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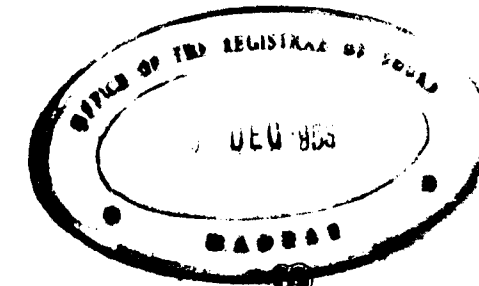
THE VEDANTA KESARI

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः

The Atman is not attainable by the weak

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VOL. XL No. 6



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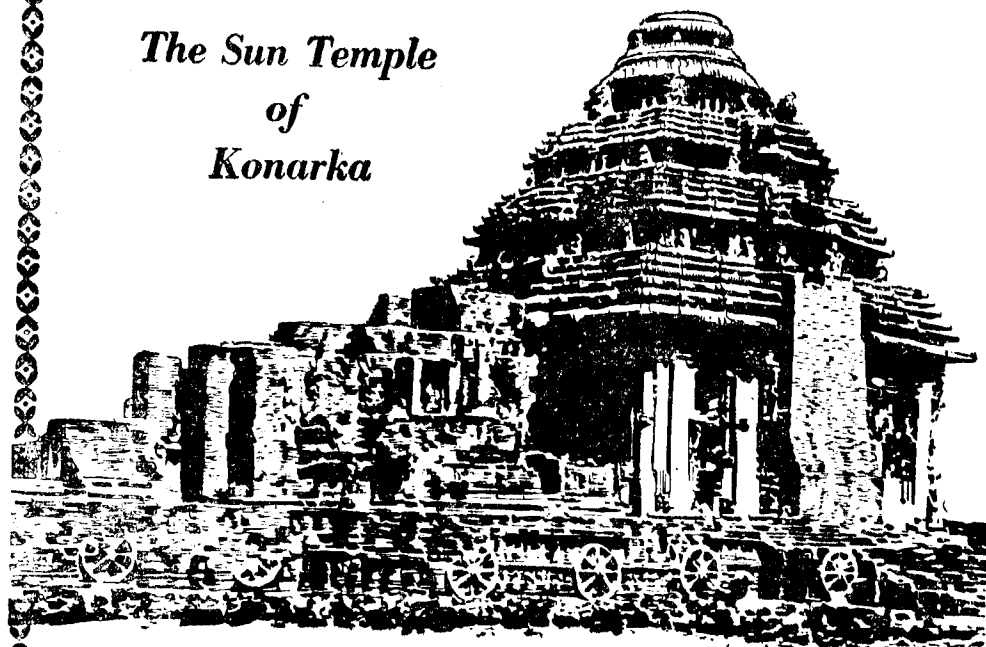
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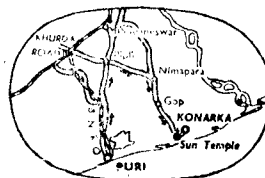
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Close to the sea-coast, north of Puri, stands the 700 years old Konarka temple. Legend runs that the Sun-god was once seen here rising out of the sea in his golden chariot. Where His shadow fell, devotees endeavoured to build a temple in the shape of the God's chariot, complete with twenty-four wheels and seven horses. Though now partly in ruins, this symphony in stone still ranks as one of India's greatest architectural splendours.

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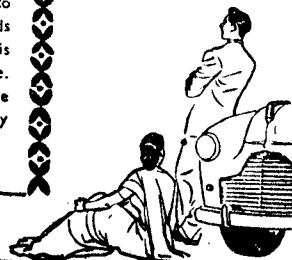
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24 miles out of Puri, the road leading to Bhubaneswar branches off at Pipli towards Konarka, which lies 29 miles away. This road is motorable only between December and June. There is an Inspection Bungalow near the temple but no refreshments are available. Petrol may be obtained in Puri.

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Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.*

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XL

OCTOBER 1953

No. 6

SALUTATION TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

त्वं वैष्णवीशक्तिरनन्तवीर्या विश्वस्य बीजं परमासि माया ।
सम्मोहितं देवि समस्तमेतत्त्वं वै प्रसन्ना भुवि मुक्तिहेतुः ॥
विद्याः समस्तास्तव देवि भेदाः स्त्रियः समस्ताः सक्ता जगत्सु ।
त्वयैकया पूरितमम्बयैतन् का ते स्तुतिः स्वयंपरापरोक्तिः ॥
विद्यासु शास्त्रेषु विवेकदीपेष्वप्येषु वाक्येषु च का त्वदन्या ।
ममत्वर्गतेऽतिमहान्धकारे विभ्रामयत्येतदतीव विश्वम् ॥
विश्वेश्वरि त्वं परिपासि विश्वं विश्वात्मिका धारयसीति विश्वम् ।
विश्वेशवन्या भवती भवन्ति विश्वाश्रया ये त्वयि भक्तिमन्त्राः ॥
सर्वस्य बुद्धिरूपेण जनस्य हृदि संस्थिते ।
स्वर्गापवर्गदे देवि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

You are the power of Viṣṇu, the endless valour. You are the primaeval māyā, which is the source of the universe; by you all this (universe) has been thrown into an illusion, O Devi. If you become gracious, you become the cause of final emancipation in this world.

All lores are your aspects O Devī; so are all women in the world, endowed with various attributes. By you alone, the Mother, this world is filled. What praise can there be for you who are of the nature of primary and secondary expression regarding objects) worthy of praise.

Who is there except you in the sciences, in the scriptures, and in the Vedic sayings that light the lamp of discrimination? (Still) you cause this universe to whirl about again and again within the dense darkness of the depths of attachment.

O Queen of the universe, you protect the universe. As the self of the universe, you support the universe. You are the (goddess) worthy to be adored by the Lord of the universe. Those who bow in devotion to you themselves become the refuge of the universe.

Salutation be to you, O Devi Narayani, O you who abide as intelligence in the parts of all creatures and bestow enjoyment and liberation.

(From the *Devī-māhātmya*)

SAVING SUCCOUR OF THE HOLY MOTHER

Call on the Lord who pervades the entire universe. He will shower His blessings upon you.

To pray to God and meditate on Him for even two minutes with full concentration is better than doing so for long hours without it.

Repeating the name of God once, when the mind is controlled, is equivalent to a million repetitions when the mind is away from God. You may repeat the name of God for the whole day, but if the mind be elsewhere, that does not produce much result. The repetition of Name must be accompanied by concentration. Then alone one gets the grace of God.

Even if the mind be not concentrated, do not give up the repetition of the holy word. You do your duty. While repeating the name, the mind will be fixed of itself like a candle flame in a place protected from wind. It is the wind alone that makes the flame flicker. In the same way our fancies and desires make our mind restless. Again the concentration is delayed if one does not utter the holy word correctly.

Repeat the name of God, whether your mind is concentrated or not. It will be good for you if you can repeat the name of God a fixed number of times every day.

The conjunction of day and night is the most auspicious time for calling on God. Night disappears and day arrives, or day disappears and night arrives - it is the conjunction of day and night. The mind remains pure at this time.

It is very necessary to have a fixed time for meditation and japa. For it cannot be said when the auspicious moment will come. It arrives so suddenly. No one gets any hint of it beforehand. Therefore one should observe regularity, however busy one may be with duties.

One has no control over illness, but even in the midst of most intense activity, one should at least remember God and salute Him.

The Mantra purifies the body. Man becomes pure by repeating the Name of God.

As the wind removes the cloud, so the Name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness.

Through these spiritual disciplines (japa and meditation) the ties of the 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 the sense organs are subdued.

If you do a good action, that will counteract your past evil action. Past sins can be counteracted by meditation, Japa and spiritual thought.

Continue to pray without losing your heart. Everything will happen in time. For how many cycles did the Munis and the Rishis of old practise austerities to realize God, and do you believe you will attain Him in a flash? If not in this life, you will attain Him in the next. If not in the next it will be after that. Is it so easy to realise God? But this time Sri Ramakrishna has shown an easy path, therefore it will be possible for all to realise God.

...the real point is this: the room may contain different kinds of food-stuff, but one must cook them. He who cooks earlier gets his meal earlier too. Some eat in the morning, some others in the evening, and there are yet others who fast because they are too lazy to cook.

LETTERS OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE,
LUXA, BENARES CITY,
THE 15TH APRIL 1920

MY DEAR B-,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 11th inst.

Very glad to learn that you spent your Easter Holidays with Maharaj at Bhubaneswer very joyously. Swami Saradananda wrote to me of the situation and conditions about the Math there before and it pleased me to have your endorsement of the same in your letter. How happy I felt to be told that Maharaj was in the best of his moods there and with perfect health. May he continue to enjoy the freedom and felicity of mind which are his own without being hampered by the uncomfortable interference of the crowds of Bhaktas there.

You give all credit to A— for the new Math building at Bhubaneswer and do it rightly and as he did all he could to make it a success without any desire for name and fame he does not feel any the worse for criticism whether adverse or favourable. He proved himself a Karma-yogin therein. He cares for the blessings of Maharaj and that he has got in abundance and that satisfies him fully. He is doing a little better here under the Kaviraj's treatment recently. He has received your letter and will write in reply to it soon.

My health, I am sorry to say, is far from satisfactory just now. But the will of the Mother comes to pass and I am quite satisfied with Her decree.

You have said that in my last letter I wrote to you that, 'we are to remain as spectators'. Yes, quite right. That is not only for you but for us as well. If we can only remain so, then we can enjoy the fun of this world. Otherwise not. But it is so hard to remain as witnesses in every thing we do. We mix ourselves up and feel pain or pleasure for our deeds. May Mother keep us always very near Her and not allow us to run away to get entangled in the meshes of Maya. I shall thank my stars, if I can have the opportunity of remaining a spectator by the grace of the Mother in the true sense of the term the rest of my days. As for you all, you should play the part of heroes as sons of Mother and true devoted followers of Swamiji dedicating yourselves as sacrifices for the good of the many without caring any thing for your own benefit or acquisition. For, Mother Herself takes care of those who keep themselves busy for the well-being of Her children that need help and succour in this world. How I wish to see this accomplished before it is long. My best wishes and love to you as ever.

Yours in the Lord
TURIYANANDA

SERVICE IN GRHASTHA-DHARMA

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE,
LUXA, BENARES CITY,
THE 11TH MAY 1920.

MY DEAR B-,

Your kind letter of 8th May came duly to hand. Yes, the Bhandara has been really a great success. But it was so through the kind help of you all who used to love Latu Maharaj and still do so most cordially. More than five hundred Sadhus were sumptuously fed with nice delicacies and about two hundred Bhaktas took prasadam later. More than one hundred plates were distributed among the different men and women and there was left still food enough for another fifty. Next day was the day for the poor Narayanas. They also more than one thousand in number were entertained with proper care and attention who expressed their feelings of satisfaction and joy when they retired after being fully fed and given everybody in the end two laddus and two copper pieces endearingly. Really it was joy to see the sight at that time. We could distribute also monetary help to different charitable centres of our Mission from the money we received for Bhandara expenses. So great was the love and enthusiasm of the devotees and friends of Latu Maharaj. There was no want, no lack of anything to make the Bhandara a complete success.

We feel very much concerned and anxious for Holy Mother's illness. May she be spared yet for some time for the good and benefit of so many of us. I am feeling much worse than before. May be owing to the strain and stress resulting from Bhandara affair. The heat is also becoming greater. That may be another reason for it.

I am glad you liked Rabi Babu's lecture, because it was Swamiji's idea that he expressed in it. I noticed and marked it long ago that the Thakur family accepted Swamiji whole-heartedly. May be they make no mention of his name. But what of that? That they have accepted him there is no doubt and we are well pleased thereby. Swamiji himself never cared for name and fame. If others could understand and appreciate him that would make him glad and happy. There should be no question of personality. It is the question of principles that should be respected. You understand this very well and I need hardly remind you about that.

I hear that Holy Mother is feeling a little better from the letter that Baroda wrote to Chandra. It has given us very great satisfaction. May she come round May the Lord be so kind. The members of both the Ashramas here are doing well.

Trusting this will find you well and prosperous. With my best wishes and love as ever.

Yours in the Lord,
TURIYANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE HOUSEHOLDER

In the householder's life naturally the claims of his family come first and foremost. And let it be said at once that these duties are assacred as others' other duties in other āsramas. What Sri Krishna means in saying, 'स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः', (better it is to die in the observance of one's svadharma) is that *s'reyas* can be attained through one means alone, viz. through the observance of one's svadharma. They go from darkness to greater darkness who meddle with others' svadharma while neglecting their own. Firmly rooted in his own family duties the householder's services node out in branches to cover the entire world. This branching out is by all means a very important part of householder's svadharma. But if the roots are not taken special care of, branching out becomes impossible.

Duties to parents and kinsmen: What the Rsi of the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* says in the mantras like, मातृ देवो भव, पितृ देवो भव, (let your mother be a god unto you; let your father be treated like a god etc.) are elaborated by law-givers into specific code of service a fair idea of which can be had from the passages quoted below:

Regarding his father and mother as the visible and incarnate deities, he should ever and by every means in his power serve them. *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, VIII. 25.

One should offer, as desired, seats, beds, clothes, drinks and food to mother and father. They should always be spoken to in gentle voice and their children's demeanour should ever be agreeable to them. The good son who ever obeys the behests of his mother and father hallows the family. *ib.* 28-29.

He who, intoxicated with the pride of learning or wealth, slights his parents is

beyond the pale of all Dharma, and goes to terrible hell. *ib.* 32.

Even if the vital breath were to reach his throat, the householder should not eat without first feeding his mother, father, son, wife, guest and brother. *ib.* 33.

The body is nourished by the mother. It originates from the father. The kinsmen out of love teach. The man, therefore, who forsakes them is indeed vile. *ib.* 36.

For their sake should a hundred pains be undergone. With all one's ability they should be pleased. This is the eternal duty. *ib.* 37.

Service to one's parents have been considered so sacred that people have been advised even to renounce the urge for renunciation (or rather practise it that way) to fulfil their duties to parents.

No one should retire from the world who has an old father and mother, a devoted and chaste wife, or young and helpless children. *ib.* 17.

He who becomes a mendicant without first satisfying the needs of his own parents and relatives is guilty of the sins of killing his father and mother, a woman and a Brahmana. *ib.* 19.

It is to be noted with what attitude and in what *milieu* the Snātaka entered the grhastha āsrama. Though by now married, he was the son of his parents first and then the husband of his wife. Reverentially living with them and always serving them with *S'raddhā*, he was also to do his duty by his wife. This meant a sober integration all-round of life, a healthy check on selfishness, ego-centricity and other inferior urges and an effective training in the cultivation of higher puruṣārthas. We are, however, aware that now-a-days when 'I-and-you-two!' mentality dominates the urges and motives of very many young couples who feel

that it was their matrimonial right to enjoy their conjugal felicity in as uninhibited a manner as possible and to that end to live away and apart from their parents as soon as they were married, it would be a bit difficult for the moderners to appreciate the beauty and efficacy of the ancient scheme of the Hindus. If this situation which has been fast developing in the Hindu society is not desirable, the responsibility for it has to be shared equally by aggrieved parents too. Parents cannot have it both ways. They cannot reject Vanaprastha and Sannyas and also expect their sons to be as devoted to them as the sons of a by-gone age appear to have been. If the parents would not behave in the old way, they will have to suffer seeing their sons going the new way. And indeed they sometimes go the new way out of sheer necessity and sometimes with vengeance. Who can find much fault with a young man of forty for disliking the necessity of celebrating the *anna-prasana* of his newly born brother together with his newly born child over and over again, and thus deciding, for decency's sake to have a separate roof?

From the duties of the son mentioned above, one should not, however, run away with the idea that the long-faced Hindu law-givers prescribed a kill-joy pattern of life and thus made it more insufferable than what it need have been. This fear is totally unfounded. The Hindu law-givers had a wonderful sense of proportion and an instinct for joy of life. Of course they had their own definition of joy. That is, however, a different question. The householder is definitely advised to make his life as enjoyable as possible through the discreet use of his senses. Injunctions as the one following are not very rare in Indian literature :

These are allowed in a householder's life, viz., the use and enjoyments of garlands,

ornaments, dresses, perfumed oils and scents, enjoyments and pleasures accruing from dancing and music, both vocal and instrumental, and all pleasant sights and scenes, the enjoyment of various kinds of foods and drinks belonging to various kinds of edibles...; and the enjoyment of pleasures derivable from sports and all sorts of amusements and the gratification of desires.

Santi-parva, CXCI. 16.

Duties of husband to wife, children and relatives: The husband and the wife are specially advised to take very good care of each other and make themselves happy through mutual regard and service in all possible ways. They were also exhorted to take anxious care of their children and other kinsmen :

Women should be always adored and treated with love. There, where women are treated with honour, the very gods are said to be propitiated.

Mahābhārata: Anuśāsana-parva, XLVI. 5.

There, where women are not adored, all acts become fruitless. If the women of a family, on account of the treatment they receive, indulge in grief and tears, that family soon becomes extinct.

ib. 6.

The virtue of a man depends upon women. All pleasures and enjoyments also entirely depend on them. Do you serve them and adore them. Do you bend your wills before them.

ib. 10.

The householder should never punish his wife, but should cherish her like a mother. If she is virtuous and devoted to her husband he should never forsake her even in times of greatest misfortune.

Mahānirvāṇa Tantra VIII. 38.

By riches, clothes, love, respect, and pleasing words should one's wife be pleased. The husband should never do anything displeasing to her.

ib. 42.

A father should fondle and nurture his sons until their fourth year, and then until their sixteenth they should be taught learning and their duties. Up to their twentieth year they should be kept engaged in household duties and thence forward, considering them as equals, he should ever show affection towards them.

ib. 45, 46.

In the same manner a daughter should be cherished and taught with great care and then given away with money and jewels to a good husband,

ib. 47

The householder should in the same way also cherish and protect his brothers and sisters and their children, his kinsmen, friends and servants.

ib. 48.

He should also maintain his fellow worshippers, fellow-villagers, guests and unexpected strangers.

ib. 49.

If the wealthy householder does not so act, then let him be known as a beast, a sinner and as one despised in the world.

ib. 50.

Duties of wife to husband and others: Juxtaposing the exhortations quoted above great emphasis has also been laid on the necessity of the wife's whole-souled service to the husband, children and relatives. Reciprocity and mutuality in this regard is an aspect of Hindu sociology and morality which has not been always adequately understood and from this have arisen many a wrong notion about the position of women in India. The fact is that if the husband was called upon to look upon his wife as a goddess to be adored, the wife was also exhorted to look upon her husband as a deity to be propitiated. The basic anxiety here appears to have been for educating people to inculcate regard for the divinity inherent in men and women. On this unique sense of mutuality is conceived the duties of the wife, an idea of which is given below :

Like a deity, a chaste wife shall always serve her husband, even if he is found devoid of learning, character and conjugal fidelity.

Manu Samhitā v. 154.

Women should keep household articles in order, be expert (in domestic work), contented, economical in expenditure, salute the feet of their mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law and be devoted to their husbands.

Yājñavalkya Samhitā I. 83.

They that love their husbands whether living in the city or in the forest, whether well or ill-disposed towards them, attain great status. Wicked, or libidinous, or indigent, a husband is a supreme deity unto a wife of noble character.

Rāmāyaṇa II. 117. 22.

Devotion to her lord is woman's merit; it is her penance; it is her eternal heaven...The husband is a god which women have. The husband is their friend. The husband is their

high refuge...If the husband that is poor, or distressed, or fallen among foes, or afflicted by a Brahmin's curse, were to command the wife to accomplish anything that is improper or unrighteous or that may lead to the destruction of life itself, the wife should without any hesitation, accomplish it, guided by the code, whose propriety is sanctioned by the Law of Distress.

Mahābhārata: Anuśāsana-parva CCXLIX. 5-26, CCL. 1-62.

For the woman there is no necessity to go on pilgrimage, to fast or to do other like acts, nor is there any need to perform any devotion except that which consists in the service of their husbands.

Mahānirvāṇa Tantra VIII. 100.

For a woman her husband is the place of pilgrimage, the performance of penance, the giving of alms, the carrying out of vows and her spiritual teacher. Therefore should a woman devote herself to the service of her husband with her whole self.

ib. 101.

She who by body, mind and word, and by pleasant acts, ever pleases her husband, attains to the abode of Brahman.

ib. 104.

A father should not marry his daughter if she does not know her duty to a husband and how to serve him, as also the other rules of women's conduct.

ib. 107

Extra-family duties of the householder :

We have already noted that the duties of the householder did not exhaust themselves in the locus of his own family but overflowed its bounds and irrigated the entire world through beneficent services. All the extra-family services of the householder which are too numerous, detailed and sometimes even intricate are motivated by three very ancient and powerful ideas, which are as follows :

(a) the idea that the benefits of *iṣṭā-pūrta* which meant the cumulative spiritual results or merits due to a man's performance of sacrifices and charitable acts could be reaped hereafter.

(b) the idea that man is born with three debts to sages, gods and pitrs, which were to be repaid by Brahmachārya, by performing yajñas, and by procreating sons respectively.

(c) the idea that every householder causes injury or death to living beings everyday in five places, viz., the hearth, the grinding mill, broomstick, winnowing basket and similar household gear, mortar and pestle and water-jar for which expiation need be done.

From the first idea emanate such injunctions as are quoted below :

Providence has not surely ordained death only for the hungry and the ill-fed, for death in various forms does make short work even of such as have enough to eat. It is also certain that the wealth of him who (out of his resources) helps the needy does not get exhausted, whereas he who does not succour the poor has none to console him in time of trouble. *Iṅgveda* X. 117. 1.

That man, surely, will have no one to console him in time of trouble who, having plenty to eat, does not give a morsel to the indigent person who, reduced to straits and oppressed with hunger, comes to him for help, but hardens his heart and eats in the very sight of the poor man. *ib.* 2.

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

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

The householder who has dedicated tanks, planted trees, built rest houses, on the road side, or bridges has conquered the three worlds. *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* VIII. 63.

He who has taken the vow of truth, whose charity is ever for the poor, who has mastered lust and anger, by him are the three worlds conquered. *ib.* 65.

The duties of the householder are considered highly meritorious. The householder should never cook any food only for his own

use; nor should he kill animals (for food) except in sacrifices. *Sānti-parva*, CXXIII. 5.

Even from a limited income, something should be given away daily with care and liberal spirit. This is called *dāna* or charity. *Ātmi Sāṁhitā* 40.

The virtue of a person, who establishes an orphan by performing rite of investiture with the sacred thread, marriage etc. for him cannot be enumerated.

Dakṣa Sāṁhitā III. 29.

If you have but a morsel of food, why don't you give half of it to the poor?

Vyāsa IV. 23.

Let him (the householder) with proper feelings unremittingly do the *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* works. These works done with the honest money, bear decayless fruits.

Manu Sāṁhitā, IV. 126.

On obtaining a fit recipient of gifts, let him do the *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* works with a pleased attitude of mind and to the best of his ability. *ib.* 227.

Little by little let him store up virtues as white ants build up an anthill, for his benefit in the next world, without creating hardship for any creature. *ib.* 238.

In the next world neither his wife and children nor his parents and relations will be of any avail; it is virtue alone that stands by him in the next world. *ib.* 239.

Hence in order to have virtue as his ally, let him little by little store up virtue; with the help of virtue a man sails across the shoreless darkness. *ib.* 242.

Two persons should be drowned in water after tying in their neck a large stone, viz. a rich man not making gifts and a poor man who is not a *tapasvin* (who undergoes austerities or who is restrained).

Udyoga-parva, XXXIII. 60.

Not a little of the work which is now-a-days done by the well-organised departments like District Boards and P. W. D.s was in ancient times done by private individuals dominated by the idea of *Iṣṭa-pūrta*. Even where history fails to name the makers of high roads with shady trees and rest houses by their sides and wells for supplying drinking waters, we may know that the real maker of such public-utility institutions is that hoary idea.

Even today one comes across by the side of village roads, structures of stones or some other material where the carriers of loads could rest their burden and sit in a shade for a little respite. Arrangements for supply of water to thirsty pedestrians are found everywhere in India specially during the summer. Such acts of services which are carried on with utmost unpretentiousness and almost as a matter of course, are the relics of that idea of *Iṣṭa-pūrta*.

From the second and the third ideas mentioned above flow injunctions of services which are technically known as *Pancha-mahā-yajñas* and other allied duties. We give below a selected list of such duties which will indicate the vast sweep of the Hindu conception of service as obtained in ancient India :

A householder has five places where animal lives are destroyed; they are the hearth, the grinding stone, the broom stick, the pestle-mortar, and the stool for water-pitcher. These five when performing their proper functions, kill animal life. For the expiation of the sin committed by him in each of these five places, the great sages have ordained that, the householders shall daily perform the five great sacrifices. (*Pancha-mahā-yajñas*). The sacrifice of Brahma consists in teaching the Vedas; offering oblations or libations to the manes is called a *Pitr-yajña*; burnt offerings to deities constitute a *Deva-yajña*; offering oblations (food) to the animals is called a *Bhuta-yajña*; while hospitality to chance-guests is called a *Nṛ-yajña*. By not suffering the daily performance of these five sacrifices to be omitted, a householder even living in his house, is not associated with the sin committed in the five life-killing places in the household (*Panchasūnā*). He who does not feed the deities, the chance-guests, the beasts, the manes, and his own self each day, by performing the five great sacrifices, is a dead man, even though he breathes.

Manu Sāṁhitā III. 68-72.

The *Rṣis*, manes, animals, guests and relations expectantly look upon the householder (for maintenance etc.). Hence a wise householder shall properly discharge the duties he owes to them. Let him satisfy the *Rṣis* with his Vedic studies; the deities with proper

burnt offerings; the manes with the *S'rāddha* offerings; the guests with food; and the animals with oblations offered unto them.

ib. 80-81.

Unto all the deities, unto ghosts that are abroad by day, and unto those that roam about at night he shall offer oblations in the sky. *ib.* 90.

Unto dogs, unto the degraded, unto those who eat flesh of dogs and persons afflicted with diseases which are the outcome of sin and unto crows and worms he shall offer oblations of boiled rice on the ground, taking care that they may not be soiled with dust. *ib.* 92.

After offering these oblations, a householder shall first feed the *Ātithi* (guests) arrived at his house and then dole out alms to Brahmanas and mendicants. *ib.* 94.

An *Ātithi* arrived after sunset at the house must not be discarded under any circumstances. A guest whether arrived at the house in the proper or improper time, must not be kept unfed. *ib.* 105.

Let the master and the mistress of the house eat what remains after feeding the Brahmanas (guests), relations and servants. *ib.* 116.

He who cooks food for his own use eats sin; food which is the residue of sacrificial oblations, is recommended by the virtuous. *ib.* 118.

Presents of money (must be given) outside the Veda to persons begging for their Gurus, (or) in order to defray the expenses of their wedding (or to procure) medicine for the sick, to those who are without means of sustenance, to those who are going to offer sacrifice, to those engaged in study, to travellers, (and) to those who have performed *Visvajit* sacrifice. *Gautama* V. 21.

UNOBTRUSIVE BUT ALL-COMPREHENSIVE ALTRUISM OF THE HINDUS

The list of the duties quoted above speaks for itself. It is remarkable how extra-ordinary humanity and altruism was inducted in the very common and unobtrusive routine of the daily life of every humble householder. Those critics, who due to their genuine ignorance, or intriguing oversight or pitiable lack of insight into the Hindu way of life, have dared to remark that Hindu religion

lacked ethics and altruism have sometimes found admiring supporters even among uninformed Hindus themselves. But those who are open to conviction can see for themselves what conclusions they are driven to by the like of testimonies which we have submitted above. (And our testimonies, due to the limitation of space, are by no means exhaustive). To the Hindu who aspires even to breathe religiously, altruism was not an ornament of drawing room or a trumpet of the public place but an inviolable item of the daily routine to be religiously performed, a commonplace of life which passed unnoticed because it was so well taken for granted.

Has there been anywhere in the world more kindly laws for the daily conduct of the common people than what can be seen in the following two injunctions of Apastamba :

The division of food must be made in such a manner that those who receive daily portions (menial servants) do not suffer by it. II. 4. 9. 10.

At his pleasure, he (the householder) may stint himself, his wife, or his children, by no means a slave who does his work. *ib.* 11.

In the Santi-parva we have a passage which goes a step further and advises the householder to cultivate compassion and sama-dr̥ṣṭi even towards the *vrata-bhraṣṭas* and offenders of moral code :

In this mode of life (meaning the order of the householder) the scriptures hold that a portion of food should be given to every creature, to one, who for the sake of show, keeps his nails and beard, to one who for pride shows what one's religious practices are, to one who has abandoned his sacred fire, and even to one who has injured his preceptor. Santi-parva CXXLVIII. 10-11.

ANCIENT INDIAN PATTERN OF SERVICE VIS-A-VIS ORGANISED SOCIAL SERVICE OF TODAY

Organised social service of the modern type does not appear to have been much

in vogue in ancient India. Neither was it necessary in the social context of those times. When every individual life was patterned on the ideal of maximum charity—least concern for oneself and the utmost concern for others—service used to be every home's, each person's, every-hour's affair. This individualization of service irrigated even the remotest fragment of society with kindly acts of beneficence in the most pervasive manner. No collectivization of service could bring forth those spiritual results which the ancient Indian system produced. What counted in ancient India was the attitude, what primarily appears to count today is the magnitude. Individual service of the ancient type was fundamentally a matter of offering in the religious sense, collective service of the modern type is in the most part a matter of conferring in the social sense. In those remote days of India, service could be deemed only as spiritual probation; in the modern organised type it can be sometimes the 'society-lady's slumming about' or even a profession as paying as any other in the economic sense, and could be totally unrelated to any spiritual ideal.

Though the ancient ideas are not totally lost in India they do not all seem to be continuing as living forces anymore. On the other hand contrary ideas are sneaking in. To give and ask alms were considered to be religious duties of certain orders in society. But today such a probation is very largely looked down upon. The philosophy that totally rejects the institution of begging and instead preaches of economic self-sufficiency, simultaneously plunges the practitioner of this philosophy in the gloom of uneconomic selfishness. This imported philosophy, which seems to be gaining ground and following, cuts at the very root of Indian conception of life and values. When you reject the institution

of begging, you accept only Grhastha āsram and the values of artha and kāma. And such a view of life cannot be in any way differentiated from the most unashamed type of rabid and unenlightened and hedonistic materialism, which is its own undoing. We are aware that begging as an institution has many a pitfall. When resorted to by vast number of unscrupulous people—as we find in practice in all countries where it is not banned by law—begging can prove to be a colossal drainage of national human energy for unproductive purposes. It can even bring a people to ignoble pass.

There is, however, no ground to imagine that the modern arguments against the institution of begging were unknown to Hindu law-givers. Rather we have proofs to the contrary. We, therefore, find elaborate rules about this institution, which indicate that while the law-givers were perfectly aware of the pitfalls, they also knew that if āsrama dharma and puruṣārtha scheme were to be pursued, the institution of alms-giving and alms-taking had to be the part of religion itself. We cannot do otherwise today if we are not determined to undermine the fundamentals of Sanātana dharma. This should not be considered as encouraging parasitism. This is only urging to discriminate and to know who should be served through this institution. We, however, seem to be going by another way. *

And, therefore, of necessity the state has to be a welfare state, for springs of individual charity has been battered by a philosophy which has little reference to the ultimate economics of life! Now the welfare state comes upon the individual with a tattered carbon copy of the very same discarded philosophy to stimulate

his inclination to be passive when pressed under the ponderous machinery of taxation. But maximum taxation is bound to go hand in hand with maximum selfishness in the individual's life in society. When you are allowed to feel that the state has taken not only your burden but also your resources to do good to the society, you naturally mind your own good in a limited way. But how could you separate yourself from society? So what was an organism becomes an antagonism and the individual feels the grinding pressure, in the matter of which the state could render little help, for having audaciously taken all province as its own and having bitten more than what it could swallow, it was now in a most unenviable pass.

Today Indian people, specially some of those who create thought-patterns for the consumption of the multitudes, seem to be in a state of serious mental conflict. They are not at all sure how much of the Indian way of life was good for the new India they dream seek clean to build. They also do not appear to adequately know how much of the alien ideals could be beneficially grafted in the life-process of India. Sometimes things are being pulled down and nothing is being substituted instead. And the vacuum becomes the breach in the bund through which the devastating floods enter the human habitations and fields of golden harvest. It is good to build anew but it is no good to build on sands. Hence the necessity of knowing our *terra-firma* on which to build. Our *terra-firma* is the ideal of service. Whatever new society we may be anxious to bring into existence must be built on this ideal. The implications and the applications of this ideal must have full sway.

* Hardly two weeks passed since our writing on the theme when appeared in the Press on 22-9-53, Pandit Nehru's remarks on 'unemployment of higher order' by which he meant the Sadhu's way of life. We propose to examine his statement in a future issue.

It is not as if the ideal of service was the *terra-firma* only of a future Ideal India. It can be and should be so with entire humanity. There can be three patterns for the life of the Grhastha all over the world: the acquisitive, indifferent and dedicative. It is the dedicative pattern that must be brought to have its sway now, for we had had enough and more of the other two patterns and that to our undoing. It is only in the dedicative pattern that the future of the world lies. The fundamental

plank of the dedicative pattern of life is service. This was why the Hindu law-givers were so meticulous and particular in weaving the ideal of service as the warp and woof of the life of every householder.

Even selfishness understood in a far-reaching way should make it clear to any thinking man that there could be no superior investment to service. This fact was well-understood in India in ancient days. Today this idea requires to be well-understood by the whole world.

WORSHIP OF THE DIVINE MOTHER

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

According to the Vedanta, the Infinite Spirit, Sat-Chit-Ananda, the One without a second, through Its infinite Power has manifested Itself as the Personal God, souls and the universe. In the words of Sri Ramakrishna, 'When the Supreme Being is thought of as still and actionless, neither creating nor sustaining nor destroying, I call Him by the name of Brahman or Purusha. But when I think of Him as active—creating, sustaining and destroying—I call Him by the name of Sakti, Māyā, Prakṛti, or Kālī. He who is the Absolute Existence, Intelligence, Bliss is also the All-knowing, the All-intelligent, and All-blissful Mother of the universe.' The Supreme Spirit may be worshipped in various forms—as Mother, Father, Friend, Guru, etc.. The Divine Mother is no other than the imperishable Brahman. She is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the world-phenomena and is known variously as Kali, Durga etc.. She is the Mother of the universe.

In our country, the concept of the Motherhood of God has been recognised and accepted from time immemorial; it is a very important feature of our culture.

In the West, the concept of God as Mother appears strange to many. A Western lady once told me: 'I am myself a mother, and have my mother too. We all have our strong points and weaknesses. We do not attach any particular sanctity to mother.' There, many women even resent being addressed as mother. But in India, even a girl will feel glad when she is addressed as mother—a term of great endearment and dignity.

But even in the West, the concept of the Motherhood of God can be traced from very early times, though not so explicitly as in our country. A close study of the cults of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome reveals traces of this concept in their religions. The same is true of Babylon and Assyria where the chief Goddess was Ishtar. Ishtar was identified with the Sumerian Mother Goddess Innini, the Lady of Heaven who had no association with a male counterpart, similar to our Kumari. The Jewish Bible also has reference to Goddess Astarte, the Queen of

Heaven; but this idea was discounted by the Jewish prophets. Even in Christianity, though at one time the cult of Mother worship was not accepted, we find Virgin Mary looming large. Some Buddhist sects worship Mayadevi, the Mother of Buddha, as the Mother of the Universe. A certain sect of Muslims honour Bibi Fatima, the daughter of Mohammad, as the 'Lady of Light,' but her position is far inferior to worshipping God as Mother.

Thus we find the worship of the Divine Mother prevalent everywhere in some form or other.

In Hinduism, however, its continuity has been kept up all through the ages. The Rg-Veda describes Devi as being endowed with the cosmic powers of bringing forth the universe etc.. The *Kenopaniṣad* mentions Uma Haimavati as the bestower of the highest knowledge or Jnana. The *S'vetas'vatara Upaniṣad* mentions Her as guiding our destinies and says that one can see and attain Her only through meditation or Dhyana. The Itihasas—*Ramayana* and *Mahābhārata*, also contain evidences of Devi-worship.

A vision of Durga, the all-powerful Divine Mother, may fill one with wonder and awe; in Her are combined the aspects of tenderness and terror. Her form is symbolic of the fact that She is all tenderness, love and grace to the devotee, but terror to the wicked. She has taken such a form for the protection of the good and for the destruction of wickedness. This is demonstrated by Her having a spear in one hand, a decapitated head in another, with the other two in the poses of granting boons and promising protection.

It was Sri Ramakrishna who made Devi-worship very popular in Northern India in recent times. With the sole intent of realising Her, he underwent years of tremendous spiritual disciplines. So intense did his yearning for Her vision grow that,

one day, he was about to sacrifice his life itself if She did not reveal Herself to him. And lo! She did reveal Herself to him. He beheld an infinite Ocean of Effulgence and cried out in ecstasy 'Mother! Mother!' and became completely lost in Her. But he would not be content with a momentary vision. By plunging himself into further sadhana, he got the power of having Her vision at will. As a result of this, the Mother began to reveal Herself to him in every woman, every girl and practically in everything. No wonder, therefore, that he saw in Sri Saradamani Devi, his consort, not the wife but the Divine Mother and worshipped her as such. On one occasion, when his mother-in-law expressed to him her regret about her daughter not having any children, he remarked: 'Well Mother, you need not worry about it. Your daughter will have so many children that she will be tired of being addressed day and night as *Mother*.' This came true, and thousands of people came seeking refuge in her, looking up to her as *Mother*, seeking spiritual guidance and solace.

Sri Ramakrishna says that there are two aspects of Maya the 'Vidya' and the 'Avidya'. The Vidya Maya takes us on the path of spiritual liberation and is characterised by the good qualities of Love, devotion, discrimination etc., while Avidya Maya takes us down the path of bondage and is characterised by the bad qualities of lust, anger, pride, malice etc.. So, one should carefully avoid the path of Avidya Maya and follow that of Vidya Maya. That is the way to realize the Divine Mother, who is the greatest embodiment of Motherhood. We should not forget that each one of us is Her own child. She dwells in the hearts of us all. In realising Her, who is our inmost Self, lies the way of our salvation. That is true religion.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

(A HINDU VIEW)

By SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

Dars'ana, the Sanskrit word for philosophy, is derived from the root *dṛs'* which means 'to see.' Therefore philosophy, in the Hindu tradition, is not merely additional information about, or intellectual understanding of, reality; it is the 'seeing' or realization of reality, and its application in the daily life of man. The West, it is said, wants to understand reality, but the East, to become reality.

The Sanskrit word often used for religion is *dharma*. The latter, derived from the root *dhr*, meaning 'to sustain' covers a much wider ground than its English counterpart. *Dharma* is what sustains a being in its evolution. It is the inner law, the is-ness, without which a thing would not be what it is. Thus it is the *dharma* of fire to burn, of water to flow, and of the horse to be 'horsey.' The scorpion, the tiger, the warrior, the merchant, the saint, all follow their *dharma* when they function in their natural way. Thus the Hindu lawgivers lay down the *dharma* of a householder and of a monk, and a man is warned against following another's *dharma*, however pleasant the latter may be.¹ By the faithful performance of one's own *dharma* one ultimately attains to the Highest Good.² In the course of his evolu-

tion a man becomes aware of the reality of God and longs for His realization. According to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the highest *dharma* of a man is to relinquish, at the right time, all worldly duties and take refuge in God alone.³

The methods of philosophical inquiry, according to the Upaniṣad, are as follows: hearing the scriptures from a qualified teacher (*śruti*), applying reason to understand the instruction thus received (*yukti*), and experiencing the reality which is the import of the scriptures, through contemplation (*anubhava*).⁴

The scriptures, the Vedas, record the experiences of illumined persons, and the statement they contain may be accepted by the student as working hypotheses. Reality, being supra-physical and supra-mental, cannot be directly understood by reason, which is based upon and conditioned by sense experience. But the explanation of the scriptures must not be in conflict with reason. Uncritical acceptance of the scriptures as the sole authority on reality often makes one dogmatic or fanatical.⁵

But reason, too often proves to be the rationalization of desire. We often prove what we want to prove. Reason is a

1. 'Better is one's own *dharma*, though imperfectly performed, than the *dharma* of another well performed. Better is death in doing one's own *dharma*; the *dharma* of another is fraught with peril.' (*B. G.* III. 35.)

2. 'Man attains perfection by devotion to his own duty.' (*B. G.* XVIII. 45.)

3. 'Abandon all *dharma*s and come to Me alone for shelter.' (*B. G.* XVIII. 66.)

4. 'The Self, my dear Maitreyi, should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon.' (*Br. Up.* II. iv. 5.)

5. In such a theological book as the *Brahma Sūtras*, Brahman or Ultimate Reality is proved solely on the basis of the scriptures (*Br. Sū.* I. 1. 3). But S'ankara, in his interpretation of Gaudapāda's *Karika* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, says that Brahman can be established by reasoning also, independent of the scriptures. (*Mā. Up. Gau. Ka.* II. 1; III. 1.) While arguing with the Buddhists and the Jains, who did not accept the authority of the Vedas, S'ankara mainly relied upon reasoning to prove the ultimate reality of Brahman.

handy tool of emotion. The inadequacy of reason to solve the great riddle of the universe is admitted nowadays by some of the modern physical scientists. Further, the knowledge acquired by reasoning is mediate and indirect. Therefore such knowledge cannot destroy the vision of multiplicity, which is direct and immediate, and which, according to Vedāntists, is created by ignorance (*avidyā*). Hence, the Hindu philosophers declare that the student must develop another method of perception, called *aparokṣa-anubhūti*, or direct experience not dependent upon the sense-organs. In such experience the senses do not function. The knowledge acquired through the senses is coloured by them; therefore it is relative knowledge.⁶ All Hindu philosophers admit that direct experience is the final proof of reality.⁷ But this experience must not be in conflict with scriptural evidence and reason.

To sum up: A conclusion, in order to be valid must be based upon the scriptures, reason, and experience, just as a law, in the United States of America, must, in order to be valid, meet with the approval of the Congress, the Executive, and the Supreme Court.

The method pursued by Hindu philosophers in order to attain knowledge by experience is known as *yoga*, whose disciplines mainly consist of self-control, detachment, and concentration. Through the practice of *yoga*, reasoning is transformed into what is called intuition, by which reality is directly experienced. This does not call for the suppression of the

mind. The functioning of the mind, free from the 'impurities' of greed, lust, and egotism, may be called intuition. As Ramakrishna has said:

'Pure mind and pure consciousness or Brahman are the same.'

According to the Upaniṣad, to know reality is to become reality.⁸ Genuine philosophical knowledge is accompanied by the transformation of life and character. Hence for the pursuit of such knowledge the observance of ethical and spiritual disciplines are imperative; mere intellectual honesty is not enough. Hindu philosophers insist that the aspirant should be endowed with such virtues as the control of the senses and the mind; chastity in word, thought, and action; reverence for the teacher; discrimination between the real and the unreal; detachment from the unreal; a certain amount of indifference to heat and cold, pain and pleasure, honour and dishonour, and the other pairs of opposites of the physical world; compassion for the afflicted; and unflagging determination of the mind to attain freedom from the bondage of the material life. Without detachment from the unreal and intense longing for freedom, ethical virtues are mere appearances, like water in a desert. The ethical virtues of themselves, have no stability and may vanish like the mirage at any time.⁹ Without compassion, knowledge may very well become a Moloch which craves satisfaction from human sacrifice. This is evident from some of the discoveries of modern scientists who are not interested in human values. One justifiably questions the worth

6. 'But a calm person, wishing for immortality, beholds the inner Self with his eyes closed.' (*Ka. Up.* II. i. 1.)

7. The *Chārvākas*, or materialists, accept sense perception as the only evidence of reality. But their school has long been extinct. Their writings are preserved today only in fragments. The Hindus, in their generosity, give the name of philosophy to any serious and sincere investigation of reality.

8. 'He who knows the Supreme Brahman verily becomes Brahman.' (*Mu. Up.* III. ii. 9.)

9. 'Where this renunciation and yearning for freedom are torpid, there calmness and other ethical virtues are as mere appearances, like water in a desert.' (*Vivekaśūdhāmāṇi* 30.)

of knowledge that results in the destruction of humanity.

Gaudapada, in his interpretation of the *Māndukya Upaniṣad*, speaks of the three tests of the supreme knowledge; it must not quarrel with or contradict any other form of knowledge, and it must be conducive to the welfare of all.¹⁰ It is only little knowledge that meets with contradiction, but not the great knowledge.¹¹ Being unitive in nature, it is free from conflict and contradiction. Reality is non-dual and all-inclusive; hence it includes both spirit and matter. Complete destruction of doubt is possible only when one knows that which is 'both high and low'. That is to say, both spirit and matter.¹²

Experience of reality is noetic; therefore it is to be attained in this life. What happens after death is a matter of speculation. The Upaniṣad speaks of the attainment of the knowledge of reality in this very life.¹³ Knowledge makes one free. Śaṅkara accepts the doctrine of Jīvanmukti, or freedom in the physical body. The free soul lives in the world, unstained by its good and evil, like the 'lotus leaf in water.' But other philosophers, who are particularly influenced by religion, accept the doctrine of videhamukti, or liberation after death. According to them, the soul, as long as it dwells in the body, cannot be altogether free of such physical limitations as hunger, thirst, disease, old age, and death. But they

too say that a man endowed with illumination can acquire control over his material environment and lead a life of freedom, though his final freedom is attained only after the dissolution of the body. Buddha attained nirvāṇa under the bodhi tree at Gaya, and parinirvāṇa, or ultimate liberation, after death.

Ultimate reality in Vedānta is called Brahman, which has been described differently by different Vedāntic philosophers. For instance, the non-dualist Śaṅkara teaches that Brahman, in its essential nature, is free from all attributes, and identical with the individual soul (jīva) and the universe (jagat). It alone exists. If one sees anything else one is a victim of illusion. According to Rāmaṇuja (qualified non-dualist) and Madhva (dualist), Brahman is endowed with attributes. Rāmaṇuja says that the individual soul and the universe are different modes in which Brahman becomes manifest, they are parts of Brahman, as the sparks are of a fire. But Madhva describes the soul and the universe as totally different from Brahman. Further, unlike Śaṅkara, they accept the doctrine of salvation after death. According to non-dualism, individuality is totally effaced after the attainment of the knowledge of reality; but dualism teaches that the ego is an eternal entity, though its nature is completely transformed by the knowledge of God.

All the orthodox Hindu teachers base their doctrines on the Vedas, the philo-

10. 'Which promotes the happiness of all beings and which is free from strife and contradictions. (Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. iv. 2.)

11. 'Revered sir, what is that by the knowing of which all this becomes known?' (Mu. Up. I. i. 2.)

12. 'The fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are resolved, and all works cease to bear fruit, when He is beheld who is both high and low.' (Mu. Up. II. ii. 8)

13. 'If a man is able to realize Brahman here, before the falling asunder of his body, then he is liberated; if not, he is embodied again in the created worlds.' (Ka. Up. II. iii. 4.)

'If a man knows Ātman here, he then attains the true goal of life. If he does not know it here, a great destruction awaits him.' (Ka. Up. II. 5.)

'He, O Gārgi, who departs from this world without knowing this Immutable, is miserable.' (Br. Up. III. viii. 10.)

sophy of which is given in the Upaniṣad. What does the Upaniṣad teach about Brahman? To be sure, there are passages in it supporting dualism, qualified non-dualism, and absolute non-dualism. According to Śaṅkara, the purpose of the Upaniṣadic texts is to establish the ultimate Reality of the non-dual and attributeless Brahman. The Upaniṣad in unmistakable language condemns duality.¹⁴ But no such condemnation of non-duality is found in that scripture.

It is sometimes asked how philosophers endowed with the direct vision of reality can describe it in apparently contradictory ways. In answer it may be said that the true nature of Brahman is inexpressible in words. It is free of both duality and non-duality, *dvaitādvaita vivarjitam*, because these terms are correlatives. But different philosophers have described it according to what is revealed to them, each regarding the aspect that is revealed to be the highest.¹⁵ Brahman is often likened to the Chintāmani, a mythical gem which reflects what passes in the minds of the on-lookers. But non-duality seems to be the nearest description of Brahman's real nature. Or it may be said that though illumined philosophers have all attained to the knowledge of Brahman, they have described it in different ways to suit the diverse understanding of the students. The student who is conscious of and identified with the physical body and the universe, is taught the dualistic doctrine. But if he is oblivious of the phenomenal world, then he realises the identity of Brahman, the individual soul, and the universe. From the cosmic stand-

point, Brahman is endowed with the attributes of creation, preservation, and destruction; and from the acosmic or transcendental standpoint, it is free of attributes.

In the Hindu tradition, religion and philosophy are not considered incompatible. In the one, emotion is emphasised, and in the other, reason. The highest reality, according to religion, is called God, who is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe. Though various religions differ about the attributes of God, yet all agree that a man, by communing with him, puts an end to his ignorance and attains to supreme bliss, which also is the aim of Vedānta. According to religion, the highest good is attainable only after death in heaven, though a devotee may enjoy in this life the bliss of communion with God. Many Hindu philosophers also as already stated, accept the doctrine of videhamukti, or liberation after death.

Religion emphasises faith as a spiritual discipline and deprecates the role of reason in the realization of God. This is particularly noticeable in the bhakti cult, in which the devotee communes with the personal God through love. The Upaniṣad, too, says that through reason alone one cannot attain reality.¹⁶

Reason and faith are two functions of the thinking mind, and they often cross each other's path. The ultimate experience of God may be an act of faith; but this experience must not be in conflict with reason, and should be communicated to others in a rational way. Religion, in which emotion plays an important part,

14. 'He goes from death to death who sees multiplicity in Brahman.' (Ka. Up. II. i. 11.)

15. 'The disciple grasps only that idea which is presented to him by his teacher. Ātman (the self) assumes the form [of what is taught] and thus protects the disciple. Absorbed in that idea, he realizes it as Ātman.' (Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. II. 29.)

16. 'This knowledge cannot be attained by reasoning.' (Ka. Up. I. ii. 9.)

may become mere sentimentalism if it is not strengthened by the meat of philosophy as philosophy without religious fervour may degenerate into dry intellectualism. Faith supplies the aspiring soul with the passion to struggle in his search for truth; reason prevents him from wandering into dark alleys or up dead ends. Swami Vivekananda once remarked that out of one hundred persons that pursue religion, seventy-five become hypocrites, twenty mentally unbalanced, and only five get a glimpse of God.

Vedānta has harmonized faith and reason, religion and philosophy; this fact accounts for its adequacy and universality. All through the development of Hindu culture, religion and philosophy have corrected each other. Thus whenever religion confined itself to mere names and forms and thereby clouded man's vision regarding truth, philosophy raised its voice in protest. For instance, the Upaniṣad and the teachings of Buddha and Śaṅkara may be regarded as the protest of philosophy against the narrowness of religious faith. They remind us that one may be born in a church but must not die in a church. Vedānta truly says that Buddha, Christ, and Krishna are mere waves in the infinite ocean of existence that 'I am.' The Upaniṣad and the Bhagavad-Gītā say that when the goal is reached the scriptures are transcended.¹⁷ Likewise, the teachings of religious devotees like Rāmaṇuja and Chaitanya saved aspirants from the inane rigmarole of academic Vedānta. In the Hindu tradition a genuine saint cannot be distinguished from a real philosopher. Śaṅkara and Rāmaṇuja are respected in India both as philosophers and as saints.

The personal God of religion and the Brahman of Vedānta are not, essentially,

two different entities. The attributeless Brahman, when regarded as the Cause of the universe, is called Isvara or the Personal God. When associated with the acts of creation, preservation, and destruction, Brahman appears to be personified; free from them, Brahman remains the attributeless Absolute. Maya, the creative power, inheres in Brahman and has no independent existence of its own. Non-dualism admits the reality of the personal God from the phenomenal or relative standpoint, and distinguishes Him from other creative beings. But from the standpoint of Brahman, all distinctions are effaced. A clay lion is different from a clay mouse, though when dissolved into clay, they become one. The personal God, the universe, and living beings all become one with the Absolute when a person attains to the Knowledge of Brahman. Even a consummate non-dualist like Śaṅkara has composed many soul-stirring hymns in praise of the deities. He advocated the worship of the Personal God for stimulating the growth of concentration and devotion among aspirants.

Mysticism is a highly controversial subject. According to mystics, their experiences are outside the realm of reason and cannot be communicated to one who does not belong to their circle. It is a private experience as opposed to the universal experience of philosophy. Most of the Indian mystics emphasize love of God and love of man. They are called 'love-mad.' Unlike average religious devotees, mystics do not recognise the barriers of caste and creed. They feel the oneness of humanity. To them the world is not unreal, but permeated with the spirit of God. They are indifferent to religious rituals or philosophical reasoning. They lead a life of naturalness and

spontaneity.¹⁸ Both religious devotees and philosophers are found among the mystics of India. Genuine mysticism may be said to be the culmination of religious endeavour and philosophical pursuit. But the world is full of spurious mystics. Because of their distrust of reason they lead a whimsical life. Claiming direct inspiration from God, but in reality following the impulses of their impure ego, they are often unethical in their conduct.

Ethics is the steel-frame foundation of religion, philosophy, and mysticism. No vision of God or truth is possible for a man devoid of self-control, righteousness, chastity, and compassion.¹⁹ A man who cannot distinguish between what he ought to do and what he ought not to do is not much above the animal level. He who cannot inhibit selfish impulses is not fit to live in human society. Neither religious vision nor philosophical insight nor mystical experience is genuine unless they are followed by the total transformation of a man's selfish nature. Though in the end a man may transcend ethical imperatives, it does not mean that he leads an unethical life. What is meant is that the ethical virtues, which the perfect man assiduously cultivated during the period when he practised spiritual discipline, now adorn him like jewels. They become part and parcel of his nature. He can never, even by mistake, make a false step.

The following summary of some of the philosophical doctrines of India will show

that in the Hindu tradition religion, philosophy and mysticism have maintained a close alliance.

(a) There is only one ultimate reality—self-existent, non-dual, eternal, and uncaused. All else belongs to the domain of phenomena, which are caused and endowed with beginning and end, and therefore are ultimately unreal.²⁰

(b) Ultimate reality is the all-pervading essence of things; nothing can exist independent of it. Whatever is seen by a man endowed with the highest knowledge is real. If a man sees anything other than reality, he is a victim of illusion. What an ignorant man perceives as endowed with name and form is to the non-dualist the Ultimate Brahman.

(c) Ultimate Reality, whose very stuff is existence-intelligence-bliss absolute (Sat-chidānanda) is both immanent and transcendent. Only a portion of it, as it were, appears, under the spell of māyā, as the visible universe.²¹ The non-dualism of Śaṅkara is not pantheism, nor is it illusionism (māyavāda). Its purpose is to show the ultimate reality of Brahman alone (Brahmāstitvavāda).

(d) Reality, or Brahman, is the cause of the universe.²² Creation is a spontaneous act and not the result of any outside compulsion. The word *cause* has been used in different ways by different philosophers. Some say that creation is the sportive pleasure (līlā) of the Lord, and some say it is an illusory super-imposition (māyā) upon reality, like the superimposi-

18. 'Therefore the knower of Brahman, having known all about scholarship, should live upon that strength which comes of knowledge; having known all about this strength as well as about scholarship, he becomes meditative; having known all about both meditateness and its opposite, he becomes a knower of Brahman. How does that knower of Brahman behave? Howsoever He may behave, he is just such.' (Br. Up. III. v. 1.)

19. 'He who has not first turned away from wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued, and whose mind is not at peace, cannot attain Ātman.' (Ka. Up. I. ii. 24.)

20. 'If a thing is non-existent both in the beginning and in the end, it is necessarily non-existent in the present. The objects that we see are really like illusions; still they are regarded as real.' (Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. II. 6.)

'The unreal never is. The real never ceases to be.' (B. G. II. 16.)

21. 'With a single fragment of Myself I stand supporting the whole universe.' (B. G. X. 42.)

22. 'Brahman is that from which the origin, subsistence, and dissolution of this world proceed.' (Br. Su. I. i. 2.)

17. 'In this state...the Vedas are no Vedas.' (Br. Up. IV. iii. 22.) 'To enlightened knowers of Brahman the Vedas are of as much use as a pond when there is everywhere a flood.' (B. G. II. 46.)

tion of water upon the desert as seen in a mirage. Both the doctrines of lila and that of maya signify the inability of the finite mind to ascertain the logical relationship between the Absolute and the relative, the One and the many; and they signify also the possibility of created beings' achieving freedom when they are tired of the play or sincerely desirous of liberation. According to non-dualism, the relationship between the Absolute and the relative is unreal; for the Absolute has not really become the manifold universe.²³ Gaudapada, in his interpretation of the *Māndukya Upaniṣad*, teaches the doctrine of the non-origination of the manifold (ajātavāda). The reality of multiplicity, though psychologically given, cannot be logically established. The creation may be, like a mirage, perceived as a fact; but there is no act of creation. The desert does not really produce the water seen in the mirage. Gaudapada denies the reality of the causal relationship.²⁴ The universe is the very nature of Reality. Dualistic philosophers describe the universe as the emanation or evolution of God, or as the creation of His thought and will.

(e) The individual soul is, in essence, one with Reality. Its apparent separation is the result of māyā, or metaphysical ignorance. The deluded soul identifies itself with the body and becomes individualised. Non-dualism admits the diversity of living beings during the state of ignorance and has prescribed ethical and spiritual disciplines for their liberation. Birth and death, good and evil, reincarnation and the law of karma, all apply to the individual or apparent, and not to the real soul. The present and future of the

individual soul are governed by the law of karma, which is the law of cause and effect. A certain kind of action, called prarabdha, has caused the present body; it will influence the pleasure and pain of this life and will continue to bear fruit till death. Another kind of action, called sanchita, will bear fruit only in a future existence; its effect can be nullified by the knowledge of God or Reality. The actions done by illumined souls, who are free from ego and attachment, do not bear fruit. Man is a free agent, and not a victim of a blind fate or of God's caprice. His own past determines his present, which, in turn, influences his future. Whatever compulsion is observed in his activity does not come from outside, but from within himself. The law of Karma bids him accept with calmness what is happening to him at the present, and gives him the courage to build up his future as he chooses. Due to ignorance the soul at first has identified itself with matter and accepted a physical existence. Now it is trying to liberate itself from the prison-house of matter. That is the meaning of evolution. One of the important disciplines for liberation, accepted by all schools of Hindu philosophy, is to perform one's duties to one's relatives, community, country and mankind.

(f) Liberation is the realization of complete identity with the Godhead. Even in such a dualistic religion as Vaishnavism, the devotee finally beholds in himself or herself the ideal Deity (Iṣṭa Devatā). Until liberation is attained, a man is a part of the phenomenal world. He must perform his duties—social, political and moral—determined by his position in society or stage in life. He

23. 'The universe of duality [which is cognised] is mere illusion.' (*Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. I. 17.*)

24. See the fourth chapter of the *Gaudapada Karika* on the *Māndukya Upaniṣad*.

25. (*Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. I. 9.*)

cannot regard the world as unreal. For such a person, non-dualistic Vedānta has formulated an elaborate cosmology. The only way to transcend the world-machine is to enter it and then come out of it. Religious and philosophical discipline hastens the process. From the empirical standpoint a distinction is made between the states of waking, dream, and illusion, though from the standpoint of ultimate reality they all are equally unreal.

Hinduism does not find any real conflict between the physical sciences, on the one hand, and philosophy and religion on the other. Science, through reason, reveals the power-aspect of the universe; and religion, through love, reveals its innate goodness. The universe is an indivisible unit, with no real separation between mind and matter, or between human and non-human beings. The apparent difference disappears with the attainment of the knowledge of reality.²⁶ The worlds of the Gods, men, animals, and vegetables are governed by the same fundamental laws. When these laws apply to physical

objects, they are called physical laws, and when they apply to the phenomena of the inner life, they are called spiritual laws. As already stated, the complete understanding of reality requires the knowledge of matter as well as of spirit. India's national degradation started when, under the influence of a distortion of the doctrine of māyā, Hindu philosophers began to regard the phenomenal world as non-existent and irrelevant.

The laws governing the physical universe are to be understood through reason, and spiritual laws through introspection. One cultivates introspection through yoga, which, in spiritual investigation, serves the purpose of both telescope and microscope. Phenomena otherwise inaccessible to the naked sense-organs can be perceived by the mind trained by the discipline of yoga. There is no unbridgeable gulf between God and man. Whatever gulf is seen to exist can be crossed through personal evolution. There lies in the ant a potential divinity which it will one day realise.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA : THE MEANING OF HIS LIFE AND WORK

By SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

Among the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Ramakrishnananda holds a unique position; he bears the Master's name; and he, among all the disciples, may be considered as a specially commissioned apostle chosen to work in one part of the world—the South of India. While other disciples

were sent to various places as a matter of course, the special act of commission to this teacher by Swami Vivekananda is something distinctive, and there is significance in this event. I shall have occasion to point out towards the end of my discourse in what relation Swami Ramakrish-

26. 'Duality ceases to exist when reality is known.' (*Ma. Up. Gau. Ka. I. 18.*)

nananda stands to that great change in the mind and face of South India which is to come in the not distant future.

THE EARLY PROMISE

Let us make his acquaintance as the young boy Sasi who entered this world at Calcutta in the same year in which Swami Vivekananda entered it—in 1863. We find him cheerful, vivacious and active as a child, and intelligent, inquisitive and energetic as a boy. At school he studied the various subjects that were taught to him but the fire in him could not be quenched with the studies that the school provided. There was in him even in early boyhood a passion for purity, a spirit of dispassion, and a mood of searching and inquisitiveness, a burning desire to probe deeper, and not rest content with what was given on the surface plane of experience. A mood of spiritual quest was marked in him even in his boyhood. And so along with Sarat (Swami Saradananda), a younger cousin of his, we find him wending his way to the Brahmo Samaj which was then the movement to which most of the spiritually hungry among the English-educated went at that time. There he came in touch with the great Keshab Chandra Sen and others. He participated in the spiritual ministry of the Brahmo Samaj and sought to satisfy his soul's hunger. From there an inexorable destiny guided his steps gently and steadily to the temple of Dakshineswar where he met with the great Sri Ramakrishna whom he accepted as his Guru, guide, and all in all, and under whose training he developed into that great spiritual personality in whose blessings we all have the privilege to share.

MUTUAL DISCOVERY OF THE MASTER AND THE DISCIPLE

Sasi's meeting with Sri Ramakrishna is significant because of the future which

lay hidden within it. He goes to the teacher and there was an interview between the teacher and the disciple. It was characteristic of Sri Ramakrishna and characteristic also of the disciples who went to him, that in these interviews there were interesting questions and answers. Sri Ramakrishna asked Sasi—hardly 18 years then—as to what aspect of God he would like to meditate on, whether God with form or God without form. This was a usual question which Sri Ramakrishna put to various aspirants coming to him. But straight came the answer from this young, inquisitive and frank boy to this query of the Master: 'I do not know whether God exists at all or not—so how can I decide whether I should worship God with or without form...' The mood behind this frank answer is very significant for religion. There is an earnestness behind its apparent agnosticism. Religion with most people is a matter of belief or conformity. It ensures for them a life, cosy, comfortable and secure. But it lacks adventure and, consequently, leaves the heroic souls cold. The heroic souls come to religion in a spirit of quest, in a mood of adventure, and find no joy in cosy and comfortable beliefs which they dare to question with a frankness which cannot be appreciated by ordinary teachers but only by the greatest of teachers. Sri Ramakrishna represented in himself that spirit of a great world teacher who could tame and train these fearless and frank souls. Of such stuff was Sasi made. Of such stuff, even in a more intense form, was Swami Vivekananda—then young Narendra—made. All these souls were fearless and frank, yet possessed of that dynamic inquisitiveness which makes for greatness in any sphere of life. Sri Ramakrishna gathered around himself such inquisitive and aspiring souls and slowly shaped them in their particular lines of

personality development and gave to humanity the services of a galaxy of apostles.

THE MOTHER-HEART OF THE YOUNG YOGI

Swami Ramakrishnananda's devotion to his Master was characterised by a supreme spirit of dedication and self-effacing service characteristic of the mother-heart. During Sri Ramakrishna's illness in the last year of his mortal existence Swami Ramakrishnananda dedicated himself to the unremitting care of his master's body, excelling in this all his other brother-disciples. The spirit and intensity of that service to the person of the Master earned for him, after the passing of the Master, the name Ramakrishnananda. Swami Vivekananda who had desired to take that name for himself, chose, however, to bestow it on his brother-disciple, Sasi, in appreciation of his self-effacing love and service to the Master.

We next meet with him as Swami Ramakrishnananda in the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order at Baranagore, Calcutta, in the company of Swami Vivekananda and other young Sannyasin disciples of the Master. The great mother-heart of Sasi found another remarkable expression in the life of that monastery. This famous monastery is the origin of the now world-wide Ramakrishna Math and Mission. That origin is characterised by an intense spirit of renunciation, spiritual devotion, austerity, self-sacrifice and brotherly love which is characteristic of the traditional monastic life of our country. In the Baranagore monastery the life of the members was marked by an utter forgetfulness of the body and its needs in an intense pursuit of spiritual awareness and Divine presence. But in this code of life there was one exception—and that was Swami Ramakrishnananda. Second to none in his spirit of renunci-

ation, austerity and devotion, he chose to give expression to these through the loving service of the Master's relics in the chapel and of the Master's children in the monastery. His mother-heart found the fullest expression in these two channels.

His labours to keep intact the infant monastery and his care and watchfulness over the bodies of his brother-disciples whose souls had sped to God in self-forgetful devotion have become inspiring legends in the Ramakrishna Order. Actuated by the monk's love of wandering and of the open and free life, we find Swami Vivekananda and all his brother-disciples filing out of the Baranagore monastery one by one. They went, they came, went again, and came again. Every time they found Swami Ramakrishnananda steadily tending the monastery fires—spiritual and physical. For ten long years he tended the infant Order with a rare love and devotion. The monastery's life centred in him and his life centred in the Master whose service constituted his austerity and spirituality, pilgrimage and devotion. In the meantime, great things were happening outside which were to affect profoundly the course of the world and the life of Swami Ramakrishnananda.

SOUTHWARD HO!

For, Swami Vivekananda, after his wanderings through the length and breadth of India, had gone to the West and preached successfully for four long years the message of Vedanta through the Chicago Parliament of Religions and a thousand other platforms. On his return to India in 1897, he had burst upon our horizon with a mighty spiritual force, had shaken our nation out of its lethargy and complacency, and had imparted to it a message of strength and practical spirituality, of patriotism and national service, the message, in short, of a dynamic national

character. This dynamic impact was to affect Swami Ramakrishnananda's life also in a radical way. For, as part of his plan of spiritual campaign in India, and in response to the desire of his Madras devotees and admirers, Swami Vivekananda decided to open one of the three centres of his movement in Madras—the other two being in Calcutta and in Mayavati. And he deliberately chose Swami Ramakrishnananda for Madras, as his apostle to South India. The call was sudden as well as revolutionary. From the even tenor of a cloistered life, he was to plunge into the responsibilities and cares of an abbot in a big city. Swami Ramakrishnananda cheerfully responded to the call of his beloved leader and thus expressed another facet of his great spirit of renunciation and self-effacement. He reached Madras in the middle of 1897 to commence a new form of spiritual sadhana where service of God flowed into service of man, and which continued to the end of his life in 1911.

This self-effacement of Swami Ramakrishnananda, as also of other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna like Swami Premananda and Swami Turiyananda, each one of whom was a spiritual giant, contains a lesson to the spiritually-minded in our country today. Spiritual pride is the bane of some aspects of our spiritual life. And spiritual pride is worse than worldly pride. The examples of the children of Sri Ramakrishna will help us to avoid this vice and implant self-effacing humility in its place. Little saints breathing high spiritual airs is a social malady which can be cured only by the examples of a few spiritual giants following the humble way. A mantle of simplicity and humility covered the gigantic spiritual stature of Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Premananda and other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He went about his work in his new field in

Madras denying himself in the affirmation of the Divine. Only to a few discerning souls was it given to see the man behind the mantle.

Apart from this, there was another aspect of his work in Madras, especially in the early years. Swami Ramakrishnananda came to a Madras which had only just a while ago experienced the mighty impact of Swami Vivekananda's personality. The difference between the two personalities was wide. Swami Vivekananda was an orator and organizer, and a dynamo of spiritual energy and power which neither the East nor the West could resist or ignore. Swami Ramakrishnananda was the opposite of this. But he possessed just those gifts which could canalise a spiritual flood for the lasting benefit of the people concerned. His purity and renunciation, non-sectarian spirituality and broad tolerance, his utter selflessness and intense love for man, and above all, his complete dedication to the cause of his Master—these he placed in the devoted service of the people of this part of our country. He was endowed with a strong physique and keen intellect; the first enabled him to bear the hardships of a pioneer's job, while the second enabled him to satisfy the spiritual demands of an intellectual people such as the people of Madras are known to be.

South India may well claim the honour of having been the spiritual teacher of India for centuries together. To this South India came Swami Ramakrishnananda. We can see the unseen hand of Providence in this choice; his attainments and outlook and approach bore a relation to the spiritual background and present requirements of South India. The wholesome effects of this choice are already beginning to manifest, but its full effects, its mature fruits, would come in course of time.

THAWING THE FROZEN SNOW OF THE SPIRIT

We may well ask what is the type of spirituality that is now wanted in this part of the country? There is one fact that emerges from South Indian history; it is that the people here are intensely religious. For two thousand years at least the people of South India have paid passionate allegiance to the spiritual ideal through Buddhism or Jainism, Shaivism or Vaishnavism. Yet, in recent centuries there has been a developing tendency to entomb the spiritual idea in social conformities and forms and to confuse spirituality with frozen patterns of mere Smārta behaviour. This tying up of spirituality made for the stagnation of spirituality along with the stagnation of society. This was the situation all over Hindu society by the end of the eighteenth century, but it was much more pronounced in South India due to its comparatively sheltered political existence. With the impact of the West on our society, however, its stagnation got disturbed and society began to move, slowly at first, but faster and faster afterwards.

This gave rise to a critical social situation; a stagnant religiosity which found expression largely in formal acts of piety and correct *smārta* behaviour could not catch up with, much less sustain, the movements of a dynamic society. Life and religion, therefore, began to function in separate compartments. This division in the mind of man had disastrous consequences for his character and personality. The impulses of a static piety and the forces of dynamic social urges tended to cancel each other so as to reduce man's strength of character and effectiveness of personality. Religious orthodoxy needed to be rescued from a rigid social orthodoxy, especially when that society was in a phase of dynamic movement. It

is only then that religion comes to itself and becomes strong to sustain and guide the new social urges. In the absence of this orientation, religion functions as a dead weight on life and society, continuing to swear by a world which is no more. This explains the evil aspects of communalism in modern India in its Hindu, Muslim or Christian forms. For, communalism is religion entombed in rigid and narrow socio-political frames. It dries up the human heart along with drying up the springs of religion itself. The country needed a re-statement of religion as a spiritual adventure and quest which has the capacity to invigorate a society from within and make for progress allround. This was the service that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda did to religion in general and India in particular. And it was the message of that dynamic and comprehensive spirituality that Swami Ramakrishnananda bore to the religious people of the south.

GODWARD PASSION AND MANWARD LOVE

The impulse of this spirituality flowed in the two channels of a God-ward passion and a man-ward love. And the currents of that flow broke down in its flood the limitations of creed and dogma on the one side, and sect and *sampradaya* on the other. Swami Vivekananda did not engage himself in any programme of social reform; he considered social evils as diseases on the social body; social reform, he held, dealt only with the symptoms and was, therefore, temporary in its effect. Lasting benefit to society comes from spirituality which, energising from within, makes for health and vigour without. This is the dynamism of a spiritual orthodoxy as contrasted with the staticity of a rigid social orthodoxy. Emphasis on this spiritual orthodoxy makes for a deepening of man's spiritual awareness and a broaden-

ing of his human sympathies resulting in basic social health and development in a natural way.

The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement in Madras as expressed through Swami Ramakrishnananda was a combination of this central spiritual orthodoxy with a peripheral social orthodoxy. The latter helped to smoothen the passage of men from a mere adherence to the letter and forms of religion to its inner life-giving content and spirit, while the former helped to demonstrate the beauty and charm of this inner content and spirit, and to draw up to it with irresistible force the native religious instincts of the people.

Swami Ramakrishnananda's life in Madras was an eloquent expression of this inner spirit of religion. It manifested itself through his every act and speech and mood. He lived and functioned in a constant awareness of the presence of his Master whom he worshipped through ritual and labour, through study and teaching. Often would he be filled with spiritual ecstasy and emotion which would find chance escapes in talks with the Divine which, to an onlooker were audible, yet incomprehensible. Though meticulous as to ritual, his worship in the temple was no act of prosaic ritual; it was the outpouring of a devout heart to the ultimate spiritual Principle who as a Person was a reality intimate and close to the worshipper. In his worship of his Master in the chapel of the monastery the people of Madras got a glimpse into Sri Ramakrishna's own worship of the Divine Mother at the temple of Dakshineswar. To a people so devoted to temple and worship and ritual as South Indians are, Swami Ramakrishnananda's methods and manner and moods of adoration were an inspiration and an education.

Swami Ramakrishnananda's spirituality did not get confined to the precincts of

the temple. What he took in by contemplation, he poured out in love and action in a variety of fields of human service—spiritual and intellectual, of cultural and philanthropic. In fact, his life of fourteen years in Madras was a saga of self effacing austerity of a new type through which abundant good flowed to humanity. Through lectures and classes, conversations and instructions, he scattered what he had gathered. He did these in addition to his constant efforts to run the ashrama household on precarious means. So much work he did and so many burdens he bore without feeling the strain of work or weight of burden because of the fullness of his love for God and concern for man.

SPIRITUAL CREATIVITY OF HIS CATHOLICITY

His catholicity was another fruit of his comprehensive spirituality. He was a reverential student of the Bible and the Koran side by side with the Hindu scriptures. As for the Bible, he knew it from cover to cover and he adored Jesus Christ with a passion met with only among the early Christian saints. He would go to the old Christian Church at St. Thome in Madras and enjoy the delights of Christian piety there. He was equally at home with the Vaishnava as with the Saiva adorations. The example and ministrations of such a dynamic catholicity introduced into the South Indian religious mind a new impulse of spiritual creativity and unity. This impulse had within it the force of Sri Ramakrishna's personality and the message of Indian spiritual tradition.

That message originating in the Vedas and the Upanishads found effective voice in the *Gita* and the *Bhāgavata* in a later day.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

In whatsoever way men approach Me, in the same way do I respond to them. All

paths, O Partha, lead eventually to Me only.
(*Gita*: IV, II).

वदन्ति तत्तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम् ।
ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दते ॥

It is one and the same Non-dual Experience that Knowers of Truth declare variously as the Absolute, the Self and God.

(*Bhāgavata*: I, 2, 11).

'The whole world of religions' says Swami Vivekananda in his speech at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, 'is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them.'

The Ramakrishna - Vivekananda movement in the South as elsewhere in India and abroad embodies this message of fundamental religion. This explains its universal appeal; it attracts to itself the spiritually hungry of every creed and sect. Those who gathered round Swami Ramakrishnananda belonged to a variety of sects and creeds which had lived exclusive and even mutually hostile lives for the past few centuries. At his touch, the high walls that separated them fell, revealing the beauties in each other's garden and leading to union in heart-beat and pulse. Here is the initiation of a process which contains momentous consequences for India and the world. Though it found only a limited expression in Swami Ramakrishnananda's time it proved its worth and validity and significance through him and the movement of which he formed a part. And since his time it has been steadily advancing, uniting heart with heart and hand with hand, to create a pattern of enduring national unity in the South as elsewhere. 'National union in India,' Swami Vivekananda had proclaimed, 'must be a gathering up of her scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.'

The intensification of this process in the coming years, with the resultant sucking into its stream of the currents of Vaishnavism and Saivism, Christianity and Islam, is bound to evolve a pattern of fundamental national unity in India based on the principles of unity in diversity, toleration, and fellowship, with sects preserved but sectarianism destroyed, and liberating values, spiritual and human.

THE SOLEMN MARCH OF THE TRANSMUTING FIRE

The way Swami Ramakrishnananda lived and worked in Madras gives us an insight into the impact of true religion on society. The only asset of a spiritual movement is the character and spirituality of its members and their radiant faith in the divine in man. The influence of such a movement spreads from person to person and group to group, until its spiritual leaven, pure and potent, eventually leavens the whole bread of society. This is the history of the Christian faith during the first four centuries. Sankara refers to this leavening process in his introduction to his *Gita* commentary:

गुणाधिकैः गृहीतः अनुष्ठीयमानश्च धर्मः प्रचयं गमिष्यति ।
'A spiritual idea spreads in society when it is grasped and lived by men and women of more than ordinary virtue'.

Swami Ramakrishnananda spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna in this part of India primarily through his exemplary life and character. Its silence was the measure of its potency. He carried Swami Vivekananda's exhortation into practice:

'Calm, silent and steady work, no newspaper humbug, no name-making, you must remember.'

Though a spiritual giant, he had his sainthood behind an exterior of simplicity and common human ways. What a lesson this alike to the pious and the saintly in India, several of whom tend to proclaim their piety and their sainthood through even their bodies! Those who proclaim

religion thus are castigated by the *Bhāgavata* as *Dharmadhvajās*; they carry cathedrals on their heads and not in their hearts. The truly religious, on the other hand, express their inner fulfilment through a character which is fearless and gentle and which exudes the aroma of purity, renunciation and love.

This is how a great teacher like Swami Ramakrishnananda lived and worked in Madras to lay the solid foundations of a spiritual movement which has spread far and wide and which, since his passing away, 42 years ago, has been uplifting the hearts of thousands in this city and province. The faith in his heart flowed into works for the good of his fellowmen. The vast and varied educational activities of the Mission in Madras today serving the needs of about 6000 boys and 4000 girls have, for their original inspiration, the compassion of his heart on a poor youth orphaned by plague at Coimbatore whom he took up and made the first inmate of the hostel which is today the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. His visits to Travancore-Cochin, Mysore and Burma helped to lay the foundations of the far-flung Mission institutions which we see in those areas today.

SPLIT-MIND INDIA AND THE DUBIOUS PALIATIVE OF SECULARISM

There is much discord and division in the Indian mind today as it expresses itself in the religious and cultural, social and political fields. The last few centuries had witnessed contraction of our loyalties in the form of sectarian narrowness in religion and caste narrowness in society. To the prevailing divisions of Hindu society have been added Christian and Islamic divisions. In the absence of a broader understanding of religion, the people have tended to express the intensity of their religious feelings and loyalties

through narrow communal movements based on sectarianism and intolerance. Yet, the desire for national unity is a powerful urge; it is the most outstanding fact revealed by the national renaissance; and it forms the stimulus behind all progressive socio-political movements in modern India. When the world of religion lay divided and broken, this urge for unity sought effective expression through non-religious channels, mainly political. The political movement in India therefore gradually developed into a national movement, breaking down the barriers of sect and creed, caste and sex, and liberating the Indian spirit from the shackles of foreign subjection and indigenous division. In the wake of political freedom, the nation proclaimed its formal unity through its newly adopted constitution for a sovereign democratic and secular state. The wisdom of declaring India a secular state may be questioned and has been questioned. But that was a step dictated by actual conditions, social and political, cultural and religious, and meant to forge a common national loyalty. Political wisdom consists in reckoning with *actual* social forces and formulating policies based on that assessment for enhancing the unity and strength and progress of the nation. The secular as applied to the state means only non-communal and non-religious; it is of course not anti-religious.

Citizenship of an all-Indian state involves common national loyalties and common national aspirations on the part of all the people, irrespective of caste and creed and sex. At present these loyalties and aspirations proceed from forces outside the creedal and caste loyalties which latter function largely at the communal and the parochial but not at the national level. This is the logic of forces behind the secular state. But, in the Indian context, this cannot be the final answer

to our social problem. A common political loyalty on the one side, and divisive religious loyalties on the other, ill go together, except in the short run. The division in the national mind thus engendered will lead to a weakening of the national character and loosening of our national ties in the long run. But a nation is wise in resorting to this social expediency and resigning itself to its long-range effects if it has in its possession no higher wisdom capable of bridging the gulf between the sacred and the sacred, and the sacred and the secular.

The nation has accepted this expediency with a deep-seated feeling that it misses the truly Indian touch. But feeling apart, the question is: Do we have that higher wisdom in our country? The answer from those who know India intimately is an emphatic YES. This question when seriously put will lead the nation to an appreciation of our authentic national spiritual tradition, the Vedanta, and to its dynamic expression in our age in the messages of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The lives and experiences of these two master-minds furnished a positive and adequate answer to this question long before the nation formulated the question to itself under the pressure of social forces. They represent the spirit of unity and synthesis at the highest level—the triple unity of faith and reason, of faith and faith, and of faith and life. That spirit forms the very core of Indian culture and spiritual tradition. The impact of this spirit on the various creeds and sects in India will lead to an increasing emphasis on their common spiritual elements resulting in the liberation of values, universal and human, imbedded in them. Religion then will function as a force for human unity, fellowship and service, and contri-

bute its vital quota to national life to convert the formal political unity proclaimed in the Constitution into a real and lasting national unity.

THE GIVEN ANSWER AND THE DEMONSTRATED SOLUTION

This is the meaning of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement for our nation today. It has a message to every Indian citizen—a message of renunciation and service—the intensification of which in life will make for character and spirituality, which are the results of the impact of religion on the individual, on the one hand, and national unity, strength and progress which are the results of the same impact on society on the other. This was the message that Swami Ramakrishnananda lived and taught for fourteen years in Madras. This message has one supreme quality—it is every thing positive and nothing negative. The message that was then spread in this part of India through one centre and one voice is now being radiated, as a fruit of his labours, through a score of centres and scores of voices. Already it has achieved a measure of unification of the national mind and purpose and thinned the barriers between sect and sect and community and community. Though what is accomplished is small compared to what remains to be achieved, the methods and results have vindicated their cogency and adequacy for the solution of our many religious and social problems. Our task today is to struggle to lay hold of the wisdom of that authentic national tradition and remould our nation in its light and inspiration. In this supreme creative adventure, the examples of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples will provide us with an unfailing source of stimulation and guidance.

Mr. Viswanath, the richest man of the village, paced up and down for some time. His wife's words had created a severe conflict in him. She had said, 'From yesterday Nanda's eyes are swollen. He is unable to open them. Why do you not approach that young man whom they call 'V'? The whole village says that he is an excellent doctor. It seems that with a few powders and liquids he is able to tackle every case. The poorer people revere him as a god. He too loves them much. It is they who look after the needs of all the four young men. I asked you many times to invite them to our house. We have wealth. Do we not also want the love and respect of our neighbours, although they are poor? Now at least, because our eldest son is ill, do go and invite V. Let us not stand on false prestige.'

Gradually the conflict subsided. Viswanath heaved a sigh and said to her, 'You are right. I shall invite him.' So saying he went up to the banyan tree, where all the four were resting, and with some hesitation, mentioned about his son's illness. V was a person to whom rest really meant an unbroken flow of service. He had also pleasant manners which removed all opposition or hesitation. He got up in an instant and followed Viswanath to his well-furnished house. His mere touch seemed to relieve the patient to a considerable extent. Being a highly qualified doctor, he quickly saw what was wrong with the boy. He cheered up the boy by saying that he would be all right in a couple of

days. He then went to the dwelling place of Rameswar, where his small medicine chest had been kept for the sake of safety, and prepared four packets of a certain powder. He then returned to the patient, infused some of his own confidence into him and explained how to use the powder. The powder backed by his visits opened the boy's eyes, physical and mental. Soon after his recovery he became one of the most regular and diligent students of the Night Classes held under the banyan tree.

One evening an aged villager was talking to a group sitting on the tank bund. In the course of the conversation he said, 'Our temple priest was present during the last visit of our doctor to treat Nanda, ten days ago. Viswanath, says he, offered a small purse as a mark of his gratitude. But what do you think our doctor did? He gracefully refused to accept any return for his medical services. But then it seems, he added with a smile, 'Well, why don't you assist in the service itself?' That is why the big choultry attached to the temple is being repaired, white-washed and fitted up in a new way. The priest says that as Viswanath is the sole trustee of the temple and its properties, he has decided to hand over the choultry to V and his companions to be used, as long as they stay here, for running the Night Classes and a Free Dispensary. I am also told that in Nanda's name, he is prepared to endow an amount whose interest can meet the immediate needs of a Day

School if our young friends can run one. Is that not fine? Who ever expected our wealthy and proud Viswanath to follow these youngsters or do anything to make

us poor people happier? God's ways are mysterious! Well, let us go. They are getting ready for evening songs.'

भग चरैवेति !

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Worship of the Divine Mother

The autumnal month of the Hindu calendar is set apart for the special worship of the Divine Mother in Her various aspects. In different parts of India the worship indeed takes different local colours but everywhere God is invoked as the Mother of the universe to dower her children with protective and redemptive blessings. In this short discourse Swami Yatiswarananda, whose illuminating writings we are privileged to often publish in these columns, shows that the worship of God as Mother is prevalent in some form or other in almost every part of the world and that in Hinduism this great tradition flows right from the Vedic times to the present day with a spiritual promise which we should cherish in all earnestness.

Philosophy and Religion: (A Hindu View)

In many a land religion has tried to keep itself safe from philosophy and *vice versa* with the result that both maintained a sort of uncompromising and rigid autonomy with a vengeance. The result of such separation between religion and philosophy has been very unfortunate: religion unenlightened by philosophy entered the blind alleys of dogmatism and other sanctimonious vices, whereas philosophy uninspired by religion got lost in the arid sahara of infructuous and futile intellectualism, which could be anything between unethical and monstrous.

As a result of modern studies in comparative religion and philosophy a section of scholars in the West are seen to be waking to the necessity of bringing a *rapprochement* between religion and philosophy. But there persists a strong opposition from the orthodox religionists and philosophers who respectively fear nothing more than the cold light of reason which philosophy inevitably brings and the stress on supra-rational intuition which is

the forte of religion. Sooner or later, it is hoped, the understanding will have to be taken for granted that essential religion was the very alter-ego of true philosophy and therefore any separation between them is fictitious and injurious. The temper of the times is such that those who insist on keeping religion separate from philosophy will have to arrange for the funeral of both.

It was only in Hinduism, one could say: 'Religion i.e. Philosophy'. In this illuminating article, Swami Nikhilananda—Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, author of several authentic books on Hindu religion and philosophy, and the translator of the now world-famous *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*—covers a very wide ground in a comparatively short space to interpret the unitive genius of Hindu philosophy and religion and incidentally indicate how the prospective and much needed *rapprochement* between world religion and world philosophy could be effected.

Swami Ramakrishnananda: The Meaning of His Life and Work

In this article adapted from a lecture delivered on August 9, '53, at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Ranganathananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, not only presents a thought-provoking study of the life and work of this singular apostle of Sri Ramakrishna, but also *en passant* throws illuminating side-lights on some controversial topics of religion and culture in contemporary India.

Charaiveti: Progress in Service

Readers will please note that before there could be 'Progress in Service', 'Entering Service' was necessary (*vide*, September '53 issue) and that sequences were also likely to follow.

MUSAFIR'S SUDDEN TIPS

The wide world is an irresistible invitation. You like to go about. You seek to see things and know. As you knock about, perhaps in the least expected moment, you find yourself enriched with a new experience which you could not have attained in a cosy air-conditioned reading room. When you get your skin tanned in the open of the world you earn a fire within, which is a direct transmission from the sun itself. Never is perfect the education of a man whose clothes have not turned greyish with the dust of the roads on which the millions of the world plod; who has not visited the varieties of the world—its multifarious topography, climates, civilizations, animals and human faces, tongues, strivings, musical instruments and viands various. One cannot aspire after at-one-ment before one has seen the wonderful many.

Going out, about, away and within—all form the parts of Hindu religious practices. The Vedic Rsi therefore sounded that eternal dynamic call: 'Charaiveti!' He also assured,

'While wandering one gets honey and sweet fruits (various enjoyable things). Look at the brightness of the sun who never sits idle but moves on.'

Those who move on—move on really—on the terrestrial world or in the spiritual world cannot but testify to the veracity of the above statement. It is only the rigid, frigid and squalid creatures who stagnate and swear and refuse to open themselves up to the knocking light that miss the brightness and sweetness of life which is going ahead and coming up.

* * *

Wanderers are always a charming lot. (By wanderers we do not however mean those people who are paid to travel for political or other inferior purposes, or for

seeing just those things which are to their supposed interest to see; or those over much rich muddle-heads who go about in the world seeking odd exciting means for squandering their clotted pelf.) Their broad smiles take the colours of an expanding horizon, which can take within its soft wings all absurdities, crudities and sublimities. Their stories when told with that generosity and humour of the wide open, seldom fail to entertain and educate. Unawares they throw out sparks of such experience as are valuable for all concerned.

Recently we were delighted to chance pick up a precious tip from the travel tales (published serially in *The Hindu*, Madras) of that defeated hero of America, Mr. Adlai Stevenson. This shrewd mellowed man who had just received a grand sobering lesson in the school of practical politics, went out in that mood in the open of the world apparently with an open mind for that richer education which one could have only on dusty roads and under varying skies. The wide world took him very kindly, so much so that he articulated his wonder as to if they all knew that he was defeated at polls last fall! Though he never could possibly cease to be an American statesman while travelling, one should appreciate that he tried considerably well to see things as they prevailed in this haphazard world, and not through the goggles of any doctrinairism. Of the many interesting, sharp, sudden, incisive, kindly, revealing, petulant and controversial remarks he has made in his travel accounts tipping benevolently the Government of his country and the world politicians, by far the most precious and educative thing he said specially perhaps addressing his countrymen are as follows:

'...that McCarthyism had done America more harm in eight months than Soviet propaganda had done in eight years.'

'Most of the world's troubles are not due just to Russia or Communism. They would be with us in any event, because we live in an era of revolution—the revolution of rising expectation.'

It was very good that a distinguished American went out in the world, stumbled

over these truths, understood them and communicated them to the people of that great nation. Never will come a time when humanity will require more urgently any thing but truth.

Would to God some open-minded Russian could go about in the like-unlike manner and stumble on some other truths which the Russians specially and the humanity required to know!

20-9-53.

THE MISSING LEAVEN

In this sea-served city of the South we are in the habit of very soberly cultivating the prerogative of considering ourselves a preeminently intellectual people. Even the most intelligent and otherwise humble among us do not appear eager to analyse as to whether or not here was a case of above board group-ego cultivation. Did we not feel justified in getting annoyed with that distinguished foreigner who with an adroit twinkle in his eyes said in effect that it was all too pardonable a bosh, a quaint ego-centricity, to consider Madras as the intellectual capital of India, for there was not a great city in India which did not consider itself the rightful possessor of that appellation. With a little remonstrance we smiled intellectually pitying the lack of insight in the chance-visitor! But the hard-boiled visitor took his unedited conviction with him; for having seen quite a good part of the world and the ways of it, he was not to be taken in easily. We too retained our title and conviction for all that! What if 'immature' minds did not understand the quality of our distinction?—we consoled ourselves!

Of late, however, even the most devout among the holders of such views must

have been feeling ill at ease with the responsibility of holding this dubious title. People from all parts of India have been coming here and emptying the arsenal of their vocabulary on the poor intellectual and his profession. The other day Sri Jayprakash Narayan squarely scolded the intellectuals for their unenlightened coldness to the Bhoodan movement. Coming to preside over the 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, Dr. Sampurnananda, the Home Minister of U. P. read a paper whose very title was, 'Neuroses of the Indian Intelligentsia'. What is more, one of our very trusted city intellectual himself rose to the occasion and characterised an 'average intellectual' (italics ours) as 'all head and very little heart and much less flesh and blood.' Let us not ignore that non-average word, which is 'average', for hidden there is the path of deliverance for us the title-holders!

One could in candidness ask: why so much talk about intellectuals when you have come to deliberate on cultural freedom? The answer is that it is all a self-criticism without which there could be no culture. All those eminent men who criticised intellectualism were themselves con-

sidered to be intellectuals. They cannot deny their caste so easily! But then it must be said that they are intellectuals with a blessing of the higher hunger. And here exactly is the hope of our culture. That our intellectuals have been realising that it is not quite intelligent to be mere intellectuals in the 'all head and very little heart and much less flesh and blood'-sense, is in itself a big promise. Higher up there is a supreme situation where the intellect and the heart attain simultaneous functional sublimation in the unitary urge of the Atman itself and the consummation of culture is attained.

Tat Tvam Asi are three words from the Upanishads which are technically called a *Maha-vakya*. This is also an ultimate definition of culture according to Indian tradition. Any human striving of body, mind or soul, directed consciously or unconsciously, to the consummation implied in the genius of this *Maha-Vakya* may be termed culture.

In his inaugural address to the Cultural Conference mentioned above Sri C. Rajagopalachari, with his instinct for precision, went straight to this point and declared that :

All Indian culture is bound up with this doctrine of self-control based on a recognition of the existence and the functioning of a soul within and pervading the material case-ment. ...to cultivate self-control, faith in the Divine rule is an indispensable prerequisite condition of mind; without it, we may talk of self-control but it is not possible. ...The culture of India is based and bound up with self-control. It is the characteristic fundamental of Indian thought. It is this alone that can establish true freedom not to be confused with the free play of individual ambitions. It is self-restraint, control from within that makes art artistic, beauty beautiful, and order orderly and enjoyable.

Not quite a few among the moderners take 'self-control' to mean nothing better than obscurantist self-inhibition, which is clearly the negation of 'freedom'. They, therefore, swear by self-expression in the domain of culture. And having known nothing but the lower self—higher self being unknowable without self-control—their culture turns out to be just an exhibition of those impulses of the human mind which are anything but beautiful and sublime. And vulgarity is an idol whose devotees are a legion. And legion is democracy. And naturally what is demoniac often passes as culture. You may disagree at your own risk.

But we believe, those our humble folk, who have not been intellectualized beyond cure, will correctly understand those bold men who will stand up and say that uncovering all ugliness, the cultivation of rabid vulgarity or serving as the bond slave of the unregenerate impulses of the mind is no culture according to Indian tradition; that self-control is but a joy-ride over a fiery stallion.

Self-control means the control of the lower self by the higher self for the realization of the Self, which alone is freedom in the truest sense of the term. Only the *Jivanmukta* is free to have freedom. Only the *Sthita-prajña* is truly cultured. The divinity within man has its own urge and necessity of self-expression. Many a people of the world today are trying the futile process of building culture on the non-recognition of this urge and necessity. As we understand it, in its Second Annual General Meeting, the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom by and large appeared to be seeking out this missing leaven of the world culture of hyper-today. It has been a good augury.

21-9-53.

THIS BANE OF HINDUISM

Sensibilities of all well-meaning citizens of India were sorely outraged by a Patna news dated, 19-9-'53 that Acharya Vinoba Bhave and some of his associates were assaulted at the gates of the Vaidyanath temple of Deoghar by the Pandas (hereditary priests). The incident happened when Sri Vinoba was entering the temple along with some Harijans for worship.

Most shameful, scandalous and criminal as this incident is, it spotlights our attention on a virus in Hinduism which is priestcraft. Notice the slogan of these ruffians when they pounced upon that ascetic and his humble followers: 'Long live dharma and down with adharm!' With what sinister self-righteousness these self-appointed custodians of religion go about helping the erring souls! And much of Hinduism seems to be still in their hands. You may blame the foreigners who come to India just to see these gangrenes in our social life, but what have we been doing to cure these chronic ailments? Alas! full of disgust against such affairs, our own children have been seeking enlightenment outside the very pale of religion itself.

In his presidential address to the Cultural Conference recently held in Madras, Dr. Sampurnananda deplored that,

In India... the bugbear of communalism had made secularism almost synonymous with anti-religion; in any case, all reference to Hinduism was looked upon with suspicion.

If such suspicion has any moral roots, it is in the nefarious behaviour of such custodians of Hinduism who laid hands on Sri Vinoba, twenty years after they had done so with Mahatma Gandhi. It was not a very unlike element which undid that supremely precious life of the Mahatma. If the cult of secularism has been thriving in India in an alarming

pace, it is because the religionists have been failing to sufficiently help release the creative urges of the essential spirit of genuine religion. (Interested readers may in this connection read the article captioned 'Swami Ramakrishnananda: the Meaning of his Life and Work' published in the same issue where Swami Ranganathananda tackles this controversial theme with great depth of thought and comprehension).

The challenge of this situation has to be accepted. We are glad to note that the Bihar Government has promptly taken up the matter in all seriousness; and that people at large have felt this outrage very poignantly. The culprits will undoubtedly be brought to book. But what about the potential culprits and the culprits escaping detection? Here is the jurisdiction of education, which the society has to impart.

It is a matter of common knowledge that in very many pilgrimages of India most unashamed, systematic and syndicated exploitation goes on in the name of religion. While it is not desirable that all places of pilgrimage should have to be looked after by government departments, it is clearly not permissible to allow mercenary goonda elements to continue to possess and control the celebrated places of worship. If the priestly class of India will not lose their profession and be wiped out totally sooner or later, they must not only condemn such acts of the men of their profession but also condone such sins by devoting themselves earnestly to the services of the deities and their devotees. They should understand that by purifying their profession they will only stand to gain in the short and in the long run. We would not have considered it worthwhile to speak such words of coun-

sel to the priestly class had we not been convinced that there is still a sane section of people even in this much vilified profession. It was reported that the head Panda of Deoghar did actually invite Sri Vinoba to visit the temple with his Harijan associates assuring him that there was no ban on Harijans' entry to the temple. Evidently the unenlightened and the obscurantist section of the Pandas got the upper hand of the situation and the unfortunate incident happened. The duty

of the local people of the places of pilgrimage is to see whether and how the hands of the sane section of the men in this profession can be strengthened. Otherwise there may not remain any alternative to transferring the management of the centres of pilgrimage to the government, for which there seems to be growing public demand. But one can not foretell whether or not this remedy could turn out to be worse than the disease itself.

22-9-53.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSENTIALS OF LIVING HINDU PHILOSOPHY BY FRANS VREEDE; GEORGE CUMBERLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, BHARAT BUILDING, MOUNT ROAD MADRAS 2. 1953, PP. 71.

This is a bird's-eye view of Hinduism presented by an Orientalist who has tried to look at Hindu culture from the traditional stand-point. It is, as is described by the title, a short introduction; but it covers a very wide field - philosophy, religion, psychology, ethics, and sociology.

The author significantly makes it clear at the outset that Hindu philosophy is not a mere theorizing about reality, but has for its aim the attainment of release from bondage. The source-books are, of course, the Vedas and the Upanisads. But the language used should be understood in a symbolic way, and it must lead to the silence wherein the truth is realised. There are various philosophical schools in India. It is customary to speak of the six orthodox schools. These however, should be regarded, not as mutually conflicting philosophies, but as complementary stand-points. Prof. Vreede is of the view that Advaita-Vedanta is the ultimate *darsana*. It is from this position, he holds, that the scheme of *varnas* and *asramas* should be interpreted, as also the technique of spiritual discipline. The goal of all striving is the realization of the one and only truth, the eternal Self, in one's own heart. In a note on 'Books to be read' with which the book concludes, the

author recommends, among other books, the literature relating to Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramana.

There are a few errors which may be rectified in the next edition: (1) At p. 5 God (*Isvara*) is described as the only transmigrator (*samsari*). This view is not correct, either from the stand-point of theistic Vedanta, or from that of absolutistic Vedanta. God is never involved in *samsara*. (2) At p. 27 where the Sankhya is discussed, it is stated that '*purusha*' is seemingly divided in all individual beings. This is not the Sankhya view, according to which there is a real plurality of souls.

Professor Vreede's book is a useful introduction to Vedanta. On the whole, it is a faithful account of the essential features of Hindu thought and life.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN.

STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE AESTHETICS BY DR. PRAVASJIVAN CHAUDHURY, M. A., P. R. S., D. PHIL., PUBLISHED BY VISVA-BHARATI, SANTINIKETAN, 1953, PRICE: RS. 5/-

Dr. Chaudhury's book is based not on all forms of art experience but only on poetics. It is a collection of eleven studies, including one on Tagore's aesthetic ideas. This is really the period of Comparative Philosophy in the history of philosophical activity in India, and so Dr. Chaudhury deserves the encouragement of philosophers. So far as the Indian doctrines go, the author bases his ideas on the doctrines of Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta and practically omits Bhoja. He shows good acquaintance with much of modern western

poetics and presents the *rasa* doctrine in a favourable light.

The author says 'Art is no psychology of feelings, nor is it mere mental discipline (like *yoga*) for mastering and transcending our passionate nature' (p. 15.) But any student of Indian aesthetics would ask whether art was not treated as a *yoga* by the classical writers. Music, for instance, is called *nāḍabrahmayoga*, the yoga of the Sound Brahman. Art of whatever kind is meant, according to our classical writers, for disciplining emotions and sentiments and sublimate them and make them so *satvic* as to reflect the Brahman in its purity. Even in the case of poetics, had the author taken into consideration the ideals set before themselves by the writers of Sanskrit poetics, he would not have been led to the view he expressed. In fact, what he says in the chapter on Vedanta Aesthetics conflicts with much of what he says in the chapter on the Objectification of Feelings in Art.

One defect of comparative aesthetics lies here: we compare the secondary aims and practices of western and Indian classical poets without taking into consideration the ultimate aims they have before themselves. This I pointed out in my small book on *Telugu Literature* some years ago. When we do not take the ultimate aims into consideration, we place either our poets or the western poets in a very unfavourable light. For instance, we use the word epic but what an epic is for the Greeks and modern western writers is not the same for the ancient Sanskrit writers. Under the epic we classify *itihasas*, *purānas*, and even *mahākāvyas*; but the aim of each of these three is different. So by comparing the ultimate ideals can we appreciate differences between the secondary and lower ideas and practices. This remark applies to all forms of art.

One again feels that one has to do much more than what the author has done in order to give even a plausible exposition of Vedanta aesthetics. The reader would naturally ask: Does one who enjoys Kalidasa's *Sakuntalam* obtains that enjoyment because of the realization that the world is an illusion (*maya*)? It is also not safe to use the word Vedanta in this connexion (ch. ix) because the world is not illusory according to all schools of Vedanta. What would Ramanuja and his followers, for instance, say?

However, comparative aesthetics is a very important subject, giving useful insight into our life and culture. It is hoped that the author will be able to present us a comprehensive and adequate work on the subject in the future. And no writer on comparative aesthetics can avoid giving more elaborate explanation of our aesthetic concepts than the author has at present done. For aesthe-

tic concepts are much more suffused with our cultural ideals and outlook than the metaphysical and the ethical. For the forms of art, I am inclined to think, are the forms in which the culture of a community, nation or race is enjoyed.

The author shows a good grasp of many of the concepts of poetics and deserves encouragement.

P. T. R.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH PAST AND PRESENT. THE ELEVENTH FREDERIC MYERS MEMORIAL LECTURE. (THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, 31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON W. C. 1. 1952, PP. 23. 1 SH.)

The series of Myers Memorial Lectures was instituted to perpetuate the high standards of research in a difficult field proposed by the great classical scholar and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who founded the British Society for Psychical Research. In the Eleventh Lecture of the series, Dr. Thouless of the Cambridge University, who has made notable contributions to the experimental study of both 'Extra-Sensory Perception' (ESP) and "Psycho-kinesis" (PK), discusses the difficulties in the way of our finding empirical evidence for human survival. He points out, and very rightly, that the believer in any profound religion need not wait for the scientific confirmation of all that he believes in. The importance of psychical research lies in its challenge to orthodox science and not in its support to religion. Dr. Thouless points out how much the situation has changed since the S. P. R., under the leadership of Myers, made its solitary protest against materialistic science. The increasing evidence for 'psi capacities' necessitates a revolution in our scientific approach to the problems of Human Personality.

C. T. K. CHARI

PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION-VAGRANT CHILDREN — PUBLISHED BY UNESCO, 19, AVENUE KLEBER, PARIS XVI, FRANCE.

This monograph is a continuation of UNESCO's earlier publications on the educational problems of war-handicapped and homeless children. It deals with the psychological and social causes of juvenile vagrancy and contains valuable information on the most successful methods of rehabilitating these maladjusted children. It emphasises the need for close cooperation not only between the family and the school but also between the social health and welfare services.

The first part of this publication contains a collection of reports written for the conference of

experts at Charleroi about vagrant children in war-worn countries of Germany, Austria, Greece and Italy.

Part II gives a brief account of the International Conference of Experts and Directors of Children's Communities on the educational problems presented by vagrant children. And questions raised by juvenile vagrancy, more particularly by 'Children gangs' and street children were discussed.

Part III is devoted to the really constructive purpose of suggesting ways and means of rehabilitating those asocial and anti-social elements in the various countries as otherwise the young vagrants are likely to become in future enemies of society and even callous repulsive criminals. The various causes of juvenile vagrancy are outlined, chief among them being biological factors, bad social environments, unsound teaching, neglect of post school activities, cinema, domestic calamities and unstable social and political conditions due to the war. The juveniles are classified into three groups:

(a) morally neglected juveniles

(b) morally corrupted juveniles

and (c) young criminals from 14 to 18. To deal with the last class children's court and child welfare societies are set up. Protective methods are adopted for the first and second groups.

The surveys of socially and educationally mal-adjusted children in the various countries contained in this monograph illustrate the urgent need for concerting measures for correcting asocial and anti-social juveniles.

V. R.

BENGALI

MAHAMAYA BY SWAMI JAGADISHWARANANDA, PRABARTAK PUBLISHERS, 61, BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA 12, 1ST EDITION, 1950, PP. 100, PRICE: RS. 1-8-0.

This small book is a delightful work besides being highly informative. The various conceptions of Mahamaya as found in the *Chandi* and other puranas have been clearly brought out with appropriate quotations (in translation) and references to the goddess in different sacred scriptures and philosophical works have also been noted and their significance carefully indicated. The author is evidently an accomplished scholar in this field of study though his main purpose in this book is to enlighten the average reader. We learn from this work how richly significant and pervasive is the concept of Mahamaya in the religious thought of Hinduism, particularly of the Hinduism of Bengal, and how it has found an important place in later Buddhism as well as in the imaginative literature of Bengal. Even if it is too much to expect a general revival

of the worship of Mahamaya, an awakening on our part to the realisation of our rich heritage of magnificent thoughts and images is both a need and a possibility, and this will help us to build up fresh systems of thoughts and beliefs more suited to the times. Swamiji's work is a contribution towards this end.

P. C.

SIKṢĀY MANSTATVA BY SRI MANIN-DRANATH MUKHOPADHYAYA M. A., B. T., D. S. E., PRABARTAK PUBLISHERS, 61, BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA 12, 1ST EDITION, 1952, PP. 348, PRICE RS. 6-8-0.

This is a collection of essays in Bengali on educational psychology. The essays have been written from time to time and published in periodicals, each as a complete piece, and their piecing together in the book has been a bit loose. Though the author writes with care and lucidity, the book as a whole, because of the circumstance of its production, is neither comprehensive nor an integral whole. It is meant for the students, the author writes in the preface, but one may as well doubt whether such derived books as this really help a student who should best be encouraged (or even compelled for want of a derived book) to go to the sources, to read the writings of the workers in the respective fields of enquiry. However, the author should have added a selected bibliography to help students to go to the sources and read in full what he gets in a very much distilled and flashy form in this book.

The book is, however, very useful to laymen, particularly to intelligent guardians of students. The responsibility of the guardians in the matter of training students is no less than that of the teachers and they should know more of educational psychology than what reaches them through chance from lay discourse or general magazines. Sri Mukherjee's book may be recommended to them particularly. Moreover, as an attempt to write about educational psychology in Bengali, Sri Mukherjee's work must be admired.

P. C.

PERIODICAL

PĀÑCAJANYA-RĀJANĪTĪ AṅKA (HINDI) EDITED BY MAHENDRA KULASREṢṬHA—PUBLISHED BY RĀṢṬRA DHARMA KĀRYĀ-LAYA, SADAR BAZAR, LUCKNOW. 1953. PP. 192. PRICE RE. 1/-

This special number of the *Panchajanya* presents all the different shades of political opinions prevalent in the country by the pen of the eminent and mature thinkers. The editors clearly aim at spiritual reorientation of the present political system around the ancient culture of

India, and the democratic traditions of the West in so far as they can be integrated with the true Bhāratiya Samskr̥ti.

Perhaps the most informative and enlightening article is that of Pandit Satavalekar. He gives in a nutshell both the ancient Indian ideals and the defects of the present political system. Kṛṣṇakumar's article based mainly on that monumental work of Satavalekar वैदिक राष्ट्रशासन is very informative and induces one to read that work thoroughly.

M. N. Roy and Vidyarthi give a humanistic approach and excepting in certain details their ideas seem to be very close to the Gandhian constitution presented in a concise form by Rameswar.

Dinadayāl differentiates between जनतन्त्र (rule by people) and बहुतन्त्र (rule by majority). But one is reminded of Sri Vinoba's question to the Mahatma. Vinoba asked why should each person have only one vote when their mental and intellectual developments are not identical. The Mahatma said that was right but how were we going to decide

who had more, and how much more, intellectual and virtuous capacity. And so in spite of ourselves we have to accept बहुतन्त्र as the practical aspect of जनतन्त्र.

There are many other articles which are highly informative and the editors must be congratulated for bringing all these eminent thinkers in one handy volume.

The editorial points out that the aim of journalism is two-fold. It must guide the people on the right lines, and also develop their intellectual, moral and spiritual horizon. Vyasa is presented as the ideal editor. We can only hope and pray that Indian journalism may rise to those heights, and present to the world the true ideal of this profession.

Quotations from various sources including Vedas, Puranas, Itihāsas, great thinkers both of the East and West, modern as well as ancient, greatly enhance the value of the number.

The get-up is nice, printing good, and the price moderate.

B. M.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI KRISHNA JAYANTI
SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MADRAS-4

The Birthday Tithi Puja of Sri Krishna was observed here at the Math with special archana, bhajan and the exposition of *Srimad Bhagavatam* in the night of August 31, '53. Earlier in the dawn from 5 a.m. the Sadhus of the Math chanted together the entire Gita.

The public celebration of the Jayanti came off on the next Sunday, September 6, '53. Sri T. V. Ramasesha Sastrigal spoke in Tamil on 'Sri Krishna Janmam'. In his exposition he followed the narration in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* quoting profusely from other sources both Sanskrit and Tamil.

Swami Ritajananda spoke in English on 'Sri Krishna the World-Teacher'. A summary of his speech is given below:

The Lord incarnates Himself again and again for the destruction of the wicked, protection of the good and the establishment of Dharma. The first

two may be possible by lesser incarnations, but the full incarnation alone is capable of establishing Dharma, which others cannot do. Sri Krishna's life and teachings beautifully bring out this point. His boyhood life with the cowherds boys, his relationship with the people, his discourses to intimate friends and the other extraordinary exploits of his life cannot but point out this fact. As Swami Vivekananda has pointed out, Sri Krishna came to harmonise various sects of Hinduism. He felt that time had come when the higher truths embedded in the Upaniṣads were to be made easily available to all. He wanted religion to be not entirely a ritualistic one or a philosophical one but also to be based on love. So we find him instructing Nanda not to be engrossed in the Indra worship. He puts things in such a clear and appealing manner like the born teacher that he was. Then his association with the Gopis point out that a love shorn of all egoism is capable of giving us the highest beauty. In the Rasa lila when the maidens became a little self-conscious the Lord at once disappeared. But when they felt intensely his separation and pined for him, he

there again. Not only this, they realised Him fully as the indweller of all human beings.

Sri Krishna also taught by his life and counsel that if one could live perfectly unattached, discharging one's duties and loving without selfish motive, one would attain the highest.

By complete surrender to the Lord the devotee could get all he wanted. Draupadi's prayers never went unheeded. As a perfectly detached personage Sri Krishna could take up any work whether it was that of a messenger, or a charioteer, without suffering any loss of dignity. Besides these, Sri Krishna has left behind his redeem-

ing gospel in the form of *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Uddhava-Gita* for all times. According to him the recognition of the Lord residing in the hearts of all creatures is an important religious ideal and the correct attitude for building national unity and world-peace. So he repeatedly asks Arjuna to remember this truth and to work on keeping his mind centered in the Lord. It is not at all possible to build up a better world without putting into practice the teachings of Sri Krishna. The all round personality with an urgent message for all times and all people that Sri Krishna is, he deserves to be the chosen ideal and guide of the entire humanity.

BOOKS JUST PUBLISHED

AT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS 4

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The Devi-Mahatmya or *Sri Durga-Saptasati* (100 mantras on Sri Sri Durga) Translated in English by Swami Jagadisvarananda.

Pp. 192 Price Rs. 2/-

TAMIL :

Saint Durgacharan Nay (The Ideal Householder Disciple of Sri Ramakrishna) Translated from the Original Life in English.

Pp. 162 Price Rs. 2-4-0.

TAMIL :

Ramakrishna Uvacha—Translation of original Sanskrit Spoken by Sri Ramakrishna (in English).

Price Rs. 6.

ENGLISH :

Sri Ramakrishna Upanishad By Sri C. Rajagopalachari. (Translated from Original in Tamil)

Price Rs. 1/-

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 Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, from Tuesday the 13th October to Sunday 18th October, 1953. This great Puja in image was celebrated here at the Math 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 year and derive such spiritual benefits as can be had from such grand worship of Divine Mother.

A prominent feature of the celebration will be the feeding of the Daridra Vyvanas.

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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Kathopanishad	...	1	0	0	15
Prasnopanishad	...	1	0	0	15
Mundakopanishad	...	0	12	0	11
Mandukyopanishad	...	2	0	1	14
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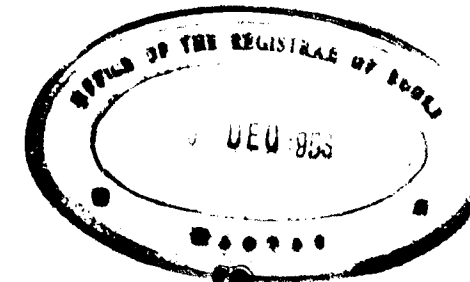
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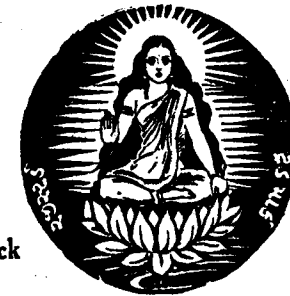
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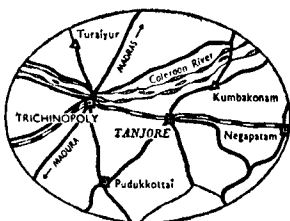
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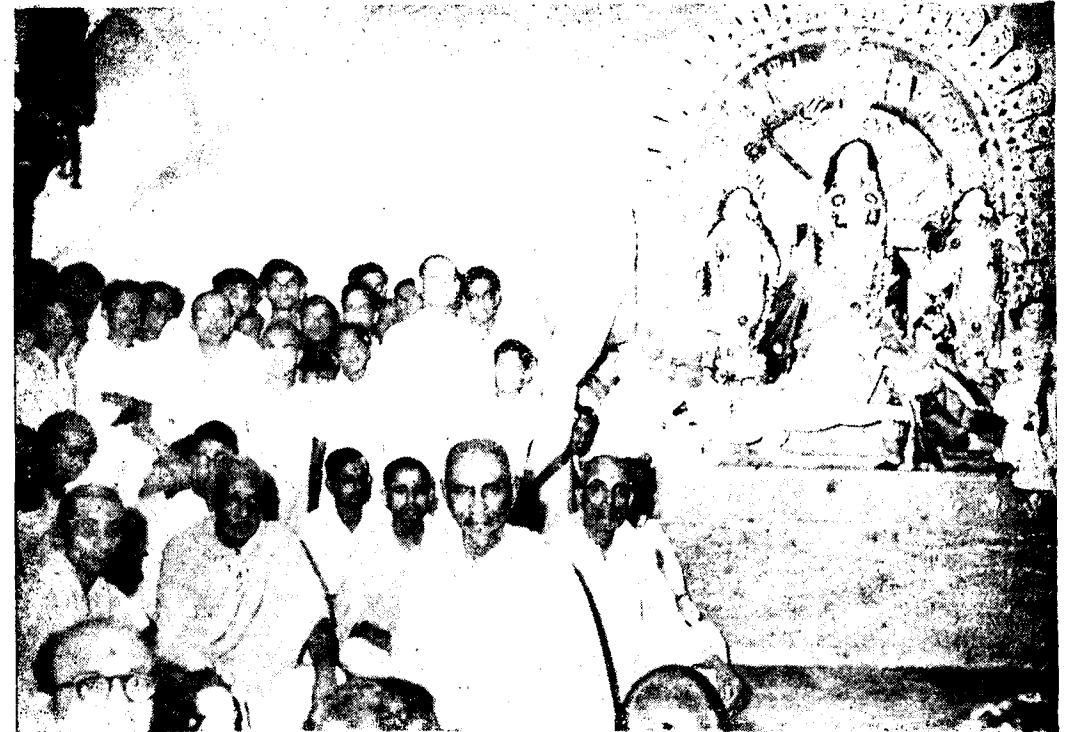
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*. Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.*

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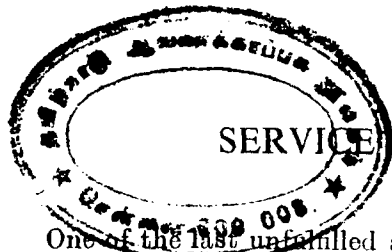
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No. 7

SAVING SUCCOUR OF THE HOLY MOTHER

If one's head becomes deranged, one's life becomes useless. The intelligence of man is very precarious. It is like the thread of a screw. If one thread is loosened, then he goes crazy. Or he becomes entangled in the trap of Mahamaya and thinks himself to be very intelligent. He feels that he is quite all right. But if the screw is tightened in a different direction, one follows the right path and enjoys peace and happiness. One should always recollect God and pray to him for right understanding.



SERVICE IN VANAPRASTHA-DHARMA

One of the last unfulfilled aspiration of Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, it was reported, was that he should live the life of the Vānaprastha somewhere at the foot of the Himalayas. We are not quite sure if all the many friends and admirers of Dr. A. C. the world over, who valued his life work, respected and adored him or even envied his great success and eminence as a savant and cultural ambassador, could take kindly to this last aspiration of this singular man. 'Life in lime light for so many years in America, so much of honour and fame—after all this what's that strange craving?'—some friends must have wondered. Impatiently must have thought some air-conditioned admirers of the gadgety metropolises of the West, 'Ah! that's the absurd craze for the wilds which an Indian seldom sheds even when he has imbibed so much of western culture.' More sober among them must have pondered if it would not be wrong for Dr. Coomaraswamy to deprive humanity of his valuable services by retiring to the forest. Some might have extended their thoughts still further and cogitated over the utter futility of such a course of life under any circumstances, not to speak of the case of such a valuable life as that of Coomaraswamy. 'How could any one serve the cause of human culture or benefit society in any way by just running away to jungles?'—was perhaps, a simple honest question which baffled many a understanding.

But, we are sure, there must have been at least a few among the intimate

friends of Coomaraswamy who should have noted this last aspiration as a revealing fact of his life. It provides us a measure of the excellence of the inner culture of the man who worshipped throughout his life at the high altar of culture. For a man of his eminence to ask for that quiet, that silence, that awayness, that unconcern, that immersion in the self, which his last aspiration meant, must have been a knocking education to discerning souls, most of whom, alas! through much too much easily available misdirection, jostle frantically to the fag-end of their perspiring lives on the narrow spiral of 'success'. To those who close their eyes and understand, this last aspiration of Coomaraswamy has been his most valuable self-portrait. No meditative soul can read it without feeling comforted. Has this not been one of Coomaraswamy's significant piece of service to humanity?

Vānaprastha, to be sure, is a mode of life which is far removed from all modern schemes and conceptions of decent, successful and worthwhile life. Even in India few among moderners have a clear idea and much less affection for it. It is not as if following the injunctions of *Brhannāradiya*¹ they have ceased to have regard for this āsrama in this Kali yuga. It is not also that all people have developed a dislike for retired life at advanced age. But the modern conception of retired life—in a cosy furnished cottage at the far end of the city with a heavy bank balance to be handled by the

never-to-be-separated partner of life, a latest model car fitted with radio, all sorts of electrically operated gadgets for cooking, cleaning and refrigeration, a small library to feed, educate and stimulate the old mind into youth, an occasional discussion about current politics and ancient culture with polite visiting neighbours and a profound self-centred unconcern for all those issues of life which tend to pull one out of the soft warm cushion of comfort—hardly comes anywhere near the Vānaprastha mode of life as conceived by ancient Hindu law-givers.

The requirements of the Vānaprastha mode of life according to Manu and Yajñavalkya are as follows:

Having duly discharged the duties of the householder, a snātaka Brahmana with all the passions of his heart sobered and tranquillised, shall live self-controlled in the forest.

Manu Samhita VI. 1.

A householder, when he will find his hairs turned grey and the skin of his body furrowed with lines and wrinkles and see the son of his own son, shall resort to the forest. *ib.* 2.

Forswearing the use of all kinds of food grains, as well as that of vehicles and wearing apparels used by men in the village, and placing his wife under the care of his son, or in her company, let him take refuge in the wood. *ib.* 3.

Taking the *Srauta* and *Grihya* fires together with the spoons and ladles, etc., used in the Agnihotra offerings, with him, let him come out of the village, and live peaceful and self-controlled, in the forest. *ib.* 4.

With food-grains used by Munis and holy roots, fruits and *sākas* let him daily perform these five great sacrifices. *ib.* 5.

Let him be clad in skin, rags, or barks of trees, bathe morning and evening each day, wear beard, moustache and clotted hair, and grow finger nails. *ib.* 6.

Out of his own food let him make offerings and gifts to the best of his might to the poor, and serve the guests in his hermitage with offerings of water, fruit and edible roots. *ib.* 7.

Always devoted to the study of the Vedas, with all his senses under control, beneficent and compassionate to all, let him ceaselessly make gifts without receiving them from any

one, and exert for the good of all creatures. *ib.* 8.

He (the Vānaprastha) should use his teeth for a mortar, eat fruits ripened in proper time, and break every thing on stones. He should perform the rites laid down in the Vedas, smritis, and other sastric works with juice of fruits.

Yajñavalkya Samhita III. 49.

He should spend his time with the celebration of *Chandrāyana* or should always live with hardship. He should take his meals after the expiry of a fortnight or after the day is over. *ib.* 50.

Being purified, he should sleep in the night on an open ground and spend the day with (standing on) the fore part of the foot, or by standing, sitting, travelling or practising Yoga. *ib.* 51.

He must live within five fires during the summer, sleep on the bare sacrificial ground in the rainy season, put on wet cloth in the winter season and thus practise austerities according to his might. *ib.* 52.

He must not be enraged with him who pierces him with a thorn, nor pleased with him who worships him with sandal paste but he should be impartial towards both. *ib.* 53.

On putting the fire within his own self, he should dwell under a tree and live on a restricted diet, or he should beg from the retreats of (other) Vānaprasthas the quantity of food which may keep the body and soul together. *ib.* 54.

Or collecting it from a village, he should, having controlled his speech, eat eight handfuls. Living on air, he should proceed towards the north-east quarter till the destruction of his body. *ib.* 55.

It will be evident from even a cursory notice of the above injunctions that Vānaprastha mode of life required people to go away from the bustle, rush, fury and ordinary pursuits of life—some would even say from the responsibilities and struggles of life—and set them to the practice of hard austerities for the attainment of the supreme end of life, which is the realization of the Self. Severe upon themselves, they were to be 'charitable and devoted to the well-being of all creatures.'

¹ मांसादनं तथा श्रद्धे वानप्रस्थाश्रमस्तथा ।...एतान् धर्मान् कलियुगे वर्ज्यानाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ बृहन्नारदीय, पूर्वार्ध 24-14
P. V. Kane remarks in *History of Dharmasastras* Vol. II. Part II, p. 929: 'Owing to the great similarity and virtual fusion of the two āśramas the stage of Vānaprastha came to be gradually ignored and people passed from the householder's life directly to the life of Sannyasa. Govindaswami on *Baudhayana Dharma Sūtras* III. 3. 14-17 remarks that the Acharya (Baudhayana) should be asked why he describes the two orders of Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa as distinct.'

We are aware that in these confused and hectic days when there is a furious demand for work, more work and ever more work, for producing more and for ever more wealth for raising the standard of living of the masses, many a leader of thought and action of the world will have nothing but righteous scorn and eloquent condemnation for the Vanaprastha mode of life. Retiring of that sort from the world, they would claim with a flair of all-knowingness and self-sufficiency is a luxury which no thinking and well-meaning people should indulge in. And then there is the too trite banter that those cowards who run away from the struggles and responsibilities of life are clearly lost to humanity, and so one need not waste thoughts over them.

Thinkers of this school are too self-righteous to acknowledge that there might be mistakes somewhere in their way of thinking. Even when pointed out they would not see that the Vanaprastha shirks no responsibility whatsoever when he retires from the world. It is after fulfilling all his duties towards his children and community as a householder and duly transferring all his property, wealth and responsibility etc., to his sons and heirs that he retires to the forest to devote himself entirely to self-culture. One can perhaps argue that self-culture need not necessarily be so much synonymous with self-torture, but one can never with any justice lay the blame of irresponsibility and cowardice on the Vanaprastha. There are of course absurd conceptions of responsibility and heroism which, it may be confessed, few people can fulfil. These critics do not also see that there could be a purpose of life which is somewhat different from mere 'higher standard of life', that there is a hunger of human soul which cannot be satisfied by the so called good things of life, and that man in his inner-

most being sometimes wakes up to a peculiar want of his which is satisfied only by realising the Self, the truth behind the facade of this world. These critics refuse to understand that to try to find out the answers to the fundamental questions of life, is also a requirement of life, a part of its struggle, and the most heroic part at that. It takes a lot of pure courage and heroism to renounce, retire to forest and depend on God who is so away, unknown and uncertain to most of us. At an age when he would be otherwise depending on others, he takes the step of braving the unknown circumstances and the uncertainties of the forest life. Is it cowardice?

True, the Vanaprastha's service to the community is not as tangible, varied and spectacular as those of the Grhastha. But that is not to say that the Vanaprastha in his own way, by his very mode of life does not render a unique piece of service to the world. His very going away from the world leaving its strifes, vanities and problems behind, is a pointer, a very helpful knock on the head of the community which gets bogged in the frivolities and futilities of the world. The Vanaprastha by his very way of life breaks open the encrustation of *artha* and *kāma* which stiffens life into shameful smallness, and allows the waters of dharma to flow towards the expanse of *mokṣa*. By his renunciation of the things and the goods of the world, he not only flames the imagination of the people towards the higher values of life, he also eases the tension of the brutal competition and scramble that go on in this world for every bit of trifle. Ordinarily speaking people are not ready to lessen their grip over the goods of the world until and unless death stifles their sinews. Our big world wars are nothing but our little individual non-renunciations and ugly desires of daily life brought

together to a collective blazing point. The Vanaprastha by his very silence neutralizes at least a part of the prospective strifes of the world which is not a mean service. Then his complete absorption in the pursuit of the realization of the Self, and his whole-hearted devotion to the well-being of all creatures including the animal kingdom, his taking the least from the world and giving to it the most—are

high examples which can do immense lot of good to the world when understood and followed.

The greatest service that the Vanaprastha renders to the world is that by the mode of his living he signalizes the truth that there are higher things in life to strive for than pathetically going after lust and lucre even at the drooping age. (xxxiv)

ISA VASYA UPANISHAD

(A STUDY)

By C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

- (1) ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥
- (2) कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

Sankara appears to have written the commentary on this Upanishad in the early flush of his philosophic conviction. He separates the first mantra from the second in order to maintain the pre-eminence of the way of Sannyas even as against work with detachment. Accordingly he interprets the two mantras as addressed to two different classes of people.

Verse 1 according to him is addressed to seekers of knowledge and sannyasis and verse 2 to others who are unable to do this and who settle down to rituals, a lower grade of aspirants. I would read 1 and 2 together and interpret it in accordance with the path laid down in the Gita.

'Isvara pervades everything in this world. So, dedicate everything to Him

while enjoying the things you enjoy. Do not entertain covetous desires. If you desire to live, you cannot escape from action. There is no other way therefore but dedication of all acts to God, if in order to live you do works and yet resolve not to be contaminated by the evil that accompanies all action.'

This is the doctrine more amply expounded in the Gita. There is no reason when these two slokas of the Upanishad are capable of being read together and in complete accord with the teaching in the Gita, why we should put any other sense on the words. 'तेन' like त्वयि are variations from the grammatical case-forms, which are not uncommon to Vedic Sanskrit.

- (3) अहुर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।

तांस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्मह्नो जनाः ॥

Here the commentators appear to be obsessed by the doctrine of birth after death. The phrase आत्मह्नो जनाः in this verse should be remembered in interpret-

ing प्रेत्य. I would take the verse to mean :

'He kills his soul who denies it by identifying it with the body. Such men having killed their souls will find the world all dark and without any light to guide their steps. Their minds led by desire will wander into evil and grief.'

Is this not our experience every day? Those who all too easily fall into the fallacies of materialism soon find life to be aimless.

- (4) अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो
नैनद्वा आनुवन् पूर्वमर्षन् ।
तद्वावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठ-
तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥

This puts down briefly what is explained in the last seven verses of the third adhyaya of the Gita. The soul can conquer the wandering mind and senses and prevent their turning to things of sensuous pleasure leading the men to ruin. देवाः means the senses. This is a well-known use of the word. The Spirit within governs all activity though itself unmoving.

- (5) तदेजति तन्नैजति तदूरे तदन्तिके ।
तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥

Here is explained the nature of the inner Spirit. It occupies every part of the body, mind and senses. All that you think as outside of you and other than yourself, moving or unmoving, near or far, is also yourself. The sloka takes the pupil from the ego to the universal over-all soul, single and all pervading, the soul of all souls.

From sloka 5 as interpreted above, it is a natural progress to the sixth sloka :

- (6) यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

Here is the teaching as to how one should view himself and other living beings and things. This is also the

teaching of the Gita. See IV. 35 and VI. 29.

What does one attain by this discipline and attitude ?

- (7) यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥
(8) स पर्यगाच्छुक्लकामयमव्रण-
मन्नाविरं शुद्धमपापविद्धम् ।
कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयंभू-
र्याथावस्थतोऽर्थान् व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः ॥

The man who lives the way of life taught in the previous slokas attains equanimity, jnana and the power of enjoying whatever comes, to the best advantage. The eighth sloka cannot be taken out of the context of the sixth sloka.

- (9) अर्थान् व्यदधात् शाश्वतीभ्यस्समाभ्यः

Will enjoy the things of enjoyment for years and years, i.e., in the right way and not leading to pain and grief.

The 8th sloka repeats in substance the content of the 7th sloka and contains also the substance of Kathopanishad Valli II, 18 and 19 and Gita slokas on the same subject. व्यदधात् need not present difficulty as it could be used in quite a few senses.

- (9) अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायां रताः ॥
(10) अन्येदेवाहुर्विद्यया अन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।
इति शुभ्रं धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षिरे ॥
(11) विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥
(12) अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसंभूतिमुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ संभूत्यां रताः ॥
(13) अन्येदेवाहुः संभवादन्यदाहुरसंभवात् ।
इति शुभ्रं धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षिरे ॥
(14) संभूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा संभूत्यामृतमश्नुते ॥

Slokas 9 to 14 are really impossible now to understand. 'Avidya' and 'Vidya',

'Asambhuti' and 'Sambhuti' and 'Vinasha' are terms to which the commentators give meanings derived more or less by conjecture. We have lost the background of these six verses which obviously seek to reconcile and accommodate certain opposite views that prevailed at the time. The conjectural meaning I would give to these six verses is that there is no profit in building up a theory of metaphysics and ignoring the physical, we should act as rightly as we can taking the phenomenal for granted and go through life; not question reality and be lost in metaphysical doubt, for that way lies error and ruin. It is a reiteration of the doctrine of the Gita that we should do what at each moment is our duty in the phenomenal world and not apply the doctrine of illusion to life which we cannot escape from. Sri A. V. Gopalacharya's studies in the Upanishads give a fairly satisfactory interpretation of these obscure verses. He brings these verses to fall in line with the Gita.

- (15) हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत् त्वं पूषन्नपात्रेण सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥
(16) पूषन्नेकैषं यम सूर्यं प्राजापत्य व्यूहं रस्मीन् समूहम् ।
तेजो यस्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तस्ते पश्यामि
योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥

Verses 15 to end, are prayers for enlightenment and an appeal that our minds may be freed from sin.

Verses 15 and 16 : 'The Sun nourishes us and we owe everything to him. He is a golden cover of the Truth that we yearn to know and which is hidden. Let us offer our salutations to him and pray that glorious as he is he may withdraw his very glory and let us see the Truth he holds as in a golden vessel.'

- (17) वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मान्तं शरीरम् ।
ओं कृतो स्मर कृतं स्मर कृतो स्मर कृतं स्मर ॥

- (18) अग्रे नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्
विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो
भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्ति विधेम ॥

'Soon, the breath in me will leave me and join the universal air and my body will be reduced to ashes. O mind! remember that after death your works will remain and therefore let me pray that my sins may be removed. O, Fire, that will finally accept my body as a sacrifice! may you that know everything cleanse me of my evil thoughts! Prostrations to you with this prayer!'

Where a text in the Upanishads is obscure, one is entitled to read it in the light of what has been clearly taught in the Gita, the author of which had better means than we now have to understand the ancient scripture handed down from teacher to teacher in intimate succession.

The Hindu brought up in the mental discipline of this Upanishad can 'pluck the little flower from the crannied wall and hold it root and all in his hand' in awe and offer reverential worship unto it, and offering that worship in humility, hope somewhat to understand what God and man is.

Did not the British poet, Tennyson sing about

The Sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains

And ask

Are thy not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee, thyself art the reason why

For is He not all but thou that hast learnt to feel 'I am I'?

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet

Law is God, say some; No God at all says the fool

For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool.

God is Law say the wise, O Soul
And let us rejoice

For if He thunder by law, the
thunder is yet His voice,

And the ear of man cannot hear
and the eye of man cannot see

But if we could see and hear
this vision, were it not He?

AN INDIAN PHILOSOPHER LOOKS AT THE WEST

By P. T. RAJU

The reader would like to know something about the Indian philosopher, particularly the philosophical atmosphere in which he is born. Every contemporary Indian philosopher is born in an atmosphere of conflict between East and West, not in the new senses of communism and democracy but in the old senses of scientific and spiritual cultures. From the eighteenth century India has been the battle-ground of East and West. Though Indian philosophers were in contact with western philosophies, religions and cultures during the centuries before Christ, at no time in the history of India were they influenced by western ideas as significantly as in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. We hear of Socrates meeting an Indian philosopher. Pyrrho accompanied Alexander the Great in his eastern conquests and got acquainted with Indian thinkers and their philosophies of life; and his so-called skepticism, which is really an expression of his tolerant attitude to conflicting philosophies of life, might have been the result of a similar attitude of a group of Indian philosophers headed by Sanjaya. And Indian philosophy has remained a philosophy of life to the present day and has been closely associated with religion, religion being understood as a way of life and not as a set of dogmas deduced from

a particular revelation to some individual. Though Greek philosophy and religion show similarities to the Indian, Indian philosophers seem to have borrowed little from them. If at all, it was the Greek philosophers that borrowed from the East. But after the advent of the British, the borrowals have been in the reverse direction. There are good reasons for the complaint of some western philosophers that at present the East knows more of the West than the West of the East.

From about the sixteenth century to the nineteenth the philosophical development in India was nil. It was an intellectually blank period. The motive force of the Indian philosophical development spent itself, and the logical development of the different systems of thought practically reached its limits. Perhaps philosophical activity would have taken a new turn. But the Muslims were about to consolidate their power by that time. As Indian philosophy was closely associated with religion, the Muslim conquerors, with their proselytizing zeal, did everything possible to discourage it. The powerful Muslim rulers of India were not the liberal Shias but the conservative and fanatical Sunnis, who would have persecuted not only Indian philosophy but any philosophy even if it developed within Islam. Free and rational thought was considered

to be a danger to their beliefs. With their iconoclastic zeal, they destroyed everything associated with non-Islamic religions. Buddhist philosophy and religion left the country; the rest buried their books; and after a few generations most of the Indians were unable even to understand their sacred literature.

However, by the time the Muslims could consolidate their conquests, two Hindu empires, the Vizianagar and the Marata, rose in the south. The first was destroyed by the Muslims themselves. Before the second could firmly establish itself, the British entered the scene. The period was one of turmoil and insecurity to life and property, and not at all propitious to any intellectual and scientific activity. The British started liberal education, and the Indians took eagerly to it. And to the general ignorance of their religion and philosophy, the educated Indians added contempt.

Though the British proclaimed neutrality to the local religions and were indifferent to them, they founded the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1784 in order to get the ethical and legal codes translated into English, so that the rulers could get acquainted with them and administer justice accordingly. But when the work was once started, the translators got more and more interested in Indian philosophies and literatures, and the number of western orientalists increased. The high tribute paid to Sanskrit philosophy and literature by men like Goethe, Max Muller and Deussen gave a rude shock to the westernized educated Indian, who was till then looking upon his classical culture as useless and antiquated, and who thenceforward began to restudy his classics. And he studied them, not like his forefathers with superstitious reverence, but with a rational critical attitude, which was a result of western liberal education.

Though the British rulers proclaimed religious neutrality, the Christian missionaries who followed them were not neutral. Their mission was to convert the unbelievers, both Hindu and Muslim, to Christianity. But as forcible conversion was not allowed, they had to use the methods of persuasion. So they began to study Indian philosophies and religions in order to refute them. Their main targets of criticism were the caste system, untouchability, the status of women, idolatry, and the mythological, as distinguished from the metaphysical religion of the masses. They summarized their criticism as the unhumanistic other-worldliness of Indian philosophy and religion: Indian religion has no humanitarianism and does not care for the welfare of man in this world; in its higher aspects it is too metaphysical, and so the common man is unable to understand it and keeps close to the mythological and symbolic forms with their idolatry, which is nonsense and breeds superstition; it is too ascetic, and asceticism is indifferent to positive ethics.

Of course the educated Indian, who had a close intelligent acquaintance with his classical philosophy and religion, did not accept the criticism. Like his own critics in controversies, he began drawing distinction between essentials and externals, the central teachings and the fringe, over-emphasis and under-emphasis and so on, and utilized all the subterfuges which debators in religious controversies use. He asked: Can there be a religion worth the name if it is not other-worldly at all? Should religion necessarily take over social work and social programmes? May not social work be relegated to social workers and made part of their ethical discipline helpful to spiritual discipline? Supposing Hinduism abolishes caste system, why should it become Christianity?

No Hindu believes that the wooden image is really the Almighty! Why does the Christian cross himself before the images of Christ and Virgin Mary? Has Christianity or Islam no symbolism? What has permission or prohibition of the remarriage of widows to do with spiritual life? What has polygamy to do with religion? Wrong customs and practices are indications of a backward and unprogressive society, which can reform itself without changing its religion. And so on and so forth. While asking these questions and meeting the criticisms, the Indian has been introducing several social reforms, and he finds that even after these reforms he does not have to give up Hinduism. Hindu spiritual discipline never prescribed definite social laws, but only laws which were relative to the different castes and sub-castes. The relativity of all social laws is what every Hindu sees and has been taught to tolerate. He is therefore not seriously opposed to change and progress based, of course, upon sound social thought, and does not confuse social discipline with spiritual discipline.

The results of liberal education showed themselves in another direction, namely, in the growth of strong national feeling and the rise of nationalism. Along with Shakespeare, the Indians studied Mill's *Essay on Liberty* and Locke's *Essay on Self-government*. They wanted parliamentary forms of government for themselves also and asked the British to quit India. But in order to have a strong national government, they have to have a strong nation; and for the nation to be strong, society needs reform and improvement in all its forms. So a change was needed in the general philosophical outlook: a more affirmative attitude to life and a positive interest in human affairs. The result was the re-interpretation of the *Bhagavadgita* by B. G. Tilak as teaching primarily the

Way of Action and not of Inaction and by Mahatma Gandhi as teaching active adherence to the principles of Truth and Love.

Such is the environment in which the modern Indian philosopher is born. He is influenced not only by western social and religious thought but also by the scientific, particularly by Darwin's theory of evolution and applications of it by social thinkers and metaphysicians.

There are four characteristics generally common to most of the modern well-known Indian philosophers. In the first place, none of them wishes to break away from the ancient and classical Indian philosophical tradition. They may not write commentaries on the ancient texts; but they want to work out and develop the classical Indian philosophical tradition by incorporating the developments in western thought. Secondly, every one is influenced by western thought. He does not attach much importance to western theological speculations and scholastic philosophy. The Greek thought and modern philosophy after Descartes are unhampered by scriptural authority. The humanism of the Greeks and the scientific thought of the modern west are rational and scientific. It is impossible and detrimental not to use their criteria. In the third place, the most important and central problem of classical Indian philosophy is the problem of the self. It was discussed from the psychological, philosophical and religious stand-points. So all the contemporary Indian philosophers are interested in it. If there is salvation, it must be for the self; if the world of matter is to be conquered and controlled, and if society is to be reformed and improved, it is again for the self. Then what is the nature of the self? In the fourth place, the problem of the freedom of the self is an eternal problem for the Indian philo-

sophers. Traditional religions understood this freedom as freedom from material entanglements. But is this freedom to be achieved through escape from matter or by conquest and transformation of matter? Almost all the contemporary Indian philosophers accept the second alternative: there can be no escape from matter, it has to be conquered and transformed into spirit. In the light of the criticisms of the western humanistic and Christian philosophers and in conformity to national demands and responsibilities, Indian philosophers have begun to lay new emphasis on the affirmative attitude to the external world.

The first question which a philosophically minded person in India naturally would ask a western philosopher is: What does western philosophy say about the self? Indian philosophers are not satisfied generally with the indifference of western philosophers to the problem. They would ask the same question as Christ asked long ago: What does it avail one if one gains the whole world and loses his self (soul)? Ancient Indian philosophers, both orthodox and heterodox, had much to say about the self, which would be useful at the same time to religious thought, metaphysics, psychology and ethics. If God is the Universal Self residing in the finite selves, then the nature of even the finite self cannot be understood if we ignore religious experience, the object of which is the relation of the finite self to the Universal Self. If God or the Universal Self is the ultimate Being then the study of the self must also be the study of Being and so ontology or metaphysics. The empirical self includes urges, emotions, feelings, instincts and cognitions; and so a study of the self includes psychology. Ethics deals with the canalization of our desires and urges and with the agent of ethical action; and so the

study of the self is important for ethics also.

The result of the traditional philosophical activity in India is that metaphysics has become the philosophical aspect of religion, and religion the practical aspect of metaphysics. Hence there is no philosophy of religion apart from metaphysics in India; and metaphysics, though the work of reason, is not supposed to be an arm-chair conceptual or speculative reconstruction of the world, but the rational support and guide of spiritual discipline. Of course in the Indian universities, metaphysics is not taught with this aim, but only as an academical subject; and yet it is taught as a true doctrine of reality.

In the West and the Near East, religion had its origin independent of metaphysics, but not so in India and Greece. Indian religion, like the religion of the Greek philosophers, is rationally and philosophically developed and supported, without recourse to dogmas and special revelations. Western culture is claimed to be a continuation of Greek culture; but this claim seems to be true only so far as logic, and the scientific, and, to some extent, social thoughts go but not so far as religion is concerned. Christianity at first supplanted Greek religion and destroyed it. But when Christianity realized that it needed intellectual content and justification, it revived Greek philosophy and incorporated it into her theology. But Plato and Aristotle did not fully fit her. Nor was the Greek spirit of free enquiry the same as the Christian religious spirit. For this reason, Christianity was, now and then, obliged to condemn Plato and Aristotle. Her theology remained dogmatic and closed the doors of her inner temple against free rational enquiry. Islam also did the same but not Indian religion. Hence for Indian philosophers spiritual life could remain the centre of interest. We find the same

spiritual motif in the thought of most of the contemporary Indian philosophers.

The materialist philosophy of communism is a product of scientific thought, which developed after the Renaissance as a result of the bifurcation by Descartes of reality into matter and spirit, and of the Greek social thought as found in the aristocratic communism of Plato. Indeed, there were other factors that went into the product, but we may say that these two are the main strands. After classifying reality into matter and spirit, Descartes handed over matter to reason and scientific study and left spirit to faith and the theologians to wrangle about. The Greek religious thought, which was based on reason and not on dogma and revelation, was destroyed by Christianity, which mistakenly thought at that time that she was strengthening and guarding herself best by strengthening her dogmas and rendering them unapproachable to reason. But man, as a rational animal, has begun to say in the west that he will not be concerned with things forbidden to his reason and experience.

Russia, therefore, is not East, for the word East always stood up to the end of World War II, for spiritual culture, holy men, and men who expounded philosophies of the Universal or Divine Spirit. Russia is pure West, because her philosophy is social and scientific rationalism, which has so far been foreign to countries like India. It is European culture minus Christianity, which could not be taken over by the rationalism of communism, because the former entrenched herself within her circle of dogmas and closed her doors against rational understanding. Had Greek religious rationalism been not destroyed, contemporary history would have been different. We are therefore obliged to re-evaluate the Renaissance and say that, in Europe, it was an

incomplete and truncated revival of Greek thought and learning: the Greek religious rationalism, which characterised the apexes of the systems of the Greek philosophers, was not revived but allowed to die. Through the labours of the Arabian and Greek scholars, Aristotle was brought back to Europe. But the Greek religious rationalism did not become part of the philosophy of life of the European Christians and, now and then, the Church found it necessary to condemn even the works of Aristotle.

It is true, and I am not unaware, that the Renaissance produced a humanistic outlook among some of the educated and stimulated humanistic activity; but it was mostly confined to a few cultured men. The main religious tradition looked with suspicion on their activities, and the main living religion of the people could not be made rational. It was safe for philosophers to approach, with their reason, problems of the natural and social sciences, but unsafe to make a similar approach to the problems of the living religion. And so the current of rational thought which carried the ideas of science and society forward did not carry the spiritual ideas, and in the end produced communism, which is scientific humanistic rationalism.

There is need therefore for the revival of religious rationalism of the Greek type. But unfortunately Greek religion is once for all dead. So Indian philosophy, which is spiritual, and Indian spirituality, which is religious rationalism, may supply the want in order to make western rationalism complete and comprehensive. It is unfortunate that any talk about the knowledge of God, experience of God etc., are condemned and dismissed as gnosticism or naturalism. These two words are associated with Christian heresy, atheism and anti-spirituality. So sincere and serious philosophers, unless in moods of

humour or patronage, do not care to reason about God. Even otherwise, their freedom to think is severely restricted. When we are prohibited rationally to think about God, we do not think about Him; and if we do not think about Him for a long time, we tend to ignore Him and regard Him as unimportant. And the problems of religion therefore have become unimportant for many western philosophers.

Along with the problem of God the problem of the self also has become unimportant. Religions were concerned with the salvation of the self in man. Theologians used the word soul. Philosophers began using the word spirit and avoided the word soul because of the latter's associations with the supernatural, with which the theologians alone were privileged to deal. Later the philosophers discarded even the word spirit and substituted mind for it, thinking that it sounded more scientific. Still later, the psychologists could not have much use for the word mind too. Science cannot study the thing in itself but only its behaviour, and the behaviour of even mind is expressed materially. The philosophers also followed suit, began studying the material behaviour of mind, ignored mind, then forgot about it and next denied it. The self which is expressed in its behaviour is ignored; only the behaviour is recognized as the existent fact for rational study. With what result? The very basis of ethical and social thought is destroyed, namely, man with his core of individuality, which is not exhausted by or reducible to the social and material relations into which he enters. If the individual is his behaviour, we can reconstitute the

behaviour and so the individual; and we can reconstitute him in any way, the socialist way, the communist way or the democratic way. Of course he will react to society as an individual; but he will react only in the way we condition him. By himself and in himself, the individual is empty, he is nothing; he is only what is constituted by material and social behaviour. But if democracy is true, is it not to recognize an unanalyzable core of individuality in each man? And where is it to find that core?

It has been a very common and oft-repeated criticism that Eastern philosophies and religions preach a negative attitude to the world and its values, that they have been pre-occupied with the problems of the self, its relation to God and salvation, and did not care to think about the lot of man on this earth. And present-day Indian philosophers, both in denying the charge and developing their thought, took care to lay proper stress on the affirmative attitude and have been looking to the West for example and inspiration in working out the details. But what do they find? They find a negative attitude to the self! Christ asked: What does it avail a man if he gains the world and loses his self? The eastern philosophers were made to ask themselves: What does it avail a man if he gains his transcendental self and loses the values of the world? But he asks now: If the self is empty and is nothing, for whose sake is all the worry and trouble about conquest, control and utilization of matter? The western philosophical tradition has developed its own negative attitude.

RAM-DADA

By GIRISHCHANDRA GHOSH

Many know about the late Ramachandra Datta, the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. How his life of devotion developed has partly been published by his disciples in the *Tattva-manjari*. Partly, I say, because, however much anybody might write, nobody is capable enough to describe the deeply intimate relation of the devotee with the Master. That gem of devotion is secretly preserved in the core of the heart of the devotee and he only is capable to describe that. For, uptill now no language fit to describe that feelings of the heart, has been invented.

That picture abides in the devotee's heart. He alone sees it with wonderment. Nobody else has access there. That is the temple of the Lord, and He only resides there. In that temple goes on endless sport of the Lord with his devotee. I am only trying here to describe Ramachandra as I saw him.

I first met Ramachandra at his house at Simla in Calcutta. On the particular day a devotee named Tejachandra Mitra left a note in the Star Theatre (at that time in the Beadon Street) that Sri Ramakrishna would visit the house of Ramachandra Datta at Madhu Roy's Lane at Simla. The devotee left that note without being requested by me. Afterwards I came to know that he had done so at the direction of the Master. As soon as I read the note after going to the Theatre, I felt attracted. Slowly I moved on and was thinking at every step, 'Why should I go uninvited?' Sometimes I stopped and thought of retracing my steps, but still went ahead. Even after reaching the lane in which Ramachandra's house was situated I was hesitating. At

last I reached before the gate where Ramachandra was waiting. It appeared that he knew me. He welcomed me cordially as soon as he saw me and instead of showing any social courtesy he began to speak in praise of the Master. He did so with great earnestness as though he was afraid that this man who had somehow gone there due to some momentary impulse might turn away after coming as far as the gates of heaven! Ramachandra began to narrate the glory of the Master with great care. The Master had visited the theatre twice previously. Though I was known to him, I could not realise that the saviour had already given me shelter. Afterwards I met him, received his message of hope and came back.

Ramachandra would often accompany the Master wherever he went. But when the Master had come to the theatre, Ramachandra sent food for him but did not come himself! He used to consider the theatre as a polluted place. But seeing in his house the Master's grace on me, he expressed his sorrow to his friend, Sri Devendranath Mazumdar, a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna with the words 'Alas! what a fool have I been to have considered that place polluted where the Master himself had set his own feet to bestow his grace on the fallen! The Master alone understands his own play (Lila). How could I realise, foolish as I was, that the friend of the lowly had gone to the Theatre on the pretext of witnessing a drama just to shower his grace on the fallen? Deven, you will see soon that these men of theatre will not remain ordinary persons any more, but through the grace of the Master all will become adorable to me.'

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After this I met Ram Babu at Dakshineswar. He approached very humbly and took me to the Panchavati. All the readers of the *Tattva-manjari* are aware that Ram considered Paramahansa Deva as an Incarnation. He came to know from the aforesaid Deven Babu that my faith also was that the Master was an Incarnation. Hearing of this impression of mine Ram was overwhelmed! He addressed me as 'Girish-dada'—elder brother Girish. From that time onwards I also used to call him 'Ram-dada.' In the Panchavati Ram-dada, with choked voice,—words not properly coming out due to intense emotion of the heart,—addressed me the following words, 'Girish-dada, have you understood that this time there are three in One: Paramahansa-deva is the sum total of the three, Gauranga, Nityananda, and Advaita! His (Sri Ramakrishna's) idea is the synthesis of love, devotion and knowledge in one receptacle. In the incarnation as Gauranga they were manifested in three receptacles.'

Ram-dada went on in this strain as much as he could, his inner feelings however were partly expressed and partly remained in his heart. I grew so much intimate with him that there was nothing that he could not give me. Repeatedly he began to fold his hands in reverence and possibly would roll on the ground in Panchavati had I not prevented him. He took me as purer than the pure, and I became very closely related to him. There is a saying of Nityananda Prabhu in a song, 'He who worships Gauranga, is my life itself'. To him I became as if dearer than his own life. That day Ram-dada was beside himself with joy, as though he had got an uncommon thing! After that, we would meet often. The theatre became his place of pilgrimage, so to say. He would not be able to pass his days if he did not go to

the theatre and discuss with me about the Master. That there might be any thing contrary to what I said, would find no place in his brain. If anyone contradicted me, he would roar out, 'What! contradicting Girish-dada's opinions! The Master said, "His (Girish's) intellect is supernormal"'. Even thinking too highly of myself, I was unable to find out how I was in anyway more intelligent or considerate than Ram-dada, because I noticed at every step that he was very sagacious. And Ramdada had but one subject for discussion and that the Master! What he would do with the Master, how he would propagate his message, how best he could serve him—these were his thoughts day and night. The Master said, 'Ram is deeply devoted to me'. Through his devotion Ram was infallible regarding the Master. Whenever any one would arrange festivals in his house, he would mostly be compelled to consult Ram-dada. For, there were frequent festivals in Ram-dada's house with the Master in accompany of his devotees. Ram-dada would not allow anybody who came to see the Master to go away without taking prasad. So while making arrangements for festivals one found it necessary to take Ram-dada's advice. But during the festivals at his own house he would consult me about the arrangements of the items of food. 'What do you say Girish-dada, let us prepare this kind of sweet or that sweet' and so on. Needless to say, it was not possible for me to improve upon a single item that he would decide upon.

Devotees are of different moods; even the rascal does not lack in moods. One day in the theatre, out of insanity I used most ugly names to the Master. While he was returning to Dakshineswar I made pranam also fully prostrating myself. Coming back to Dakshineswar, the Master began to tell anyone and everyone

'Do you see! Girish Ghosh fed me with one and a half luchis and spoke ill of me in filthy language'. Many of them began to say, 'We know that he is a rascal. Why do you go to him even?' Being pained at my behaviour many began to chide me. Afterwards when Ram-dada came, the Master told him everything. It was characteristic of Ram-dada that if anybody would use taunting words at the Master he would immediately go forward to punish the man even if he did not have the strength to do so. Ram-dada already heard of my scoldings in Calcutta and also heard I had made prostrations at the end. So when the Master told him everything he said, 'Why Sir, he has done well.' The Master addressing all the people present, said, 'Hear, hear what Ram says. He called me ill names referring even to my parents, still Ram says that he has done well!' Ram-dada was unmoved and said, 'Yes Sir, that's true! When Sri Krishna chastised the snake Kaliya, and asked, "Why do you emit poison?", Kaliya replied, "Lord, you have given me poison, whence shall I emit nectar!" Whatever you have given to Girish Ghosh of the Theatre, he has worshipped you with that alone.' Hearing these words the face of the Master became flushed and began to emit lustre. Still he smiled and said, 'Even then should we go to his house again?' Many said, 'No.' But the Saviour of the fallen said, 'Ram, then call for a carriage. Come, let us go to his house.' Reader, this is my Ram-dada. Nobody easily wants to prostrate himself at the feet of another. But let the reader imagine whether or not one felt spontaneously inclined to bow before Ram-dada. Ram-dada alone recognised the sinner and the Saviour. The Master came to my house. Many devotees also accompanied him. Ram-dada, overwhelmed with joy, accosted me with a smile. Vivekananda

also was in the party. 'All glory to your faith,' said he and took the dust of my feet. Surely he was firmly convinced that the Saviour had bestowed his grace on me.

Readers may be curious to know why I spoke ill of the Master. I had the impression in my mind that I was lacking in devotion and so would not be able to serve him. But if he became my son I could nurse him out of affection. Infatuated with this idea, I started pressing him, 'Please be born as my son!' The Master said, 'Why should I do so? I shall be your spiritual guide and remain as your chosen ideal!' As he did not agree to be born as my son, I started abusing him with all sorts of words.

Readers would excuse me that while I am to speak about Ram-dada I am speaking more about myself! My intention is just to explain certain situations, (which will throw light on the character of Ram-dada). Readers, however, will have to judge how far that desire is being fulfilled.

Ram-dada used to have a lot of discussion and sometimes even controversies with many of those who were either believers or non-believers in the Master. Ram-dada was not at all eager to be the winner in the wrangling but he was anxious as to how the disputant would take refuge in Paramahansa Deva! At the end of the controversy, if anybody would go away unconvinced, Ram Babu would regret, 'Ah! The Master did not give me the capacity to convince the person! Oh, how unfortunate he is not to have sought for the grace of such a compassionate Master!' True, Ram-dada would argue loudly, but his attitude would be found out at the end. He would never call the disputant, arrogant or barbarian, but would realise the lack of his own capacity and would pray for that to the Master. Such occurrences have been many. The day when Paramahansa Deva said, 'I

cannot talk any more, please give power to Ram and others, O Mother! They will talk and prepare the people and I shall just touch them.' Ram-dada's enthusiasm increased hundredfold. Seeing his eagerness many people would remark adversely and would even ridicule him, but Ram-dada's enthusiasm went on increasing doubly day by day.

The readers of *Tattva-manjari* know that Ramachandra was born in a Vaishnava family and that he had aversion to fish and meat. In boyhood when asked to take meat in a relative's house in the village, he left that house and having no money with him came back to Calcutta with great difficulty. This incident is mentioned in the *Tattva-manjari*. Even when he was an atheist he would not touch meat because of the family *samskara* (tradition). Fish and meat were prescribed as his diet when he became a diabetic patient. Being earnestly importuned by the doctor and the relatives he of course took fish, but he never touched meat. So great was his aversion for meat. But one day I prepared meat in the Theatre. Both Devendranath Mazumdar and Ram-dada were present. I offered mentally that meat to the Lord and said, 'Ram-dada, this is but prasad!' He said, 'Of course, if you ask me to partake of it, put it in my mouth'. I was in a fix. I touched the meat with the finger and put that finger in his mouth. Ram-dada remained unperturbed. If anybody would see him at that time, he would think, that his hatred for meat was a lie. No sign of his aversion was noticed. It was Prasada! and so Ram-dada had no aversion. From the Kankurgachi garden he would bring offered cooked food in carriage driven by Muslims. He would not take any cooked food other than prasada. When invited anywhere he would request the host to serve him

all the items at a time, and would take that after offering! While in the process of once taking his meals he would not permit any new course to be served. As people have great faith in the prasada of Jagannath, so he also had the same regard for the prasada of Sri Ramakrishna. If he knew that it was prasada he would take even the leavings of a low person.

The picture of Ramachandra will never be obliterated from the memory of those who saw him at the Kasipur garden on the day when Paramahansa Deva showered his grace like a wish-fulfilling tree. My brother Sriman Atulkrishna says, 'I got the grace of Paramahansa Deva through the kindness of Ram Babu only. I was standing in a corner. Ram Babu pulled me by the hand and presented me before the Master'. While mentioning this Atulkrishna becomes overwhelmed. Many people felt the kindness of Ram Babu on that day.

Many days I had long talks with Ram Babu but we never had any controversy. I have mentioned above that it was Ram Babu who would ask for advice from me, but when my wife died many devotees came to me out of sympathy. Ram Babu also came. But there was no word of sympathy. He only said, 'Girish-dada, now you are free. Don't accept bondage anymore'. I thought that he was asking me not to marry again. Reading my mind Ram said, 'No, no. I am not speaking about marriage. Even the thought of that will not come to you, that I know. You have children. Don't enter into samsara again with them and live a pompous life. Those who have no other go, tolerate the pangs of sufferings due to the death of their wives. But you have Ramakrishna, why should you require any other diversion?'

Ram-dada was the teacher of Chemistry in the Science Association of Dr. Mahen-

dradal Sarkar. It is not too much to say that he was an adept in chemical experiments. I was his student there. While returning home I would come with him in his carriage. At that time some scholar in Chemistry used to hold the view that everything has come out of hydrogen. While coming together with Ram-dada we would often discuss about hydrogen. The burden of the talk was the same, viz. from one, came out many; even by the material science this has been proved. Discussion like this would ultimately turn to Paramahansa Deva. Charmed, Ram-dada used to say, 'Wonderful is the glory of the Master! The same material science which made me an atheist, now I see, the divine eyes having been opened by the grace of the Master—expresses every atom as infinite—infinite—all infinite—without beginning and end. Infinite consciousness is present directly in every atom. The discussions in the meeting on Chemistry would develop into higher discussion of knowledge and our meeting would come to an end for that day with praise to Ramakrishna Deva, the repository of all knowledge.

If I were to narrate all (what I know of Ram-dada), the article will become too lengthy and all people may not like it. I shall therefore bring this article to a close narrating one more incident.

The Master, then in a sick condition, was living in a rented house at Shyam-pukur. The date of the Kalipuja came. The Master asked a devotee named Kalipada Ghosh, 'Arrange things necessary for Kalipuja today.' Kalipada did so with great devotion. In the evening all the articles necessary for Puja were placed before the Master. On one side there were various items of food including barley water as the Master was not able to take anything else. On the other side was a heap of flowers, red lotuses and red hibis-

cuses being in plenty. The room with its lengthy side towards east and west was full of devotees. At the western end there was Ram-dada and I was near him. My mind was becoming very eager, almost restless. I was anxious to go near the Master. Ram-dada told me something which I do not remember exactly. I was not in normal mood then, a certain change had come in me. I remember, Ram-dada encouraged me and said, 'Go, why not go!' At his words all my hesitation disappeared. I crossed the devotees and came before the Master. Seeing me the Master said, 'What—these are the things to be done today.' Immediately saying 'Then let me offer the flowers at your feet', I took flowers in both the hands and placed them at his lotus feet shouting, 'Glory to the Mother!' Presently all the devotees began to offer flowers at his lotus feet. The Master spontaneously assumed the symbolic posture of granting boon and freedom from fear in his both hands and entered into samadhi. When I remember that scene I remember Ram-dada. I feel Ram-dada made me do the worship of the living Kali.

In conclusion one more thing, I shall mention as it may be liked by the devotees of Ram-dada. After his passing away I saw him oneday in dream with a complexion like the molten gold, bare body, wearing a very ordinary white cloth! I asked, 'Ram-dada, what do you do now?' Ram-dada answered, 'I do now what I used to do previously; I serve the Master.' Paramahansa Deva used to say, 'Dreams about gods are not mere dreams but true.' My belief is that the divine form of Ram-dada that I saw was real. It was true that he was engaged in the service of the Paramahansa Deva. It is also true that eternally he will be engaged in the service of the Master.

ALBERT EINSTEIN ON RELIGION

By SWAMI PURAGRA PARAMAPANTHI

'It was the experience of mystery—even if mixed with fear that engendered religion.'

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Albert Einstein is the greatest scientist of the modern age—if not of all times. His far-reaching theories and discoveries have revolutionised the entire realm of modern thought and brought about radical changes in the fields of neo-physics. His is a genius of the highest order and his views on many subjects other than science are of profound importance and have deep implications in modern times. For he is not a man engaged in the pursuit of science alone at the exclusion of others. He is, on the contrary, a fully living being in proper sense of the term—a personality very much alive and aware of the burning problems of the day—social, political, racial or spiritual. It is Einstein the humanist—the man with great love and sympathy for all mankind, with passion for peace and justice, with higher convictions of the ethical values of life—that has wider appeal and significance to common humanity than Einstein—the scientist of colossal dimension. His saintly character—his utterly unselfish life which spurns fame and name that have been imposed on him, his perpetual *nişkāma karma* remind us of the Rishis of antiquity. In this article we propose to discuss in brief Einstein's views on religion which are strikingly original but perhaps open to doubt and criticism. However, the present article aims at outlining his views only without venturing to advance any criticism.

Einstein maintains that the desire for the fulfilment of necessity and cessation of suffering has been the motive force of

all human actions and thoughts down the ages. In his opinion this important fact helps us to evaluate correctly the religious or spiritual development of man. He observes that the most varying emotions preside over the birth of religious thought and experience. He envisages the three stages of development through which the evolution of religion has taken place and reached its perfection in the cosmic religious feeling. They are—the primitive religion of fear, the social or moral religion and cosmic religion.

As the feeling and desire have been at the back of every human endeavour and creative work—so the birth of primitive religion can be indirectly traced to these complex and varying emotions of man seeking fulfilment and shunning misfortune. But the direct cause of primitive religion is fear—fear from the destructive forces of nature. Einstein says, 'With primitive man it is above all fear that evokes religious notions—fear of hunger, wild beasts, sickness, death.' The origin of fear, according to him, is the ignorance of the natural laws of causality that governs the world of phenomena. The primitive man replaces the laws of nature by the spirits or gods of his imagination and thinks the phenomenal events to be the manifestations of their power. He thus endeavours to propitiate the gods of his fancy to gain favour and earthly prosperity, to triumph over evils and natural calamities. His actions towards these deities are ultimately motivated by the desire for the fulfilment of necessity and assuagement of pain. The primitive religion also, gradually helps the formation of a priestly class who act as the 'mediators' between people and their gods.

The next stage in the religious consciousness is the development of the social religious feeling which gives a concrete form to the vague factors of primitive religion. Einstein says—'The social feelings are another source of the crystallization of religion.' The origin of the social religious feeling is the human mortality and fallibility, the limitation and weakness of men and leaders of societies. Men are subject to errors and limitations, men are often overcome by unforeseen forces and calamities over which they have no control. So to circumvent these forces and issues beyond their control and power they seek the guidance and support, love and sympathy from an unseen and Supramundane Being. They long for reliance on some power or entity beyond the world so that they may prosper and survive with its help and protection. This yearning for unearthly help and the realisation of human fallibility act as the incentive to form the social or moral conception of God. Einstein says—'This is God of Providence who protects, disposes, rewards, and punishes.' Here God is conceived as the dispenser of immortality and helper in sorrow and suffering. Here we witness the transition of religion from the domain of fear to the realm of social morality. Einstein thinks that in the religion of morality the moral factors are not self-evolved but are forced upon us by the fear of punishment and joy of reward by an anthropomorphic God. In this religion God is conceived in the image of man. Men here visualise God as the manifestation of earthly father magnified and divinised to a great extent. At this stage religious elements assume a bigger dimension and become definitely a cohesive social force binding men and women of similar faith into a common social organism. The religious ideas also emerge from the fog of primitive era to take more or less clearout

and systematic proportion and form. Yet the basic elements which inspire the social religious feeling in men remain almost the same, viz., the desire for fulfilment of necessity and assuagement of pain.

Einstein characterises the religions of cultured people of the world—specially of the Asian people as the religion of morality. He thinks that the religion of morality is always a dominant force in all higher social life. He admits that there are intermediate types of religion in between the religion of fear and the religion of morality. But in all of them God is conceived in the image of man and very few persons can go beyond this conception of Formal God.

The third stage of religious development or experience is called by him—'the cosmic religious feeling'. Persons of exceptional ability who are in thought able to transcend the concept of Personal God can only comprehend this cosmic religious feeling. The idea is very difficult to conceive and communicate to others for it has no corresponding concept of anthropomorphic God. The realisation of the cosmic religious feeling can only spring from the realisation of the utter vanity and futility of selfish individual desires and aims. The pre-condition of this great feeling is the pure contemplation of the immensely sublime and ordered operations of the physical phenomena and the depth and richness of human thought and wisdom. The feeling of insignificance of isolated personality, the awe and veneration which the majesty of vast nature and thought as a whole rouse in us are the necessary pre-science to the universal religious feeling. Here the individual being strives to break the chain of narrow egoism—to identify himself with the entire universe of men and nature and to experience the world as a significant whole.

In Einstein's conception of the cosmic religion the universal causation is the decisive element for he believes in the rigid law of causality governing matter and mind. He visualises the entire world-structure as the rational entity which exhibits intelligence and reason of superior type. The universe is, to him, a unified whole of matter and mind full of grandeur and beauty. Therefore, according to him, the immanent universe represents the entire Reality and existence which is yet to be penetrated and known and which is still enveloped in mantle of mystery. Einstein characterises the full realisation or the intense selfless yearning to understand this universal Reality as the cosmic religious feeling. The very process of realisation brings about the annihilation of selfish desires and egoistic aims, transforms and universalises the ardent aspirant. In cosmic religion alone men of superior type rise above the compulsion of fear of primitive religion and the oppressive influence of Personal God of social religion who punishes and rewards. In cosmic religion also the motive forces which preside over the birth of religious experience, are not the desire of fulfilment and cessation of misfortune. Here alone men shake off the shackles of narrow, isolated and personal craving and are initiated into the harmonious unity of the whole.

Einstein declares that this cosmic religious feeling is beyond the concept of Formal God. The experience has nothing to do with temples and churches and no particular teachings or philosophy can be based on it. The great religious persons and prophets whom he calls 'religious geniuses of all ages' have realised this highest religious experience and feeling and often they have been branded as atheists by their ignorant contemporaries.

Einstein is of opinion that the cosmic religion can be kept alive by art and science. This function of art and science is a very important one. Yet science has nothing to do with the so-called social religion. For science denies the existence of Personal God who rewards and punishes and interferes in the operations of natural laws. The scientist is really convinced of the universal workings of causality which governs the universe. To him the human actions are motivated by internal and external necessity; necessity is the determining force compelling men to work and think. As such men cannot be held responsible in the eyes of God. Einstein observes—'...a man's actions are determined by necessity external and internal, so that in God's eyes he cannot be responsible any more than an inanimate object is responsible for the motions it goes through'. In philosophical sense Einstein does not believe in human freedom and from this point of view he is a rigid determinist. To him the famous saying of Schopenhauer—'a man can do as he will but not will as he will'—has been a source of constant inspiration in cloud and sunshine, in failures and misfortune.

So when there is no responsibility towards an unseen Being so far as the human actions and thoughts are concerned, the question of fear and punishment, joy and reward involving the element of morality does not arise at all. Therefore the conception of moral religion involving responsibility by compulsion and idea of Formal God has no meaning to the scientist or science. Science thus rules out the necessity of the so-called moral religion to form the basis of human societies. Einstein thinks that man's behaviour should be grounded on 'sympathy, education and social ties.' Man's work and thought should be regulated by factors that are developed in man and belong to him and

not by the fear of punishment and joy of reward which the Personal God rouses in man. But science does not undermine the ethical values of life for religion itself returns to science in the form of cosmic consciousness and experience. The cosmic religious feeling as outlined above serves as the incentive to all scientific works and discoveries. Einstein says—'I maintain that cosmic religious feeling is the strongest and noblest incitement to scientific research.' The cosmic feeling universalises the outlook of the scientist and destroys all longings for selfish aspirations and aims. The scientist draws inspiration from the conviction that the universe has a rationality of its own—that it manifests the marvels of reason far superior to our own. Einstein is of opinion that all scientists do their work with a firm conviction that the world is a well-ordered and comprehensible unity and not a thing of chance. Einstein says—'The basis of scientific work is the conviction that the world is an ordered and comprehensible entity and not a thing of chance.' The life-long devotion to scientific work, the ceaseless endeavour and sacrifice, the untiring pursuit after selfless knowledge are sustained by a faith that reason and harmony reign in the universe. The scientist gives up his personal ambitions and hopes to realise and experience to some extent 'if not fully' the sublime operations of Reality. Einstein observes—'His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural laws which reveals an intelligence...' To express precisely the union of science and religion as envisaged by him Einstein says—'Science without religion is lame—religion without science is blind.'

Einstein maintains that the universe of Reality stands shrouded in mystery to the scientist for he has not yet fully penetrated the realm of reason and profound beauty that veils it. So the

feeling of mystery persists and the existence of Reality yet to be fully fathomed inspires the scientist with an exultant emotion and glimpse of knowledge of the Reality. This emotion too, which the gigantic mystery of entire creation rouses, constitutes one of the basic factors of the cosmic religious feeling. In this sense alone Einstein professes to be a deeply religious man for he is the ardent worshipper at the altar of profound mystery the universe unfolds. He does not believe in the Personal God who punishes and rewards and has a will analogous to our own. Yet Einstein does believe in the Principle or Order which reveals Itself in the world of matter and mind. In a beautiful way he expresses the idea in the following words—'The great scientists of all centuries of our civilisation have paid tribute in some measure to the power or principle back of the universe—the titanic First cause which still mothers creation.' The principle he conceives has perhaps a tinge of pantheism in it for his principle is more immanent than transcendental. He does not believe in the immortality of soul.

Speaking about Judaism he says—that the main features of Jewish Ideals are—'the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love for justice and the desire for personal independence.' Judaism consists exclusively of—'moral attitude in life and to life.' It is mainly concerned with the human life in its present state and the highest virtue lies in promoting welfare among human beings. The purification of life figures prominently in it. The religion also exalts the beauty and grandeur of nature. It is not therefore a transcendental religion. Einstein says—'... the Jewish God is simply a negation of superstition—an imaginary result of its elimination.' Yet Judaism wrongly tries to put morality on the basis of fear. Speaking about the immense value and curative power of

pure Christianity and Judaism he observes—'If one purges the Judaism of the Prophets and Christianity as Jesus Christ taught it of all

subsequent additions, especially those of the priests one is left with a teaching which is capable of curing all the social ills of humanity.'

THE PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF VEDANTA AND BUDDHISM

BY VAJRABUDDHI

The goal and summum bonum in Buddhism, inclusive Theravada or Hinayana, is Nirvana, the true and Ultimate Reality, the Nameless One beyond the dualism of being and not-being. Psychologically it is the great awakening brought about by the complete elimination of the obtrusive 'ego'. So we behold the entire cosmic dream of all delusion-struck beings as a conditioned projection on the screen of our own consciousness. If the idea of God, so often misused and, therefore, avoided in Buddhism does not mean a personal deity of this or that religion, even a Buddhist in Ceylon, Siam or Burma, without prejudice to his religious tradition, may not reject this term as an aspect of that unconditioned 'Ens Realissimum' of Nirvana, the other shore supermundane of the Deathless Island. Thus, the wise Vedantist with his Buddhist brother will perceive all the waves and shapes of phenomena of the universe floating in this boundless ocean of Eternal Bliss or Divinity in which we live and breathe. Of course, quite right, 'a first beginning of life is not to be perceived' (Buddha).

The sun is the source and efficacy of light and life. From it rays go out, and each ray has in itself the life-giving effect of the sunlight. So, God, Nirvana, Universal

mind in its utmost purity, is source and efficacy of all existence and multitude of objects having no permanent reality in themselves. They are, really, only manifestations of Mind conditioning one another, a vast concatenation, and possess the nature of Maya or a dream. Everywhere that Divine Reality is working, also in us, in man. So far we are Divine, Buddha-like or Christ-like. Only through It we are, only within it. Without It we should be nothing.

God—Nirvana IS, the Reality of realities, the Omnipresent, Omniscient, that is, all what is, in the ultimate sense, is God, the Real.

If God is, He is also in evil. But, in reality, there is no evil. Our eyes of wisdom are still clouded and closed, and we call certain things wrong or sin because they appear to us to be so. In truth, all is one, we too, the evil too. As soon as we open our spiritual eye and get rid of the self-conceit that our person is important and every man is individually separated from the others, as soon we comprehend that all is essentially one, then good and evil vanish away and no fear is left. There is only the eternal presence of incomparable, measureless All-Goodness-Beauty. For we know then: we are of Divine kind (Buddha-nature), the

bodily and temporal are only affixed to us, change incessantly and vanish away like the moisture out of a cloth drying in the sun. And then the Real becomes to us, more and better perceptible and flows through us like an alive experience of the Eternal. Afterwards, we live right in the world, we take part in all and perform our duties, but we do not surrender to the allurements and deceptions of life. We make with, it is true, but we do not see our one and all in this life, the glimmer upon the screen.

It is a cinema-picture, not the real landscape. That we were born, means solely that it is necessary for us to run through this life-time and to learn to know ourselves, i.e. —ourselves, the Divine within us—and to let us mature. What we live to see today, is the result of our former thoughts and actions. What today we are learning from it, is for the benefit of our next life, what we err today, must be suffered in the future. We are obliged to forge our infinite Buddha-nature-within in the fire of everyday realities. Until the whole world is perfected and delivered, the Infinite within—smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest—has to struggle in the shape of man with the finite.

But never the connection is broken with that 'Centre within us all where Truth and Bliss abide in fulness.' We are on the way back to it, only we do not know it always clearly and succumb too often to the vain delusion,—our personal life would be important, and we are somebody distinguished;—while in truth, our small, latent Bodhi-spark is a particle, a drop of the dazzling, infinite Light-ocean in which we live and have our being, eternally indestructible and not at all, touchable by this life.

If we perceive, the world before our eyes is something completely relative, a glittering illusion, seen within spacio-

temporal relations, a flowing and fading, dreamlike shadow caused by our own greed and sensuality; but in fact, all is one, the One without-a-second, then suffering cannot touch us, greed cannot make us unhappy. Then insight and wisdom admirably strengthen us and lead—on the road of self-forgetting Love and Compassion—to the Great Peace that passes understanding, viz. to the Oneness with all. And in that state we are aware of:

That nobody has a merit, each has his endowments and gifts. To the one the light shines brightly, to the other faintly; the one discerns clearer, the other obscurely; the one goes right on, the other astray. We are wayfarers, amongst them, a few take the lead, others go far behind, some sideways, but all of them and the whole travel to the nameless Centre which is everywhere, quite equally in which way.

Be not caught by things, because they pass away; adhere not to men, they are mortal and follow their own call. Love all, for, all are brothers and sisters of Buddha, Christ and Krishna, returning home from where once they strayed like you. But do not love something and some one so much that you depend on it with your being, for, all is transitory, merely veil and cover of the essence: the nameless Real and Absolute. Essential is simply 'That within-you'. Aspire and strive after that!

There is no sin, only ignorance and error. There is no punishment but consequence and reaping. Whatever may happen, find refuge in the positive feeling to have an Eternal Home and Island which never can be lost. Die before dying, viz., be attached to nothing in the world so that no loss can move you, but strain every nerve to fulfil your utmost aspirations and to promote the becoming-at-one of the whole world. So often you stumble, so often rise again. That is the point,

all we do and not do must serve to begin and to take up again and again our motion to perfection and enlightenment. If you can renounce all earthly, nothing on earth can grieve you. But now, you are not to intend to renounce like certain ascetics tormenting themselves, rather be able to give up like a man who abandons the plays of the child. Then your true nature begins easily to flourish, free from all earthly weight and its deceptions and pressings. All those old and modern titillations of the senses, of name and fame, after which the unenlightened people are blindly running, are nothing more to you, so little only as to the man the plaything of the child.

Life on earth with its revolving wheel of rebirths is a great schoolroom of many

forms where we have in our present situation to learn special and decided lessons and probations, not earlier we may pass and attend higher classes. Frequently, we have to return and to repeat the same curriculum. What we do not learn now, we shall learn and realize later to mature perfect wisdom and compassion with all.

The one Religion within all religions, beliefs and creeds in the west and the east is the practical philosophy of Buddhism and Vedanta: the inexpressible yearning of the human heart to go out into the Infinite where I and Thou, Mine and Thine, without reservation, are abandoned and forgotten—in the Eternal Presence of which Buddha Gautama was hushed in speechless Silence.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S GIFT TO THE MODERN WORLD

By SOEDORSONO

Arnold Toynbee, the well-known British historian, in one of his latest articles called 'The World and the West', told us that the world, that is to say the non-Western world, has suffered more from the West than the West has suffered from the rest of the world. When we look to the world and think of the meeting between the world and the West through the eyes of the non-Western world we will see that Muslims, Hindus, Chinese, Japanese and Russians will think alike of the West. They will say, said Toynbee, that the West is the Arch-aggressor throughout modern history. The Russians will remind us of the West-European armies of 1941, 1915, 1812 and 1709. Poles, Frenchmen and Germans have chosen their way to Moscow. It is therefore quite natural that the Russians still look to the West with very suspicious eyes. There was always a constant pressure from the West towards

Russia and it became much stronger since the technological revolution in the West, since the use of fire weapons which enabled the Polish people to conquer Moscow in 1610. The Swedes also came to Russia with the same methods. And it continued to be so until Czar Peter, the Great, adopted the method of defence which later was also used by other leaders in the non-Western world like Mustapha Kemal Ataturk and Mohamad Ali Pasha from Egypt. Czar Peter namely brought to Russia the technological standards from the West which proved the best defence method as shown in the defeat of Napoleon in 1812. This continued to be so, until the industrial developments brought the West one step further. Russia therefore is now again under an autocratic rule, and is united to keep pace with the Western technological progress. This again has proved to be the right path. Russia has defeated the Nazi

aggression of 1941. Only a few years later, however, the world came to know that the West was again one step further,—USA dropped the atom-bomb. And so, we are witnessing now again the Western-Russian rivalry in technological progress and defence. But the adoption of Communism can also be mentioned as one of Russia's defence system.

India in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries was in a similar position. India was also attacked by the west and similar efforts were made as elsewhere to defend itself. As everywhere in Asia, India was being tormented by political strife and revolutions. As in Indonesia, political disintegration went further and further. Selfish rulers, mostly devoid of the strength of character and who were only unscrupulous adventurers, looking for aggrandisement for themselves, have come to surrender to the policy of divide and rule of Western colonizers. There were since the 18th century religious preachers with an inner urge for spiritual progress, spiritual uplift. But those could only be regarded as the presages of the great spiritual movement of the 19th century which may be called the Indian Reformation Movement. India was then still suffering from the ailments of that time and as religion was the backbone in Indian national life, it was this decrease in faith in Indian cultural traditions that has hurt so many of her great leaders. And efforts

were made to restore the grandeur and strength of Hindu faith and culture. India has never lacked creative forces, in fact there were, and there are still many and manifold. One of these was Sri Ramakrishna who has given guidance to millions of people in the adventure of living. There were many who came before him but only a few could equal him in devotion and true love and in his efforts for the resuscitation of Indian traditions, culture and faith. His work still inspires those who devote themselves to this Mission. They have carried on his work in a grand manner. In 1950 your great Prime Minister came to inaugurate a new section of the Ramakrishna Mission hospital in Rangoon. On that occasion he said that good work need not be advertised and that funds will come by themselves. This is true for this great Mission. It is really consoling to every citizen in this troubled world to know that such work is still appreciated.

It is said that today's civilisation is aiming at humaneness, reasonableness, tolerance, equality and freedom. We are now all striving for peace, for democracy, for progress which will not come without peace and democracy. Democracy includes tolerance and equality. And it is for me therefore so remarkable to find in the teachings of Ramakrishna who lived after all in a different world,—this same tolerance and brotherhood.

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

BY SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

(Translated from Original Bengali)

PART TWO

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

YADAVADRIPATI

(continued from July '53 issue)

Without food or sleep, the vast regiment of soldiers following her, the Princess proceeded non-stop southward in search of her dearest One. But when even after crossing the bounds of her father's Empire,

she could not trace Him, she resolved to give up her life. The flames of the pangs of separation began to scorch the regions of her heart and tears began to roll down her eyes. She was unable to gather

herself up in any way. The words of hope uttered by Kuvera did not even enter her ears. She would only exclaim, 'My Lord, my Lord,' and thus give vent to the acute agony of her heart. One night, without the knowledge of the soldiers, she entered the dense forest southward. Kuvera followed her. Mad as she was, without looking either way, all the while meditating only on her Chosen One, she began to proceed on the way towards further south. Kuvera would sometimes bring her wild flowers and fruits. She would sometimes take a very little of it to appease her hunger and thirst and then would proceed again in quest of her dearest One. Only when night fell, unable to discern the way, she would be forced to take rest. After thus travelling many days, she at last reached Melkote. As one with eyes does not require any one else's help to see the sun, so the Princess, who was all devotion to Sri Hari and whose vision had been cleansed by the collyrium of knowledge did not require any one else's help to be united with Sampatkumara, who was dearer to her than her own life.

The influence of the twin forces, the intense eagerness of her heart, and the irresistible attraction of the Lord of her heart, soon brought about their ever-prayed-for union. The river came to be united with the ocean. She knew a greater peace than what a brimful pot of nectar can bring to a man almost dying with hunger.

Yatiraja and his disciples were amazed to see her supra-human devotion. Though born of a Muslim family, she was not prevented from going inside the temple, for they knew that a genuine Bhakta had no caste whatsoever.

Now came to an end Bibi Lachimar's sojourn in the forest of this world; her desires were fulfilled. The remaining days of her life were crowned with indescrib-

able happiness of celestial enjoyment born of communion with the Lord of her heart. At last her pure frame got dissolved in the body of Sri Sampatkumara.

The Prince Kuvera used to serve Lachimar like his own Chosen Deity. He never worshipped any other second God. When the empress of his heart got dissolved in the body of Sampatkumara, he was not able to stay there for another moment. He gave up all his Muslim habits of thought and took refuge at the feet of Sri Ranganatha Swami. Though he was not permitted to enter inside the temple, he took refuge at the blessed lotus feet of Seshasayi Narayana with undivided devotion even from outside the temple. He would not go about anywhere for begging. If any one gave him any eatable, he would take a part of it to appease his hunger and thirst. After he had passed thus some time, observing silence and satisfied with what chance might bring, once, while absorbed in deep meditation he heard a voice saying, 'O the best among the Yavanas, I have been instructed to grant liberation to those Vaishnavas who take refuge in Me; and Lord Jagannatha has been pledged to grant liberation unto the fallen ones.' Being thus ordered this non-Hindu devotee started for Sri Jagannathakshetra, the next morning. After a few months he arrived at Sri Puridhama where he felt himself blessed being granted the Divine vision by Sri Purushottama, the Redeemer of the fallen. He being worthy to be called a genuinely wise man and realising the same Paramatman residing alike in a Brahmana, modest and learned, in a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a Chandala, earned the capacity for the vision of the same Reality everywhere.

It is said that Mahatma Kuvera was one day baking his bread on the cow-dung ingle when a dog came and suddenly fled away with the bread. At this he ran

after the dog with the pot of ghee in his hand and shouting: 'O Narayana, wait a little, let me smear ghee on the bread; otherwise You won't relish the meal'.

So long as one is full of body consciousness one can never be free from the pride of caste. In the body alone attach the name, caste, and Āsrama. It is the body which is indicated by the terms Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaisya, Sūdra, Mussalman, Christian, English, French, Hindu etc.. Therefore it is doubtless that

one who taking the body to be the real self, casts satirical glances on the caste system, is never guided by pure intelligence. Through the grace of God, Bibi Lachimar and Kuvera were freed from the body-consciousness and so they had no fetters of caste. And even Ramanuja himself used to worship them, great Bhaktas that they were. Even today the pure image of that daughter of the emperor is being worshipped in every Vaishnava temple in Southern India thus evincing the universality of Hinduism.

चरैवेति

WATERS OF LIFE

(AFTER ONE YEAR)

It was three days before Vijaya Dasami. As usual in the evenings, intimate friends began to gather round Kalidas. Every one in that little town of twenty-five thousand inhabitants loved and respected this elderly advocate. He was a patron of arts and literature and the supporter of all good causes.

One friend said, 'We do not know how to express our gratitude to you for making this year's Navaratri a season of real Vijaya or success. You have indeed the rare gift of spotting out eminent men and women, and in a most unobtrusive way bringing them to us. From where could you bring this wonderful young man you call 'S'?''

Kalidas explained how this young man and his three companions had taken a

vow not to reveal their full names and how he had met them all in the little village where Viswanath, his maternal uncle lived. After a pause Kalidas added, 'Each of them has many talents. By their devoted service they have onw over the people there and in fact transformed an entire group of villages. How I wish that their influence spreads to our little town as well!'

One praised S for his fluency, another admired his wit and a third loved him for his inimitable way of telling stories from Puranas, the Bible and other religious literature to illustrate his points. All without exception paid the most glowing tribute to his deep patriotism and his passion for serving God in man.

When S left, the public who had been listening to his brilliant discourses for

about a fortnight, presented him with a purse containing three thousand Rupees. Two ladies sprang a surprise upon all, when, on the last day, each of them, in right orthodox style, presented to him a fine cow, capable of yielding a good quantity of milk!

For the next three months the tank bund and the land behind the temple became the scene of unprecedented activity. Five villages co-operated. Men and women, boys and girls, teachers and students carried out their allotted tasks by turns. 'P' paced up and down among them all, correcting a mistake here and casting a glance of approval there. Bricks were baked, logs cut into different sizes, foundations dug and walls erected. It was all a labour of love. It was a sight to see women, sitting in rows and preparing metal for concrete work, singing chorus songs to match their hammer strokes!

P also managed to run out of the village now and then and fetch queer-looking pieces of machinery, and parts of condemned jeeps! These he began to assemble in a small shed, which served as his office. In due course, under his expert guidance, the people constructed an overhead tank, with sand filter arrangement. P had by that time got ready for installation a machine ready to pump all the water needed for drinking,—and even for irrigating neighbouring lands! To match all this structure, there came up on another side a neat cow-shed, with suitable flooring and drainage arrangement, fit for housing a dozen cows and calves and a bull!

A few villagers sat admiring the tall green grass growing in selected plots. 'This P is a magician,' said one to the rest. 'See how he has quietly provided easy and pleasant work for almost all the poor widows of these parts. They are all employed now in cutting grass, looking after the cows and filling milk into spotlessly clean bottles. They get their maintenance and a little pocket money.'

'What about the young orphans?' asked another. 'See how he has set apart enough free milk for their use!' 'He is an artist too,' said a third. 'See how he has contrived to make filtered water come up as a fountain above Siva's image in one shrine and flow out under Vishnu's feet in another.'

Seeds of the Neem and other trees were not wasted any more. Castor and other useful plants began to be carefully planted wherever convenient. Even tamarind seeds were collected. Each seed went into its proper shed, and young people were trained to handle appropriate apparatus for extracting oil, preparing starch for weavers and so on.

While S covered progressively wider fields by his discourses—aided substantially by the jeep!—the purses he brought enabled P to dedicate more and more of his vast technical knowledge for increasing the wealth of the neighbouring villages. Anything dilapidated sprang into fresh life at the mere touch of P's fingers. He carried about with him the breath of life. And wherever he walked, the very waters of life flowed, as Ganga did behind Bhagiratha in ancient days!

भग चरैवेति !

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Isa Vasya Upanishad

It is a piece of education to observe how while carrying on with scrupulous thoroughness the very strenuous work of administration as the Chief Minister of Madras at this advanced age, Sri C. Rajagopalachari yet finds time and energy to devote his mind to the advanced study of science and philosophy. Those who have read Sri C. R.'s article on Sir C. V. Raman and his work which was published in a Supplement of *The Hindu* some time back, must have noticed that Sri C. R.'s interest in science is not a mere layman's. He seems, however, to be more in his elements in the sphere of religion and philosophy. After Gandhiji, he is the one great statesman in active politics in India, who has been incessantly striving, sometimes at the risk of being misunderstood at all levels, to locate the very important place which *dharma* and *darshana*, religion and philosophy, should occupy in the national life of this country and humanity. In this regard Sri C. R. has been one of the very few capable and true *uttara-sadhakas* of Gandhiji. India owes him a special gratitude for this.

In this short article Sri C. R. gives his own interpretation of the entire *Isa Vasya Upanishad*. It will be noticed that in his exposition he prefers to differ from Sankara. In fact this has stood out as a point in his elucidation which deserves careful scrutiny.

Sri C. R. thinks that Sankara appears to have written the commentary on this Upanishad in the early flush of his philosophic conviction. This is of course a highly speculative statement. Do we have enough data to non-controversially determine the chronology of Sankara's commentaries? Then if tradition has to be given any credence to, Sankara wrote his commentaries after the attainment of Advaitic experience. For one such, the 'early flush of philosophic conviction' is not likely to be much different in fundamentals from the late shimmer of the same, for time cannot add to or eat away from the basic content of that experience. How could we then be entitled to implying that Sankara's interpretation of this Upanishad would have been very different in case he had written it at another point of time in his philosophical career?

An Indian Philosopher Looks at the West

Dr. P. T. Raju M. A., Ph. D., Sastri, Professor of Philosophy, Rajasthan University, Jodhpur, our valued contributor, is back home again after

completing his term of Visiting Professorship of Comparative Philosophy at the University of Illinois, Urbana, U. S. A..

In this illuminating article (which is based on his Century Fund Lecture, delivered at the Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, on February 12, 1953), the learned Professor makes some points regarding comparative religion and philosophy which deserve attention of the students of philosophy and religion both in the West and in the East. Too long have we been told that the Eastern philosophies and religions are too negative to serve the purposes of life. But has this attitude been a monopoly of the Easterners alone? Or has it been shared by Westerners too in their own way? Candid recognition of the facts pointed out by Dr. Raju in this article is necessary, for without this we cannot make any sure headway towards building what has come to be known as 'one world philosophy' as distinguished from Eastern and Western philosophies.

Ram-dada

The word 'dada' in Bengali means, elder brother. Ram-dada therefore means 'Ram' the elder brother.

Here we have a pen-portrait of Ramchandra Dutt, one of the preeminent householder disciples of Sri Ramkrishna, by Girishchandra Ghosh, another great householder disciple of the Master. This pen-portrait is the translation from a Bengali piece with the same caption which form a chapter of the book named, 'Ramachandra-Mahatmya' or 'Life of Ramachandra, the Sevaka of Sri Ramkrishna'. Readers will note that this article affords us an insight into the lives of these two great Bhaktas of the Kali yuga—Ramachandra and Girishchandra.

Albert Einstein on Religion

It was a great misfortune of far-reaching consequences that religion and science fell apart in the West and developed in lines dissociated and sometimes even hostile to each other. This brought about the much harmful bifurcation in social, religious, intellectual, academic and personal lives of men and women creating no end of complexes and problems. After much suffering, it appears that people in the West are now waking to the great truth which Einstein expressed aphoristically in the following words:

'Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.'

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It is important that more and more people in the world, specially the intellectuals, knew Einstein's views on religion, for that will help make 'lame' science walk and 'blind' religion see.

Swami Puragra Paramapanthi is a new contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari* whose first article was published in January 1953.

The Practical Philosophy of Vedanta and Buddhism

Sri Vajrabuddhi, a Buddhist monk of German origin, will be appearing to be a new contributor to many of our readers. But in fact he had written in the columns of the *Vedanta Kesari* in 1936, when he used to be known by the name 'Nyanapiya'.

The purpose of his writing the present article, as the author indicates, in his communication, is to obviate 'the learned ignorant opposition against Vedanta' practised by some sects of Buddhism.

In this age when religion itself faces formidable opposition from organised irreligion, it is necessary for sheer survival that religions should give up the luxury of useless controversy on hypothetical differences and seek to strengthen and enrich one another by respectfully and mutually imbibing the best points in each and thus making the essentials of religions to have their powerful sway over the day to day lives of humanity.

Though Swami Vivekananda used to be called a 'Hindu' monk he did a tremendous lot to popularise

the teachings of the Lord Buddha among the peoples of the world. In his address captioned, 'Buddhism, the Fulfilment of Hinduism' at the Parliament of Religions, Swami Vivekananda said,

'Hinduism cannot live without Buddhism, nor Buddhism without Hinduism. Then realise what the separation has shown to us, that the Buddhist cannot stand without the brain and philosophy of the Brahmins, nor the Brahmins without the heart of the Buddhist. The separation between the Buddhists and Brahmins is the cause of the downfall of India. That is why India is populated by three hundred million beggars, for the last thousand years. Let us then join the wonderful intellect of the Brahmin with the heart, the noble soul and the wonderful humanising power of the great Master.'

If the Hindus and the Buddhists out of group-ego-centricity flout the necessity of such creative mutuality between their *apparently two* religions, they can do harm only to themselves.

Sri Ramakrishna's Gift to the Modern World

Here is the text of a speech by Dr. Soedorsono, Ambassador for Indonesia in India, delivered on the occasion of the celebration of the 118th Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on March 8, '53.

Charaveti: (Waters of life)

Readers will please note that 'Waters of life' flows from the previous issue.

A CRITICISM OF SOME RECENT EXTRA-POLITICAL REMARKS OF PANDIT NEHRU

Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that in no country in the world no single person who is not professionally a scientist has done so much in so short a time for the advancement of Science as Pandit Nehru has done in India. Like a wonder working wizard of the fable, by the mere waving of his magic-wand, as it were, this great constructive genius has brought into existence in almost no time majestic mansions of science—these great temples of learning and search after truth—all over India. In those horrifying times of India smeared with the goer of men, women and children and scorched with the wild fire of human insanity, Pandit Nehru, though incessantly fighting a deadly battle with forces of disruption and destruction, never lost sight of the constructive requirements of a modern State that India was to be. Under the lusty tongues of consuming flames he tenderly nursed the green shoots of construction. This his rare leadership has few parallels

in the history of the world. Every thinking Indian should be grateful to him for this his unique piece of service to this nation.

While paying our most spontaneous and unqualified tribute to Pandit Nehru, we should also like to underline one 'but' in this regard. It is urgent that this emergent nation took note of this 'but'. This nation, out of gratitude, should not slip into imagining that Pandit Nehru is infallible, or that it was no longer necessary to scrupulously examine his views about things. The case should be just the contrary. The greater the stature Pandit Nehru attains in leadership, the firmer his hold on the minds and hearts of men, the more dangerous becomes his personal follies for the entire nation or even for humanity. Little men's follies are of little consequence and can be lightly passed over. But follies of such a great and vital leader like Pandit Nehru should be carefully and mercilessly scanned and criticised.

Our love and regard for the man, our gratitude for his unique services to the nation, our expectations of his future services, our difficulty in finding a substitute for him—nothing should deter us from anxiously exposing a folly of his when we are sure that his thought-patterns which immediately get the widest possible publicity in India exert a powerful influence on the minds of the people. Now when Pandit Nehru is the master of too many leaves and fishes, when he can make men big by a pull or a wink, there are not many among the competent who will be so unworldwise as to take the risk of incurring the displeasure of this giver of boons. Therefore a few self-appointed unfortunates will have to do this unpleasant job in all humility, prayerfulness, and if we may say so, most necessary frankness. We have a feeling, however, Pandit Nehru himself must have an inner hunger for pure, unmotivated, searching and enlightened criticism—if possible not very wounding, of course—of his thoughts and actions. He knows what a tremendous responsibility he is bearing. There can be no end of helpful restraints to which he can subject himself in good faith.

We believe that India has a very responsible part to play in shaping the future of human destiny. And Pandit Nehru is India's chosen man of destiny, on whom has fallen the onerous task of giving direction to the course of Indian history. It is, therefore, highly urgent to occasionally examine the development of Pandit Nehru's basic understanding of fundamental India. No doubt, Pandit Nehru would probably appear to carry and give the impression that he has 'discovered' India. Many in India and some abroad seem to view the fundamental India through Pandit Nehru's eyes. But how far is it correct and safe to do so?

Not an inconsiderable thinker of India who holds a responsible post in the administration of the country has recently made the following statement:

'...The man who knew the Indian people intimately because his heart-strings beat in unison with theirs, who could speak in a language pulsating through and through with our traditions and age-long ideals, is no more. He was cruelly snatched away from us. The leadership that remains is not attuned to the Indian mind. There is a vast cultural chasm that separates it from the masses. The customs, the songs, the folk-tales, that appeal to the multitude repel the national leadership. It is one thing to tolerate, as one tolerates the play-acting of children, the foibles of one's unenlightened country men, it is another to enter into their spirit and discern the heart-throbs that lie buried beneath the crust. It is true, everyone speaks of Indian culture, claiming that no one other than himself understands what the word means.'¹

We need hardly point out who is the object of criticism here. Though opinions like this do not very frequently appear in the Press for reasons hinted at above, it is worthwhile for all those who value independence of thinking, which is the bed-rock of democracy, to examine the validity of such statements. However great a leader may be, no nation should turn a mass of yes-men to him. This is the greatest homage a great nation can pay to the greatness of a great leader.

We, therefore, feel it to be our duty by the nation and Pandit Nehru himself to candidly criticise his views and thoughts whenever they appear to us to be carrying the germs of future harm to the nation. We shall place one such case here for special consideration of all thinking people of India. In his Pilani address² Pandit Nehru said,

'Scientific research may not yield immediate results, but it alone can be the basis of a country's progress.'

The vast majority of intellectuals and educated—Pandit Nehru's this statement will not directly affect the masses immediately though—are in such an indoctrinated temper today that they would not even pause to think that this statement of Pandit Nehru could be anything short of an axiom. We shall, however, show by analysis how dangerously defective is this reported statement of his. Neither Pandit Nehru's conception of science is wide enough, nor his idea about progress is correct. We could even say that because his conception of science is stunted, his conception of 'progress' is bound to be incorrect. When Pandit Nehru speaks of 'science' he means only 'physical science' with total disregard to the great fact that there are spiritual sciences too. And that 'progress' which Pandit Nehru bases on the prospective advancement of the physical sciences alone cannot but be lop-sided. Such a conception of 'progress,' which has brought untold miseries to humanity, has been acknowledged by the savants of different nations as the one formidable bane of modern civilization. The Prime Minister of India whose love of science is perhaps greater than his knowledge of it, can afford to make such a bold statement and also think that he is that way doing a service to this nation. But one, whose love of science is in no way inferior to that of Nehru's, but whose knowledge and experience of and services to science is definitely infinitely greater than those of Pandit Nehru, could not make such bold and unqualified statements about the glory of science. His knowledge of the implications of the advancement of science preven-

ted him from making categorical genuflections at the altar of science though he happens to be a confirmed and dedicated scientist. Here is the considered view of Einstein in this context:

'...the scientific method can teach us nothing else beyond how facts are related to and conditioned by each other. The aspiration towards that objective knowledge belongs to the highest of which man is capable, and you will certainly not suspect me of wishing to be little the achievements and the heroic efforts of man in this sphere. Yet it is equally clear that the knowledge of what *is* does not open the door directly to what *should be*. One can have the clearest and most complete knowledge of what *is*, yet not be able to detect from that what should be the *goal* of human aspirations. Objective knowledge provides us with the powerful instruments for the achievements of certain ends, but the ultimate goal itself and the longing to reach it must come from another source. And it is hardly necessary to argue for the view that our existence and our activity acquire meaning only by setting up such a goal and of corresponding values. The knowledge of truth as such is wonderful. But it is so little capable of acting as a guide that it cannot prove even the justification and the value of the aspiration towards that very knowledge of truth. Here we face, therefore, the limits of purely rational conception of our existence.'³

From one of his latest addresses carrying the impressions of his most up-to-date thinking-process, it does not appear that Pandit Nehru will be soon maturing to that fine balance, constructive harmony and helpful synthesis of thought that so beautifully and refreshingly characterise Albert Einstein's views, quoted above, expressed a decade ago.

On the contrary Pandit Nehru ventilated such other views in a digression in the same address quoted above, that we are alarmed to take note of his rather wilful disregard for a very essential requirement of the fundamental aspiration of this nation. The part of the report runs as follows:

'...Referring to the problem of unemployment, the Prime Minister said, this was a bad thing as people who wanted work did not get it. But there was another kind of unemployment, "the unemployment of higher order" comprising those who lived off the back of others. These parasitic class was as much a drag on society as the real unemployed. Both were useless for the country's progress.'

'He included some fifty lakh of Sadhus in India also among the two categories of people who lived on the earnings of others. There might be some very high personages among the Sadhus and the like, he said, but the majority were mere parasites living on public charity. All this was bad for any country as they were all consuming without producing anything.'

'This kind of business of these Sadhus living on other people's earnings can be classified as theft even though in law it may not be termed so.'

It is the politician's pleasure to imagine that he alone keeps human life possible on earth. Creative

part of the courses of civilizations or the destiny of humanity, however, is not perhaps all determined by mere perorations of politicians on pulpits or in Parliaments and Press Conferences. In this, thoughts and prayers of the forest or cave dwellers or the renouncers of the world, who go about with begging bowl in their hands also make a far-reaching contribution. Asoka knew this. Shivaji knew this. Gandhiji knew this. When will, O God, Pandit Nehru understand this?

It is not quite necessary to put Pandit Nehru in an inconvenient position by asking him an academic question as to if the politician's mode of life necessarily lent itself to 'productive' labour. The history of the world, nay, only that day's history of India too, is wide open before us!

Does Pandit Nehru imagine that all the people of the world can get all the required light for solving all the problems of their lives—here and hereafter—from the reports of his Press Conferences or occasional foreign policy statements? Enough light unto all! Why should there be any realms of thought, spheres of experience, regions of necessity where the politician's power, fiat, and authority would cut but little ice? Who will assure Pandit Nehru that non-all-knowingness is no vice even for a great man of his calibre and that there are other hungers of men which the politician cannot assuage?

Those whose understanding of science is no worse than that of Pandit Nehru, have said that religion is at least equally important to keep human life meaningfully possible in this world. If religion is a necessity, there must be institutions for its special culture, just as we require to have national laboratories for the cultivation of natural sciences. Begging, ashramas, sadhuhood and all that form that much necessary institution for the cultivation of religion. Now, if you want religion to live on, you must have dedicated men to live religion too—that is to say, technicians, experimenters and experts of religion—in one word the Scientists of the Spirit. And these Scientists of the Spirit had had their own way of life sanctioned by the Vedas and the Sastras, approved by God and men through ages. And begging had been one of the most important institutions in this way of life. Hindu law-givers to be sure, did not adumbrate ever-transmuting five-year plans, for they planned human life not for five, ten, twenty years or a century, but for millenniums to come. They knew that the ultimate economics of life was quite a bit different, perhaps even opposed to at places, to the temporal economics by which the modern politician swears. The ancient Indian Ashrama conception of life which a celebrated western Psychologist⁴

¹ Vide: The Presidential address delivered on September 13, 1953 at Madras by Dr. Sampurnananda, Home Minister of Uttar Pradesh, at the 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee Culture Freedom.

² Dated Sept. 27, 1953, delivered on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Central Electronic Engineering Research Institute.

³ Vide 'Out of My Later Years' Albert Einstein, Philosophical Library, New York, 1950, pp. 21, 22.

⁴ Vide 'Modern Man in Search of A Soul' by Dr. C. G. Jung, Chapter on 'Stages of life', 1944, p. 136. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., London.

recommended in effect to the modern nations, was conceived by scientific minds without caring to be called scientists. Sadhus, whom, in his rather unbecoming, unwarranted and highly objectionable rashness Pandit Nehru roundly calls thieves, were attached to a way of life, where begging or depending on others for the wherewithal of life was considered a signal service to society. Those who gave alms were equal receivers of some thing which they required most for life and those who accepted them were not only receivers but givers too of precious things. What Pandit Nehru calls 'unemployment of the higher order' is in fact the employment of the highest order. Clearly, we cannot speak for humbugs. We are speaking here for genuine aspirants who take to the life of *Bhaktishacharya* for the sake of God-realization and good of humanity.

True, fakes, counterfeits, idlers and cheats abound in society in every walk of life, but does that justify one in decrying a way of life through which numberless persons in all climes have attained the *summum bonum* of life which is liberation? Pandit Nehru has spoken on different occasions with genuine regard about the necessity of following the teachings of our saints and seers. But he does not appear to understand that the teaching of the saints cannot be kept alive, unless their way of life is preserved. If you want the teachings of Buddha to inspire people, you must allow with respect his followers to go a-begging in the wide world. Why did Buddha refuse to accept his father's invitation and go a-begging in the streets of Kapilavastu, where he had driven his royal chariot years ago? Had Sankara and Vivekananda any the lesser intelligence and lesser love for humanity than Pandit Nehru's? To get more men like them the nation has to keep their way of life alive patiently through centuries, just as there must be a Congress to hold a Nehru. Monasticism is no peculiarity of India. Almost all the nations of the world have their monastic orders which depend for their existence and functioning on public charity, in some countries even on Governmental help. Politicians elsewhere do not generally feel themselves called upon to disturb their way of life and pass insulting judgments upon them. But has not Pandit Nehru an extra-ordinary mission in life? Is it not a matter of our great national pride that our beloved Pandit Nehru has become too big to require to abide by the canons of propriety?

As to the main issue in the above discussion all well-meaning people will find the required light and help for forming sound judgement from the following dialogue between Swami Vivekananda and a disciple exactly on the same topic:

Disciple: But many people are of opinion now-a-days, Sir, that with the increase of wandering monks in the country, much harm has been done to its material progress. They assert it on the ground that these monks idly roam about, depending on householders for their living, that these are of no help to the cause of social and national advancement.

Swami: But will you explain to me first, what is meant by the term material or secular advancement?

Disciple: Yes; It is to do as people in the West are doing by securing the necessities of life through education and promoting through science such objects in life as commerce, industry, communications and so on.

Swami: But can all these be ever brought about, if real Rajas is not awakened in man? Wandering all over India, nowhere I found this Rajas manifesting itself. It is all Tamas and Tamas! The masses lie engulfed in Tamas, and only among the monks I could find these Rajas and Sattva. These people are like the back-bone of the country. The real Sannyasin is a teacher of householders. It is with the light and teaching obtained from them that householders of old triumphed many a time in battles of life. The householders give food and clothing to the Sadhus only in return of their invaluable teachings. Had there been no such mutual exchange in India, her people would have become extinct like the American Indians by this time. It is because the householders still give a few morsels of food to the sadhus that they are yet able to keep their foot-hold on the path of progress. The Sannyasins are not idle. They are really the fountain-head of all activity. The householders see lofty ideas carried into practice in the lives of the Sadhus and accept from them such noble ideas; and this it is that has uptill now enabled them to fight their battle of life from the sphere of Karma. The example of holy Sadhus makes them work out holy ideals in life and imbibe real energy for work. The Sannyasins inspire the householders in all noble causes by embodying in their lives the highest principle of giving up everything for the sake of God and the good of the world, and as a return the householders give a few doles of food. And the very disposition and capacity to grow that food develops in the people because of the blessings and the good wishes of the all renouncing monks. It is because of their failure to understand the deeper issues that people blame the monastic institutions. Whatever may be the case in other countries, in this land, the bark of householders' life does not sink only because the Sannyasins are at its helm.

Disciple: But, Sir, how many monks are to be found who are truly devoted to the good of men?

Swami: Ah, quite enough, if one great Sannyasin like Sri Ramakrishna comes in a thousand years! For a thousand years after his advent, people may well guide themselves by those ideas and ideals he leaves behind. It is only because this monastic institution exists in the country that men of his greatness are born here. There are defects, more or less, in all the institutions of life, but what is the reason that in spite of the faults, this noble institution stands yet supreme over all the other institutions of life? It is because the true Sannyasins forego even their own liberation and live simply for doing good to the world. If you don't feel grateful to such a noble institution lie on you again and again!

Beware where you are led!

14-11-53

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TALKS ON JNANAYOGA: BY SWAMI ISWARANANDA, RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, THE VILANGANS, TRICHUR, T-C STATE PP. 123. 1953, PRICE RS 1-8-0.

This book is written in an easy style. The purport of it is that Deep Sleep gives us every night the highest possible 'experience', and that what we have to do is only to understand its significance in waking state. 'Arise, awake, and know the Serene Self of Dreamless Sleep.' (P. 41) Quotations are taken from everywhere to lead to and explain this point of view.

To us it seems that too many sweeping statements have been made about Rajayoga. 'If Chittavrittinirodha were a state of knowledge, it would be a contradiction in terms, for, Vrittinirodha cannot coexist with knowledge.' (P. 30) Leaving aside quarrels about words, let us understand the simple fact that we 'know' our names, and do not make Japa or meditation on them on the ground that we might forget them. Fear of forgetting and necessity for repetition can create mental waves, one of which neutralises the other. When the mind is relatively freed from both, knowledge does persist. In fact all knowledge is like this, manifested through mental waves, but not dependent on them. On page 45, a statement is made that the 'method of the Rajayogi' being to control the mind through 'practice alone', 'by mere will power', temptations are likely to overpower him, while the Jnani is free from such danger because of his 'knowledge'. Abhyasa-vairagya formula of Patanjali shows that it is not mere will alone that the Yogi employs. And the Sutra 'Tat-param Purusha-khyatera-guna vat-trishnyam' shows that 'knowledge of Purusha' is higher Vairagya.

We feel sure that these controversial points can be eliminated without reducing the strength in the main presentation of Non-duality. We also feel that if proper stress were put upon the position of dream, which shows 'creative power', the author would not have stated (on page 39) that 'the concept of Turiya is, philosophically considered, superfluous and the concept of Prājna as Isvara is a theological supposition...not verified in experience.'

Although the reviewer has taken exception to some of the above positions, he has great pleasure in stating that this book is highly thought-provoking, and that it compresses much valuable matter in a very short compass.

S. N. P.

"DIMENSIONS OF LIFE" BOOK I: CLOUDS BY "WINDED WANDERER" PUBLISHED BY A. ANANTHACHARIAR, 15, GOVINDU STREET, T. NAGAR, MADRAS-17 PRICE RS. 1-4-0.

In this book the author has attempted to expose the hollowness of the self-styled rational thinkers of the present century, who in the name of science deride the eternal values of Religion and God-realisation as the 'false-hoods and hypocrisies of old-world theology.'

In the prologue, we are told, how a modern educated youth belonging to the school of free thinkers, goes defiantly to an illumined Sadhu to propound his theories and to express his doubts about the wisdom of the ancients. The Sadhu in the course of a series of talks expounds to the beguiled youth the eternal truths about God and soul and leads on to a discussion about allied subjects such as Temples and Idolatry, Karma and Renunciation etc..

It is doubtful whether the youth of invincible recalcitrance was edified or ever convinced at all by the earnest ministrations of the Sadhu, for we find him even to the last uttering painful blasphemies. But the clarity of thought and lucidity of expression which characterise the well-planned and sequentially arranged expositions should commend this book to the reader who wishes to cherish the precious heritage of our ancient land. K. S. N.

SONGS AND SONNETS BY G. V. SUBBARAMAYYA, M. A., PUBLISHED BY VIVEKA PUBLISHERS, NELLORE. PP. 55. PRICE: RS. 2.

This book is a collection of poems, the greater part of which, we are given to understand, was inspired by the author's Guru, Bhagavan Sri Ramana. The Sonnets (Pages 34 to 55) composed between the years 1922 and 1931 are remarkable for their melodious diction and strict adherence to the Shakespearean and Petrarchan conventions. The poems in which the author affects *Vers Libre* are felicitous and touching in their expression. Besides the depth of emotion and sincerity of feeling of which the author has given ample evidences in these compositions, his deft handling of technique of English versification entitles him to a place among the Indian poets who have used English verse as their vehicle of expression. K. S. N.

MASTER-KEY TO ALL ILLS: (KRIYA):
BY V. T. NEELAKANTAN AND S. A. A.
RAMAIAH, M. A. PP. 227. COPIES TO BE
HAD FROM S. A. A. RAMAIAH, NO. 1-1
ARULANANDA MUDALI ST., SAN THOME,
MYLAPORE, MADRAS. PRICE RS. 7/- NET.

In the first ten pages it is told how the book was written as the result of trances in which Kriya Babaji appeared. 'Shall he coming now and then' were the parting words of the vanishing Master (Page 10). The book touches a number of topics ranging from the value of silence up to Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The writing as it stands loses much of its value because of constant mention of the coming books and their prices.

S. N.

BENGALI

VEDANTA-DARSHAN BY SRI MATILAL
ROY (WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY MAHA-
MOHOPADHYAYA SRI KALIPADA TARKA-
CHARYA), PRABARTAK PUBLISHERS, 61,
BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA 12, 1ST
EDITION, 1952, Pp. 622, PRICE RS. 7-8-0.

This is a massive work on a grand theme by an expert who not only brings to bear upon his subject wide and careful learning in the field but shows at every turn of his steady movement of thought great insight and power of conviction which cannot fail to impress his readers. This is a commentary on *Brahma-Sutras*, but the author builds up a comprehensive philosophical scheme on the basis of the aphorisms of Vyasa, taking cues

from previous commentators as well as from the scriptures. His general philosophy is pivoted on the idea of identity-in-difference and he pitches it against Sankara's non-dualism or unqualified monism. He is also influenced by Sri Aurobindo's thought. Now while his philosophy may be accepted as such, it is doubtful how far he has been successful in refuting Sankara or even in arguing his own theory. He bases his position mainly on testimony of the Scriptures and the aphorisms of Vyasa, but that involves an element of interpretation and relative emphasis. He seems to be obsessed by his antagonism to Sankara but he does not appreciate what led Sankara to take liberty here and there in his interpretations. It was the need for a consistent philosophy. While the present author's aim is admirable,—he seeks to establish a philosophy of affirmation,—he however, wins his case more by his power of persuasion,—albeit, arising from his own firm conviction,—than by any ratiocination. In this he has not advanced beyond Ramanuja or Hegel, and some of his original arguments are naive. In any case he could not rise up to Sankara to be able to oppose him. Nevertheless, in so far as he cogently places his own view-point and advances from aphorism to aphorism with steady and clear grasp of the essentials, and in so far as he infuses his writing with a glow of faith and enthusiasm, he is to be highly commended. Instead of seeking to decide the issue between pure identity and identity-in-difference, he might have engaged all his energies to the exposition of his own view-point. For that issue is beyond our power to decide and a constant reference to the vexed problem is a source of irritation. Barring this little obsession in the book, it is an admirable work, a real contribution to Bengali literature.

P. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI SRI DURGA PUJA

October 13 to October 18, 1953

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH

MADRAS 4

'Is the Math conducting Sri Durga Puja this year also as was done last year?' was the question that was put to us as early as July last by numerous friends of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The query indicated the desire and earnestness of a large number of devotees that

the sacred Puja should be repeated this year too in the same scale as was done last year. Some of us, elder members of the Utsava Committee, however, were apprehensive of the measure of public response that we could evoke now. The Godavari Flood Relief—a very urgent piece of succour—was in the process of being liberally financed by the people of Madras. The need to celebrate Holy Mother's Centenary, which is to come off within next few months in a place like Madras, in a scale befitting the importance of the occasion was another consideration that made us

hesitant. Yet the younger among the devotees of the Math were very eager that the Puja should be conducted this year and with the characteristic optimism of youth heightened by their devotion to the Divine Mother, they promised that they would be able to mobilise the necessary finance for the purpose. It was felt that it was unwise, improper and unholy to stifle the enthusiasm of the young devotees and deny them this opportunity for the great *kainkary* which they looked forward to so eagerly and so earnestly.

Accordingly, the Utsava Committee decided to conduct the Puja relying upon the grace of the Divine Mother. No sooner was this resolved than the General Committee divided itself as usual into a number of sections, each taking upon itself a particular duty in connection with the Utsava. More friends of the Math very kindly volunteered to join the Utsava Committee and desired to be given opportunities for service.

As days rolled on, we felt the same misgiving as we did last year. Our target of collections was the actual amount that we realised for last year's festival; but at the beginning money flowed tardily though not unwillingly. But as the days of the Puja drew nearer donation in cash and kind began to flow in with greater frequency enabling us to plan the Utsava in rather a somewhat greater scale than that of the last year.

It was also resolved to invite for the Utsava as many monks of the Ramakrishna Order as could possibly grace the occasion with their presence. The Utsava Committee sent through Swami Kailashananda a respectful invitation to Srmat Sadasivananda Maharaj, a direct disciple of Swami Vivekananda and a very senior monk of the Order now aged 75 who was then staying in Delhi, to condescend to come over for the Utsava. We were immensely delighted when he agreed to do so and came to Madras in this his first pilgrimage to the South sufficiently in advance of Dasara. To our great joy, Swami Vireswarananda, Assistant Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission and ten other Swamis from different centres of the North and the South enhanced the solemnity of the occasion by their presence during the days of the Puja.

Early in October, preparations for the conduct of the festival began to be made. Pandals were erected. Decorations proceeded apace. Utensils were secured. There was a great buzzle and enthusiasm in the precincts of the Math and the holy place began to put on a festive appearance. Escorted by two devotees, the Image arrived from Calcutta on the 12th of October and was duly received at the Central Station, Madras, by the devotees and Swamis of the Math headed by Swami Vireswarananda. On the very forenoon the Image was installed on an altar specially con-

structed for the purpose. As devotees entered the Math that evening, the one question which accosted them from the lips of their friends was: 'Did you see the Mother? She is superb. She is much more captivating than She appeared last year.' Everyone who stood before the image was struck by its grace and grandeur and the gentle smile that played on Mother's lips went into the heart of every devotee and enthralled him in Her presence. Even for the Bodhan Puja which commenced on the first evening, there was such a large concourse of men, women and children gathered to have darshan of the Mother that it looked as if the participants in the Utsava this year would be twice of what it was last year. And we were glad about it, for we wanted that the whole of Madras should come to the Math to have darshan of the Holy festival.

The various items of the Puja were gone through every day with meticulous attention to every detail. As in the last year, Br. Durga Chaitanya was the Pujari and Swami Suddhasatwananda was the Tantra-Dhāraka. Swami Tapasyananda did the ceremonial Chandi parayanam for four days. It will be difficult for others to emulate them in the perfect observance of every detail and in their fervour and devotion.

On the second day, Amantran and Adhivās were conducted and more devotees came to witness the Puja than on the first day. Thursday was the day of the Saptami Puja. While the Puja was going on in the forenoon, clouds gathered and there was an intermittent downpour which caused great inconvenience to the assembled devotees. Yet, unmindful of the inclement weather they stuck to their places and were absorbed in the darshan of the rituals. The feeding of the devotees was fixed for that day. It caused great regret to the organisers that many devotees could not stay for prasada, but left soon after Pushpanjali to avoid more drenching in the rain. Due to heavy rains the pandals erected for the purpose of feeding the large number of devotees became useless. Organisers of the Utsava found a comparatively easy escape from this difficult situation through the kindness of the authorities of the nearby P. S. High School, who generously lent the use of the enormous zinc shade and the long verandahs of the school buildings for the purpose of feeding the devotees on the Saptami and Ashtami Puja days and the Daridranarayanams on the day of the Navami Puja.

At 4 p. m. this (Saptami) day, Sri T. P. Kalyanarama Sastrigal did Harikatha Kalakshepam in Tamil on 'Parvati Kalyanam.' After Aratrikam there was music performance by Sri Madurai Mani Iyer, a pre-eminent musician of Madras. The hall and the environs of the Math were packed beyond capacity by devotees who came

that evening for darshan and for the music which concluded at 9 p. m.

Friday, the 16th October was Mahashtami. Kumari Puja and Sandhi Puja were the important events of this day's function. Notwithstanding heavy rains quite a large number of devotees came to attend the Kumari Puja. The hall having been packed to its maximum capacity, devotees stood in pouring rain outside and witnessed the Puja. Kumari herself a trifle younger than the one who was worshipped last year was the picture of sweetness and grace. It was evident that as soon as the Puja commenced, the Divine Mother took her abode in her person and received the *Sodasa Upachara* devoutly offered by the Pujari, instructed by the Tantra Dharaka. The whole scene was entrancing and elevating.

The programme that afternoon included public lectures expounding the significance of Devi worship. The Hon'ble Sri K. Venkateswami Naidu Garu, Minister for Religious Endowments, Government of Madras presided. After a welcome speech by the Secretary of the Utsav Committee and the Chairman's preliminary remarks Brahmasri Sastra Ratnakara Polagam Rama Sastrigal, Professor, Madras Sanskrit College delivered a lecture on the meaning of Dasara and of Sri Durga Puja. This was followed by a discourse on the same topic by Swami Agamananda, President of the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama at Kaladi. In a powerful speech lasting 45 minutes, Swamiji stressed the importance of Mother-worship which was characteristic of of Hindu religion only and he exhorted his audience to fight the forces of atheism with all the powers at their command. Sri K. Balasubramania Iyer, President of the Utsava Committee proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and to the distinguished lecturers. That night, after Aratrikam there was Kali Kirtan by Br. Pritichaitanya and his group of 'music boys.'

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of the Indian Union, visited the Math in the evening and attended the aratrikam for a while.

Saturday the 17th was Navami Puja day. It was also the day fixed for Daridra-Narayana-Seva. The feeding of the poor as mentioned above was decided to be conducted in the compound of the P. S. High School situated opposite the Math. This day also the sky was overcast in the morning and there was rain at frequent intervals. The Divine Mother who is incarnate in her poor children graciously kept off the clouds that afternoon during the time when the poor feeding was to take place. The Daridra Narayanas were treated to some music through loud speaker to avoid the tedium of a long wait. It was a sacred sight to see Divine Mother eating through Her about 4,500 children who had gathered in the premises of the school and were fed with a sumptuous fare

of three courses. The feeding itself which started at about 1-15 p.m. went on till 5 p.m.. It was a great relief to us that we were able to go through this very important item of the celebration unhampered by the rains. Bhajan by Sri T. M. Krishnaswami Iyer and party followed Aratrikam that evening and attracted a large number of devotees.

Next day the Vijaya Dasami Puja was conducted in the morning and the Divine Mother's reflection in the mirror was immersed in the sacred waters during the Puja. At 10-30 a. m. after the Puja all the Swamis of the Mission, inmates and guests, assembled at the feet of the Mother and the devotees availed themselves of this opportunity to pay their respects to them. Swami Kailashananda introduced the 'Guest Swamis' to the assembly and each of them made a short speech on the significance of the celebration. The supreme *saulabhya* and transparent devotion of Swami Sadasivananda who spoke first made a deep impression on the minds of the hearers. The President of the Utsava Committee conveyed the thanks of the devotees to the Swamis for their messages and benedictions and incidentally cogently pin pointed the responsibility that rested on the monks, disciples and devotees of the Ramakrishna Order in the matter of upholding and propagating the Sanatana Dharma. The Swamis sitting together at the feet of the Divine Mother in the congregation of a large number of devotees presented an inspiring scene in the hall and it was an unforgettable experience.

Sri C. Subrahmaniam, the Finance Minister of Madras, visited the Math on this day and had the darshan of the Devi.

Immersion of the image was to take place that evening in the sea opposite the Office of the I. G. of Police. Obviously tired of trying in vain our powers of endurance during these three days, the God of rain took a respite and we were delighted to see a clear sky all through the day. The image of the Mother was taken out for the procession punctually at 3.30 p.m.. The procession was formed, headed by buglers and trumpeters and banners. A richly caparisoned elephant strode majestically in front. Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, women devotees, male devotees, Bhajan parties, Swamis of the Mission, Band and Nadaswaram—all arranged themselves, one behind the other in front of the Mother and formed a line which was nearly three furlongs at the end of the procession. The roar of the procession was brought up by Brahmanas chanting the Vedas. Chorus cries of 'Jai Sri Durga Maiki Jai,' 'Om Sakti Om' and 'Sri Durga maha saranam' rent the air. A Swami sitting on the back of the elephant in uneasy eminence and holding on his head the 'Devi-Ghata' conveyed advance intimation of the

Divine Mother coming behind with Her devotees. The procession itself passed on in a perfectly orderly manner without impeding traffic. It gathered volume as it wended its way and by the time it reached the sea-shore, the crowd was ten thousand strong. The cordon previously formed by the volunteers reserved an enclosure on the beach for placing the image of Mother for a while before the immersion. The final Aratrikam was the prelude to the shifting of the Mother's image to a waiting catamaran. The raft carrying the sacred image gently glided into the sea to the accompaniment of fire works on the shore. There was not a dry eye in the huge concourse, as the Holy Image rode on the crest of the waves and we waited and watched a long while till we could see it no longer.

Almost all the devotees who witnessed the immersion came back to the Math for 'Shanti-Jal' and Vijaya Sammelan. They all dispersed after the distribution of prasad.

On every day of the Puja, there was an unending stream of devout persons eager to have darshan of the Devi. It speaks volumes for their faith and sense of discipline that they stayed in perfect order and wonderfully co-operated with the organisers. In addition to a good number of them being fed with consecrated food, everyone who attended was given holy Prasad and butter-milk as he or she left the premises at the conclusion of the function for the session.

The band of young men who served as volunteers (three hundred and more in number) did a Herculean task during all the days of the festival. From preliminary decoration to the final immersion and even afterwards the various works they had to do were heavy and strenuous. Transportation of huge vessels of hot cooked food for Devotees' Feeding and Daridra Narayana Seva from the Math to the School premises was a stiff piece of work in the inclement weather which was specially unkind at the time. The lady volunteers—under the guidance of an elderly lady devotee who was ably assisted by the leader of Girl Guides with her band of eager workers—too had their share of quite a lot of hard work. All the volunteers under the guidance of a Brahmachari of the Math put forth determined and united effort. It is no exaggeration to say that the celebration owes much to them for its success.

The six-day festival came to a happy and auspicious ending. It must be confessed that the Mother tried our powers of endurance a great deal and at the same time gave us the strength and the faith to stand Her test with pious determination and to succeed by Her grace. Needless to say, a celebration of this significance and magnitude requires the united effort of a number of friends and devotees. We are happy that we had this help and co-operation in an

unstinted measure. Of the service rendered by the members of the Utsava Committee, especially the young men, it is not possible to write in measured language. Everyone did his best and more than his best.

Number of institutions like the Corporation of Madras, the Chicago Radio, the Kapaleswarar Temple, the P. S. High School, Vivekananda College, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Sri Ramakrishna Mission High School Hostel, Sarada Vidyalaya, the St. John's Ambulance Association, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Organisation and the Aynavaram Milk Supply Union and S. R. V. S. responded to our request for help and services. We take this opportunity to acknowledge with thanks the very helpful services rendered by Madras Police throughout the celebrations. To all of them we are immensely grateful.

At the conclusion of the Puja celebrations, everyone had the satisfaction that a holy festival which went deep down into the hearts and minds of the people of Madras came to a close without any casualty or mishap and was conducted with the fervour and sanctity appropriate to the sacred function. In very truth, Sri Durga Puja has captured Madras. It has come to stay as a great and glorious annual event.

Dated Madras
25th October, 1953

P. SANKARANARAYANAN,
Secretary,

Utsava Committee,
SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS.

SRI SRI KALI PUJA SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

On the auspicious night of the New-moon day which fell on the 5th of November, 1953 Sri Sri Kali, the Divine Mother was worshipped at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras. It was in a beautiful life-size image, installed in the spacious hall of the Math that the Divine Mother accepted the worship of Her children.

The beautiful image of the Mother was brought down from Calcutta and on the day of the Puja was installed on an altar raised specially for the purpose. In the background of an awe-inspiring cremation ground with blazing pyres consuming corpses and prowling blood-thirsty jackals, flanked by the serene and holy Panchavati painted on a screen, Mother stood on the breast of Mahakala with sword in one hand and a decapitated head in another. Pouring forth boons from one hand and bestowing fearlessness from yet another, Mother danced in the background of dense dark clouds silver-lined with the sudden flash of lightning. The image was beautifully decorated with garlands and the whole atmosphere throbbled with the infusion of a new life into it.

As a part of the Puja, Sri Chandi was chanted in the morning with the necessary rituals. In the evening at 7 O' Clock, Swami Paramatmananda spoke in Tamil on the significance of the Kali worship. A large audience heard the Swami for one and a half hours. As the evening twilight deepened into the darkness of the New-moon night, devotees began to pour in to take part in the worship and Bhajan. Punctually at 10 O' clock in the night the worship began. Kali kirtan was carried on throughout the night by the sadhus and devotees filling the whole atmosphere with the sweet songs on the Divine Mother. The children devotees—actively sympathised by some apparently grown-up ones too—engaged themselves in the most disturbing but taken-for-granted fireworks of Deepavali and kept away the sleep that hovered over some devout but relenting eyes. There were, however, one or two or more pious souls the soundness of whose provisional sleep was so perfect that even the loudest 'atom bomb' could hardly do any effective indent in that. Many Sadhus and devotees kept vigil throughout the whole night taking part in the worship with its elaborate rituals. After offering Pushpanjali to the Mother, Homa was performed which marked the completion of the Puja at 5 O' Clock on the next morning.

On the next day more than 300 devotees and 250 Daridra Narayanas took prasadam at the Math.

At 4 O' Clock in the afternoon the image was carried in a procession headed by some special drums and Nadasvaram followed by a large number of men and women devotees engaged in Bhajan. Nearly 600 took part in the procession up to the San Thome beach where the image was immersed in the Sea.

Devotees returned to the Math with a heavy heart to hear the solemn notes of the bell indicative of evening Aratrikam of Sri Ramakrishna. Regaining their poise they immersed themselves in singing hymns to Him whom they worshipped as the Divine Mother.

After taking prasadam the devotees dispersed for the day.

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CELEBRATIONS

The 27th December, 1953 is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sri Sarada Devi, the Divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna, also known as the Holy Mother. Uptill now the details of her life and character have not been widely known; her purity and love and her faith in Sri Ramakrishna took her to him not as a wife in the

ordinary sense, but as his first disciple; how under his guidance her spiritual life developed; and how outliving him by thirtyfour years, she silently but effectively carried on his message and became the spiritual guide of thousands of earnest seekers.

Preparations are now being made to celebrate her Birth Centenary in a fitting manner and to place before the world the wonderful life and teachings of this motherly saint. The period of the Centenary Celebrations will last from December, 1953 to December, 1954.

The Centenary Committee invite the co-operation of all interested persons in these celebrations and suggest to them the following ways in which both individuals and local committees may find it convenient to organize activities of their own in order that the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother may be duly celebrated throughout the world:

1. A message of goodwill and co-operation may be sent to the Central Centenary Committee.
2. A religious gathering or prayer meeting may be held on the 27th December, 1953, with a view to effecting throughout the world communion of spirit through prayer among all seekers after truth.
3. A memorial meeting may be held on a chosen date to bring before the people of the area the personality of the Holy Mother and the details of her life and teachings.
4. Meetings, Exhibitions, Conventions, discussions, or other suitable functions may be held during the period of celebration on the lives of the great women of the world, emphasizing the spiritual value of womanhood to life and society, and with special reference to Sri Sarada Devi and her teachings.
5. Publicity may be given to the Centenary celebrations through the local radio and local journals and periodicals by means of notices of meetings and functions and by suitable articles on Sri Sarada Devi and on the ideals of womanhood in general.

It is earnestly hoped that all local committees will endeavour to organize celebration on these and similar lines, and do all in their power to contribute to the world-wide success of the Centenary. The Central Centenary Committee will be very glad to receive an outline of the proposed programme when formulated. It will be glad to assist in any way possible and send literature helpful in preparing the celebrations.

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THE SECRETARY,
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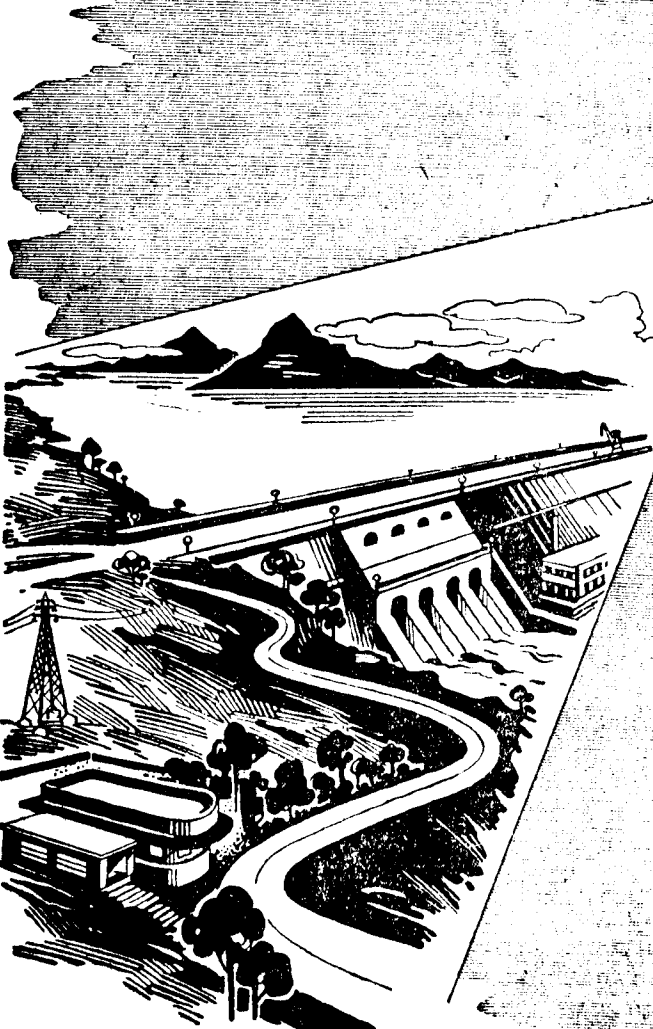
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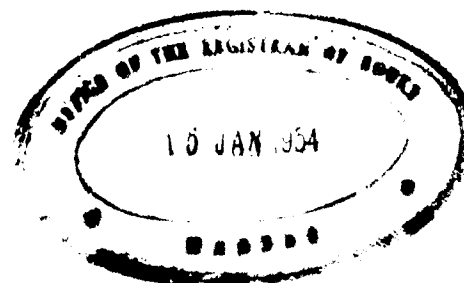
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All the preliminary steps have already been taken. A Committee consisting of 7 members is constituted for the starting of the College. The necessary permission from the Government and the University has already been obtained. An area of 16.5 acres has been placed at the disposal of the Committee by the Government and negotiations have been made for the purchase of another 20 acres. The foundation stone was laid by H. H. The Rajapramukh of the T. C. State on the 28th August, 1953 when H. H. the Maharaja of Cochin also graced the occasion. Estimates and plans have been prepared and levelling of the site is being completed.

The Committee hopes to open the Junior Intermediate Class in the ensuing Academic year itself. Of a total of Rs. 25 Lakhs estimated for buildings and equipments, at least 6 lakhs will be required immediately.

The proposed College does not have any one particular community behind it, standing as it does for all sections of the people. We are, therefore, confident that it will receive the whole-hearted support and encouragement from one and all. Every pie for the construction of the College has to come from the benevolent public. Needless to point out that it is the responsibility and privilege of socially and financially advanced sections of the public to encourage Institutions of this type. At a time when Governments and political parties are moving towards legislative measures for the elimination of the vast inequalities that exist and for more equitable distribution of wealth in society, it will be only in the fitness of things to donate liberally for such noble endeavours. May we point out that donations and endowments to such Institutions are exempted from income and other taxes.

Our endeavours have been blessed with worthy encouragements at the very outset. The Devaswam Board of Travancore has agreed to donate a lakh of rupees for the College. Sri N. Krishna Iyer of Kottayam will be putting up a wing of the College building in the name of his revered father. Sri Panayya Pazhoor Brahmadathan Namboodiripad has already donated Rs. 10,000/-. Sri Parayath Raman has donated Rs. 1000/- and Sri. N. Govinda Pai has donated Rs 1500/- as their first instalments and we are confident that others are waiting only for time to crown our efforts with success.

It is decided to inscribe on the walls of the College in marble the names of donors of Rs. 1000/- or more. Halls, or buildings can be constructed and named after the dear and near ones of the donors if they so desire.

It is our earnest request and fervent prayer to one and all of our friends and well-wishers, the devotees, admirers and followers of Sri Sankara, to come forward with their contributions without waiting for others and thus enable us to start the Classes at the beginning of the next academic year itself.

Contributions however small will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Treasurer, Sri Sankara College Association, P. O. Kaladi, T. C. State (South India).

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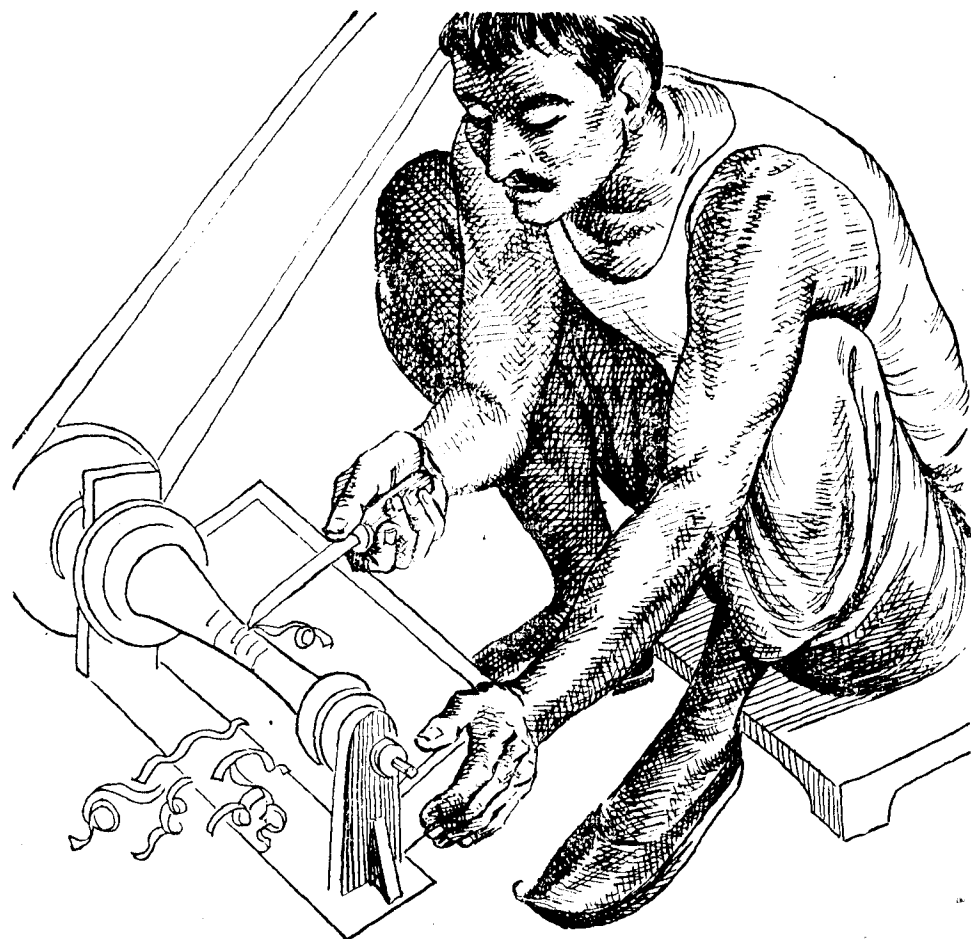
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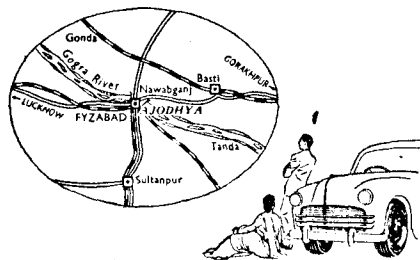
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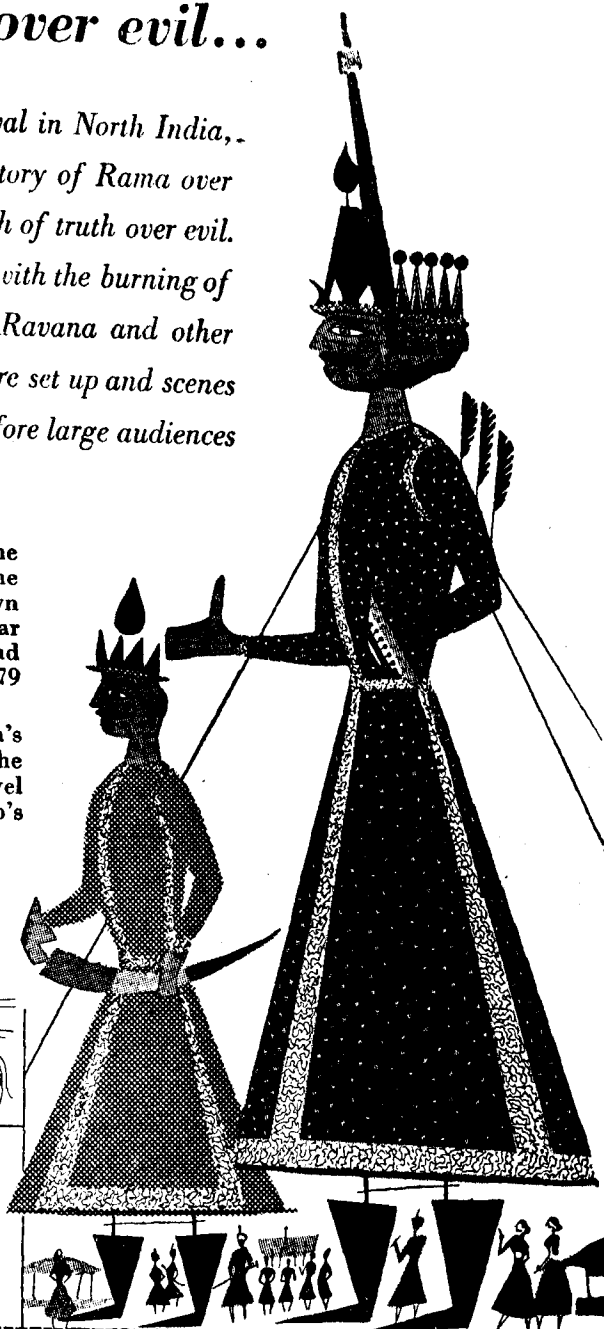
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. Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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SAVING SUCCOUR OF THE HOLY MOTHER

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'O Sadhu, beware!' Sadhus should always be alert. The path of a Sadhu is always slippery. While one is on slippery ground, one should walk tiptoe. Is it a joke to become a Sannyasin? If one had so desired, one could have married and lived the life of a householder. Now that you have given up such intentions, the mind should not be allowed to think of these things. What has been once spat out, is not eaten again. The ochre robe of a Sadhu protects him as a the collar of dog protects it from danger. No one molests a dog with a collar, as it belongs to some one or other. All gates are open to a Sadhu. He has admission everywhere. The mind naturally tends towards evil deeds. It is lethargic in doing good works. Formerly I used to get up at 3 a.m. and sit up for meditation. One day I felt disinclined to do so on account of physical indisposition. That one day's irregularity resulted in the upsetting of my routine for a number of days. That is why I tell that perseverance and tenacity are necessary for success in all good work. While I was living in the Nahabat at Dakshineswar, I used to pray in the moonlit night, 'O Lord, there is stain even in the moon. Let there be no stain in my mind.'

A monk should be above attachment and jealousy. He must be the same under all circumstances. Sri Ramakrishna used to say to Hridaya, 'You must bear with me and I must bear with you, then everything will go on well. Otherwise we shall have to summon the manager to make up our differences!'

SERVICE IN SANNYASA - DHARMA

WHEN TO RENOUNCE?

In the graduated scheme of the Hindu pattern of life, the fourth mode or stage of life has been called the Sannyasa āsrama, the previous stages being Vānaprastha, Gṛhasthya and Brahmacharya. In a 'Mokṣa-Dharma' chapter of the Santi-parva Suka asks Vyasa:

'While living satisfying duly the duties of forest life how should one, who tries to attend to that, which is the highest object of knowledge, set his soul on yoga accordig to the best of his powers?'¹

Vyasa answers:

Having acquired purity by the practice of the first two modes of life, viz. Brahmacharya, Gṛhasthya, one should thereafter, set his mind on yoga in the third mode of life... Having conquered all shortcomings of the mind or thought by easy means in practice of the first three modes of life one should pass in to the best and highest² of all the modes, viz. Sannyāsa.³

As indicated by Vyasa in the above slokas the general rule favoured by many law-givers had been that one should first become after the period of Brahmacharya a Gṛhastha, then a Vānaprastha and ultimately a Sannyāsi.

Manu, the champion of this procedure would not brook any other passage to Sannyāsa. He says:

'Thus having successfully passed from one order of life over to another, he, the conqueror of his senses and institutor of many a fire offering, tired with the labour of begging and offering oblations shall augment or increase his pleasures in the next world by taking to asceticism, *Manu Samhita* vi. 34.

Having discharged his three debts, let him, devote his thought to self-emancipation, striving to attain emancipation without discharging these debts, a man obtains a degraded status. *ib.* 35.

Having studied the Vedas according to the regulation, procreated sons according to the rules of virtue and performed the religious sacrifices to the best of his ability, let him turn his thought to self-emancipation *ib.* 36.

'For seeking the emancipation of self, without having studied the Vedas, procreated children and performed the sacrifices, a Brahmana shall obtain a very degraded status in the next world.' *ib.* 37.

Yajñavalkya also holds almost the same view:

'(He, alone, is qualified to enter the life of a Sannyasin) who has studied the Vedas, who has practised recitation (of the sacred verses) who has a son, who has given food, who has maintained the sacred fire, who has celebrated sacrifices according to his might and who has concentrated his mind upon (the acquisition of) emancipation.'⁴

Understandably enough, all law-givers could not agree on this point of necessity in which an element of unreason made for rigidity, which required one and all to pass through the three stages of life before one could take to Sannyāsa. Institution of such rigid uniformity originated from ignoring the fact that all human beings did not start life on a similar point of experience. Some indeed required to burn fingers to acquire the precious experience as to how to behave with fire. Some perhaps entered the arena of this life with a lot of pre-natal experience which required just a little brushing up.

1. *Mahabharata*: Santi-parva, CCXLV, 1.

² cf. (a) गृहधर्मो जघनतः ब्रह्मचर्यं हृदो मम । वक्षःस्थलाद् वने वासः सन्न्यासः शिरसि स्थितः ॥ *Srimad Bhāgavatam* XI. 17.

(b) मुहूर्तमपि सन्न्यस्य लभते परमां गतिम् ।

न सन्न्यासात् परो धर्मो वर्तते मुक्तिकारणम् ॥ *Bṛhaddharmapurāṇam*

3. *Santi-parva* CCXLV. 2. 3.

4. *Yajñavalkya Samhita* III. 57.

The one fundamental plank that constitutes the fitness for Sannyāsa is the spirit of renunciation, which means both dispassion for the things of the world and yearning of the realisation of the Self. If X already knew at his twentieth year what Y would painfully learn at 75 after much chalk-eating, thorn-munching, and heart-burning, what business had any law-giver to drill X through a machine of irrevocable drudgery to help make him as wise-unwise as Y at a much later age?

Voices of protest against such rigidity were, therefore, heard from very early times. The most reasonable and well-followed of these protestant voices is that of *Jābālopaniṣad*:⁵

ब्रह्मचर्यं परिसमाप्य गृही भवेत् गृही भूत्वा वनी भवे-
द्वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेत् । यदि चेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादेव प्रव्रजेद् गृहाद्वा
वनाद्वा पुनरव्रती वा व्रती वा स्नातको वाऽस्नातको वोत्सन्नामि-
रन्मिको वा । यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् ।

After completing the period of Brahmacharya (studentship) one should become a householder; after becoming a householder one should become a hermit, and from the stage of hermit one should enter the life of sannyāsa. If, however, the spirit of renunciation dawns one can at once enter the life of sannyāsa whether it is from the stage of Brahmacharya, Gṛhasthya or Vānaprastha, whether one has kept vows or not, whether one is a Snātaka or not, whether one has tended sacrificial fire or not, the moment one comes to attain dispassion for the world that very moment one should wander away i. e. enter the life of the mendicant.

Vyasa himself says in another place;

ब्रह्मचारी गृहस्थो वा वानप्रस्थोऽथवा पुनः ।

विरक्तः सर्वकामेभ्यः पारिव्राज्यं समाश्रयेत् ॥⁶

5. *Jābālopaniṣad* 4.

6. (and also 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) Quoted in *Yati-dharma-samgraha*, Published by Ananda Ashrama Press, 1901, p. 2.

⁷ उत्पन्नज्ञानविज्ञानो वैराग्यं परमं गतः । प्रव्रजेद्ब्रह्मचर्यात्तु यदीच्छेत्परमां गतिम् । जातो पुनो गृहस्थो वा विदितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

⁸ ब्रह्मचर्याद्गृहाद्वापि वनाद्वा संन्यसेद्बुधः । पुत्रेषु भार्या निक्षिप्य मृतपत्नीक एव वा ।

⁹ संसारमेव निःसारं दृष्ट्वा सारदिदृक्षया । प्रव्रजन्त्यकृतोद्वाहाः परं वैराग्यमाश्रिताः ॥

¹⁰ पारिव्राज्यं तु वैराग्यात्कर्तव्यं विदुरादिभिः । विधिना तच्च कुर्वीत सन्न्यासमिह बुद्धिमान् ॥

¹¹ अहमेवाक्षरं ब्रह्म वासुदेवाख्यमव्ययम् । इति भावो ध्रुवो यस्य तदा भवति भैक्षमुक् ॥

12. *ib.* p. 3.

'Whether one be a Brahmachāri, Gṛhastha of Vānaprastha—whenever one develops dispassion to the objects of senses, one should resort to mendicancy.

Yama⁷, Katyaiana⁸, Bṛhaspati⁹, Parā-sana¹⁰, Kratu¹¹, also hold similar views.

Saurapurna emphatically says:

यदा मनसि वैराग्यं जायते सर्ववस्तुषु ।
तदैव संन्यसेद्ब्रह्मचर्यं पतितो भवेत् ॥¹²

Whenever arises in the mind dispassion for the things of the world, the wise one should at once take to Sannyāsa, otherwise he will get degraded.

Gautama (iii. 2) and Baudhāyana (ii. 10. 17. 2) without committing themselves directly either way, present both the views side by side, evidently recognising the reasonableness of the latter stand.

The history of monasticism in the world shows that exalted Sannyasins like Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Sankara, Ramanuja, Ramananda, Madhva, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda who illumined the lives of millions through the powers of their realisation and ministration mostly came directly from Brahmacharya āsrama or Gṛhastha āsrama, and seldom strictly from the Vānaprastha āsrama. But the good point in the injunction of Manu was that he made it obligatory on all twice borns to renounce the world at a particular age.

WHY SANNYĀSA AT ALL?

Why Sannyāsa at all? This question has been asked from the earliest times,

and continues to be asked even today. Sannyāsa was never without its detractors. If Jaimini decried Sannyāsa on exegetical grounds of his own, the modern man is there to denounce it on his so called humanistic, socio-political and economical grounds. The determined and apolaustic denouncers of Sannyāsa apart, the honest and earnest questioner can always find in the sacred literature perfectly rational and acceptable answer to the question.

Millions clumsily rush apace on the expanse of life knocking about and being knocked about, weeping, enjoying, suffering, cursing and then passing away into that unknown from whose bourne, it has somehow been claimed that no traveller returns! To be sure, most of the people of the world are not bothered much with extraordinary whys and wherefores and whithers of that peculiar process which is life, if they are given their quota and ever increasingly more than their quota of things to satisfy their gastronomical and sexual appetites, and some other fancies of their order of life, which they would soberly call culture and civilization. Even after that, if the puny funky drowsy conscience makes sometimes some little noise, a dose or two from the wayside patent religion is enough to administer the much necessary quietus to the naughty fellow. This is what we call the gentleman's pious life in this vociferous world. *Ariha* and *Kāma* and little of pragmatic *Dharma*, these three values of life are more than enough for most of us.

But poor humanity is not poor as that all the time. From among the millions of non-kicking type of humble men, there come up the robust lion-types¹³ who refuse to float on, and stand firm digging their

paws on the bleeding bosom of this meaningless life and roar out few fundamental questions which echoes through eternity, through the sheer power of their straightness, tearing to shreds all comfortable and false dogmas of patched-up faiths and lullaby fables and intoxicating follies, labelled diversely.

This solitary lion among men asks: 'What nonsense is this life? The more I take in with all my multi-purpose senses the more wretchedly I hunger. The terrific misery of it! The frivolous futility of it! Good Heavens, where is the end of it all? If I have known a little of this world, the entire universe with its unknown dimensions giggles at my ignorance, so vast and baffling. And then where shall I hide this smallness of mine, this insufferable puniness? Are there no answers to these questions? Is there none who knows the answers to these questions? What use is life so puny, unintelligent and insufferable? I don't want pelf, power or progeny. I don't want aught that this world holds so dear and quarrel unceasingly over. I want that alone knowing which all is known¹⁴, all hungers are assuaged and eternal ineffable bliss is attained. What shall I do with all these things which will not make me immortal?¹⁵ How shall I attain immortality in this death-infested world?' These soulful hyper-earnest questions stir up the very heart of the timeless, and Words of pure essence, music rarefied, vibrates through the corridors of time and touches with transmuting sympathy the strings of his eager heart. What are dead words to others become the living Vedas to the sincere aspirant and the path is blazed before him through which

¹³ cf: मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चित्तति सिद्धये । B. G. VII. 3.

¹⁴ cf: कस्मिन् भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति । *Mundaka Up.*

¹⁵ cf: येनाहं नाश्रुता स्यां किमहं तेन कुर्याम् । *Br. Up.* IV. 5. 4.

waves of light glide past. One who is not lost to his soul cannot but be stirred to his depths on listening to the music that so sonorously flow on:

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ।¹⁶

एतमेव प्रजाजिनो लोकमिच्छन्तः प्रव्रजन्ति । एतद् स वै पूर्वं विद्वांसः प्रजां न कामयन्ते, किं प्रजया करिष्यामो येषां नोऽयमात्मायं लोक इति ; ते ह स पुत्रैषणायाश्च वितैषणायाश्च लोकैषणायाश्च व्युत्थायाश्च भिक्षाचर्यं चरन्ति ।¹⁷

मनसैवानुद्वेगं नेह नानास्ति किंचन ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥¹⁸

स वा एष महानज आत्मा जरोऽमरोऽमृतोऽभयो ब्रह्म ; अभयं वै ब्रह्म ; अभयं हि वै ब्रह्म ; ब्रह्म भवति य एवं वेद ।¹⁹

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः—श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यो....; आत्मनि खल्वरे दृष्टे श्रुते मते विज्ञात इदं सर्वं विदितम् ।²⁰

ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् । तदेवाभ्युक्ता । सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् । सोऽश्रुते सर्वान् कामान् सह । ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति ।²¹

एको वशो सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति । तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ।²²

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा शेष आत्मा

सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।

अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो

यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥²³

वेदान्तविज्ञानमुनिश्चितार्थाः

सन्न्यासयोगाद् यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।

ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले

परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥²⁴

स यो ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद

ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति ।

तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं

गुहाप्रस्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति ॥²⁵

यो वै भूमा तत् सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति भूमेव सुखम् ।²⁶

Such have been the saving, reassuring, and guiding intimations of Infinite to the awakened soul, who having been roused to divine dissatisfaction, has dared put across the shams of the world few fundamental questions. Knowing the Infinite alone one attained bliss that never waned, one became fearless for ever, one never hungered any more with diverse desires, and one knew aught that existed. One ultimately realized, 'That Thou art'. And one knew this by giving up, पुत्रैषणा, लोकैषणा, वितैषणा i. e. shaking off all the sensuous,

16. Not by work, not by progeny, nor by wealth, but through renunciation alone one attains immortality. *Kaivalyopanishad* 2.

17. Seeking this world (of the Self) alone monks give up their homes. (The reason) for this is this: 'The ancient knowers, it is said, did not desire progeny, thinking, 'what shall we do with progeny—we who have realised this world, this Self?' Giving up the desire for sons, for wealth and for worlds, they took up a wandering mendicant's life. *Bṛihadaranyaka Upanishad* iv. 4. 22.

18. Brahman is to be known by the mind in accordance with (the instructions of a teacher). There is no diversity whatsoever in it. He who sees diversity, as it were, in It, goes from death to death. *ib.* iv. 4. 19.

19. That infinite, birthless, undecaying, indestructible, immortal and fearless Self is Brahman. Brahman is indeed fearless. He who knows (the Self) as above indeed becomes the fearless Brahman. *ib.* iv. 4. 25.

20. The Self.....should verily be realised; should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. When only the Self, my dear, is realised by being heard of, reflected on and meditated upon, all this is known. *ib.* iv. 5. 6.

21. He who realizes Brahman attains the supreme. With reference to that very fact it has been declared: 'Brahman is Existence, Intelligence, Infinitude; he who realizes Him treasured in the cave, in the highest ether, fulfils all wants together, as Brahman is Omniscient. *Taittirīya Upanishad* II. 1. 1.

22. (That) one (Supreme) Ruler, the soul of all beings, who makes His one form manifold—those wise men who perceive Him as existing in their own Self, to them belongs eternal happiness, and to none else. *Kaitha Upanishad* v. 13.

23. The Self is attained through veracity, concentration, wisdom and continence, all constantly cultivated. When impurities dwindle thus, the ascetics behold Him—stainless, respondent—within the very body. *Mundaka Upanishad* III. 1. 5.

24. Those aspirants whose natures have been purified by a life of striving and renunciation, and who are well-established in the Self that forms the sole quest of all Vedantic Studies,—they attain immortality in Brahman at the time of illumination; they are absolved on all sides. *ib.* III. 2. 6.

25. Who ever knows the supreme Brahman, becomes very Brahman. In his family none ignorant of Brahman is born. The knots of his heart being unloosed, he goes beyond sorrow and sin, and attains immortality. *ib.* III. 2-9.

26. The Infinite the great is Bliss. There is no Bliss in what is small. The Infinite alone is bliss. *Chhandogya Upanishad* VII. XXIII. 1.

social and relative cravings, by renouncing 'lust and lucre' i. e., by taking recourse to sannyāsa.

Have we not here the answer to the question, 'why Sannyāsa at all?' In short sannyāsa is for the attainment of *Jivan-mukti* and *Lokasangraha*, 'आत्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगत्-हिताय च', for the liberation of the Self and the good of the world.

We are, however, aware that there is a very large number of people who fondly cling to the illusion of the possibility of making the most of both the worlds and in effect ask: 'Is it not quite intelligent to eat the cake and yet keep it? Why could we not realize God in a gentleman's way?' To such deluded millions Swami Vivekananda's thundering reply is:

...He who has the slightest desire for worldly pleasures, even a shred of some such craving, will feel frightened at the thought of the path you are going to tread²⁷; so, to give himself some consolation he goes about preaching that impossible creed of harmonising Bhoga and Tyāga. That is all the raving of the lunatics, the frothings of the demented—idle theories contrary to the scriptures, contrary to the Vedas. No freedom without

renunciation. Highest love for God can never be achieved without renunciation. Renunciation is the word: नान्यः पन्था विद्यते अयनाय; 'There is no other way than this'. Even the Gita says: 'काम्यानां कर्मणां सन्यासं कवयो विदुः' 'The sages know Sannyāsa to be giving up of all work that has desire for its end.'

The man who has not realized his Self, however learned, is in the last analysis of things, a man of nescience. His loud preachings, however earnest can hardly help humanity in any fundamental sense. Over and above that if he is conceited against the necessity of Self-realization even, he is, to say the least, an enemy of himself and, consequently, cannot be a friend of man. It is only those who aspire to know God earnestly, and those who have already known Him that are friends of themselves and friends of men too. The name of earnestly seeking to know God is renunciation. None ever knew himself without renunciation. None ever truly served who did not renounce his selfish pursuits.

(to be concluded)

REMINISCENCES OF SRI SARADA DEVI, THE HOLY MOTHER

By SWAMI AMBANANDA

It was on Saturday the 19th September 1914, the day of the New Moon, that I had the good fortune to see Sri Sarada Devi for the first time. On the preceding afternoon Swami Nirmalananda came to the room of the Belur Math where my

brother Damodaran and myself were put up and said: 'Tomorrow is the auspicious day for paying your respects to the Holy Mother. Bathe early in the morning and do not take any breakfast. Provide yourself with some flowers and go to

the Mother with Brahmachari Govindaji. After taking your noon meals there you can go to Dakshineswar, worship and return to the Math by dusk'. Accordingly we bathed on Saturday morning, plucked some flowers, offered salutations to Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji in the shrines consecrated to them, prostrated before Swami Premanandaji and went to the Udbodhan Office with Govindaji. Before entering that abode of the Mother, Govindaji bowed with his head touching the wall downstairs even while we were on the road. We admired the graceful act of devotion and did likewise. We entered the house, prostrated before Swami Saradananda who was seated in the eastern room on the left side, talked with him for some time and then went to the room of the Manager of the Udbodhan Office. He told us, 'Sit here, please. After her puja is over you can see the Mother'. And so we did.

After 9 a.m. the Mother's puja was over. At once we were called in to see the Mother. I was the first to be conducted there. As soon as I entered her worship room, I saw the photo of Sri Ramakrishna on the cushioned seat facing the east and I prostrated. Then I bowed before the Mother who asked me to sit on her left side. She was seated facing the north. She then worshipped Sri Ramakrishna and poured the Tirtha (holy water) on my hand. I did not know that it was meant to be drunk. During the S'rāddha ceremonies (death anniversary) of my father, I used to sprinkle the holy water on my head and eyes. Similarly I did with the water given by the Mother. Then she asked me to take some water from the vessel and drink it. But the ladle made of Kusa grass could not hold much water and so even after dipping and taking out three or four times, only a very few drops of water

could be got and I had to be content with that little. Then the Mother initiated me with the name of Ramakrishna to make Japa. She showed me thrice how to perform Japa by means of the fingers of the right hand. In that way the name can be repeated ten times in one round. She also initiated me with the Mantra of the Divine Mother to make Japa. After that, she asked me for the Dakṣina (the offering to be made by the disciple to the Guru). When I took out the coin (a rupee) from the border of my cloth to offer it, a thought struck me as to how I was to place the coin in the hand of the life-mate, the spiritual partner of one who did not and could not touch any coin. So I placed the rupee near the left foot of the Mother. She at once read my mind and graciously took the coin and placed it aside, thus showing to me that she had accepted it. Then I prostrated devoutly before the Mother and thought, 'Mother, if you could graciously raise your feet, I can place them reverently on my head and become blessed'. She did so at once. I placed those holy lotus feet on my head and felt really blessed. In that prostrate state I told the Mother: 'Vouchsafe to grant me purity and devotion'. This was the prayer I had resolved to ask the Mother while I was on bed the previous night pondering on the question many a time. At once the Mother took a flower, placed it on my head and said: 'Sri Guru Maharaj (Ramakrishna) will give you what you have asked for'. I was consoled and satisfied and kept the flower safe with me and taking it little by little ate it up wholly in two or three days. The Mother asked me to make Japa (repetition of the Mantra) for some time. In an intoxicated mood of self-forgetfulness, I began to repeat the Mantra aloud. Then the Mother placed her hand on her

27. Swamiji was addressing some of his disciples when he was just going to initiate them into Sannyāsa.

lips and said 'Slowly; make Japa silently.' After doing as she had advised, I prostrated before her once again. She told me: 'Go outside and send your brother.' I did so.

After my brother had returned, we went together to the Manager's room and continued our Japa there silently. At noon, we sat for meals with Swami Saradananda and others in a room where there was a beautiful representation of the Mother. The food was served and all others began to take meals. But we two, that is, my brother and myself, wanted to take meals only after receiving the prasād of the Mother and so we sat quiet. Our wish was divined by Lakshmi Didi, the niece of Sri Ramakrishna who was serving us and she said: 'My boys, the Mother has not yet begun to take her meal. Food has been served to her. She asked us to serve you. After she has begun to take her meal, I shall bring you her prasād. You can in the mean time take your repast'. After sometime, she brought us the Mother's prasād, two balls of rice mixed with ghee and boiled green pulse. We partook of it with devotion. Late in the afternoon we took leave of the Mother and started for Dakshineswar.

Ten days after, that is, on the tenth day of the Durga Puja we bathed in the morning, went to the Udbodhan Office and requested Rash Behari Maharaj to buy some good sweetmeats and offer them to the Mother. Then we sat in the Manager's room. After the Mother's puja was over, we went and prostrated before her. At midday we took our meals there, went to Dakshineswar, worshipped there and returned to Belur Math at 6 p.m..

One evening we went to the Mother in the company of a few people. That day she did not speak to us. I felt sad and then the Mother turned to me affectionately and smiled graciously.

On the eve of our pilgrimage to Benares, I went to the Mother to take leave. Then she talked for fifteen minutes enquiring of many things. She asked among others: 'Have you gone to Benares before? Who accompanies you? How long will you be there? Will you be returning here or will you go back straight from there to your own place? Have you got sufficient funds for your journey? Otherwise I shall give you. Do not hesitate to ask of me. It is enough you return it if you can conveniently do so. Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) is there. Can you do one thing for me? You must convey my blessings to Rakhal; that will delight me. After returning to the (Belur) Math, come here without delay'. In this manner she spoke very affectionately to us. We were filled with intense joy. I forgot the loss of my mother. The Mother's cheeks reminded me of my own mother. If the affection of every mother were like that of the Holy Mother, the world would veritably be a mansion of joy.

We reached Benares and prostrated before Swami Brahmananda. I was waiting for an opportunity of doing what the Mother had bidden me. Two or three days after our arrival, I found Swami Brahmananda alone. I went near and prostrated before him and said: 'I have to tell something to your revered self. I do not know how to discharge my duty. Kindly excuse me for any impropriety.' He said: 'Enough of apologies. Tell me at once what you have to say'. I then told him of what the Mother had said. He bowed down his head in affectionate reverence, signifying that he had devoutly accepted her blessings. Then he told me, 'When you meet the Mother again, tell her that I feel blessed by receiving her blessings. Also you should

prostrate devoutly at her feet on my behalf'. By the Mother's grace that duty was thus satisfactorily discharged.

Another day I went to the Mother to get a Rudraksa garland from her. She was alone. She gave me the garland. I prayed in Malayalam: 'I wish to place this on your neck, Mother'. At once she bent down her neck and I devoutly offered it on her neck. She was about to return it to me when I again said in Malayalam, 'Let it be there for some time'. Then my brother asked her a question about the manner of Japa by means of the fingers. She retained the garland till she had finished explaining it to his satisfaction. After that she took the garland and was about to give it to me when I said: 'Kindly do a little Japa with it and then graciously give it to me'. She did Japa for some time and then gave it to me. I received it and placed it on my neck. She said, 'Take it in your hand and do some Japa by means of it.' Then I began to do Japa of the name of Sri Ramakrishna without even moving my lips. When I had done Japa repeating the name about twenty times, she said in Bengali: 'No, No, not that. Do Japa with the other Mantra'. I nodded my head to show that I had grasped what she had commanded, but I still continued the repetition of the name of Sri Ramakrishna. She however did not object. So I thought that the Mother approved of it. After the Japa of the name of Sri Ramakrishna with one round of the garland I made the Japa of the Mantra with the Bijaksara as the Mother had bidden. Afterwards, I prostrated before the Mother, who appeared gracious to me. Thus I felt that she knew everything even before one's telling her.

I could not drink the tirtha (holy water) that the Mother had poured on my

hands! I could not avail myself of that great blessing! How unfortunate! Such thoughts made me unhappy. Then by the Mother's grace I got an idea one day. I shall pray to the Mother for the holy water that has bathed her feet. If she grants my prayer, I shall be most blessed. Thus the grief of not having drunk the tirtha given by her will disappear completely and I can give the tirtha to many other devotees also. It will be a blessing both to them and myself. For that purpose I took Ganges water and filtered it most carefully so that it might be perfectly pure. I put it in a two ounce bottle. One morning I went to the Udbodhan Office and told the Manager, 'I want a clean flat-bottomed vessel. I shall tell you the reason later on'. He kindly gave me such a vessel. I took it and went to the mother accompanied by the Manager and my brother. Then I told the Manager to tell the Mother that I had a request to make. At once before even the Manager had interpreted my words she stretched her legs. I placed the vessel beneath her feet, took the bottle and poured the Ganges water reverently on her feet. I thought in my mind: 'Mother, I can do only this much'. Then she turned to me affectionately, took the tirtha in her hand, made Japa for some time and poured the sacred water on her own feet. She did so thrice and then she asked me to take the tirtha. I felt myself extremely fortunate and blessed, removed the vessel and gently wiped the feet of the Mother with a rose-coloured towel. After that I prostrated before the Mother. I felt that the Mother was graciously pleased. Later my brother informed me that she told softly to the Manager: 'Behold. How devoutly this man does everything'. That was also due to her grace. I gave a little of the tirtha to my brother to

drink and I drank a little myself. The rest of the tirtha I kept safe in a bottle. In the evening we again prostrated before the Mother and left for the Math.

The tirtha I have retained still and it has been distributed to thousands of devotees. That is one tangible grace of the Mother, I can convey to others.

After fixing the day of our departure from Calcutta to return to our house, we went to the Udbodhan Office from the Belur Math to take leave of the Mother. Among many things she asked: 'Will you not come to see me again?' I was quite unable to answer such a question. I was penniless. It was with great difficulty that I had been enabled to go over now. How can such an opportunity be repeated? After a few minutes of such reflection I folded my hands in salutation and said: 'Yes. I shall come'. I felt that the Mother had read my thoughts and was pleased with my answer.

Next day, that is, on the day of our departure to our native place we went to Calcutta in response to the invitation of uncle, a devotee who had the rare good fortune to have seen Sri Ramakrishna.

Then we had three hours of leisure. We availed ourselves of the opportunity to

pay our respects to the Mother once again and take leave of her. She was immensely pleased. We were to return to our native place soon after. But the Mother did not put to us that day the question: 'Will you not come again?'

A few years after my meeting the Mother, I thought: 'It would be good if I send a rupee and a half to Rash Behari Maharaj requesting him to buy sugar-candy for a rupee, have it offered to Sri Ramakrishna by the Mother and send a little of the Prasad to me.' But I would forget this when I got my salary which would be spent all too soon. Thus six months passed on without the realisation of my desire. On a specially holy day, when I came out after my Puja of the Mother I got two letters. From the handwriting I knew that they had been sent by Swami Vishuddhananda. I read one letter. On opening the other, I found that it was a packet on which was written: 'Holy Mother's Prasad'. It contained some pieces of sugar candy. My surprise and joy knew no bounds. It was indeed a tangible mark of the insight and power of the Mother to know and fulfil the earnest desires of her devotees. Her grace is omnipotent.

If we strove like valiant men to stand in the battle, verily we should see the Lord of heaven assisting us, For He is ready to help them that fight, trusting in His grace, who Himself provideth us occasions to fight, in order that we may overcome.

If we place our religious progress in outward observances only, our devotion will soon come to an end. But let us lay the axe to the root, that being purged of passions, we may possess our minds in peace.

If every year we rooted out one fault, we should soon become perfect men.

But how often we feel on the contrary, that we may find ourselves to have been better and more pure in the beginning of our conversion, than after many years of our profession.

Our fervour and progress ought to increase daily; but now it is esteemed a great thing if any one can retain something of his first fervour.

If we would do ourselves a little violence in the beginning afterwards we should be able to do all things with ease and joy.

It is hard to give up what we are accustomed to, but harder to go contrary to our own will.

But if thou overcome not little and easy things, how wilt thou surmount greater difficulties?

Resist, thine inclinations in the beginning and break off evil habits, lest, by little and little, the difficulty increase upon thee.

Oh, if thou dost consider what peace thou wouldst procure for thyself, and what joy for others, by well-doing, I think thou wouldst be more solicitous for thy spiritual progress.

from *The Imitation of Christ*

RELIGION AND EDUCATION IN A MODERN SECULAR DEMOCRACY

By FLOYD H. ROSS

What ought to be the relationship between religion and education in a modern secular democracy?

What relationship shall religious institutions have to the publicly supported schools?

Indian educators and citizens must decide these questions in the near future. It is possible that religion in India is not as sectarian-minded as religion in the United States. However, India has devotees of almost every religious faith in the world. While most of these are noted for their high degree of mutual toleration, some of these religious groups are not noted for their ability to live in the present. Others are inclined to substitute *indoctrination* for *education*. That is, they do not seek to teach children and young people how to explore the truth for themselves; instead they seek to 'impart' the truth to children as water is poured through a funnel into a bottle.

A secular democracy has no occasion for being unfriendly to truly religious values. But there are many reasons why it must be highly critical of what too often passes for 'religious education' or education in religious values. It was not without good reason that the framers of the American constitution agreed upon a legal separation of church and state. They were not trying to divorce the state from all religion (though some persons since have been inclined to interpret the separation of church and state in that manner). The framers of the American constitution were well acquainted with ecclesiastical control over education and with a system where the government was

a partner in the teaching or upholding of religion. Some of them had followed this tradition in the American colonies earlier; they had known it back in England. *They rejected it emphatically on the basis of that experience*, not on the basis of personal irreligion—for most of them were deeply religious.

One major criticism of ecclesiastical control of education in the public schools is that such control tends to be less than religious in any *value* sense of the term. Almost inevitably it ends up in sectarian indoctrination and a not-so-subtle coerciveness in the interest of gaining more followers. This is not true religion but something else posing as religion. In the United States there is such radical disagreement among the citizenry as to which *variety* of Christian religion shall be taught that the worst features of sectarianism are aggravated. The Christian religion means one thing to a 'Fundamentalist' who teaches that any person who does not believe in certain dogmas about Jesus or Christ will certainly go to Hell. A 'Liberal' Christian who has, after reflection, rejected all of the so-called 'Fundamentals' because he feels they are not fundamental to the religious life, is just as concerned that his children shall *not* be taught that the majority of mankind will be sent to Hell because of differing beliefs. Indeed, there are millions of Americans who question whether concern over any of the traditional dogmas of religion has anything specifically *religious* about it.

Of recent years, religious groups have brought pressure to bear upon state

legislatures to require Bible-reading in the schools, or the recitation of the 'Lord's Prayer.' Some states have passed such laws, usually with the stipulation that the teacher shall not make any interpretation of the passage read. These passages are commonly required to be taken from the Old Testament, lest the Jewish members of the class be offended. However, in most cases legislatures have not decreed *which* translation of the Bible shall be used. This has made for further dissension, for many Americans have warmly-held convictions about the inerrancy of their favourite translation of the Bible; other translations are commonly repudiated, some having been publicly burned at mass meetings sponsored by religious groups. (Protestants and Catholics do not agree on which Bible is to be used.)

Most legislators passed such bills without discussing whether the mere reading of traditional religious books has any significant educational value, especially for children of elementary school-age and when done without any effort to interpret to the age level concerned. They were simply trying to satisfy the pressure groups and avoid facing the deeper implications of the problem.

In view of the difficulties associated with the above plan, an increasing number of states have been experimenting with 'released time programs'. A certain time each week is set aside by state law for religious instruction *on school time* but outside school buildings, for those pupils who desire it. Often buses at public expense are provided for taking these children to the church of their choice for formal instruction. The details are usually handled (for the Protestants) by the local 'Church Federation' and by the Roman Catholic diocesan office, or Jewish synagogue. The teachers are chosen

by the churches, and because of the wide range from 'Fundamentalist' to 'Liberal', many such groups are set up.

The children whose parents do not want them to participate in such 'released time' religious instruction are permitted to remain on the public school premises. However, most states specify the numbers of minutes per week to be spent on required studies (English, reading, social studies, and others), so that in the absence of any of the pupils who go to the 'released time' classes, none of the basic studies can be taught to the remaining students. There is an additional drawback. It has been found in practice where the majority of the class elects, under parental pressure, to participate in the 'released time' program, the children whose parents do not want them to participate are placed in an unhappy predicament: for purely social reasons they want to 'go with the group', but they are restrained by parental desires.

The question with which this article began can now be restated more bluntly: Is it the business of the state, through the tax-supported schools, to engage in any way in *direct* religious instruction? Is it practical to do it, and is it desirable to try to do it? If the alternative, as some defenders of the teaching of religion in the public schools imply, is 'between required religion and no religion at all', the answer was well stated by Principal Jowett several years ago: 'My mind is not of sufficient subtlety to distinguish between the two.'

A more fundamental philosophical question must also be raised by honest parents, teachers, and educators. If profound religion arises out of a deep need of the organism for unity of purpose or integration, can *any* organization afford to try to *impose* it on any of its members? A modern state may well advise its

citizens, as parents, to look to the religious atmosphere of the home and community, but it would be much wiser to refrain from trying to impose any definite pattern called 'religious instruction'. The life of the spirit at its best eludes all forms, moulds, or systems—including 'religious' systems.

In addition, a careful look at the history of religions would show that the ecclesiastical mind tends to be as uninspired in its techniques and methods as the non-ecclesiastical mind. Authoritarianism is bad in any form; it is at its worst when religiously blessed. Modern educators know this from past experience. Any hint of inquisitorial method in the religious set-up contradicts the very essence of true religious education which stands for the integrity of each person or soul. Unfortunately religious institutions tend to become just as interested in statistics—the number gained—as a tooth-paste manufacturer is interested in the number of tubes sold.

Those who are in favour of part of public education being placed under ecclesiastical control, or sectarian teachers, often point to the unhappy condition of modern Western society, claiming that this is traceable to the lack of direct religious instruction. This is a debatable issue. However, scholars who have studied the 'middle ages' carefully have pointed out that those years were not so much the 'age of faith' as the 'age of credulity and superstition'; the *quality* of the faith of the average European of that period was nothing to be proud of. Modern man needs to remember that 'the golden ages of the past' are frequently golden only because of his own un-lived life, measured in part by his nostalgia for his own childhood. Every person must learn to see himself and his social problems in perspective: just as the past was never

truly a 'golden age', neither is the present exclusively an 'evil age'. Sufficient unto each generation are the problems thereof. No generation is asked to find all the answers, but it has to learn how to face the perennial questions.

What values matter most in a living democracy? Modern man must explore the values in the democratic mode of life, neither obsessed by an over-idealized past nor hag-ridden by the future. A person comes to self-realization only in the present. This means learning from the past without being burdened by the past or making a fetish of it. Gandhi illustrated this principle in his total life-pattern. He was a Hindu to the core and at the same time a revolutionary force within Hinduism, seeking to free it from intellectual and social *rigor mortis*.

In a modern democracy *group* integrity must transcend either joint-family loyalties or caste ties. Without individual integrity, democracy subsides into nepotism, favour-seeking, and oligarchy. In a democracy, citizens must learn to look every would-be authoritarian in the face, whether the budding tyrant be priest, king, or demagogic leader appealing to mass prejudices.

Group integrity includes individual integrity and builds upon it. Indians must learn how to participate in the 'group process'. That is, they must engage in round table discussions—at the village level—on all questions pertaining to personal and social growth. Teachers or interested parents can take steps to start such discussions in the village centers. No long speeches should be permitted, but two or three *brief* presentations by concerned persons should be made the basis for thorough discussion. The average Indian must learn how to become articulate about the problems of village life and education. Little can be accomplish-

shed from the 'top down' so long as villagers are apathetic.

The question of the place of religion in democratic education must be discussed in this kind of setting, the country over. How many of the so-called traditional religious values are *truly* religious? Is religion a bundle of special beliefs, disciplines, or practices added on to ordinary life? Or is ordinary life the truly religious life when it is lived in a rich quality of togetherness, mutual respect, honest truth-seeking? All disciplines—'religious' or otherwise—need to be evaluated in the light of the contribution they make to a person's capacity to serve God in his fellowmen with joy.

Government can legislate minimum

standards in education; by intelligent legislation government can also remove many of the obstacles that tradition-obsessed groups may tend to keep in the path of social democracy's advance. But only enlightened citizens in the villages and cities of India can see to it that education in India becomes truly effective, combining the disciplines of hand and head and heart.

Money will be required for an effective educational plant. But more important than money now is a new spirit in the toiling millions of India. For out of that renaissance of the spirit sound education can be built. Without it, expenditure of any sum of money will be fruitless.

JESUS CHRIST THROUGH INDIAN EYES

By M. HAFIZ SYED

Christianity, one of the greatest religions of the Semitic stock, claims to be the sole custodian of Truth. It takes its Supreme teacher, to be the only begotten son of God. The rest of the world, unless it acknowledges Christ as its saviour, is doomed to perdition. To speak of Christianity side by side with other religions in the same breath is considered, in certain quarters, as nothing short of sacrilege. Hinduism, as misunderstood these days, is looked down upon as a pagan faith with no solid foundation and with idolatry as its basic principle. This surely, is the verdict of unenlightened people who have never cared to study the tenets of any faith comparatively.

Those who have taken the trouble of studying and understanding both these religions, Hinduism and Christianity sympathetically and impartially, have come to the conclusion that both aim at purifying the human heart and ultimately leading man to the source of his being. Those who have some insight into the mysteries of religious life have come to believe that higher Hinduism, minus all its accretions and latter-day interpolations, is a universal religion that appeals to all shades of opinion and provides spiritual food for all types of men.

The more it is studied, the more does it illuminate the intellect and satisfy the heart.

A critical study of Christian theology reveals some teachings which need satisfactory explanation. Others present insuperable difficulties in fully grasping their underlying meaning and true significance. Let us take some of them one by one and see what light ancient Hinduism throws on some of the gaps that one finds in them and on the mysteries that underlie them:—

(1) The doctrine of original sin cannot be reconciled with the divine nature of man accepted and believed by almost all the religions of the Aryan stock. In the Christian scriptures it is said that man was made after the image of God. How are these two seemingly contradictory teachings to be reconciled?

Man in general, humanity as a whole, is born in sin, in sinful surroundings, with sinful desires. In other words, according to the teachings of higher Hinduism, the spirit (Jivatma) descends into the material forms and completely identifies itself with earthly vehicles. This descent into matter is called *Pravritti-mārga*, or the path of forth-going. The characteristic of this period of man's life is sensual enjoyment, reckless plunging into all kinds of pleasure, an undesirable kind of life in short. Till such time as he is tired out and finally satiated with earthly enjoyments he is under the full dominance of his passional nature and of wrong-doing. In a word, he leads a sinful life, in so far as he does not act in accordance with a moral standard and in harmony with Divine Law. He totally forgets sometimes his higher self and disregards moral sanctions.

But, these vicious tendencies in him do not last for ever. There comes a time when he is awakened to a higher sense of values. From that moment onward he begins to turn spirit-ward; his evil ways are dropped one by one and he begins to

tread what is called the path of return. This view of life explains the meaning of original sin. There is a deeper meaning also underlying this doctrine. In the words of Ramana Maharshi:

The sin is said to be in man; but there is no manhood in sleep, manhood comes on waking, along with the thought, 'I am this body'; thought is the real original sin; it must be removed by the death of the ego; after which this thought will not arise.

Further he explained the truth of Christian teaching in these convincing words:

The body is the cross; the ego is Jesus, the son of man; when he is crucified, he is resurrected as the 'son of God', which is the glorious real Self. One should lose the ego in order to live in the true sense of the word.

(2) 'The kingdom of Heaven is within you'. The word heaven stands for other-worldliness, peace, harmony and wisdom. These are not to be found in outer teachings of life. The ancient Indian sages have taught us in unequivocal words that there is no happiness for a man outside his own higher Self, the nature of which is bliss, *ānanda*, and that this reality dwells in the heart which is the seat of the Divine Self.

Christ believed with whole-hearted conviction in what he called the kingdom of God, and he meant by this something inward, spiritual, natural and eternal, something diametrically opposite to that messianic Kingdom to the advent of which his contemporaries looked forward—a kingdom which was conceived of as outward, visible and temporal.

According to Indian thought, the Kingdom of God is already in our midst; and all that men need to do in order to hasten its advent is to realise its presence. The kingdom of God is, in the first place, the kingdom of soul-life, the kingdom of the realised presence of God in the soul of man. It has no limits, either temporal

or spatial. It is here, if anywhere. It is now, if it will ever be. We do not wait for its advent. It is in the midst of us. When we pray, as Christ taught us to pray, that it may 'come', we are praying that we may realize each of himself, its hidden presence.

Further, Indian sages have taught us that the kingdom of God is the kingdom of intrinsic reality. The final measure of reality belongs to it, and to it alone. By reference to its hidden treasure all other ends, all other joys, are as shadows and dreams. When a man has found this pearl of great price, he will sell all that he has in order that he may acquire that inward prize.

The kingdom of God is attained by the age-long method of Soul-growth. The law of growth is the master law of Nature's being, and therefore the master law of human life: To realize the divine potencies of one's nature, to become the God that one really is (though now in the germ), to earn the right to say, 'I and my father are one.'

It may be added that the kingdom is open to all men. The least and lowliest of us is a ray of the divine light. The chosen people is not Israel but Humanity. God is their All-Father, 'the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' In the illimitable inward kingdom, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bound nor free; for God 'is all and in all.' Do we not know that most of the sages and saints of India have proclaimed in no uncertain language that God is the ideal Self of man because He is the ideal end? It follows from these premises that the duty of man is to find his higher Self; to grow towards the spiritual perfection of which his nature is capable.

(3) The Self in a sense is All in All. It is spoken of in the Upanishads as the Totality, of which the worlds and the creatures

are fractions, though in absolute truth it has no fractions. Thus to gain the Self is to gain the All. The sacred lore of the Hindus tell us:

'That which is infinite is happiness; in the finite there is no happiness.'

We are taught that the Self alone is great; all else is infinitesimally small. This view of spiritual values makes the famous enigmatical saying of Jesus Christ as clear as day light.

'What doth it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'

For a very small price the surrender of the ego—this infinitely great Self is to be had. But this small price has to be paid.

(4) Another precept of Jesus which remains as a 'hard saying' to his followers:

'Be ye therefore perfect even as your father who is in heaven is perfect.'

The ordinary Christian, full of ordinary frailties and weaknesses, asks how he can become perfect as God is perfect. Seeing the impossibility of the achievement set before him, he quietly puts it aside, and thinks no more about it. But seeing it as the crowning effort of many lives of steady improvement it comes within calculable distance of our achievement and these precious words yield meaning beyond our limited vision and hope. This view of gradual development and unfoldment is not generally accepted by the Christian divines.

Light, once again comes from the Indian sages who point this path of final perfection in clear and unmistakable language. They rightly believe in the gradual evolution of man's mental and moral faculties. The highest aim of a Hindu neophyte is to become perfect in due course of time by gaining experience in every walk of life, through sorrow, suffering and moral struggle which finally lead him on to the goal of perfection. Christ's words seem to be more in keeping with the age-old

teaching of the ancient Rishis than with the interpretation of the Christian divines.

(5) 'Love thy neighbour as thyself; love those who hate you; bless those who curse you.'

The question that at once arises is why one should love one's neighbour as one's own self when the neighbour refuses to recognise his oneness with oneself. The Indian sages have taught us that the higher Self of man is an indivisible unity. This common life is shared by all, good or bad, rich or poor, high or low, saint or sinner. Therefore an injury done to my neighbour is an injury done to me. There is no other self than my own self. Hence this consistent and logical injunction to love others as one should love one's own self. Further, to meet life with unwavering trust is to take for granted that light, not darkness, is the heart of nature; and to believe in that light is to love it and to love it is to love all things for its sake. In the Christ-like life there is, in the last resort, but one motive for action, love.

Sweeping aside as frivolous and inquisitorial the ever-increasing multitude of rules which complicated the life and burdened the conscience of the zealous Jew, Christ gave instead two cardinal commandments which are essentially one:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

In these words the doom of the old dispensation is pronounced, and the gates of the kingdom of Heaven—the kingdom of freedom and love—are thrown open to all. The only way in which we can interpret our realization of unity in the world of the relative is through love for all creatures; just as any kind of hurtful action is a denial of the Reality in which all are one, so are self-sacrifice, love for all that lives and service of our fellow-men the expressions in the world of relativity

of that Supreme Reality which can never be fully expressed here, the utter unity of all that is.

(6) The Holy Trinity. One of the basic doctrines of Christianity is belief in the Divine Triad. To a non-Christian it may appear confusing but its underlying meaning is clear. According to ancient Hindu thought the manifested God, the One, appears as three. Among the Hindus the philosophers speak of the manifested Brahman as *Sat, Chit, Ananda*, Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. Popularly God is a Trinity: Brahma the Creator of the Universe; Vishnu, the Preserver; Siva, the End.

(7) Now let us take three famous verses from the Sermon on the Mount:

'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.'

To whom does this apply? Can an average man act up to this high ideal? Obviously it is the teaching for a man becoming perfect, but for the man of the world it is impracticable. Christianity has not made this distinction; but it actually practises the distinction although it does not realize it theoretically. The effect of recognising a thing that we do not practise is to demoralise us and not to raise us. If we pretend that it is our theory of life that, when a thing is stolen from us, we give the thief something more, then if we do not practise it, we are surely hypocrites and hypocrisy is one of the worst vices.

True practice and theory make life in all parts sacred not secular. On Sunday the Christian goes to Church and admires the Sermon on the Mount. On Monday he goes to his office and orders the prosecution of his cheating neighbour. The one life is sacred; the other is secular, profane. Hinduism permeates the whole

life with religion and there is no part of the life of the Hindu which cannot form part of his faith. From the explanation we are led to believe that this teaching, lofty as it is, cannot possibly be followed by the ordinary run of humanity. That is why it is disregarded as something visionary and beyond the moral capacities of an average man. When it is viewed in the light of ancient Hindu teaching its infeasibility loses its force and it appears to be sound and sensible in its underlying significance.

The ancient Hindus have never believed in absolute morality. The relativity of the Hindu ideal of dharma is acknowledged by the contending schools of Indian

philosophy. The Hindus do not look upon all mankind as on the same level of thought and morality. There are different gradations of men. Therefore the moral or spiritual laws guiding man's destiny must necessarily be different at different stages. What is right for a babe cannot be right for a boy. Similarly what is right for an undeveloped soul cannot be right for a morally awakened man.

This teaching is meant for an advanced soul who has no interest in earthly joys and has renounced them joyfully as he has found something higher and more valuable than what he had. Such beings are called *Sannyasins*.

SRI SARADAMANI DEVI THE CREST-JEWEL OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD

By P. SANKARANARAYANAN

Sri Saradamani Devi, adoringly referred to by thousands of disciples and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna Mission as the Holy Mother, was born in Jayarambati, a small village in West Bengal on the 22nd of December, 1853, just a hundred years ago. Her birth and life in this holy land of ours is of more than ordinary significance. Intended by her parents to be the wife of Gadadhar in the ordinary acceptance of that relationship, she grew to be the first disciple of the Master and survived him to be the solicitous mother of those whom he left behind and the teacher of countless men and women who came to her for instruction and initiation. She invested the concept of wife with a new meaning and raised it to a pedestal of unheard-of sublimity. Her physical frame became to Sri Ramakrishna the

icon which received the impress of the Mother of the Universe and was sanctified by his worship. In very truth, she was the *saha-dharma charini* of her husband, fellow traveller in the journey of his soul, dedicating herself to his service, doing everything to help and nothing to hinder Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual quest. She was the crest-jewel of Hindu womanhood, at once its glory and its consummation.

A divine dialectic has dichotomised life into the male and female, each opposing the other in a complementary way for the synthesis of a higher fulfilment. To the Hindu, this duality in the human level is neither accidental in origin nor capricious in its course. A pre-ordination of ante-natal factors other than the mere biological determines the advent of men and women in this vale of soul-making

and vests with them a mission to accomplish during their sojourn on earth. Birth is not an accident, but an occasion that ushers in an opportunity for spiritual perfection. Whereas in the subhuman realm the union of the male and the female is to preserve the species and perpetuate the race, among men and women this union has a higher purpose. Marriage for the Hindu is a marriage of souls rather than of bodies. In the pilgrimage of the soul as in the journey of life, man and woman need each other. The marriage ritual sets the seal on a spiritual compact. The great *Avatars* of our land, the galaxy of personages whom we revere and worship have held aloft this supreme ideal of wedded life. And, between these, man and woman, the woman has ever played a heroic role. She has always functioned as both the lever and fulcrum of man's spiritual advance and, yet, by a curious mechanics, raised herself in the process. The Hindu scheme did not intend that a woman should remain unmarried for ever. A wise realisation of the predicament of her nature obliged the male as father, as husband and as son to protect her in different stages of her life, thus releasing her from the cares and anxieties of her own physical sustenance and also gave her the duty and the privilege to stand by her wedded mate, to participate with him in the pursuit of dharma and realise the highest in his company and under his guidance. The great women of our country from time out of memory have embodied this ideal in their persons. Living as exemplary wives maintaining an immaculate purity, they came to be worshipped as holy mothers.

The story of Sri Saradamani's life illustrates in a super-abundant manner this ideal of Hindu womanhood. In fact, she has raised it to a pinnacle of excellence,

unequalled in the past and unapproachable in the future. The celebrated women of our *puranas* and *itihasas* have indeed been of heroic mould. As partners in life's duties, as ministering angels, as sharers in the trials and travails of their husbands they are entitled to our respect and veneration. But to few among them was given to rise beyond a consciousness of their wifely or womanly nature and glide into the super-conscious in which sex and function disappear in the felicitous experience of the Divine. To none of them was given to vindicate in her life the Upanisadic text, न पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियोभवति, आत्मनः कामाय पतिः प्रियोभवति, that the husband is dear not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of the Atman. No woman of recorded history surrendered herself to her lord so willingly and completely and consented to be the laboratory of his spiritual practices as the Holy Mother did. And what is more, so unique was the experimenter and so responsive was the apparatus that it soon throbbed with the experiment itself and it was quickly transported into the realisation of the same supreme bliss which the experimenter himself achieved by it. Few prophets of old had such understanding wives as Sri Ramakrishna had in Sri Saradamani, who continued the Master's mission after his physical passing away. In these and other respects, the Holy Mother is pre-eminent among the adorable women of our land.

The fact that when his parents were casting about to find a partner for young Gadadhar to reclaim him from his 'malady of other-worldliness,' he himself told them, 'vain is your search in this place and that; go to Jayarambati and there, in the house of Ramachandra Mukherji, you will find her who is marked out for me,' indicates that like Rama and Sita of yore, these great souls had com-

pacted between themselves to come down to earth and take on a bodily vestment for an agreed purpose. That purpose was twofold: one to exemplify the realisation of Divinity as the Universal Mother and the other to proclaim the universal harmony of religions. In the person of his wife whom on an occasion he worshipped as the Divine Mother Herself, Sri Ramakrishna experienced the fulfilment of the first of these twin purposes. One may not be beside the mark, if one believes that the Divine Mother incarnated as Sri Saradamani to train him to see Herself in all things and all beings. To see God in everything and to see God as everything, that can be done only by superior mortals bordering on immortality. By effort and training, it may be possible for determined souls to see God in stocks and stones, to perceive the Deity even in dust. Sri Ramakrishna's sadhana, however, took him far beyond this stage. It is not easy for even the best of mortals to forget the wife in the woman of his marriage and to steel himself to see her as the mother of his adoration. This is a rare spiritual phenomenon which was given to Sri Ramakrishna alone to bring about for himself. He saw the Divine Mother in everything because he first saw Her in the person of his own wife. But more marvellous than his unconsciousness of the wife or the mere woman in the physical tabernacle that he worshipped was the very natural and spontaneous way in which the Holy Mother became infused with the Divinity that the Master saw and worshipped in her being. Not every youthful wife sharing the same bed with her husband can put to him the straight question: 'How do you look on me?' and receive with understanding equanimity the prompt reply: 'The Mother who is the Deity in the temple, the mother who gave birth to me and resides in the Nahabat—even she is now

massaging my feet. I look on you in that light—as the embodiment of Motherhood.' The biographer of the Holy Mother says with reference to this reply:

'These are indeed puzzling words for the sense-bound mind of man, but they were only a commonplace in the mouth of Sri Ramakrishna, the true worshipper of the Universal Mother'.

The remarkable thing is not that they were 'commonplace in the mouth of Sri Ramakrishna', but that they were commonplace to the ears of Sri Saradamani, a girl in her teens who had yet to enter into her spiritual education from her husband.

Eve is known, the world over, to be the temptress. Fact and fiction are replete with tales of the allurements which woman exercises over man. The 'fall of man' was brought about, so the story goes, by a woman. Most of the religious prophets have either kept themselves unmarried or if they married, they have given up their wives for fear that they might retard their spiritual progress. Jesus did not marry. Buddha fled away from his wife. Sannyasa was considered a *sine qua non* of spirituality. Not so for Sri Ramakrishna. His married state was no bar or hindrance to his spiritual Sadhanas; for he had an extraordinary wife who, when he once jocularly asked her, 'Do you want to drag me to Maya?' promptly replied: 'Why should I do that? I have come only to help you in the path of religious life.' As the biographer of the Holy Mother so pointedly observes:

'Often there is a tendency to attribute this unique feature of their married life entirely to the saintly character of Sri Ramakrishna. But it is forgotten that at least an equal share of the credit for this is due to the Holy Mother. For such an ideal could be translated into life only because she was his match in point of purity, and co-operated with him whole-heartedly in the fulfilment of the ideal. For this, we have the testimony of Sri Ramakrishna himself. "Had she not been so pure", he said to his disciples, "who knows whether I might not have lost my self-control from her inducements?"'

But how can the Holy Mother ever practise 'indulgences' on her husband? She came to fulfil the Master's mission, not to hamper it or destroy it. At the time that he commenced his austerities he prayed to the Divine Mother, 'O Mother, remove even the least taint of carnality from the mind of my wife' and he said later that when he lived with her, he understood that the Mother had really granted his prayer.

One may marvel at this kind of conjugal relationship that existed between the Great Master and the Holy Mother. But it is natural to a true Hindu steeped in his traditional culture who believes in the sublimation of all desires and giving them a Godward direction. Truly has the poet said that 'the expense of spirit in a waste of shame is lust in action.' But the conversion of *viśaya-kāma* to *Bhagavat-kāma* makes for a spiritual alchemy which transforms degrading lust into noble love and brings about an attunement of souls for a heavenly purpose. Especially is this so in the case of Sri Ramakrishna and his holy consort as even from their early years, like Sukadeva, Dhruva and Prahlada, they remained utter strangers to the promptings of sex. The thought of *Kāminī* and the touch of *Kāñchana* never tainted Sri Ramakrishna's mind or body and the Holy Mother too was equally uncompromising in giving no quarter to these instruments which will corrupt the mind and corrode the spirit. And yet, were these holy pair wanting in conjugal felicity? The Master loved her with a passionate ardour equalled only by her regard and reverence for him. The devoted service that she rendered to him every day with meticulous care for his personal wants unmindful of her difficulties was an object lesson of wifely duty. Thus Sri Saradamani was promoted by her husband from the status of a girl-wife

to that of an apt disciple and was ultimately enthroned in the citadel of his heart as the Mother of the Universe. When he worshipped her as the Mother, she lost all consciousness of the worshipper or his worship and lost touch with the external world and with her physical self and got absorbed in the Supreme Mother who permeated her through and through. Sri Ramakrishna once worshipped himself as the Divine Mother proclaiming by this act that the Mother whom he adored in the temple at Dakshineswar, She whom he worshipped in the person of his wife and the Mother who took Her abode in his own being when he worshipped himself were all one and the same Divinity diversely manifested. This is a proof positive that the Master wished his disciples to realise that he and his consort had one soul between them and that even after his physical passing away, the Holy Mother would preserve his presence in her being and continue his mission on earth.

And so indeed she did. Surviving him for full thirty five years, she took upon herself to provide solace and spiritual sustenance to the children of the Master and attended to them with motherly solicitude. Many were the devotees who sought her holy feet and listened to her words of wisdom which poured from her lips so gently and so affectionately. Till she attained mahasamadhi, she always felt the truth of the assurance of the Master that he was always alive in her and had not parted from her. She carried his message far and wide in the course of her pilgrimage and sanctified the ground that she trod on. Madras had the good fortune of being one of the places that she visited and some of us of the older generation retain vivid memories of the venerable person of the Holy Mother, her artless demeanour and gracious look which we

treasure as priceless experiences salvaging us into spirituality. On this occasion of the Centenary of the Holy Mother's birth,

let us tender to her our reverential adoration and pray that her grace and benediction be upon us more and ever more.

DIVINE LOVE ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

By ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

The young and the old, the secular and the religious, the ancient and the modern speak about love. Love lyrics and love romance are continuously displayed before the youth in many ways, notably through film, radio, television, journalism and literature. Art and Religion are often made subservient to decipher the hieroglyphics of love. Not only in Hollywood, but everywhere cinematographic industry thrives through parading to the youth the most sensational and breath-taking forms of love-stories. Young and old, poor and the rich join queues and waste their time, energy and money in seeing even the shabbiest pornographic representations of love-romance stories. Thrills and excitements they get and the world thinks that that is love.

But all that glitters is not gold. Appearance is not reality. Semblance is not the substance of things. 'Love and lust are deadly enemies', wrote Shakespeare. What is usually depicted as love on the screens and stages is at best nothing more than worldly love, sense-love, sex-love and nothing else. The sort of love described in modern detective story books, novels and film stories has no other purpose but to excite your senses, inflame sexual instincts, feed passions and emotions through an appeal to the lower and lesser side of human nature. Bodily

pleasures, sense-enjoyments and sexual intoxication are represented as the *summum bonum* of life; and the inexperienced, pleasure-hunting and easy-going youths are caught in the net of worldliness. What is the price they have to pay? Very much indeed! They have to sell their mental, spiritual and mystical faculties and mortgage their entire soul in order to be enticed and drowned in the varied forms of lust and sense-sex-love which is being so much advertised and commercialised in this Machine Age.

But when we turn our eyes from the senseless orgy of sensational and thrilling romanticism of modern commercial films and novels and stand face to face with the teachings of the Upanishads, the Tripitakas, the Bible, the Masnavi and other religious and philosophic literature, face to face with the master-minds of the mystic philosophy of Love, souls like Kabir, Tulsi Das, Jallaludin Rumi, Francis of Assissi, John of the Cross, St. Augustine, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and others, we become freed of the sophistry and dazzling entwining grip of the pseudo-love of the worldly romanticists and get a glimpse of the sort of Love which we are all capable of evolving and developing, if only we know our own selves through *ātma-jñāna*, discipline the wild and unruly instincts in us, and canalise

all energies and powers, transmuting and sublimating the lower vital and psychic forces into the higher forms of life and love.

Man, according to the Biblical teaching is 'created unto the image of God'. Man, according to the Vedanta, is one and identical with the Supreme Reality, the Divine Ground of the entire universe. 'That Thou art'—*Tattvamasi*—'I and my Father are one' and such axiomatic teachings have their parallels in other religions, in the teachings of the mystic saints who were not merely theoreticians or speculative theologians, but who strained every nerve to realize God, Love, Truth in their lives. It is from the embodiments of such truths that we can learn more about religion of Love and Truth than from books. 'Scriptures are theories, but he (referring to Sri Ramakrishna) was realization', said Swami Vivekananda.

One such 'realization' of Divine Love was of St. John of the Cross, the Spanish Carmelite mystic (1542—1591), whose teachings on spiritual truths are studied, appreciated and followed by many even outside the Catholic Church and Christendom. This is because spiritual truths have no national, racial or communal frontiers. They are as wide and spacious as the star-lit skies up above, and these spiritual truths enlighten any seeker and earnest soul, irrespective of caste, creed, sex or nationality, even as the sun and moon emit their radiant rays and refreshing beams on all equally.

St. John of the Cross, like Francis of Assissi, belongs to the devotional school, the *bhakti-mārga*, of the Catholic Church. From the available biographical records it is clear that even as a boy in early teens, John was sentimentally, emotionally, spiritually and mentally devoted to the crucified Lord. He understood the significance of the Cross, the symbol

of self-sacrifice, suffering and self-immolation for the sake of Love. 'None has greater love than he who gives up his own life for his friend', said Jesus, the crucified Love. Hence it is that John, while entering the monastic order of the Carmelites, assumed the name of John of the Cross. *Tyāga* or sacrifice, is supremely symbolised in the sign of the Cross, on which Jesus suffered and gave up his life for the example, inspiration, strength and salvation for others.

In the life and writings of St. John of the Cross one gets a glimpse into the nature of Divine Love, clothed and explained in the most intimate expressions of human love. Metaphors, similes and rhapsody that are found in the highest human romance, of the love between a man and a woman, are used by St. John of the Cross to describe his experiences of Divine Love, of the conscious communion of the soul with the Over-Soul, of the *Ātman* with the *Paramātmān*. Not even Plato's Phaedrus—wherein one finds the theory and exposition of what is known as Platonic Love—ascends to such supernal heights as does St. John of the Cross in his 'Ascent of Mount Carmel,' 'Song of the Soul' and the 'Bridegroom' and other esoteric writings. Even such a sublime philosopher like Plato had at his disposal only the armoury of Reason, whereas a mystic saint like John of the Cross had the intuitive and experiential faith besides, a doctrine that emanated from the study, contemplation and realization of the life, teachings and the supreme sacrifice and immolation of Jesus on the Cross. It is like the difference that exists between Sankara, the non-Dualistic Philosopher and Kabir, Mira Bai or Tulsi the mystic saints and singers of Love Divine.

Love, true and divine, according to St. John of the Cross, is not the white heat of the sense-sex-life, nor is it any attach-

ment to one's own sweet self. True love excludes even the most subtle and refined form of self-love. Self is not only forgotten; it is left behind and—in higher stages of the union of soul with God, the *Ātman* with *Paramātman*—even completely obliterated, crucified, annihilated. But true Love dawns only after the soul of man has been purified of all sensual, sexual, intellectual and mental dross and has come to abide in its own form, the introspective self-realized consciousness which is all Light and Love. The price one has to pay, complete abandonment of all earthly joys and enjoyments, attachments and allurements, if one really, seriously and sincerely wants to taste what real Love means, to climb the pinnacles of *Bhakti Yoga* which many a mystic and saint in various religions trod.

Worldly love inflates our passions, agitates and exhausts our senses, our hearts and minds, causing the whirlwind of emotion-tangles. But love divine is not the white heat that excites our senses and sex-urge, but is the cool refreshing light that calms us down, that enables us to see with eyes closed, enables us to expand unto the infinity of God. Says John of the Cross:

'That light guided me
More surely than the noonday sun
To the place where He was waiting for me,
Whom I knew well,
And where none appeared.

'I scattered His hair in the breeze
That blew from the turret,
He struck me on the neck
With His gentle hand,
And all sensation left me.

'I continued in oblivion lost,
My head was resting on my love;
Lost to all things and my self,
And, amid the lilies forgotten,
Threw all my cares away.'

In Love Divine all sensationalism is left behind, all self and selfishness gone, the individualised soul, monad, being lost

in the infinite Reality, realised as Love, as the gnostic or the Jñāna Yogi realizes the same as Truth. The Upaniṣads have described the same phenomenon in the same homely and intimate human simile when the comparison is made between the lover and the beloved. As a man, while embraced by his beautiful sweetheart, loses the consciousness of 'I' and 'thou', the outer and inside distinctions and becomes merged into but one consciousness, transcending his ego and self, so the *Ātman*, the soul, when embraced by self-subsistent Beauty, God, Over-Soul, *Paramātman*, loses all consciousness of 'I' and 'thou' and becomes merged into the infinite consciousness of God.

Sri Gauranga, in one of his Kirtans has said:

'Love, love has made me forget and lose my self and grow into His Self'.

This experience of losing one's self, dying to one's self and re-discovering it in the real Self, *Ātman*, God, is not the unique experience of Chaitanya Deva alone; it is most common in the *Bhakti* School of both Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Herein Vaishnavism, Sufism and Catholic Mysticism basically agree. St. John of the Cross teaches that man is born in divine Love only when the last trace of self-love and sense-sex-thirst are annihilated. It is literally a death of the ego and self, with everything that is egoistic and selfish, and a new resurrection in the life and light of God, manifesting Himself, unfolding Himself as LOVE. Says John of the Cross:

'O Sweet burn! O delicious wound!
O Tender hand! O gentle touch!
Savouring of everlasting life,
And paying the whole debt,
By slaying Thou hast changed death into life.'

Although self-sacrifice, crucifixion of every form of selfishness, sensuality and sexuality is the prerequisite for the new

blossomed life of Love Divine, after the realization of that Love the senses and even sex regain a new life, the flood of divine Light and Love overflowing into the bodily part of man—as it were. Hence it is that the mystic experience of Love, not infrequently, brings about the concussions and shaking and thrilling of the body, senses, passions and emotions. This is the stage of positive integration of personality and union of soul with God, which, however, is never reached save through complete detachment from ego and worldliness. Says Sri Ramakrishna:

'As your attachment to the world diminishes, your spiritual knowledge will increase. Attachment to the world means attachment to 'woman and gold'. It is not given to everybody to feel *prema*, ecstatic love of God. Chaitanya experienced it. An ordinary man at the most experiences *bhāva*. Only the *Īśvarakotis*, such as Divine Incarnations, experience *prema*. When *prema* is awakened the devotee not only feels the world to be unreal, but forgets even the body, which everyone loves so intensely.'

In the teaching of St. John of the Cross, *prema* or Love, in its purest essence, is realised and relished but by a handful, as the path towards the attainment of Divine Love is 'narrow and thorny' as Jesus says. It is literally 'walking on a razor's edge', as the Upaniṣads describe it. Few have the desire, yearning, striving, one-pointedness of aim and devotion, steadfastness and perseverance in this arduous path. Caught up, as the largest majority of mankind are, within the entwining grip of the sense-sex-bound, time-space-bound world of relativity, of *māya*, the illusory, glamorous, dazzling enchantments of the bodily and physical life, we miss the core of our existence, the *raison d'être* of our earthly pilgrimage, which is nothing less than the beatific vision of God as LOVE. Like glow-worms we are satisfied with the fleeting, enervating, exhausting and mind-clouding and

will-weakening of senses and we have no idea of the brighter lights of the moons and the suns;—nay so much we are immersed in such trifling torrents of pleasures that we do not even believe in the very possibility of the existence of Love itself, wherein were nourished the greatest mystics and stainless saints of God. For owls and bats night is light and daylight is darkness to them. This is what the Gita says:

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥

Gita. II. 69.

'That which is night to all beings, in that is awake the self-controlled man; wherein all beings are awake, that to the self-knowing seer is darkness'.

As the breeze of Love Divine caresses the dedicated soul, now purified through intense and persevering intellectual discipline, chaste virginity and immaculate purity, the latent powers within man begin to develop. Until now the great potentialities of human soul were lying dormant, grown rusty due to the allurements and fascinations of carnal and sensual attachments and intoxications. Now the mind of man is released from the obscurity of passion-emotion-agitations even as the moon is released from the enveloping clouds. The new ecstasy, enchantment and swoon which the soul enjoys is the mature fruit of the blossomed Love which is the core of our being. This creation sprang from Love, subsists in Love, returns into Love.

A sense of wholeness, integrated inner poise and power, natural blossoming of health, bodily well-being and fitness, delicacy and refinement of senses and vigour flow into the bodily part of man from the mind and will of the soul, now being united with the Over-Soul, *Paramātman*, God. Then dawns the new romance of Love Divine, which has some faint analo-

gies and similitudes with the higher forms of human romance of a man with woman or the closest ties of human friendship. The mystic saint borrows some such tender and endearing phraseology from lovers and beloveds in the attempt to portray a bit of his ineffable experience in the trance and ecstasy achieved in Love Divine. St. John in his famous 'Spiritual Canticle' imagines himself to be the bride and God the bridegroom, arrayed in the best moral, intellectual and bodily attire to become worthy of the love, courtship and wooing of God. St. John says:

'There He gave me His breasts, there He taught me the science full of sweetness. And there I gave to Him myself without reserve; there I promised to be His bride'.

'My soul is occupied, and all my substance in His service;
Now I guard no flock, nor have I any other employment:
My sole occupation is love.'

With all-consuming love the soul goes out in search of God whose Beauty and Love it has once tasted. Says John of the Cross:

'Where hast Thou hidden Thyself, and abandoned me in my groaning, O my Beloved? Thou hast fled like the hart, having wounded me. I ran after Thee, crying; but thou wert gone.'

'In search of my Love I will go over mountains and strands;
I will gather no flowers, I will fear no wild beasts;
And pass by the mighty and the frontiers.'

The oneness of the soul which the mystic feels in love with God is an added incentive and experience to see God in every creature—nay God Himself is said

to be the whole Creation. Says John of the Cross:

'My Beloved is the mountains, the solitary wooded valleys, the strange islands, the roaring torrents, the whisper of the amorous gales; the tranquil night at the approach of the dawn, the silent music, the murmuring solitude, the supper which revives and enkindles love'.

One remembers, through association of ideas and identity of the mystical experience of God-intoxication, that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa also, after coming down to normal conscious plane from the heights of *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*, used to say:

'God Himself has become all these'.

The mystic poetry and the esoteric of Love Divine experienced and taught by St. John of the Cross has very much in common with Vaishnavism, with the bhajans of Mira Bai, the Abangs of Kabir and Tukaram. So continues the eternal romance of the soul in love with God wherein are preserved the documents of Pure Love, of self-subsisting Love itself.

In ancient Rome the vestal virgins used to preserve the sacred fire which was symbolic of Pure Love. In Athens Parthenon was the temple consecrated to the goddess of Pure Love. Throughout ages it is the mystics who broke open the fetters of lustful concupiscence and entered the sanctuary of God, being purified through chaste virginity and mental purity and attained the vision of God and divine Love. Blessed, indeed, are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, love God and become like God.

The Lord said:

Calmness is a steady attachment of the mind to Me. Self-control is control of the sense organs. Fortitude is the bearing of grief. Patience is perfect control over the palate and sex impulse.

The highest charity is the relinquishing of the idea of violence toward beings. Penance is the giving up of desires. Valour is the conquest of one's nature. Honesty is looking upon everything with an equal eye.

Truthfulness is true and agreeable speech which the sages praise. Purity is non-attachment to work, and renunciation is the giving up of work.

Religion is that wealth which men may covet. I, the Supreme Lord, am the sacrifice. The highest strength is the control of prana (energy). The best profit is devotion to Me.

Srimad Bhagavatam

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

By SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

(Translated from Original Bengali)

PART TWO

CHAPTER THIRTY

THE STORY OF KURESA

(continued from November '53 issue)

• After Kuvera the illustrious Bhakta had left for Srikshestra, Kuresa who was deprived of his physical vision but had his inner eyes intact, who was as it were a fascinating immaculate image of so a rare devotion to the Guru, the incarnation of devotion, foremost among the scholars, came along with his wife and son to a place called Krishnachala with a view to do the worship of Bhagavan Sundarabhuja and resided there for some time. While residing there he thought himself blessed in composing the hymns to Sri, to Sundarabhuja, to Atimanusha, and to Sri Vaikuntha. Thence, desirous of touching the lotus feet of Yatiraja, his own Guru, he went to Yadavadri and appeared before his chosen object. When after worshipping him in devotion, Kuresa fell at his feet, Sri Ramanuja held him up affectionately from the ground and in great love embraced him very warmly and said, 'Today I have been purified and blessed by the touch of a great devotee. Ah! What an auspicious day it is for me!' Being so embraced by Yatiraja and addressed so sweetly, Kuresa began to shed tears of joy. He was unable to pronounce a single word. His wife and his son Parasara too being abundantly graced by Sri Ramanuja, experienced unbounded joy. Thenceforth they began to live in the vicinity of Yatiraja in great happiness.

After one or two days Ramanuja said to Kuresa, 'My child, you go to Kanchi-

pura and pray for your eyes to Lord Varadaraja Who will surely remove your blindness. That depraved Krimikantha is dead. There is no more reason for fear. Do not delay any more'. 'Be it so', said Kuresa on hearing the command of his Guru and straight went to Kanchi-pura. Arriving there he went to Sri Varadaraja and taking absolute refuge,—body, mind, and speech,—in Him began to hymn the Lord. Varadaraja, the dispeller of the sufferings of the devotees, pleased with the devotion of Kuresa asked, 'My child Kuresa, what do you pray for? Only tell; and I shall fulfil it even now'. With folded hands said Kuresa, the large-minded, 'Lord, by Thy grace, may Chaturgrama obtain the supreme object'. 'Be it so', said Sri Varadaraja. Kuresa again fell to hymning the Lord. Said Sri Varadaraja, 'Kuresa, what more do you pray for? Tell, I shall fulfil that'. At this Kuresa said, 'Lord, may those who are the administrators of Chaturgrama attain the supreme object'. 'Be it so', said Varadaraja. Kuresa experienced unbounded joy to hear this. Thinking himself absolutely blessed and quite forgetful of his own blindness, Kuresa went to his own place from the temple.

The administrator of this Chaturgrama was that stone-hearted depraved one who plucked out the eye-balls of Kuresa. What can he be, who is able to be glad and think himself blessed being able to secure supreme bliss for this kind of

terrible enemies? It is not adequate to call him a god, for, even the gods are ever eager to see the annihilation of the demons. So, can their heart be ever equal to the immense heart of Kuresa? He is God Himself in the image of a Bhakta, that is to say, if God wishes to assume the form of a Bhakta, He does so taking the receptacle of the inner self of the great ones like Kuresa. This was why Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Bhagavan, Bhakta, and the Bhagavata,—there is no difference between these three. Whoever may look upon these three separately, for him the knowledge about the reality of God is yet far away'.

When Ramanuja at Yadavadri came to know from hearsay that Kuresa had deemed himself blessed on securing the good for the line of his own arch-enemies and that he never took any care to get back his own eyes, Ramanuja sent a disciple of his with the message which was a command, 'My child Kuresa, I was very much pleased to hear that you are experiencing celestial joy. But, in that, you alone knowing the joy, you have shown the attitude of slight selfishness. Therefore, hereby I now command you that in order to make me supremely happy, you should now beg for your two eyes at the feet of Sri Varadaraja. Don't you know that you, yourself, your body, and mind, are all mine and not yours?' Hearing this message of supreme grace from his brother-disciple, Kuresa began to dance and say, 'Blessed am I today. Taking this extremely worldly-minded man as an occasion, Yatiraja has today revealed the limitless glory of his boundless heart. Instantly shall I go and taking refuge in the lotus feet of Sri Varadaraja, I shall beg my own eyes for the sake of Yatiraja.' So saying he went in quick steps and standing before the blissful, all-mind-bewitching, Srimurti

of Sri Varadaraj, the fulfiller of all desires, began to hymn the Deity.' Being pleased with Kuresa, Sri Hari, the dispeller of the sufferings of the devotees' hearts, said, 'My child, Kuresa with what prayer have you come again? There is nothing which I cannot give you. Tell; even now shall I fulfil all your prayers'. Deeming himself blessed at this said Kuresa, 'My Lord, some time ago, I had, through the wrong turn of my fate, lost the two dear things of my Chosen Ideal. May I, through Thy grace, get them back today.' 'My child,' said Sri Varadaraja, 'may instantly two divine eyes augment the beauty of your pure body and cause unlimited joy to your Chosen Ideal. I am residing on this earth only to see and serve pure devotees like you. As the devotees come to see and serve Me, likewise, I too know, seeing and serving the devotees as the only way to earn any joy. A God without devotees is as incomprehensible as a sun without light. To say that there is a beautiful woman, but without a body is as much nonsense as to say there is God but no devotees.' On hearing these nectar-like words of Sri Hari, Kuresa experienced intense joy, which made him lose outward consciousness. After sometime, getting back his bodily consciousness he came to know of the regaining of his own eyes. Glad beyond measure, shedding tears of joy, and looking with folded hands at the image in front of him, he said, 'Lord, it is You who gave; it is You Who took; again it is You Who have given back today. O wilful One, how can an insignificant jiva like me comprehend the profundity of Your incomprehensible play? In the beginning art Thou; in the end art Thou; in the middle art Thou, Thou the condensed form of bliss. Thy creation is full of joy; Thy act of sustenance is full of joy; and that slumber of

Thine, which brings about dissolution too is full of joy. Only those like me blinded by ignorance, imagining Thee and Thine, Who is essence of bliss, to be endowed with miseries, pass life in afflictions. Through Thy grace, my ignorance has been dispelled today. Ah, great good fortune of mine! Ah, great grace of Thine!' Mad with joy, Kuresa began to dance while torrents of tears of joy fell sprinkled on the people assembled around him like waters of peace. All were greatly surprised to see him regain his eyes and they all felt the awakening of deep devotion towards the Lord and His devotee in front of them. All began to feel extremely fortunate and blessed. After being profusely worshipped by his friends, Kuresa returned to his own place from the temple.

In no time this news spread in all directions and all began to consider Ramanuja and his disciples to be endowed with superhuman powers. The denizens of the entire Southern India began to believe them to be the God-ordained reformers of religion. Tradition says that when Ramanuja heard about the supreme mercy of Kuresa even towards his terrible enemies, while dancing with upraised arms, before all, he said, 'My attaining the supreme goal is now an established fact. I am no longer concerned about that. For, when Kuresa has been able to liberate his enemies, then, it is doubtless that I shall be liberated through his influence'. It is natural with the god-like great ones to augment the glories of their own devotees.



MOVING CO-OPERATION

Village Day Schools ordinarily have no 'Commerce' classes. But the young man C started them in his school! He divided his bigger students, boys and girls, into different groups and trained them by turns to look after stores, purchases and sales. What stores, one might ask. Well, listen to the talk of the villagers sitting on the tank bund.

One said to a group facing him: 'That C is a wonderful man. I still remember how he gave me my first lessons in stopping soil erosion. Later on he persuaded us to start a Co-operative Society. What a tremendous work it is carrying on now!

Take just one item,—the good seeds that he has brought from outside. The output of grains and vegetables from my fields has more than doubled ever since I began using them. I am now able to fix all my attention on cultivation. C and the Society take my products, sell them and put my money in the Savings Bank section. By next year I shall have enough money to erect a better house.' The speaker's relative, a rich middle-aged man from a very distant village, listened in silence.

A second villager said: 'Do you know how our soap-making and biscuit-making

sections are working now? C says that the quality of our products has now considerably improved and that the demand has gone up by leaps and bounds. According to his advice I have withdrawn a sum of one thousand rupees from my Savings Bank account and invested it in the manufacturing section.' The rich visitor, again, listened in silence.

A third villager added: 'Our C is kind and considerate to all. He gave me a loan for purchasing a good cow. He also arranged to supply me with the oil cake and fodder through the stores, and adjusted the price of these from the milk I supplied. The debt is cleared and from now on my earnings will go into the Savings Bank.'

By this time a fully-loaded lorry entered the village and went up to the front of the Co-operative Stores, where C and some of the older students, according to schedule, waited to take charge of the goods.

One villager immediately observed: 'Although bigger in size, this lorry is really the younger brother of our jeep. C purchased it at an auction for the use of our Co-operative Stores. It helps us to deliver our fruits and vegetables in their fresh condition to distant villages and towns. On the return trip it carries cloth, iron, cement and the hundred other things we require here. C was kind enough to train my eldest son and fix him up as the driver.'

'Why only your own son?' exclaimed another villager. 'This C has an eye upon the children of all of us. Look at the way in which he manages the gymnasium! Our boys and girls are now growing up beautifully, with well-developed and graceful limbs. Not one falls ill; their general vigour has increased to such an extent. Look, again, at the wise manner in which C chooses boys and girls for

different sections of the workshop run by P. Also—'

Before he could finish his list, the newspapers brought the welcome tidings that all the nine boys and the five girls, specially selected by C from among the Day School students to appear as private candidates for the Matriculation Examination of B. University had come out successful. As the news spread, parents gathered from all the areas covered by the School. Parents and students all began to praise the work of C and his colleagues. Before they left it was decided that a portion of the profits of the Co-operative Society must be set apart for additions to the Laboratory and Library. Brilliant students of the neighbouring areas could then be adequately trained and sent up as private candidates for University Examinations held at A. and N. These were the two places where private candidates were accepted.

That night Rameswar and Viswanath prayed fervently and kept awake long, shedding tears of joy. For along with others, Janaki and Nanda too had passed the Matriculation and could now proceed for higher examinations.

The visitor from the distant village now thought in silence on what he had seen and heard. He knew now what co-operation could do in the country-side, and strange ideas began to move within his breast. When wealth, conviction and love for fellow-villagers combine, as they did in his breast, what is it that they cannot 'move'?

Ten years passed. Janaki took her medical degree and moulded her life, of her own accord, on the model set by V. Nanda became an Engineer and became a second P. So batch after batch of other boys and girls, trained by the four 'strangers', qualified themselves

for various walks of life. The fire of genuine service has its own way of spreading from heart to heart. Some young people settled down in their own village, while others moved out into far away villages and started creative activities in the modest and silent yet thorough and business-like manner indicated by their beloved teachers.

* * *
People said many good things of the young men who began pulling out the weeds of their tank and ended by lifting up entire groups of villages. Some said

that they hid their real names, as one was a Muslim and another a Christian, and that they did not want their good work to be spoilt by religious prejudices which the full names might rouse up. All found their unbounded love, self-sacrifice and originality remarkable, unprecedented, unforgettable. And some, with greater imagination than others, said that their initials had a deeper significance, as V., S., P. and C. could easily be made to stand for Village Service Pioneer Corps.

भग चरेवेति !

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Reminiscences of Sri Sarada Devi, The Holy Mother

The readers of the *Vedanta Kesari* have been kept informed through notices published in its pages from time to time that the great event of the Holy Mother's Birth Centenary is due to be celebrated in a befitting manner in various parts of the world between December, 1953 to December, 1954.

It should be our lookout to derive as much spiritual benefit as possible out of these celebrations. Celebrations in relation to saints and prophets are all intended for our own spiritual regeneration. *Svādhyāya* or devotional study of the scriptures and lives of saints is considered as one of the most potent forms of spiritual exercise. Writings like the one we have here may be deemed an interesting form of *svādhyāya*.

Swami Ambananda, whose writing we are publishing here posthumously, was a disciple of the Holy Mother.

Religion and Education in a Modern Secular Democracy.

* If 'qualified monism' is no monism, qualified democracy too is no democracy. Some political

theorists hold out the dubious doctrine that when we qualify democracy with the word 'secular' it attains a dynamic superiority, but when we qualify it with another word, say like, 'Islamic', it at once becomes 'medieval'. It is not, however, very clear why the logic which can prove that there can be nothing like 'Islamic' democracy, cannot be also extended to show that 'secular' democracy is as much an absurd conception.

Democracy unqualified is fundamentally a healthy indeterminism in the sense of essential and creative liberty, whereas 'secular' democracy is determinism of a rigid timid sort. Whether it suits us to see this truth or not, we stifle the genius of democracy the moment we fetter it with any qualifying necessity, secular or religious.

'Secular democracy' is therefore basically a somewhat fictitious situation. How education and religion have to pattern themselves in such a situation cannot therefore be considered a very easy question.

This difficult question is here engagingly handled by a new thoughtful writer in the *Vedanta Kesari*. Dr. Floyd H. Ross, Professor of World Religions, School of Religions, University of Southern California, U. S. A., is now on Fulbright Grant a Visiting Lecturer in Educational Psycho-

logy and Sociology at Ramakrishna Vidyalaya Teachers' College, Coimbatore

Jesus Christ Through Indian Eyes

'I pity the Hindu who does not see the beauty in Jesus Christ's character. I pity the Christian who does not reverence the Hindu Christ', said Swami Vivekananda. This is the typical Indian approach to religion at its best. As an Indian, Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt, our long associated learned contributor here views the teachings of Jesus from this liberal standpoint. The parallelism he shows in this article between the teachings of Hinduism on the one hand, and those of Christ on the other, may help some exclusive devotees of Christ to understand why it is impossible for the true Indian not to pay his heart's homage to Christ.

Sri Saradaman Devi: The Crest-Jewel of Indian Womanhood

We have here a study of the wonderful counterpart of Sri Ramakrishna that was Sri Saradaman Devi, 'the crest-jewel of Hindu womanhood at once its glory and its consummation', from the pen of Sri P. Sankaranarayanan, M.A., Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras.

Divine Love According to St. John of the Cross:

Love is the thing which can both bind and liberate. When it is sensual it binds, when it is divine, it liberates.

Sri Anthony Elenjittam shows in this intimate study the uniqueness of St. John's Divine Love, which made him so singular among Christian saints and so akin to some Hindu saints.

REFLECTIONS ON INDISCIPLINE AMONG STUDENTS

Of late students have been much in the news in India. 'Students' indiscipline' has become a common headline in newspapers and an uncommon headache with our leaders and not a small alarm for all thinking people. From time to time mild, strong, persuasive or indecisive statements are being issued on the topic by the top administrators of the country. But it does not appear that we are tracking down the problem to any solution. Like an aggressive epidemic or invading cloud of locusts it appears to be proceeding apace from province to province leaving little room for complacency anywhere. It has fast assumed the proportions of a very urgent all-India problem.

'Students' indiscipline' in India, however, does not seem to us to be an isolated affair. It better appears to us as a part of a greater unrest that sways over the world. Students in America, England, Middle East and Far East have all been in the news in near past. Most dishonourable, shameful, even ugly and horrifying activities of students have been reported in the Press from time to time to the shame of many a nation. There may be a particular local articulation of the problem which will look very different from another manifestation of it, but basically indiscipline among students is a world-wide concern, which cries for the attention and deliberation of the best educationists and psychologists of the world. We shall here confine ourselves to the study of the problem in the Indian context.

In India the local or national character of the problem can be viewed as the unfoldment of a historical process. There was a time when we called away students from their studies and colleges for the purpose of political movement. Even today there are leaders who are calling the students to renounce their colleges and studies for working out this or that cause of their choosing. It is possible that such acts have created a floating *samskara* which continues to evolve itself and attach to flowing youth at particular points. Now suddenly when we would very much like we cannot just wipe out our own *karma-phala*.

For the last quarter of a century and more politicians have been systematically making scrupulous or unscrupulous use of the student-folk for furthering their factional, or other ends. Among the politicians there is a group which has been on principle relativising all the superior values and traditions cherished by this nation. With a flair of rationalism they have called the youth to get free of all binding moral scruples and adopt whatever means they find handy to further their immediate ends, which are of course necessarily to be materialistic. In the high name of working for bettering the lot of the helpless, hapless and hopeless underdog, consistent exploitation of the very human soul specially of the young has been going on. And we have not known how to effectively counteract it. Religious priestcraft had had its due share of infamy and criticism everywhere

in the world. But alas! political priestcraft though infinitely more injurious passes as an honourable profession with even a halo on its head!

For the last quarter of a century and more, during the period of struggle for national independence and afterwards it is the politician who is dominating the national consciousness. Politics has been held out in effect to the people as the broad way to easy glory, power, name, fame and money—the most desired ends of human life. The politician has taken upon himself the entire responsibility of moulding the whole of peoples' mind according to his light. It is he who has to say what should be the shape of all things to come—administration, industry, law, religion, philosophy, art, culture, the size of one's family, the form of the script and even the cut of one's dress. It is the politician who has to say what things should remain and what things should go; and how we should name and fashion our institutions, constitutions and civilizations.

Take an election campaign. Rival politicians go out to 'educate' the masses. Those clouds of words that hang heavy over the consciousness of the nation, specially of the youth! Those vituperations and denunciations, self-advertisements and proselytization political—all leave their mark and influence the way of thinking in the youth. The young student dreams for that glory which is of the politician, and he has no patience to wait. He then rushes to the most handy instrument, which is unscrupulous means given unto him by a political messiah with all the flourish of a stiff philosophy. Politics has become almost the *Panchama Purusārtha*, with the Indian intelligentsia of today. Such is the dominating power of politics as such in India today, that it is at will whistling away one after another our most outstanding academicians and scholar professors. Our worshippers in the temple of learning have not found anything worth emulating in Einstein's refusal of the all party invitation to become the President of Israel. With one leg in the University, another leg in Parliament or Legislature, and almost the entire mind given devoutly to the jealous master that politics is, our learned savants are showing such amazing skills of superior balance that our young students feel that life is useless if they cannot emulate such great examples in their own spheres in their own way. Let it not be construed that we want our Parliament and Legislatures to be manned, womanned and dominated by people of meagre education Indian Parliament of the day with Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Pandit Nehru and many other learned scholars is perhaps an incomparable House. But too much centralization of talents in politics naturally leaves other spheres hungry and chaotic. When educationists of a nation take their sw-

dharma so lightly, or perhaps enlarge its scope in such a way as to bring politics within its province, it is little wonder students follow high examples.

There is another factor, the monster educator of the century—the cinema—special hand-maiden of *Māyā*. The young impressionable minds which have been already high pressured to shape by politics enters into the dream-land of the shadow-world—where their emotions and appetites are whetted and vulgarised to the extreme. And have we not too a section of the Press and vast number of publications to strengthen wildness in young mind?

Please note that all what has been mentioned above is the most formidable part of education that the student is receiving outside the walls of institutions in the open world of India. As against that, he receives education also in the 'educational' institutions in over-crowded classes taught by under-paid teachers, most of whom, it is said, became teachers only because they failed to gate-crash the secretariates or other government offices. In the atmosphere dragooned by politics and confounded by secularist gospel, the pay-scales naturally determine the teaching-scales, and consequently the status of the teacher at once comes down very low in the scale of the student. Wage-earning teachers soon find themselves arrayed against the right-fighting students applying sometimes the trade-unionist strategy and at other times their own recension of the noble ideal of 'Satyagraha' received as a patrimony from the heroes of the nation. The same political high fever which high-pressured the mind of the young outside his educational institution has also its counter-part inside the institution.

Now when we turn to most of our homes what do we find? Joyless parlours where parents make futile attempts to solidify the minds of their wards into the mould they have framed with their knowledge or ignorance. They do not much take it seriously that though a son or a daughter, the young fellow has a soul of his or her own and his or her own line of growth too. Many a parent come to grief because of their failure to have regard for the aspirations, inspirations and the imaginations of their children. The more ignorant a father the greater the tyrant he often becomes. In the fullness of time the revolt bursts forth. As a reaction the young fellow learns to hate all what his fond father wanted him to teach and imbibe in all good faith for his supposed good. Such a ward easily takes to such a gospel which enfranchises his inhibited emotions and scuttles down all the values his parents hold dear. He soon turns out to be the greatest enemy of himself, who causes worry wherever he goes. Eventually perhaps he becomes a useful agent of a political party and ere long even a 'leader'!

Students with higher hunger who do not easily turn to be the mere creatures of the environments and who seek higher inspiration, perhaps come in contact with a religionist whose dogmas possibly militate against all the sure findings of science, who opposes all social reforms in the name of Religion and denounces all other religions in the name of his own. The wide awake searching young mind feels the pressure of a choking atmosphere upon his very soul which pines for the Great, Grand and Glorious. But alas! he is only answered with smallness wherever he knocks. His disgust soon insinuates his entry to the other camp. Having seen only crooks of religion, he feels justified in renouncing and denouncing religion itself. Soon his loud voice is heard in the babble that drowns the feeble voice of underpaid teachers, too timid to become angry.

Then it appears, in some academic spheres the very intelligent people, who have found it possible to decide that sex education should be imparted to boys and girls for the great purpose of progressive culture and dynamic civilization, have found it impossible to come to any conclusion as to whether any religious instruction should be given at all to students in educational institutions. Some authorities of higher educational institutions are reported to be even cherishing honest doubts as to if it is proper on their part to purchase religious books for their libraries in a secular state. Needless to say, they do not feel much pricking of conscience when in the name of literature and culture they purchase glittering sexy novels and 'yellow' magazines for boys and girls.

In such a state of affairs, where the politician is the hero and the guru and the god of the society, where factory-type educational institutions are manned by teachers who are said to be unequal to their task and above their remuneration, where many parents little know how to bring up young children, religionists often move against themselves, what better students have we any right to expect?

If all what we have said above is the part of a 'system' then Dr. S. Radhakrishnan is right in saying, 'There is nothing wrong with our students. What is wrong is with the system.'

But the question naturally arises, have the students an extra-system existence? Do they not form the part of the system to which they belong? Or are students conceived to be the products of a machine, which is the 'system'? A pin can blame the machine entirely for its prickiness. But is it safe and correct to teach students not to own the responsibility for such of things in their way of life which the sober section among themselves do

not call correct. Why should excellent stuff that youth is, allow itself to be fashioned just by reaction?

We have written enough to show that the 'system'—understood in the sense indicated—is undoubtedly wrong. But let it be well understood that students too form a part of the system.

Now the difficult question is, what is the remedy? Dr. Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that highest priority should be given to this problem. Services of the best minds have to be secured for Education and to that end same remunerations, facilities and attractions are to be given to the university teachers as are given in administrative services. The Vice-President of India said¹:

'The teacher is the main factor in any university system, not magnificent building, large laboratories and equipment. All these things are no substitute for the teacher.'

So long as we do not treat the teaching profession with the attention and reverence which used to be given in early days, there will be teachers of inferior quality. They will be given to cram books and agitate for examinership and there will be party politics in University.

Dr. Radhakrishnan also said that it was the neglect of the great ideals that was one of the factors responsible for increasing unrest found among students.

The points which the learned Vice-President of India has drawn our attention to, are very important indeed. No doubt, if more attraction is held out, we may get men with better talents to serve as teachers in Universities and Colleges. While we also do not see why teachers of all ranks should not be better paid, we are not quite so sure that better-paid teachers will be necessarily better teachers.

While *artha* is a rightful value, it is not that type of men who make too much of *artha* that inspire respect among students.

In ancient days when teaching profession was held in the highest esteem, teachers always took comparative poverty for granted. In India at least they were never commanding same facilities with the administrators of the country. An element of voluntary renunciation was always associated with the life of the teacher in India. In the Upanishadic period when Gurukula system prevailed, teachers subsisted on public charity and on things begged by students for them. There were no fixed wages and no stipulation for fees would be made before the tuition began. At the end of his term the student paid whatever honorarium suited his means. The very high respect in which a teacher used to be held in India were due to the great character, simple life, selflessness and services of the teacher and not

because of the pay scale of the teacher which could be compared with that of the administrator.

Here is an amusing snag on which we are habitually stumbling. We want the teacher to be given the same respect as used to be done in ages gone by, but we do not recommend the type of life to the teacher which he used to live in those days. We should understand that better paid teachers alone cannot do the trick of better education and cannot command greater regard from students. The pay-master student will then naturally dominate the situation with his indiscipline. We will have then reduced education to mere buying and selling. The student flings money and purchases education at the counter. What is the occasion there for unusually respecting a mere salesman who is a teacher in that case? The Indian teacher will get back his due respect when he again stands on his traditional Indian plank of simplicity of life, high character, one-pointed devotion to learning and self-effacing service. Otherwise he should be satisfied with whatever little courtesy he may yet receive from his students in exchange of his own.

The situation is no doubt baffling. But if we would care to understand the root causes of the malady, perhaps we will be able to track down the problem. We are convinced that much of the educational problems in India, as seen from the Indian point of view, is arising from the fact that we have effectively confounded the higher values which India has cherished through the ages. Gandhiji used to say that *moksha* was the only aspiration of his life and his politics was the means to that end. This was why he had to spiritualize his politics. His worthy followers came on the leading scene, and being very much progressive they said that their aim of life was to raise the standard of life of the people of India and establish peace in the world. This was why they had to secularize their politics! They are very serious people and have sincerely gone ahead with their ideas. They are doing a wonderful lot of things,—arresting wild rivers, cultivating fallow lands, building huge industrial plants, research laboratories and demanding the submission of Nature herself. Well, these are all very striking achievements. But may we draw the attention of the thinking people to the fact that with all our legislative bustle, parliamentary action, raising the stature of India in the eyes of the world, five year plans, multi-purpose projects, we are mainly striving for the attainment of the two lower *puruṣārthas* which are *artha* and *kama*. That is what is meant by working heart and soul for raising the

standard of life of the people of India. Let us not be misunderstood. We dare not say that these are not very important things to do. Forsooth, man does not live without bread. It is no crime to ask for a little butter to sweeten the bread. But we claim this: unless we know how to correlate the demands of other two higher *puruṣārthas* which are *dharma* and *moksha* in the scheme of our affairs, which absorb all our interest and energy, we will not be fundamentally changing our *milieu* much. We have thus here the question of not only the better and greater education of the students, but also that of entire society, the parents of students, teachers and—should we say in all humility and trepidation—also perhaps of the leaders of the country.

What is the ceiling of the standard of living we are going to have? Will all the wealth and the things of the world be enough for appeasing our so many hungers if we do not chasten ourselves with the higher alchemy of nobler aspirations? Give by all means the teacher his due. But what business have we to deprive the student of his due which is the intimation of the noblest aspirations of life, of deifying the self and the world, which has to be imparted not so much through profaned words but through the very way of life, the teacher would live; which the society will fashion the teacher to live; which the leaders of the society will kindly permit and inspire the society to fashion?

The Rṣi who breathed the mantra 'ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यद्विद्म जगत्यां जगत्' gave us in those few potent words the entire genius that should mould all our schemes of life, political, economic, social, and educational. Let us not forget the requirements of this mantra while tackling the problem of indiscipline among students. With infinite patience, love and reverence for the erring, kicking, aspiring young souls, we believe, we can yet turn 'indiscipline' to a high creative purpose. Perhaps it is a call back home sounded in a bizarre manner. It is an education which the entire nation must take from the hands of the young in a spirit of profound humility and much needed self-criticism.

To the students we say this: When you will have taken up the challenge to be bold, intelligent, honest and foreseeing, you will surely see how often you have been swayed by collective non-intelligence, cowardice and blindness. Protest by all means against what you consider wrong. But before you rush to protest, examine rigorously the correctness of your conception of right and wrong. You merely showball the wrong when you protest

2. Whatever there is changeable in this ephemeral world, all that must be enveloped by the Lord.

1. Vide Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's Delhi University Convocation address dated December 5, 1953.

against it in a wrong way and eventually you become a creature of it, a truly pathetic thing having no capacity for right action. Please remember the simple but inexorable equation of cause and effect. You cannot politicalize destiny. Beware, if you are too intelligent to learn you will

be left by the wayside like rotten ash-gourds. And the caravan will move on.

Friends, only *s'raddha* will save us all, and help us through. May we be humble enough to learn and learn enough to be humble.

10. 12. 53.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE DHAMMAPADA—PALI TEXT IN ROMAN SCRIPT WITH A TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH BY NARADA MAHA THERA. PUBLISHED BY THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA—CALCUTTA—A TWO-COLOUR POCKET EDITION—PAGES XIX+359+IV—PRICE Rs. 2/-.

This is an eminently simple and readable rendering in English of the well-known Buddhist Ethical Classic. Several English translations of the Text exist already, of which may be mentioned those of Max Muller and Professor Radhakrishnan. It is evident that the Venerable Narada Maha Thera has made good use of all the available translations. He has, no doubt, tried his best 'to give the commentarial interpretations.'

The Dhammapada is one of the numerous books in the miscellaneous collection—the *Khuddaka Nikāya*—of the *Sutta Pitaka* of the Pali Canon and the Text is found, with but minor variations, in other versions of the Canon. It is a random compilation of moral precepts in verse, divided into several sections (*vaggas*). The Dhammapada rightly occupies a high place among the few great Scriptures of the world. There is nothing sectarian in it; its appeal is not restricted to a particular period or some section of society, nor is it confined to a certain country or continent. It transcends all such narrow limitations. A serene spiritual flavour suffuses and pervades the entire book. It is beyond all doubt that it represents the lofty utterances of an Enlightened Soul. We read:

(a) THE UNIVERSAL LAW OF LOVE

- (1) Not by hatred does *hatred* cease in this world; by love alone does it cease. This is the *Eternal Law*. (Verse 5)

[Note: Perhaps suggested by the plural form of the Text 'Verāṇi' (वेरानि), it has been translated as 'hatreds', but it would be happier to say 'hatred' instead of 'hatreds'.

'Esa dhammo sanantano' has been rendered as 'This is an ancient law.' In the place of the

expressions 'an ancient law', it would be more apposite to use 'the *Eternal Law*'. The word 'ancient', presupposes a beginning, however remote it might be; but 'sanantano' means 'eternal' (that always has existed, exists and will exist.) Compare 'Esha Dharmaḥ Sanātanah'—एष धर्मः

सनातनः. With the lofty idea of this verse and the foregoing ones may be compared the Sacred Kural which says 'அறத்திற்கே யன்புசார் பெண்ப அறியார்—மறத்திற்கு ம:தே துணை'—The ignorant say that Love doth aid only virtuous acts; but, verily, it is an ally as well to allay sinful acts?]

- (2) 'By effort, earnestness, discipline, and self-control, let the wise man make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm'. (Verse 25)
- (3) 'Not to do any evil, to cultivate good, to purify one's mind—This is the advice of the Buddhas'. (Verse 183)

(b) SUFFERING—ITS CAUSE

The root-cause of imperfection and suffering is attachment, clinging to the 'I' and the 'Mine.'

- (1) 'From attachment springs grief, from attachment springs fear; for him who is wholly free from attachment there is no grief, whence fear?' (Verse 214)
- (2) 'As rust, sprung from iron, eats *itself* away when arisen, even so his own deeds lead the transgressor to a state of woe.' (Verse 240)

[Note: (i) Here, the word 'itself' leads to some confusion. As it is, 'itself' cannot but refer to 'rust', which, evidently, is not the purport of this verse. The meaning, then, is 'Rust, though born of iron, consumes that iron itself. In the same way, the very misdeeds of a transgressor lead him to a state of suffering (woe).' The piece of iron is compared to the transgressor and the rust to his misdeeds.

- (ii) The translation of the first verse in section 16, 'Affection'—'Piya Vagga'—seems to be defective. 'Devoting oneself to that which should be shunned, and *devoting oneself* to that which should be associated with.....'. 'Ayojayam' means 'not devoting or abstaining from.' So it should be, 'not devoting oneself to that which should be associated with or abstaining from etc.')

- (3) 'There is no fire like lust, no grip like hate; There is no net like delusion, no river like craving.' (Verse 251)

(c) SUFFERING—ITS REMEDY

The remedy is to void the mind of all craving by the observance of the Eight-fold Path. The characteristic Buddhist recipe for realising that all things are transient (*aniccā*) and substance-less (Soul-less—*anattā*) is also set forth in a special section on the Path (*Magga Vagga*). The goal of realisation is depicted with deep insight and intimacy in the last two sections—*Bhikkhu* and *Brahmana Vaggas*.

- (1) 'As the jasmine creeper sheds its withered flowers, even so, O Bhikkhus, should you totally shed lust and hatred.' (Verse 377)
- (2) He, who has broken all fetters, he who fears not, he who has gone beyond toils, he who is unbound—him, I call a Brahmana. (Verse 397.)
- (3) In whom lust, hatred, pride, detraction are fallen off, like a mustard seed from the point of a needle,—him I call a Brahmana' (Verse 407).
- (4) He who has no longings, he who, through knowledge, is free from doubts, he who has plunged into the Deathless (*Nibbāna*),—him I call a Brahmana. (Verse 411).

These noble utterances are reminiscent of similar descriptions of the Brahma State or that of the *Sthitaprajna* in the Upanishads and the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The Dhammapada suggests a comparison with its counterpart, the *Bhagavad Gita*. Both strive after ethical and spiritual values. The spiritual, in the last analysis, is abandonment of the ego-centric outlook and a positive attainment of unity with all Being. While the *Dhammapada*, consistent with Buddhist metaphysics, emphasises the negative aspect of egolessness in the conception of Nirvāṇa, the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* bring up the positive character of Brahma-hood. Again, the Dhammapada implies no element of Grace or Devotion; the appeal is invariably to self-effort and the Inner Moral Law or Righteousness. In the *Gītā*, the dominant idea or note is self-surrender and attainment of union with the Superself—*Purushottama*; as such it makes an appeal to our Religious consciousness.

The brief notes provided at the end of the book are really useful. Though the reviewer has doubts, at places, about the appropriateness of the English rendering of some expressions, the venerable Bhikkhu Narada Maha Thera deserves our sincere thanks for bringing out this popular translation of a Great Book.

T. R. GOVINDARAJAN

MYSTIC APPROACH TO THE VEDA AND THE UPANISHAD BY M. P. PANDIT, SRI AUROBINDO LIBRARY, 369 ESPLANADE, MADRAS, 1952, PP. 142, PRICE Rs. 3/-.

'The mystic approach' by Sri M. P. Pandit is based on the Esoteric Interpretation of the Veda,

propounded by Sri Aurobindo. The Samhita of the Rigveda, according to this work, is instructive of knowledge secretly to a selected few and of ritual openly to all, through symbolic language.

The Veda is divine in origin. The Rishis were only seers of the truths of the Mantras. The central theme of their findings was sacrifice external as well as internal. The problem before the sages was to protect their findings from being misused by the unqualified and at the same time to preserve them for the benefit of the qualified. This was done through the language of the Samhita. It was deliberately symbolic. The popular meanings of the words of the Samhita frequently caused the reading unconnected and incoherent, but the defect did not matter much for the orthodox ritual; whereas the esoteric meaning gave a connected and coherent reading necessary for a systematic understanding of the inner discipline and practice. Again, the Samhita is ritualistic only incidentally; but it is essentially spiritual. The Sages were not addicts of any intoxicant; but they were pragmatic Mystics. The rituals that they instituted were not meaningless; but they were highly symbolic of the internal worship and meditation.

The Upanishads therefore were not reactions against the Spirit of the Samhita but are merely open expressions of the knowledge, hidden in the Samhita. Finally therefore the Samhita is not a record of semi-barbarous worship; not a mere record of mythology and ritual but is a Revealed Scripture whose message is of great importance for all seekers of Truth.

'Mystic approach' is a unique achievement in the field of modern Vedic studies. It has defended the Samhita against all the modern criticisms arising mainly out of western scepticism. It has justified the claim made for the Samhita as the Revealed Scripture.

But we are surprised at the remarks that the work records in reference to the commentary of Sayana. Sri Aurobindo says: 'If the Veda is what Sayana says it is, there we have to leave it behind for ever as the document of a mythology and ritual which have no longer any living truth or force for thinking minds.' And Sri T. V. Kapali Sastry says: '...the central defect of Sayana's work remains. It is the defect of a representative obscurantism of the time, the progressive and narrow....., a sublimated hedonistic doctrine before which the ideals of an inner and higher life and spiritual knowledge have their facets disfigured or eclipsed and hidden in disgrace.'

The Author of the 'Mystic approach' concedes that the Samhita embodies both Ritualism and Knowledge. Here lies the sanction of the Samhita for the Ritualism of the Brahmanas. Even the Upanishads do not all antagonise the external religion

of the Brahmanas. They do even advise openly 'देवपितृकार्याभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम्'. The Upanishads are pro-spiritual without being anti-ritualistic. Sayana again belongs to the school of the Upanishads. He holds that ritualism subserves spiritual knowledge. This is clear from the lines of his Preface to the commentary on the Rik-Samhita. 'पूर्वकाण्डोक्तस्य धर्मस्य ज्ञानं पुण्यम् । उत्तरकाण्डोक्तस्य ब्रह्मणो ज्ञानं फलम् । यथा लोके पुण्यं फलस्योत्पादकं, तथा वेदानुवचनं धर्मज्ञान-मनुष्ठानद्वारा फलात्मकब्रह्मज्ञानेच्छां जनयति' and he quotes in support 'तमेकं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसा नाशकेत' and further 'यथा च फले तृप्तिहेतुस्तथा ब्रह्मज्ञानं कृतकृत्यत्वहेतुः । यत्पूर्णानन्दकबोध-स्तद्ब्रह्महमस्मीति कृतकृत्यो भवति ।'

Ritualism received great sanctity since it was prescribed and practised by the sages as the sole and the only means to qualify the aspirant for admittance to the mystic sphere. Hence the inviolable commandments of the Brahmanas came to being laying absolute emphasis on the sacrificial use of the hymns of the Samhita. Consequently, the mystic interpretation of the Samhita became less popular and spiritual knowledge was in danger of being lost to the followers of the Samhita. So the few who were in possession of the Spirit of the Samhita brought the Upanishads into being. Since a direct interpretation of the Samhita in favour of Spiritual Knowledge was not favoured, the Sages of the Upanishads expounded the inner philosophy of the Samhita as if original to the Upanishads themselves. The Upanishads therefore are not a direct interpretation of the Samhita but treatises on the philosophy of the Samhita, standing rather independent of it. Still the possibility of a direct interpretation of the Samhita is hinted at throughout the Brahmanas, the Vedangas and the Upanishads. Hence with the aid of Etymological surmises, attempts have been made to give non-ritualistic interpretations of the Samhita, so that the mystic nature of the Samhita cannot be doubted.

But the Samhita is extremely comprehensive and has an apparent diversity of import in relation to the variety of human temperaments, just in the same way as the Upanishads. Anandatirtha intends to show how the Samhita supports or means Vaishnavite dualism. But that is not the only phase of Spiritual Knowledge that the Veda supports. Atmananda proposes a non-dualistic interpretation for the Samhita, and Dayananda interprets the Samhita in accordance with his own predilections. Hence 'The mystic interpretation of the Samhita,' has a plurality of results mutually opposing; and this pluralism has made it rather indefinite and undecided. But the orthodox Ritualism is definite and decided owing to the sanction of the Veda itself. And the traditional honour of

the Samhita is both for its ritualism and for its knowledge. So the mystic interpretation cannot become a substitute, not even an alternative but only an optional addition to the scholium of Sayana.

C. RAMACHARI

INTRODUCTION TO TANTRA SHASTRA:

By SIR JOHN WOODROFFE, GANESH & CO., (MADRAS) LTD., SECOND EDITION, 1952-PRICE RS. 5/- PP. 152.

This was written first as an introduction to the *Mahānirvāṇa-tantra*, and should be treated as a companion volume to the edition and translation of that great work.

Sir John Woodroffe gives in this introduction a summary of all the topics dealt with in the *Mahānirvāṇa*. The Tantra is in the form of teaching given by Siva to Parvati on Mount Kailasa. The present work begins with a description of the mountain scene, and then plunges into the intricacies of Tantric philosophy and practice. The relation between Siva and Sakti, the nature of Prakṛti and its *gunas*, the various worlds that constitute the cosmos and their inhabitants, the different ages called *yugas* and the scriptures that are special to each, are all first explained. Then follows an account of the human body with its five sheaths, channels of energy (*naḍis*), and psychic centres (*cakras*). Human beings are of three types: *paśu*, *vīra* and *divya*. The Tantric way is especially designed for the *vīra* or heroic type. The spiritual discipline has to be learnt from a teacher who has to initiate the disciple at a *dīkṣā* ceremony. The *sādhana* itself is a many-sided course, ceremonial worship and *yoga* constituting the main features. All these are clearly explained in this book by Sir John to whom we owe, in our age, much of the knowledge that we now possess of the Tantras.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN.

SELECTED SAYINGS OF BASAVA—

TRANSLATED BY SRI C. S. BAGI, VICE PRINCIPAL, LINGARAJ COLLEGE BELGAUM: PUBLISHED BY VACHANAMANTAPA, BELGAUM: PP. VII+82. PRICE RE. 1.

Sri Basava is one of the greatest luminaries that adorned the spiritual sky of Kannada country. He was the spiritual aspirant of the highest type, who, by intense *sādhana* attained perfection. The current of his heart's Divine Love that was directed towards his Lord during the strenuous period of his austerities and again his mystic experience after the attainment of God-realisation have been given verbal expression by himself. These expressions that sprang spontaneously from the heart of this saint have been called his 'Vachanas'.

In the Kannada literary world the technical term 'Vachana' has got a special meaning denoting a poetic prose composition akin to those of Walt Whitman. Sri Basava and his contemporaries have composed them in hundreds finding in them a fit vehicle for the expression of their spiritual experiences. Apart from their spiritual value, which is great by itself, they have a very high literary value, as they form a special class by themselves appealing to the heart of the common man and enlightening him. Most of them are metrical in their composition and a good number of them are successfully sung by professional musicians.

The non-Kannada-knowing world has been deprived of the mystical experience and the resonance that these vachanas convey. For a sweet spiritual relationship that has to be established amongst different provinces and nations and for the benefit of the spiritual aspirants of different parts of the country an exchange of such thoughts and experiences is an absolute necessity. One of the ways that are open to us on these lines is to translate the best of our works into such more common languages as English. Sri Bagi, the Vice Principal of Lingaraj College, Belgaum has undertaken such a noble task as rendering of 226 of Sri Basava's sayings into English. It may be said that the translation has been fairly faithfully done.

The classification of the vachanas into 'Yearning', 'Purity', 'Holiness', 'Worship', 'Faith' and 'Union' is pleasantly apt. This book will prove a valuable possession for the spiritual aspirants. In the hours of doubt and darkness, instability and despondency, one can draw inspiration, solace and light from the words of this great Acharya.

PRABHU SHANKARA

NAYAS WAYS OF APPROACH AND OBSERVATION: BY NATHMAL TATIA, M.A., D. LITT., (CAL.) PUBLISHED BY JAIN MISSION SOCIETY, G. 146, CHICKPET, BANGALORE CITY.

This brochure points out the distinctive logical contribution of Jaina philosophy. It urges the need for recognizing the complexity and richness of reality and the inadequacy and relativity of the several possible human conceptions of it. While the various approaches are significant in so far as they go, their validity is confined to their relative standpoints. They can neither be pressed beyond their legitimate spheres of application nor be dismissed as worthless or phenomenal absolutely. A sound metaphysical theory and wise mode of practical life demand a comprehensive integration of such varied perspectives of reality. The case for this outlook is briefly set forth in this brochure.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION BRIEF REPORT FOR 1952

The 44th Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at the Belur Math on the 27th September last under the presidentship of Swami Atmaprakashananda. The following is a brief report of the work done by the Mission during the year 1952.

Centres: There were altogether 68 Mission centres, which served all without any distinction and preached non-sectarian religious principles.

Relief Work: In connection with the East Pakistan Refugee Relief, the Mission rehabilitated 69 families at Malda and Sonbil, in Cachar. It also undertook welfare work among them, and distributed 23,058 lbs. of Multi-purpose food and about Rs. 13,620 and Rs. 8,583 as pecuniary and educational help to the displaced persons. In the 24 Parganas Famine Relief carried on from June to December, 1952 in the Sunderbans and at Taki

10,056 mds. of rice and 9,454 mds. of atta, mostly supplied by the West Bengal Government, were distributed among the inhabitants of 164 villages and 5 Municipal wards, besides 5,179 lbs. of Multi-purpose and other foods, 4,890 dhotis and saris, 4,110 new garments, etc.. The Famine Relief started in 1951 in the Purnea district of Bihar was finished in February, 1952. The Rayalaseema Famine Relief work was started in the Cuddapah, Anantapur, Kurnool and Chittoor districts of Madras in March, 1952 and continued beyond the year, in which rice, atta, milk, clothes, medicines, etc., were distributed to the needy. The total expenditure under this head came up to Rs. 4,52,646-0-3.

Medical Service: The Mission conducted 8 Hospitals with a total of 660 beds, which treated 15,678 cases in all. Its 43 Outdoor Dispensaries treated altogether 20,87,507 cases, including repeated ones. The Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Dugri, near Ranchi, treated 59 patients.

Help to the Poor: Under this head, some branch centres distributed rice, powdered milk, clothes, etc. to 4,500 persons besides Rs. 2,266-15-9 in cash to 505 recipients. The Headquarters helped 257 students and 59 families with Rs. 11,734-5-0. Regular stipends totalling Rs. 4,702-1-0 were also given to 29 refugee students from Sind, Rs. 735-9-6 to 5 schools.

Educational Work: Under this head were a first-grade, a second-grade and a Teachers' Training College, with a total strength of 1,611 boys. Through the Secondary Schools in India and Pakistan the Mission taught 6,220 boys and 2,698 girls. The Lower grade schools had on their rolls 5,463 boys and 3,349 girls. The Industrial and Technical Schools had 340 boys. The 30 Students' Homes looked after 1,263 boys and 177 girls.

Work Outside India: In Ceylon, Burma, Singapore, Mauritius and Fiji the Mission successfully carried on its educational and cultural activities. The Ceylon Branch conducted 22 Schools of different types with 4,250 boys and 2,750 girls. In East Pakistan it maintained its existence with some difficulty.

Finance: The total income for the year was Rs. 41,71,809-1-5 and the total expenditure Rs. 35,46,665-3-8.

Belur Math,
30-9-1953

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
General Secretary,
RAMAKRISHNA MISSION.

RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MANGALORE REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1947 TO 1952

The report gives in brief how the Ashrama was started on 3-6-47 and details its varied activities from its date of inception to the end of the year 1952. This Ashrama was started as a section of The Holy Mother's Trust, Mysore, which was created by the late Swami Srivasananda in 1938 in furtherance of the cause of spreading the message of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. Even in the year of its start, apart from worship and Bhajana conducted everyday in the Ashrama, religious preaching in the form of Sunday discourses and lectures in various schools, Colleges and students' hostels on religious and cultural themes were undertaken in and outside Mangalore City. A small library was also run especially for the benefit of the devotees. In the year 1948, the Ashrama was removed to a more spacious building and the activities continued in a wider scale with classes on the *Gita*, *Bhagavatam* etc..

The work of the Ashrama increased further in 1949, 1950 and 1951. On 4-10-51 the Ashrama

was transferred to an extensive building, which was gifted to the Ashrama along with seven acres of land where it is functioning now.

Although, thus a permanent place had been secured, such amenities as pipe-water supply, furniture, repair and improvement of the building and the area around as well as some permanent arrangement for the maintenance of the monastic members and upkeep of the shrine are necessary. For this purpose and due to the expanding activities of this Centre, which is the basis of the newly started Ramakrishna Mission in the town, friends and devotees are requested to extend their cooperation to this infant Ashrama in every way they can.

PURNA KUMBHA MELA AT ALLAHABAD AN APPEAL

The famous religious fair, the Purna Kumbha Mela, will be held in Prayag on the Triveni sands in the months of January and February in 1954. The important dates for Snan are 14th January (Makar Shukranti), January 19th (Pous Purnima), 3rd February (Amavashya) and 8th February (Vasanta Panchami). Pilgrims and Sadhus come to this Mela from all parts of India and the number usually swells to forty lakhs. Special arrangements are to be made for the medical care of the pilgrims. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Allahabad, will, as usual, open a camp on the Mela grounds for an outdoor charitable dispensary and first aid for the purpose of giving medical help and attention to the assembled pilgrims. There will also be a boarding and lodging section to provide food and shelter to about four hundred pilgrims.

Qualified doctors and compounders will be necessary to conduct the work. Medicines, dressing materials and food-stuffs will have to be purchased for the purpose. The contemplated relief-work, it is estimated, will cost Rs 20,000/-.

We, therefore, earnestly appeal to the generous public to help us in this noble and humanitarian cause. Contributions in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged by any of the following:

1. The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthiganj, Allahabad, U. P.
2. The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math (Howrah), West Bengal.
3. The Manager, Udbodhan Office, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

SWAMI DHIRATMANANDA
Secretary,
RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, ALLAHABAD

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Mundakopanishad		1 0	0 15	
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