both God and Man?'

If we recognize God as our Master, Father or Mother, we must also feel that we are all fellow-servants, all children of the same God. If we hold that God is the Whole and the soul is a part, we should feel that we all are fellow-souls—eternal portions of the Supreme Spirit. If we consider that the Ultimate Truth is Unity, we and our neighbours, nay all beings, are one. Our love towards our fellow-creatures must be based on this fact; and to love is to serve.

There is no such thing as religion by proxy. So we must be spiritual and realise the Truth for ourselves. If we—each one of us—will try to live our life with earnestness and sincerity, we can discover the harmony within ourselves and transform our warring world into a veritable heaven.

May He—the Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in Heaven of the Christians, the Allah of the Mohammedans, the Brahman of the Hindus, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Tao of Lao-Tze and the Divine Moral Order of Confucius—enable us to live the righteous life and to move towards the Truth, which is the source of all harmony.

S'RI RĀMA : THE IDEAL GURU

By N. RAGHUNATHAN

I

A certain parrot, a wandering voice in the delectable woods of the Vedānta, was once disporting itself in the bamboo-cluster of the Kākutsthās and was caught in the net of words of the artful hunter Vālmiki. And now he has found his nest in my heart.¹

This translated *s'loka* from the *Rāmāstava-karna-rasāyana* of S'ri Rāmabhadra Dikṣita, the great Rāma-bhakta and poet of the seventeenth century, sets out the constituents of the traditional approach to the study of the Rāmāyana. The Supreme, taking name and form, so-journed with us for a while and discoursed immortal melodies. Vālmiki ensnared that magic utterance in his art, and thanks to him, that wonder-parrot still joyfully nests in hearts that open to him. To those for whom the ontological truth of the Rāmāyana is a matter of felt experience such questions as the historicity of Rāma, the authenticity and fidelity of the Rāmāyana as a contemporary record, the problem of its authorship and other matters which seem so important to the sceptical modern

mind are wholly irrelevant. The Rāmāyana as a story has an inner consistency and—in spite of the many miraculous and 'unnatural' persons and happenings you encounter,—a verisimilitude which one rarely finds in the ant-hill labours of the historians. But, even supposing that it began as a myth in the fertile brain of a poet and that later myth-makers have gone on adding to it—and not always in harmony with the basic structure, as the Orientalists who have attempted this kind of exegesis would have it—the original myth itself was clearly an inspiration, something *given* to the poet. And the Rāmāyana has had for millennia a reality and a contemporary value which no merely historical event, the shadowy memory of which survives in the conflicting testimony of historians and which has not achieved an autonomous life in the psyche of the race, can possibly possess.

The methodical mind of the chronicler is bothered by the continuous snowballing up of the Rāmāyana story and the chaotic way in which the indiscriminating belief

¹ वेदान्तविभ्रमवने विहितप्रचारः काकुत्स्थवंशमवतीर्य कदापि खेलन् ।

वाल्मीकिवाङ्मिकरवागुरया गृहीतो ह्यत्यङ्गरं व्रजति कश्चिदयं शुक्रो मे ॥

² There is a double entendre here, 'Vams'a' meaning 'bamboo' as well as 'family'.

of the devout accommodates, as if they were of equal validity, contributions of every grade of value to the canon. But out of this wealth—or welter, if you like,—the *adhikāri*, whose spiritual antennae are alert, picks out just those things which he requires for his own growth.

The Orientalists think that the Rāma story is of far greater antiquity than the extant version of the Rāmāyaṇa; though even for that they will not assign a date farther back than a few centuries before Christ. Indian tradition, with its synoptic vision and its resolute subordination of empirical truth and historical time to the doctrine of the Co-eternally Present and the revolving *yuga* or (*kalpa*) cycles, symbolically speaks of Valmiki's Rāmāyaṇa as reminiscence, as a recollection and brief redaction of the endless story eternally recounted in Heaven. And entering into the true spirit of this symbol poets and heart-searchers of every age and clime in whom the spark of Rāma-bhakti has been kindled by Valmiki's living experience have, each according to his capacity, brought their bounty of insights to add to the common stock.

I like to think of the Rāma Kathā as a mighty *as'wattha*, that sacred tree so dear to the Indian consciousness. Valmiki is the trunk whose roots reach to the axis of the earth. Kamban and Tulasī and the rest are great branches which possess the air. It is a deciduous tree, you will remember, and every season it sheds millions of leaves only to break into verdure again miraculously. Each leaf is the unfurling of a poet's—perhaps a minor poet's—fancy, thrilling in an auspicious moment of realisation to an impulse that has travelled from those immemorial roots. The tender shoots, soft as velvet and flushed like an ingenuous cheek, imperceptibly mature and attain the metallic sheen of silver and in a tinkling orches-

tration offer their paeon of praise to the sun at the touch of the caressing wind. Then, almost before you are aware of it, their brief day is done—the sere, the yellow leaves drop one by one and their place knows them no more. But they have done their appointed work and left their guerdon of *pippala*, the pabulum on which numberless birds, the *rasi-kas* of every generation, thrive, often not knowing their nameless benefactors. And on top of that sempiternal tree there sit the Two Birds of the Upaniṣad, the Rāma-suka of whom inspired Rāmabhadra spoke, and Its companion, the questing soul. And all the time, through that massive trunk covered with lichen, supporting the weight of many branches on which the fancy-free rhymesters and *paurāṇikas* of every age have hung their gay paper lanterns, rises the mysterious sap from the tap-root of Indian culture.

II

The truth proclaimed by the Rāmāyaṇa has many facets. Here I shall deal in brief compass with one class of insights the percipient reader of the Epic may get. I propose to speak of S'ri Rāma as the ideal *Guru*, the exemplar of the *Guru-siṣya* relationship. The idea of looking up to the Divine as the first and greatest of all *Gurus* is of course central to Indian thought and so magnificently illustrated in Dakṣiṇāmūrti and the Gītā Āchārya. The Viṣṇu Sahasranāma speaks of the Lord as 'Guru' and 'Guru-tama.' The Rāma cultus, again, has been made the core of an elaborate metaphysic in works like the *Yoga Vās'iṣṭha* and the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*. The *dhyaṇa-s'loka* of anonymous authorship with which every Rāma-bhakta begins his daily *pūjāyaṇa* represents S'ri Rāmachandra as the expounder of the *Para Tattwa*. And Rāmabhadra Dikṣita in a *sloka* of his *Viśwa-garbha-*

stava gives me the cue even more explicitly.²

To Rāmabhadra S'ri Rāmachandra is Āchārya and Vidyā-nidhi; and is not the Guru to be looked upon as Iswara? 'So let me solicit His favour in order that at every birth I may get Him for Āchārya.' Let us see how far this intuition of the later poet is concretely supported by Valmiki, to the reverent study of whose inspired poem Rāmabhadra devoted a lifetime and whose subtle perception he sought to make explicit in more than a thousand *slokas*.

But, before I proceed to do this, I would invite your attention for a minute to the well-known Eleventh Anuvāka of the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, Seeksha Valli, which contains the classical definition of the *Guru-siṣya* relationship. For the Rāmāyaṇa the unknown genius who composed the exordium makes the high claim that even as the Veda is the Word of the Veda-Puruṣa, the Rāmāyaṇa is the Word of Rāma, who is none but the incarnation of the Veda-Puruṣa. It seems to me that the story of Rāma as Valmiki unrolls it to our view is but the record of a career devoted to the faithful implementation of the scheme of life the Guru expounds in the Seeksha Valli. The quintessence of that teaching is the balanced pursuit of the *trivarga*. It is noteworthy that in this particular *s'ruti*, the 11th Anuvāka of *Taittiriya* (Seeksha), there is no reference to the *turiya puruṣārtha* any more than there is in the Rāmāyaṇa, of which more anon.

The *anus'āsana* of the Āchārya to the disciple who has completed Veda Adhya-

yaṇa, begins with the exhortation, 'Speak the truth, follow the Dharma'. Vasistha, the Kula Āchārya, in naming Rāma (रमन्ते योमिनो अनन्ते) has initiated him into the knowledge of his own abiding Self, which, as the S'rutis declare, is Satya itself. So there is no need to exhort him to speak the truth:

रामो दिर्नाभिभाषते ।

And then Viswāmitra, the Rṣi of the Gāyatri who was great as a Kṣatriya before he became greater as a Brāhmaṇa, appropriately inducts him into the Kṣatriya-dharma. S'ri Rāma's first exploit as a warrior is the killing of Tatakā, woman as well as demon, just as his first act of merciful redemption is devoted to another woman Ahalyā. Here begins the first of the long series of *dharma samkatas* by grappling with which S'ri Rāma graduates to self-knowledge. Pity tugs at the heart-strings, but Viswāmitra firmly tells him where his duty lies as Kṣatriya and King. He must be prepared to sin, if sin it be, to protect his subjects. And S'ri Rāma takes the lesson to heart. By destroying Subāhu and routing Mareecha and effectively safeguarding the performance of Viswāmitra's *yajña* he pays his debt to the Āchārya:

आचार्याय प्रियं धनं आहृत्य ।

And the Āchārya is himself instrumental in making him enter on the householder's life: प्रजातन्तु मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः ।

But before that happens S'ri Rāma has the danger of that *pramāda*—lack of recollectedness—which the S'ruti regards

² यस्याचार्यकमस्ति यस्य गरिमा विद्याविशेषग्रहे साक्षादीश्वर एष इत्यविशयाज्ञोपासितव्यः स किम् । प्राप्तव्योऽयमुपासितव्य इति च प्रत्युद्धवं काङ्क्षया तस्मै प्राञ्जलिरस्मि दाशरथये श्रीजानकीजानये ॥

³ आचार्योऽन्तेवासिनमनुशास्ति । सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । etc.

as the root of all evil forcibly impressed on his mind by S'atānanda's elaborate account of the trials and tribulations which were the lot of Kausika the son of Gadhi before he achieved self-conquest. From greed, the basest of vices, (मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम्) to anger the most difficult to root out, especially for the Kṣatriya to whom *amarṣa* is natural, there is not one trap into which Kausika does not fall, largely because of his failure to mind his steps. With Menaka ten years pass as if they were a single night. When Vasiṣṭha's sons twit Viśvāmitra with transgression of the S'āstra he curses them. When his own sons upbraid him for asking them to save another's life at the expense of their own he curses them too. Every time he recollects, too late, that irrespective of the intrinsic worth of the cause he espouses, the espousing of any cause by one who has not controlled his senses is bound to do more harm than good. And he realises at last that *Brahmarṣitva* is not a rank or status that anybody, however exalted, can confer on another, that it is but another name for the *jīvendriyatva* that he has achieved after that long and heroic struggle.

For the householder *kus'ala* and *bhōoti*, self-protection and a competence, are as important as *Dharma* and *Satya*. Hence the relevance of *Kāma* and *Artha* (this latter as a means to *Kāma* as well as *Dharma*) in the Dhārmic life; for has it not been said that all things are dear because they belong to the self?⁴

Vālmiki describes S'ri Rāma as deliberate in his allegiance to the *trivarga*:

He knew the secret of obtaining happiness through the pursuit of Artha and Dharma in which he never relaxed.⁵

He has tasted the joys of life and bestowed endless guerdon on those who sought it at his hands. And yet he will not allow his father to break his word, because of his supreme regard for Dharma.⁶

On the morrow of his marriage Viśvāmitra departs and Parasurāma comes. The Kṣatriya who had achieved *Brahmarṣitva* and the Brāhmaṇa who had undertaken the Kṣatriya's role for the best part of his life both contribute to the education of Rama and fulfil themselves in him. S'ri Rāma, a born Kṣatriya, knows that it is by sticking to his Varna-Dharma that he can rise to the height of his true stature:

He regards his own Kṣatriya Dharma as of supreme value, his mind being in accord with his birth.⁷

He has no wish to follow another's *dharma*. And even with regard to his own *dharma*, he is not a passive conformist, much less would he in the name of *Varna-dharma* or *Kula-dharma*, permit himself that latitude or laxity which favours indulgence in the baser instincts. He has no use for the Artha S'āstra doctrines which, rationalising experience, seek to make out that Kings may pursue State policy with ruthlessness and with little regard for morality. When Lakṣmaṇa wants S'ri Rāma to crown himself, putting under restraint the old King who has succumbed to Kaikeyi's wiles, S'ri Rāma tells him:

Therefore discard this attitude based on adherence, unbecoming of an Ārya, to *Kṣātra-*

⁴ आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति ।

Remember too the Lord's saying in the Gita: धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।

⁵ अर्थधर्मौ च संगृह्य सुखतन्त्रो न चालसः ॥ II. i-27.

⁶ ऐश्वर्यस्य रसज्ञः सन् कामिनां चैव कामदः । नेच्छत्येवाचूतं कर्तुं वचनं धर्मगौरवात् ॥ II. xxxiii-7.

⁷ कुलोचितमतिः क्षात्रं धर्मं स्वं बहुमन्यते । II. i-16.

dharma (or what passes for it). Follow the dictates of Dharma, and not cruel impulses. Be guided by me.⁸

This is the higher *Kṣatriya-buddhi* which, while it steels the righteous King's will to face the most unpleasant tasks from a sense of duty, does not brutalise it or make it succumb imperceptibly to the instinct of self-seeking. It inculcates true *vairāgya* and in that sense it assimilates the Kṣatriya to the Brāhmaṇa. S'ri Rāma is spoken of as being *kus'ala* in all the duties and the traditional lore that pertain to the Brāhmaṇa as well as the Kṣatriya (*vide* II-Lvi-28-32). He does not achieve this double *adhikāra* by *dharma-vyatikrama* but by the self-transcendence that comes naturally in a life lived between the fixed poles of duty and compassion. It is at Viśvāmitra's instance that he redeems Ahalyā. It is Parasurāma who first makes it known to the world that Rāma never wastes an arrow because he never bends the bow except in the interests of righteousness.

It is the *viveka* kindled into *vichāra* and getting itself confirmed in *vairāgya* that the S'ruti exhorts the teacher to impress on the pupil:

You should do only those karmas that are unvitiated and flawless, not others.⁹

Here is no excuse for drifting into use and wont. Tradition does not mean supine conformity but creative discipline. Bhagavān S'amkara says:

If you do what is opposed to 'śiṣṭa-āchāra' the excuse will not avail you that some 'śiṣṭas' have been found to do such things.¹⁰

And the S'ruti itself goes on to declare through the mouth of the Āchārya,

Whatever we have done well you should do, not aught else that we may have done.¹¹

Whatever may be the case when the disciple is ripe for Brahmajñāna, he cannot, in the face of the *dhārmic* dilemmas of everyday life, demit his duty to exercise discrimination and refrain from doing anything, even if his admired teacher has done it, which he is convinced is wrong. The S'ruti itself teaches him to look upon his father and his mother and his Āchārya as his God. And S'ri Rāma, almost as if he were commenting on this text, tells Lakṣmaṇa,

How shall we seek to please Deity Who is not within our reach, while we neglect father and mother and Guru who are with us?¹²

But he does not on that account succumb to the well-meant sophistries of Jābāli, the entreaties of his mother or even Vasiṣṭha's attempt to get him accede to Bharata's request. Nor, on the other hand, does his *pitr-bhakti* blind him to the faults of his father. He reminds the old man gently at the moment of his departure to the forest that he has been less than kind to his mother. (*vide* II-xxxviii-13-14). And his 'एकपत्नीव्रत' is all the more remarkable because it is in contrast with the almost universal practice of kings. It was perhaps a resolve based on long and serious meditation over his father's unhappiness. S'ri Rāma was, for all his highly developed sense of reverence, the last man to render mechanical obedience.

⁸ तदेनां विदुजानार्या क्षत्रधर्माश्रिता मतिम् । धर्ममाश्रय मा तैश्च मद्बुद्धिरनुगम्यताम् ॥ II. xxi-44.

⁹ यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि तानि सेवितव्यानि । नो इतराणि ।

¹⁰ न कर्तव्यानि इतराणि सावद्यानि शिष्टकृतान्यपि ।

¹¹ यान्यस्माकं सुचरितानि तानि सेवितव्यानि । नो इतराणि ।

In *S'rimad Bhāgavata* S'ri S'uka tells Parikṣit that man must follow the injunctions and teachings of the great; but of their actions he may imitate only those which seem to be in conformity with their teachings.

¹² स्वाधीनं समतिक्रम्य मातरं पितरं गुरुम् । अस्वाधीनं कथं देवं प्रकारैरभिराध्यते ॥ II. xxx-38.

A time was to come when S'ri Rama himself was to be told in different contexts that he, whom the world looked upon as teacher and exemplar, had done things which could not be defended. But it did not occur to him to suppress criticism by any kind of authoritarianism. For instance he reasons with Vali, advancing many justifications for killing him, some of which seem to the modern mind to savour of special pleading. But Vali himself accepts them as valid. Of course the modern critic, if he should find himself in the same predicament, might, with justification possibly, refuse to act as Rāma did. But before doing that he would have to make sure that his scruples were not vitiated by such *kasmala* as came upon Arjuna at Kuruksetra. And that is what S'ri Rama tells Vali in effect:

Very subtle and difficult to ascertain, oh monkey, is the Dharma of the good. Only the Ātman seated in the heart of all beings knows what is 'good' and what is 'not good'.¹³

This ability to still the mind and to listen to the *Guru* within the heart is not a knack that one may pick up at will. Meanwhile there arise life-situations which one must tackle as best one can. And the S'ruti declares¹⁴ that when doubts arise as to matters of conduct¹⁵ the man who is anxious to do the right is best guided by the practice in similar situations of Brahmanas of exemplary character who are in love with Dharma.

This text again seems to be almost consciously repeated in Rāma's words reminding Vali that he has not tried to study Dharma under the wise:

You have not contacted wise old men whom the Āchāryas would regard as competent to advise on *Dharma-sukshma*.¹⁶

These Brāhmanas are apparently to be regarded as on a higher flight than the *Āchārya*—the *vidyā-guru* who delivers the exhortation of the Eleventh Anuvaka of the Seeker Valli. They are spoken of as, among other things, totally free from anger and harshness.

The *rśis* of the Dandaka forest are men of this stamp. It is the like of them that S'ri Rāma has vowed to protect from the violence of the Rākṣasas. Sītā gently remonstrates with him for taking upon himself without provocation other people's quarrels, when the proper thing for one who has come to live the forest life is to give up the use of arms for the duration. In reply S'ri Rāma points out that he has passed his word; he will give up his own life (not to speak of Sītā herself or Lakṣmaṇa) rather than break his plighted word, especially when the promise has been given to Brāhmanas. S'ri Rāma in this situation may be expected to guide himself by the light of the example of these revered Brāhmanas. What did they do? They allowed themselves to be harried or even killed by the Rākṣasas rather than waste their *tapas* by retaliation or anger. Now, literal copying of their conduct would have meant S'ri Rāma's making the same gesture of non-violence towards the Rākṣasas. But it would have been merely a gesture. There would have been no reality behind it. For Rāma was a Kṣatriya and King even though in exile: he was not a Brāhmaṇa.

¹³ सूक्ष्मः परमदुर्ज्ञेयः सतां धर्मः श्रवणम् । हृदिस्थः सर्वभूतानामात्मा वेद शुभाशुभम् ॥ IV. xviii-15.

¹⁴ ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिनः । युक्ता अयुक्ताः । अलक्ष्णा धर्मकामाः स्युः । यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन् तथा तत्र वर्तेथाः ।

¹⁵ S'ri S'aṁkara seems to think that the doubts referred to here are doubts that may arise in the course of discharge of *śrouta* or *smārta karmas*: but for our purposes it seems unnecessary to narrow the scope of the argument thus.

¹⁶ अस्त्यष्टा बुद्धिसंपन्नान् वृद्धानाचार्यसम्मत्तान् । IV. xviii-5.

His *dharma* was not absolute forbearance, but the violence necessary to put down evil. The *vānaprastha dharma*, in so far as it could apply to him during his Dandaka sojourn, could be regarded as imposing upon him only the kind of restraint, and allowing him only the kind of indulgence, that was not contrary to his *Varṇa-dharma* or *Kula-dharma*. S'ri Rāma must have weighed all these considerations in his mind and come to the conclusion that he should follow the practice of the Brāhmaṇa *tapasvis*, not literally, but in accordance with the spirit thereof. He realises that he should be prepared to give up everything, including his own life if need be, in doing his duty of protecting the helpless, as the Brāhmaṇas are prepared to stick to their duty of non-violence even if it should mean death to themselves.

Constant discrimination in this wise, with the sole desire to find the truth and do the right, slowly helps to dislodge the ego. The seeker's personality expands in the process till in time it achieves dispassion and a breadth of sympathy which to minds incapable of objectivity seem mutually incompatible. S'ri Rāma is at once hard as granite and soft as a flower. Lakṣmaṇa is to him as near as his own breath, but no one is made to feel more the weight of his displeasure. Sītā, he says, can no more be separated from him than the good repute of a good man. And yet he could nerve himself to tell her that he had no use for her. He has, outwardly, his moments of exaltation and his moments of depression; but in the greatest crises he seems to stand apart from himself and contemplate the scene with the serenity of the *ātmatuṣṭa*—

the man who is firmly grounded in the Self.

It is in depicting S'ri Rāma as he appears on the battle-field after Ravana's death that Vālmiki seems to suggest that *Dharma-jijñāsa* is over and *Brahma-jijñāsa* has begun. In the earlier part of his story S'ri Rāma is always found distinguishing between the *Devas* and *Daivam*. For the former, the numerous gods, he has respect and he scrupulously discharges his duties towards them, but one is left in no doubt that if honour or duty required it he could stand up to them. *Daivam*, on the other hand, is that intangible, inscrutable and ever-victorious mystery to whom man can only bow his head in submission. It is this notion of *Daivam* in the Rāmāyaṇa that seems to come nearest to our notions of a metaphysical ultimate, (*mokṣa* being nowhere explicitly mentioned).

But when, after the death of Ravana, S'ri Rāma confronts Sītā, a new note creeps in. He says:

If you, alone and helpless, were carried away by the fickle-minded Rākṣasa, I, a mere man, have overcome the mishap wrought by Daiva.¹⁷

That man could, by his own efforts, redress an act of *Daivam*, is hardly the kind of thought that one would expect S'ri Rāma to voice. It is in the same strain that he goes on to speak when Sītā has entered the fire and the Heavenly Host are assembled on the battle-field:

I look upon myself as a man, Rāma the son of Daśaratha. May the Lord tell me who I am, where I belong and whence I come?¹⁸

It looks almost as if he wanted the Gods to proclaim to the world the truth about himself (or the Self). He was

¹⁷ सा त्वं विरहिता नीता चलचित्तेन रक्षसा । देवसंपादितो दोषो मानुषेण मया जितः ॥ VI. cxviii-5.

¹⁸ आत्मानं मानुषं मन्ये रामं वशरथात्मजम् । योऽहं यस्य यत्तत्त्वाहं भगवांस्तद्वशीतु मे ॥ VI. cxx. 11-12.

really propounding the paradoxical truth that only *Daivam* can annul what *Daivam* has done. S'ri Rama was no more given to mock-modesty than to boasting. When on different occasions he spoke as one conscious of supernatural powers and attributes, the context makes it clear that he spoke out of the depths of his being, from that level of God-consciousness whence Lakṣmaṇa drew up his reserves of impregnability.

He recollected the ineffable and indescribable truth of himself as part of Viṣṇu.¹⁹

It is in the great moments that this *daivee-smṛti* comes to the surface. At other times the *manuṣya-bhāva* abides, that sense of being other to *Daivam*.²⁰

Brahma's reply to the question, 'Who am I, where do I belong, whence do I come?' symbolises the Guru's *upades'a*, which is really *prabodha*. And Brahmā says nothing which S'ri Rama has not from time to time received as an intimation from the depths of his own consciousness. In other words the *Ātman*, the *Antaryāmi*, is the Guru *par excellence*. He abides with the *Jīva* as the bird who is the *Sākṣi* abides with the bird who is the *bhoktā* till the feeling of separateness vanishes.

Regarded in this light the episode of the discarding of Sitā takes on a very different aspect. Man's desperate clinging to his sense of separateness, and to the misery that is the consequence, is symbolised by S'ri Rāma's determined effort

to conduct himself as a *prākṛta* (an ordinary mortal), though he said before and will say again that Sitā can no more be separated from him than the sun's rays from the sun. When Sitā emerges unscathed he explains that he had to conduct himself in this manner for demonstrating her purity to the three worlds:

प्रत्यर्थं तु लोकानां त्रयाणां.... VI. cxxi-16.

But in the great S'aranagati scene the Guru—who was thus explicitly to affirm Himself as the exemplar in this world of conditioned reality—stands forth in his true essence as the Para-Vidyā, the way and the goal, where there is neither *moha* nor *s'oka*:

To him who seeks my protection saying, but once, 'I am thine', I shall be the refuge, even if all the world should assail him. That is my fixed resolve.²¹

Don't we catch here the resonance of the S'ruti's assurance,

'Thou hast indeed obtained abhaya, oh Janaka.'²²

It is the unveiling of Rama, the One without a second, that is the crown and consummation of V Imiki's gift to humanity. Rāma, the Ruler Immortal seated in the heart, discourses on the Para-Tattva to Ānjaneya the ideal *śiṣya* who flew, straight like the arrow of the Upaniṣad's imagery, to the target which is *Brahma*. In that communion the teacher, the teaching and the taught are one.

When Rāma ruled the world was transformed into Rāma.²³

THE REAL DANGER

By C. KUNHAN RAJA

During my life-time, I have known the two World Wars. The first was fought to make world safe for Democracy and the second to free the world from Totalitarianism. I have also known of the Russo-Japanese War, the Turko-Italian War and the Boer War before the first World War. Mussolini's actions in Ethiopia 'to bring civilization' to that primitive country and the attack of Japan on China between the two Wars are also still fresh in my mind. After peace was established on the close of the second World War, there is now going on what is termed a 'Cold War' between the Eastern and the Western blocks in world politics.

The Eastern block wants to create 'a classless society' so that the individuals will be safe from the oppression of Capitalists (the State and not individuals or private Corporations, undertaking the full responsibility for national organisation). The West wants to establish a 'welfare State' in which the State will be subordinate to the individuals, in which the individual liberty is safe from the tyranny of a totalitarian State, in which the individuals form themselves into corporations and organise the activities of the nation.

In the last century it was supposed that science would be able to bring plenty to all, that wants would be eradicated, that diseases and other sources of human suffering also could be remedied and that the cause for human discontent and consequent conflicts between individuals, corporations and nations also would be removed from the life of man in this world. The new advocates of democracy

further held the view that if there is free-trade, there would be full individual freedom for their activities and that if there is universal franchise (at that time no one thought of women as citizens) among men, there would be full control over the actions of the governments by the people and that men would be free and happy in the States.

There is a reaction to all such new developments in the form of a revival of religious consciousness among men, and many new religious organisations have come into existence. Science repudiates the existence of a God and also the reality of what is called a 'soul' in men. To them there is only a material evolution, and what is called 'life' is only an accidental and later phase in that material evolution. What is accidental and later, is, by its very nature as an accident, sure to come to an end as a factor in this evolution. At that stage there will be left only a 'blind' evolution to continue. The scientist himself will cease to exist and as such science itself becomes a temporary factor in this world. What are called happiness and misery, what are called feelings, are only material phenomena, and as such, have no ultimate values in life; as such, ethics too loses its ground. The result is that human happiness ceases to count as having any absolute value, and material prosperity becomes the real goal in human activities. The scientists pursue their science; the industrialists and other businessmen develop industries and also their commerce; the politicians support the enterprises of the businessmen. The business-

¹⁹ विष्णोर्भागममीमांस्यमात्मानं प्रत्यनुस्मरन् । VI. lix-122.

²⁰ Why, did not Viṣṇu himself ask the Devas, as if he did not know (अजानन्निव), how he should set about the task of destroying Ravana?

²¹ सङ्कदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते । अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्व्रतं मम ॥ VI. xviii-33, 34.

'Abhaya' here means not only the 'transcendence of fear'; it indicates the realisation of the One without a second. द्वितीयद्वै भयं भवति ।

²² अभयं वै प्रप्तोसि जनक ।

²³ रामभूतं जगद्भूतं रामे राज्यं प्रशासति ॥ VI. cxxxi-102.

men take advantage of the new discoveries of science, and the politicians take advantage of them in their support to, and defence of, material progress in their States.

It is as a reaction against this 'materialism' that religions have come forward again to re-assert the truth of man as an ultimate, and as an absolute, factor in the world. Thus happiness of man and not material progression without an aim, becomes the goal of human activities. This happiness, when purely material, becomes temporary, and often an obstacle in the way of a more permanent and real happiness. This is what is called the advocacy of 'spiritual' values in life, as against material values.

Unfortunately, this noble pursuit of re-asserting the fundamental nature of man took a turn opposed to the prevailing spirit of science, just as science came into conflict with the prevailing notions of religions during the last two centuries. *This conflict of science with religion is one of the real dangers in the world that stands in the way of human happiness.* Unless religion and science can work together, there cannot be any real happiness for man. Neither religion alone, nor science alone, can bring about happiness for man. Progression has no meaning unless there is a plan and a goal, and a plan and a goal mean a planner and a purpose. Matter cannot 'progress' without a 'spirit' that plans and that determines the purpose of the movement and the goal; a 'spirit' cannot function by itself without matter. Thus there must be harmony between matter and spirit, and consequently between science that deals with matter and religion that relates to the 'spirit'. Thus matter and spirit are not in conflict with each other, but are complementary to each other. This danger of conflict must be removed.

While science and democracy brought about one danger to human happiness and when later religious movements were not able to tackle the situation, the world is faced with a still greater danger to human progress and happiness in the form of communistic propaganda. I distinguish between Communism and the procedure of Communists. I also distinguish between what are essentially communistic principles and what are inherited by it from the environments in which it grew.

The fundamental of every religion is that in human conduct, the 'Highest Being' is taken as the standard and the purpose of all human activities and the goal of man is to attain this 'Ideal'. It may be known by different terms in different religions; but the fundamental goal remains the same. In democracy and in science also, the ideal of a 'movement upward' was accepted. They conceived of a 'Utopia' when all men would be raised to the highest level. The standard of religion remained, though the goal was within the realm of material progression without a permanent and fundamental entity called a 'spirit' to guide this progression and to attain the goal. In science and democracy, the wise man, the man who knows, leads humanity.

But in Communism, it is a 'workers' control' of human destinies and the procedure to attain to human equality is by demolishing the top, by a process of levelling down. In a society with 'classes' there must necessarily be those above and those below. The elements of a society in the lowest level becomes the standard. The scientists' Utopia is also a 'classless society' where all are lifted up to the topmost level. But the Communists' ideal is to remove the top levels and to bring all into the bottom level. *This is the great danger that faces humanity at present.*

The scientists accepted intelligence as an important factor in the affairs of man though they did not accept it as the essence of a 'spirit' in the universe and though they recognised it only as a subordinate and accidental adjunct of matter. But Communism does not accept intelligence as the dominant factor in man's affairs and brings the whole organisation of human welfare under the domination

of manual labour. Their methods and their refusal to recognise a 'spirit' and a 'religion' are survivals from a previous age. But this denial of the value of 'intelligence' (which really is the essence of 'spirit') is a new factor, which I consider the real danger to humanity at present, which completely overshadows the danger of science and democracy.

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

BY SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

(Translated from Original Bengali)

PART TWO

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

YADAVADRIPATI

(continued from April '53 issue)

Thus Ramanuja converted Vithhaldeva and thousands of other Buddhists to Vaishnavism and accepted their worship for some time; after which, he, accompanied by his disciples, came to Yadavadri. The present name for this place is Melkote. He set his foot on this holy ground in 1020 Saka era. In the morning of the fourteenth day in the month of Paush of the year mentioned, Ramanuja, while taking a stroll in the Tulasi grove, came across an image underneath an anthill. After excavating the image and cleaning it with pure water, when Ramanuja put it on an altar, all the devotees assembled there thought themselves blessed to look at the lively and captivating features of it. The old inhabitants of the place began to say, 'In our boyhood we heard from our old men that of yore Yadavadrpati used to be worshipped here. But when the Muhammedans invaded the place and

began to break down all the images of Gods, the worshippers of the said image of Vishnu hid it in some secreted place and then went away somewhere else. From that time onwards the Deity was not worshipped nor any festivals celebrated. We feel assured that this must be that Yadavadrpati who at the advent of one like you has again arisen to accept the service of His devotees.' On hearing them said Ramanuja, 'What you have spoken is right. It is He who is Yadavadrpati. At night He had appeared in a dream and commanded His service. All of you please unite to see that a beautiful and magnificent temple is built and consecrated to Him. Let regular services to Him be conducted from today'. According to the behests of Yatiraja his disciples and the village people built on that very day a spacious thatched house and after installing the Deity therein,

engaged themselves heart and soul to the Lord's worship and service. At his instance a beautiful and large temple was built up there within a very short time. A large tank by the name Kalyani had before existed near this place. The limpid water of that tank could now be used for the bath and offerings of Yadavadripati. One day while walking on the northern side of the tank Ramanuja was very much delighted to discover white earth there, for the Vishnavas use that earth for inscribing the Urdhvapundra. Uptil now they used to collect this earth from Bhaktagrama. But by that time the particular kind of earth being already exhausted in Bhaktagrama, Ramanuja had sent many people to search for that kind of earth at different places. But none succeeded in doing so. So he was very glad to discover it himself over there.

In every temple in southern India there are two images of each Deity. The name of the one is *Achala*, (non-moving), meaning that it never goes out from inside the temple; the other is *Sachala-vigraha* (moving Deity), that means it goes out of the temple being carried on vehicles during the times of Utsavas or festivals, for which it is also called the *Utsava-vigraha*. Tradition has it that one day Ramanuja was commanded in a dream by Yadavadripati as follows, 'Ramanuja, My child, I have been very much pleased with your service. But as I have no Utsava-vigraha, here, I cannot go out of the temple to make my devotees blessed, and the fallen ones free of sin. Therefore, you hasten to bring my second image named Sampatkumara, which is kept with the Emperor of Delhi.'

Being so commanded in dream, next morning along with a few disciples Ramanuja started towards Delhi where he reached after two months. It is so said that the then Emperor of Delhi was much gratified to see the lustre of his body,

his scholarship, and his personality and wanted to know why he had gone there. At this when Ramanuja prayed for the image of Sampatkumara and the Emperor granted his prayer, Ramanuja was taken inside the temple where he found that many of the Deities of the plundered temples of India were collected. Though Ramanuja made a thorough search, he did not find the desired image. Now when the Emperor showed the image which was dearest to his daughter, Ramanuja at once recognised it to be Sampatkumara and with the consent of the Emperor took the image and started along with his disciples towards his own country. They began to walk day and night without any rest, for Yতিরaja knew for certain that if the Princess grew sick for the image, then the loving father might again take it back from him.

Now when the Princess came to know that some Brahmins had fled away with the object of her greatest love, her grief knew no bounds. She became completely overwhelmed with bereavement. The various words of consolation which her father poured forth had no effect whatsoever on her. Day by day she grew to be like a lunatic. Frightened at this, the Emperor ordered a regiment of soldiers, 'Go immediately, and bring back the image forcibly from the Brahmin.' Then the Princess said, 'Father, please permit me, I too shall accompany them.' The Emperor, who was very fond of his daughter, acceded to the importunities of the Princess. The Princess, who was followed by a large retinue of maid servants and men servants and was placed on a nicely decorated palanquin, was given the command of the troop of soldiers. About this time, Kuvera, a prince who was enamoured of the beauty of the Emperor's daughter was in the palace for a long time engaging himself all the time to win the grace of the Princess in the expect-

tation of being betrothed to her. When he found the Princess Bibi Lachimar rushing after the image like an insane woman, he too, unable to bear her separation, followed her.

In the meantime, Ramanuja and his disciples by walking non-stop had crossed the boundary of the Emperor's territories. Bibi Lachimar who was pursuing them was still far behind them. Within a few days Ramanuja arrived at Melkote with the image of Sampatkumara; he installed the Utsava-vigraha in a very sacred spot inside the temple. On his way he was immensely helped by the Chandalas. Had they not carried Sampatkumara all the way, Ramanuja would have had surely to fall into the hands of the Emperor's soldiers. This is why uptil now the Chandalas are given the right to go inside the temple of Yadavadripati for three days every year.

Like the whole, unlimited, non-dual and formless aspect of Sri Hari, His numberless formful aspects are also real. Some modes from among these formful aspects incarnate on the earth at times and by doing away with the blemishes that might have crept into religion, they do good unto men. Some among them would come on the earth in the form of an image, accept the worship of the devotees upto the end of a cycle and thus fulfil the desires of the devotees' hearts. The pure images of the Lord are called the *Archavatāras* of Sri Hari. Like the many other Archavataras such as, Amarnath,

Kedarnath, Badrinarayan, Chandranath, Jagannath, Dvarakanath, Srinath, Omkarnath, Pasupatinath, Taraknath, Srihingesvari, Kalikamata, Ramanath, Yadavadrinath is also one Archavatara of Sri Hari. Ramanuja was pursued by the Emperor's daughter while he was coming away with Sampatkumara which was the Sachala or Utsava-vigraha of this Yadavadripati. To the gross eyes, this image may not appear in any way different from the other images; but Yতিরaja had his subtle vision. He knew that it was the Lord Vishnu Himself in the Archā form who in order to make Bibi Lachimar, the supremely devoted daughter of the Emperor blessed, fell bound in the hands of her father, was carried to the palace, and was united with His devotee. By the divine power of her profound devotion, acquired through many a birth, Bibi Lachimar could recognise Sampatkumara as her Chosen Deity and by accepting Him as her husband got immersed in the ocean of beatitude. So, when Ramanuja plunged her in the limitless ocean of grief by taking away her dearest One from her side, it is nothing strange that she, insane with acute pangs of separation, should pledge her life in the quest of her chosen Deity. The gross-eyed Emperor, unable to comprehend this, took it for certain that his daughter had run mad and being greatly attached to his daughter, permitted her to go along with the troops to pursue Ramanuja, for he thought, per chance she got her desired object, the madness might leave.

Undertake only those works that present themselves to you and are of pressing necessity—and those also in a spirit of detachment. It is not good to become involved in many activities. That makes one forget God. Coming to the Kalighat Temple, some, perhaps, spend their whole time in giving alms to the poor. They have no time to see the Mother in the inner shrine! First of all manage somehow to see the image of the Divine Mother, even by pushing through the crowd. Then you may or may not give alms, as you wish. You may give to the poor to your hearts' content, if you feel that way. Work is only a means to the realization of God. Therefore I said to Sambhu, 'Suppose God appears before you; then will you ask Him to build hospitals and dispensaries for you?' A lover of God never says that way. He will rather say: 'O Lord, give me a place at Thy lotus feet. Keep me always in Thy company. Give me sincere and pure devotion for Thee.'

Sri Ramakrishna

Adi Sankara is always described as Parivrajaka Acharya, or a Teacher who moves from place to place. It is interesting to examine why our ancestors created such a title for any one.

The position of a *travelling* teacher would be appropriate only in a context where more or less *stationary* teachers work in particular localities. Any one with a slight acquaintance with the principle behind the arrangement of four Asramas would easily see that the Vanaprasthas and the Sannyasins functioned respectively as the stationary and itinerant teachers. Both these types of teachers gave their service free, and thus contributed in a large measure to the spread of learning and culture in ancient days. The Sannyasins, specially, by moving from place to place, helped to coordinate traditions in the remotest corners of the country. Let us frankly admit that this is a task which the powerful governments of the present day, with all the facilities they command for quick travel and communication, find it hard to achieve.

We know what happens when people ask for greater conveniences for educating their children. Our Ministers plead that there are no funds. What is the way out? If children cannot pay, we must try to raise up teachers who can give their service for the sheer love of it. We must, in other words, organise our society in such a way that a certain number of competent men would naturally 'retire' or 'renounce' and become available as free teachers. In olden days it was

considered an item of religious discipline to give up *eshana-traya*, desire for sex, wealth and subtle pleasures in this world or the next. Could not modern men (and women) develop sufficient fervour to take up similar vows and cover a portion of the educational field?

Our tragedy is that our own leaders have ridiculed and misrepresented this ideal of renunciation to such an extent that no self-respecting young man or woman would normally think of adopting such a course and leading a dedicated life. The same leaders internally chafe when they see the shameful spectacle of people, very much advanced in life, going about with their progressively advancing interest in their grandchildren, or their money-making or their craving for social or political importance, engaged in unseemly squabbles and blocking the paths of younger citizens! *Retire, renounce and serve*: this would be a beautiful motto for ennobling the lives of such people and making society better. But our leaders would not tell that. They are mortally afraid of the word 'renunciation'. If they have to use it, they neutralise it with many qualifying adjuncts till its significance is all lost! Mental renunciation is enough, they say; and they point out to us the example of Mahatma Gandhi! As if mental renunciation is *quite easy*, and the example of Mahatma Gandhi *much easier*!

As against this they also show the number of formally renounced people who have not been able to shed their selfish-

ness, or who have taken the external symbols of renunciation for earning their livelihood. This is patently unfair. When two mango trees are to be compared, it is no use taking the best fruit of one and the worm-eaten fruit of the other for comparison. Take the best of both. As against a Gandhi, take a Dayananda, or a Vivekananda, or a Ramana Maharshi or a Kamakoti Pitham Swami.

Look at some of the other wonderful problems of the present day. There is Communism, proposing to work for the welfare of the community; it is against private property and religion. There is also fear due to the rapid increase in the population of the world. People advocate all sorts of remedies to remove these evils.

Many honest people however believe that the remedies suggested really help the spread of greater vices instead of virtues. It does not require very great insight to realise that the ideal of the Sannyasin can be made to play a great part in facing some of these problems in a manner consistent with virtue, an inner sense of moral victory and the best traditions of Indian culture. The ideal of the Sannyasin is to sublimate sex, to give up private property in letter and in spirit and, lastly, to dedicate his life for realizing God and serving Him in all creatures. He who is called Sannyasin from the standpoint of the Asramas—be it remembered—is to be termed 'travelling teacher' from the educational standpoint. SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

One Key-idea of Hindu Planning of Life (Editorial)

Many seem to think that planning is a very new idea in the human affairs of the day. Indeed some aspects and accents of the idea are new. But Hindus had the idea of planning with them right from the Vedic times. They planned their society according to their varṇa-theory and their individual lives according to the āśrama-theory. We had occasion to speak about the varṇa-theory previously. Here we seek to point out that—judged from any standpoint, economic, psychological or spiritual,—planning of individual life as represented in the āśrama-scheme of the Hindus, remains unexcelled even today. One of the fundamental ideas of the scheme was service.

Readers of the *Vedanta Kesari* who have been following the editorials for the last three years will note that, as announced in the April '53 issue of the Journal, we are picking up here again the

links of the editorial-series on 'Renunciation and Service' of which twenty-nine instalments have appeared before. This editorial, however, is written in a self-sufficient manner so as to enable the new subscribers to follow the theme without any reference to the previous issues. In the following issues, until further notification, we mean to adopt the same technique.

The Ideal of Religious Universalism and Harmony

In this strife-ridden world it is only Religion, understood in its essential and purest sense, that can bring harmony and peace. But if religions themselves become agencies of quarrel and discord, what happens to the future of humanity? In this article, Swami Yatiswarananda, one of the senior-most monks of the Ramakrishna Order, whose spiritually helpful and intellectually illuminating articles we are often privileged to publish, makes a powerful plea for religions to adopt the only

fruitful path open to them in future, that of universalism and harmony.

Sri Rāma: The Ideal Guru

Sri Rāma has been considered as an epitome of ideality in ever so many ways—the ideal son, the ideal husband, the ideal brother, the ideal gentleman, the ideal friend, the ideal disciple, the ideal hero, the ideal king. But it is not quite the common way to consider him as the ideal Guru, a theme beautifully dealt with by Sri N. Raghunathan, the Assistant Editor of *The Hindu*. After going through the article one is sure to feel that this trenchant devotee of divine lore should make more occasions to share his thoughts on his first interest.

The Real Danger

From the beginning of his times man had to live through hostile conditions by the sheer power of his intelligence. Given intelligence, dangers have been blessings in disguise to man. But one has to imagine the enormity of 'The Real Danger' when intelligence itself is denied by man himself. Dr. Kunhan Raja, Professor of Sanskrit, University of Tehran, Iran, whose learned article we had previously occasion to publish in the *Vedanta Kesari*, draws the attention of the thinking people to such a calamity, which, the Professor feels, a section of humanity has already precipitated.

FRIENDS OF MEN DEPART

Within three weeks from June 19, '53 to July 2 '53 we lost three great citizens of India: Sri C. Jinarajadasa, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji and Sri T. R. Venkatarama Sastri.

AN ORNAMENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Sri C. Jinarajadasa, President of the Theosophical Society for seven years from February 1946, passed away on June 19, '53 at Wheaton, Illinois (U.S.A.). He was 77.

A deep scholar, a linguist, a man of broad sympathies which he earned not a little from his wide travels over the world, Sri C. Jinarajadasa was an ornament of the Theosophical Society. His passing away is therefore a great loss to the Society, for which we deeply sympathise.

A very refined type of man, Sri Jinarajadasa gave one the spontaneous impression of a quiet high culture which was so innate in him. A Sinhalese by birth, not unlike late Ananda Coomara Swamy, he was the child of Greater India and a citizen of the world.

We have very pleasant memories of two occasions when he visited this Math to

preside over the birth day anniversaries of Lord Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna. A son of a Buddhist family who had studied the scriptures in the original he spoke on the Tathagata with special impressiveness. Presiding over the 113th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on March 14, 1948, he said that Sri Ramakrishna was an *Ārṣa-buddhi*. It was the duty of the people of this land, he continued, who had the privilege to possess such spiritual teachers and traditions, to live up to them.

The passing away of such a fine kindly man as Sri Jinarajadasa is bound to create a sense of void wherever he was known and understood.

May his soul rest in Peace.

A GREAT INDIAN

Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji, M. P., President, All-India Jana Sangha, passed away on June 22, '53 at Srinagar while he was a prisoner of the State Government of Kashmir. He was 52.

It required a tragic death to reveal to this nation true proportions of the stature and the *bona fides* of this truly great man.

A great son of a great father, a man among men, a scion of the soil, a profound patriot, a friend of the people, a leader of men, a champion of the distressed, neglected and the bypassed, a conscientious, intrepid and creative objector to the omissions and commissions of the ruling power that be, a wise counsellor to many a beneficent organisation, an indefatigable reviver of the ancient culture of greater India, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherji was by himself an institution of his times, a singular soul of invincible individuality, a towering personality with a voice and a vision of his own and least of all a generous gentleman.

His contributions to the educational, cultural, economic and political development of this emerging India is immense. A powerfully opposed man though politically, he was listened to with respect by millions for they instinctively knew that the single passion of this uncommon man was the good of his country and his people. Mistakes he might have committed. In this respect, however, he is surely squarely in the company of greater men. A fearless and relentless critic of things, which he thought harmful for the country, he was a giant bastion of the new democracy which this country is just building up. Parliament of India without S. P. will be a 'poorer' House: so have said M.P.s in effect. But nonetheless he has left behind the example of a vigorous Parliamentarian which will inspire the future representatives of the people for a long time to come.

Today India is an expanding influence. Many people do not seem to know how great is Shyamaprasad's contribution in this direction. The links of India with

far Eastern countries have always been more through culture and less through politics. By working hard for building up the Mahabodhi Society, it was Shyamaprasad who in a very real sense help revived these ancient links. One feels a pang in one's soul that a man of such wide vision and noble action should have been so profusely slandered by that all too common an abuse used *ad nauseam* in contemporary political India. Could not politics afford to be more generous? Shyamaprasad loathed the expediency of rising by the spiral of success by subjecting himself to any sort of brainwashing. He stood by and paid for his conscience and convictions. He did not accept any authorised version of religion, philosophy or politics. He preferred to remain a true son of the ancient mother according to his own understanding.

As an educationist, who became the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University at the young age of 33, he was the worthy successor of his great father. Up to the end of his time he has been a much depended adviser to many a cultural and educational institution, and learned society.

As a heart who felt for the homeless, hapless uprooted millions, as a voice who poignantly spoke for them, he was a refuge of the miserable millions.

The national loss which his death constitutes has been a special loss for the Ramakrishna Mission, for in him it has lost an unfailing friend and counsellor, who had held office in some of its institutions.

May his soul rest in Peace.

A SENTINEL OF THE SOUTH

Sri T. R. Venkatarama Sastri passed away July 2, '53 at his residence in Madras. He was 79.

A grand liberal, an eminent jurist who had deep knowledge of Indian Niti and Dharma Sastras, a wakeful democrat, a counsellor of the community, a superior publicist, a courageous crusader for any right cause, an independent thinker, an intellectual of many facets—Sri T. R. V. Sastri was a sentinel of the South. His was a voice of sanity in this our fluid India.

Even with his disabled body he was a dynamic spirit. As one who never shirked unpleasant but indispensable controversy on a right cause, he was an educative influence to the community where the difficult and unpopular task is always deftly left out for the other fellow. He was one who believed that to be a cosmopolitan, one had not necessarily to snap one's own roots. He did not believe that by being true to one's cultural moorings one became narrow-minded. He discounted the benevolence of the benefactor who in effect suggested suicide. But at the same time—as he more than once said with subtle humour to the present writer—he dreaded the all too local-patriotic efforts of raising the Buckingham canal (of Madras) to the status of eternal Ganga!

A rationalist by temperament, he delighted in uninhibited free thinking. To the amusement of the present writer he has sometimes tried hard to represent himself as a non-religious man! One day, however, he unawares gave out that he could not read the *Rāmāyana* at places without shedding tears. On another occasion he said that Sri Krishna was his ideal and hero. Not long before his passing away he made a fresh study of the life and teachings of Lord Buddha. He was

one of those men of liberal education who had studied the Hindu scriptures in the 'orthodox' way and the 'critical' way too. Moreover he was also a deep student of comparative religion. So in matters of religious controversy he could be simultaneously devastating and convincing. In the cultural life of Madras he was the most respected guide and patron. His services to the cause of Sanskrit is memorable. Few may know that even with his paralytic body, at the age of 79, he was taking lessons in French, rendering English into French and French to English. Such was the mind in Sri T. R. V. Sastri.

The Ramakrishna Mission loses in him a much depended friend. He was the Vice-President of the Sarada Vidyalyaya and a Member of the Committee of Management of the Vivekananda College, run by the Mission. For the last few years he had been taking great personal interest in the *Vedanta Kesari*, in the columns of which we were given to publish several of his valued articles. In him the Journal loses a much respected contributor and well-wisher.

May his soul rest in Peace.

Friends of men depart. In India we have too many aged and overworked men at the helm of our affairs. Quite a few M. Ps. and Chief Ministers are above seventy. The law of nature will have its sway sooner or later. Let not the nation be found unprepared. Let our young hopefuls understand that in India we have already achieved a unique revolution. What is now wanted is conscientious submission to wise leadership and devotion to hard 'detail work.' 6-7-53.

THERE ARE OTHER EVERESTS OF WHITER SNOW

(A SCRUTINY OF SOME POINTS IN SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S RECENT EXPOSITION OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY.)

Few among those who have some acquaintance with Hindu thought and modern knowledge will have any difficulty in endorsing the following claims which Sri C. Rajagopalachari made on behalf of Hindu philosophy in his 'Russel Memorial Lecture' delivered at Patna College on May 11, 1953:

1. that Hindu philosophy can claim to be peculiarly in harmony with latest knowledge.
2. that, Hindu philosophy furnishes a faith and a culture which can support and strengthen the compulsory laws of a democratic state.
3. that Hindu philosophy has raised catholicity and tolerance to the level of positive and cardinal religious duties. Hindu philosophy has thus potentialities to make the greatest positive contribution to civilization.
4. that it has no quarrel whatsoever with the physicist or the geologist and yet it offers a firm spiritual foundation for a new co-operation and catholic polity for the governance of the world.
5. that it is not an opiate but can be a powerful driving force and automatic regulator.

Some features of Sri C. R.'s exposition of Hindu philosophy, however, will be viewed, we are afraid, as a bit too modern, extraordinary and personal. He found it handy—he was facing ten thousand young students among whom were window-breakers too!—to interpret Vedanta, which is universally accepted by the Hindus as the *mokṣa-sāstra*, not as a philosophical-cum-spiritual discipline leading one to mokṣa (one could not trace the word mokṣa or its normal equivalents in the reported text of his lecture), but as 'the eugenics of soul, the scientific plan to bring into existence a better breed of men.' According to Sri C. R., Vedanta is thus a type of animal husbandry, call it husbandry of *homo sapiens* if you please. He asks, 'Have we not laboured to improve the breed of poultry and cattle? Have we not succeeded wonderfully in them?' In the face of such compelling evidences and examples what higher purpose can Vedanta serve than the husbandry of *homo sapiens*? Sri C. R.'s exhortation, therefore, is: 'Let us improve the breed of men, bodies as well as souls. ...Let us plant our souls in the good earth and be born again as good men.'

And then what? And be born again as good men—*ad infinitum*! To what purpose? To fulfil the plan of Vedanta, which, according to Sri C. R., is to lead humanity to that promised land, that biological Utopia, where like better hens and better cows, better *homo sapiens* will be constantly raised, until at long last, 'the world will ultimately be filled with good men.'

Rightly has Sri C. R. deplored in his lecture, 'As for our savants, the trouble has been one is apt to fail to see the wood for the tree.'

Of course his chief aim in the present exposition of Hindu philosophy has been expressly, 'to bring the civic aspect of Hindu philosophy into prominence.' To this end, Sri C. R. boldly faces his own poser: 'How can Hinduism which preaches *sannyās* and fatalism be suited for an age wherein hard work and due performance of civic duties are so essential?' As to the charge of fatalism he convincingly proves that there is no fatalism in Hinduism. It is all *karma*, which means absolute freedom. As to the charge of *sannyās*, he says that the *Gita* does not insist on it! Let Sri C. R. present his own case:¹

First let me state definitely that it is not the teaching of Vedanta that men should renounce activities and become anchorites. Vedanta demands renunciation but the renunciation is different from what is referred to in the argument against the suitability of Hinduism for the modern citizen. It is the renunciation of false value; renunciation of attachment that the Vedanta wants in its votaries. What is preached in the Vedanta is enlightened and true valuation of essentials and a spirit of detachment. And this is explained and reiterated in the *Gita* quite as if this very query raised now had specifically been put to Sri Krishna. *Buddhi* and *asanga* are insisted on and not *sannyās*.

No one can deny that Vedanta demands renunciation of 'false values' in its votaries. Now it all depends upon what one means by 'false values'. According to the supreme tenet of Advaita, Brahman alone is real. It is then a truism to say that what is not *satya* (real) is *mithyā* (false). The other part of the Advaitic tenet is that *Jagat* is *mithyā*. Now, values pertaining to that *mithyā Jagat* which has been character-

¹ We are using the text of his lecture as published in the June '53 issue of the *Indian Review*, Madras.

rised in the Gita as *antīyam asukham lokam* (this unreal miserable world) has necessarily got to be false values. One who has realised this truth, or even one who is determined to realize this truth, that *jagat* is *mithyā*—to be sure, to the vast majority of people, *jagat* is the only thing real—upon him is enjoined renunciation of the world here and now. When the falsity of the world is not a mere *artha-vāda* or a romantic imagination or just a hearsay to a particular person, the fact of Brahman is the only reality. When such a person gets immersed, so to say, in the truth of Brahman, *sannyās* is but a natural consummation for him. Vedanta permits such a person to even renounce activities² (as we commonly understand the word) and become anchorite. (Oxford Dictionary gives the meaning of the word 'anchorite' as 'hermit' and person of secluded habit. We believe Sri C.R. uses the word in the same sense.) Whether or not such a permission of Vedanta would be tolerated by the modern social temper is a different question. Yajñavalkya's renunciation of false values could take only one form and that was *sannyās*. He knew enough of Vedanta one is persuaded to suppose. Vedanta did grant renunciation of activities to Sri Ramana even in these our complex problematic days. He was both a renouncer of activities and an anchorite. Society tolerated him; it did not ask him to take a spade in hand and repair the District Board roads, or make compost manure. If he had done all these that might have been considered by some as a very high example. But no one seems to think that by not doing so he has harmed society or lapsed in duty. Administrators, economists and sociologists have sat at his feet and derived inspiration from his state of inaction for their respective jobs. Not only that. Sri Ramana has also been acclaimed as one of the exemplars of authentic Vedanta.

One sometimes does not know how far one should go in order to humour the wild needs of the modern society. Our modern requirements overwhelm us to such a degree that we sometimes seek to pattern all anterior thought in the shape of the solution of problems we may seek in the future. The inflexibility of Sri C. R.'s interpreta-

tion of Vedanta appears to stem from such a prepossession. Vedanta has grown through millenniums. It has passed through several stages of evolution. There are various schools of Vedanta too. Likewise the ideal of renunciation has evolved through millenniums. It had its periods of renaissance too. We have references of anchorites in the Rig-Veda.³ Before the Buddha there had been quite a considerable number of *sampradāyas* of the renouncers. We know about Buddha's personal reactions to a prevailing mode of asceticism. Buddha himself gave a new orientation to the ideal of *sannyās*. As a reforming dispensation Buddha's influence shaped the posterior Hinduism imperceptibly. Sankara headed another renaissance of renunciation and interpreted Vedanta in a way which permitted renunciation of activities and becoming anchorites to those who were fit for such a mode of life. Then came Ramakrishna heading another renaissance of renunciation. By preaching synthesis of yoga, Swami Vivekananda interpreted Ramakrishna-Vedanta in a way which adroitly juxtaposed intense activity with utter renunciation. Here we have a position where contradictions have met, where *paramārthika* predilections did not ignore the civic requirements, where civic pre-occupations did not eat away the *paramārthika* aspiration. One has to remember that Hinduism preserves all patterns. The practical Vedanta of Vivekananda does not prevent the possibility of a Ramana. And Vedanta embraces all these.

There is no strait-jacketism in Hinduism. This unique religion scrupulously recognises the fact that all human beings do not live in the same level of existence. Necessarily, therefore, according to fitness of the aspirant his duties are enjoined. It is true that for the vast majority of men renunciation of activities is not prescribed. Those who pursue inferior *puruṣārthas* are not condemned, because, it is hoped that by law of necessity they too will sometime or other wend their way to higher *puruṣārthas*. But one is also permitted to kick off every thing and wander away as freely as the air not caring a trice for the world and remain ever drowned in the contemplation of Brahman in the manner of a Trailinga Swami.

² ज्ञानामृतेन तृप्तस्य कृतकृत्यस्य योगिनः । नैवास्ति किञ्चित्कर्तव्यमस्ति चेन्न स तत्त्ववित् ॥

³ Vide: *Rg.* VIII. 17. 14.; x. 136.

Hinduism had always the subtle vision to appreciate the supreme beneficent influence of such exalted *karma-tīrthas* upon human society. The *Dharma-sāstras* enjoin it as the bounden duty of the householder to look after the requirements of such renouncers of activities.

The natural habitation of the *Brahma-jñānis* and *Jīvan-muktas* is *sannyās* whether it is formally taken or not. Activities are not obligatory to them. They are free from all *vidhi* and *niṣedha*. There have been *Brahma-jñānis* who have lived *prastara-vat*, like a mute stone slab. There have been *Brahma-jñānis* who have lived cyclonic lives as we find in the case of Sankara and Vivekananda. It may be a fact that at a given point of time there may not exist many such persons in a given society. But Vedanta fully recognises and provides for such a supreme fact of spiritual possibility.

Usually the example of Janaka is cited as one who lived the ideal Vedantic life in the world. But then it is seldom reckoned as to why the same enlightened Janaka who could say in full awareness, 'Infinite wealth is mine, as I possess nothing. If Mithila burns down nothing is burnt that is mine,'⁴ should have ultimately chosen to formally renounce the world. Bhisma narrates the story of Janaka's renunciation as follows: 'Installing his son in the sovereignty of the Videhas, the old king began to live the life of a Yati.'⁵

One has to remember that Janaka was one of the greatest teachers of Vedanta and a great administrator withal. In his conversation with Sulabha Janaka remarks, 'Renunciation is the highest means prescribed for liberation. Renunciation by which one becomes freed, emanated from knowledge.'⁶

Advising Suka as to how one should live in the fourth āśrama Janaka makes the following points: Living virtuously in the forest, he should at last, establish his fire in his soul, and freed from all pairs of opposites, and renouncing all attachments, he should pass his days in the anchorite mode of life, which is otherwise called the mode of Brahman.⁷

Narada's advice to Suka is very explicit as far as renunciation of activities and becoming anchorite is concerned: 'That man is said to be truly endowed with wisdom who renounces every act, who never indulges in hope, who is perfectly dissociated

from all worldly surroundings, and who has renounced everything that belongs to the world.'⁸

Such passages abound in Vedantic literature.

We have quoted a few passages just to show that it is not quite correct to 'state definitely that it is not the teaching of Vedanta that men should renounce activities and become anchorites.'

In prescribing duties Hinduism always wholeheartedly accepts a man at his own level but always prospectively connects him with the ultimate end of life, generally accepted by Hindus, as *mokṣa*. Broadly speaking there may be three groups of men: non-aspirants (those who live without any conscious reference to the ideal of *mokṣa*), conscious aspirants (those who pattern the activities of their lives in reference to the ultimate end), and the enlightened (those who have attained *mokṣa* here and now). Needless to say that it is not within the power of the non-aspirant to renounce activities, for his unregenerate impulses and desires will drive him helplessly to action, good or bad. The Hindu Sāstras are mainly concerned with advising the conscious aspirant, for he alone is the true *jijñāsu* (enquirer). Of course attempts are made to persuade the non-aspirants to become aspirant, and also to press the services of the enlightened for the good of the world. But the main bulk of the very subtle discussion regarding renunciation or non-renunciation of activities pivots on the ideal of *mokṣa* mainly in reference to the life of the deliberate *mumukṣu*, the conscious aspirant.

True, *niṣkāma karma* is prescribed as a potent means of *sādhana*. But *niṣkāma karma* is not easily done. In the strictest senses of the word *niṣkāma karma* can be done only by the liberated, for *kāma* has died once for all only in him and in none else. Others' attempts to do *niṣkāma karma*, therefore, involves renunciation of at least those activities which are *sakāma*. It also requires some anchorite habits to correctly discern as to whether one was actually succeeding in performing *niṣkāma karma*. In the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* we find the Master often and on advising the aspirants to occasionally retire in seclusion for

⁴ अनन्त वत् मे विद्मि यस्य मे नास्ति किञ्चन । मिथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे दहति किञ्चन ॥

⁵ Vide: *Mahābhārata*: S'āntiparva, CCCXIX. 97-94.

⁷ *ib.* CCCXXVI. 20.

⁸ *ib.* CCCXXX. 14.

⁶ *ib.* CCCXXI. 29.

exclusively devoting themselves to direct spiritual practices.

* * *

Sri C. R. is absolutely correct when he says that in the Gita *buddhi* and *asanga* are insisted upon. But when he says that the Gita does not insist on *sannyās*, he gives his own limited interpretation of the entire Gita in the matter of which he has of course his stalwart predecessors and also will have enthusiastic followers. *Sannyās* is but the natural sequence of the fullness of *buddhi* and *asanga*. So to reject *sannyās* is not to have enough of *Buddhi* and *asanga* even. In the introduction to his Commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita* Sankara very clearly says,

The aim of this famous Gita-sāstra is, briefly, the supreme Bliss, a complete cessation of *samsāra* or transmigratory life and of its cause. This accrues from that religion (Dharma), which consists in a steady devotion of the knowledge of the self, preceded by the renunciation of all works.⁹

Whether or not one accepts this exposition, one must concede that this is also one of the considerable interpretations of the Gita for which the world has overwhelming reverence. We have also to admit the significance of the fact that the three great Āchāryas of Vedānta who commented upon the Gita and were the pioneer formulators of the three living schools of Vedānta were themselves *sannyāsins*. Their very way of life is a very forceful interpretation of the Gita.

But then the Gita does not really insist on *sannyās* in the case of the unfit. *Sannyās* could never be a mass-prescription. The Hindu Sāstras consistently forbids *sannyās* for those who are not spiritually and temperamentally fit for it. But to those who are ripe for it they always say, 'God-speed!' The teaching of the Gita reaches its sublime height in the following verse:

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यसेनाधिगच्छति ॥

XVIII. 49.

He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who has subdued his heart, whose desires have fled, he attains by renunciation to the supreme perfection, consisting of freedom from action.

Does the Gita insist here only on *asanga* and *buddhi* or on *Sannyās* also? The verses which follow the one quoted here will also convince one that this was not a sporadic mistake of Sri Krishna. The difficulties and flaws of Sri C. R.'s discussion about renunciation of activities and the ease with which he has been able to discount *sannyās* arise from the fact that he has somehow fought shy of connecting the topic with the necessity of 'seeing the Mother in the inner shine', which is the ultimate purpose of life.

Much as Hinduism is, the Gita as an epitomizing scripture, is all things for all men. It supplies a synthetic panacea for the ills of the world. It is possible to draw out a moderate modern gospel out of the Gita, a gospel which will serve the purpose of social good characterised by 'due performance of civic duties' and 'suitable for an age where hard work is so essential.' The Gita will ungrudgingly supply the spiritual electricity for carrying on all our multi-purpose programmes. But the Gita refuses to get exhausted by merely being useful to civic purposes. There are other higher flights, beyond civic reaches where the Gita flames up in immaculate urges of supreme aspirations. It is one thing to enthuse people for the Community Project by quoting verses from the Gita, and it is possibly slightly a different thing to extract from the Gita the required guidance for attaining *mokṣa* here and now. But even these two can be correlated and co-ordinated according to the teaching of Gita. But for that purpose we may require something more than *buddhi* and *asanga*. What is that but *sannyās*, received by the front door or admitted by the back door?

To dissolve the difficulties in finding suitability of *sannyās* for this complex age of ours we have not to throw away the baby with the bath water; we have not necessarily to reject *sannyās* or water down the ideal. It is not by relativizing the ideal that we will have discharged our ultimate civic duties properly, but it was by conforming the society to the highest ideal of *sannyās* in a graduated fashion that we will have improved the character of civilization itself. In a sense *sannyās*

is a social product, the focal point of concentrated detachment of the society as a whole. The horizontal functioning of the society cannot go on smoothly unless the vertical aspirations are kept vigorous and pure. Wherefrom will the ordinary people learn how to renounce the 'false values'? Sri Ramakrishna says:

Worldly people learn renunciation by seeing the complete renunciation of a monk; otherwise they sink more and more. A *sannyasin* is a world-teacher.

A *sannyasin* is a world teacher in spite of himself, not because he keeps a shaven head or wears ochre robes but because he enshrines in his life the secret and the power of transcending all dualities of life in a negative way and attaining the ever blissful and ever knowing state in a positive way. This secret, this power is nothing but renunciation.

We have shown elsewhere¹⁰ rather elaborately how social cohesion in the modern context and a purposive construction of global humanity in our bad burning complex tense world of today can be brought about only through renunciation, (which

includes the *apara-vairagya* of the householder and also the *para-vairagya* of the *sannyasin*).

To cite an example. The usefulness of an organisation like the Ramakrishna Mission in the present context of society is widely acknowledged. But could there be a Ramakrishna Mission at all without a Vivekananda, his *sannyasin* brother disciples and *sannyasin* followers? To ask this question is not to imply that the lay disciples are not rendering great service. This is to ask another question as to whether or not lay disciples alone could make a Ramakrishna Mission of the type we have functioning in society. The simple answer to the question is the Ramakrishna Mission itself as we have it.

Hinduism has produced Tilaks and Gandhis, C. R.s and Nehrus. Hinduism has also produced Sankaras and Vivekanandas, Pavhari Babas and Ramanas. Will there be many Hindus who could lay hands on their hearts and say that they did not require the latter group of men any more?

There are other Everests of whiter snow.

18-6-53.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE FUNDAMENTAL ASPIRATIONS OF MAN ACCORDING TO INDIAN THOUGHT: BY K. BALASUBRAHMANYA IYER, B.A., B.L., M.L.C. PUBLISHER: KUPPUSWAMY SASTRI RESEARCH INSTITUTE, MYLAPORE, MADRAS. 1952, PAGES 36; PRICE RUPEE ONE.

Man apparently is a bundle of desires, emotions and appetites integrated into a personality by the rational ideals pursued by him and by virtue of (religiously speaking) the Divine Light in him. The seers of India with their characteristic insight into human nature discovered the norm by which mankind should be kept on the rails of the humanities and at times elevated to divine levels. Based on that norm they laid down the fourfold discipline of *Puruṣārthas* or Ideal Human Ends, in order that the energies of mind and body may be properly controlled and directed in pure and fruitful channels, ensuring the welfare and per-

fection of the individual and the collectivity. The fourfold Ends—Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa—may be liberally translated into English as righteousness, lawful acquisition of wealth, enjoyment of unforbidden pleasure and attainment of bliss through the cessation of worldly bondage, designated as liberation. This brochure under review is reprint from the *Journal of Oriental Research*, Vol. XX embodying two lectures delivered by the author under the auspices of the Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Lectureship Endowment and is purported to be an exposition of 'all the main ideas which have been expressed by our ancient seers and poets about the four *Puruṣārthas* (Preface).'

Though a brochure of mere 37 pages, the treatise deals with a theme which the reviewer considers highly important. Hence his close scrutiny of the booklet.

¹⁰ Vide: *The Vedānta Kesari* Vols. XXXVII (May 1950 to April 1951), and XXXVIII (June 1951 to August 1951)

⁹ तस्य अस्य गीताशास्त्रस्य संक्षेपतः प्रयोजनं परं निश्चयसं सहेतुकस्य संसारस्य अत्यन्तोपरमलक्षणम् ।

तत् च सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्वकाद् आत्मज्ञाननिष्ठारूपाद् धर्माद् भवति ।

On the whole the treatise gives to the general reader a popular explanation of the scheme of Puruṣārthas propounded in Indian religious thought. Since, however, there are already some scholarly study of the subject in the brilliant writings of the late Prof. M. Hiriyama and Mahamahopadhyaya P. V. Kane's erudite *History of Dharma Śāstras* proper to the respective contexts, a more rigorous and thorough treatment of the subject than what is found here would have been much more welcome.

The Author's assertion that man is 'essentially an animal' and 'essentially a spirit also' (Ch. 2) is not the final conclusion of the Rsis. That is 'essential' which is indispensable or important in the highest and most perfect degree. If the one is essential the other must be accidental. If we accept the gospel of the Rsis, man is potentially and therefore, essentially Divine. If we reject that view and embrace Behaviouristic view of Psychology, man is essentially an animal and his spirituality is a trick of his 'super ego' built up by social compulsion. It is difficult to accept both spiritual and animal nature as forming his essence. Sri Sankaracharya's statement *pas'vātibhis ca avishesht* purports only to impress that *pramāṇa-pramāṇya-vyāvahāra* of the unilluminated man respond to agreeable and disagreeable stimuli as in the case of a *Pas'u*. If the great Acharya had thought that man is 'essentially' an animal he would not have propounded the Divinity of Man in thousands of words and sworn by the Mahāvākyas teaching *Tat Tvam Asi* and *Ayam Ātma Brahma*.

The statement that 'we do not find any discussions of the view for and against the doctrine' of Karma and reincarnation in any books of our sacred literature is a glaring oversight. The *Prasthāna Traya*, *Darśanas*, their *Bhāṣyas* and *Purāṇas* do contain innumerable references and even logical statements of the *raison d'être* of the said doctrines. The first stanza of the Sāṅkhya Kārikā refers to the threefold misery where *Ādhidaiivika*, is defined as suffering resulting from extrinsic supernatural influences of spirits such as *Yakṣas*, *Rākṣasas*, *Vinayaka* and *Graha*, (See *Vācaspati Mi ra's Tattvakaumudī*) and is not 'God-made' misery as stated by the present author on p. 7. *Videha-mukti* and *Krama-mukti* are not synonymous, as suggested on p. 8. To a *Jīvanmukta* or *Brahmajñānin* *Videha-mukti* automatically results instantaneously when the body yields to the change known as death; but *Krama-mukti* according to the Advaitin is the process by which the *Devatopāsaka* of the highest type is translated to *Brahmaloka* from whence fully illumined through the grace of *Brahma* he attains to *Mukti*. No authority is cited to support the assertion that Sāṅkhyas and Buddhists accept the doctrine of *Jīvanmukti* (p. 9). That all the Indian thinkers (p. 10) place *Mokṣa* as the highest

aspiration of the human soul is not an unexceptionable view in so far as the influential *Bhāṅgavata Śāstra* places *Bhakti* above *Mokṣa* and considers it as *Panchama-puruṣārtha*, and in so far as Buddhism with its *anīlmanvāda* stresses only the *Ārya Astāngika Mārga* leading to *Nirvāṇa* which is the dying out in the heart of *Rāga*, *Dosa* and *Moha* (not any post-mortem felicity accruing to the soul).

The fragmentary quotation (p. 12) *arthakari ca vidyā* found in *Hitopadesa* is claimed to be *Upaniṣad*. The present reviewer could not trace it to that source. Perhaps its lair is the *Mahābhārata*, *Udyogaparva*, (see Critical Edition P. 135). The whole stanza is अर्थार्थो नित्यमरोहिता च प्रिया च भार्या प्रियवादिनी च । वदथ पुत्रोऽर्थकरी च विया षड् जीवलोकेऽस्य सुखानि राजन् ॥ Difficulties are offered by the following statements for a proper evaluation of the view of the ancient sages. The acquisition of wealth is 'the primary purpose of life....all the other Puruṣārthas can only be achieved by the fulfilment of this primary purpose in life.' (p. 12). But on page 28 the author asserts that 'Dharma is the primary objective for man and Artha and Kāma are secondary.' Again *Vācāspari* is quoted which states that *Dharma* may be practised without wealth having recourse to *Japa*, *Tapa* and *Tirthayātrā* (p. 29). On page 12 we are told that the 'highest aspiration of the human soul should be to attain *Mokṣa*', 'that human life should be one continuous preparation for it and that the longing for *Mukti* should permeate man's whole being'. *Mokṣa* is *Panama-puruṣārtha* or 'the supreme goal'. p. 11. And yet Indian thinkers 'have laid equal emphasis upon the pure joys of life, in the pursuit of fine arts etc....' p. 11. From the above citations it would appear all the four ends are man's primary purpose or supreme goal, on the principle of equal emphasis. But each of the four cannot be primary to all. And not a word about *Adhikāra*—the pivotal principle of competence underlying the scheme is not mentioned in the whole treatise. The formula called *Saikalpa* 'is pronounced by every Hindu' (1) p. 5; 'the three Puruṣārthas should be pursued by every individual' (p. 31)—not according to *Adhikāra* comprising in *Arthittva*, *Sāmarthya* and *Aparyudastatva*!! That there is no sin in the acquisition of wealth, that Indian thought does not advocate asceticism or renunciation for all but the chosen few, that asceticism is not part of the normal good life, that efforts to increase a man's wealth is not in any way derogatory and that Indian thinkers always regarded the economic factor as an essential element (p. 12) are views which will be widely acclaimed for their optimistic note and the modern spirit they breathe. But the picture does not appear to be complete

without another side of it. The Indian seers excepting Buddhists have always thought of *Puruṣārtha* within the frame work of *Varnāśrama Dharma*, divorced of which the scheme loses its force and much of its significance. But many of the modern writers fight shy of presenting the true principles underlying *Varnāśrama* because of the invasion of that scheme by caste system and its consequent decay. No society can live without seers, protectors, providers and labourers either organized on vocational ground or on vocational-cum-hereditary basis as the terms *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *śūdra* imply. If *Mokṣa* and *Kāma* are the *Sādhya*, only those who seek these fruits, (that is to say a *Mumukṣu* and a *Kāmi*) alone have to care about them. Nowhere it is stated that every human being must seek *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. The scripture only tells that the natural proclivities to the enjoyment of pleasure should be regulated by rules of *Dharma*. With equal stress the seers also declare that *Mokṣa* is the goal only of *Mumukṣus* who have done with enjoyment or found its futility. Desire for enjoyment or longing for liberation is not produced by scriptural dicta. Indian people as a whole were never otherworldly, ascetic, or wealth-shunning assuming that getting wealth is a sin. Absolute renunciation is advised only for the *Mumukṣus* and not any 'chosen few.' But that amount of renunciation as well as self-denial in the form of *Tapas*, *Dikṣā* and *Vrata* is incumbent on almost all who engage themselves in fulfilling religious

and social duties and most men may have some share of it. If *Dharma* rests on obligation and not on assertion of rites some element of renunciation and asceticism must be present in all stages and stations of life and to a supreme degree in the *Brāhmaṇa*, the seer, who teaches the rest by example of moral perfection and spiritual illumination. Total renunciation of all wealth and pleasures is enjoined only on him when he matures into the last two stages of life so that he may inspire all the rest with *Tyāga*, *Vairāgya* and *Tapas* to the extent the circumstances of their life permit. *Apratigraha* or non-acceptance of property is laid down as a rule for the seer or *Brāhmaṇa* or the saint or *Yati* because wealth leads to power and corruption the very opposite of *Tapas* or tranquillity specifically set down as his duty. The *Dharma-śāstras* rigorously restrict possessions to the *Brāhmaṇa* because he is the keeper of the treasure of *Tapas* and *Vidyā* from which the well-being of all must follow. To overlook this fact and give an exclusive stress on the desirability of wealth and pleasure would be suppressing irksome truth and suggesting a type of hedonism though one may present it under the mantle of *Dharma*.

The above critical observations and other defects unnoticed here do not reduce the value of this publication as a general guide to the common reader for an understanding of the place and value of *Puruṣārthas*.

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS

SANKARA-RAMANUJA JAYANTI SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH MADRAS-4

The public celebration of Sri Sankara-Ramanuja Jayanti was held at the Math on Sunday, May 25, 1953. Sri K. Balasubrahmanya Iyer, B.L., M.L.C. spoke on the two Acharayas, first in English and then in Tamil. A summary of his speech is given here.

It is, indeed, a very good idea that the Ramakrishna Math celebrates the birthday of the two great Achāryas of South India. Though these two were the establishers of two different schools of thought and philosophy in our country, still their work and achievements are part of the common cultural heritage of our people at the present day.

According to the generally accepted view, Sankara lived at the end of the 8th century and Ramanuja at the beginning of the 11th century.

The great Sankara was born at a time when the whole country was split up into various cults and sects and on account of the decline of Buddhism, and the absence of one uniform religion, many superstitious practices had clustered round the worship of the sects, some of them even quite opposed to our moral notions. It was at such a time that Sankara dedicated himself entirely to the great work of the unification of our people under a common philosophic system and for the unification of the six systems of worship prevalent in our country from immemorial times and the re-establishment of enlightened and pure methods of worship in our country. That is why Sankara is referred to as the षमत्स्थापनाचार्य. The system of philosophy which he expounded is well-known as the Advaita system. The term Advaita does not mean Na-Dvaita. That is non-duality. But it really means न द्वैतं यत्र : The one reality where there is no duality. Buddha is often referred to

as Advaya-vādi (vide the *Amarakoṣa*). This means that he is the expounder of the negation of the two entities: Brahman and Prapancha; God and the world. The Buddhists, especially the Mādhyamika School of Philosophy negate the existence of both God and the world of matter. The materialist denies God and accepts the truth of matter alone. He even holds that consciousness is the product of the combination of the elements of matter. There are other schools of philosophy, such as the Vaiṣṇavite, Sāivite and the Mādhyasystems which accept the truth and reality both of God and the world of matter. The Advaita system expounded by Sri Sankarācharya denies the absolute truth of matter and affirms the existence of the one Reality in which the world of matter is an appearance and God, Brahman, forms the substratum of this appearance. Sankara accepts the existence of different degrees of reality and describes the three kinds of realities as Prātibhāṣika, Vyāvahārika and Paramārthika. The appearance for example of snake in the rope seen in darkness is also a reality at the time when it so appears. The world of matter is also a reality so long as humanity has not realised the absolute truth. The Advaitin holds that when the human soul completely realises the oneness of the ultimate reality, the variegated phenomenal world ceases to exist for him. Quite contrary to the opinions of the Buddhists who hold that whatever appears is not a reality, Sankara attributes some kind of reality even to the appearance of snake in the rope. It is not, therefore, correct to speak of Sankara as some of the later philosophers do as a crypto-Buddhist (Prachinanna Bauddha). While Sankara was a philosopher and an idealist he was at the same time a practical reformer and an organiser of a uniform system of religion. He had many rare qualities which are not usually co-existent in anybody. While he was an intellectual and a logician, as a devotional worshipper he shines pre-eminent as the author of Hymns and Stotras of the well-known forms of the Lord. In these Stotras you find him an ardent, devout worshipper of noble emotions and lofty sentiments. His great devotion to his mother was indeed very remarkable. He even withstood public opinion in the matter of the cremation of her body. He promised her that he would be present at her last moments and came all the way from Kashmir. By his intellectual and spiritual powers, he invoked the presence of Lord Krishna before her to bless her. This

thrilling incident reads like a romance and shows what a devoted son he was to his mother, though he took Sannyāsa at the tender age of 5. His life was one of utter self-abnegation. He led a hurricane campaign throughout the length and breadth of India and by force of his intellectual powers and irresistible logic he conquered all opposition and established among millions of of his countrymen the great system of Advaita thought. He preached tolerance and sympathy and established that all forms of worship lead to the realisation of the one God who appears in many forms to his devotees.

The great Acharya Sri Ramanuja was born under the same auspicious Nakṣatra as that of Sri Sankarācharya, but after 300 years. Though he preached the great system known as Viśiṣṭādvaita, it should be remembered that both Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita are only schools belonging to the Vedānta darśana. Both the systems have certain common elements. The term Viśiṣṭādvaita has been interpreted as the unity of the one God who has within him as parts of Himself, the whole Universe and human souls. In fact, God, Soul and Matter form one organic whole though they may differ and are considered different. This organic unity they call *Sarira-Sāriri-bhava*. Just as the soul and the body though separate, form one organic whole, similarly, the Puruṣa, God, soul and matter form one integral whole. The universe is regarded as the Sārira of God. Ramanuja was influenced very largely by the hymns of the Great Tamil Saints known as Ālvārs and the system of worship obtaining in the temples of Srirangam and Kanchipuram. In fact he established the forms of temple worship that were in vogue in the Tamil country. The temple worship very largely influenced the Vaiṣṇavite system. Unlike Sankara whose earthly existence was only 32 years, Sri Ramanuja was blessed with a long life full of brilliant achievements. He shed the light of spirituality on millions of his countrymen. He emphasised Bhakti as the only way to salvation and stressed the need of prapatti or surrender to the Lord and denied the Nirviśeṣa Brahman of the Advaitin. The followers of his system exist in all parts of India, though his activities were confined to South India alone.

We, of the modern age, are fortunate in being the inheritors of the messages of these two great Achāryas of the South and the Ramakrishna Math did well in celebrating together their birthday.

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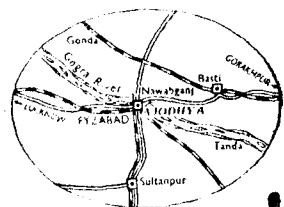
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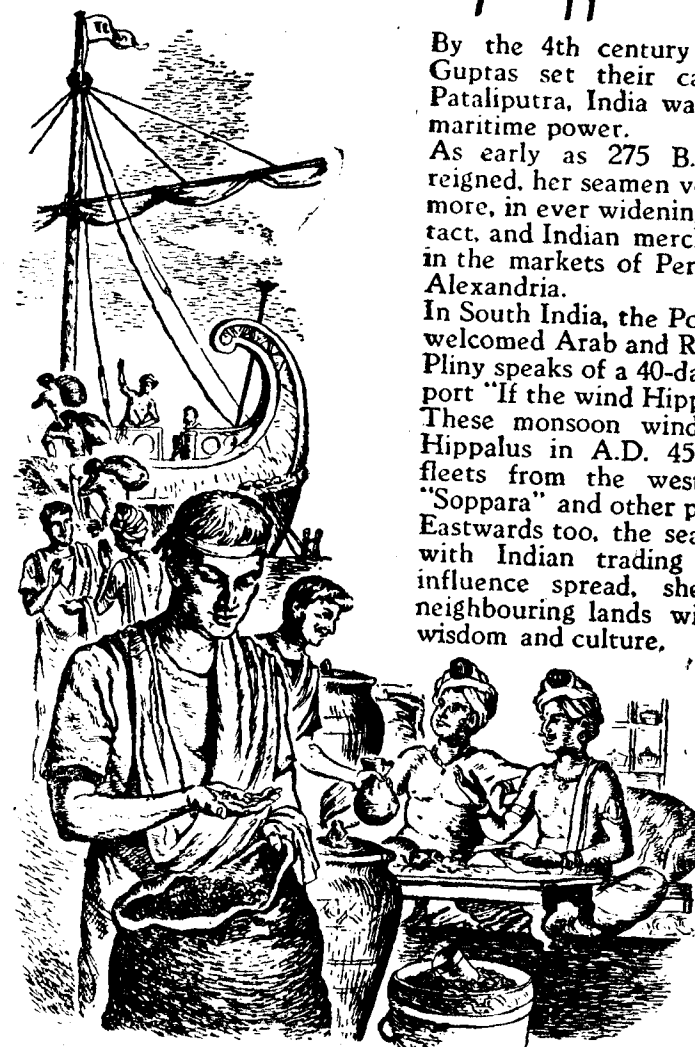
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The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.*

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VOL. XL

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Even the injunctions of Destiny are cancelled if one takes refuge in God. Destiny strikes off with her own hands what she had written about such a person. What does a man become by realizing God? Does he get two horns? No. What happens is, he develops discrimination between the real and the unreal, gets spiritual consciousness and goes beyond life and death. God is realised in spirit. How else can one see God? Has God talked to anybody devoid of ecstatic fervour? One sees God in spiritual vision, talks to Him, and establishes relationship with Him in spirit.

Through spiritual disciplines the ties of past karma are cut asunder. But the realization of God cannot be achieved without ecstatic love (Premā-bhakti) for Him. Do you know the significance of japa and other spiritual practices? By these, the power of sense-organs is subdued.

Did the cowherd boys of Brndavan get Sri Kṛṣṇa as their own through japa and meditation? They realised Him through ecstatic love. They used to say to Him, as to an intimate friend, 'Come here, O Krishna! Eat this. Take this!'

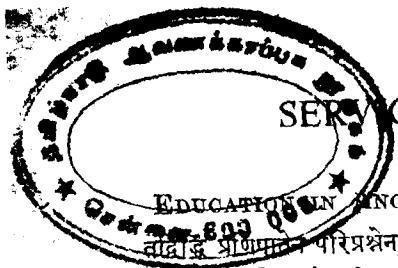
One's love of God depends entirely upon one's inner feelings. Love of God is the essential thing.

The grace of God is the thing that is needful. One should pray for the grace of God.

One must pray sitting on the bank of the river. He will be taken across in proper time.

Must you not sit with the fishing rod in your hand, if you want to catch the fish?

God is one's very 'own.' It is the eternal relationship. He is everyone's own. **One realises Him in proportion to the intensity of one's feeling for Him.**



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Know that, by prostrating thyself, by questioning and by service; the wise, those who have realised the truth, will instruct thee in that knowledge. *Bhagavad-Gītā* IV. 34.

Commenting on the above sloka Sri Saṅkara says:

Know thou by what process it is obtained. Go to the teachers (Āchāryas) and humbly prostrate thyself before them. Ask them what is the cause of bondage (bandha) and what the means of deliverance; what is wisdom (vidyā), and what is nescience (avidyā). Do service to the Guru. Won over by this and other marks of respect, the teachers, who, knowing the truth as well as realizing it themselves, will impart to thee their wisdom.... By this the Lord means to say that that knowledge alone which is imparted by those who have realized the truth—and no other knowledge—can prove effective.

There alone the following statement will hold good:

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यत्मान्यथो मयि ॥

Knowing which thou shalt not again thus fall into error, O Pandava; and by which thou wilt see all beings in thyself and also in Me. *ib.* IV. 35.

We have here a succinct representation of the educational system of ancient India, its purpose and its method. The aim of education as hinted here was to apprehend That by knowing which everything else was known, by knowing which one did not fall into delusion but saw all beings in oneself and in God. For this knowledge the student had to go to the teacher and in all humility and sraddhā prostrate himself before him and make his supplication known. If the teacher was satisfied with the earnestness and attitude of the applicant he accepted the latter as his pupil, who while living away with the teacher in his retreat and engaging himself in his service, in due course came to acquire the knowledge he sought.

Contrast to modern-type education: In our modern method of education we have little provision for prostration and service—contrariwise, such horrifying and barbarizing practices like intimidating or even occasional beating of teachers for fanciful reasons are not unknown in this our beautiful India—and absolutely no room for realizing That by knowing which everything else is known. We now have an effective provision for knowing all things by knowing which the Ultimate is totally forgotten and anything but self-aggrandisement seems hardly a reasonable aspiration. Sri Ramakṛṣṇa made a revolutionary statement when he said that to know the many was ignorance and to know the One was knowledge. And here he was voicing the very soul of ancient Indian education.

Far removed as we are from our ancient moorings in our educational affairs today, it would not be totally unromantic to dwell for a while on the system of education that obtained in ancient India. In other words we shall be dwelling here on the Brahmachari-dharma, our main object being to spotlight the service-aspect of it.

Education viewed as wherewithal of life's journey: It is indeed unique that from the earliest times of their recorded history, Hindus should have conceived human life as a solemn journey through gradual self-unfoldment to consummate self-fulfilment attaining which nothing more remained to be desired in the world. Life was taken absolutely seriously and every stage of it was planned in such a way as might be conducive towards the attainment of the ultimate purpose. It is indeed significant that the Hindu's entire life, from beginning to end, from the *garbhā-dhūna* to *antyeṣṭi*, should have been spanned

ned by a chain of saṁskaras, or purificatory acts purported to develop the highest conceivable human personality, for the attainment of which one had to exert oneself (the word āsrama means a place for self-exertion) through four well-defined stages of life, the first of which was called Brahmachārya, meaning the period of studentship.

According to the later evidence of the *Gṛhya-sūtras* the three twice-born castes—Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas—were all required to undergo a period of studentship. It was practically a system of universal compulsory education for the Indo-Aryans. (This probably explains the grounds of the remarkable boast of king As'vapati Kaikeya in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (V. 11. 5): 'In my kingdom there is no ignorant person.')

Teacher-centred education: The most characteristic feature of ancient Indian education was that it was teacher-centred—(who in his turn was Atman-centred)—and not institution-centred, as we find it today, and that it was non-contractual. Education then was entirely dominated by the personality of the teacher. Students had to go away from their parents' house and live with the teacher for a considerable number of years absolutely under his care, discipline and tuition. During the period of studentship parents had very little to do with their children. Education was not an affair of mere reading and writing. If we may say so, it was a question of awakening, igniting and setting ablaze the inner man. It was imbibing something from the very being of the teacher—something which one cannot define but which refines everything—through a gradual process of being near and serving him. This was why self-teaching was never encouraged. Such knowledge as was acquired without the help of the teacher was not considered valid.

One, therefore, had to approach the teacher. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II. 8) says, 'Unless it is taught by another (the teacher) there is no other way to it.' *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I. 2. 12) has it, 'Let him in order to understand this, take fuel in his hand and approach a preceptor who is learned and is thoroughly established in Brahman.' In the same Upaniṣad (III. 2. 3.) we again find, 'Not by self-study is the Atman realized, not by mental power; nor by amassing much information.' *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. 14. 1-2) drives home the contention with a vivid imagery, 'Just as, my dear, some one, having brought away a person, from the Gāndhāra, with his eyes covered, might leave him in a place where there are no human beings; and as that person would shout towards the east or the north, or the south or the west, I have been brought here with my eyes covered, and left with my eyes covered. And as thereupon someone might loosen his bandage and tell him,—Gāndhāra is in this direction, go this way—, whereupon asking his way from village to village, and becoming informed and capable of judging for himself, he would arrive at Gāndhāra. In the same manner, one who has a teacher, knows; and for him the delay is only so long as he is not liberated; and then he will reach perfection.'

Qualifications of the teacher: Such being the position of the teacher in the educational scheme of ancient India, from the points of scholarship and personal character the teacher had to be a man of supreme excellence. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I. 2. 8) says that truth is not grasped when taught by an inferior man. So the teacher had to be pure, sinless, *s'rotriya* (well-versed in sacred lore) and *Brahmanistha* (dwelling entirely in Brahman). It was his duty to teach the student the entire truth as he knew it without keeping anything back. Of course it was the teacher who was the sole judge how best and through what stages, he was to instruct his pupil. If he considered someone unfit to receive

1. Vide: Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji's article captioned, 'Ancient Hindu Education' in *Sir Asutosh Mukherjee Silver Jubilee Volumes* Vol. III, P. 233, Calcutta University, 1922.

certain higher knowledge he might discriminate not to impart it to him. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtras* (I. 4. 14. 2-3) clearly says that, 'the teacher whom a student asks for instruction should not refuse him, if he finds no defect in the student.' It (I. 2. 8. 25-28) further stresses that, 'the teacher anxious for the welfare of the student as if he were his son, should attentively impart learning to the student without hiding anything from him in all matters of duty; nor should the teacher restrain the student for his own work in such a way as to cause obstacles to his studies except in seasons of distress. A teacher becomes no teacher if he avoids giving instruction.'

Students' approach to the teacher: Very early in childhood students went to live with the Āchārya at his house. Certain formalities were observed when they approached the Āchārya for being accepted as his pupil. *Mundaka Upaniṣad* (I. 2. 13) refers to such formality:

For the sake of knowledge let him go, fuel in hand, to a spiritual teacher (Guru) who is learned in scriptures and established in Brahman.

Before accepting an applicant as a student the teacher made necessary enquiries and tested his earnestness and fitness but no stipulation or agreement as to fees was made.

Who was fit to be taught: The smṛtis lay down rules about the qualifications of a student who deserves to be taught. In the *Vidyā-sūkta* quoted in the *Nirukta* (II. 4) we see that the teacher was not to impart vidyā (knowledge) to one who was jealous (or who treated vidyā with contempt), was crooked and was not self-restrained and that learning was to be imparted to one who was pure, attentive, intelligent and endowed with Brahmacharya (celibacy), who would never prove false (to his teacher) and who would regard what he learnt as a treasure. Manu (II. 109 and 112 also) says that ten persons

deserve to be taught viz. the son of the teacher, a student who serves his guru, one who gives some knowledge in exchange, one who knows dharma or who is pure (in body and mind), who is truthful, who is able to study and retain it, who gives money (for teaching) who is well-disposed, and who is one's near relative. Yāñavalkya I. 28 mentions all these and adds that the student must be grateful, not inclined to hate or prove false to the teacher, healthy and not disposed to find fault. The student should always be dependent on and under the control of the teacher (as Ap. Dh. S. I. 1. 2. 19 and Narada say) and should stay with no one but the teacher.²

Normally speaking the regular period of Brahmacharya began only with the saṁskāra known as *Upanayana*³ which etymologically meant 'taking near the teacher' in which the Āchārya imparted the Vedic Gayatrī mantra to the student.

Ceremonies that were observed: *Ās'valāyana-grhya-sūtras* (I. 19. 1-6) says that the Brāhmaṇa boy should undergo Upanayana in the 8th year, the kṣatriya in the 11th, and the Vaisya in the 12th year, and that up to the 16th, 22nd and 24th year respectively it cannot be said that the time for Upanayana has passed. As no one could become *bona fide* Brahmacharin without upanayana, and as the age limits were granted to all the three varṇas, it seems reasonable to conclude that generally speaking a Brāhmaṇa boy could go to live with his teacher any time between 8 and 16, a kṣatriya between 11 and 22 and a Vaisya between 12 and 24. The precocious boys, however, could be taken in even before the normal minimum age, at 5, 6 and 8 respectively.

As is but normal, there is difference of views among different law-givers as to the age-locations of Brahmacharya. We also

find references in the Upaniṣads of people of advanced age going to the Āchārya for instruction. In the *Chāndogya* we find Gautama and his son S'vetaketu Āruneya both going to King Pravāhaṇa Jaivali for formal instruction. In the same Upaniṣad (VII. 1) Nārada approaches Sanatkumāra after completing the period of ordinary studentship during which time he had studied a variety of subjects. Elsewhere (VIII. 7-11) Indra is found growing old in the house of the preceptor. In the *Mundaka* (I. 1. 3) S'aunaka who is described as a great householder (महाशाल) approaches Aṅgiras for instruction. These examples, however, indicate only the exceptions to the rule. Generally speaking the age regulations as indicated above were observed.

On the fourth day of the Upanayana, was performed another rite called *Medhā-jaṇana*.⁴ It was believed that through the performance of this rite the Brahmacharin's intellect attained the power of grasping and retaining the Vedas.

With the rites of Upanayana and Medahajanana performed the pupil became *bona fide* Brahmacharin, who had to observe certain special rules of conduct and living. The Brahmacharin was also called the *Āchārya-kula-vāsin* (lit. one who dwells in the house of the teacher) and *Antevāsin* (lit. one who dwells near the teacher.) The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI. 3. 3. 2) says, 'he who takes Brahmacharya, indeed takes upon himself a sacrificial session of long duration.'

Usually the period of studentship would be twelve years, though studentship of longer or shorter duration was not unknown. *Chāndogya* (VIII. 11. 3) speaks of Indra's studentship of 101 years. In the

same Upaniṣad (II. 23. 1) we have reference of Brahmacharya for life.

To mark the termination of his formal studentship the Brahmacharin now paid according to his mite a remuneration to the teacher in cash or kind, took a ceremonial bath after which he came to be called a *Snātaka* and with the blessings of the teacher returned home. *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* (I. 11) contains a beautiful and typical parting message to the Snātaka by the teacher, who gives in broad lines the code of conduct he should henceforth follow in his life.

The students who intended to return home and become a house-holder after the termination of the normal course of Brahmacharya were called *Upakurvānas* and those who intended to remain life-long students and live with the Āchārya were called *Naiṣṭhika* Brahmacharins.

General duties of the Brahmacharin: The duties of the Brahmacharin were: begging for the teacher, getting fuel from the forest and keeping the sacred fire in the teacher's house, attending to all other necessary house-hold work in the teacher's house including keeping his cows, accompanying and waiting upon the teacher on festive occasions,—after doing all these,—attending to his studies. The Brahmachari grew long matted hair or kept a clean shaven head. He had to eschew all forms of luxury, sleep on the ground (sleeping at day time was strictly prohibited), cultivate sobriety of behaviour and seriousness of disposition, scrupulously shun company of women, maintain absolute continence and observe all those yogic disciplines which were indispensable for bringing about purity of stuff (*satta-*

2. Vide: *History of Dharma Sastras*, Vol. II, part I, 1941, P. 330-331.

3. The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI. 5. 4.) describes the spiritual significance of *Upanayana* in the following terms: 'The teacher lays his right hand on the head of the pupil whereby he becomes pregnant with him तेन गर्भो भवति and then in the third night the embryo issues out of the teacher and being taught the *Sāvitrī* obtains true Brahmanhood.' He is like a divine creature born from his teacher's mouth. (XI. 5. 4 17).

4. *As'valāyana-grhya-sūtra* (I. 22. 18-19) describes the ceremony as follows: The teacher makes the student sprinkle water in an unobjectionable direction thrice from the left to the right with a pot of water round about a palasa tree that has one root, or round a bunch of kusa grass if there is no palasa, and makes him repeat the mantra: "O glorious one, thou art glorious. As thou glorious one, art glorious, thou glorious one make us full of glory. As thou art the preserver of the treasure of sacrifice for the gods, thus may I become the preserver of the treasure of Veda among men." Quoted by P. V. Kane in his H. D. S. Vol. II, Part I, Pp. 306

s'uddhi). Before he could be imparted the superior knowledge, the Brahmacharin had to prove that he was calm and unperturbed in mind (ज्ञान्त), self-restrained (दान्त), self-denying (उपरत), patient (तितिक्षु), and collected (समाहित). Those who are aware of the inner significance of these terms will appreciate how much strenuous and sustained efforts were necessary for making these qualities the very fabrics of one's character.

Special emphasis on the necessity of service: Of all duties mentioned above in a general manner, the law-givers laid special stress on *Guru-s'usruṣā*, service unto the Guru. The Guru was the preceptor and also the exemplar. Setting an example for unreserved emulation before the taught was considered to be one of the most important functions of education. Knowledge was not a commodity for barter as we seem to have reduced it to in these days, but a fire to be transmitted. The eager Brahmacharin was to remain engaged in ever-wakeful service of the preceptor in order to imperceptively receive that transmission from the teacher. Until and unless ego, conceit and self-will in the pupil were annihilated, higher knowledge could not effectively flow in. To this end service was the most effective and unchallenged means. To take an example: one of the most important items of the Brahmacharin's duties was begging for the teacher. It was also enjoined as a duty upon householders to give alms to Brahmacharins. It is to be noted that only a Brahmacharin had the sanction of begging and not the Snātaka, for whom it was by law prohibited. However high might be the parentage of the Brahmacharin, it was compulsory for him to beg as a religious duty, by failing to do which while not physically incapable, he was to undergo rigorous penances.

Now, one could not possibly beg without

learning to be humble. Then all the other various pieces of menial work he had to do day in and out was sure to knock off whatever conceit or false sense of prestige or peculiar conceptions of indignity of certain types of labour (against which our leaders are nowadays fighting a strenuous fight) he might be harbouring. Most of the duties of the Brahmacharin were thus intended to form him up into an ideal shape, a fit receptacle for the highest knowledge. It was in this period of life again the mind of the growing man was to be given such a direction that on his journey through every stage of life, engaged in the pursuit of whatever values, he would gradually advance towards the ultimate end of life which is the realization of the Self. When we remember this fore-ground clearly, we shall understand well the import of the following injunctions upon the Brahmacharins listed from the *Mahābhārata*:

While living in the preceptor's house, he (the Brahmacharin) should seek his bed after the preceptor has gone to bed and rise therefrom before the preceptor rises from his. He should do all such acts again which a disciple as also a menial servant should do. Doing this he should humbly stand by his preceptor. Skilled in every kind of work, he should act like a menial servant, doing every act for his preceptor. *Sānti-parva, CXLII. 17-18*

Having performed all acts he should study sitting at the feet of the preceptor, with anxious desire to learn. He should always behave with simplicity, avoid evil speech and take lesson only when his preceptor asks him for it. *ib. 19.*

He should never eat before the preceptor has eaten, never drink before the preceptor has drunk; never sit down before the preceptor has sat down ... *ib. 21.*

He should gently touch his preceptor's feet with palms, the right foot with right hand and the left foot with the left. *ib. 22.*

Reverentially saluting the preceptor, he should say to him, 'O illustrious one, please teach me! I shall do this O illustrious one! This I have already done, O twice-born

one. I am ready to do whatever else your revered self may be pleased to command. Having said all this and having duly offered himself thus he should perform whatever acts of his preceptor wait for doing and having completed them inform the preceptor once more that they have been done. *ib. 22-24.*

Whatever observances have been laid down in full for Brahmachārins should all be regularly practised by him. He should be always at the beck and call of the preceptor. *ib. 26.*

For showing what other types of service the Brahmacharin was expected to render to the teacher, it is convenient for us to quote Sri. P. V. Kane⁵ who has listed them from various Dharma-sāstras:

Gautama and Baudhyāna dharma-s'āstras (I. 2. 34 and 37) say that the student is to serve his teacher by following after him when he goes anywhere, he should help the teacher in his toilet and bath and should shampoo his body and take food left by him (*ucchiṣṭha*); he should be diligent in doing work that would be pleasing and beneficial to the teacher; he was to study when the teacher called him, he was not to cover his throat with a piece of cloth, or was not to sit in the presence of his teacher with his feet on his lap, was not to stretch his feet, he was not to clear loudly his throat, nor to laugh, yawn or crack the knuckles; he was when called by the teacher to reply at once leaving his seat or bed and was to approach the teacher even when he called from a distance; he should always occupy a seat lower than that of his teacher and should go to sleep after his teacher and rise before him (*Gautama* II. 20-21, 30-32). *Manu* II. 194-198 and *Āpastamba-dharma-sūtras* I. 2. 5, 26 and I. 2. 6. 1-12 contain similar rules. *Manu* (II. 199) says that a pupil should not mimic the gait, manner of speech and the actions of the teacher. *Manu* (II. 200-201) calls upon the pupil to close his ears (with his hands or fingers) or to leave the place where somebody indulges in calumnies about the teacher or points out the faults in him, and states that if the pupil himself finds faults with his teacher or calumniates him, the pupil 'in the next life' is born as an ass or a dog. *Viṣṇu-dharma-sūtras* 28. 26 says the same.

Āp. Dh. S. (I. 2. 7. 27) prescribes that the student shall behave towards his teacher's

wife as towards the teacher himself, but shall not clasp her feet or eat the residue of her food. *Gautama* (II. 31-32) also says the same thing and adds that the student shall not assist the wives of teachers at their toilet or bath nor wash their feet nor shampoo them.

Āp. Dh. S. I. 2. 7. 30. *Vas'istha-dharma-sūtra* XIII. 54, *Viṣṇu* Dh. S. 28. 31, *Manu* II. 207 require that the students will behave towards the teacher's son as towards the teacher...*Manu* (II. 208) gives a restrictive rule that the son of the teacher deserves the same honour as the teacher, if he imparts instruction in place of the teacher (because the latter is otherwise engaged), whether the son be younger or of the same age as the student, but that the student in any case must not shampoo the limbs of the son nor assist him in his bath nor wash his feet nor eat the leavings of his food.

ANCIENT IDEALS IN MODERN Milieu

From even a casual estimation of the duties listed above it will be clear what a supreme importance was attached on the necessity of students' service to the teacher in the educational system of ancient India. The attitude of service which was instilled in the Brahmacharin during the most impressionable period of his life naturally became in him a second nature which found new broadening and application in wider fields as he entered the next Āsrama of life, viz. *gārhasthya*. Only welfare could flow from him to society in which he was going to enter and that solely as a result of the training he received during the time of Brahmachārya.

Today when the professions of both teaching and learning seem to be fast becoming sorts of trade-unionism ranged against each other, we seem to be in a quandary which is really alarming. We acknowledge that teachers cannot starve and teach ideally. We also know that the student's cannot offer their heart's homage to the teacher who patterns his tuition according to his pay-scale. Nobody need have any doubt regarding the

⁵ Vide: H. D. S. Vol. II. Part I. Pp. 332-333.

fact that we have most effectively lost that centre of gravity in education which obtained in ancient India. Now, when money is not the centre of gravity, it is probably some whim or fancy in some dignified attire that dominate education. Few educationist seem even to have an awareness of the fact that education ultimately remains a raw nomad until and unless it consciously seeks its centre of gravity in That in which the universe is rooted.

If it is a fact that we get what we only deserve, then it should be open to us to deserve better by being better. On the issue in hand the only way of being better is to serve better in a bilateral way. In the new *milieu* when the students have

not to beg for the teachers or tend their cattle, they can at least cultivate genuine regard for their teachers. But spontaneous flow of regard can come only as a reciprocating fervour for the genuine concern of the teacher for his pupil. The amount of *sraddhā* one puts forth in his life comes back full circle to one. The education which has not *sraddha-cum-seva* as its soul is clearly demoniac. The calamities which we have been reaping in this world in various forms are largely the products of such education. The challenge of our times is, therefore, to find the *new means* for the new adoption of service in the new scheme of education in our new *milieu*. To fail to do it is to have a staggering world worse-confounded. (XXXI)

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF BHAGAVAN SRI KRISHNA

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

In the Gita there are some passages which are directly addressed to the Jiva in the second person singular number of the imperative mood, as Vidhi. Ten of these collected passages may be considered as the ten commandments of Sri Kṛṣṇa. The last passage, though not in the imperative mood, forms a fitting conclusion and the first one, though the word of Arjuna, is necessary as a fit opening of this decalogue. For, all commandments become effective only when the listener has a teachable attitude.

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्

O Krishna I am at thy command. I have surrendered myself at thy feet. Teach me and mould me.

When the above attitude becomes genuine and firm in us, we shall distinctly hear the following 'ten commandments' addressed to us directly and individually.

1. निबोध मे (*Learn fully from Me.*)

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहाहं

In this life you should work after acquiring a proper knowledge of the commands and rules of the Scriptures, through which I speak.

We are told here that we should try to seek guidance directly from God through our purified minds and till we attain to that state we should seek it from the scriptures which represent God's perpetual revelation.

2. न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि—मा शुचः

On no account you should grieve over anything whatsoever. No, you must not lament.

This is the second commandment of Bhagavan enjoining on us to be cheerful and to be equal to all situations. How are we to acquire that strength? The answer is in the third commandment.

3. यत्मानं प्रजहि

Strive always to remove sin and evil.

But we have no strength for it. What shall we do? The next commandment shows a way.

4. छुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ

Shake off this mean spirit and arise.

The Lord is all-powerful. He is सत्यसङ्कल्पः. He has commanded us to shed all weakness and to exert manfully. Do we listen to His words? If we do, then certainly we shall have the strength to overcome sin and evil. Still we may say we have no method to shake off this हृदयदौर्बल्य. Answer to this is in the fifth commandment.

5. योगाय युज्यस्व—मामिच्छासु

Resolve yourself to practise yoga. Yearn to get Me.

The Lord has commanded us to arise, and we shall arise. But we have to practise the method of union; and the root of this practice is to hunger and thirst after Him as He Himself has taught it. But usually we have not even the desire to seek Him. What shall we do?

6. अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम्

This life and world of yours is not eternal and is joyless. So the way open to you here is to resort to Me.

The desire to realize God can come only when we are convinced that our life and its environments are impermanent and infested with misery. When we start to cultivate *bhajan* we will be becoming more

and more aware of these defects of mundane existence. Then, of course, we should know what real *bhajan* is. The seventh commandment instructs about real devotion.

7. बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि—मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य—
सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय

You must understand that all beings have their cause and seed in Me. You must endeavour to see all this as My रूप, form. You must fix once for all in mind that all creatures have their residence in Me.

Here the Lord has commanded us to despise nothing, as the Lord is the seed of everything. We are ordered to see in our relatives, neighbours and all living beings and in the whole of nature the underlying beauty of God, and to adopt an attitude of love and service in and through God. Here we may misunderstand *bhajan* merely as loving contemplation. So we have the eighth commandment which states that Love is not idle.

8. नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वम्—कार्यं कर्म समाचर—सुक्त-
सङ्गः समाचर—कुरुष्व मदर्पणं—निमित्तमात्रं भव

You must do the allotted work always. You must correctly, thoroughly and joyfully do the appointed duty. Do it without narrow selfish attachments. Do it as My work dedicating it to Me. Consider yourself a mere occasion (निमित्त) of your work.

These commands will apply to anyone in any position and one may find it hard for practice. But a clue for its easy accomplishment is given in the next commandment.

9. बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव—मय्येव मन
आधत्स्व, मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय

Take for your support बुद्धियोग and always give your mind to Me. Bring back and place the running thoughts in Me and push your thinking faculty into My focus.

This may be taken almost as the final commandment. योग, नित्यानित्यविवेक, समदर्शन

and कर्मयोग can bear fruit only when we constantly endeavour to remain with God. Hence we get this stress on placing बुद्धि and mind always in God, with repeated endeavour whenever it strays away. After scanning these commandments it is natural that the jiva still feels diffident. The Lord who is in the innermost heart of all detects this and gives the greatest and the last commandment.

10. प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे

I promise, you are dear to Me.

We have no loss greater than losing faith in this commandment. Let us feel

at every moment that we are dear and precious to the Lord however unclean we may be. When this faith is strong, when we have the sincere conviction that the Lord in His infinite mercy and affection is ever watching us, seeking only for a moment when we whole-heartedly turn towards Him, with the earnest longing that He should receive us and hug us to His bosom, then—at that very moment—we are on the path to liberation and blessedness.

May these commandments make an appeal directly to us and render us strong, illumined and peaceful.

SRI KRISHNA IN INDIAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE

By S. R. RANGANATHAN

SRI KRISHNA is an inexhaustible theme. There is no end to the number of facets which Krishna-tradition presents. I propose to invite your attention to the pre-potent place which Sri Krishna occupies in our thought and culture. I shall next mention a problem which needs investigation and I shall lastly refer to some immediate lessons which we can draw—which we should draw—from what we know of Sri Krishna, for our own benefit.

SRI KRISHNA AND SRI RĀMA

I don't think that, in the thought and culture of any community in the world, one or two figures dominate in the way in which Sri Krishna and Sri Rama do in the thought and culture of the Indian community. Imagine what a large number of us bear the name Krishna or Rama or

any of its variant forms. It is difficult to find an Indian family where at least one of the children is not named after Krishna or Rama or after their consorts. One of my friends was so moved by the frequency of the name Krishna that he began to look for this name even outside the Indian community. He maintained the thesis that Christ was a variant of Krishna. Jesus was a variant of Kesava and Devar was a variant of Dwārakā and so on. Without going into the linguistic soundness of his thesis, I only wish to mention his attempts to prove the great intensity to which Krishna-idea has grown in the Indian community.

Utterance of the Name: It is a fact, is it not, that the word 'Krishna' is uttered almost involuntarily by most of us on so many occasions in our daily life. When

you get up in the morning, I am sure many of you begin with the word 'Krishna.' When you begin your meal, I dare say the same thing happens. When you sit down, you often say 'Krishna.' This is quite apart from our rituals prescribing the utterance of Krishna in so many situations. Whatever good act you do you dedicate it to Krishna.

A Moot Point: It is a moot point whether 'Krishna' is uttered more often than 'Rama' or the other way about. It is also difficult to decide whether the biography of Rama is read more widely than the biography of Krishna—the *Rāmāyana* more than the *Bhāgavata*—or the other way about. Indeed it is difficult to decide whether Sri Krishna occupies a more dominant place than Sri Rama or whether it is the other way about in our own culture and thought.

Oneness of Sri Krishna and Sri Rama: This question may look irrelevant to theists who believe that both Sri Krishna and Sri Rama were the *Avatārs* (Manifestations) of God Himself; and yet the fight goes on endlessly on this point. A most amusing account of this fight is to be found in an appendix to the *Mahā-Bhārata* called *Jaimini Bhārata*. It is an interesting episode which is described there.

AN AMUSING STORY

Hanuman—Rama's Devotee: Hanuman, the great devotee and the well-known messenger of Rama, is said to have been left behind in this world after Sri Rama and his brothers. He had become very old. He chose to go and lie down at the site of one of Rama's great achievements. The place he chose was the bridge built for Rama from the main land of India to Ceylon—the Setu—as we call it. He was lying across the sea-sand in front of the Setu.

Arjuna—Krishna's Devotee: The sea at the Setu is a sacred place to which Indians have been going on pilgrimage. Arjuna is said to have gone to Setu on pilgrimage.

When he found Hanuman lying across the sands, Arjuna asked for way. Hanuman who was absorbed in the thought of Sri Rama, casually asked Arjuna to lift one of his limbs aside and make way for himself. But valiant Arjuna was amazed that he could not lift any of Hanuman's limbs. He asked Hanuman how it was. Hanuman said that it was all due to the supreme Lord of the world of whom he was a devotee. When further enquiry elicited from Hanuman that Sri Rama was the supreme Lord of the world, Arjuna felt enraged that anybody in the world should put any other figure above his own supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

A Gentleman's Agreement: A fierce controversy arose. I need not go into all the details. They decided to settle the issues by a feat of strength. Arjuna, a more devotee of Sri Krishna, could build a bridge of arrows stronger than the bridge built by Sri Rama. If Hanuman could break it, Sri Rama would be taken to be the supreme God. If Hanuman failed Sri Krishna would be the Supreme God. It was further agreed that whoever failed should leap into fire. This was a gentleman's agreement between Hanuman and Arjuna. There was no other witness in that desolate place. As the one or the other had necessarily to fall into fire, they jointly started the fire.

The Test: Then the test began. Arjuna built the bridge of arrows. Hanuman jumped over the bridge with an indifference born out of arrogance. But however much he shook the bridge, he could not cause any damage to it. Hanuman accepted defeat and went to fall into the fire. But Arjuna held him back. 'This is only a trial,' he said. 'The real test will begin now; attempt again.' After a good deal of persuasion Hanuman agreed and in all humility turned all his thought on Sri Rama. When in that mood of surrender he put his foot on the bridge, it collapsed instantaneously. Then Arjuna rushed to fall into the fire. But Hanuman held him back. 'We shall decide by the best of three attempts', he said. 'Build the bridge again. Let us put it to test.' But Arjuna refused. The dispute between them prolonged for a long time. Each was trying to fall into the fire and each was preventing the other—too good to believe, is it not?

An Umpire: When they were in this predicament, an Old Man suddenly appeared. He said that he was attracted by the quarrel. He offered to settle the dispute. His judgement was very strange. 'The correct thing

to do is for both of you to fall into the fire. I want you to fall simultaneously from opposite sides. Since simultaneity may be missed if you look at each other, close your eyes firmly and, when you hear my signal, both of you fall into the fire.' So they did. They experienced a miracle. The fire did not burn them. Hanuman felt that Sri Rama was embracing him. Arjuna felt that Sri Krishna was embracing him. Both opened their eyes simultaneously and found that in reality they were embracing each other, that the fire had gone and that the Old Man had disappeared. I am sure you know who that Umpire was. I am equally sure you know the moral.

THE PRIVILEGE OF THE DAY

It is improper and useless to spend any time in finding out whether Sri Krishna or Sri Rama occupies a more dominant place in our thought and culture. There is wisdom in assuming that they are equal in their dominance. They are equal in their dominance in our own folk practice. We therefore celebrate the birthday of Sri Krishna as regularly and with as much zeal as we celebrate the birthday of Sri Rama. We combine them into a single word 'Ramakrishna.' Many persons in the Indian community bear the name Ramakrishna. The most illustrious of the persons bearing the name is Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa whose portrait inspires the members of this Hall. And yet there is such a thing as 'the privilege of the day.' Today it is perhaps permissible to say that Sri Krishna occupies the most dominant place in our culture and thought. We may compensate for this by exercising a similar privilege on the birthday of Sri Rama when it comes in April.

We shall assume for the present that Sri Krishna occupies a unique position in Indian thought and culture which has no parallel in the thought and culture of any other community.

PROBLEM FOR INVESTIGATION

I next turn to the problem which I said needs investigation. Is Sri Krishna a historical personage or merely a poetic creation? A similar question applies also to Sri Rama. It is a matter of faith among most of the people of the Indian community that they were historic personages who lived and walked on the soil of this country like all other human beings—except that they were direct manifestations of God Himself. On the other hand there are those who assert that they were only creations of poets of extra-ordinary potency. Neither mere faith nor mere assertion can be taken to be conclusive evidence.

Modern Examples: We have plenty of examples in which one and the same person had actually existed as an ordinary mortal and had at the same time been immortalised by literature. Historical plays of Shakespeare come to our mind immediately. Because Henry VIII and Henry IV are made by Shakespeare heroes of his plays, we do not doubt their historicity. There are archives to prove that they actually existed. There are even materials associated with Henry VIII which are still preserved. When I was in the Lambeth Palace, the official residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, they showed me the gowns used by the successive archbishops while coronating the successive monarchs of England. One of these gowns is marked as having been used at the time of the coronation of Henry VIII. Coming to our own times, some of us remember the days when Queen Victoria was the monarch of Great Britain. I for one remember the announcement of her death. There can be no doubt that she was a historical personality and yet an author has made Queen Victoria the chief theme of one of his works.

I leave you to find out who that author is. I will quote another example. Many more of you have been contemporaries of King Edward VII. There is a delightful English novel depicting him. Here again, I leave you to find out the name of the novelist. Bernard Shaw has turned some of his plays on well-known historical figures. There are again the historical novels of Scott. If I remember right, one of his novels depicts the life of one who lived in India. I cite these examples just to emphasise that because a certain personage has been immortalised by a literary author, we cannot infer from it that he was not a historical personage.

Ancient Examples: I don't think that anybody questions the historicity of Mohammad though he is the central figure in the *Koran*. Similarly nobody questions the historicity of Christ though he is the central figure in the *Bible*. Nor does anybody question the historicity of Buddha though the Jataka Tales and Pali-texts have immortalised him.

A Special Problem: Apart from the negative indication that the fact that a person has been immortalised in a literary piece should not be taken as a proof that he was not a historical person; there is also a positive reason why we should not summarily set aside the historicity of Sri Krishna and Sri Rama. In regard to Sri Krishna—so also it is with Sri Rama—there are local traditions which appear to be inexorable. Mathurā and Brndāvan are still pointed out as the place where Sri Krishna was born, where he played and where he grew to manhood. Dwārakā is still remembered as the place where he ruled. There are similar vivid traditions connected with Sri Rama's movement through the continent of India. Can they be explained away by saying that, because the *Bhagavata* and the *Ramayana* mention these places, these places have

established themselves in the tradition current among the people as if Sri Krishna and Sri Rama actually lived in those places. This is not as simple as it seems.

Mixedness of Tradition: Widely prevalent traditions cannot be thrown overboard totally nor can they be accepted totally. The probability is that an old tradition has a factual core covered up with false encrustations. It is as irrational to disbelieve a tradition in its entirety as it would be to credulously believe it in its entirety. It is wrong to throw the baby away with bath water. Because tradition is a mixture of truth and fiction, we cannot discard it altogether. It is the business of scientific method to break the false encrustations away and preserve the core of truth. It may be difficult to achieve this. That would only mean that great effort is necessary. Perhaps a new technique will have to be forged. This is the problem that I commend to your care. Probably after you live your normal life of activity and enter into a well-earned period of retirement, some of you would care to investigate this with the help of all the maturity which you would then have. It may even be that one or two of you who profess to become historians might take it as part of your profession to investigate this problem. Scientific attitude requires it. Indeed this is a challenge to your scientific attitude.

Closeness of Fusion: It is true that fact and fiction are too closely fused in the biography of Sri Krishna. Indeed in many of such traditions, they are too closely fused to be readily separated out. But this kind of fusion of two different entities is not peculiar to tradition. This kind of fusion challenges even physicists. The fusion of two kinds of oxygen with atomic weights 16 and 17 had been baffling physicists and chemists for more

than a century. The unit for measuring atomic weights has been so chosen that the atomic weight of every element would be an integer. But in actual practice an integral atomic weight was never obtained in spite of millions of measurements. The indolent explained it away on the basis of experimental error. When William Aston was in Madras in 1937 he narrated how he was saved from such a naive mood of indolence. He was warned, he said, by his professor that scientific method should not adopt such an attitude. He first traced the difficulty to impurity in the sample chosen for measurements. The impurity was accordingly removed to the fullest extent that known chemical technique would allow. Perhaps even new methods of removing impurity were invented and yet the atomic weight would not become an integer even once. This continued to be a puzzle until mass-spectrography was invented. In this technique a powerful force is generated capable of separating two substances whose densities differed as little as we liked. The use of this technique soon separated the two oxygens of atomic weights 16 and 17 which were fused together in the proportion to say, 99 to 1. Once this separation was made, the puzzle disappeared. It was also realised that no chemical method could have separated the two oxygens. They are called 'isotopes' of each others. It was only a new technique that could separate them. You all know what a great progress the application of the isotopes by Aston is making today and to what beneficent use it is being put. The closeness of the fusion of fact and fiction in regard to Sri Krishna throws us challenge to Historiology and Cultural Sociology even as the closeness of the fusion of the two different oxygens threw a challenge a to Physics and Chemistry.

The Challenge: My appeal to you is that some of you should take up this challenge. I wish you the kind of success which Aston achieved in regard to atomic weight. Forge a proper scientific method to probe into this problem—was Sri Krishna a historical personage or was he merely a literary creation or was he both?

SRI KRISHNA AND CULTURE

So far we have been examining the place of Sri Krishna in Indian thought. I should next turn to his place in Indian culture. For this purpose, I should like to assume that culture is something which characterises the way of life. Sri Krishna typifies some of the essential characteristics in the Indian way of life. This is what is meant by saying that Sri Krishna occupies a dominant place in Indian culture. One of society's techniques to preserve the individuality of its culture is keeping alive pictures of personalities like Sri Krishna whose ways of life it values.

Lessons to be Learnt: On this occasion when we are celebrating the birthday of Sri Krishna who occupies a prepotent place in our culture, it is but proper that we should learn something positive from the life of Sri Krishna. A resume of Sri Krishna's life is found in all the *Purānas*. But the *Bhagavata Purana* is particularly rich and the *Mahabharata* is perhaps even richer from the point of view with which we are now concerned. The authors of the *Bhagavata* and the *Mahabharata* have made a supreme effort to make their works a true criticism of life. They have depicted Sri Krishna as an ideal with reference to which we should regulate our own lives.

FALSE ATTITUDE TOWARDS IDEAL

When the word 'ideal' is mentioned many people heave a sigh of relief. For, they say: 'By its very definition, an

ideal is one that cannot be attained. Whatever we do, we shall be short of the ideal. It is therefore no good to make any effort in the matter. Hear the story of Sri Krishna's life by all means. It has a charm which is worth enjoying. But it is futile to attempt imitate him.' This attitude is wrong. This is born out of indolence. Indolence is the greatest devil against which we have to guard ourselves. It is the result of the sapping of our will by the lowest of emotions—love of inaction and inertia.

RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS IDEAL

We can learn from the mathematician about the right attitude towards the ideal. To use mathematical terminology, ideal in the limiting point to what can be achieved. An aside for those of you who are not studying mathematics. Let me acquaint you with this profound concept 'Limiting Point.' Imagine a point 'O' and a point 'A₁' at a unit distance from it. Mark A₂ which is at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the unit distance, A₃ which is at $\frac{1}{3}$ of the unit distance, A₄ which is at $\frac{1}{4}$ of the unit distance and so on. I am sure that you are able to realise that the points are moving nearer to 'O' at every step. In general let us say A_n is at $\frac{1}{n}$ of the unit distance. By increasing *n* you can bring A as near to O as desired. In this situation O is called the limiting point of the A's. And yet, we shall never land on O itself. This concept of limiting point is very useful in the attitude we should have towards the ideal set by Sri Krishna's life. For, according to the limiting point concept, we can come as close as we like to the limiting point though we may not actually occupy it. The limiting point is not only a challenge to us asking us to capture it but it is also an assurance to us that we can succeed in coming nearer and nearer to it and indeed as near to it as anybody can imagine. Sri Krishna's place in our

Indian culture should have the practical effect of making each one of us endeavour to come as close to Sri Krishna as possible in our way of life. This is the right attitude we should have. A celebration like the one is worth having, only if we make this an occasion to make up our mind that we should approximate as closely as possible to his way of life.

A CONCRETE RESOLUTION

There are many features in Sri Krishna's way of life which are valued in Indian culture. Let us make up our minds today to approximate at least to one of those features before the next birthday comes. What feature shall we single out for this purpose? I suggest 'Avoidance of Prestige.' Prestige is one of the scourges, which mars a man's way of life. Our national poet Rabindranath Tagore once wrote a farewell poem on prestige and said in effect 'If you leave us alone, most of our misery will end.' He was referring to the havoc British prestige was playing on India's political life. In one of the delightful essays of McCauley he gives a very graphic description of how prestige makes two close relatives or friends work up their temperature which even threatens them to aim at each other's life. Let us find out the place of prestige in Sri Krishna's way of life.

SRI KRISHNA AND PRESTIGE

The *Mahabharata* is full of anecdotes which throw light upon the hold—or rather the absence of hold—which prestige had on Sri Krishna. When the Great War began what is the post that he offered to take up? I am sure anybody, who was respected as much as He was, would have asked for the highest post, charged with the glow of honour, dignity and power. Do you know what post Sri Krishna offered to serve in? He offered to be the charioteer of Arjuna—car driver,

if you please. Tell me, will your sense of prestige allow any of you to become the car driver of somebody else who, you know is inferior to you in every way? Sometimes he agreed to be a messenger boy. He practised in his younger days as a cowherd. If he had been a slave of prestige, would he have condescended to fill up all these places.

An Acute Situation : A more critical situation is described in the Tamil version of the *Mahabharata*, by Villiputhurur. A situation arises in which Arjuna is exhausted. It has been always recognised as one of the duties of the charioteer that he should be very watchful of the General's physical and mental condition. When the General was too exhausted, he should so manoeuvre that the chariot is withdrawn from the battle-field without anybody knowing that it was so done because the General was weakening. We find the charioteer of Ravana doing it at a critical moment. But when Ravana's sense of prestige gets wounded by this act of his charioteer, he chastises the charioteer, for having diverted the chariot from the battle-field. The prestige of Ravana unfortunately induces prestige in the charioteer. A faithful charioteer unaffected by sense of prestige should have given an evasive reply as to why he diverted the chariot. But the prestige-ridden charioteer of Ravana says: 'I diverted because you were weakening.' This naturally throws Ravana into a rage. But let us see what Sri Krishna, the Charioteer, did. He found that Arjuna was weakening. He had to be cheered up. His thought had to be diverted. Sri Krishna, the Charioteer, told Arjuna: 'The horse is not behaving well. I have myself become too dull to use the whip effectively. You, as the General, should take action to give me a kick on my back so that I may be stimulated. I can then transmit the stimulation to the horses!' Arjuna was shocked to hear this. He had accepted his superior Friend Krishna to act as charioteer with very great reluctance. Moreover at the very beginning of the battle when he broke down, it was Sri Krishna that pulled him up with words of wisdom—the *Gita*. At some stage in the course of his advice Sri Krishna had revealed to him his own Divinity—*Visvarupa Darśana*. All this was fresh in Arjuna's mind. How could he kick Sri Krishna? He refused. Arjuna pleaded: 'How can I kick You who is so superior to me, who is God Himself!' Sri

Krishna caught hold of these very words and said, 'If I am superior to you, if I am God Himself, obey Me. I order you to kick Me.' I leave the rest of this episode to your imagination.

APPLICATION TO OUR LIFE

There will be many situations in the life-time of each one of you to approximate to Sri Krishna, in your attitude towards prestige. Situations may arise now and here in this very hostel. When you get into quarrel in your Committee, what do you do? I suppose each one runs to the Master of the Jubilee Hall insisting upon his prestige being saved in the presence of others. However much the Master pleads that there is no substance in the request, still you will be tempted to say in effect, that prestige is more important than substance. Situations like that often arise in hostels. It had arisen half a century ago when I was myself in a hostel. I am sure, the Master of the Hall will give you scores of instances of their having arisen during the last few years. Instances are sure to arise in the coming year when you are so blinded by the sense of prestige that you are activated by it into a wrong way of life. Remember to day's celebration. Remember the resolution that you make today that you will make as close an approximation as possible to Sri Krishna's way of life which acts as the limiting point for our ways of life. If you worship Sri Krishna in sincerity and if you worship Him with a purpose, let that purpose be to purge yourself of the tendency to become a victim to the demon of prestige. This you can do by your endeavouring to make as close an approximation as possible to Sri Krishna's way of life.

If we purge ourselves of one wrong way of life after another by having before us the ideal set by Sri Krishna in our culture, I am sure it will bring happiness not

only to each one of us severally but also to our community as a whole. If our community extensively approximates to Sri Krishna's way of life, I am sure it will have a very wholesome effect on the world-community as well. Let us pray to Sri Krishna Himself to give us the will to live up to His Ideal.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA—THE INCARNATION OF SELFLESS SERVICE

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

Romain Rolland has said well that Sri Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa realised the Absolute and yet was a devotee of devotees and found no incompatibility between the two realizations. He has said also equally well that Sri Ramakrishna touched the feet of God and yet returned to Man. He felt also that there is truth in all religions and that they must live in harmony. He felt and proclaimed the harmony of Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita. He felt the harmony of Fatherhood of God and Motherhood of God. He realised and proclaimed that religion is realization.

These were the great truths for which India and the world at large were waiting. But he could make them fully effective only by having a set of disciples who would receive the new illumination and continue to spread it everywhere even as he did in his life-time. Romain Rolland says:

And so his religious sense, a sixth sense more highly developed in him than any of the others, revealed to Ramakrishna those among the passers-by, who were predestined for a divine sowing, those in whom God was sleeping. One glance, one gesture, was enough to awaken it. Nearly all the disciples yielded to him at the first meeting the vibrations of their inner being, whether they wished to do so or not. He scrutinised them through and

through. Other men had only their own salvation to find, but the true disciples were to be leaders and have the charge of other souls. That was why, when they were recruited they were subjected to physical and moral examination, followed after their admission by a paternal and ever watchful discipline.

He says also that Sri Ramakrishna was always careful to examine the tongue, the chest, the working of the organs, before sanctioning the exercises of intensive meditation.

He preferred them young, sometimes very young, hardly adolescent and unmarried, 'not yet caught in the net of desire, not entrapped by riches, free from ties....'

We have in Rolland's work on Sri Ramakrishna a list of these luminous satellites of the central sun. The brightest of them was Narendranāth Dutt who later on became the world-famous Swami Vivekānanda. Rolland says well about him:

He was the St. Paul of this Messiah of Bengal. He founded his Church and his doctrine. He travelled throughout the world and was the aqueduct, akin to those red arches that span the Roman Campagna, along which the waters of the spirit have flowed from India to the Europes (i.e. mother Europe and her brood of the Americas) and from the Europes back to India, joining scientific reason to Vedantic faith and the past to the future.

I had the privilege of seeing and being blessed by Swami Vivekananda just as I had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Swami Ramakrishnananda as a disciple. Both the events took place before the twentieth century saw the light of day. The former event took place in 1893 before Vivekananda went to America and the spell of his musical voice and his spiritual splendour thrilled and captivated the West. The latter event was in 1897 when Vivekananda returned from Chicago as the hero of Hinduism and founded the Ramakrishna Math in Madras and installed Swami Ramakrishnananda there.

I love to dwell awhile on the glory that was Swami Vivekananda. After his Guru's Mahasamadhi, he practised penance in the Himalayas and then travelled all over the country on foot upto Cape Comorin. I met him at Trivandrum in the course of that memorable pilgrimage. He stepped into our house and wanted to meet my father. I was then a student in the junior intermediate class. Somehow I felt that he was a king and ran up and told my father that a Maharaja had come. My father came down and met him. A few minutes later he told me: 'He is indeed a king, but a King of the Spirit.' Swamiji stayed for some days in our house. Once he found me studying Kalidasa's *Kumārasambhava* and told me:

I am glad. Kālidāsa is our supreme poet. The poem is the poem of heroism. Every young man should remember the poet's ideal and live a heroic life.

It was at Cape Comorin that he swam in the ocean and sat on a rock and meditated on the glory that was India. As Rolland says:

At last his task was at an end, and then looking back as from a mountain he embraced the whole of India he had just traversed, and the world of thought that had beset him during his wanderings.

He felt a call to serve India and his mission was chosen. He carried the message of his Master all over the world and he established the great Ramakrishna Mission.

As I said before, he sent Swami Ramakrishnananda to organise the Mission in Madras. The latter's name was Sasibhushan Chakravarty. He was born in 1863 in an orthodox Brahmin family in the Hooghly District in Bengal. He became the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna in 1883 in his twentieth year. As to Sri Ramakrishna's power of picking up his destined disciples Roman Rolland remarks:

At sight he could read the soul of those who approached him, and so, if he accepted them as his disciples, it was with full knowledge...He had the power of divining, seizing and keeping those spirits foreordained for his mission, and it would appear that the hawk-eye of the Paramahansa was never mistaken.

Sasibhushan Chakravarty's father was a man of great piety, purity and devotion. Sasibhushan was an able scholar and a keen student of mathematics and science but he had also a deep innate spiritual nature. Bengal was then in the throes of modernisation. Westernisation of life and thought was the rage of the day. Brahmoism was then born as the result of the clash of the East and West. Keshab Chandra Sen's star was then in the ascendent. He was of a very noble and devout and spiritual nature. Sasibhushan was attracted to him and grew intimate with him. He became the private tutor of Keshab's children. Keshab's gospel was noble but did not seem to be deep or high enough to the young aspirant for his spiritual requirements. He said afterwards often to us that Keshab's preaching whetted his hunger but could not satisfy it. He finally met Sri Ramakrishna in October 1883 in the company of his cousin Sarat (later the great Swami

Saradananda). Sri Ramakrishna asked him: 'Do you believe in God with form or without form.' Sasibhushan replied: 'I am not quite sure if God exists at all. How can I answer your question?' The Master liked that frank reply. Sasibhushan felt the radiation of spirituality from the Master and began to go to him often. He felt his doubts cleared and his spirituality grew and grew in him. When Sri Ramakrishna fell ill in 1885 he and his brother disciples gave up their studies and lovingly tended their Master and he was the most devoted of them all. The Master's loving grace was on him and it was his highest spiritual sadhanā.

After Sri Ramakrishna entered into Mahasamadhi in August 1886, his disciples desired to become a devoted band of lovers of God and servants of Man under the leadership of Swami Vivekananda. Sasibhushan had become known as Swami Ramakrishnananda. Swami Vivekananda himself coveted that designation but yielded it to Sasibhushan as he felt that the latter's devotion to the Master was peerless. After the Mahasamadhi of Sri Ramakrishna different disciples of the Master went to different places to intensify their life of Sadhanā. But Swami Ramakrishnananda longed to be near his Master's ashes which were enshrined in the Baranagore Monastery. He worshipped his Master's image as devotedly as he served the Master himself. While others went afar for penance and by way of pilgrimage, that was his place of penance and pilgrimage.

But, as already stated by me, the sleepless and ever-vigilant devotion of Swami Vivekananda to the cause of India and of his Master's gospel required Swami Ramakrishnananda at Madras to organise the work of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission there. Swami Vivekananda called upon his Guru-bhais to supplement Bhakti-

yoga by Jñānayoga and especially by Karmayoga, nay, to prefer the service of the country and humanity as superior to personal mukti. The fact is that service is a vital factor even in personal mukti. It is said in the four-volume *Life of Swami Vivekananda*:

As the first fruit of singular self-abandonment one whose life had been indissolubly merged, as it were, in the ceremonial worship of the Master unremittingly for twelve years, who in the performance of that duty which he did with unparalleled devotion, never left the precincts of the Math, even for a single day—Swami Ramakrishnananda—went out to Madras at the behest of Swamiji to open a centre there for propagating the teachings of the Vedānta in Southern India. (p. 140, Volume III).

Madras was and is a great centre of Sanskrit learning and orthodox Hindu culture and hence Swami Ramakrishnananda was chosen as a pious soul devoted to the traditional life and as an able scholar in Sanskrit. My good karma led me to Madras at that time. I joined the Law College in that year and was a young man brimming over with ebullient energy and enthusiasm. When Swami Vivekananda came to Madras in February 1897 in the course of his triumphal tour from Colombo to Madras after establishing the cultural supremacy of India and the spiritual supremacy of Hinduism in America and later on in England, delicious crowds gave him a tremendous ovation. I was one among those enthusiastic youths who unyoked two horses of his processional carriage and drew it up to the Ice House in the Madras Marina, where he was to stay. We were proud and happy over our unique performance. During all the days of his stay in Madras I was with him and served him.

Swami Ramakrishnananda was installed in a room in the Ice House. We used to meet him often there. Whenever poor

feeding was arranged there and when guests came there, we took pleasure in serving food and doing humble menial tasks. The ideal of serving the Daridra-Narayanas was placed as a shining light before our inner eyes by Swamiji and has remained as an abiding glory in my heart to this day. Myself, Ramu (Sri C. Ramaswami Iyengar who afterwards devoted his life wholly to the cause of the Ramakrishna Mission and to whose zeal and organising capacity the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in Mylapore owes its existence), Ramanuju (Sri C. Ramanujachariar who is devoted to carrying forward the great traditions of his cousin Ramu), Rao Sahib C. V. Krishnaswami Iyer (who afterwards retired as a District Judge), M. Rangaswami Iyengar, and others became a band of students who sat at Swami Ramakrishnananda's feet. The classes were held in Sri M. Rangaswami Iyengar's house in North Mada Street, Mylapore. We studied the Gītā, the Upaniṣads and other sacred books under Swamiji.*

Some time later the Ice House was sold away. Swamiji stayed in an outhouse there for sometime. It was in 1907 that a building was constructed in Brodies Road, Mylapore to house the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and Swamiji moved into it in a delighted frame of mind. That building was later on demolished and its site was included in the compound of the present spacious and splendid Math building on the same locality.

For fourteen years at Madras Swami Ramakrishnananda's life was one of incessant and devoted work. He had no Guru-bhais with him and was alone and was without even a servant at the beginning. He conducted worship in the Mas-

ter's shrine; he had to meet and satisfy a ceaseless stream of visitors. He had, in addition, to collect funds for the upkeep of the Mission. From the beginning the Master's message appealed to the heart of Madras and Swamiji's simple and spiritual nature endeared the Mission to the people of Madras. Swamiji conducted classes in various parts of the city. Very often he had to conduct three classes in one day. Madras did not then have the modern conveniences of locomotion by way of trams and buses as it has today. There were no cars or buses on those days. The so-called Mylapore tram stopped at Barbers Bridge and the only tram line to the town (then called Black Town and called much later as George town when His Majesty George V was crowned as King Emperor) went through Chintadripet. The tram journey was a mild torture. But the places to which Swamiji went could not all be reached by tram but many of them had to be reached by jutkas. The Madras jutka of those days has now vanished. It was a four seater in which really only two persons could sit with comfort. The upper seat used to be very much up and as the horse went along the occupants of it would be dragged down by the force of gravitation and had to jostle against the occupants of the lower seat. Swamiji was a man of big build and was tall in addition. His head would hit the jutka's roof and he used to feel it very uncomfortable to sit in the carriage. And yet he could be seen going in different parts of Madras during different portions of the day to his various classes in that vehicle of torture.

Swamiji had not the leonine look and the flashing eyes and the magical musical voice of Swami Vivekananda. He had a

comparatively plain face. But the sweetness of his heart shone in it when he smiled. Like Mahatma Gandhi's smiles—Mahatmaji also was by no means a handsome person—his smile was fascinating and irresistible. It lit up his face and evoked at once the higher nature of every one who had the joy and privilege of seeing it.

Swamiji was by no means a great speaker. We who had heard the eloquence of Swami Vivekananda, who was hailed in America as 'an orator by divine right' could not but feel the distance between both of them in respect of eloquence. But he was an impressive and persuasive speaker, though not a master of eloquence. His best performances and results were always found in his classes. He had a gentle persuasive argumentative conversational Socratic method of teaching and we felt drawn to him by silken but strong ties of reverential affection. We were all upto our neck in modern knowledge and I am afraid that we often plied him with relentless and even sceptical questions inspired by a scientific bias and rationalistic temperament and sometime even with puerile questions. But he was always calm and serene and immovable and sat like Patience on a monument smiling at the mental storms around him. His simple faith in his Guru and God was touching to behold, and slowly we came to his moods of acceptance and adoration. When things did not go well in the Math and he felt stranded from want of funds or helpful hands, he would plead and remonstrate with his Guru's image. His pleading was never in vain. There is a well-known saying (*Daivam Puruṣārūpena*) God through some human agency or other. Help and encouragement used to come to him in mysterious and unexpected and unforeseen ways.

During his ministry at Madras, he laid

the foundations of the work of the Math and the Mission on deep and broad and strong foundations. The celebrations of the birth days of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda became annual spiritual functions awaited and eagerly looked for by the public of Madras. Even today his programme of worship and bhajan and Harikathās and lectures is followed in the celebrations at the Madras Math. The feeding of Daridra-Narayanas which he began and arranged and organised are annual features of those celebrations even now. He brought up an orphan boy who had no help whatever and was the human nucleus of the remarkable Ramakrishna Mission Student's Home which, like a banyan tree shelters large number of young lives today and illumines their minds and hearts and makes their hands willing and eager and strong in the service of God and humanity and country.

During his incessant work at Madras, he found time to go to the mofussil and deliver lectures in several towns and he founded Mission centres at Trivandrum and Bangalore. All this ceaseless work he did because of the command of Swami Vivekananda. Left to himself he would have spent his life in meditation of the Lord and in loving worship of the image of Sri Ramakrishna. He felt in the image his Master's living presence and holy contact. He was a very orthodox person and a strict vegetarian. His orthodoxy was of an enlightened type and he respected other men's faiths and ways of life and he lived always in the light of the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna about the truth in all religions and the harmony of all religions. Very often this toleration becomes nowadays an excuse for latitudinarianism and an easy-going summarisation of ritual and worship but he stuck to tradition as the well-worn and smooth track trodden by the giants of old and never shortened or

* 'Swamiji' here and subsequently refers to Swami Ramakrishnananda.

abbreviated or modified or altered the settled modes of worship. His learning was subordinated to spirituality and prided itself not on itself but on its being handmaiden of the Spirit. He was convinced of the truth of Advaita as the ultimate and supreme realisation but he knew and felt and taught that without bhakti on man's part and grace on the part of God such a realisation would never be a *fait accompli*. As in the case of his Master, sweet and sincere devotional music used to fill his mind and heart with rapture and bear him on its wings into the heights of samadhi or supreme spiritual experience.

My desire in this essay is to paint the man and not to describe his teachings. But in the case of a person whose main work in life, apart from worship, was spiritual instruction, the man and the teacher cannot be kept apart without doing violence to both. I shall, therefore, wind up this essay with brief reference to his teachings. His beautiful descriptions of Lord Sri Krishna and His teachings were published with the name *Sri Krishna the Pastoral and King-maker*. His other works viz. *Universe and Man*, and *The Soul of Man* and his lectures on the *Path to Perfection* and the *Necessity of Religion* have been published in one volume called, *The Message of Eternal Wisdom*.

Swami Ramakrishnananda's special and original instruction lay in his clear analysis of nature and of man, reconciling the mood and method of science and the mood and method of religion. Science has shown to us the indestructibility of the ultimate essence of matter. But the ultimate truth of things cannot be learnt through scientific analysis but only by introspection which alone will enable us to realise what the Vedas declare—*Isāvās'yam Idam Sarvam*. God is immanent and transcendent. He is Sachchidananda. He

is the innermost truth of the Universe. In the same way He is the innermost truth of ourselves. The petty ego which identifies itself with the limited body and senses and mind will be found on introspection to be the eternal infinite Sachchidananda. The devotee who in the *Īs'ā Upaniṣad* prayed to the sun to reveal his innermost essence found that such essence was one with his own innermost quintessence: *Yosāvāsau puruṣah sohamasmi*.

This doctrine of infinite eternal Sachchidananda is India's highest intuition and Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramakrishnananda stressed again and again that Religion is the realisation of this supreme truth. They stressed also another great truth that all religions lead to the same goal and must hence live in mutual concord and harmony. Swami Ramakrishnananda says in his 'Message of Sri Ramakrishna':

'Thus, after analysing the various religions of this world, we see that although they proceed from different personalities and may apparently differ, they all lead to the same goal. (*The Message of Eternal Wisdom*, p. 18).

I cannot do better than close this brief sketch by quoting a beautiful and self-revelatory passage from Swami Ramakrishnananda's preface to his work, 'The Soul of Man'. He says therein:

Thus we see that ignorance, which is the cause of all miseries, has been troubling all men from the very beginning of time in the form of ego, making the eternal appear as non-eternal, the all-blissful appear as miserable, the all-knowing to appear as ignorant, the all-powerful to appear as weak, the infinite appear as finite, the Master appear as slave. Hence the one duty of every man should be to eradicate this ego rooted in ignorance, with the axe of wisdom which teaches that man is infinite by his nature... How can this little book, which preaches the renunciation of the ego, following the footsteps of the hoary sages of India, be of any use to humanity which is not going to profit by its impracticable advice? In answer we say, man may not have a heart

to follow the path described herein, but certainly he is eternally restless for the goal that has been held out to him by the sages, and if nothing short of the goal can bring complete satisfaction to him, and if there is no other path leading to it, he must be made to go through it somehow or other. He may not have a heart at present to take up the

path, but in this or some other future incarnation of his, when his imaginary heaven will appear to him in its true colour, the knowledge of the path leading to salvation will be a great boon to him. And so, although this book can help only a few directly, it can certainly help everyone indirectly. With this hope it has been made to see the light.

CRIME AND ITS CURE IN INDIA

By J. K. SOUMITRI SHARMA

Crime is on the increase in India as is its population and problems arising out of it. As every one knows every anti-social act is a crime. But it is the result of a series of causes and not a single one. The four basic needs of man as enunciated by great Manu—Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa—can be fulfilled only when man lives as a social being, as a member of a civilised society. Otherwise a jungle man would be an articulate animal at the most. Whenever any of these human urges are interfered with, there is friction and man indulges in the committal of crime. But before anyone is adjudicated as a criminal it is the duty of society to understand the situation thoroughly, analyse the effects of climate, food, heredity, education and neighbourhood, economic and political influences and so on, and then devise appropriate means of reclaiming him instead of condemning him and losing him for ever. Quite often, a criminal is forced into becoming an adjudged professional, as though all the malefic planets conspire together to make him so.

CRIME AND CLIME

Crime varies with the seasonal and topographical conditions of the place and

the environments of the person. Even the types of crime vary with the climatic conditions. Crime in hot countries is usually against an individual, whereas in cold countries, it is against property. In hot countries, the act is mostly impulsive, whereas in cold countries, it is a cold-blooded design, well laid out and executed, and even on organisational magnitude. In warm countries, we find a slight provocation causing exchange of fists and burning of tram cars and juktas. In cold countries even a pistol is aimed with a calm hand, a steady nerve and a pre-plan. In tropical countries such as ours, the climate exhausts the man, lessens his food consumption and makes him docile and thus minimises the incidence of crime. Whereas in cold countries, heavy alcoholic drinking, meat eating, and sex indulgence contribute much and prompt the man for thrills and adventures and thus cause enormity of crime.

CRIME AND HUMAN ELEMENT

Is criminality a hereditary trait? Biologists hold strongly that tendencies are transmitted from parents to children. A child born of a drunkard certainly craves for alcohol, and can be offset only by

cautious up-bringing. Weak children born of weak parents are known to possess more criminal tendencies than normal ones. It is said that deficiency of pineal gland produces sub-human mentality; and excess of adrenals causes aggressiveness; and a disproportionate prostate gland results in sexual abnormalities. That is now some persons are said to be a prey to theftomania even in their later years of responsible status in society.

CRIME AND ENVIRONMENTS

More than the man or the climate, it is the social environments that contribute to crime most. It is the family, the school, the associates and the playground that affect a boy's set up and his future career. Grinding poverty and distress in family, many a time give room for prostitution, theft, and fraud which are necessarily the worst crimes. Many a time boys and girls are trained for it. Once a boy succeeds in pick-pocketing and goes unsuspected, he gets emboldened and dares for bigger crimes. For grown-ups there are any number of incentives for crime, especially in big cities. Large cities throughout the world are the ant-hills of crime. It is the cities that give shelter to the perpetrators, whose identity can be easily camouflaged in the surging crowd.

PROMOTERS OF CRIME

Many a modern Indian film glorifies sex immoralities, provokes carnal appetites, encourages vagabondism and lawlessness and somehow grudgingly shows virtue all along fighting hard and quite often ending in a losing battle. Young minds are allured by the daredevil stunts staged on the screen. Many such movie-makers in our land, who manufacture box office hits and bloat their purses are not only passed off as great artists and directors but are claimed as the choicest citizens of our land of culture. In reality they are

the parents for the propagation and multiplication of crime. Another agency is the cheap literature that is being voraciously swallowed by our present educated young men and women in the shape of night-reading booklets and journals. There are hundreds of magazines distributing immorality in the garb of catering sex education; and our young generation must specially beware of them, because they are responsible to vitiate the mind beyond repair, if not, beyond repentance and thus destroying the very roots of our great culture.

CRIME VERSUS DETECTION

Crime varies with time, purpose and circumstances. For, after all, it is the society that determines the crime. Ordinarily robbery is a crime. But if a Shivaji does it to build up his armies and to liberate his motherland, or a Stalin does it for the sake of building up his Party, they are deemed as meritorious acts. Normally murder is a worst crime. But if the same person commits good many murders in an enemy camp, it is a heroic feat. One would even bless one's own country's bombers to shower hell and fire over the enemy territories. In some countries prostitution is a crime, and in some it is not. In olden days hand would be cut off for a simple theft. But under the present judicial set up, even a murderer is set at large for want of an evidence.

As are the variations in crime, so are its detection too. In days past, large footprints were necessary clues. Sherlock Holmes was a hypnotic word for detectives. But in this scientific age, precision and surety of detection have reached astounding proportions. The methods are such that even if a top rank gangster like Bhupat has crossed the continents, spanned the seas and is hiding in a cave in a remote corner of the globe, still he can

be surely caught beyond scope of escape. But the criminals also being contemporary products of the same stock of society, resort to more ingenious ways of perpetrating the crime. Iron safes and safety rooms are left out safe. And open day light hold-ups at Bank doors and streets have come into play. Science and intelligence are no monopoly of the police alone. Criminals also have easy access to them.

REPRISAL THE BASIS OF PUNISHMENT

Since the day man has started living as a social being, crime has existed and punishment also is being given in a variety of ways. No small amount of human genius has been spent to find novel and unique ways of torture. Slow death on the oil-mill, boiling alive in water or oil, tearing the body by elephants, peeling off the skin, sewing up in animal skin, nailing on the cross, these and many other forms have been tried to get rid of not only the criminal but the crime itself for ever. But crime has persisted. Retaliation for wrong still prevails. Vengeance still forms the foundation of Penal Law. Reprisal is still its guiding principle.

MODERN REFORMATION

But now rapid changes have been taking place to reclaim an offender into society and to prevent crime. The aim of punishment now is to recondition the prisoner's personality. Especially in West and even in Japan, the prisoner is being trained in regular habits with a view to establishing harmony in his life. He is given good comforts of life and put under proper systematic daily routine. Bathing, exercise, regular times for food, hard but interesting vocational work and adequate rest and plenty of literature to improve himself will certainly put him on right

lines. There are a lot of incentives for self-improvements and character building. In fact, he is so well reconditioned that he returns to the world fully equipped for a new and reformed mode of living. Even the word 'prison' is discarded and is called penitentiary and reformatory. Prisoners are called inmates. Cells and barracks no more give the impression of cages and dungeons. Juvenile delinquents are even better treated with care and compassion. For, a juvenile delinquent of today, if left uncared, will be the confirmed criminal of to-morrow. In case an offender sins against a society or vice versa, both are losers. In most of the cases of young delinquents, the causes that lead to crime are beyond their control. As such, a little attention on the part of society is enough to put them on right track. So in the West, most of these potential criminals are being reclaimed into society with success.

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND

The subject of juvenile delinquency is so vast and developed that for want of space, I shall confine only to this much that it still requires greater attention of our society and the Government to locate them and recondition them so that they will be useful citizens. Hundreds of vagabonds are being still manufactured in theatres and by-lanes of our big cities. Jails have got but only a flavoury touch of reformatories. High stone walls, enclosed corridors, dingy cells, steel bars and locks, bug vermin and company unlimited, hard and moist floor, coarse mat, smelling bed covering, most nauseating uniform, wooden badge and the buffoon's cap, insufficient and non-nutritious food, long queue even for latrines, rod beating, hanging by arms, and a hundred and one variety of tortures at the hands of the hard-boiled warders, absence of magazine,

book or any literature or intelligent pastime are still the horrid marks of ordinary prisons in India to-day. They are still a hell on earth, where those who enter should leave hope behind.

Knowing full well that any amount of

penal laws and jails cannot mitigate the incidence of crime, let our people try to train themselves and their children on the basis of our great culture and most of the causes of crime will be certainly eradicated from our glorious land.

चरैवेति

FRIENDLINESS AND COMPASSION

"The real life is inside yourself, not outside. But you must work hard to find it."¹

Our sense organs are so made that they can turn only outwards.² Their function, as we all know, is to bring reports from the external world. This by itself does not become an evil. For they can now and then do something good. They can, for example, under very favourable conditions, indicate to us that, perhaps quite close to us, there stays a saintly teacher who can guide us in our spiritual path. But the trouble is that such conditions come very rarely. And these organs can never enable us to perceive the forces which create such conditions or which compel the mind to run in evil directions. Nor can these senses help us to penetrate into the innermost recesses of our personality where Power, Knowledge and Peace abide for ever. It is certainly a hard task to liberate awareness from the insistent pulls exerted by external objects and to make it habitually turn within on itself, its freedom, its perfection.

* * *

The eyes differ to some extent from other sense organs; for we can close our eyes at will. But we gain very little by closing them. For in place of direct pictures of external objects, we begin to perceive a continuous stream of mental pictures, accompanied by running commentaries on our joys and sorrows, our hopes and disappointments. To stop this effectively we must learn the technique of raising up, at will, attractive pictures symbolising truth, beauty, goodness, holiness and other virtues. In other words, we must cultivate a higher scale of values till, by the force of intelligent repetition, those values overhaul our entire mental make-up and become part and parcel of our personality.

* * *

Most people find mental discipline uninteresting. Their reluctance to start it becomes the greater when they are told that progress comes to 'those who go through it with love, reverence and enthu-

siasm and accept it whole-heartedly as a life-long programme.'³ One common excuse for avoiding discipline is that religious teachers put stress on certain formalities. For instance, aspirants are advised to sit in a shrine, adopt a reverential attitude, repeat some hymns, perform a few rituals and concentrate on a few symbols. Modern people, desperately training themselves to fit into a world of speed, find it altogether impossible to spare time for such practices.

To such people an excellent prescription can be given. Indeed it takes the very changes in the environment as the spring-board for 'practising' virtuous reactions. Nay, orthodox tradition lays it down as an obligatory discipline for all. What to meditate upon may differ for different temperaments. But all without distinction must build up their cultural level. And this involves the total eradication of baser passions by the deliberate introduction of nobler ideals.

* * *

Tradition divides events in the environment into four types: Our neighbours may be either happy or sad, or they may be engaged in doing something holy or sinful. Each of these events, when noticed, can be made excellent material for the positive adoption of four attitudes and the elimination of four corresponding baser impulses. Says Vāchaspati:

'Whoever shows *friendliness* (Maitrī)...i.e., a heart ready to help—towards the happy, the dirt of *envy* leaves him. When the mind shows *compassion* (Karūṇā)—the wish to remove the miseries of others as if they were his own—towards those who are suffering, the dirt of the desire to do evil to others is removed. Whoever shows *complacency*

(Muditā) pleasure, toward the virtuously inclined beings, the dirt of *envy* is removed from his mind. Whoever shows *indifference* (Upekṣā)—taking of the middle path and not taking sides—towards the viciously inclined, the dirt of *impatience* is removed from his mind.'⁴

We are specially told that 'if friendliness etc. are not cultivated, the means (direct exercises in concentration etc.) cannot lead to steadiness.'

It is not mere purification of our own individual minds that is brought about by strengthening the three dynamic virtues of friendliness, compassion and complacency.⁵

Vāchaspati explains:

'Of these, the power which comes by the practice of the feeling of friendliness is that by which he can make the whole living world happy, and hence become the well-wisher of all. Similarly, by the power of compassion, he lifts suffering creatures out of pain and the cause of pain. So also, by the power of complacency, he becomes just to all the world.'

What is meant by power?

'Power (Vīrya) is effort. For this reason the man who possesses the power of friendliness etc. puts forth an effort to render people happy etc. and his effort is not checked (baffled or thwarted by anything in the world).'⁶

It is one thing to say that we do not believe in these disciplines or the claims made about their supreme efficacy, in other words, that we are not prepared to take any step to put them to the test. But it is quite a different thing to label Indian systems of mental discipline as leading to selfishness, other-worldliness, pessimism, want of sympathy for suffering humanity and so on, as many modern critics think it a fashion to do.

भग चरैवेति !

SUBANDHU

³ Yoga Sutra I. 14.

⁴ Yoga Sutra I. 33.

⁵ Indifference by itself, being negative, does not directly help the attainment of trance.

⁶ Yoga Sutra III. 22.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Service in Brahmachari-Dharma (Editorial)

We thankfully acknowledge that for much of the information and references used in this article we are indebted to the following works:

History of Dharma Sastras By P. V. Kane M.A., LL.M., Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1941.

Hindu Civilization by Radha Kumud Mookerji, M.A., Ph.D., Longmans, Greens & Co, London.

'Ancient Hindu Education' an article by Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji in the *Sir Ashutosh Mukherji Silver Jubilee Volume* Vol. 3., Calcutta University, 1923.

Ten Commandments of Bhagavan Sri Krishna

Swami Vivekananda says: 'The glory of Sri Krishna is that he has been the best preacher of our eternal religion of principles and the best commentator on Vedanta that ever lived in India.' It would appear a historical fact that whenever the Indian humanity swerved from the path shown by Sri Krishna, they have foundered and fallen in evil days. If we would analyse the factors contributive to the present resurgence of India we shall see, at the back of it all lie the *tapas* of the heroes who have been the followers of the teaching of the Gita. If we want to maintain the tempo of advancement and carry it to the high consummation, it is necessary we individually translate into action those teachings of the Gita which will stand us in good stead through all ages. Swami Vimalananda here furnishes us some of the most important teachings of the Gita given by the Lord in the form of direct imperatives. These have been grouped into ten commandments to facilitate the understanding of the constructive consistency underlying them.

Sri Krishna in Indian Thought and Culture

Among the factors which make the month of August significant for India one important is that the birthday of Sri Krishna falls in this month.

What are known as culture and thought are themselves very delicate stuff, so much so that

they elude definition. Though to our knowledge there has not been any adequate appraisal of the contribution of Sri Krishna in Indian thought and culture, one may say with confidence that Sri Krishna forms the very soul of our thought and culture. So varied, comprehensive and mysterious is Krishna-penetration in our life that one does not know if there is any space in one's life uninfused by Krishna-pervasiveness.

Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., D.Litt., LL.B., F.L.A., President, Indian Library Association and Professor of Library Science, University of Delhi, handles the Krishna-theme in a manner specially acceptable to the young minds. It is very often said with a special accent of self-righteousness by the grown-ups that nowadays religious themes are an anathema to the young minds. How far this is due to the absurdity of presentation of religious themes in outworn fashions is a ponderable question. The beautiful technique Dr. S. R. Ranganathan adopts here can go a long way in popularising religious themes among young minds. The present article is adapted from a lecture which he delivered on the last Krishnastami day (August 13, 1952) before the members of the Jubilee Hall of the University of Delhi.

Swami Ramakrishnananda—the Incarnation of Selfless Service

Among the great apostles of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Ramakrishnananda was a singular saint of monolithic structure, so akin to and so unlike others. His life was a long saga of devoted service. At home in his pre-monastic days he was a devoted son; when destiny brought him at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna he was at once in his elements, that is to say, he dedicated himself in the whole souled service of the Master. He exemplified that type of service which did not care for even one's own mukti. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna he continued the service of the Master in his relics but expanded the scope of his service by embracing in its ambit the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and finally humanity at large. In the flaming *yajña*

of service he ultimately consumed himself and left behind him a shining example of the ideal which Ramakrishna-Vivekananda preached.

Crime and its cure in India.

Here is a topic which is unfortunately very meagrely thought about in India. Nonetheless it is a serious problem which cannot be kept in cold storage any more without serious detriment to the cause of national regeneration as a whole. It will be very well if we could bring our scientific temper, which is in vaunted evidence in these

days, upon this intricate problem and do something following the great examples of other great nations. It must be remembered that crime is a social product and the criminal is a social responsibility. Criminology is, thus a vital and important part of sociology. It therefore behoves us to study the subject in this light.

Sri J. K. Soumitri Sharma, whose article is being published in our columns for the first time, has done very well in drawing the attention of the thinking people to this very urgent but neglected problem of India.

DRAGONS, PYTHONS AND SHY LILIES

For God's sake, give us our daily lilies! But who would listen?

How many have this feeling we do not know. During the course of the observance of that most important *nitya-karma* (daily duty to be religiously performed) of the present times without going through which one simply cannot be considered civilized, cultured, modern, decent or even a sufferable man, we have sometimes a feeling of an arduous and painful journey through a trackless forest where one suddenly but surely comes across dragons or pythons. They are a wonderful type of creatures. They do not eat one right away. Sometimes they even look non-violent! They do not outwardly seem even to touch you. But after passing by them, if and when you care to take a stock of your self—many people do not seem to deem this probation worthwhile at all—you find that something from within you has been eaten away in a mysterious way, leaving you a poorer creature. Specially the dragons eat in gulp. The loss is severe. But the pythons prefer to eat in quite a pythonian manner by instalments, your relation to it being an edible stored. Daily it eats a little

of you. You cannot extricate yourself being all the time within its mouth. You do not know how big and long is the python. The information is that everywhere on earth intelligent men are being eaten in the same mysterious way.

As you make your daily way through the thorny bushes and briars of the forest, on occasions unawares you come upon a shy lily. A white lily, a little lily—sweet, smiling, innocent and tender. It is indeed amazing how this tiny slender lily can hold its own in this bizarre forest infested by dreadful dragons and ponderous pythons. But the greater wonder is the lily's way of touching you from within. So soft is the little lily, but how powerfully it restores you from within! In the form of a certain wholesomeness it creeps within you in a fragrant fashion and you feel that much of the dragon-and-python-eaten portions of your self is healed. But it is not everyday one meets a lily. Not a day, however, passes when one does not meet those ferocious creatures. Sometimes it also happens that one suddenly comes across a number of lilies. It is then indeed a lilian day. One then feels like living on.

At this stage we should perhaps tell you what we mean by 'that most important *nitya-karma*'. It is the act of reading daily newspapers. By dragons, we mean those howling headlines which declare a horrible aeroplane crash, a train disaster, a gruesome murder, a Mau Mau, the fall of a Beria or the death of S. P. Mukherji—such news as disturb your sensibilities outrageously. By pythons we mean those rolling coiling meandering, eluding news about a Korea or a Kashmir or a South Africa. It will also have been noticed some dragons themselves get transformed into pythons in course of time, e. g., a Mau Mau. What are the lilies then? Little white lilies are those pieces of reports which you have to search and search for, very often in vain, those gems of news of no news-value, which are almost invariably published in unimportant places by most dailies, if at all they are published, those non-political talks of savants, philosophers, thinkers, scientists, and lovers and servants of humanity, which carry the much needed leaven for the betterment of this bad burning world of ours.

For the most part our dailies are either dragonian or pythonian or better, drago-pythonian. Even a sigh for a lilian daily will be surely dubbed as utopian. But can we not make a most moderate demand for some more shy lilies in our dailies?

We are sorry to say that an overwhelming number of the dailies of the world do not appear to have a sufficiently developed lily-sense. Fortunately in our home-city of Madras we have one or two Dailies which seem to cultivate the lily-habit rather deliberately. In the righthand bottom corner of the Editorial-page of *The Indian Express* the 'Ching Chow' is daily there with an unconcerned and genial smile to present you with a fragrant lily. We for one will not doubt the sanity of a man

who once in a while cultivates the peculiarity of just noting,—or may one even say communing?—with the 'Ching Chow', lily, and going away smiling without caring for any other stuff in the paper. We hasten to submit that our good friends should not imagine that we are insinuating disregard for their most important page! We are only spot-lighting its most soothing corner, which in this news-weary world has a special invitation. 'Ching Chow', however, gives you an impression of an urbanised lily grown in a glistening brass vessel held by a fancy stand on a modern mosaic floor of a fashionable drawing room. Its roots do not know the splendour of that quiet dignified indiscipline that is forest natural. But a lily's a lily for all that.

It is of course *The Hindu* which often gives you an impression of fairly well-developed lily-sense. Once in a while one finds a lily in its page almost challenging a dragon or a python. And then its lilies grow in spacious naturalness of the wide forest. As you go about you suddenly meet them to your unexpected joy.

We pick up one or two lilies at random (from *The Hindu*, July 13, '53) to show how beautiful and refreshing they are:

At a reception held in his honour (on July 11, '53) by the Indian Chamber of Commerce of Great Britain, Dr. Radhakrishnan said that the world could not be divided into two camps, one pure white and the other jet black. History showed that the enemy of today was transformed into the friend sometime later.

That is also the teaching of all religions. If you look deeply into the heart of your enemy, you will find there the heart of your twin brother. The problem before the world is, therefore, not one of crusading against an enemy but of manifesting the good in ourselves.

'We belong to the one indivisible Church of God though we may be of the Church of Christ, or of the Buddha or of the Hindu persuasion. It is on the basis of that unity that the world can be brought together.'

Don't you feel the fragrance of the lily here, the sweet refreshing lily? Does

it not soothe your tension-smitten nerves? This is the lily-effect. It gives you the assurance that there may be hope yet for this our rotten world.

Yet another lily from *The Hindu* of the same date.

Prof. A. V. Hill, the well-known British Scientist, in an address to the University college, London, said that science was an essential part of human culture, but it must not be exalted to a form of witchcraft that alone could resolve all human difficulties.

He added that there were those who honestly believed that more and more scientific discoveries and more of technological improvements were the only things required for the betterment of mankind. One could be easily denounced as a reactionary for not

being sure that human ingenuity through science would be sufficient to provide all indefinitely with a better life.

In fact every technical advance, every scientific or medical discovery brought with it human problems to solve, moral, social, political or aesthetic. To imagine that scientific and technical progress alone, can solve all the problems that beset mankind is to believe in magic, and of the unattractive kind that denies a place to the human spirit.

This is a real shy lilian lily. As you inhale its fresh fragrance you rediscover those colours of the world which forming a rainbow across the azure firmament of your mind, used to beckon you ahead.

Friends, give us our daily lilies! 21-7-53

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PRINCIPLES OF TANTRA (THE TANTRA TATVA OF SRIYUKTA SHIVA CHANDRA VIDYARNAVA BHATTACHARYYA MAHODAYA) EDITED BY ARTHUR AVALON, PUBLISHED BY GANESH & CO., (MADRAS) LTD., MADRAS-17. 1952, PP. 1172+IX PRICE RS. 30/-

The publishers have done a good service in bringing out the second edition of this book, which had gone out of print long ago.

In the present religious revival of our country, Tāntric literature plays an important role combining within itself all the four yogas: Karma, Bhakti, Rāja and Jñāna. It shines as an illustration, as to how all methods are leading to the same goal. Arthur Avalon, who found a wealth of spiritual material in this vast literature has done a very valuable service by editing many of the Tāntric texts.

This big volume running to more than a thousand pages tries to defend the study of the Tantras against which a volley of criticism was aimed by many Western writers as well as many social reformers in India. Hence the author begins by first explaining the reason for the appearance of the

Tantric scripture, what it consists of, and thereby showing its merits. This gives plenty of opportunity to the modern educated Hindu to know the meaning of many of our traditions and rituals. He comes to know what is Sakti, the primordial energy and the important role it plays in the world. Every religion consists of, philosophy, mythology and rituals and here we get full details of the philosophical aspect and the ritual aspect. The detailed study of the important Mantra in Gāyatrī, the chapter on rituals of worship, inner and outer ones, the explanation of the Tāntric initiation, the relation between the teacher and the taught—give us a close insight into the greatness of spiritual discipline, which is essential for all seekers of the higher life. Any reader of this book will soon realise that Tāntric literature and religion are neither obscene nor magical as some Westerners have remarked but a treatise, which explains a path by which one can sublimate his lower nature, awaken the stock of dormant spiritual energy lying within him and manifest it.

There have been and still are people, who are able to go through these disciplines and achieve

wonderful results. They have proved beyond all doubt the greatness of this Śāstra.

Now and then the author begins to admonish the modern generation in lengthy paragraphs with the idea of reforming them. It would have been better if such admonitions were not made so important. The long discourses addressing the critics have made the book bulky and they disturb the interest of a person, who wants only to know about the *Principles of Tantra*.

The printing and get up of the book are excellent.

SWAMI RITAJANANDA

SRI KRISHNA—THE DARLING OF HUMANITY BY A. S. P. AYYAR, M. A. (OXON), I.C.S., BAR-AT-LAW, THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL OFFICE, MYLAPORE, MADRAS, 1952, pp. XXVIII+451, PRICE RS. 4/- OR \$ 6.

When new types of writing and fresh ways of the literary medium are being attempted everywhere by the seekers of self-expression, it is strange that the author of this fairly sumptuous volume should have resorted to the old, old lore of Sri Kṛṣṇa and His doings as recorded in our Purāṇas. But the strangeness is no sooner felt than dissolved with our taking up the book itself. For, despite the fact that in English the Purāṇic stories can only secure for us a limited sense of satisfaction and experience, there is the intrinsic worth of their indefinable purity of conceit and elevation of thought, which easily compensate for any of the shortcomings of translation and free rendering in a foreign language. There cannot be two opinions also regarding the value of such Indian themes for us, especially for our hopefuls of tomorrow, at a time when the country has been passing through one of its transient periods of Freedom's newly found obstacles in the shape of our own craze to imitate others in everything. Perhaps, nothing will be of greater influence on formative minds than such stories as here preserving the core of Hindu Dharma and Indian imagination at its best.

Hence, only praise will be forthcoming from the thinking section of people here regarding this self-imposed labour of love of Sri A. S. P. Ayyar in giving us a compendious narrative of Lord Krishna's celebrated deeds of prowess as well as teachings of wisdom. After correctly and succinctly dwelling upon the bewitching fables of the Child-

God's life in Gokulam and Brndāvan, the author takes us to Sri Krishna's activities as a Guide and Philosopher of the Pāṇḍavas. Then come the great words of the Lord as the author of the Gītā, and finally there are certain stories also given from what have gained currency in many parts of this ancient land from time to time through folk-imagination and frill-work to the religious recension of the Purāṇas. All the parts of this well-planned work invite our enthusiasm and encomium, because it is not often that we come across a mind as the author's which can peer into the fables and fancies of our Puranic texts and come out with a balanced judgment of its own both in the selection of material and the method of recapture of the ancient spirit.

We need not add anything further to our high commendation of this volume to readers, except saying that if the reader occasionally feels with the author that the best of modern stories too sometimes fall short of the perfect equilibrium between fact and fable in comparison to these old, old stories, then the object of this publication can be deemed to have achieved fulfilment in a measure.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

KRISHNAMURTI, THE MAN AND HIS TEACHING: BY RENE FOURE, (TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH); CHETANA LTD, 34 RAMPART ROW, BOMBAY; 1952; 73 PP; PRICE RS. 2/-

This is a brief but clear account of Sri J. Krishnamurti's teachings. By way of introduction, the Author presents a beautiful pen-portrait of Krishnamurti's life-story. A young intelligent and handsome lad, who was chosen for the high office of the future Messiah of the world, acquires the courage to break away from the myths that were built around him. The death of his dear brother steals his heart and sets his mind unswervingly on the spiritual quest. He strives and comes out with his message which is 'a simple direct call to all to share in a life set free'.

What is Krishnamurti's message? It is this, as summarized by the Author of the book under review: Man's basic problem is fear. The more he isolates himself, the more terrified he becomes. Fear is the fatal shadow of all self-conscious limitation. Moved by this fundamental fear, he seeks security in the not-self. But the paradox of it is that the search for personal security through

acquisitions causes general insecurity and suffering. Self-consciousness, the basic fear, search for security, greed, acquisitions—these constitute a self-perpetuating cyclic mechanism, which Krishnamurti calls the 'I-process'. This process is a process of ignorance, and the fundamental contradiction between the 'me' and 'other' which is at its root is the cause of suffering. Yet it is suffering that can put an end to ignorance and illusion. It is, however, not by a positive effort that one can free oneself from the giant-wheel of illusion; for the very will to escape from the process of the 'I' is rooted in and nourished by the same process. Only when the futility of this process is seen does it cease. In the very understanding of the 'I'-process there is the liberation from it. According to Krishnamurti, it is not the will that liberates, but knowledge of oneself, mercilessly full, subtle and detailed. When we are suffering, the very suffering gives the foretaste of, and the opportunity for awareness. (p. 64).

It is not difficult to see how close Krishnamurti's teachings are to Buddhism and Advaita (though, according to the present reviewer, there are significant points of difference between the doctrines of Buddhism and the metaphysics of Advaita). In view of this fact, it does not seem proper to claim complete originality for Krishnamurti's message. It is said, for instance, that his way of discovery was not through belief and surrender, but through doubt and revolt—which makes it out to be contrary to all mystic traditions, that he denies the 'I' both substance and duration, contrary to all metaphysics and theologies, and so on. But, to everyone of these aspects of Krishnamurti's teaching parallels can be shown in Buddhism and/or Advaita. The denial of complete originality, however, does not detract from the excellence of Krishnamurti's message. The modern intellectual has many a truth to learn from his writings and discussions.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

MYSTICISM UNVEILED BY K. ANANDA RAU, POPULAR BOOK DEPOT, BOMBAY, Pp. XVIII+210, Price Rs. 6-8-0.

To the mystic the experience designated as Mysticism is as real and vivid as any sense experience to the ordinary worldly-minded person, and to those outside the pale of mysteries, mysticism is bound to be mystifying and puzzling.

Hence unveiling mysticism is unnecessary for the former and unintelligible to the latter. But as in all case of dichotomously exclusive dilemmas, there is a middle class which is ordinarily ignored, and to that class of persons who have not had the mystic experience and who do not consider that experience as unreal, Sri Ananda Rau's book will be welcome. The author has a happy gift for conveying to the ordinary mind the significance of sublime truths through a medium wherein he has adroitly blended plain anecdotes, philosophical reflections, and quotations from renowned mystics. He has used the symbol of the temple to expound in Chapters I, II & III the deeper aspects of mysticism. The power of 'Gāyatrī' is demonstrated in Chapters IV and V, and Chapter VI, the longest in the book explains S'raddhā, Bhakti, Nāma-Smaraṇa, Jñāna, Vairāgya and Tyāga. The short chapter on the ten Avatārs (Ch. VIII) is notable for the interpretations of the characteristics of the incarnations given by the author. The concluding one is replete with valuable suggestions, Gāyatrī again receiving special mention.

The incredulous and the 'new intellectuals' who revel in what they term the 'scientific approach' will do well to keep away from the book. Earnest seeker after truth and the eager sādha will find the book valuable. P. S. N.

THE ETERNAL TRUTHS OF LIFE BY ARTHUR ROBSON, THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE, ADYAR, MADRAS 1952, Pp. VI+226, PRICE. RS. 7-8-0.

The present volume endeavours to present occult matters 'according to the teachings of the Masters as given in the Mahatma letters.' Karma, Re-incarnation and different stages of life after death occupy the first half of the book. 'Karma is a living record of our past' (p. 8) 'It is the basic fact of our life' (p. 28), but all that happens to one objectively is *not* one's Karma or even the effect of one's Karma (p. 19). Karma can be transmuted in socially useful urges (pp. 42-45) and all that is left to us after death is our Karma (p. 47). The entire discourse on Karma follows the well-known theosophical lines. This is followed by a description of the nature of experiences at the time of death and of existence in Karma loka and in Devachan (Chapters 6 to 10), and finally of the entry anew into physical life (Ch. 11). It may

be recalled that theosophy has specialised in the study of 'Life after death', and the author has done full justice to the theme.

In the second part of the book the author expounds, according to theosophical tenets, the goal of life and the path for realisation of that goal. The Noble Path (Ch. 15) Detachment (Ch. 16) The Path to Nirvāṇa and Paranirvāṇa (Chs. 17 & 18) Trinity and Treinity (Chs. 19 & 20) are expounded with clarity and conviction. The Karma doctrine, of course, runs as a refrain throughout the book. The chapter on the Anatomy of Pain deserves special mention for the sake of the view that pain may be caused by 'Good Karma' as much by 'Bad Karma.'

The treatise is valuable in as much as it states the essential theosophical principles succinctly and with clarity. It will be found helpful to the students of Comparative Religion and to those who are engaged in research in recent religious reform movements in our country.

P. S. N.

DEHUMANIZATION IN MODERN SOCIETY (ITS ROOTS AND DANGERS) A LECTURE BY RENE FULOP-MILLER; PUBLISHED BY THE NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE, AHMEDABAD; Pp. VII+28; PRICE AS. 7/-

'Whilst that (knowledge) which is confined to one single effect as if it were the whole, without reason, without foundation in truth and trivial,—that is declared to be *Tāmasika*', says the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, and the result of the *Tāmasika* way of thinking is the degeneration of men. It is exactly this way of thinking, the failure to take man as man in all his aspects that has led to the unfruitful, and often disastrous, attempts of the various lop-sided social and political philosophies to reconstruct society. Proceeding from partial or wrong data about man, solutions to his problems have been attempted with the inevitable consequences—failure.

The author gives a clear analysis of the causes that have given rise to such wrong philosophies about man and society. Among these the most important one is 'abstraction'—be it of the materialistic or the idealistic variety—which has produced the 'economic man', 'historical man', 'biological man', 'sociological man', 'psychological man' and finally the 'average man'—everything

but the living and real man! Even democracy—which the author feels is 'basically man's best bet'—is a victim of this wrong approach. It is this 'abstraction', this non-integrated approach that has perverted the outlook of many philosophers, scientists, artists etc. and has been the root-cause of the present de-humanization in society.

But the cloud has its silver lining. There are indications that 'man will finally free himself of the various abstractions' and 'will retrieve his human image and with it his self-esteem.' 'In modern science—biology, psychology and sociology—there are trends towards realizing 'human nature in its totality and uniqueness.' 'The recent insights of modern science and philosophy are in complete accord with the wisdom and teachings of all great religious leaders and sages throughout the centuries. The author ends with a sentence which is suggestive of what he considers as the way out and also his optimism in the matter: 'Those who put their faith in the uniqueness and totality of man, those who believe in the reality of intellectual and spiritual values, are furthering the evolving realization of a great truth, they help to bring about a dawn which will put to flight the dark night of dehumanization and thus chart the way toward a meaningful and valuable life.'

The publishers deserve our congratulations for presenting this thought-provoking thesis to the Indian readers. The ideas presented in this essay are worthy of the thoughtful considerations of all those who are planning to build the new India.

In its simple and clean get-up and moderate price, the book conforms to the helpful traditions of the Navajivan Publishing House.

BRAHMACHARI SATYACHAITANYA

THE STUDENT'S MANUAL OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA BY K. VAIDYANATHAN M.A. PUBLISHED BY R. VENKATESHWARA & CO., MADRAS 1, PP. 68, PRICE Rs. 1.

Sri K. Vaidyanathan has done a distinct service to the community of students by epitomizing the teachings of the Gita in a systematic and lucid manner. The summary sticks to the essentials and leaves out controversies. It is a direct presentation of the teachings of the Lord in a devout and moving manner. Students of the Gita will welcome this labour of devotion.

S. S. R.

PERIODICALS

(ENGLISH—BENGALI)

GOLDEN JUBILEE SOUVENIR OF RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SISTER NIVEDITA GIRLS' SCHOOL, PUBLISHED BY SRIMATI RENUKA BASU, SECRETARY, NIVEDITA SCHOOL GOLDEN JUBILEE COMMITTEE, 5 NIVEDITA LANE, CALCUTTA 3, PP. 142.

Sister Nivedita's life-work eludes statistical grasp for her's was the work in the very soul of India. But one tangible thing which she left behind as the monument of her own work is the national institution called the Nivedita Girls' School in Calcutta.

This Souvenir published to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the institution contains messages from the President and Vice-president of the Ramakrishna Order, the President and Vice-President of India and other eminent leaders of the nation. The General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission writes the Foreword. There are valuable articles on Sister Nivedita and her associate Sister Christine and their life-work—Education. One of the special features of the Souvenir is a symposium on 'Social Service through Religion.'

With numerous illustrations, dignified get up, neat printing and informative and instructive articles the Souvenir can be counted as worthy of the occasion it commemorates.

WOMEN'S WELFARE JOURNAL (VOL. IX. NO. 1.) SPECIAL ANNUAL, JANUARY 1953, PUBLISHED BY THE WOMEN'S WELFARE OFFICE, 7 ARAVAMUDU GARDEN STREET, EGMORE, MADRAS 8, PP. 140, PRICE. AS. 8 ONLY.

No where on earth women had been accorded such high a place as in India. That Sri Ramakrishna should have brought the culmination of his long sadhana by worshipping his wife as the Divine Mother was an incident quite in keeping with the Indian tradition. But unfortunately, due to some historic lapses in national memory, there had been a falling away from the ideal and we found a heroic race of women represented by such lofty personages like Sitā, Sāvitrī, Gārgī, Maitreyī and others of that type, reduced to ignoble plight. In his work of national regeneration of India Swami

Vivekananda laid greatest stress on uplift of women. But he laid special emphasis on the necessity of bringing about this much needed transformation strictly in the lines of the hoary and tested ideals of Indian womanhood. He also said that women must work out their own salvation—there could be no regeneration by dictation from men. If men had any role in this it was only to remove obstacles from the women's way. Gandhiji, who came, so to say as the *uttara-sādhaka* of Swami Vivekananda, galvanized the Indian womanhood by inspiring them to take their rightful place in the noble fight for independence of the country. This has vastly changed the appearance of Indian womanhood in wanted directions. Today our women have proved their metal in shouldering most acute responsibilities inside the country and in the wide world. This is indeed a very happy augury as far as it goes. But it does not go far enough. Much strenuous work remains to be done for levelling up the general standard of Indian womanhood. And this urgent task has got to be carried out in the lines of the ideals of Indian womanhood as directed by Swami Vivekananda—leavened by such assimilative stimuli of alien ideals as may not militate against the indigenous ones. A cautious conscious fusion of ideals may be permitted, but confusion of ideals must be avoided.

Could we be permitted to submit that such a much needed periodical as the *Woman's Welfare Journal*, to be true to its purpose and name in a whole manner, should, in addition to its worthy declared aims of 'promotion of social education, adult literacy, family welfare and happiness, consciously engage a part of itself in the serious study and propagation of the ideals of Indian womanhood, for unless this is done all our social work might prove futile a task in the ultimate analysis of things.

This ably edited bumper Annual Number contains articles in four languages—the major portion being in English—from the pens of eminent writers, thinkers, scholars and social servants. There are as many as eleven art plates and a children's corner.

The cover page illustration captioned 'The Labourer's Midday Meals' by H. V. Ramgopal is a bold specimen of realism in contemporary Indian Art. Sri T. V. Rangaswami's sketch of Gandhiji is a striking piece.

This Journal should have support of womanhood from all parts of India and why not from some kindly wakeful ladies in foreign lands too?

PERIODICAL

(BENGALI—ENGLISH)

VIDYAMANDIRA PATRIKA, 1953 RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYA MANDIRA, BELUR MATH, DT. HOWRAH, WEST BENGAL, PP. 154.

This profusely illustrated Annual Number affords an insight into the young minds of Bengal—impassioned, poetic, imaginative, thoughtful, idealistic.

SRI T. V. KAPALI SASTRI ON SRI AUROBINDO (II)

Sri T. V. Kapali Sastri has issued a rejoinder in the *Advent* of April 1953 to my amplified criticism of his book, *Lights on Fundamentals* published in the January 1953 issue of the *Vedanta Kesari*. After a careful perusal of his re-vindication of his position I cannot help feeling that in spite of his elaboration of certain obvious principles not particularly relevant to the issues on hand, he leaves my queries and criticisms severely unanswered. It is possible that even this evasion is due to his oft-repeated 'contempt', 'pity', and 'disgust'. But I am irreverent enough to suspect that beneath this affectation of scorn, there is a genuine failure of logic and indignation of a slighted oracle. I here propose to note as briefly as possible some new ideas that Sri Sastri has brought forward in this second rejoinder and assess their significance for our controversy.

1. I notice that Sri Sastri capitalizes a great deal my deference to Sri Aurobindo's great work, *The Life Divine*. I have no hesitation in acknowledging the great qualities of that masterpiece. But the relation of that acknowledgement to this controversy should be cleared up a little. It is possible that some of my critical observations on Sri Sastri's work are applicable to the doctrine of Sri Aurobindo himself. It is also certain that Sri Sastri's presentation of his Master's teachings creates difficulties of its own not germane to the original formulation. The former part of the criticism when directed on the full statement of the teachings by Sri Aurobindo has to be amplified with reference to the immense volume of his

It appears typical of the youth of Bengal that in this issue there should be two articles representing two great poets of Bengal—Tagore and Nazrul—as revolutionaries. Various types of literary arts find their place here—serious articles, short stories, one act drama, poems, travel accounts etc.. The general standard of almost all the articles are pleasingly high.

There are also instructive and learned articles from the pens of the Secretary, the Principal, and Lecturers of the College.

The Editors deserve congratulations for bringing out such a presentable Number.

exposition. Hence, suspending that critical task for the time being, I sought to delimit the scope of the present discussion by affirming that my critical remarks proceeded from dissatisfaction with the work of the disciple and not with that of his Master. I have made no critical comment that is not directly and immediately connected with Sri Sastri's affirmations in the book under question and his later defence published in the *Advent*.

2. I admit that Sri Sastri had reasons to leave out the treatment of Sadhana as the book, *The Four Powers of the Mother*, dealt with it, this work, (*Light on the Fundamentals*) being only an appendix to that other work. But still the high sounding 'Light on Fundamentals' suffers a lacuna by leaving out such a fundamental. What was justifiable in an appendix becomes a positive lapse in an independent treatise.

3. Sri Sastri has failed to appreciate the difficulties that his picture of the sevenfold world presents. If it was offered as pure reasoned metaphysics that would be a different matter. He uses old concepts of the Vedas, Puranas etc. and gives them what I consider arbitrary meanings and implies that those symbols and concepts bear those meanings in the ancient scriptures. The proper way to annihilate scepticism on the matter would be to produce ancient literary and scriptural authority for his interpretations. He does nothing of the kind. He just takes up only one instance, 'Jana-loka' and repeats what he had already stated in his 'Lights', that since *jana* suggests birth and since the Upanishads speak of the birth

of all beings from Ānanda, Jana-loka must mean the Ānanda of the seven-fold ladder of existence. He takes up what he considers an analogous case and tries to pooh-pooh a possible critic. 'Nārāyaṇa reposing on Ananta' means for Sri Sastri His reposing on infinite Prakṛti. He ridicules the incredulous critic as being forced to take Ananta as the traditional pauranic thousand-headed Ādi-śeṣa. There is a great confusion involved in this treatment of the case. Some analysis is needed here to understand the case logically. There are four possible alternative ways of dealing with a figure like this:

(a) One may find in this merely an ancient myth with no symbolic significance and therefore of no value to modern spiritual consciousness.

(b) One tradition-bound orthodox Vaiṣṇava may take the figure literally and accept it as fundamentally real.

(c) One may take the figure as a symbol and by careful and honest study of relevant scriptures may discover its originally intended symbolical connotation.

(d) One may understand it as a symbol and without any further scriptural investigation may read off its connotation in terms of his own present theological system.

The last is Sri Sastri's methodology. That is clearly an irrational attitude. Opposition to it does not necessitate the equally irrational attitude of the literalist believer. There are the other two sound alternatives. I took it that Sri Sastri seeking as he does, a reconstruction of the thought basic to our scriptural symbols, would adopt the only rational approach and would support his interpretations with authentic materials from ancient texts. For not a single interpretation of his which I challenged, he has produced a single bit of authority and textual support.

4. Now I proceed to Sri Sastri's reply to my charge of anthropomorphism. I do not hold and did not hold that to attribute *Tapas* to the Supreme Reality is anthropomorphism. *Tapas* as clearly enunciated in the Upanishads, means *Jñāna* and to attribute that to the Absolute is not to interpret it in grossly human terms, even though for a radical materialist even that would be anthropomorphic. My point is that the Supreme Sat-Chit-Ānanda is too transcendental and integral to have the kind of *Tapas* or concentration of conscious-

ness which would involve unconsciousness. This is a criticism I seriously urge against the whole school which Sri Sastri represents. In our human and limited levels of consciousness, depth of concentration is inconsistent with width of knowledge or consciousness. Hence excessive concentration of consciousness on any field or object necessitates considerable ignoring of other fields and objects. Sri Sastri maintains, so far as I understand him, that the genesis of matter in the universe, the descent of the Absolute into unconsciousness and materiality is to be explained as due to such a concentration of consciousness on the part of Sat-Chit-Ānanda. This is what I call anthropomorphism in the context. He is ascribing to the *Tapas* of the Godhead consequences noticed in human *Tapas* but really incongruous with the perfection of Absolute Consciousness. The incompatibility between depth and width of consciousness found in the human level is erroneously extended to the Supreme Spiritual Reality. The error is particularly striking in view of the very ostentatious rejection of the *Māyā-vāda*, which does nothing more than posit such a cosmic ignorance.

5. Sri Sastri disclaims obligation to the later 'isms' and says that my finding of traces of them in his view is due to his taking his stand on the primeval Vedas from which all these isms have sprung. But I did not criticize him for being indebted to these schools. I found fault with him for producing a patch work of several mutually conflicting standpoints. Indebtedness is not a fallacy, but incoherence is. Even if Sri Sastri takes everything from the Vedas, his is the responsibility to make his system a coherent whole. I pointed out one inconsistency as an illustration in the matter of the ontological status of the individual and the reality of the cosmic evolution. Sri Sastri has remained discreetly silent on the issue.

6. Sri Sastri is not satisfied with the facts that falsify his general characterization of the bulk of Western metaphysics. He admits the greatness of some of the Western philosophers. But he wants me to answer the questions, 'Is there a philosophic tradition in the West, as is assumed in this land, that a philosophic system is an attempt at intellectual presentation of the supra-intellectual truths perceived or experienced by the system-

builders?' I answer that there are several conflicting traditions in the West even as there are in the East concerning the function of the philosopher. But there is the more relevant phenomenon of a large number of outstanding metaphysicians in the West who reach mystical heights in their contemplation of Reality and definitely posit the need for such an immediate apprehension of the Real. When the fact is indubitable, the question raised

relating to a matter of quite secondary importance may be passed over.

These are some points calling for notice in Sri Sastry's rejoinder. I realize that Sri Sastry is furnishing no further substantiation or elucidation of his statements embodied in the *Lights on Fundamentals*. Under these circumstances, I feel, further controversy on the book serves no useful purpose.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

NEWS AND REPORTS

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND DEDICATION OF NEW CHAPEL AT THE RAMAKRISHNA- VIVEKANANDA CENTER OF NEW YORK

On Saturday May 16, at 7 p. m., a dinner was held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Center. The dinner, which was in effect a tribute to Swami Nikhilananda's untiring efforts for the past two decades in building up the Vedanta work in New York City, was attended by over one hundred and fifty guests.

The function opened with a patriotic song sung by Sri Dilip Kumar Roy, the well-known Indian singer. After the dinner a number of distinguished speakers addressed the guests. The principal speaker on this occasion was His Excellency, the Hon. G. L. Mehta, Ambassador of India to the United States. Felicitating the Swami and the Center on the completion of twenty years of fruitful work, Mr. Mehta referred to the life and teachings of both Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He described the latter as a spiritual ambassador to the United States in the tradition of the great Buddhist monks, who went to distant lands carrying the message of goodwill and brotherhood. To Vivekananda, he declared, religion was not only a spiritual quest but a social gospel; the most practical form in which it could find expression was the service of one's

follow-men. It was in this spirit that the Ramakrishna Mission had been established in India, and in the years since its inception it has given relief and succour to people without discrimination of caste, creed, or religion. The Ambassador also referred to the various branches of the Mission in America, where Hindu philosophy and culture are studied and expounded without dogmatism. Tolerance and understanding, he said, are more than ever necessary in the world today.

The Reverend Wendell Phillips, Rector of Christ's Church, Rye, N. Y., speaking on the need of a spiritual revival in the world today, stressed the indifference with which most people viewed the present world crisis. In a talk interspersed with a great deal of wit and humour, he pointed out the need of carrying out one's beliefs in one's everyday life. Dr. Horace L. Friess, Professor of Religion in Columbia University, and an active leader of the Ethical Culture Society of New York, expressed his appreciation for the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center's work in creating understanding among religions and reminded the Center's members that the comparatively small size of an organization was not necessarily an indication of the measure of its usefulness to the community. Called upon by Swami Nikhilananda for a few words, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, who had just arrived in America and was staying in New York as the Center's guest, spoke of the significance of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami,

Vivekananda for world religion and asserted that he had given himself to Mahatma Gandhi's cause because he saw in it a fulfilment of the ideals of these two spiritual leaders. Mr. Joseph Campbell, Professor of English in Sarah Lawrence College, and noted authority on mythology, describing Swami Vivekananda as a man of heroic nature eminently fitted for preaching the gospel of Hinduism in the West, paid tribute to Swami Nikhilananda as a worthy follower of a great leader.

Swami Nikhilananda, in his concluding remarks expressed his gratitude to the various speakers on this memorable occasion for their enlightening remarks and also for the considerable sacrifice they had made of their valuable time in order to be present. He also spoke feelingly of some of the faithful members of the Center, now no longer among the living, who by their unfailing support and encouragement had rendered invaluable service in building up the Center. Sri Dilip Kumar Roy brought the function to a close with a stirring rendition of Sankaracharya's 'Six Stanzas on Nirvana.' Swami Pavitrana, leader of the Vedanta Society of New York, gave the closing prayer.

The following morning, Sunday, May 17, the Center was filled with a large congregation for the formal dedication of its recently remodelled chapel. The guest speaker on this occasion, also, was His Excellency, the Hon. G. L. Mehta, who spoke on 'India and America.' The Ambassador gave a masterly survey of the cultural, economic, and political contacts between the United States and India. Speaking of the many new projects afoot in India, he said: 'There is a great experiment being carried on in India, and people should come and see it. We have no censorship and we have nothing to hide.' The two great things Indians can learn from the United States, he declared, are first, its spirit of hope, enterprise, optimism, and adventure, and second, the fundamental democracy to be observed in the New World in human relations, and the idea of the dignity of labour.

Swami Nikhilananda, in his remarks on this significant occasion, reminded the congregation that though India could learn from the west, she also had much to give. He said that while India had in her possession the precious jewels of spirituality, she was in need of a proper jewel-box in which to preserve them. In conclusion, he paid

tribute, as on the previous evening to the many loyal students of the Center, now among the departed, who had worked with him to build up the Center, as well as to all those who through their generosity and enthusiasm were helping at present to make the work a success.

The new chapel of the Center, designed to meet the needs of an increasing congregation, consists of a large main floor and a balcony, and accommodates over two hundred people. The alabaster bust of Sri Ramakrishna, by Miss Malvina Hoffman, stands on the altar before a hanging of deep red velours. The bronze bust of Swami Vivekananda in meditation, also by Miss Hoffman, occupies a prominent place opposite the main entrance. Pictures of the Holy Mother and the Virgin and Christ-child hang on the walls of the chapel, which is noteworthy for its simplicity and dignity of design.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK IN RAYALASEEMA 1952-53

Famine is a constant visitor to Rayalaseema. But in January-February 1952 Rayalaseema was visited by a famine the severity of which was unknown in living memory.

At the instance of the Ramakrishna Mission Madras, the Headquarters of the Mission deputed Swami Nityabodhananda, President, Ramakrishna Math, Rajahmundry to conduct the Relief. Cuddapah was chosen as the Headquarters of the Relief operations, which were carried on with the help of 80 volunteers and workers through 53 centres serving 273 villages. The work was started on March 25, 1952 and wound up on February 10, 1953.

Funds: The total receipts came to Rs. 4,54,049-13-3 and the total expenditure was Rs. 4,52,646-0-3, leaving a balance of Rs. 1,403-13-0. The substantial part of the resources came from the 'Andhra Prabha Fund' opened by Sri Ramnath Goenka, its total collection amounting to Rs. 3,08,314-2-7. The Madras State Relief Fund gave the Mission Rs. 1,25,000 and other local collections came to Rs. 20,259-12-3. Various other institutions and associations substantially helped in the work by donating in kind. Government departments and officials were full of sympathy and helped the work in all stages.

VEDANTA KESARI

Type of Relief Provided: The immediate need was water, food, milk for children and fodder for the cattle, and the Mission work was directed accordingly. The Mission started well-deepening work in the Chittoor district and in some parts of Cuddapah and Kadiri Taluks and furnished within the course of two and a half months as many as 21 wells with unfailing water supply. Seven milk centres and 6 fodder centres were opened in the Rayachoti and Rajampet taluks of the Cuddapah district, the milk supplied being prepared from condensed and powdered milk. Both cooked and uncooked food were supplied at the centres according to conditions, cooked food being gruel or Sankhati and uncooked food being white Jawar in the first stage and red Jawar, Sajjar Korra, wheat and rice in the later stages. Another important item of relief was the running of midday meals centres for school children, and there were at a time as many as 16 centres. Distribution of saris and blankets to women and dhotis and blankets to men, books, educational materials and dresses to school children, was another type of relief afforded. To many families who lost their all in fire accidents relief was given by supplying food and clothing and building materials. When by sudden heavy rains the Chemur river near Cuddapah rose in floods, the Mission did flood relief to two hundred families by supplying mats, rice and utensils. Some road and canal works were also undertaken and in addition to regular centres, there were many temporary grain distributing centres. Medical relief was also given in a small scale.

Method of Work: The Mission workers made it a point to open centres in far interior villages not served otherwise. For making the work more effective, a system of visiting every house to know the conditions firsthand and then of issuing cards to the most deserving was adopted. This method of individual attention, though it entailed hard work and time, was found most effective for picking out the most deserving in every village, and made it possible for the Mission to reach larger number of the needy with its limited resources. This gave the people assurance of help and avoided needless rush.

Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, and some other distinguished leaders and

officials visited some of the Mission's working centres and expressed their appreciation of the work.

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- (1) The period of the Centenary Celebrations to last from December, 1953 to December, 1954.
- (2) To publish Centenary Commemoration volume, under the caption, *The Great Women of India*.
- (3) To publish a comprehensive life of the Holy Mother in Bengali, Hindi and English.
- (4) To publish a short life of the Holy Mother in as many Indian and foreign languages as possible.
- (5) To publish *Mayer Katha* or the conversation of the Holy Mother in Hindi.
- (6) To bring out an album containing the pictures of the Holy Mother and important places associated with her memory.
- (7) To put tablets at important places associated with her memory.
- (8) Articles used by the Holy Mother and letters to be collected and preserved.
- (9) To organise an All-India Women's Cultural Conference and an Exhibition of Arts and Crafts with special reference to women.
- (10) To organise ladies' meetings at different places and institutions to popularise the life and teachings of the Holy Mother.
- (11) To hold a Religious Convention of the Lady Devotees of Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother.
- (12) To organise Essay Competition on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother.
- (13) To hold an All-India Women's Music Conference.
- (14) To arrange a pilgrimage to Jayrambati-Kamarpukur and other important places associated with the memory of the Holy Mother.

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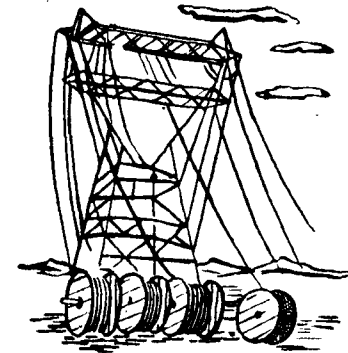
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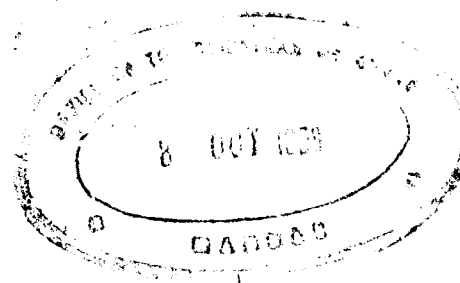
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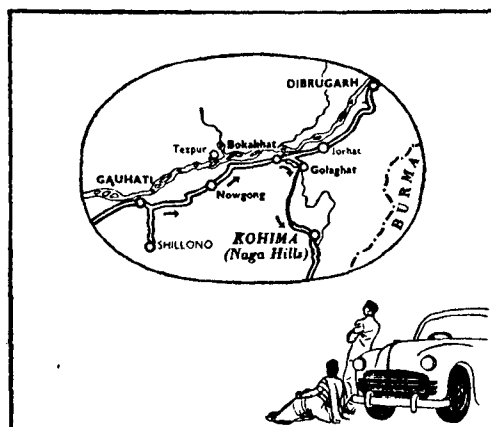
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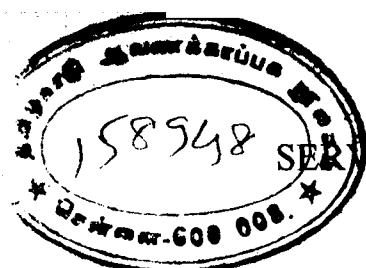
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SAVING SUCCOUR OF THE HOLY MOTHER

My child, you have been extremely fortunate in getting this human birth. Have intense devotion to God. One must work hard. How can one achieve anything without effort? You must devote sometime for prayer even in the midst of the busiest hours of the day. I used to be very busy during my days at Dakshineswar; yet I did my prayer and meditation. ...Let my sister-in-law, who complains of mental worry, do likewise. Let her get up from bed at 3 o' clock in the morning and sit in the porch adjoining my room for meditation. Let me see whether she can still have any worry of mind. She will not however do that, but only talk about her troubles! What is her suffering? I never knew, my child, what mental worry was.

Sri Ramakrishna would tell me, 'One should always be active. One should never be without work. For when one is idle, all sorts of bad thoughts crop up in one's mind!'

My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realization of God. What a wonderful mind I had at that time! Somebody used to play on the flute at night at Dakshineswar. As I listened to the sound, my mind will be extremely eager for the realization of God. I thought that the sound was coming directly from God, and I would enter into Samadhi. I experienced the same ecstasy at Belur also.



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According to hoary Hindu planning the second stage of human life is known as Grhastha-āsrama. The sacred books of the Hindus sing the glory of this āsrama in the most exuberant manner.

In the beginning of the Sānti-parva of the *Mahābhārata* Yudhisthira is found strongly bent upon following the path of renunciation. As always happened in such cases even to-day, the whole world as it were took up his case and earnestly set about educating Yudhisthira as to the unjustifiability of his inclinations. For was not Yudhisthira a king and a householder? How could he shirk his responsibilities and duties, his heroic *svadharma*, and go to the wilds like one of those world-beaten frustrated fogies who live on the ignoble profession of begging? Then what was there in the three worlds which could not be attained remaining in the order of life to which Yudhisthira belonged? When Arjuna's vigorous denunciation of his attitude failed to convince him, venerable Vyasa himself threw the weight of his sober opinion against Yudhisthira's inclinations and made the following statements dwelling upon the eminence of the Grhastha āsrama:

...The highest religion as sanctioned by the scriptures consists in the duties of a householder. ...The gods, pitṛs, guests and servants all depend (for their maintenance) upon a householder. ...Birds and animals and various other creatures, O King, are supported by householders. He, therefore, who belongs to that mode of life, is superior to all. The life of the householder is the most difficult of all the four modes of life. Do you practise that mode of life then, O Partha, which is difficult of being practised by persons of uncontrolled senses.

Sānti-parva XXIII. 2-6.

Elsewhere in the same Parva of the *Mahābhārata* we come across passages like the following upholding the superiority of this āsrama:

Indeed as all the creatures are brought up by their mothers similarly three other modes of life exist on account of their dependence upon the domestic mode. *ib.* CCLXIX. 6.

...Whatever is done by anybody for acquiring happiness has for its roots the domestic mode of life. *ib.* 7.

All living creatures consider the procreation of off-spring as a root of great happiness. The procreation of children, however, becomes impossible in any other mode of life. *ib.* 8.

Every sort of grass and straw, all plants and herbs and others of the same class growing on hills and mountains, have the domestic mode of life for their root. Upon these rest the lives of living creatures. And since nothing else is seen than life, domesticity may be regarded as the refuge of the entire universe. *ib.* 9.

Most of the Dharmasāstras too hold the same view as to the glory of the second āsrama:

As living creatures live by taking recourse to air, so all the different orders depend upon the householder for their existence.

Manu Samhitā III 77.

All the three order of ascetics (Brahmacharya, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa) are maintained by the householder with the gifts of food and knowledge of the eternal Vedas; the householder is the foremost of all orders. *ib.* 78.

A householder alone performs sacrifices, a householder alone performs austerities, and (therefore) the order of householder is the most distinguished among the four.

Vas'istha Dharmasāstra. VIII, 14.

As all rivers both great and small, find a resting place in the ocean, even so men of all orders find protection with householders.

ib. 15.

As all creatures exist through the protection afforded by their mothers, even so all

mendicants subsist through the protection afforded by householders. *ib.* 16.

Gautama beats all and goes one step further to say:

The householder is the source of these (the four orders of life), because the others do not produce offspring.

Gautama Dharmasūtras III. 3.

But the venerable teacher (prescribes) one order only, because the order of householders is explicitly prescribed (in the Vedas). *ib.* 36.

Commenting on the latter passage of Gautama, Haradatta says:

The duties of the householder, the Agnihotra, and the like, are frequently prescribed and praised in all the Vedas, Dharmasāstras and Itihāsas. As, therefore, the order of householders is explicitly prescribed, this alone is the order (obligatory on all men). But the other orders are prescribed only for those unfit for the (duties of the householder). That is the opinion of many teachers.

The hyperbolic accents in Haradatta's commentary and some of the other passages quoted above including the Gautama's are too obvious to require underlining. But notwithstanding all this, the clear enough and sober consensus of views we get here is that the Grhastha āsrama was considered to be a very important one. And why?

An analysis of the inner import of the passages reveals the one central fact that the Grhastha āsrama was considered so important because from here emanated service in multifarious forms and gave sustenance to the entire world. This order was not only the seed-bed of the world; from here also went forth all the wherewithal of life without which the world of jivas just could not go on; here alone one received all the physical shelter and succour one required. It was acknowledged that even such a wonderful tree like sannyās could not produce its flowers and fruits of liberation unless it could draw its physical nourishment from the soil of the Grhastha āsrama. The social

mechanism of the Hindus as characterised by the Varnāśrama scheme could not function for a day in its well-defined purposive manner unless the Grhastha submitted himself to a rigorous code of service integrally inset in the general layout of the duties of life.

It was also claimed, as we have seen above, that only in this āsrama all the four puruṣārthas (values of life), such as dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa could be striven for and therefore this āsrama should be considered the most pre-eminent. But most authoritative teachers have said unequivocally that it was absurd to imagine that one could attain mokṣa without giving up *kāma* and *kāñchana* (artha). In the language of Tulsidas, where there is *kāma*, there is no *Rāma*. Sri Krishna has very emphatically said that *kāma* is one of the gates to hell. If it would not be seriously urged that hell could be equated with mokṣa, then it becomes inevitable to give up the illusion that one could have both *kāma* and mokṣa simultaneously. In reference to the ultimate object of life which is mokṣa, the scope for the enjoyment of *kāma* is not a blessing by itself, for any day in the millennium one will have to transcend *kāma* before one can attain mokṣa. But taking the unregenerate man exactly where he stands, it was necessary that he be given the scope to see through and thus understand that it was *kāma* alone which was the root of all his bondage and that until *kāma* was volatilized there was no question of attaining mokṣa. The very agreeable statement that it was the householder alone who could cultivate the four puruṣārthas, which is highly misleading when taken literally, has to be understood only in the sense that it was open to the householder to see through *kāma*, realize its liberation-decoying nature, reject it outright and thus qualify himself for the attainment of mokṣa. It was only.

because Grhastha āsrama with its normal necessary implications was found wanting as to the attainment of mokṣa, Vanaprastha and Sannyāsa āsramas had to be conceived.

Life here on earth was not taken to be a closed hyphen between two unknowns but a purposive progressive continuum towards a supreme consummation attaining which there remained nothing whatsoever to hunger for. Man was not also considered as a mere skin-bound animal complete in its puny stature. He was taken to be the dweller in this house of flesh, who was free to leave it at will and become spiritually replete in the cosmic set up of the universe in a most real sense.

Celestials that dwell the higher spheres, spirits that are normally invisible to human range of vision, the human society and the lower animals—all came in the picture of the householder's daily duties; all had a claim in his devoted services. The path of service which the householder had to traverse went winding around the habitations of the creatures of the world, to upper spheres where celestials dwelt, the regions where departed souls thronged awaiting further transformation and then melted away in that pervasive oneness where diverse tunes and streams attain fulfilment. It is important that we should remember this cosmic background in which even the minor duties of the householder were conceived by the Hindu law-givers.

GENERAL DUTIES OF THE HOUSEHOLDER

Having had an idea of the nature of the background in which the life of the householder was set, it is necessary at the outset to have an ample idea of the general duties of the householder before we can spotlight the service aspect of his duties, in the matter of which one of the

early Upaniṣads supplies us a key-passage not only giving us a concise conspectus of the theme on hand but also underlining the attitude in which all services were to be done. As the student, who has lived through his Brahmacharya period of twelve years or more at his Āchārya's house, approaches the Guru for taking leave of him, out of great compassion for the student and solicitous of his all-round welfare, the Guru who should have been feeling the silent pangs of the claims of affection at these soft moments of separation, pours out a very helpful parting message indicating the broad lines of enlightened and correct procedure of covering the foregrounds that now unrolled before the young wayfarer. Those memorable words are as follows:

Speak the truth; follow the prescribed conduct; be not heedless about the solemn recitation of the scriptures; (at the time of your departure from your preceptor) offer to him the gift liked by him and take care that the line of your race is not broken. Do not fail to pay attention to truth; never fail to pay heed to the performance of duty; do not be careless about what is proper and good; be not negligent of well-being; never be indifferent to the study and the imparting of the Veda; be mindful of what is to be offered to gods and manes. Let your mother be a god to you; let your father be treated like a god; let your preceptor receive divine honour; let your guests receive from you hospitality like a god. Those acts that are irreproachable alone are to be performed, and not those that are their contrary. You must not even breathe a word when those who are more distinguished than us are in session for religious enquiry. *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* I. 11.

On *samāvārtana*¹ the Snātaka² was looked upon with due regard as a full-blooded educated young man with a character and a future, a potential prop of the society. The rigorous rules of the erstwhile formal Brahmachārin's life was now

by sanction relaxed on him. As a respectable social being he was of course expected to live by all the codes of decency, sociability, morality and piety. He was even encouraged to cultivate personal charm to a moderate degree (which was strictly forbidden for the order of Brahmacharya) and keep himself well groomed. Unlike the Brahmachārin he was allowed to use such objects of luxury as did not militate against the canons of a fundamentally spiritual culture. He was expected to maintain a high degree of personal integrity, cultivate superior interests and the company of the elite. Begging which was considered to be a special daily duty of his when he was living with his Āchārya, was now in this stage of life strictly forbidden for him.

The Snātaka, however, could not be considered a *pucca* Grhastha until and unless he was united through lawful and sacramental marriage³ with his grhīnī (wife indeed made for the grha as the upholder of which the husband was called grhastha). Of course between Samāvartana and marriage considerable time could pass. But the actual entry in *gārhaṣṭhya*, i.e. in the second stage of life, did take place only with the marriage. Marriage, therefore, has been considered as the most important *samskāra* of the householder's life.

Marriage over, now the full-fledged Grhastha with his *sahadharminī* (wife, the partner in the observance of one's religious rites) occupied the very central posi-

tion of the society. As mentioned above, it was open only to the householder to cultivate the three puruṣarthas like, dharma, artha and kāma simultaneously and also along with that strive for mokṣa. It will require quite a bit of imagination to appreciate the superiority of Hindu genius evinced in evolving such a wonderfully integrated pattern of life with a direction to the ultimate for the vast majority of humanity, a pattern of life which ignored neither the heaven nor the earth, neither the body nor the soul, neither matter nor spirit. Indeed that householder is condemned as *adharmika* (irreligious) who neglects to cultivate his legitimate share of sex-life following the injunctions of the moral code. Again the householder who over-indulged in that one urge and allowed his whole life to be motivated that way, was considered to be an abominable creature, and a scourge of society. No value except mokṣa was considered to be an end in itself. It was not for kāma by itself that the householder was to cultivate his sex-life, but it was for dharma and according to the rules of dharma that he was to do so. Same was the case with artha. One was to strive for artha not for itself but for dharma and according to the rules of dharma. Again dharma itself was no end in itself; it had its meaning in being instrumental for the attainment of mokṣa which was not only an end in itself, but the only supreme end of life.

3. 'The purpose of marriage even according to the R̥gveda was to enable a man, by becoming a householder, to perform sacrifices to the gods and to procreate sons. The verse in R̥g. X. 85. 36 shows that the husband took a wife for "gārhapatyā". R̥g. V. 3. 2, V. 28. 3 speak of the cooperation of husband and wife in the worship of gods. R̥g. III. 53. 4 contains the emphatic assertion "the wife herself is the home" (jāyedaṣṭam). In later literature also the same statement occurs. A wife was called "jaya" because the husband was born in the wife as a son (*Āitareya Brahmana* 33. 1). The *Satapatha Brahmana* V. 2. 1. 10 says "the wife is indeed half of oneself; therefore as long as a man does not secure a wife so long he does not beget a son and so he is till then not complete (or whole); but when he secures a wife he gets progeny and then he becomes complete."...Manu (IX. 28) states that on the wife depend the procreation of sons, the performance of religious rites, service, highest pleasure, heaven for oneself and for one's ancestors. So these three, viz., *dharmaśampatti*, *praja* (and consequent freedom from falling into hell) and *rati* (sexual and other pleasures) are the principal purposes of marriage according to the smṛtis and nibandhas....' Vide: *History of Dharmasastras*, by P. V. Kane, 1941, vol. II. Part I. Pp. 428-29 Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.

1. Ceremonial home-coming of the Snātaka after the formal termination of his student-career.

2. The erstwhile Brahmachārin who had just taken the ceremonial bath for marking the termination of the period of his āchārya-kula-vāsa (living in the teacher's house for study).

When we have a clear grasp of this graduated value-conception we will understand better the significance of the general duties of the householder a list of which is submitted below :

A householder should be devoted to Brahman and have his mind turned towards the knowledge of Brahman.

Mahānirvāṇa Tantra VIII. 23.

The householder should not be inordinately addicted to sleep, idling, care for body, dressing his hair, eating or drinking, or attention to his clothes. He should be moderate as to food, sleep, speech and sexual intercourse, and be sincere, humble, pure, free from sloth and persevering.

Chivalrous to his foes, modest before his friends, relatives and elders, he should neither respect those who deserve censure, nor slight those who are worthy of respect.

... He who knows Dharma should not speak of his fame and prowess, of what has been

told him in secret, nor of the good he has done for others....He should diligently earn knowledge, wealth, fame, and religious merit, and avoid all vicious habits, the company of the wicked, falsehood and treachery. ...The householder should employ himself in the acquisition of what is necessary and in the protection of the same. He should be judicious, pious, good to his friends. He should be moderate in speech and laughter, in particular in the presence of those entitled to his reverence. He should hold his senses under control, be of cheerful disposition, think of what is good, be of firm resolve, attentive, far-sighted and discriminating in the use of his senses. *ib.* 51-61.

In this ample background provided by the foregoing discussion it will be easy for us now to spot-light the service aspects of the house-holder's specific duties. (xxxii)

(to be concluded in the next issue)

REBIRTH

By T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI

Much difference has prevailed in regard to who have souls and who not. It was at one time said that women had no souls. Human beings have souls, not animals, said some. Human beings and animals have souls but no others according to others. Still others hold that even trees and stones also had souls. The last in the Hindu view. The Soul sleeps in stones, wakes up in trees and plants, knows among animals and knows that it knows in man. Its perception is limited to what its constitution can contain.

Transmigration is the passage of the soul into a new body. The old belief in India was that man may take shape as animal. There is no case of a person

becoming a plant or tree. I think Greece had it. We have a case of curse turning a woman into a stone. In the *smṛtis* man is said to be born an animal according to his beastly vices. So does it stand in the Puranas.

There is now a refinement in it. No one is born in a lower mould. The reason is said to be that the lower mould cannot contain all the instincts of the Being that he was before. Man is reborn only as Man. 'Rebirth' is reserved for this view.

All this may be only for the man who admits that man attains perfection through many lives and every birth is a stage in the pilgrimage of man towards it.

Three views are possible and all of them have been entertained.

1. Death ends all. Having served his evolutionary purpose of passing on the inheritance, man passes into the Oblivion from which he came.
2. Death does not end all. Having lived the one life that God gave, well or ill, he gets his reward, or punishment for all future or eternity. An eternity of results flows from the use of the one and only life.
3. Death does not end all. Man's soul is immortal unlike his body. Man is born again and again and learns from his earthly lives how to attain perfection and become united with God, ceasing this earthly life which is so full of suffering. At the end of each life there may be a period of stock-taking and terminable rewards or punishments, for the just previous life. Then he resumes his journey through earthly life.

Different minds work differently between these alternatives.

None can say which of them is the truth. Expression of opinion can only mean personal preference on what one deems reasonable. My preference is between the first and the third. The second seems totally unreasonable. One is inclined to say that God, the embodiment of universal Reason, could not have intended an eternity of misery for the bungling of one short life. What is to be said of those who die in infancy or at child-birth.

The first view is not implausible. On that view the end of evolution which goes on in man is not the individual on the way but Man, the developing type. Each individual only serves to produce this ultimate type.

No religion will agree to the extinction of the individual who is important in its eyes and his immortality must be secured. Then the third seems preferable. Learning through many lives to attain perfection seems natural and consistent with the clemency of God.

Mr. H. G. Wells says :

In the same manner, in varying degree, I hold all religions, in a measure, true. Least comprehensible to me are the Indian formulae, because they seem not to stand on any common experience but on those intellectual assumptions my metaphysical analysis destroys. *Transmigration of souls without a continuing memory is to my mind utter foolishness, the imagination of a race of children.* **FIRST AND LAST THINGS**

Wells does show humility in expressing his views but he is here positive because of his faith in his metaphysical analysis. I have a vague recollection that Bertrand Russell somewhere expresses a similar view.

Infant life exerts a great deal of influence on the grown-up man. How much of continuity of memory makes them one person? If in one life unremembered past events may be among the tracks of your brain why should anybody think that the impress of the old life on the new should be accompanied with a continuity of memory?

Acute intellects of the west are not all of the same view. People often express themselves more positively than is warranted by their knowledge of the particular matter.

In Mr. Macneile Dixon's Gifford Lectures on the Human Situation we come upon this passage :

Of all the doctrines of a future life, palingenesis or rebirth, which carries with it the idea of pre-existence is by far the most ancient and widely held, 'the only system to which' Hume said, 'philosophy can listen.'

Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus and even the Christian Fathers believed in it and Schopenhauer said 'It presents itself as the natural conviction of man whenever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner.' So the only conclusion to which philosophy can hearken and to which unprejudiced reflection must lead is utter foolishness and the imagination of a race

of children! Mr. Dixon proceeds to point out the disconnection of memory in one life and body and that lack of memory cannot be such a decisive factor in deciding the question.

I do not say that many successive lives stand proved but that it is not disproved by the lack of continuous memory.

But I must say that Wells is inclined to the first view and not the second. He says:

I do not think I have my personal immortality. I am part of an immortality perhaps; but that is different. I am not the continuing thing. I personally am experimental, incidental. I feel I have to do something which nobody else could do and then I am finished and finished altogether. It is now the view of Christianity and Islam and other religions that man has but one life and that makes or mars him for ever. On Doomsday the decomposed corpses of men rise at the call of a trumpet and are sorted out as candidates for Heaven and Hell.

None of the three views being Q. E. D., if reasonableness is any criterion, the second is the least reasonable and yet it is maintained as tenaciously as the others. No religion will accept the first. The third was the view even of the Christian World until it was rejected by an oecumenical council, that at Chalcedon, I think. Dixon says:

It 'has made a tour of the world' and seems indeed to be in accordance with Nature's own favourite way of thought, of which she so insistently reminds us, in her rhythms, and recurrences, her cycles and revolving seasons.

Early Indian thinkers were not exactly children but mature men whose thoughts ought not to be dismissed as foolishness or the imaginings of children or the babblings of primitive humanity. Once continuing life is taken for granted no other theory accords with reason.

JOURNEY INTO RIGVEDIC INDIA: RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT

By T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

Of the four Vedas, the oldest and the most important is the Rgveda. Although it consists mostly of hymns of praise addressed to the various gods, it affords us ample material for reconstructing the civilization of India in that remote age. 'Travellers agree,' says a writer, 'that no mountain scenery—not that of the Alps, nor any in the Caucasus, the Andes, or other famed highlands of the world—is remotely comparable in splendour and sublimity to what the Himalaya offers in almost any of its valleys.' The same may be said of the cultural Himalaya of

India, the Vedas, and more so of its Mt. Everest, the Rigveda. Those who have journeyed into this region know how unparalleled it is in splendour and sublimity. Even those who, because of other affiliations, may not venerate the Veda, admire the excellence of its poetry, the grandeur of its religious landscape, and the peaks of its philosophic thought. The Vedas, and especially the hymns of the Rigveda, which constitute the earliest literary monument of the Indo-European languages, give us, 'abundant information respecting all that is

most interesting in the contemplation of anti-quity.'

The seer-poets of the Rigveda bring tidings to their fellow-humans of invisible powers behind the phenomena of nature. Thunder and lightning, rain and wind, night and day, dawn and dusk, which are but natural occurrences to the ordinary mind, appear to the inner eye of the Rṣi as the masks of a spiritual Force that is the origin as well as the end of all things. It is to this Force that he appeals, not for gifts of the mere wealth of this world, but for granting cows that stand for the radiant rays of wisdom and horses that mean the powers of the immortal Spirit. To the critical student of the Veda the inner meaning of the hymns seldom appears; but even he marvels at the sanctified air that is about them, and at the metaphysical depths they reveal. There is no rigid pantheon of gods in the Veda. The Vedic seers want to discover the root even of the Gods. They ask, To which god shall we offer our oblation? *Kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema?* Who has seen the first-born? *ko dadars'a prathamam jāyamānam?* Questions such as these can occur only to minds that are at once devout and deeply philosophic.

The critical student of the Rigveda discerns in its hymns a gradual growth of religious thought from naturalistic polytheism to monotheism and monism. Man begins his spiritual journey by worshipping nature—those aspects of it, in particular, which baffle his understanding and threaten his existence. A great many gods are named and invoked in the Rigveda. To mention but a few: Dyaus and Prthivi are the first pair, Heaven and Earth, the parents of all creatures, including the gods. Varuṇa, the 'all-enfolder', like the Avestan Ahura, with his friend, Mitra, is the guardian of order, both physical and moral. The hymns to Varuṇa

are rich in ethical content; and the god is often implored for forgiveness of sin. The most prominent of the gods of the Rigveda is Indra, who is primarily a god of the thunderstorm, vanquishing the demons of draught or darkness, and setting free the waters or winning the light. He is also the leader in earthly battles, the lord of the hosts. As one poet proclaims, 'Without whom men do not conquer; whom they when fighting, call on for help; who has been a match for every one, who moves the immovable; he, O men, is Indra.' Agni is the Fire-God who mediates between gods and men, bringing the former to their allotted seats in the place of sacrifice, and conveying to them the sacrificial offerings. Soma is the god of inspiration, the giver of immortal life, personification of the most favourite beverage of the times—the *soma*-juice. This is stated to be Indra's especial drink. Before he slaughtered the demon Vritra, he is said to have quaffed three lakes of *soma*. Viṣṇu, a solar deity, spoken of as 'wide-going' (*uru-gāya*) and 'wide-striding' (*uru-krama*), and Rudra with his host of storm-gods called Maruts, play not an insignificant part in the Vedas; and in later Hinduism they were to become the most powerful gods, respectively, of the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva cults. Among the goddesses who are not many in the Rigveda, Aditi and Uṣas are worth mentioning. Aditi is the mother of the gods. The word which means literally 'boundless' or 'limitless' is a name for the invisible, infinite being that surrounds all things. Uṣas is the maiden Dawn, who, decked in gay attire like a dancer, clothed in light, appears in the east and unveils her charms. Rising resplendent as from a bath, she comes with light, driving away the darkness and removing the black robe of night.

There is nothing like a Pantheon in the Veda, as there is in Greek mythology, or

as there came to be in the later Hindu cults. This is because the process of personification was arrested at an early stage. Even in the case of such an opaque god as Indra, his naturalistic origins are not altogether obliterated. And also, there is no hierarchy of gods in the Veda with an acknowledged head. Max Muller has given the name 'henotheism' to a phase of Vedic religion, according to which there is no single permanent supreme God, but each god, in turn, is promoted to the status of supremacy, as the occasion demands. 'Every god', it has been said, 'takes hold of the sceptre and none keeps it.' These two factors—incomplete anthropomorphism and opportunist monotheism—combined with certain other tendencies led to the formulation of a philosophical theism which is probably unique to India. Some of these tendencies are: (1) conceiving of the deities collectively as 'All-gods' (*vis've devah*), (2) creating new gods out of the divine functions, as for example, Dhātṛ 'creator', and Prajāpati 'lord of creatures,' and (3) promoting the idea of *Rta*, which means cosmic and moral order, to a place superior to the gods. Thus, according to the Western Orientalists, there is an evolution of religious thought in the Rigveda from the chaos of a crowd of gods to the conception of a unitary principle expressing itself in a plurality of forms.

There are certain difficulties in applying the theory of evolution to the patterns of thought as found in the Rigveda. In fact, great harm has resulted from the indiscriminate extension of the doctrine of natural evolution to departments of learning where it has no relevance. It may be that biological evolution proceeds from the simple to the complex. But the course of ideas need not conform to this principle. It is not necessary that pluralism should precede monism. It may well

be the other way; or the two may be contemporaneous. Moreover, there is no unanimity about the valuation of ideas. To the pluralist, monism is a primitive form of thought, while to the monist, pluralism is an expression of the child-mind. So, even granting that there are various types of belief and thought in the hymns of the Rigveda, it is not possible to grade or date them. And, it is well to bear in mind that the Vedic Ṛsis were truth-seers, and not a set of primitive people governed by superstitious beliefs and irrational obsessions. A purely ritualistic or a merely mythological interpretation of the Vedic word does little justice to it. There is a deeper significance which is spiritual knowledge. It is this which the seers wanted to impart to posterity through the Mantras, which, in the words of Sri Aurobindo, are revealed verses of power, not of an ordinary but of a divine inspiration and source.

The highest spiritual truth is expressed in two forms in the hymns of the Rigveda, as in the later Vedanta. The two forms may be described, for the sake of convenience, as theism and absolutism. Theism means belief in a personal Deity, whereas absolutism is the philosophy which says that there is an absolute impersonal Reality which is the ground of all existence and the goal of all endeavour. Indian theism has certain features which are peculiar to it. Though the conception of God as an extra-cosmic agent responsible for creation is not altogether absent from Indian thought, the more pronounced view is that God is immanent in the world and also transcendent of it. Speaking of Aditi, one of the hymns of the Rigveda says: 'Aditi is the sky, Aditi is the intermediate region, Aditi is father, mother and son. Aditi is all the gods and the five tribes. Aditi is whatever has been born, Aditi is whatever shall be born.' The well-known *Puruṣa-sūkta*

describes the primal *Puruṣa* as immanent as well as transcendent. 'Thousand-headed was *Puruṣa*, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed. He having covered the earth on all sides, extended beyond it the length of ten fingers. *Puruṣa* is this all, that has been and that will be. And he is the lord of immortality, which he grows beyond through food. Such is his greatness, and more than that is *Puruṣa*. A fourth of him is all beings, three-fourths of him are what is immortal in Heaven.' Another feature of Vedic theism is that there is no insistence on any one form of God as the only form admissible in religion. Such an outlook makes for freedom from fanaticism and for a spirit of comprehensive sympathy for forms of worship other than ones' own. The classic text of the Rigveda which has been oft-quoted in this connection is that which declares: 'Truth is One; sages give it many a title; they call it Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan.' (*Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti agnim yamam mātariśvānam āhuh*)

The Vedic seers did not stop with a personalist view of Reality. It may be said that they did not rest content until they had a vision of the unlimited Absolute which cannot be characterized in terms of the categories known to us. The hymn where Absolutism appears in all its splendour is the *Nāsadiya-sūkta* which has been praised as containing 'the flower of Indian thought.' 'In its noble simplicity, in the loftiness of its philosophic vision', says Deussen, 'it is possibly the most admirable bit of philosophy of old times.' The first two verses of the hymn, as rendered by Muir, read as follows:

'Then there was neither Aught nor Nought,
no air nor sky beyond.
What covered all? Where rested all?
in watery gulf profound?
Nor death was there, nor deathlessness,
nor change of night and day.
That one breathed calmly, self-sustained
nought else beyond it lay.'

Here, the final Reality is significantly referred to as 'That One' (*tad ekam*), without employing any particular name. To this one principle all things are traced. Opposites like being and non-being, life and death, night and day, are shown to be the self-unfoldment of this One. How from the distinctionless principle which is 'neither aught nor nought' the world of opposites and distinctions arose no one can tell. Thus, the quintessence of Absolutism we find in this beautiful hymn. And so in the Rigveda we have the seeds of the teaching of the Vedanta.

Vedanta is philosophy. The aim of philosophy, as understood in India, is not a mere intellectual appreciation of the absolute Reality, but an intuitive realization of it in one's life. The expressions used by the Ṛsis for conveying their experience are: 'I have seen', 'I have heard', 'I have enjoyed', 'I have drunk.' The plenary experience, however, cannot come to one if there is not the requisite philosophic training. The most holy prayer couched in the *Gāyatrī-mantra*, it may be noted, is a prayer for philosophic wisdom.

'That lovely splendour of Savitr,
The shining God, we contemplate:
Our philosophic thoughts may he promote!'

We believe that every being is divine, is God. Every soul is a sun covered over with clouds of ignorance; the difference between soul and soul is due to the difference in density of these layers of clouds. We believe that this is the unconscious basis of all religions, and that this is the explanation of the whole history of human progress either in the material, intellectual or spiritual plane—the same spirit is manifesting through different planes.

We believe that this is the very essence of the Vedas.

FRAY DIEGO DE ESTELLA

By WOLFRAM H. KOCH

(Continued from May '53 issue)

'The world shows the will many apparent goods like delights, honours, temporal profits and other similar things; but under these goods, which are transient and false, is hidden the death of guilt with its abominations of vices and sins. These delusions thou receivest, O my soul, when, beginning to love these outward vanities, thou buyest eternal and lasting torments at the cost of losing thy freedom. I do not know what provocation and badness this is, for, although it is so very natural for thee to love the good, as it is for fire to burn, thou leavest thy God who is the highest Good and an act of pure goodness for the sake of so superficial a goodness as is the goodness that shines in the creature. The goodness of the creature is nothing but a small drop that emanates from that infinite ocean and profound abyss of the ineffable goodness of the Creator.

'Why dost thou leave existence for appearance, the living for the picture, that which is truly good for a shadow of good? Under this small goodness that thou beholdest in the creatures, which they received as a loan from the highest Goodness of God, there are hidden many imperfections, but the goodness of the Lord is really and truly His own without any mixture of any imperfection. What malignity is thine that thou leavest what is substantially good and essentially good and so very worthy of being loved, being the highest Goodness, in order to run after a small momentary good which covers many faults and defects that are worthy to be abhorred? 'No one is good except God', says the Scripture, for He alone is substantially good, and His goodness is natural to Him and belongs to His essence; whereas the goodness of the creature is acquired, communicated, borrowed, and very superficial, and it is not good of itself, but only by participation, which comes through the goodness it received from God.'

'What man is there in the world who setting his affection on a very natural likeness of a person, would not set a greater affection on that person himself? If all creatures are but drawings by Thy hand, my God, should I not set greater affection on Thee than on Thy image and drawing? And if I love with

so great a care the things which compared with the nobility of my soul become only desirable because of my covetousness, why should I not love That without which there is no good at all and who created those things out of love for me?'

'Love moves a person more to love another than any benefits received from him; for he who benefits another gives him something of what he possesses, but he who loves gives himself with all he possesses without anything being left to give.'

'Natural and also worldly love, when a friend is very fond of another, at once believes to belong to him and entrusts him with all he possesses and gives him what he has, forgives him all troubles or insults which he may have received. He is not envious of any good he may experience, works to content him, does not injure him in anyway, suffers great travail for the loved one and attacks any danger; and the pain and suffering produced in him by compassion with foreign suffering is greater than that suffering. Thus, if the person by whose love he is made captive lacks joy, he is most sad; if he lacks health, he is more ill; if he is poor, he is not rich; if he sees him in adversity, he thinks himself full of tribulation.

'So if worldly love does this in the subject in whom it is, how much more will Divine Love effect in him if he is properly prepared by grace and the goal is the highest Good which is God, from whom comes all perfection?'

'O great force and excessive power and vigour of love! What art thou not able to do and what arduous thing dost thou not begin and what strong thing dost thou not vanquish, even if they appear impossible?'

'O, most mighty power of love that art stronger than death and ever so much more powerful than all powerful and strong things, much mightier than all mighty things, and much sweeter and gentler than anything in the world!'

'Whoever wishes to do so, my God, may ask of Thee the gift of wisdom, the gift of prophecy, may ask for humility and chastity

and whatever he may wish for, but I will only ask Thee for Thy Divine Love; for he who possesses that, possesses all. It is the greatest good which can be desired and the greatest gift that can be given. And the reason is that whatever gift may be conceded to me and whatever benefit may be given me, is nothing to me if Thou deniest Thy Divine Love, wherewith I am to possess Thee; for love has such power that it makes Thee, O Lord, belong to me, and my possession and inheritance. He who has all he could have, but has not the love of God, has no fruition of God.'

'Such is the power and the strength of the Divine fire of love that purifying our sensuality it spiritualizes it and lifts it up to enjoy itself in Thee, O Lord, together with the spirit.'

'So great and rare is the power of love that I must be even as the object of my love, and like that which I attain by love. There is nought that joins or adheres in as lasting a fashion as love, which unites and joins us with the Beloved in such a way as to transform the lover into the object of his love. Love is nought but a unitive and mutual virtue. As iron, when greatly heated in the forge, becomes fire, so my heart, as it burns, O my Lord, in Thy Divine and sacred fire, is entirely transformed into Thyself by love. It is deified and becomes as God. The iron, cold and dark as it is, becomes transformed into fire and grows soft, warm, bright and shining, with all the properties of fire, doing all its works and everything that is done by fire, since it can burn, shed light and enkindle.'

'Why should my soul be adulterous having so beautiful and so rich a Spouse, so worthy to be loved? I shall be lame in the love of the world and the way of evil so as to walk lightly in the paths of Thy Divine Love where I shall enjoy Thy sweetness.'

'Do not desire exterior things, do not ask for the exterior and passing like the world that is satisfied with fleeting apparent and vain things.'

The following passages are taken from Estella's *Tratado de la vanidad del mundo*.

'Most friendships of the world are like the friendship of the raven. Those who seem to be your friends, are not truly so, but only lovers of themselves; they make a show of their interest, but in reality they are only seeking themselves in you.'

'Do not trust the world, neither should you make much of words, nor of the vain friendships of men, and do not think that the false world is going to treat you better than it treated Him who created it.'

'Fly from dangerous conversations. Even if the wall is not burnt by the flame of the candle that touches it, it is at last made ugly and blackened thereby. Even if you do not begin to burn, your character will be darkened by bad conversation.'

'Come to know the danger that lurks not only in evil but also in what you take to be good. Greater harm is done to a Christian by the things that appear to be good than by those that are openly evil.'

'What can you gain by all human praise but a little wind and smoke that passes away? If you wish to be praised by men, despise their praise.'

'What is more foolish than loving vain things and despising the true ones? What is more perverse than forgetting God, and thinking only of men? What greater absurdity is there than looking at the world and despising heaven?'

'In the hour of death you will find that all that time has been wasted which you spent in satisfying men; but you will find that you will have profited greatly by that spent in satisfying Jesus Christ.'

'Everything is false and full of delusion. Honours blind worldly men, and the great ones are less masters of themselves.'

'The variety of desires has its origin in the disease of the soul. He who is ill desires many things.'

'God gives corporal strength to the animals, but fortitude belongs to men. This fortitude, which is the virtue of the striving mind, consists in suffering adverse things with magnanimity. How can you possess fortitude if you feel sad because of a word that has been said to you? You praise yourself for being strong and menace those who have injured you! Thus you contradict yourself saying that you are strong, while those who hear you see that you are vanquished by small injuries, and that you do not possess courage or fortitude to suffer very little things. The strong, generous soul forgives injuries, is not moved by any adversities, and faces all tribulations. How can you be strong if you are troubled by a nothing and lose your sleep because of little things?'

'Those who possess greater corporal strength are usually more ill and weak in spiritual things. So do not pride yourself because of these vanities, but rather recognize that you are weak and sinful, subject to necessities and vanquished by weak things.'

'If those who are ill in body are not worthy to be hated, but to be pitied, much less must those be abhorred who are wounded in their souls.'

'No one can insult you if you do not wish to receive the insult; and if ever he who offended you is in your power, you should take the possibility of revenge as revenge. It is the noblest and most honest form of vengeance; for it means forgiving while you are able to revenge yourself. This forgiving of insults does not belong to cowardly hearts, not to small ones, but to manly souls that are generous.'

'Before God manifested to the Prophet Ezekiel what he had to say to the children of Amon, he killed his wife, who, being dead, was lifted up to hear the secrets of God; for before that she was held back and fettered by carnal love. As sensual sin obscures the understanding, blunts judgement and paralyzes reason, thus, on the other hand, the purity of chastity disposes the soul and makes it fit for a clearer knowledge of God and the celestial secrets. Among the Apostles only St. John and St. Paul were virgins, of whom one was lifted up to the third heaven and beheld the Divine Essence, and to the other were revealed the celestial secrets on the breast of the Lord.'

'Being endowed with that singular prerogative of chastity St. John and St. Paul were subtler and possessed a higher knowledge of Divine things, as is apparent in their writings. St. Thomas of Aquinas, gifted with this virtue, shone brightly in the Church because of his wonderful wisdom.'

'He who is free from earthly cares and anxieties will be able to contemplate the celestial secrets. Chastity subjects sensuality to reason and thereby disposes the soul to communicate and hold converse with her Spouse Jesus Christ.'

'Of God, who is most pure and most clean, Scripture says that He grazes among lilies, because He finds His delight in the white purity of chastity. Every thing finds its delight in its likeness. Purity in the rational creature is most pleasing to God, in which, as greatly conform to Him, the Lord enjoys Himself and rests.'

'It is written, no unclean thing shall enter the celestial city. To chastity most principally is attributed the spiritual beauty of our soul, because it creates a consonance and a proportion, subjecting the flesh to the spirit.'

'The Sage says: "O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory, for the memory thereof is immortal; because it is known both with God and with men".'

'Chastity is not born or preserved except in austerity of life and mortification of the flesh. Chastity is in great danger in the midst of delights, and perishes without fasting and moderation. Supported by these two it lives and is nourished. It is a greater miracle to be chaste without being abstinent than to resuscitate the dead.'

'Weddings swell the earth, but virginity peoples heaven. It is more, being in the flesh, to live cleanly than to be an angel. That the snow preserves its whiteness in the region of the air is not to be highly appreciated; but that it, lying on the earth in the midst of dust and mud and being stepped on, preserves its whiteness is to be highly esteemed. It is no miracle that the angels are clean and keep their virginal purity in heaven, where there is nothing that is contrary to it; but that men clothed in flesh and living in the world and being in contact with it live cleanly among so many dangers, must be valued very highly. If there could be any envy in the angels, they would be envious only of virgin men. That is why the angel did not consent to be adored by St. John the Evangelist, because he was a virgin.'

'Flee from the conversations and company of the dissolute and you shall prepare a dwelling for the Holy Ghost in the clean body.'

'The Spirit of the Lord does not dwell in unclean bodies, but in clean and chaste men. Virginity is a glorious and angelical virtue. Blessed is the soul that serves her Spouse Jesus Christ in a clean body. Blessed is he who prepares in his clean heart a dwelling for the Holy Ghost; blessed he who, cleaning the temple of the Holy Ghost, gives it a dwelling in his soul. Flee from the pestilence of sensual vices, so that your soul may be an honest and loyal spouse of Jesus Christ.'

'Moses ordered all women to be killed except the virgins, with whom he used compassion. Chastity delivered them from death as it shall deliver you from eternal death.'

'Well does he do who leaves all earthly things and, avoiding all paths to sin, hides

himself in secret, fleeing from the affairs and danger of this world.'

'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God, says the Lord. God loves the clean heart and in it dwells Jesus Christ in peace; and in the humble and gentle rests the Holy Ghost. In tumult Christ is lost; in laughter he is insulted; in wrath, speared; in a lie, spat at; in detraction, robbed; in deception, wounded; in hatred, crucified. Cleanse your heart of all worldly affection. Remove from it the love of worldly praise and the vain glory of the temporal.'

'Wash your hands of perverse actions; guard your lips from idle words, your eyes from seeing vanities and your heart from evil thought; for then you shall have it clean before God. You wash your hands and your face many times, so as not to displease men; therefore you must much more wash your conscience of all vice and sin, and your heart of all stains, so as to please God, who sees the hidden secrets of the heart. The pure heart is the eye wherewith God is seen, and through the purity and cleanness of conscience we come to the glory of eternal bliss. The pure heart is the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost, and where no evil thought is admitted, there dwells God. As pots and pans are cleaned by rubbing them with a rough cloth, so by austerity of life our heart is cleaned.'

'He who serves God half-heartedly and weakly is very near to leaving Him altogether for sin. St. Peter, being imperfect and weak, followed the Saviour from afar and not from near by, when His enemies led Him away as a prisoner; wherein you should see that those who follow Christ half-heartedly like St. Peter, are very near to leaving Him completely and falling; for the half-hearted in the service of God will very soon become cold.'

'A heart cannot receive two contrary loves; that is why he who wishes to serve God must despise and abhor the works of the Evil One and the love of this world. Isaiah says: "The bed is straitened so that one must fall out; and a short covering cannot cover both." If the love of the world dwells in you, there is no room for the love of God. If you would clean your heart of the love of the world, Divine love would enter it. He who has experienced the consolation of God, abhors everything that the world can offer to his senses. If men knew the gift of God and tasted how sweet the Lord is and how joyful the service of the heavenly King, they would gladly despise all earthly things and the hard service of the world. Serving the flesh is

death, the food of worms, nourishment of illnesses, corruption of bodies, destruction of virtues, perdition of good and gain of many evils and pains. Serving God is blessedness of the soul, health of the body, prudence of the mind and heavenly life. Whom shall you serve: the Lord who treats His servants well, or the tyrant who ill-treats them?'

In all his writings Fray Diego de Estella's sense of the evanescence of the world and the transitoriness of all worldly pursuits and pleasures with their evil consequences for the soul is extremely marked; so marked, indeed that it makes him harp again and again on the same favourite subjects, almost without any variation. In spite of this, much may be gleaned from them that is valuable for all spiritual aspirants, both of the West and the East, and can be used in building up their own disciplines and methods for reaching the ultimate goal of their longing.

A story is told of a dead man who came to a sage begging him for money for his second marriage. 'Do you not know that you are no longer alive, but living in a world of illusion?' replied the sage, and showed him the shroud he was wearing. Later the son of the sage asked him: 'If this is true, may be I also am living in a world of illusion?' 'If you really know it to be a world of illusion,' answered the sage, 'then you are no longer in it.'

To Diego de Estella, of course, our world was not a world of illusion—an idea utterly foreign to Christianity—but a world of deception and misleading will-o'-the-wisps of desires and cravings to be shunned by all possible means in order not to be entrapped and blinded by them. In both cases the man who fully realizes its deceptive nature will one day waken to the fundamental quest for Truth and begin his homeward journey to God or to his true eternal Self.

We should be grateful to the saints and mystics of all ages and races, for they

bring the same eternal message of freedom and redemption from blindness again and again to men, saint and sinner alike, to those hopelessly entangled in the meshes of their sensuality and to those already treading the path to God. This surely is the greatest service anyone can render mankind.

THE EDUCATION AND MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN IN EUROPE

By M. H. REVAULT d'ALLONNES

The healthy mental and emotional development of children, and the improvement of education to this end, must be a continuing responsibility of those who are aware that the foundations of world peace are laid in the minds of men. As Europe has been the scene of two major wars which have profoundly shaken the structure and the values of society and thus affected the mental well-being of many, both, children and adults, Unesco began its contribution to the study of problems in this field by convening a Regional Conference on the education and mental health of children in Europe, which was held in Paris at the end of 1952. Each of the European Member States of Unesco was invited to send an expert delegate. To this group was added a body of independent experts with special knowledge and representatives chosen from non-European regions. The Conference represented too a wide range of professional experience—teachers, medical specialists, psychologists, lawyers and administrators, thus permitting an exchange of views not only between different countries, but between different professions connected with child welfare.

Although its programme was very extensive, the Conference made no attempt to

go over the ground already covered by research workers and practising psychologists in particular subjects, a profitless if not impossible task, nor to deal with each subject exhaustively. It was considered more important to examine from an essentially practical standpoint the present-day problems (which often vary from country to country); to note what seemed to be the best solutions, to reject those which seemed of little help. This meant concentrating on those problems and questions of which everyone is aware, but whose solution is still non-existent, uncertain or a matter for discussion; those which appear to be far more important than is usually thought; and those very precise solutions which have been given and which seem to have a certain practical interest.

In order to cover the ground adequately the Conference was divided into four working parties:

Group I studied the problems of pre-school education and the first years of primary schooling: orphans; first entry to school; transfer from class to class and school to school; the social climate at school—child-child and child-teacher relationships; selection, training and continued training of teachers.

Group II dealt with problems concerning the final years of primary schooling and with secondary schooling, i.e. the 10-18 age group; syllabuses and methods; discipline; competition and co-operation; overstrain and pressure; class lessons, home work, examinations; selection, training and further training of teachers; moral and religious education; co-education.

Group III turned its attention to those factors and influences which do not come under the direct control of the school: parent-teacher relationships; out-of-school activities, leisure pursuits; the effect of parents' attitudes and expectations on the child, the teacher and the school administration; anxiety factors reacting on the child; teaching of mental hygiene at school; psychological, educational and vocational guidance.

Group IV studied the problems of exceptional children: backward and mentally defective children, maladjusted children, highly intelligent children; contacts with parents of problem-children; modifications of programme and methods for ensuring the better mental hygiene of pupils. This last point raised the question of the selection and training of specialized personnel: educators, specialist teachers, psychologists, social workers, psychotherapists, neurologists, psychiatrists, administrators, etc.

NEED FOR TEAM WORK

All working parties were of the opinion that problems concerning the mental health of children were as a rule too complex to be solved by any one person working in isolation, or even by parents, who are coming to feel an ever greater need for assistance. Conversely it seemed clear that no problem concerning the child can be solved without the participation of its family.

This underlines the need for team work between parents and specialist workers to re-establish or maintain the child's mental balance.

According to the nature of the problem, the parents will co-operate with differently constituted groups: teacher and school psychologist for questions relating to the school; specialist teachers, psychologists and psychotherapists and doctors for problems of re-adaptation; children's magistrates, medical specialists, social welfare workers for questions of child delinquency; psychometric and medical experts in the diagnosis of certain other disorders. This idea implies the organization of centres (staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of specialists) for the diagnosis, treatment and educational guidance of children.

The concept of integration in a team was studied in particular by Group III in connexion with the healthy mental development of each individual. Real maturity cannot be acquired without a feeling of security. To belong to a group, to have a recognized function in this group, to be useful and necessary, these are the factors which make for a feeling of security, and which are best provided at first by the family and then by the extension of the family in the school environment. Characteristic of this maturity and feeling of security is the fact that each member of the group is capable of making mistakes and admitting his mistakes, and is able to co-operate in the work of the team rather than behave submissively or dictatorially in a hierarchy.

FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Among the more important factors affecting the behaviour of the child at school all groups recognized the outstanding importance of family atmosphere, of the parents' attitude to the child and

the relationships between the parents. To aid the child, one must in fact often aid the parents; many cases can be cited of children who show disorders of behaviour which disappear when the parents are helped.

Group I studied these questions in relation to pre-school education; Group III in its examination of the effect on children of the attitudes and expectations of parents, of the anxiety factors affecting community mental health and bearing upon children; and Group IV in its discussion of contact with the parents of 'problem children'. Group III considered that the various aspects and influences outside the school should have as their focal point the maintenance and preservation of satisfactory family life. Since this was in the opinion of the group the most important factor in the development of the child's personality, all other out-of-school influences should be related to this focus.

Cultures which have temporarily taken away from the family the role of child-rearing, have eventually found themselves obliged to return to that role. This is so true that it seemed to the working party, when discussing cases of children who had had to be put into boarding institutions, that every effort should be made to restore the child to his family, if possible, whatever the latter's shortcomings. It is the family—father, mother and children—which best supply the child's basic emotional needs: acceptance, affection, comfort, security, confidence; his basic physical needs: food, shelter, clothing. It is in the family that the child will find protection and where his first experiences will best be tolerated because he is loved by the family. This first social unit is a base of operations for the child's achievement of an expanding circle of social relationships and is an

agency for cultural and spiritual transmissions.

THE SUBSTITUTE FAMILY

The study of this question meant defining the way in which to tackle the problem of the team which is to protect and assist the family and the substitute family in cases where the child loses his parents. Today there appears to be a tendency, to provide props and supplementary services to counteract the evils caused primarily by a child's loss of his natural family. Group III felt that emphasis should, on the contrary, always be on strengthening and maintaining the child in his own family unit, particularly during the first five years, and where possible restoring him to it. Group IV felt that placement in a boarding institution was already an admission of failure and should occur only when absolutely necessary.

Nevertheless any temporary or permanent provision for children with inadequate or non-existent families should aim to preserve, as far as possible, the functions and experiences provided in ordinary families. Placement in another 'ordinary family' is probably the best substitute for home, in this order: adoption, foster home, boarding out. When placement in an institution is considered the best solution the mental welfare of the child is apparently best maintained where the family group system exists: small homes with house-mothers and house-fathers, small groups of children of mixed ages and both sexes attending school and participating in leisure activities outside the home. If the only possible solution is that of a large institution, the latter can be organized in smaller family units each having its own house parents. Here again the substitute family, like a natural family, is made up of mixed ages and both sexes.

It is important that the various family substitutes should also provide for continuity and stability, avoiding unsettling transfers from one institution to another, changes of staff, etc. wherever possible. (In countries where adoption is illegal, the child can be adversely affected by frequent changes of substitute parents.)

One of the most important points, more important even than a certain level of material comfort, for the harmonious development of the child in the substitute families, is that of the choice of foster parents, that is the selection and training of house-fathers and house-mothers. This question was studied by all the working parties.

PARENTS

The working parties tried to define the role of parents and it seemed, following on from the above discussion, that it is in carrying out adequately her maternal role that a mother can best help the mental health of her child.

Many parents nowadays feel insecure in their parental role. The extension of auxiliary services makes them feel—unjustifiably—unnerved and inefficient; the unwise diffusion of psychological knowledge tends to increase their awareness of their own deficiencies; economic insecurity, sometimes disastrous for family life, adds a burden of psychological insecurity. Where parents—including the fathers—are reassured that they are the best people to bring up their own children, where they are given unobtrusive help and support, anxieties are lessened and warm and creative personal and marital feelings are released and strengthened.

It was therefore suggested that each community should study its local conditions with a view to providing some of the following ameliorations already found helpful in some countries, for example:

- financial assistance to enable mothers to devote themselves full time to their family;
- housing conditions that allow the family a comfortable level of existence;
- health visitors, who advise and assist all mothers after the birth of every child;
- children's clinics;
- day nurseries which do not accept babies under the age of 9 months, so long as they have a mother, in communities where the mother is receiving financial aid during these 9 months;
- education for those parents desiring it;
- parent-teacher co-operation;
- advice to engaged and newly married couples, etc..

Legislation affecting the family should be tested by the criteria outlined above; in particular we should ask, does it encourage motherhood, contribute to the mental health of the mother and provide a mentally healthy environment for children by supporting and sustaining the parents in their educative role?

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL

An impressive variety of professions devoted to the welfare of the child are now open to adults and it is seen that many professional workers have a role to play in the healthy development of children. All working parties therefore studied the question of the selection and training of specialized personnel in the mental health field.

The groups recognized that in the selection of this personnel a certain number of characteristics seemed contra-indicated, others on the contrary, essential, and that a basis of common training was necessary. These child specialists may be teachers or educationists, social welfare workers, pediatricians, neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, judges,

magistrates, administrators, etc.. The crucial test for the selection of some of these specialists more directly in contact with the child is that of the probationary period after obviously unsuitable persons have been eliminated. All specialists connected with child welfare should study psychology, not only theoretically but through practical case study.

ACQUISITION OF CULTURE

The acquisition of culture is a life-long process. The school arouses and develops an appetite for culture while providing the means for its acquisition. General culture has always been considered an important factor in adaptation and therefore in mental health. It seems regrettable that in most of our countries the idea of what may be considered general culture in school curricula has remained practically unchanged during the last 100 years, in spite of social and scientific changes that have taken place in the world. In many, if not most European schools, the general culture taught is neither general nor in fact cultural. On the one hand it ignores almost completely the social, artistic and manual aspects of education; on the other, many teachers are obliged to neglect the quality of their teaching to inculcate a mass of inert facts which the child thankfully forgets.

Several points seemed important to Group II. The acquisition of culture is a life-long process; at school the child should learn to learn. His level of general culture should be assessed in terms of his mastery of essential techniques, and in terms of his attitude towards learning. The school's efforts should be evaluated in the light of the harmony between the curriculum and the development of the various capabilities of the pupils and in terms of the relevance of what it seeks to do to life within the human community.

METHODS

It seems therefore that the educational methods which best maintain the mental health of the child are those which stimulate him to learn by whetting his appetite, rather than those which stuff him with knowledge. The healthy school is child-centred rather than teacher-centred.

The mental health of the children is adversely affected by inconsistencies between the various branches of their education. In particular home and school should be in harmony and there should be no conflict between school life and the practice of religion.

What the child learns must meet his personal needs. Curricula are often overloaded from the point of view of both teacher and child. The delegates were unanimous in thinking that children's interests should be aroused by active teaching methods.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

If its relationship with the home is good the school is by far the most important social institution in Europe for the establishment and maintenance of mental health.

The factors of growth (security, independence, identification and opposition) need to be provided for in the good home. They are no less necessary in the good school. The school day must offer both security and independence and must give every child the opportunity to identify himself with the purpose of his teacher, his class, and the school as a whole, and also to oppose them without becoming either subservient or a rebel. The school must however fulfil the function set for it by the teachers and by adult society, including the parents. In his dealings with children, each teacher plays one or several of a variety of roles: he teaches,

imposes discipline, guides, stimulates spontaneous behaviour and sets an example. The learning situation is properly one of give and take on the part of both children and teachers. As a social group the school should reflect relationships of mutual respect and shared responsibility between the head and the staff, and between adults and children.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Parents and teachers together can, with some outside assistance in difficult cases, discover the aptitudes and potentialities of the child. Parent-teacher associations are very helpful in many countries. They have various activities: regular parent-teacher meetings; home visits; providing interchanges between parents and teachers and also contacts between parents and teachers in the presence of children so that the latter do not feel excluded.

School psychologists are also often a most effective link, as also are trained social workers.

In cases where an important or permanent difficulty is noticed parents and teachers should call in a psychological team to assist. Quite apart however from the more serious cases, there are examples where unknown to each other parent and teachers put pressure on over anxious children. Here too the intermediary of the skilled psychologist can help both parents and teacher to adjust their demands in the best interests of the child.

OVERWORK AT SCHOOL

This question particularly interested the specialists. In recent years, curricula have tended to become heavier and school hours shorter; and the child is left between the claims of competing specialists. Official recommendations have been made that the time spent on purely intellectual

work should be limited. But this does not always reduce the strain on the child since intellectual work cannot be separated sharply from other activities. Attention too was given to the baneful effects of competitive examinations and other means of stimulating emulation between children. The present system of class tests, merits and placings in forms perhaps stimulates the best ten or twelve percent, the remainder lapse into apathy or despair, their self-confidence steadily undermined.

THE CHILD EDUCATES THE CHILD

The spontaneous informal relationships among children and adolescents are vitally important educative and psychological factors. The value of play was also stressed and the necessity of providing space and time for play activities.

Organized relationships too are important whether they arise spontaneously or through community activities. It was felt that where possible such organized relationships should be open to all children irrespective of their political, religious, economic or social background.

For adolescents, organizations which have adults capable of understanding and guiding young people during the period of revolt against parental authority, are a useful intermediary between the growing boy or girl and his family.

PROBLEM CHILDREN

The need for a very early diagnosis of backward, defective or maladjusted children raises the question of how to organize early screening. This latter requires a team of doctors and psychologists, whose respective functions were studied in detail.

Only in certain cases is it true that mentally subnormal children present easily distinguishable anomalies. On the contrary, many children considered to be dull are not in fact so; or at least have undeveloped

potentialities. Many more can follow normal class work with some help if they are not allowed to fall behind because of a temporary difficulty.

Group IV referred to a definition of G. Mauco: 'Any child who does not succeed in a given branch of education is scholastically maladjusted', and studied the screening and treatment of cases. Many cases are concerned with the educationally sub-normal or highly intelligent, who each have their own problems, who can be saved from character disorders, bad work and other symptoms of maladjustment, during childhood or adolescence if scholastic and educational measures suitable for

their case are taken in time. These children are then perfectly adapted to their existence: they are normal children.

In another way the Conference organized by Unesco was a success: it brought together specialists from different countries and from different branches of learning. Team work to promote mental health of the child did in fact take place among the working parties of the Conference. These contacts will be followed up. Numerous participants requested that their working party continue its investigations independently after members have resumed their professional duties in their own country.

चरैवेति

ENTERING SERVICE

It was about an hour before sunrise. Rameswar was engaged in milking his cow. His daughter, Janaki, returned from the tank, carrying a pitcher of water. Keeping it down in the usual place, she said with a little excitement, not common with her, 'Father, I find that there are four strangers in our village tank today. Standing waist-deep in water, they are pulling out the weeds. As it is still not quite bright, I was unable to mark their faces properly.'

Milking over, Rameswar finished some more items of domestic work and hastened to the tank bund. The sun had risen by this time. There they were, four fairly well built young men, pulling out the last

weeds out of an area resembling a square. It looked as though they had programmed to clean a definite portion of the tank on that particular day.

By the time Rameswar approached them, they had taken up brooms improvised out of twigs and leaves and started cleaning neighbouring areas. Two of them went to opposite sides of the bund, while the third and fourth took up the main street of the village and the temple front respectively. By and by more men and women, and some children too, gathered. While the elders were discussing what it all meant, two or three middle-aged people stepped forward and agreed to take over the cleaning themselves. The graceful

way in which the strangers continued their work created a wonderful response. A number of the spectators, especially women and children, hastened to their thatched huts and returned with their own brooms. With so many hands to share in the work, important parts of the village became clean in an hour. As this work proceeded, the strangers asked for a few spades and baskets. Within another hour a good manure pit was made, and the things swept off from the roads were, after proper sorting, either burnt or put into the pit.

Having done this little bit of service, they had a preliminary wash; and then they walked up to the temple for a short prayer. Then they came out and sat on the platform beneath the gaint banyan tree standing right in front of the temple. They faced the shrine and started singing some simple songs in chorus. This attracted almost every one in the village. Many sat down, imitating the strangers, while others who knew singing stood round them and joined the chorus.

Rameswar stood thinking for a time, quietly slipped out of the crowd, followed by his daughter, and before songs ended, returned with four neat tumblers and a jug of sweetened milk. The daughter brought a pitcher of water and a newly-washed towel. Some other devoted hands fetched fruits and arranged them round what Rameswar and Janaki kept.

After saying grace the strangers refreshed themselves, sharing the fruits with

some of the smallest children, thereby evoking mild protests from the parents concerned. While offering their thanks, the four young men made a polite request that none should press them to reveal their full names, but that they might henceforth be called by their mere initials, V., S., P., and C. They then stood in the order of these initials and in the eyes of the spectators there was an expression of thankfulness, wonder and respect. Who would not like to be blessed with sons of this type?

Lest their stay should prove too heavy a burden upon the devoted section of the villagers,—who were not rich at all—the young men insisted on a number of them joining together and supplying them their noonday meal. Then through informal chats they slowly elicited information about the number of widows and orphans in the village, the types of diseases that usually affected the locality, the minimum conveniences which would make their life a little more easy and so on. In the evening after a few chorus songs, they divided the boys and girls, present at the time, into suitable groups and did some teaching work by telling short stories and putting simple questions on the topics covered.

You and I may call this a 'Night Class', if we like.

भग चरैवेति !

SUBANDHU

Keep the motto before you, 'Elevation of the masses without injuring the religion.' Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. ...the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get but upon the *condition of the masses*. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts? This is to be done and *we will do it*. You are all born to do it.

Swami Vivekananda

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Service in Gyastha Dharma (Editorial)

In the August '53 editorial we showed what an important role the ideal of service played in the educational scheme of ancient India; and also what urgent role it should play in the educational programmes of modern times. In this month's editorial we have endeavoured to show the place of the ideal of service in the next stage of life, that is to say, in the life of the householder as it obtained in ancient India. This ideal soaked so deep and in such pervasive manner in the Indian way of life that it came to be largely an expression of the ideal of service in multifarious operations. If humanity is ever to emerge out of the dangerous situation of the day to any haven of fool-proof safety, leaders and followers of men will have to learn to walk the path of service.

Rebirth

Just three weeks before his passing away on July 2, '53, Sri T. R. V. Sastri, our esteemed contributor, had handed to us this his last contribution, captioned 'Rebirth', with his characteristic polite request to see as to if it were worth publishing. He had also specially asked us to communicate to him our opinion about the article. But he did not care to stay on long enough! Readers will here mark the intellectual alertness which the writer retained upto the last of his days.

Journey Into Rgvedic India: Religion and Philosophic Thought

For a sensitive mind susceptible to cultural, philosophical and spiritual stimuli there can be hardly anything more fascinating than a 'Journey into Rgvedic India', for there Nature, Gods and Man commingled in such superb ecstasy of life as has been rarely witnessed in this fear-blanketed world. Bold, virile, simple, searching sojourners of the times scaled the sunny summits and delved the fathomless depths of life and declared in paean-voice wonderful eternal truths in sky-thrilling vibrations of that language spoken by celestials.

Whatever flowers and fruits of religion and philosophy India may have given the world have grown on a tree which has its roots in the Vedas. This dissertation by Professor T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, which will be read with interest by our readers, was broadcast from Nagpur on July 13, '53. It is being published here by kind permission of the Station Director, All India Radio, Nagpur.

Fray Diego De Estella

A portion of this article appeared in the May '53 issue of the Journal. From the remaining portion of it which is being published here, it will be seen that the language of the mystic, whether of the East or the West, is so often refreshingly so alike. Many of the sayings of this Spanish mystic have almost verbatim parallels in the teachings of the Indian saints.

We may hope that Mr. W.H.Koch, our German contributor for long years, who has specialised in presenting largely from non-English sources to the readers of the V. K. lives and teachings of saints and mystics of the other hemisphere, will continue to do his labour of love for the good of our readers and humanity.

Education and Mental Health of Children in Europe.

We are sure that this article (Adapted with permission from an article by Dr. M. H. Revault d'Allonnes, published in *L'Ecole des Parents*, No. 4, Paris, February, 1953) supplied by the Educational Clearing House of Unesco will be read with interest and benefit by the educationists and the intelligentsia in India.

In India we have often to notice attempts at over-simplification of things relating to children. Our children are consigned to the care of the least educated teachers when they are taken care of at all. Least resources, attention, thought, imagination, space and time are spent on them, though we do not always seem to be unaware of the fact

that these children were going to grow and determine the destiny of the world which our forefathers and ourselves by conjoint efforts have brought to this sufferable pass. Perhaps the greatest problem before humanity is how to make our children unlike ourselves!

The present article will indicate to what minute details Europe is anxious, awake and active as to the problems of children. Indian educationists who very often remain content by cultivating the quaint luxury of raising occasionally some dust-

storm of inconsequential controversy over education, will do well to note how educationists in other countries go about their business, with what devotion, seriousness, industry, scrupulousness, knowledge and dedication they apply themselves in building up the future of their children.

For us down here in India, the primary concern may not be about the mental health of the children for the physical health screams so aloud for redress that the mind must wait!

SOME TRENDS IN THE BHOODAN MOVEMENT

One original man that has appeared rather powerfully on the Indian scene after Gandhiji is Acharya Vinoba Bhave. Idealistically speaking the *Bhoodan Yajna* started by him is unique in comprehension and application. It has caught the imagination not only of the people of this land but also of the thinking people of some foreign countries. Mon. Paul Richard, a French savant, wrote in the May '52 issue of the *Vedanta Kesari* that such a movement could be conceived of and carried on only in India. The meaning of the tribute is that such a movement required the background of a peculiar type of civilization and traditions which obtained only in India.

One who has carefully noticed the Vinobian vocabulary and the *modus operandi* applied in his movement will have been convinced that here was a genuine son of the spiritual soil of India. That Sri Vinoba should have spontaneously called his campaign 'Bhoodan Yajna' is significant. Words like '*Yajña*' and '*Dāna*' are not mere joined letters to Indian mind. They are so to say power-currents of national inspiration flowing from the eternal sources of the Vedas. They conjure up in Indian mind forgotten memories of exceptional excellence which made India resplendent among civilizations. It is a matter of great blessedness that it should have been given to Vinoba to induct into the modern Indian *milieu* those powerful currents of national inspiration and to give them an orientation most needed in these times of naked needs and brute urgencies. Sri Vinoba has called this act as a new '*Dharma Chakra*

Pravartan' with a special accent. His new analysis of this ancient idea is interesting.

By this movement Sri Vinoba is about to establish the truths that it was not economics which made and unmade a civilization but man; that human minds even today responded to noble stimuli provided one knew how to tap the goodness inherent in man; and that human problems need not necessarily seek solutions in savage ways. Imagine what a miracle it is in this sordid world where a brother does not hesitate to break open the head of his brother for a piece of one cubit of land, for Vinoba to have collected 19 lakhs of acres of land within two years for giving away to the landless. Undoubtedly there is no parallel to this in world history.

Notwithstanding our spontaneous sympathy for the movement, we have, however, of late been forced to notice certain trends in it with some concern. We feel that for the future welfare of the Bhoodan movement it is our duty to discuss these trends frankly and in good faith.

Mon. Paul Richard said in the article mentioned above that Vinoba would not long remain alone; followers would join him as he proceeded on his path. This has come true.

Among many followers who have been joining Vinoba, the most outstanding is Sri Jayaprakash Narayan. His entry into the movement has given it a new colour, and perhaps, a new magnetism, not uncharacterised by a sort of pragmatism, if we may say so. It has been already reported that one of Sri J.P.'s exhortation goes as follows:

'Do not till the land of zamindars who refuse to give their land for the Bhoodan Yajna' *The Sunday Standard*, Madras, August 23, '53.

One should like to know how Sri Vinoba views such statements. If by extreme ill luck the Bhoodan movement slips into the path of coercion, it can do incalculable harm to this nation. It has been said by Pandit Nehru that Bhoodan cannot be considered the complete solution of our nation-wide land problems though it does create the required atmosphere for help solving them. It does not appear that Sri Vinoba claims anything more for his movement. Now if creating an atmosphere is the fundamental function of the Bhoodan movement, it should be seen that the purity of approach is not vitiated by hunger for success and anger out of frustration.

Realistically speaking there are some other features of the Bhoodan which call for serious scrutiny and thinking. In an announcement dated Nagpur, 21-8-53, the Joint Secretary of the Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangha, says that upto August 9, 1953, the total land collection in the Bhoodan Yajna, (exclusive of the Maharaja of Bikaner's gift of 2,68,000 bighas of lands) amounts to 17,78,454 acres. Of this total collection only 29,079 acres have been distributed to the landless. Now what is happening to the remaining 17,49,375 acres of gifted lands? Is it not to be feared that such snail-slow progress in the matter of distribution of gifted lands will not only adversely affect our national economy but may lead to other complications as well? Obviously the people of India have marvellously and admirably responded to the idealistic call of Sri Vinoba. But have the leaders of the movement yet proved themselves realistically equal to the response? Unless the economics of the Bhoodan movement is justified, the spiritual eminence of the cause is bound to suffer serious damage. We, however, leave this point to economists for more detailed deliberation.

One thing which we find difficult to appreciate about this movement, is its recent call to students, specially college students to give up their studies and colleges for joining this movement. In the Chandli Sammelan Sri J. P. advised students to leave their colleges for a year or so and join the Bhoodan work. In his Gokhale Hall address at Madras on August 15, '53 and his Madurai address at Tilak Square on August 20, '53 he is

reported to have reiterated this call. We understand Sri J. P.'s passion for the cause he has newly adopted. Undoubtedly he is about a very important business. By creating a sense of emergency about the cause he has espoused, Sri J. P. in effect gives an impression that when the students are engaged in their studies at colleges, they are as if about a less important business and so they could easily give up their studies,—to begin with temporarily and to end with permanently, for in most cases exactly that would happen if students responded to this call—and devote their energies for what is presented to be a higher cause. We regret to have to submit that this does not appear to us to be a very correct piece of leadership.

In case of a sudden national calamity, such as a Godavari flood, when normal workings of the educational institutions cannot be carried on, students may be called to service for a short period. They should, however, return to their usual duties as soon as the situation improves, and normal workings of their institutions can be carried on. But Bhoodan Yajna is not a national calamity. It is a means for the realization of a national aspiration which is equitable land distribution. Strictly speaking this task lies with the constituted Parliament and the Provincial Legislatures. It is they who should be asked to do their *svadharma* well, along with those who have formally accepted the Yajna as the special mission for a period of their life. Students must be left undisturbed to pursue their own *svadharma*, which is anyday as important as any one's special chosen mission in life. If anyone among the students individually feels from within himself called upon to dedicate himself for the Bhoodan cause, he may be accepted as one of its workers. But there should be no general haranguing about it in order to tear the students away collectively from the path of their *svadharma*.

When we take into account the overall picture of the human situation, if not of the entire world, at least of India, we are bound to find ourselves in the midst of ever so many urgencies and emergencies, causes and their leaders. Now, if it remains open to leaders to call away students from their studies for the causes of their choosing, the future of this country is bound to be bleak. The other day another leader in our South called upon the students to stay away from their schools for the cause of his choosing, which, according to him, was

undoubtedly an emergency. Beset as we are with urgencies and emergencies of different hues, why not pass a bill in Parliament and close down all educational institutions for several years to facilitate the fulfilment of our leaders' laudable missions and when all the problems are solved again slowly open the gates of the schools, colleges and universities to begin a life *de novo* in that paradise where there would be no more problems and urgencies and emergencies!

Austere though, Sri Vinoba is not without humour. Under the caption 'Useless Education' he writes in the *Harijan* of August 8, '53:

'In the Chandli Sammelan Shri Jayaprakash Narayan had advised students to leave their colleges for a year or so and join Bhoodan work. The students then asked me as to what I thought about the matter. I told them that they could leave the college even if they have no intention to take up the Bhoodan work. The students enjoyed the reply.'

He also says with scanty grace,

'One could find many other things in the college but not knowledge.'

Sri Vinoba then proceeds to say how 37 years ago the gates of knowledge were thrown wide open before him as soon as he 'slipped out of the closed walls of the college.' One need not search for any exaggeration here as far as Sri Vinoba himself is personally concerned. Examples of outstanding men who ran away from schools and colleges but became great in diverse spheres are not wanting. But is it on that score quite good logic to suggest that knowledge could be had precisely only by running away from colleges? Nobody, again, knew how many people had ruined themselves completely by following the same course as did Sri Vinoba.

It may also be remembered that people like Sir J. C. Bose, Sri P. C. Roy, Sri S. Ramanujam, Sir C. V. Raman, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Radhakrishnan, and Sri C. Rajagopalachari who are considered learned men were almost exclusively educated in Indian colleges and universities. Hoping that by 'knowledge' Sri Vinoba does not here particularly mean Upanishadic *Parā Vidyā*, one may claim that the names mentioned above do really pose an effective counter argument to his thesis.

Of India's all learned men only a very few might have acquired their learning in Sri Vinoba's extraordinary way. All others acquired their knowledge fundamentally through the education they received in whatever closed walls of colle-

ges they had in this poor country. The humble folk everywhere have to run the normal course. Personal example as the one cited by Sri Vinoba in the present context serve but little purpose. If a *parivrājaka* suggests that trains should not run on rails because on those closed tracks the trains cannot go on in their own sweet way, then what does it amount to? The *parivrājaka* may reject the train and depend on his own legs but he cannot maintain that as far as common millions are concerned the train does not serve a very useful purpose, simply because each compartment has stereotyped doors and windows and shapes or because a train cannot follow the forest track and go about picking flowers, catching butterflies or following the source of a mountain-stream.

In spite of the fact that systems of education that obtain in India of today require to be radically changed, does anybody seriously suggest that our universities and other educational institutions should be scrapped and that we should begin our new education in a forsaken *maidan*? If some one has been keeping in touch with students and watching that for 37 years Indian education remained stagnant at a useless point, then it is a very good case for self-criticism also and not one for only the criticism of that poor impersonal thing which is education.

Education is a subject which always requires more education; and more education can be had only by purifying, adding to and not by outright rejecting the less. It can almost be absolutely said that nobody is perfectly educated. Everyone's education can be supplemented. 'As long as I live so long do I learn', said Sri Ramakrishna.

While education does not necessarily lie outside colleges, we are not also sure whether or not students without previous training can correctly handle the difficult technique of Bhoodan yajna. As Sri Vinoba rightly said in a speech at Kasi on 11-9-52, that without hard *tapas* on the part of the workers, '*yajna* and *dan* will not be fulfilled.' We are afraid, there is a yawning gulf between this methodology of Sri Vinoba and the call of Sri J. P. to the students. Is it that the lure of easy success is obscuring the vision of some of the Bhoodan workers? One may rest assured that the moment large number of students, who cannot be considered to be endowed with that type of *tapas* which Sri Vinoba asks for, enter into this move-

ment, suppose after leaving their colleges, it is bound to become a movement of coercion, for virile impatient youth will hardly stop to consider human frailties and scrutinize the purity of means. What will dominate their minds will be only a spirit of rivalry and a lust for greater figures to be blazoned in papers against the name of their groups. If paper reports are correct, it appears that even Sri J. P. himself sometimes tends to create a sort of

fear-complex in the minds of the prospective donors. When you shoot out, 'if you do not give, it will be taken by somebody, so better give', we are afraid, you are not so much depending on the inherent goodness in man, but on your own capacity of creating a fear-complex in the man. We do not know whether this can be called non-violence.

24-8-53

Postscript: Since our writing the above note we had occasion to read a number of reports of Sri J. P.'s speeches on Bhoodan Yajna delivered during his recent tour in Tamilnad. These reports help serve to clarify Sri J. P.'s personal approach to the Bhoodan movement.

Speaking (on 1-9-'53) at the civic reception accorded to him by the Corporation of Madras Sri J. P. said that best part of the response to the Bhoodan movement has come from the unsophisticated. It is indeed a very happy augury. The overwhelming majority of our millions are unsophisticated. And therefore creative efforts have a bright future in this country.

Sri J. P. deplored that the learned sophisticated intellectuals of this country, from whom better faith and understanding were expected, have remained cold, apathetic and indifferent to this movement. It appears that there are others who accuse that this 'begging movement' frittered away the revolutionary urges of the nation and thus retarded its progress.

Sri J. P. also regretted that the people of this land evinced little sense of urgency.

We may console Sri J. P. saying that no moral movement—Sri Vinoba says, 'Mine is a moral movement'—ever depended for its success on sophisticated intellectuals; and that much thought and concern need not be wasted on the attitude of those for whom even *pratyakṣam* is no *pramāṇam*. Indiscision is the privilege of intellectualism, fashionable among moderners, sacrifice an anathema and purity a complex—a disease to be cured! They are clearly lost to creative efforts who cultivate their heads at the cost of their hearts. They are bespectacled but visionless.

The thunder that rips open the ancient banyan tree and releases its seer-soul is revolutionary no doubt, but in a destructive sense. But the dew drop that quietly sets the soul of the rose-bud afire and makes it open its soft petals in fragrant power is also revolutionary, but in a creative sense.

Bhoodan movement is not a whit less revolutionary than the one set in motion by Marx. But if the Vinobian movement even unknowingly tries to steal the thunder of the Marxian movement, the former indeed blunts the edge of its own revolutionary urges. There can be no mixed economy for pure non-violence. And adulterated non-violence is horrible because it is counter-revolution confounded. Non-violence immaculate is constructively irresistible because it has a face so unlike violence. How can imitation-violence be as effective in its own way as sincere violence? Impurity either way means losing revolutionary urges, one's the destructive edge, the other's the creative edge.

Sri J. P. is cent per cent correct when he says that our people have little sense of urgency. They do not see that the deluge is rushing up down on. Well, even all our saints have made the same complaint! Forsooth, if all had the same sense of urgency who could find followers? It is the leaders' business and privilege to announce the deluge, provide the rampart and also supply the relief during and after the flood.

In the report (*The Hindu*, dated 2-9-53) of his Press Conference, dated Sept. 1, '53, at the Office of the Congress Legislative Party, Madras, we find some points raised in our above note discussed. It is gratifying to learn that Sri J. P. 'gave no threat to any one.' He hoped that some misrepresentations in the Press reports were not deliberate.

Sri J. P. made some points in his Press Conference mentioned on which we, and perhaps many others, should like to know Sri Vinoba's clearly enunciated personal views:

1. According to Sri J. P., '...Satyagraha...to induce land-owners to donate lands to landless was not in conflict with the aims and methods of the Bhoodan movement.'

Could the act of 'inducing', one may also say, enforcing, by whatever means, the lawful land-owner to part with his land *against* his own wish, be called 'satyagraha'?

Could such extortion consummated through a means which the land-owner, in spite of himself could not resist, be called *dan* and a moral act too?

Has Sri Vinoba formally sanctioned his workers to use such 'satyagraha' for the fulfilment of his mission?

2. Sri J. P. said that in a certain part of the country the Grihadan movement has already started.

What is Sri Vinoba's detailed theory about this part of the movement? What does he ask the people to do in this regard?

Is 'satyagraha' going to be used to induce or enforce unwilling house-owners to part with or share their houses with those who need houses?

2-9-'53

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA BY ANIL KUMAR RAY CHAUDHURI (DAS GUPTA & CO. LTD., 54/3, COLLEGE STREET, CALCUTTA) PP. 212 PRICE RS. 5-12-0.

The doctrine of Maya is fundamental to Advaita. *Ekam Sat*. Reality is one only, not two or many. If non-duality is the truth, a reason has to be discovered for the many forms in which Reality appears. The appearances delude man into thinking that they are real as they appear. On account of his ignorance, he mistakes the appearance as the reality and this delusion brings in its train desire, dissatisfaction and distress. Thus man gets tangled in the coils of *samsāra*. He cannot obtain release unless he gets over the delusion, pierces through the veil of maya and perceives the lone Reality behind the appearances. Whence is this maya and why does it function? It is a datum of cosmic function and is beginningless. Like *avidyā* which is a psychological fact, *māyā* is a cosmological factor. Both have been without a beginning, but both can have an end. *Avidyā* can be negated by Knowledge and *māyā* can be transcended by *Brahma-Sākeṭkāra*.

Of what nature is this maya? It exists as the cause of the perception of the manifold of the universe; but in truth it has no reality, since like the appearances which it causes it also is an appearance. It cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist. It is the false cause of the seeming appearances. It is neither true nor false. It is truly false and falsely true. In fact one cannot say what exactly it is. It is *anirvachaniya*. Being, as it were, the first born of Brahman, it envelops Brahman and makes it appear otherwise than it is. It 'splits' the infinite Brahman which is without name and form and without qualities into the finite centres of experience investing them with names, forms and qualities. Thus the world is a *vivarta* of Brahman and a reversal of the process will lead to the perception of the One Reality back of the appearances. Fear, suffering and sorrow and consequent entanglement in the cycle of *samsāra* all arise from a wrong perception of duality and plurality.

Dvaitādeva bhayam bhavati. The perception of non-duality dispels all these and makes for release in this life itself. Such a released one is a *jīvan-mukta*. He has pierced the veil of maya by the sword of true knowledge. He is no more gripped by *avidyā* or deluded by *māyā*.

It will thus be seen that *māyā-vāda* is the pivot of Advaita Vedānta. This doctrine expounded by Sri Sankaracharya with Upaniṣadic authority and with unparalleled dialectical skill has come in for a great deal of powerful criticisms by the expounders of other Vedantic schools who are either thoroughgoing dualists or qualified monists. Bhāskara of the Bhedābheda School, Sri Ramanuja who expounded Viśiṣṭadvaita and Sri Madhwa who taught Dvaita have attacked Mayavāda in different ways. Of these, Sri Ramanuja's is the most severe onslaught. He attacks the theory on seven fronts pointing out *saptavidha anupapattis* as undermining its validity as a doctrine of Vedānta.

In this book under review, Sri Anil Kumar Chaudhuri gives a clear and consistent exposition of the doctrine, defends it against the criticisms made of it and justifies it as cardinal to true philosophy, religion and ethics. As Dr. Radhakrishnan points out in his brief foreword 'the writer gives a brief historical account of the development of the doctrine and shows the importance of the theory of maya for Sankara's philosophy'. After a short review of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads in the Introduction, Sri Ray Chaudhuri defends in the 1st Chapter *Ajñāna* as a legitimate concept in philosophy. The various views of error, viz *satkhyāti*, *akhyāti*, *anyathakhyāti*, *ātmakhyāti* and *asatkhyāti* are all expounded with the thoroughness and fidelity characteristic of the treatment of *pūrvapakṣas* in Indian dialectics and the defects of each of these views are pointed out. The discussion in this chapter ends with the exposition of *anirvachaniya khyāti* which is the Advaita theory of erroneous perception and the author concludes by saying 'that the concept of *ajñāna* or *māyā* is not a chimera. It is clearly demonstrated by the analysis of illusion. Illusory experience cannot be satisfactorily explained without the admission of *ajñāna* as the material source

of the illusory object.' He follows this conclusion with a comparative and critical estimate of western theories of error.

After a consideration of the nature of Ajñāna and its proofs as determined by perception, inference, arthāpatti, śrūti and smṛti the learned author refers to different views regarding the locus of Ajñāna whether it is the jīva or the caita saguna Brahman. Incidentally posing the question whether ajñāna is one or many, he agrees with the view of *Vedāntasūtra* that it is one in the aggregate but many with reference to the individuals affected by it.

The fifth chapter is devoted to the determination of the nature of and the relation between Brahman, jīva and jagat as conditioned by Maya. Supported by parallels in Western thought, the author expounds the theories of saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman, the pratibimba-vāda and the avaccheda-vāda relating to the nature of jīva and what exactly is meant when it is said that the jagat is illusory. 'The world', says he, 'is vivarta of Brahman, and parināma of maya'.

Chapter VI considers Sri Ramanuja's objections to the doctrine of Maya. Each charge of anupāpatti is taken separately and refuted on indisputable authority of scriptural texts. After dealing with the ethics of the Vedānta and with Vedāntic emancipation in the subsequent chapters, Sri Ray Chaudhuri brings out the significance of paramārthika unreality and vyāvahārika reality of the world. Then follow a series of appendices in which doctrines analogous to Maya in Western and Indian thought are described. Refutation of the charge against Sankara that he is a crypto-Buddhist and the vindication of Śrūti pramāṇa and of Adhikāribheda and a note on the characteristics of Indian philosophy bring up the rear of this very useful book. The doctrine of maya is a fascinating, if intriguing subject of study and the learned author has brought to bear on the exposition of it his deep and extensive reading of original sources. His treatment is very scholarly and extremely lucid and convincing, copiously illustrated as it is by parallels from Western thought. The book is to be heartily recommended to all students of Indian philosophy in general and of Advaita Vedānta in particular.

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

ALTERNATIVE STANDPOINTS IN PHILOSOPHY — BY DR. KALIDAS BHATTACHARYYA; DAS GUPTA & Co. LTD., 54/3 COLLEGE STREET, CALCUTTA, 1953, Pp. 374, Rs. 10-8-0.

The distinction between a thinker and an expositor in philosophy is clear and simple, and while modern India has produced a good many of the second category, she has only a very small few of the former. Thus is there a general complaint that while India has advanced so much in science and arts, it has not progressed so much in philosophy. While in the West we have a steady progress in philosophy, new schools of thought being set up and serious controversies going on through society meetings and a good number of journals, we are here content with reading about them and sometimes pointing out with self-complacency that we had all these forms of thoughts in the past and they have all been found untenable. Generally a good scholar in philosophy here means one who has read the history of Indian and Western philosophy and made some comparative studies in that field. In fact, our scholars are more of historians than philosophers. Where is the boldness and enterprise of our older philosophers, a Sankara, an Abhinavagupta, a Madhusudan Saraswati or, — to mention names from our modern scholars in arts and sciences, — of a Ramanujam, a Bose, a Raman, a Saha, a Rabindranath, an Abanindranath, a Udayasankar? It will not do to say that we have reached the end of philosophy, the ultimate truth, and so we need not search and argue like others. For even if we have got the truth, we should express it in modern terms, and we should be able to refute other forms of thinking. However, the point may not be enlarged upon, it is obvious to many of us that Indian Philosophy marks time. Of the thinkers in Indian philosophy we have had Seal, Radhakrishnan, K. C. Bhattacharyya, Hiriyanna and B. K. Mallik, (and, of course, we have had Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath and Aurobindo, if we include the non-technical thinkers.)

Now it is exciting to see in such a depressing situation a work on philosophy which is at once original and constructive and which speaks the language of a genuine thinker, a language deep, serious, careful and rich in significance. Dr. Bhatta-

charyya is no visionary, he is a sound scholar in the Indian and Western philosophy and so as he constructs, he refutes right and left, with extraordinary vigour and clear-sightedness, all the other forms of thought which conflict with his own, till he reaches a comprehensive stand-point from which he can evaluate all the principal thought-forms in philosophy.

Now it would be impossible to go into Dr. Bhattacharyya's thesis here, (which as the sub-title of the book reads, is 'an enquiry into the fundamentals of philosophy'), for space would not allow it, — one would not even do scant justice to it in a few pages, as it is altogether a new construction, — and then our readers may not be very much interested in such high abstractions. However, the essence of Dr. Bhattacharyya's thesis may be presented in a bald manner.

The subjective, objective and the dialectical attitudes in knowledge are absolutely alternative, meaning that each attitude, which characterises respectively the subject, object and the Absolute, rejects or ignores the other and each is absolutely valid in itself; we cannot reduce one to another. Then, the cognitive, feeling and conative attitudes, that is, jñāna, bhakti and karma, are alternatives; and so are positive infinity, the finite, which is negative infinity, and the comprehensive infinite. These three alternations are identical: so that from one point of view, reality is pure positively infinite subjectivity apprehended in cognition; from another it is finite, (though unendingly expansive), objective and apprehended in feeling; and from the still another point of view, reality is a dialectical unity of subjectivity and negation of object apprehended only in conation. These three alternatives are absolute. There is one more alternation, that between philosophy, reality and super-philosophy which is a dialectical unity of the two. The Sunya-vadins, believing that there is no reality but our philosophy or symbolic representation of it, adopt the first alternative; the Jainas take up the second—as it is realistic though reality is for it alternative; and the third alternative is adopted by the Upaniṣads for they speak of the ultimate as both beyond all philosophies and yet alternatively subjectivity, object and the absolute.

The above bald statement will only indicate the breadth and sweep of Dr. Bhattacharyya's thesis

and it must be acknowledged that he has been equal to the task he has undertaken. Dr. Bhattacharyya advances with great ease and conviction, expressing his own view, arguing for it against other ones, and gathering speed and momentum as he moves on. It is a treat to read his work. His style is clear, incisive and vigorous and he sheds many side-lights as he marches forward with his main thesis, exposes many a fault and confusions of our thought and settles many traditional disputes by quick analysis and exposure to a more comprehensive outlook.

The reviewer has no doubt that the present work will gain recognition amongst the thinkers of India and abroad. P. C.

THE KEY TO GENESIS (Pp. 95) AND EVOLUTION, PARADISE AND THE FALL (Pp. 96). By G. H. MEES. (N. KLUWER—DEVENTER. BOTH BOOKS AVAILABLE AT HIGGINBOTHAMS LTD., MADRAS. PRICE NOT STATED.)

In these two little books, Dr. G. H. Mees interprets the first three chapters of Genesis in the Bible along the symbolic lines that he has made familiar in his important book *The Book of Signs* (reviewed in the *Vedanta Kesari* for June 1953, pp. 114-115). Dr. Mees maintains that Genesis I deals not with material creation and biological evolution, but with the stages on man's spiritual path. An attempt is made to establish a relation with the sequence of signs in the zodiac. Genesis 3 portrays the regressive involvement of spirit in the veil of the lower elements. Interesting parallels in ancient Hindu tradition and the Jewish Cabbala are sought. There can be no question that, whether or no Dr. Mees has solved the riddle of Genesis, on which so much scholarship has been lavished, his approach is worthwhile. It should appeal to all lovers of Oriental traditions.

C. T. K. CHARI

PERIODICAL

LADY SIVASWAMI AYYAR GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL MAGAZINE (VOL. XV) MARCH 1953 EDITED & PUBLISHED BY SRIMATI S. CHELLAM, M.A., L.T., AT THE LADY SIVASWAMI AYYAR GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, MYLAPORE, MADRAS, Pp. 114.

Apart from the usual features to be found in a school magazine, this nicely edited tri-lingual

illustrated number has one special feature which is articles from the pens of very small girls of 1st and 2nd form and above. These articles furnish us with very momentous and delightful information! S. Revati (II-A) says that she likes fruit salad very much. Do you know what Shyamala (II-B) did when she went to the Zoo? She purchased feathers of six birds for her citizenship album. You and I may not know; there must be existing a very real relationship between feathers and citizenship. Near M. Prema's (I-A) house there is a fruit shop. The shop-keeper's daughter is her friend. Prema says that she eats fruits everyday. Now guess! A fruitful friendship? T. K. Indra (II-D) says that 'Flowers beautify a garden.' Who can challenge her statement? P. S. Prema (I-A) supplies us a green news from the verdant west coast: that there are coconut trees in Malabar. She also gives us very a delicious information that coconut is used for cooking. She has certainly in

mind *Aviññāna*, *ānā* and *erisherī*! E. Nirupama (I-B) wants us to believe that their Tommy watches their house when they all go to sleep. How does Nirupama know—all the time asleep—that Tommy, the intelligent decent fellow that he is, sometimes does not snatch a nap when the mid-night stars twinkle in the sky? S. Kalyani (I-C) must be causing worry to her mother or she might be darling of her father, for she says that she purchases some bangles every month. M. Kalpakam (I-D), perhaps the youngest of the lot, has little attractions for such profane and secular things as interest other girls. She gives us a *paramārthika* information: 'Kapali temple is in Mylapore. ...Many people go to the temple in the evening. ...I go to the temple to worship God.' May God bless her and also her friends, who being very busy otherwise, have little time to worship God, to Whom, however, it is not given to forget His children.

NEWS AND REPORTS

INDO-AMERICAN CONTACTS*

By AMBASSADOR SRI G. L. MEHTA

EARLY CONTACTS

In a sense, perhaps an inverted sense, one can say that the relations between India and the United States began with the discovery of Columbus. He was trying to discover India but he stumbled upon this country. You might say that if Columbus had not discovered America, somebody else would have; but in any case, he was seeking to find India. For years afterwards, India was the battle-ground of several Western powers, the British, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the French, and eventually India passed under British rule so that our connections political, industrial, and in many ways cultural, were with England, the United Kingdom. We had few direct contacts with this country. In the early years of the nineteenth century, 1810, 1830, and thereabouts

some American missionaries visited India and subsequently, American missions were established in various parts of the country, doing philanthropic work and attending to the social needs of the people particularly those who might be called the underprivileged, the humble, and the lowly. Many American tourists visited India from time to time and carried away different impressions of India. Some were impressed with the religious motives, some with the splendors of ancient India and of Medieval India; others were somewhat depressed by the poverty, the misery and various other conditions of the country.

CONTACTS FORGED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HINDU THOUGHT

So far as the return traffic was concerned, very few Indians came to this country but one of the

earliest to come to this country, indeed if I may say so, the first cultural ambassador from India to come to this country was Swami Vivekananda. He attended the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 at the World's Fair there, and created a tremendous impression by what he said and by all that he conveyed during his meetings with people. It was after this that the first center was established in this city, and I believe Swami Vivekananda returned to this country again for another visit in 1899. It was one of the earliest occasions in which direct cultural contacts were established between India and the United States. But apart from that, there were some American thinkers who were studying Indian metaphysics and philosophy and were thus influenced in their thinking. Emerson and the Transcendentalists were thus influenced by Hindu thought. On the other side, there were a number of American writers and authors whose writings were followed by Indian intelligentsia. Emerson, for example, was one. There were poets, Whitman and Longfellow; there were novelists, there were humourists like Mark Twain, and, indeed, many of you must be aware of the fact that among the authors who influenced Mahatma Gandhi was Thoreau. Thoreau said once that in an unjust state the proper place for a just man is the prison, and this is a thought that seems very much like Gandhiji's.

POST-VIVEKANANDA CULTURAL CONTACTS

It is also true that some of our own distinguished men visited this country and their writings were also followed with interest here. You know perhaps that two Indians have won the Nobel Prize—one for literature and the other for physics. One of them was Rabindranath Tagore who, is perhaps one of the greatest poets the world has ever produced, visited this country and many of his books, poems and novels were read here. Another great poetess, one of the distinguished orators of India, Sarojini Naidu who was closely associated with Gandhi, who went to prison several times with him and who was President of our Indian National Congress on more than one occasion, and one of the Governors of a State after independence also visited this country and spoke at different places. Apart from that, the writings of Gandhiji, of Prime Minister Nehru, and of Dr. Radhakrishnan created considerable amount of interest.

Recently, I visited several places in the mid-West. The mid-West is traditionally supposed to be an isolationist part of this country but from what little I saw there, I found a tremendous amount of interest not only in international problems but in India and South Asia. I found not only people in the Universities and Colleges, but even some businessmen who had read the writings of Gandhiji and Nehru. This shows that the cultural contacts between India and the United States are as active and as vivid as ever; and there are, apart from these, eleven centers of Ramakrishna Mission which have kept up the cultural contact in another sphere.

INDIAN STUDENTS IN AMERICA:

MUNIFICENCE OF AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS

Before the first World War, very few Indian students came to this country partly because America seemed very distant to us—it is at the antipodes! This distance was undoubtedly a great factor. But apart from that, because of our commercial and political relations with England, whether for civil service or law or medicine, the British degrees were recognized in our country; in the engineering and chemical industries, British standards and specifications were accepted, with the result that in an economic sense, there was not much inducement to come to this country. From about the 30s, American achievements in the realm of technology, engineering, and various chemical sciences came to be more and more known, with the result that there was a flow of Indian students to this country in increasing numbers. Many of the Indian students who had been trained here in technical lines did quite well on their return, and this naturally stimulated interest. During and after the second World War, American technological developments impressed not only Europe but the world at large, so that the flow of Indian students increased rapidly with the aid of various scholarships.

Today, in this country, there are about 1570 Indian students all over the United States. They are studying various subjects—engineering, technology, chemical and physical sciences, etc., but they are also studying humanities including sociology, economics, public administration, business administration, etc.. These include a number of women, over one hundred, who are studying.

* Adapted from a Speech delivered at Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, New York, on May 17, 1953

medicine, education, child psychology, and so forth. Unfortunately, the financial position of the Indian Government and the shortage of dollars compelled the Government of India to cut down the number of scholarships for students abroad—but through the generosity of several Foundations in this country, including the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Fulbright scholarship, etc. many students have been able to come here. I believe these 1560 or 1570 students represent the peak number that has ever come to this country, and while many have come on their own resources, most of the others have been able to come because of these scholarships and financial assistance. Several universities have enabled Indian students to come by giving individual scholarships to certain deserving students. Indeed, there have been instances in this country where students in particular colleges or universities or faculties have deprived themselves of some pocket money or a meal a day in order to enable an Indian student to be brought over here.

AMERICAN STUDENTS' STUDY TOUR IN INDIA

Those who believe that internationalism is still an aspiration and not a fact must look at these facts because whatever the organizations and institutions may be doing, men and women who may not be known, who do not make the headlines, who may be humble and unknown are actively cooperating in such matters. On the other side, the Fulbright Act and various technical programs including the Ford Foundation have enabled American students and technicians to go over to India. Last year, the University of California had an 'India project' under which seven or eight American students went to India to stay in Indian surroundings, work with Indian students, and try to study the problems first hand. This year, the University of Minnesota and the University of Syracuse have similar programs. Many of these students go to study specific problems such as labour conditions, question of land reform, basic education, women's movement, children's movement, etc.. One cannot praise too highly these efforts because, as you will appreciate, it is not possible nor, indeed, is it always desirable that all Indian students should come to this country—we are spending a considerable amount by educating our students abroad,

1600 in this country and 1600 in England—and very few countries in the world send so much, about 3000 or 4000 students abroad; I believe I am correct in stating that if you exclude the Chinese and Canadian students, probably the Indian student community is the largest in this country.

It is desirable, therefore, that American students and American young men and women should know India directly, not through sensational headlines in newspapers, or through garbled versions, but India as it is; not also through any glorification or exaggeration, but human as we are, with faults, with limitations which we all have. And yet, I venture to suggest in all modesty and humility, trying to build up our country during the last six years in a democratic way, trying to raise the standard of living of the mass of people, and combating age-old evils, whether it be poverty, illiteracy or evil social customs, it is, after all, a great adventure and experiment that is going on in India and if people from abroad come and see us, it is all to the good because we have nothing to hide, nothing to conceal; there is no censorship in India, no press restrictions; people can go about and see exactly what they want to see and know the country. And you will find that there is much worth knowing not only from the point of view of architecture, sculpture and monuments, or queer, weird things, but in the manner in which ordinary men and women live there.

AMERICAN SYMPATHY FOR INDIA'S POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

Apart from these cultural contacts, educational and cultural contacts which also extend to the technical sphere to which I shall refer in a moment, there have been political and economic contacts between our two countries for many years. During the struggle for national independence, India had the sympathy and moral support of large sections of public opinion in this country which included not only publicists and intellectuals, but also men in the realm of practical politics, men who are concerned with Congress or the administration of the country. During the second World war, when the leading political party in our country demanded that the principles of democracy and self-determination for which the war was being ostensibly fought should be applied to the subject peoples of the British and other empires, President

Roosevelt strongly urged the British Government to make a political settlement with India because, he said, you cannot wage a total war without the support of the civilian population of a country. I think that she will be remembered even now when a 'cold war' is being waged. And after independence, one of first Embassies to be opened by our Government was in Washington which was not only a tribute to the international importance of Washington, but an appreciation of the friendship and good-will the people of America had shown to the people of India during their national movement.

During the last five years, these contacts have been maintained and strengthened in many ways.

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

In the economic sphere, India and the United States have again not been as close in the past, partly because the British connection influenced the whole structure and function of the Indian economy, but also because the United States itself was building up its own economy in the last century and except on the continent of America, has not been known as much of a capital exporting country except in regard to such specialized commodities as oil. Nevertheless, it is of interest to mention that for several years American technicians have helped large Indian enterprises.

There are a number of American concerns which, during the last five years, have started on their own as well as in technical and financial collaboration with Indian enterprises in chemical, engineering and other fields.

The total amount of American capital invested in our country will be about one hundred million dollars.

In trade, our relations during the last ten or fifteen years have become much closer. Before the War, the total Indian trade with the United States was about 7% of the total foreign trade of India. Today, it is about twenty-five per cent. Last year, in 1952, Indian exports to this country constituted about 17% of our total exports, while imports from this country were 35% of our total imports. In many commodities, such as metals, vehicles, machinery and oil, the value of our trade with U. S. A. has gone up nearly ten times what it was before the war. We hope that these trade relations will be further strengthened.

VARIOUS AMERICAN AIDS TO INDIA

Apart from this, there has been further cooperation between India and the United States in a vital sphere. Two years ago, when our country was faced with a serious famine, a large loan of wheat, amounting to 150 million dollars was given which enabled us to tide over a serious crisis at a time when we were short of both wheat and foreign exchange. Every cent of the money that is realized from this wheat is put aside and earmarked for developmental work, for improvement of agriculture and irrigation in our country. We found as we were working out our Five Year Plan that our main difficulty is lack of resources. In under-developed countries like India and those in South Asia, the main difficulty in development is the fact that although there are potential resources, in order to activate those resources you require some initial resources.

India is a land of contrasts—it is a land of contrasts in many ways: In a geographical sense it has the highest mountains in the world—and the great plains which lie at the foot of it; the arid parts of the country which have a rainfall of two to four inches, and Cherapunji which has an annual rainfall of four hundred inches. But these contrasts are not the only contrasts. The most poignant contrast in India is the contrast in the fact that it is a country that is rich but its people are poor. And the people are poor because unless we mobilize those resources, exploit those resources and husband them properly for a balanced and effective utilization, we cannot really build up our economy. And for that we need certain essential resources in the beginning. We have got, for example, \$ 109,000,000 worth of loans from the International Bank during the last three or four years, and our Five Year Plan whose magnitude is 4.3 billion dollars, cannot be operative unless we have a certain amount of aid from other countries. In 1952 an agreement called the Indo-American Technical Cooperation Agreement, was concluded between the Government of India and the United States Government, under which the United States Government has committed itself till now to spend something in the neighbourhood of one hundred million dollars for what are called Community Development Projects and other forms of assistance for the countryside. The Primary

purpose of this Community Development Project is to increase agricultural productivity which is basic for our country, and to have agricultural extension, irrigation, development of fisheries, rural housing, communications, health and education, as well as rural industries. Let me add this that for every dollar that is spent out of this fund, the Government of India themselves have to spend in certain cases \$3 and \$7, and in other cases \$9, which is as it should be because no amount of foreign aid can save a country unless the country itself makes efforts. 'God helps those who help themselves,' and no nation can ultimately win its salvation without its own efforts. Therefore this program has been worked out and is being operated by Indians and financed mainly by Indians but at a crucial margin it has received this amount of assistance. And above all, there is a considerable amount of advice and technical assistance that is being given. There is also Point Four Programme which, according to the latest figures I have seen, show nearly 70 technical experts having gone from this country to India, and nearly 80 having come here to study agriculture, irrigation, etc.. It is in these broad spheres that the two nations are cooperating in this technical realm.

WHAT INDIA CAN LEARN FROM AMERICA

Before I conclude, let me say that important as these spheres are, the most important is the spirit in which these things are worked. If there is a spirit of patronization on one side or lack of confidence and suspicion on the other, then material aid alone cannot solve these problems. It is quite true that bread is very essential, and yet it is true that man does not live by bread alone, and the spirit that activates the two nations is really most

important. I am firmly of the opinion that it is not any ideology or 'ism' that stands in the way of two people's friendship and cooperation, but a certain lack of understanding, a certain want of patience and lack of tolerance, while the ways of life are so different, we have to adjust ourselves to one another and adapt ourselves. This, we might say on platforms, is very easy, but it is not always so easy when you come to concrete things. I have felt during my last eight months' stay in this country that the one important lesson to be learned from this country is its spirit of hope, of enterprise, of optimism, and of adventure. The average man feels that there is nothing that he cannot conquer, given the opportunity. There are no frontiers that he cannot cross whether they be frontiers of knowledge or of action. And the second important lesson is that the fundamental democracy is not merely in politics but in relations between man and man, and particularly in the attitude towards the dignity of labor. I think these are two important lessons for us to learn. We are more fond, probably, of contemplation than action; you probably are more fond of action than contemplation. A reconciliation between these attitudes is possible. It was in our *Bhagavad-Gita* that Sri Krishna said:

'In these three worlds, the sky, the heaven, and the netherworld, I have nothing unobtained to be obtained, I have nothing unachieved to be achieved, I have no desirable object that I still crave, and yet I mingle in action.'

Why? Because of the joy of creation. When a great scientist invents something, or an artist draws a picture it is not the monetary reward, it is not the honor, but it is the joy of creation that is the true reward of the great scientist and the artist, and it is this spiritual aspect that one can learn from other countries and not merely its material comforts.

INDO-CYLON CONTACTS

MADAM (DHARMASALA) OPENED AT KATARAGAMA BY THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (CEYLON BRANCH)

The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Hon'ble Mr. Dudley Senanayake, opened on Sunday the 12th July, 1953 at 9-15 a.m. at Kataragama the Madam (Dharmasala) building of the Ramakrishna Mission.

For the opening of the Madam Ministers of Ceylon's Cabinet, high officials like the External Affairs and Defence Secretary and the Indian High Commissioner came from Colombo. Many of the monks of the Ramakrishna Mission from the Headquarters at Belur and different places in South India and Ceylon were also present at the function. Immediately after the opening there was a

public meeting held in the spacious hall of the new building at which the Prime Minister was the chief guest.

Swami Yatiswarananda, Member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission, presided. Messages from the President of the Indian Union, President and General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission were read out at the beginning of the public meeting. Swami Asangananda, Vice-President of the Ceylon Branch read out the message from Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Union and Swami Vireswarananda, Asst. Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and President of the Ceylon Branch of the Mission read the messages from Srimat Swami Sankarananda Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Mission and Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission.

Earlier that morning from 6-45 a.m. to 9 a.m. there was special Puja, Homa and Bhajana in the Madam. The Puja was conducted by the Swamis and the Bhajan by devotees who had gathered in large numbers.

The building which cost Rs. 4 lakhs, took about one year to complete and is situated by the side of the famous Temple of Kataragama in South Ceylon, 185 miles from Colombo. The temple is situated in a forest and by it flows a perennial river, Manik Ganga. The deity of the temple is Kartikeya. Kataragama is a household word in Ceylon, and Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims all come there on a pilgrimage and offer prayers. Thousands of pilgrims from all over Ceylon and also from India visit Kataragama every year.

MESSAGE FROM DR. RAJENDRAPRASAD, THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA

'I remember having received some representations from Hindus of Ceylon regarding the temple at Kataragama and suggesting that I should interest myself in it just as I was interesting myself in the rendition of the Bodhi Gaya Temple. I am therefore glad to read that the Ramakrishna Mission, which stands for Unity and Harmony is establishing a Madam there which will serve as a centre of culture and learning, apart from giving accommodation to pilgrims visiting the place. I join in the hope that this will establish a new and admirable bond of cultural and religious fellowship between our two sister nations.'

SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY SHRI C. C. DESAI,

INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON

It was just a year ago that the foundation laying ceremony of this Chatram or Dharmasala,

as we of North India would call it, was completed by the Venerable Swami Asangananda of the Ramakrishna Mission in Ceylon. The speed and excellence of the construction is matched by the piety and humanitarianism that have inspired this useful project. To us in India it has been a matter of the greatest pride and joy that the Ramakrishna Mission has been in the forefront of the Indian Renaissance and has held aloft the banner of the Indian Ideals and virtues by its catholicity of approach to all human problems whether they appertain to the mind or the body or the soul.

The construction of this Madam is by no means the first or only achievement in Ceylon of the monks of the Order of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. They have already established in the Island, apart from this Madam and the Ramakrishna Ashrama in Colombo, 22 schools and 3 orphanages. We all know that the most important object of this Order has been to impart study, particularly that of the Vedanta. This work it has been carrying on unremittingly and without being daunted by any of the difficulties, financial or personal.

The Ramakrishna Mission has, all over the world, conducted its affairs with a view to bringing about the mutual understanding of all true believers in some thing religious and something more important than the material self. It is most appropriate that at this holy place of Kataragama the Ramakrishna Mission should have satisfied one of the most important physical needs of the pilgrims.

It is to me, as an Indian, a matter of great happiness that amongst the invisible exports of India, we find culture, religious faith and tolerance forming so vital a part. Such an export, while it does not rob India of anything, yet enriches every receiving country. It is such exports that give rise to the spirit of Maitri and no people can over-estimate the value of the teachings of the great saints of India.

Sri Lanka has perhaps been amongst the most appreciating of the recipients of such Indian gifts. At Kataragama we see a fusion of so many streams of religious thoughts, all directed to seeking some boon from the Infinite and the Indescribable. Kataragama is unique in this respect. To many Indians it is a place of pilgrimage and to them it will be a matter of not merely physical comfort but such mental happiness to know that an Indian organisation such as the Ramakrishna Mission has been entrusted by the people of Ceylon with the building of a Chatram for use by pilgrims of all races, creeds and nationalities.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE MADAM COMMITTEE, MESSRS. N. NAVARATNAM AND K. KANAGARATNAM

This institution is intended to give shelter, food, cool drinks and other urgent needs to the thousands of pilgrims and devotees who wend their way, year in and year out, to the sanctified abode of Sri Subramania on the banks of holy Manik Ganga. Needless to say that, in conformity with the principles of the Mission, there will be no distinction of community or race, class or caste, colour or creed. The Madam consists of two blocks—one block comprises an Assembly hall, a Thanneerpanthal, a library, an office room, twenty rooms and inner and outer verandahs: the other block consists of a feeding hall, two rooms, a kitchen, a pantry and an outer verandah. There is a well, equipped with a 40 H. P. electric plant for pumping water and supplying electricity. The Madam has all modern amenities and conveniences including a first aid centre. The land and Madam and the accessories have cost nearly four lakhs of rupees and further we hope to get a Swami of the Mission to be in charge.

There will also be lectures on religious subjects, devotional music and religious exercises in the premises during festival days. It is a happy augury that the ancient and hallowed Kataragama which draws, like a magnet, myriads of spiritually-minded men and women of all religions to offer their homage to the formless deity, has been chosen as a centre of activity by the Ramakrishna Mission, an international institution of repute which stands for the harmony of all religions, good-will among men and peace of the world and propagates the truth uttered by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna thus 'Yata Mat Tata Path' (as many faiths, so many paths). 'Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti' (Truth is one, sages call it by various names)—Rgveda.

Our needs today include funds for the maintenance and upkeep of the Madam and the continuation of the services that have been rendered hitherto. It may be asked whether the funds necessary for this would be realised. The Committee can only tell them 'It is the Lord's will.' It is however, the duty of the Committee to bring to the notice of the generous public that a paddy field to the extent of fifty acres and an endowment fund which would enable the Committee to meet a recurrent monthly expenditure of about Rs. 500/- to Rs. 600/- and about Rs. 25,000/- annually for the usual services during the festivals are necessary. This is our appeal and we are hoping that our prayers will be answered.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA
91ST BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY
SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MADRAS-4

The birthday Tithipooja of Swami Ramakrishnananda was celebrated with special Archana, Homa and Bhajan on Friday, August 7, 1953. A large number of devotees took prasadam at the Math and about six hundred Daridra Narayanas were fed.

The public celebration of the anniversary came off on Sunday, August 9, '53. From 2-30 p.m. to 5-30 p.m. there were devotional songs by Sri R. Somasundaram Iyer, B.A., B.L., and party.

The meeting which commenced at 5-30 p.m. with a devotional song by Sri Raghunath Panigrahi was presided over by Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, B.A., B.L., M.L.C. After the President's introductory remarks in English, Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, M.A. of Vivekananda College, spoke in Tamil. Swami Ranganathananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, spoke next in English, after which Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, in the same language. The Presidential address was then delivered in Tamil, Professor T. M. P. Mahadevan M.A., Ph.D. of the University of Madras, proposed a vote of thanks.

SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH

By Sri P. SANKARANARAYANAN

Speaking in Tamil, Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan said that Swami Ramakrishnananda had great claim to our remembrance and adoration. He was one of the most devoted disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who served his Master as God Himself. He practised no other sadhana except *Kainkaryo* to his Guru and that dowered him with supreme wisdom and grace. Unmindful of his own health or comfort, he lost himself in service especially during the last days of the Master's life. So devoted was he to his Master, that even after He attained His Mahasamadhi, he could not bring himself to believe that Sri Ramakrishna was not in their midst; but he treasured the mortal remains of his Master and worshipped them as he had done when He was alive. Here was a pre-eminent example of dedication and service the like of which we have only in the way in which Lakshmana or Anjaneya served Sri Ramachandra. When his fellow disciples were orphaned by the passing away of the Master and when they decided to establish themselves into a monastic order and they spent their time in meditation and prayer, Swami Ramakrishnananda took maternal care of them and ministered to their needs and comforts in the midst of his self-chosen task of devout worship of the Master's relics. For these two reasons his birthday deserves to be celebrated in every centre

of the Ramakrishna Mission; for, it was he that organised the worship of Sri Ramakrishna as it is observed today in every centre of the Mission and sustained and served the first monks of the order with motherly solicitude.

South India, (Madras in particular) has great cause to remember Swami Ramakrishnananda, for it was he who founded this Math here in conditions of exceptional difficulty. When Swami Vivekananda desired him to go to Madras, it should have been a wrench for him to separate himself from his Master's remains. And, he had to do pioneer work in a place famous for the intellectual eminence of its people. It would have been no easy task for him to start a new movement in a new environment. But the ground had been prepared for him by Swamiji and the people of Madras were responsive to the message of Sri Ramakrishna and these, combined with the earnestness and enthusiasm of Swami Ramakrishnananda not to accept defeat and not to quail before any obstacle, were responsible for the foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission in Madras. And here he toiled for nearly fifteen years to educate Madras in the ways of religion and spirituality. He worked hard and without intermission delivering lectures, meeting people, writing books to propagate the universal religion of his Master and to teach the Hindu religion and philosophy to earnest seekers. Madras took to him with kindness and regard and he felt supremely at home in such measure that very soon, by the labours of earnest and devoted disciples, a habitation and home was achieved for the Math in these premises. The saga of his trials and tribulations in this connection is a revelation of the devotion and dedication that marked his endeavours. Thus the foundations were well and truly laid for the dissemination of the grace and glory of Sri Ramakrishna and of his message of universal religion. From the beginning, the celebrations of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna in which he took part with infectious enthusiasm were great events in the life of Madras. The programme of worship, Homam, Poor feeding, Bhajan and Harikatha and evening discourse which we observe now is to be traced to his initiative.

Among the greatest benefits that Swami Ramakrishnananda conferred on Madras and South India was that he enabled the people in this part of the country to have darsan of the Holy Mother whom he was able to persuade to visit the South. Denied the privilege and *punya* of beholding the Master, we of this generation were fortunate to be blessed in person by the Holy Mother and Sashi Maharaj conferred that boon on us.

Swami Ramakrishnananda's was a dedicated life consecrated to worship of the Master, organising of the Mission and the Math and instructing his disciples in the ways of spirituality and service.

His advent in Madras was very opportune at a time when missionary proselytizing activity was vehement and strong and his presence and his teaching steadied not a few in the conviction and practice of the Hindu religion. The Ramakrishna Math at Madras is Sashi Maharaj's bequest to us and it behoves us to profit by it in full measure for our spiritual regeneration and extend its sphere of usefulness. Both born in the same year Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramakrishnananda may be said to be the twin children of Sri Ramakrishna. Swamiji carried his Master's gospel to foreign lands while Sashi Maharaj kept the homefires burning tending them with his characteristic devotion and earnestness.

The speech by Swami Ranganathananda will be published in a subsequent issue.

Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, who, though out of schedule, spoke on request, dwelt on the excellences of Swami Ramakrishnananda's great life which he knew by close personal association and declared that the people of Madras would prove themselves as much Ramakrishna-minded as the people of Bengal and that Madras would become one of the greatest international centres of the Ramakrishna Order. It will be then alone that the full potency of Swami Ramakrishnananda's life-work will be revealed to the people at large.

SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH

By Sri K. BALASUBRAMANIA AIYAR

Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar recalled his association with Swami Ramakrishnananda and referred to the difficult conditions of the life that the Swami led in Madras before he moved to the present buildings of the Math. Though he passed away in 1911, even now after the lapse of 42 years we treasure his memory as of one who established the Math in our midst. It was Madras that discovered Swami Vivekananda and Swamiji left Swami Ramakrishnananda as his legacy to Madras. His devotion to his Master whom he saw as a living presence in the picture that he brought from Bengal was unparalleled and the speaker had witnessed how he worshipped, tended and served his Master in the picture with the loving care of a mother to her child. Swami Ramakrishnananda and his two devoted disciples Ramu and Ramanuju were responsible for organising many institutions of usefulness and charity in our midst. Sri Ramakrishna can be said to be the manasa saras of the Himalayan regions and Swami Vivekananda was the mighty river which flows down the hills with great force and foam. Swami Ramakrishnananda was the

vast and placid reservoir into which the waters flowed and settled and were distributed through diverse channels to the eager and thirsting lands around. He was a great and noble soul who served both the Mission and Madras with rare devotion and great fervour.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION GODAVARY FLOOD RELIEF

The Ramakrishna Mission, Rajahmundry, started flood-relief operations on the next day of the calamity, the 16th of August and opened a feeding centre in the Mission garden. Roughly 3,000 persons were being fed every day in this centre. On the 25th all the six feeding centres in the Rajahmundry town were entrusted to the Mission by the Government. 20,000 persons were fed in the centres every-day. On the 31st these feeding centres were converted into gruel centres and they continue to be managed by the Mission.

Alongside the work in the Rajahmundry town the Mission spread its activities to the badly affected areas in the district. It opened centres in the Amalapuram taluk of the Central Delta, in the Yanam-Korangi area of Kakinada Taluk, in Polavaram of West Godavari district and also in the nearby areas of Rajahmundry Town like Thorodu, Muggulla, etc..

Between 21st and 23rd three feeding centres were opened in the Amalapuram taluk, at Allavaram, Komaragiri Island and Komaragiripattam. Nearly 8,500 people are being fed every day in these centres. The Mission is extending its activities to the Razole and Kothapeta taluks also.

In the Yanam-Korangi area the Mission mainly concentrated on cloth distribution. 1,500 pieces of new cloth, saris and dhotis were given to the victims of the flood in the villages of Tallarevu, Korangi, Silakanka, Mallavaram, Bupanapalli etc.. Another consignment of cloth is being despatched to the same area. At Polavaram in West Godavary, the Mission distributed 350 pieces of new clothing. Another consignment of clothing and food articles for distribution to the Koya are being sent to the area.

One hundred bags of rice and clothing have been despatched to the Bhadrachalam area which is very badly affected. Swami Nisreyasananda is leading the team of workers to Bhadrachalam.

The Mission intends concentrating its work in the central Delta, Bhadrachalam area and the mofussil of Rajahmundry Town. The Students Community, specially the college students deserve our appreciation and thanks for the splendid co-operation they have been extending to us in the relief operations.

RAJAHMUNDRY
1-9-53

SRI SRI DURGA PUJA SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4 AN ANNOUNCEMENT

The Durga Puja will be celebrated with due solemnity this year in the image at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, from Tuesday the 13th October to Sunday the 18th October, 1953. This great Puja in image was celebrated here at the Math for the second time in 1952, after it was first done by Swami Brahmananda in 1921.

It is hoped that all the devotees, friends and sympathisers will fully co-operate and join the celebration whole-heartedly to help make the function a success as in the last year and derive such spiritual benefits as can be had from such grand worship of the Divine Mother.

A prominent feature of the celebration will be the feeding of the Daridra Narayanas.

Contributions for the Puja and the feeding of the poor will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Manager of the Math.

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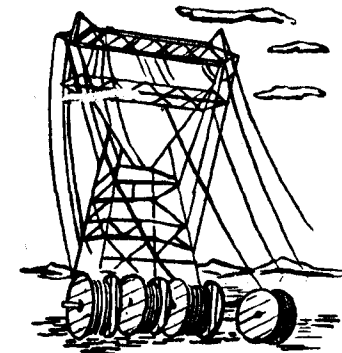
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