

The Vedanta Kesari

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श्रीमच्छंकरभगवत्पादविरचिता
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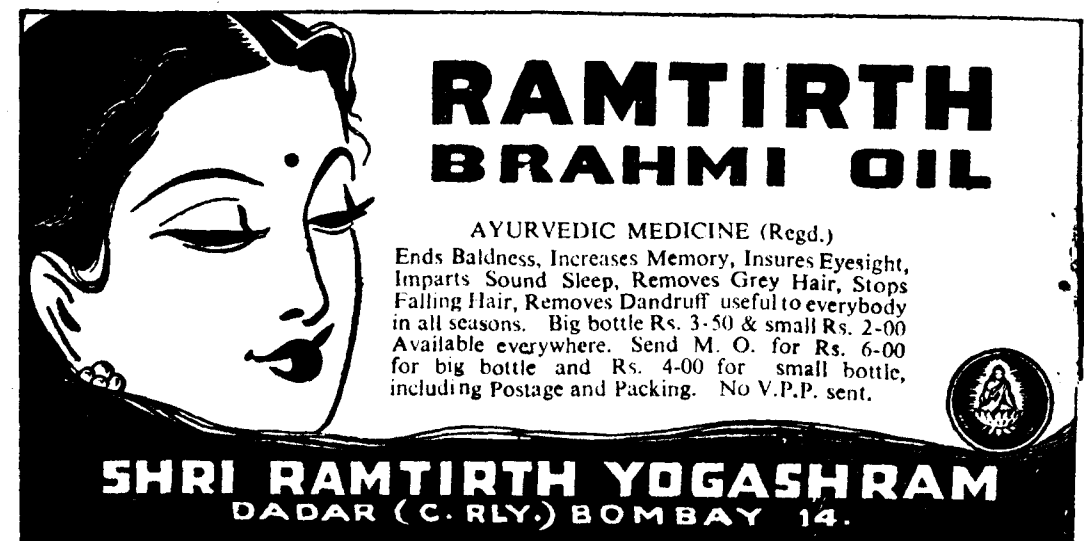
THE VEDANTA KESARI

MAY 1957

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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FROM MONTH TO MONTH WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SCENES FROM HIS LIFE FOR MEDITATION

May 1884 — Sri Ramakrishna was sitting with some devotees on the raised platform encircling the old Banyan tree in the Panchavati. The rest sat on the ground below. As the Master's birthday-celebration had to be put off because of his illness, they wanted to celebrate it to-day. A famous woman musician was going to sing devotional songs. . . .

Surendra took his seat and seeing that Bhavanath had his coat on, said: "On returning from office, as I put away my coat, I said to the Divine Mother, 'O Mother, how tightly you have bound me to the world!'"

Master: "There are eight fetters by which man is bound: shame, hatred, fear, pride of caste, hesitation, the desire to conceal, and so forth."

The Master sang:

In the world's busy market-place, O Syama Thou art flying kites:
High up they soar on the wind of hope, held fast by Maya's string.

Master: "'Maya's string' means wife and children. 'Upon the kite strings Thou hast rubbed the manja-paste of worldliness' 'Worldliness' means lust and gold.

"The three gunas—sattva, rajas and tamas—have men under their control. They are like three brothers. As long as sattva exists, it calls on rajas for help; and rajas can get help from tamas. The three gunas are so many robbers. Tamas kills and rajas binds. Sattva, no doubt, releases man from bondage, but it cannot take him to God. No sooner is the covering of 'lust and gold' removed, then one attains Chidananda, Consciousness and Bliss."

Suddenly there came a rain-storm. The Master went back to his room with the devotees and the musician. Presently she sang about the monastic life of the great Bengali saint Chaitanya Deva. When the Master heard about Chaitanya's renunciation, he stood up and went into samadhi. The devotees put flower-garlands around his neck. Bhavanath and Rakhai supported his body lest he should fall on the ground. The other devotees stood around him, as if it were a scene from Sri Chaitanya's life. (adapted)

THE ROLE OF VEDANTA IN SHAPING OUR NATION

With the dawn of independence and integration of the States India has become a well-knit country in spite of its sad partition. Though it has as many as fourteen major languages India is one, having one Constitution, one Parliament and one President. Politically its integrity is unquestionable. The cultural pattern and the outlook on life and the aspirations are so similar in different parts of the country that India can be called a real nation as any other nation however much the purists or academicians might doubt. Though the emergence of a common State is a new phenomenon, the cultural unity was achieved long ago due to the common outlook on life and common aspirations. And that stupendous task was performed by the grand philosophy and religion of Vedanta lending its synthesizing influence on the different groups of people following diverse faiths. The saints and holy men in all faiths developed that synthetic vision because of their unitive mystic experience. Truth is one though the masters call it by various names, was the guiding principle for all sects and groups. That is why we find that different sects, while following their own path as the best, were at the same time catholic enough to pay homage to the other paths or their deities.

With the coming of Islam and Christianity, the two totally extra-territorial forms of faith, the balance of Indian society was upset. India with its genius for assimilation accepted in earlier days the Sakas, the Huns and others *en bloc* in her body politic with her peculiar method of reinterpretation and assigned each group a place providing for it particular work of the society. But now owing to the loss of independence and quick changes of life her energy

was spent in keeping her own house in order. As a result India failed to effect complete fusion and integration of the exotic groups with the local ones. Another reason possibly was that the new groups belonged to the faith of the rulers and not only owed their allegiance to an alien and exclusive system of life and philosophy but maintained their contact also with their centres of origin thus remaining least affected by the harmonizing influence of Hinduism. But that they were at least partially liberalised could be seen even the other day before the communalistic politics was introduced in the Indian arena by vested interests. Now with the emergence of India as a full-blooded nation the fusion should be easier. But the different groups in the country being still conscious of their separate entities and willing to maintain their peculiarities, a wider basis of harmony is necessary to fuse them all into one group, integrated in their aspirations and behaviour. This task can be performed even now by Hinduism. Possibly the scheme of life and professions, which got encrusted through the accretions of ages, will have to be liberalized or scrapped out even for its own society and only the essentials of it put forward to embrace all others. Hinduism can assimilate alien cultures and religious ideals and social units by emphasising the essentials of spirituality, minimising ritualism and thus producing internal and external liberalism.

The essentials of all religions are the same. And Vedanta embodies those essentials. It can free Hinduism from the apotheosized hereditary caste and plethora of rituals, in accordance with the taste of the modern people. It can supply a generalised background to

other faiths, an all-encompassing system for intellectual basis. If the followers of dogmatic, doctrinaire theologies find the Vedantic theory of all paths leading to the same Godhead difficult to incorporate in their own systems, they can at least recognize that in a land of many faiths they can accept the theory of unity in variety. This recognition will change the mental climate and pave the way for better understanding. After all, the days of dreaming of a world religious empire are gone and if the religions are to fight the onslaught of aggressive secularism and anti-religious systems, they must unite to preserve the faith, not for political or material advantages but for the deepening of spiritual sense itself.

What is the core of all religions? Is it not the consciousness of oneself as Spirit and having faith in a Higher Reality and in higher values? Religions are worth the name when they foster faith in God and in the higher virtues. The true Muslims, the true Christians join the true Hindus in their faith in God, in devotion, wisdom, sacrifice and detachment. It is not that a man can be a good follower of any of these systems without changing his life, remaining earth-bound. He must lift up his mind and attune it to the Divine. Every religion says that. Vedanta, of course, proclaims this more emphatically and unequivocally. That is why we like to invoke the name of Vedanta or essential Hinduism, instead of Hinduism in general which has doctrinaire side also like other religions. Vedanta represents the essence, the core, the cream of all the faiths and it is free from all colours of the limitations of any country or society. It points out the truth lying in every religion, unnoticed, unexplored, undeveloped. Let the different religions take the clue from Vedanta, re-discover the truth in their

own systems and express it in tune with their own genius. Mutual understanding is the urgent necessity of the times. Let the best minds of every faith come forward and persuade the society to accept the conceptions of unitive experience, of unity in variety, of the synthesis of religions. As Swami Vivekananda declared, Vedanta does not try to convert anyone, it seeks to make a Hindu a better Hindu, a Mussalman a better Mussalman, and a Christian a better Christian. Will not the leaders of religions hear this liberal message of Vedanta for deepening the spiritual lives of their followers, for the survival of religions in this age of materialism at least out of expediency, if not out of conviction? Politics alone cannot bring about this mutual understanding, for it seeks to acquire rights, whereas religion endeavours to sacrifice them for the good of the people. This spiritual principle of self-sacrifice is fortunately still the basic idea of our society.

The political democracy in our country is still a new venture. It cannot withstand the onslaught of unrest caused by differing groups as possibly a stable system could. So it is the duty of all groups of people, political or cultural, to discover and stress the common features they have. They should on no account arouse the passions of the people on the grounds of religion and language, or manners and customs. Unless they want to make capital out of the hatred there is no justification. Even then they should beware of the after-effects. Our neighbouring country separated because of jealousy and hatred and still its masters are being dogged by these two vices. Even in India the hatred we had for the old Government has been partially transferred in the form of apathy to our own one, though it is slowly melting away.

Another thing we can learn from Vedanta. The democratic system raises a man today to the skies and drops him down tomorrow. The heart-breaking process causes may be eliminated or minimised if the sufferers develop the virtues of detachment and sacrifice. Love of country alone may be able, in rare cases of developed individuals, to sustain them but in the vast majority of cases failure will damp the enthusiasm and energy, for mere patriotism is too much mixed up with desire for larger work and resultant power. They can remain satisfied with less spectacular work if only they are imbued with high idealism or are temperamentally optimistic. They can do unostentatious work better if they are suffused with the religious idea that any work done in a spirit of dedication is good enough for the development of the inner life of man.

If the spiritual outlook is good for the unostentatious workers, it is imperative for the people at the helm of big affairs. The power or position of a high rank often breeds pride and arrogance. It is necessary for those in power to be imbued with a spirit of humility, not a mask but a genuine feeling, and that is possible only when they are aware of a higher Power and a Divine scheme of things.

With the coming of independence a peculiar trait of shirking duties and of endeavouring to rise up in life by other means is evident in the cases of many employees. It is a sad state of affairs. As the element of fear of the foreign masters is gone, of course happily, it is necessary to provide for common workers an incentive to create devotion for their work either by infusing love of the country or enlightened self-interest or Vedantic attitude of looking upon all work as Divine service. While the first two may be of immediate appeal, the

last one is more enduring. Vedanta proclaims the unity of existence of all the creatures and Swami Vivekananda pointed out its implication that service to man, therefore, is service to the Divine. Thus our ordinary duties become a way to self-realization. This, as Sri Krishna pointed out, will attract the maximum of devotion to duty and at the same time make the worker unattached and remove his feeling of frustration whenever such occasion arises. As the work will be a service to the Divine, all dubious means also will be given up. We are, of course, sadly aware that it is difficult for a common man to be really honest in a dishonest environment. It will be the duty of the Government and society to narrow down the necessity, allurements and scope for such dishonesty. Mere idealism possibly will not do for common man, some modicum of amenities, laws and other deterrents also will possibly be necessary. But a spiritual outlook will give a zest in work even to the average man and surely it will enhance the sustained enthusiasm of idealistic people.

The foundations of a democracy as against the totalitarian system lie in the recognition of the dignity of human personality. Vedantic idea of Divinity in man will supply the necessary philosophical basis. According to this view politics or an efficient system of administration is required for providing man with the normal amenities of life and sufficient leisure and scope for spiritual and cultural self-realization. Swami Vivekananda believed that the potentialities of a man can be best brought out by making him conscious of the immense potentialities of the Self. Preach the glories of Atman, was his advice. In innumerable cases we have also found that this awareness has created a tremendous confidence and enthusiasm in men, expressing itself in various types

of creative activity according to their innate tendencies and aptitudes. It is essential, of course, that a group of people should know of Atman for a purely spiritual motive also. They will be the beacons for guiding the people in doubt and confusion. Attuning one's life to the Divine, which is the source of all strength, is like a tributary's merging in a mighty river, thereby getting the capacity to make an entire area fertile. Now-a-days political leaders revel in denouncing the ideal of renunciation. People do not know that they have some social or political groups in their mind when they condemn in general terms, sometimes even the ideal itself. As a result the susceptible people get hardened and the very sap of the roots of sacrifice dries up and its effects are felt in other national spheres.

Whole-souled and sustained devotion to a cause comes through spirituality. Vedanta tries to eliminate the difference between sacred and secular by suffusing the latter with spiritual ideas. Spiritual quest itself brought Gandhiji and many others to politics. Thus it was the motive power of Indian nationalism. So attempts have been made here to spiritualize politics and social activities. Spiritualizing all our efforts is congenial to our national temperament and will make the system more enduring. But it is possible only when a large number of individuals or at least the topmost ones take up the spiritual attitude and thus develop a national character. This will require a spiritual reform according to the Vedantic gospel of service preached by Swami Vivekananda. There is no fear of fanaticism being developed, for Vedanta is free from mere conventions and creeds which are the roots of religious bigotry. Even if there is some fear because of India's recent experience we must give a trial to the co-ordination of the diffe-

rent spheres of life of the nation which is a united whole. By evolving a synthetic consciousness the idea of a common ideal, common endeavour and common feeling must be created among the different constituents of the society. That indeed will give India an ideal nationhood.

The message of India to the world is the idea of oneness of the universe. With the imprinting of this idea on his consciousness a man will discover peace within himself and will be at peace with all. India must preach this idea of oneness to save the world from a major catastrophe. Even for her own sake, if she is to remain a neutral and idealistic nation, she must create an atmosphere among the nations of the world of genuine love for peace, amity and idealism. Absolute standards of morality may not be possible to be kept up in the beginning, but a time may come when it will be possible. Even if it is a vision, it is prompted by lofty idealism and optimism and is sure to be a great motive force for unselfish, whole-hearted endeavour. People engaged in some national service, such as politics, business or military, may find their profession stained with unspiritual acts of diplomacy, exploitation or violence. Their moral conflict may be neutralised if they perform their duty for duty's sake and are perfectly non-attached. This psychological sanction is possibly necessary to keep a man active. It must be admitted, however, that it falls short of the highest standard, which possibly is unavoidable in an uncongenial social and world atmosphere. The Karma theory, that their accumulated bad innate tendencies are thus being worked out and as a result they will ascend to the consummation of purity, may hearten them and slowly lead them to the ideal standard.

Our life is the most mysterious of all

problems. It is not merely a mechanical and purposeless chance product of blind matter's evolution. Faith in the highest unity and a higher destiny for man may not solve all the moral problems in the language of reason but it will provide the soul of man with a perennial fountain of vigour and progressive enlightenment.

If Indian nationalism takes as its basis with firm faith the ideal of realizing the higher consciousness, it will transcend narrow nationalism and will pave the way for the emergence of a world com-

munity which is the dream of the best minds all over the world. India must translate this trans-social and trans-national ideal in her life in tune with her genius. The role of Vedanta is to help her ascend to this ideal of unitive experience from which human unity will flow as a by-product. This may be done by Vedanta through spiritualizing life, through stressing on harmony of religions, unity in multiplicity, Divinity of all creation and eliminating the dichotomy between sacred and secular. And this is the real Indian way.

GLIMPSES OF MAHARAJ (SWAMI BRAHMANANDA)

P. SESHADRI

It was from my father who used to subscribe for the *Prabuddha Bharata* that I first came to know of the great Swamiji (Vivekananda) and his Divine Master, Sri Ramakrishna. Later, the *Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, *Ramakrishna Punthi*, *Ramakrishna Lila Prasanga* and other works gave me some details about the other disciples of the Master, especially of Swami Brahmananda, well known among the devotees as Maharaj, the Spiritual Son and eternal companion of the Lord.

The first person who told me of his meeting Maharaj was Sri Padmanabhan Tampi who had served in various capacities under the Government of Travancore and was respected for his honest and efficient discharge of duties, exemplary conduct and excellent character. He had the good fortune to be blessed by Swami Ramakrishnananda during his stay at Trivandrum in 1904. Sri Tampi invited the Swami to take Bhiksha in his house and the Swami replied, 'You will have the privilege of having Sri Guru Maharaj (Sri Ramakrishna) as your guest.' On the appointed day the Swami went to Sri Tampi's house and performed the Puja

of Sri Ramakrishna before he sat for his meal. By an oversight, ghee had not been placed among the offerings for the Puja. Hence the Swami refused to take ghee when it was served. He said that he never took any food which had not been offered to the Lord.

The effect of the Swami's touch when he blessed Sri Tampi lasted according to his own testimony for a period of six months. Gradually, Sri Tampi was filled with an intense desire to get initiation from the Swami. So, he went to Madras and earnestly requested Swami Ramakrishnananda to give him Mantropadesha. The Swami said, 'We have a Nitya Mukta, an eternally free Mahapurusha amongst us. It is best that you be initiated by him. He is none other than our President Maharaj, Swami Brahmananda. You can go to Puri as he is now there and pay your respects to him. I shall give you an introduction letter.' Accordingly, Sri Tampi went to Puri along with a friend, who was also a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. Maharaj received them very kindly. An auspicious day was fixed for the initiation and Sri Tampi was duly blessed.

He used to say that he felt the blessing of Maharaj tangibly working in him all his life from that moment. Sri Tampi took Sannyasa later on receiving the name of Swami Parananda and passed away at a ripe old age with the name of Sri Ramakrishna on his lips even at the last moment of his life. He has enriched the Ramakrishna literature in Malayalam by his translation of *Sri Ramakrishna Upadesh*, *Ramakrishna Kathamrita* and other works from the original Bengali.

It may be noted in passing that Maharaj put this question to Sri Tampi and his companion, 'Why did God create us?' They could not offer any satisfactory answer. Then Maharaj himself gave the solution: 'To love Him'.

Sri Tampi used to write to Maharaj often and he treasured the letters graciously sent to him by Maharaj in reply. In one of the letters which I was privileged to read, Maharaj wrote to the following effect: 'Do not adopt any artificiality or aloofness in your meditation. Think of your Ishta (chosen Deity) as a nice charming child and behave as you would naturally do to such a one. This is the method best suited to you and you will make progress thereby.' Sri Tampi used to perform regular Puja and it was in his Shrine that I first saw the photo of Maharaj along with Swami Ramakrishnananda taken in Madras.

Once Sri Tampi went to Belur Math accompanied by a Brahmachari of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Haripad to pay his respects to Maharaj. The Brahmachari was all eagerness to be initiated by Maharaj and made his humble request for that purpose. Maharaj asked him to go to him next day. When the Brahmachari did so, Maharaj said that he was not well and so told him to wait till the next morning. On that day also, the Brahmachari had to return disappointed. The mother-heart of Swami Premananda could not bear this. He interceded with Maharaj, telling him that it was very hard

that Maharaj did not show compassion to a man coming from such a long distance, the southernmost corner of India. Maharaj replied thus: 'If your heart feels so much of compassion why can you not yourself give him initiation?' Swami Premananda rose to the occasion and said: 'He did not come to me for initiation. Had he done so, I would have initiated him then and there. He has taken refuge in you and you may bless him'. Then Maharaj softly replied: 'Brother, I was not well. What could I do? I shall certainly give him initiation tomorrow.' The next day, the Brahmachari was duly initiated. His devotion to Maharaj knows no bounds. He would often say how much he used to feel blessed in the presence of Maharaj during the morning Bhajan at Belur Math. He took Sannyasa after some years.

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Another person who met Maharaj at Puri told me of his experience. He had gone on pilgrimage with his mother and some other female relations. Learning that Maharaj was at Puri, he hastened to Sasi Niketan, his residence, without informing the other members of his party. As soon as he prostrated, Maharaj asked him about his whereabouts. When he learnt that the devotee was from Travancore, Maharaj specially enquired of Sri Tampi and asked an attendant to note his address. Afterwards, Maharaj said to him: 'I think you had been to the temple of Jagannath, but did not get the sacred Prasad. Take Prasad here.' That remark of Maharaj astonished the newcomer, for that was the fact. How could Maharaj have known it? He took Prasad and Maharaj was watching him all the time. As soon as the devotee had washed after partaking of the Prasad, Maharaj suddenly told him: 'Go at once; your people are anxious about you, and they are seeking you here and there'. He took leave of Maharaj and started. On the way, he met his mother and others who were worried as they did not know where he had gone.

Some years later, this devotee was among those who received Maharaj at Haripad. As soon as he saw him Maharaj remarked: 'A known face.' He was blessed by Maharaj with initiation and his face glows with enthusiasm when he talks of his Guru.

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Another friend who met Maharaj at Belur Math was a member of an aristocratic family in Travancore. He was a Tahsildar Magistrate at that time. He took a few months' leave and started on pilgrimage to North India. He proceeded to Bangalore in the first instance, and Swami Nirmalananda, the then President of the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama there, advised him to go to Belur Math and pay his respects to Maharaj and the other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. When he reached the landing place of the Math, he thought of taking his bath in the Ganges before entering the sacred place. After the bath, he went to the Guest House and was drying his clothes in the sun. Suddenly he remembered that he had forgotten to take the cover containing fifteen ten-rupee notes which he had placed on the bank before he took his bath. He ran to the ghat. Meanwhile, an incident had taken place. Maharaj who was in his room upstairs called his attendant and said: 'Something wrong is happening at the ghat. Ask the Swami who is downstairs to watch there carefully.' The attendant told the Swami. At once the Swami proceeded to the place. From a distance, he saw that a boat touched the landing place, the boatman got down and hurriedly took something from there, returned to the boat and was rowing rapidly. It was at that time the gentleman came to fetch his cover. He was non-plussed to see the cover missing. On being questioned by the Swami, the gentleman told everything. At once the Swami shouted to the boatman to return to the landing place. He obeyed and told the truth when he was threatened. The Swami took the cover and reprimanded the boatman for his misdeed. Then he turned to the devotee and asked him the details of the

notes he had kept in the cover. The devotee told the details and also said that, as advised by Swami Nirmalananda, he had noted as memorandum on the cover, the words, 'Offering to the Belur Math'. He got back the cover and was relieved.

Soon after, he was called to pay his respects to Maharaj. While he was prostrating himself before him, Maharaj said: 'I have become a Grihastha; I have become a Grihastha'. The devotee could not understand the drift of these strange words and stood bewildered. Then Maharaj himself explained the sense thus: "People come here who do not take care of their own things, and I have to do it for them. So I have no time to think of God. I have become a Grihastha." The rebuke went home and the devotee realised his folly. He profoundly apologised and assured Maharaj that he would be very careful in future.

That evening, the gentleman wanted to go to Dakshineswar for worship. The Brahmachari who had been deputed to look after his needs told him that he could not do so without the permission of Maharaj. It was tea time and Maharaj and Mahapurushji (Swami Sivananda) were pacing up and down the lawn talking all the while. They would sip the tea and walk to the other end. The gentleman would think of asking Maharaj for permission when they were near the tea-table, but before he could open his mouth, they would proceed on their walk. This happened time and again. Then Mahapurushji told Maharaj: "Why not grant this man's request?" Maharaj at once turned to the gentleman and said: "You want to go to Dakshineswar? Yes, you may do so." Maharaj immediately had the necessary arrangements made and sent a competent guide to accompany him. The devotee used to speak with wonder as to how Mahapurushaji and Maharaj could understand his heart's desire without even a hint being conveyed to them. To the last of his life, the gentleman would recount these incidents and he was all devotion to Maharaj.

A friend who met Maharaj at the Madras Math told me of a talk he personally heard on that occasion. Maharaj, Mahapurushji and others were seated in a room of the Math. A great devotee who later joined the order as Swami Srivasananda said to Maharaj: "I have a prayer. An authoritative life of Sri Ramakrishna is a great desideratum. Maharaj, you have been most beloved of him and you have lived with him most intimately. None else is fitted to write the life. Be gracious to give this rare gift to the world". Maharaj answered: "We, the co-disciples of Sri Swami Vivekananda, approached him once with this very request, as we thought him the most competent to compile such a biography. He said in reply: 'Brothers, if I have found anything impossible, it is to write a life of Sri Guru Maharaj. I am afraid that that perfect life will be rendered imperfect by my imperfections. This is the only work which I feel impossible to do. So I shall not attempt the impossible.' When Sri Swamiji himself has said thus, how can we venture to undertake such a work?" After saying this Maharaj left the room. Then Mahapurushji told the devotee: "Why do you make such a request to Maharaj? His mind is always in a very high plane. It is lifted up in Samadhi in a trice. How can he bring down his mind to remember and record facts and dates?"

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During the course of his pilgrimage to Kanya Kumari (Cape Comorin) Maharaj halted at Quilon for a few days. Many of the leading people went to pay their respects to him. Among them was a professed atheist, a prominent lawyer of the Quilon Bar. When others saluted him Maharaj was silent. But when the turn of this gentle-

man came Maharaj said to him thrice, 'Remember God'. The gentleman was abashed and all present were astonished.

On another occasion during his stay at Quilon, Maharaj was seated in his room. A person came, sat in the outer hall and began to argue vehemently with Swami Nirmalananda. He was an agnostic and would not be convinced even though the Swami patiently met the arguments advanced by him. The discussion became protracted. Suddenly Maharaj who was in a distant part of the building, rose from his seat, came out and said a few simple words with such compelling force that the man fell at his feet, prayed for pardon and left the place after confessing that he was now fully convinced of the folly of his position. Sri Maharaj spoke to the following effect: "Don't argue. God exists. I assure you. This is the only Truth, the truth of truths."

Maharaj stayed for a week at Kanya Kumari. He used to go to the Shrine both in the morning and evening. He would stand before the image and softly address the Deity as "Mother, Mother, Brahma-mayi", and hold converse with Her. It seemed from the expression of his face that he actually saw the living Divine Mother and not an image. His face would be suffused with joy and bliss. Sometimes he would ask some of the members of his party to sing hymns to the Mother and he would be in an ecstatic mood all the time.

One day, he performed Kumari Puja. A few virgin girls were sumptuously fed and presented with clothes and other gifts. It was a veritable worship and Maharaj prostrated before them in the end, seeing in them the Divine Mother.

SPIRIT OF INDIAN CULTURE

SWAMI TEJASANANDA

It is a truism that education and culture are too intimately connected to be separated from each other. They are not considered in India as mutually repellent forces; they are the obverse and reverse of the same shield of life; for the evolution of a culture depends principally upon the nature and character of the education we receive in our schools and colleges. Education, in the proper sense of the term, does not mean the amount of information we gather through the study of books; but, as has been rightly said by Swami Vivekananda, it is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. It is, in short, the unfoldment of the pages of the book of life to discover the invaluable wealth of spiritual wisdom that lies hidden in every being. This inner perfection or evolution brought about by education is what constitutes the keynote of Indian Culture.

It cannot however be denied that, to render education complete and fruitful, it must cover both the secular and the spiritual aspects of learning as has been declared in the Mundaka Upanishad **द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यदब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति—परा चैवापरा च।** The Para-Vidya here refers to the Brahma-Vidya or the spiritual knowledge and the Apara to the secular knowledge. Indeed a balanced combination of the two is indispensable inasmuch as it would help to build the whole personality of an individual and enable him to grow physically strong, intellectually alert and spiritually enlightened so as to realize his own identity with the entire universe.

The scientists say,—physically speaking, you and I, the sun, the moon and stars are but little wavelets in the one infinite ocean of matter, the Samashti; but our saints and seers going a step further proclaim that behind this idea of the unity of phenomena,

there is but one Soul pervading the whole existence, one Reality without a second. The spiritual oneness of the whole universe is what our education must teach and emphasise in all our academic halls. The oneness of mankind, as has been pertinently pointed out by an eminent savant of America, is something which modern man everywhere needs to learn if he is to move creatively into one world where the richness of diversity does not mean an anarchy of foolish competition, but each person needs to find the meaning of that oneness in his own selfhood before he can go far in helping to build one world.

In the light of the above, it is to be considered whether we have been able to make adequate arrangement in our schools and colleges for the fulfilment of this real objective of education; whether there is an insistence on the acquisition of that type of knowledge which helps to stimulate the creative impulses of our spiritual being. In India the criterion of true education was quite different in the past, though at the present day our standpoint has been vitiated to a considerable extent by the introduction of the Western pattern. Are we not giving too much emphasis today on the exaltation of the brain over the soul, on the mechanical perfection over the spiritual beauty, and on the lifeless logic and arid scholastic learning over the expansion and illumination of the heart which, in fact, forms the very cornerstone of the mighty edifice of Indian Culture?

A Ramakrishna and a Christ did not require any university degrees to be known as "educated" men in their respective countries. They had their own credentials, and for these, today almost the entire humanity bow down their heads before them in loving reverence. It is regrettable that this religious aspect of education has almost been

lost sight of in the scheme of our modern university education, and that is one of the main reasons why a healthy social life is not growing up in the country and disruptive forces are at work more or less in almost every sphere of our corporate existence.

Another regrettable feature in our present system of education is that we have thrown the study of Sanskrit into the cold shade of neglect, though, in fact, in India Sanskrit culture and prestige go hand in hand. To preserve the integrity of our cultural life, a proper rehabilitation of Sanskrit study in keeping with the promotion of other branches of knowledge is an indispensable factor. Sanskrit with its wide range of subjects is a veritable store-house of knowledge, and furnishes us with the master-key to the deeper understanding of our own cultural traditions, religious practices, and the sacred legacy bequeathed to us by our spiritual ancestors. Education bereft of such an emphasis on this aspect of study cannot but

fail to produce the desired result. It is high time that we should look up to the ideals of the great builders of our spiritual destiny and try to shape our educational policy according to the glorious cultural traditions of the land.

It is moreover painful to find that in recent years the connotation of the term 'culture' has undergone a miraculous change. Nowadays we too frequently hear of Cultural Missions travelling from place to place and of Cultural Conferences being held here and there. But, to our utter surprise, we find that the personnel of such Cultural Missions and Conferences contain only groups of artists and artistes, instrumentalists and musical celebrities, as if the culture of a race or a nation consists only in this class of artistic activities. There is therefore an urgent need for an orientation of the outlook of the modern man of India so as to realize the true spirit of our culture and to preserve the integrity and sanctity of our cultural heritage.

BUDDHISM AND MODERN THOUGHT

M. SIVAKAMAYYA

The Government and people of the secular state of Bharat took part with enthusiasm, in the celebration on a national scale, of the 2500th Buddha Jayanti. It is a day of rejoicing for all Buddhists, and Buddhism is one of the great religions of the world. A memorable landmark in its history, and an occasion for rejoicing for its adherents, is therefore deserving of our respect. Moreover, it is the religion of the people of a number of States in our immediate neighbourhood with whom it is desirable for us to cultivate and foster friendly relations in every possible way. Besides, Buddha lived and preached in our country, and several places of pilgrimage sacred to the Buddhists lie in our land. And above all, our country and culture are connected closely with the early stages in the history of the religion of Buddhism and especially with the life and

teachings of its founder and, we are thus justified in associating ourselves with the celebrations of Buddha Jayanti.

But the modern interest of the educated classes and leaders in India, in Buddha and Buddhism, is largely due to other reasons which deserve some scrutiny. After the political and economic domination of India and other countries of South and South-East Asia, by the advanced nations of Western Europe in the modern period, the intellectuals of the ruling races began to interest themselves in their histories, religions and cultures and understand and interpret them in their own way. In this process, when they came upon the Hinayana School of Buddhism in the countries of South-East Asia, namely Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Indo-China, they were very much attracted by certain features of it which appealed to their intel-

lectual and moral prepossessions, and their modern mentality. They therefore embarked on a critical study and interpretation of the history and culture, the scriptures and literature, of these peoples in relation to the history and culture and religion of India, emphasising and underlining the points of difference and contrast, which impressed them. In this religion of Hinayana Buddhism, with its rejection of the soul and God and hence of all spirituality and mysticism, its emphasis on simple rules of virtuous conduct and ethical life, as against ritual and ceremonial observances, its remarkable achievements even in ancient times in the sciences of logic and psychology, its freedom from the distinctions and privileges of caste, the modern European found a healthy contrast to the vague mysticism, elaborate ritualism and rigid casteism of the religion of ancient India, as it appeared to him. The advances in the physical and biological sciences up to his time, and the conclusions reached by the leaders in scientific thought, also confirmed his materialistic outlook upon life and tended to show the religion of Hinayana Buddhism as remarkably modern and agreeable to the modern mentality. It is this outlook upon life, and interpretation of our ancient history and culture, and the mutual bearings of the philosophy of the Sanatana Dharma of India and the teachings of Buddha and of Buddhism that we, the educated classes of India, have imbibed from our foreign rulers along with their materialistic, rationalistic, and democratic ideas and ideals, and which is responsible, to a considerable extent, for the special enthusiasm among educated Indians, for the teachings of Buddha and Buddhism.

The greatest among modern Indians, like Vivekananda, Tagore, Dr Besant and Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Radhakrishnan are all agreed in their estimation of Buddha as a great son of ancient India and one of the wisest and best of the Hindus of all times. During the national renaissance and the attempt to interpret our ancient culture and

religion in terms calculated to appeal to the modern mind, Buddha and his teachings received special attention as an integral part, and one of the finest flowers, of the culture of our land. During the struggle for political independence, the needs for national unity and national self-respect as well as the chosen methods of political agitation and struggle, have all tended to focus the attention of the entire nation upon the life and teachings of Buddha, as never before. So it behoves the intellectuals of this country at this juncture to examine in detail the essentials of the religion based on the teachings of this great son of India, the points of agreement as well as of difference and contrast of these with the tenets of our own religion and philosophy and to ascertain how far they are more or less agreeable to modern thought, comparatively. It may be necessary in this connection to draw a distinction between the explicit teachings of Buddha and the doctrines developed on the basis of his teachings and silences by his disciples and followers. This need not be interpreted as an arrogant attempt on our part to teach the Buddhists what Buddha meant really but to ascertain what Buddha means to us and clarify our attitude to Hinduism, Buddha and Buddhism.

The essential tenets of Buddhist philosophy, common to all the different schools of it, may be briefly summarised in a few propositions thus.

1. There is nothing permanent in this universe. Every thing is in a flux, both in the material world and in the mind of man. There is no changeless entity behind either of them. They are both not entities but complexes or aggregates, constantly changing, though continuous, like a running stream or a burning flame.

2. All these changes in the material world and in the consciousness of man are bound by the Law of causation which operates on the moral as well as the physical plane. Every cause produces its effect and

every effect must have a cause. Our character is due to our actions in the past and will be modified by our actions in the present. The effects of our actions may be manifested in this life or in other lives caused by them.

3. Existence is sorrow. Birth, illness, desire, separation, decay, death, all the facts of existence cause sorrow. The facts of evolutionary existence result in births and deaths, life after life.

4. The root cause of all sorrow is *Tanha*, *Trishna*, craving or desire, born of self or sense of separateness.

5. The remedy for sorrow is in the removal of the root cause, the extinction of desire and selfishness, the obliteration of the sense of self or separateness.

6. The method of compassing the destruction of sorrow is by the gradual control of desires and eventual conquest over and destruction of the eager thirst for life and its pleasures and the sense of self or separateness, by self-culture, virtuous life and universal love.

7. The method consists of : (a) Right belief as to the law of causation or Karma. (b) Right thought. (c) Right speech. (d) Right action. (e) Right livelihood. (f) Right effort. (g) Right remembrance, and (h) Right concentration.

8. The goal is salvation or emancipation from sorrow, or Nirvana, the utter extinction of all desire and sense of one's separateness or ego.

No doubt there are many features in this simple, yet complete and practical philosophy of life, very attractive to the modern mind. There is no appeal here to any authority of revelation or scripture or prophet but only to common sense and one's own experience and reason. There is no prescription of any ritual or ceremonial observance but only of self-discipline, virtuous conduct, *sila*, and compassion, *maitri*, and therefore no dependence on any priestly or privileged class. But we Hindus have to note that there is nothing strange or objec-

tionable to us in these doctrines of *Anatta*, *Anitya*, or transience of the phenomenal world of *Kamma*, *Karma* or causation, of *Samsara*, *Sinhara* or cycle of births and deaths and *Nibbana*, *Nirvana*, *Moksha* or emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths and sorrow by the conquest of desire and selfishness and sense of separateness of self. These doctrines are all familiar to students of the Upanishads and Gita. The only material point of difference is in the doctrine of *Anatta*, *Anatma* or denial of the soul and any spiritual reality behind the universe. But it is largely this very denial that won for Buddha's teachings as expounded by the Hinayana School of Buddhism and interpreted by the European Orientalists of the 19th century, the appreciation of the modern mind, being in harmony with the tendency of the scientific attitude and temper of the 19th century, to despise, distrust and reject any hypothesis of a spiritual reality or religious doctrine based on the same as irrational superstition. Hence the point deserves a little detailed consideration.

Recent developments in modern science, especially in physics with regard to the structure of matter, in biology with regard to the principles of variation and in psychology, have reduced the cock-sureness and dogmatism in the views of the scientists with regard to the nature of reality. Eminent scientists of the stature of Eddington, Jeans and Whitehead are prepared to admit the possibility of a spiritual reality behind the material universe, and the desirability of an idealistic philosophy to explain the phenomena of the world. Eminent intellectuals of modern times like Aldous Huxley, Herbert Reade and C. E. M. Joad are interested in oriental philosophies based on the hypothesis of a spiritual reality behind the universe and in the soul of man and a mutual relation between the two. At any rate, it cannot be maintained any longer that a religion based on rejection of the soul and all spiritual reality is alone rational and agreeable to modern thought.

Again it is maintained by competent scholars that Buddha did not explicitly deny the existence of a soul in man or a spiritual reality behind the universe, but maintained a studied silence on such question and discouraged unhealthy curiosity in his disciples regarding his views on the same, and it is more plausible to interpret his silence and reticence as an advice and exhortation to avoid unnecessary and fruitless metaphysical discussions which could never lead to any definite conclusion, but to concentrate on the practical problem of striving for emancipation through self-discipline, rather than as denial or rejection or admission of ignorance or unconcern, which are the other alternatives. It is also argued that such an interpretation is more in consonance with the other aspects of his teaching such as Nirvana as a positive condition of bliss and his prescription of Maitri or compassion for all life as the means of extinguishing desire and self and his own dedication of the latter half of his life, after attaining wisdom, to the propagation of his message. It is also more in harmony with the theory of the cycles of births and deaths or Samsara.

Moreover, even if we grant that the soul is denied by Buddha, what does the denial amount to, against the background of his other teachings? The phenomenal world is subject to change and the changes in the phenomenal world are subject to the Law of causation. The human consciousness, the investigating mind, is also a part of the phenomenal world. So, the investigating mind cannot, in the very nature of it, pronounce on the existence or otherwise of any reality behind itself which survives when the sense of separateness of the self is destroyed. So, the existence or non-existence of a soul apart from the sense of separateness while it exists and surviving it after its destruction, is a matter only for experience after the consummation is reached, and only a hypothesis, meanwhile, to satisfy the intellect and encourage the aspiration. The distinction is rather subtle and academic, whether by a

process of gradual purification and eventual extinction of all desire and sense of separateness, the personality or mind recognises a pure being within or behind as its basis and true condition all along or that the personality itself merely grows into the pure condition by development.

It is more sensible to leave it at that as a matter for personal taste and preference of the sadhaka rather than a serious doctrinal difference to dispute or discuss.

The other part of the teachings of Buddha and Buddhism based on the principles of the transience and inherent worthlessness of material pleasures is agreeable clearly to the teachings of Vedanta and the religion of the Hindus based on the same, though it is not so very agreeable perhaps, to the modern mind, so called. Buddha advocated the doctrine of the middle path or moderation with regard to the enjoyment of the material pleasures of life as conducive to individual happiness and wisdom and social harmony and well being. It is well known that Buddha condemned the practice of extreme physical mortification by the ascetics but it is not so well remembered that he condemned as strongly excessive craving for enjoyment of sensual pleasures. It is worth the attention of the modern world and at least of those modernists who profess a special reverence for Buddha and a preference for his teachings to remember this in the context of the present day craze for higher and higher standards of living for individuals, group and nations. In this doctrine of the middle path or moderation together with his other doctrines of universal compassion and non-violence, will be found, if at all, salvation for mankind and peace on earth. May all who reverence Buddha and appreciate his teachings, Buddhists, Hindus, or others join hands in the effort to propagate and practise all his teachings. It is in a spirit of gratitude to Buddha for the good he did to us and our culture, by diverting our attention from metaphysical discussions and

ceremonial observances to the practical philosophy and ethical life, with fraternal greetings and goodwill to the Buddhists of all lands, professing the religion based on his teachings, and hope for peace on earth and salvation for mankind through the practice of the teachings of Buddha; proud of

our association with Buddha and the religion based on his teachings, and yet proud at the same time of our own religious and cultural inheritance, which includes Buddha and his teachings as an integral part of it, we join in the celebrations of the 2,500th Buddha Jayanti.

RAMAKRISHNA

LAKSHMINARAYAN SAHU

Wonderful, wonderful, the dream
Wonderful, wonderful, the sight true,
Wonderful, I never saw him, I saw him today.
He showed himself, I am fortunate.
He sat at a distance, I was at the other end,
He sat quiet, thousands all round him silent,
And he began to talk, his voice was peculiar, womanish?
Effeminate? What was it? It was shrill and sweet in a way
And not so distinctly audible.
He spoke from his seat, then he stood up, and walked and walked towards me
What a fortune! Then he talked and talked.
Afterwards, he and I walked through the garden.
He showed me an image where Chaitanya Had by his side a dead body, and on another side, another,
That had died suffering from cholera
But he had no *vikar*, that is, no uneasiness of feeling.
He took me from here to there,
He led me, led me, I was led.
He showed me and showed me and I saw

Old things new.
I had gone to Dakshineswar, I had gone to Uttarpara-Bali,
But memories were revived and gloriously I saw.
That was the kindness of him, the Master.
He came, he talked, he walked with me
What a fortune! I saw Ramakrishna!
Oh, I saw him after ages,
He touched me, he talked to me, he walked with me,
But all the time I forgot to bow to him
But I was all the time bowed within myself.
Ramakrishna, My Guru! I fear, I tremble, I am unworthy.
But why did he appear before me?
Why did he move towards me from his seat at a distance?
Why did he come to me, and sat by me
And talked to me and held me, as it were, by the hand
And led me strolling through the garden?
His kindness, his mercy, his gift,
I must cherish it for life, and pursue it
Let me succeed or fail: let me run the race.

THE YOGA OF EFFORTLESSNESS

IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

The importance of spiritual practice lies in the change of perspective and conduct it brings about in us by dissolving the fundamental dichotomy in experience, by correcting the basic error in our thought-processes and by restoring to us the tranquillity and stability that are natural to us. The Yoga-Vedanta uses the words, samadhana and samadhi to signify tranquillity. That is to say, when the superior intelligence (dhior-buddhi) is rooted in the self it becomes steady and poised (sama). This poise is natural to us; disturbance and distraction are contingent and adventitious. Hence sadhana is only becoming conscious of this real state and confirming it. It is not importing something from outside by an effort.

The mind in meditation is like the salt doll, that goes to measure the depth of the ocean. It knows not what happens there, for it dissolves in the ocean. In meditation the manifest mind dissolves in the unmanifest, it becomes the unmanifest. The individual mind becomes the universal mind. There are no laws in the unmanifest realm nor is there time and where there is no time, no effort is possible; hence the real meditation which is dissolving the mind in the unmanifest must be effortless.

We have referred to the fundamental dichotomy in all experience. What is this dichotomy? The substance of life is the sense of pursuit; we feel we are pursuing something and when this sense of pursuit stops, life also stops. The substance of pursuit is values. We want to achieve something and avoid some other thing. This avoidance of something and achievement of another is not out there but in here, in our hearts. But can we say they co-exist?

Evidently not. Because avoidance and achievement are two opposing values and to say they co-exist is to say that darkness and light co-exist. If we analyse we will find that in the thought of achievement is implied the idea of avoidance and vice-versa. One value is the projection of the other. That is to say, at one moment there is unity of thought and it is the sense of values created by our personality that breaks the unity into a dichotomy and brings the polarisation. It is the sense of polarisation that makes us move to and fro like a shuttlecock; but the need for this movement, for pursuit is self-created. Dichotomy is alien, and unnatural to us. Unity is real and original to us. In unity of purpose there is no effort. Effortlessness is real and effort is self-imposed. Effort is partial and preliminary; effortlessness is total.

The basic error in the thought process is the belief that thought is externalisation. When we know a thing and say: "This is a chair, this is not a table", the certitude or conformation happens in here and not out there. But we think that the confirmation is on the chair. This is the error. The certitude of knowledge is an internal perception, it is *my* experience and not of the chair, though the chair has acted as a stimulus. But we think knowledge is out there and so we are in eternal search for an experience. We are like the proverbial musk-deer in search of something that is in ourselves. The musk-deer has the fragrant musk in its navel and gets a mild fragrance of it. But thinking it is outside of itself, it is in eternal search for the musk and ends its life without finding it.

It is this feeling that experience is out there that makes us think that experience is something to be grasped, to be seized by us. But experience can never be grasped; it is not grasping or seizing, it is experiencing, it is an inwardization, an interiorization. When we say "I cognize something", it is not as though I grasp the cognition, the cognition is only an inference. As Kant said: "The thing in itself can never be known". Cognition is not even a relationship between the subject and object; it is a spiritual identity between the subject and object from which we infer a cognition. The same case with regard to happiness. We think happiness can be grasped and we go after an object of our desire. When we get that object we are either disappointed, or we find the happiness we have pictured before has escaped our grasp. It is not actually that happiness has escaped our grasp; it is because our mental experience of the object we were pursuing is much more glorious than the object itself. That is to say, thought is always greater than the object. *The thought of God is greater than God Himself.* Here it is not as though the thought is separate from God. It is a position of pure subjectivity when thought merges itself in Pure Being. It is only then that God is seen in reality; for to see God is to see as God sees, is to have Him as God is in Himself, to quote the words of Meister Eckhart. God as the object of meditation borrows its light from God as pure subjectivity. God is pure and complete in Pure Being. So long as we are attached to the habit of objectifying, to the habit of thought, we pursue objects in this world as something superior and thus miss the original light of pure Subjectivity. We are better with the thought than with the object. But we don't realize this or we are not prepared to accept this and so we still pursue the object.

The anguish of life results not from the pursuit of objects but from the conviction that objects are superior to thoughts. Spiritual practice cuts at the root of this wrong conviction and places the emphasis in ourself

What we call knowledge is a process by which the mind mentalises the objects into thoughts. We already said that cognition is a spiritual juxtaposition of the object and subject and not even a relationship. That is to say, before the mind, the object becomes thought by the mentalizing power of the mind. This mentalizing of the knowing subject by which it knows the world, this conversion of object into thought is going on always. At no time is the thought of the knowing subject absent, not even in deep sleep. Are we then to make an effort, to be conscious of a ceaseless function, to be conscious of thought?

Thus there are three things to be corrected by discipline: (1) the dichotomy in experience should be dissolved; (2) the notion that thought is an externalisation should be corrected by the notion that thought is an inwardization; (3) the error that thought has to be worked up or laboured after has to be corrected. It is a ceaseless and spontaneous function of ours. The Yoga-Vedanta discipline advises effortlessness to achieve all the three in one stroke.

The Yoga system builds its teaching on the idea of effortlessness. According to yoga our mind, the superior mind comes into existence only in meditation. We have no mind now, or what we think to be our mind now is not the real mind but a bundle of desires and aspirations. The mind is distributed over a thousand things and is coloured by our desires and frustrations. As a glass crystal beside other coloured things is never allowed to take its own colour so also our mind is never allowed to resume its natural state. So the one way of making the crystal mind to take its own colour and shape is to take away all thoughts. This is the discipline advocated by Sri Ramana Maharshi who says that we must make the mind empty of all thoughts to capture the real mind. Even the thought of making the mind colourless must be taken away because that gives the mind a colour which is not its own. Even the thought to banish all thought is a

thought and it colours the mind and so must be abolished. So the teaching is to remain without thinking, to remain calm and tranquil. The moment we think the false mind comes into being and then effort is necessary to transcend this false mind. So complete relaxation of all thought, complete abandoning of all sense of initiative and effort is a more direct and basic method than the way of effort.

How do we stop thought? We stop thought when we are aware of it. At present we are not aware of thought. Thought is a flow and we are in that flow and part of it. So we don't know it. When we try to be aware of thought for a moment duality comes into existence. But this is not the duality of the subject and object; for it is *my* thought that flows. When I see the thought as mine, the current of thought stops as it were, and solidifies round the 'I' and then I become aware of the 'I' and the thought in a flash, as in one unity. This is awareness.

The test of awareness is that you feel a fullness, you feel that there is nothing else to be known. You feel the plenitude of being, an abundance that nothing else can give except awareness. This inner abundance is indicated in yoga as Mahayoga. The mood of Mahayoga or Great union is the mood of not wanting anything, of having everything in me. If it is the attitude of the Bhakta it will be the attitude of 'not I but Thou', the extreme poverty of the spirit, the feeling that 'Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want'. If it is the attitude of the jnani, I am God and I shall not want anything. In both these attitudes there is relaxation: for the jnani there is nothing to be achieved and for the bhakta there is nothing in him by which he can make an effort to achieve something. Sri Ramakrishna used to advocate the attitude of the kitten and not of the young one of a monkey. The latter has to make an effort to hold on to the body of the mother to protect itself when it jumps from branch to branch. But the kitten does nothing; it has absolutely no sense of initia-

tive. It is the mother's job to take care of it in all circumstances.

Effortlessness is not escaping or stopping effort; it is a faith, an attitude with which we continue to make effort. Suppose we are doing a job. We can do it with great strain, with the feeling I am doing something, etc. We can also do the same job with the sense of relaxation, out of love for the work or for the person for whom we are working. In the latter case, we achieve much more and we come out of the job much relaxed. The path of effortlessness is like the son inheriting the father's property which is already his and all that he has to do is to love his father and love is no effort. It is a sense of identity. In the Gita after the vision of the universal form Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that that vision cannot be had by study of the Scriptures, nor by austerities, nor by charity. But it can be had only by a sense of identity with the Lord, which is like discovering a thing when we have stopped searching for it. It is like finding the solution to a problem when we have stopped the searching for it. All this indicates the state of relaxation or effortlessness before the dawn of realisation, because realisation can be had only in a state of complete tranquillity and poise and never in a state of effort. It can be had, as we said in the beginning, in an unmanifest state of mind. The Yoga-Vedanta discipline, keeping this in view, says that real meditation is that where we have complete relaxation. If we feel strain or crispation during or after meditation then we are on the wrong track.

Imagine a wheel in motion. That is the mind in meditation. A wheel in motion is a wheel in relaxation. It relaxes into larger and larger space, in larger concentric circles. No doubt there is concentration on a minute point in the center of the wheel which makes the wheel rotate. But in meditation, the concentration is on a point of consciousness, and consciousness is not a point, it is the function of relaxation. So the correct feeling in meditation is that of relaxation into larger space and time. Relaxation is increas-

ing awareness of integration into a greater reality and the soul of meditation is this type of relaxation. It is the feeling of melting. Is there any effort on the part of the salt when it melts in water? Imagine that your mind in meditation is the salt melting in water: it simply relaxes.

The idea of mind in meditation relaxing into infinite time and space is brought out in two Upanishadic meditations; *Mano omity-upasita*, *Mano Brahmetyupasita*: Meditate on the mind as AUM; meditate on the mind as Brahman. Here mind should be meditated upon as Brahman which is the matrix of time and space but not in time and space. That is to say imagine that your mind is releasing time and space and that the individual ego is dissolving into the infinite, that you are the center of the world of thought. In the worship of a personal god also it is the same discipline that is enjoined. We have to imagine that our favorite deity is expanding into infinite space and the mantra which we are repeating is dissolving itself in infinite time. Here again it is the idea of relaxation as awareness of a greater reality and integration thereto that is emphasized as meditation.

From the above it is clear that the purpose of spiritual practice is the transcending of the limitations of the mind. It is the mind that conceives the need for discipline and the real discipline is to get over this mind. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it, we take one thorn to take off another thorn and finally throw away both the thorns. It is a Herculean task but the Yoga-Vedanta does not use the word 'impossible'. Because the impossible is a psychologically defective and defeatist thought. Instead of conceiving the task as impossible, we are asked to conceive it as immense, as total. In the Mandukya Upanishad we have the words that controlling the mind is like emptying the ocean with a blade of grass. Here, the spiritual task is conceived as infinite and endless, and an endless task is never attempted. There is no doer or task but all is one immensity. And under that immensity our ego gets crushed and abolished. The immensity infuses in us immediately a sense of tranquillity. We don't feel that there is something to be achieved and there is need for haste. A poise and peace descends on us and we become full and motionless. In that peace, there is God; that peace is itself self-realisation.

INDIAN INFLUENCE ABROAD

ORIENTAL STUDIES

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

History has shown repeatedly that, of the types of influence of one people over another, those that pertain to the mind and spirit are deeper and more lasting than those that belong to the material order. India has changed the course of history of many a nation, both in the ancient past and in comparatively recent times, because of her natural resources and material wealth. But this meant only a temporary gain to those nations, and not altogether an unmixed blessing. Sometimes these nations have clung on to India, even as one of them continues to do

at present, as a matter of face-saving, and not for any real advantage. The cultural and spiritual influence of India, however, is of a different order. This has resulted in large areas of the world getting into kinship with India. That the Far East and South-East Asia bear even today the impress of Indian culture is well known. What is not so well known is that even the modern West is indebted to India for certain aspects of its culture which it has received as a legacy through ancient Greece and Rome.

There is ample evidence to show that there

was a vigorous intellectual and cultural commerce between ancient India and the then known Europe. Greek philosophy was born in Ionia, a part of Asia Minor. Panini, the grammarian, refers to the Greek script as *yavanani lipi* which is the same as the Ionian. There are close resemblances between Indian thought on the one hand, and the Orphic cults, Pythagoreanism, Platonism and Neoplatonism on the other. The influence of India on European thought suffered a setback when Justinian closed the school of Athens in A.D. 529. But with the dawn of the modern era, the channels of communication were opened up again. Armed with the power that the progress of science and the industrial revolution gave it, the West came eastward in order to impose itself on Oriental nations. The presumption was that the Portuguese and the Spaniards, the Dutch and the French, and the English were members of a superior race, and that the Orientals were primitives whose God-ordained role was that of the hewers of wood and drawers of water. This situation was retrieved, to some extent, by the more or less accidental discovery of Sanskrit by some of the enterprising scholars of Europe. This discovery revealed affinities between Sanskrit and the European languages, pointing to a common origin. Although individual English scholars have had their share in Indological studies, it is savants belonging to some of the other European nations, principally the German, that made great strides in understanding the mind of India. Unfortunately the kind of ties that bound India to England did not allow of a free and unbiased approach on either side. 'It might have been expected', observes G. T. Garrat, 'that Indian philosophy, literature, and art would have been received at last with a fuller appreciation in Europe; and that some new form of civilization might have developed from the close contact between England and India. Unfortunately it must be confessed that the last 150 years have proved the most disappointing, and in some ways the most sterile, in Indian history. The English, work-

ing or domiciled in India, have not proved a good channel for spreading abroad the more valuable elements of Indian culture'.

The credit of getting at the old literature of India, in spite of formidable difficulties, goes to isolated European travellers in this country, some of them missionaries, in the 16th and the 17th centuries. A copy of the Rig-Veda arrived for the first time in Paris in the year 1731. But for a long time, European scholars could not make head or tail out of the Vedic literature. This accounts for Voltaire's denunciation of the *Ezour-Vedam* or the *Rick-Ved* as an imposition and his definition of the same as 'science of divination'. But slowly, persistent efforts at deciphering Vedic Sanskrit bore fruit. New disciplines of knowledge such as philology and comparative religion came into vogue. The Veda opened a door to the study of the ancient mind. Editions, translations, and critical studies of the Vedic literature appeared in great volume and quick succession. During three quarters of a century in Europe, it has been ascertained, about half of all that was written on India was devoted exclusively to the Vedas. Yet, most of the scholars regarded the Vedas as representing primitive efforts at understanding the mystery of nature, and childlike, if not childish, beliefs about the course of things. Recently, however, more light has been thrown on the Vedas. We have had an array of European and American scholars of the Vedas, such as Colebrooke, Burnouf, Max Muller, Wilson, Bergaigne, Whitney, Bloomfield, Macdonell, Keith, Weber and Caland. Although Indian scholars started later, their contribution to Vedic research has been considerable: witness the writings of Dayananda, Tilak and Sri Aurobindo.

The approach of the Orientalists of the West remained for a long time mainly literary and linguistic. They spent a lot of energy in splitting words and tracking them down to their roots, in reconstructing the primitive formation of sounds and sentence-structure. But the publication of some of

the philosophical masterpieces of India drew the attention of a few thinkers to the metaphysical magnificence of this land. The story of the travel westward of the Upanishads, the metaphysical Himalayas of India, is a fascinating one. Dara Shukoh, the scholarly son of the great emperor Akbar, had a Persian translation of the Upanishads made. A manuscript copy of this was taken to France by Bernier. Another famous French scholar-traveller, Anquetil Dupéron, came by it and rendered it into 'a queer jargon of Latin, Greek, and Persian' in 1801. Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, read this version and was in rapture over it. His eulogy of the Upanishads is well known. 'This incomparable book', he says, 'stirs the spirit to the very depths of the soul. From every sentence deep, original, and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit.... In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Upanekhat*. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death'. The *Bhagavadgita* is next only in importance to the Upanishads, and is an even more popular text. It has been rendered into several of the world's languages. To the English translation of the *Bhagavadgita* which Charles Wilkins published in 1785, Warren Hastings wrote a preface in which he pronounced, wisely and correctly, that works like the *Bhagavadgita* 'will survive when the British dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance'. The first German translation of the *Bhagavadgita*, dated 1802, elicited the highest praise from Wilhelm von Humboldt. He said that 'this episode of the *Mahabharata* was the most beautiful, nay, perhaps the only true philosophical poem which all the literatures known to us can show.' Kenneth Walker records in one of his books the following advice he received from a friend of his. 'Have you ever read the *Bhagavadgita*? the friend asked. 'A long time ago, but I can't

say that I got very much out of it' replied Walker. 'Then, read it again', said the friend, 'for it is one of the three or four great books of the world. I've been working at Psychology for more than ten years now and I can only tell you that, in my opinion, the *Bhagavadgita* contains more true psychology than whole libraries of modern treatises'. The *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Darsana* literature have all become familiar to the thoughtful world.

The philosophers of the West, generally speaking, have been slow in taking kindly to Indian philosophy. They labour under the wrong notion that philosophy in India is a matter of unquestioning belief and cult-practice. But gradually their prejudice is vanishing. Long ago Max Muller, who was so much in love with India that he even Sanskritised his name into Moksha Mulara, declared: 'If I were to ask myself from what literature, we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted, in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life — again, I should point to India'. Paul Deussen, a keen student of Vedanta, has written in one of his works: 'The philosophy of the Indians must become for everyone who takes any interest in the investigation of philosophic truth, an object of the highest interests; for Indian philosophy is and will be the only possible parallel to what so far the Europeans have considered as philosophy'. Now, the Western philosophers are increasingly recognising that by avoiding Indian philosophy they are missing something which is important and vital for an understanding of philosophy. There are in quite a few of the Western universities courses in Indian philosophy offered, along with the provision for teaching Sanskrit Indian philosophy includes, besides the well-known six systems, Jainism and Buddhism. Orientalists have made their

contribution to the study of these philosophico-religions also. Jaina and Buddhist studies, in fact, have gained the status of 'Ologies'. Art-forms as expressed in architecture, painting, music, etc., have also been studied; and the knowledge thus gained has been valuable in the understanding of India. The attention of Western linguists has also been drawn to some of the national languages of India, such as Tamil and Hindi.

It is not that the Orientalists of the West are concerned about India alone. The other areas of the Orient have not been neglected by them. A considerable measure of work has already been turned out on the civilizations of China, Japan, Indonesia, and the Middle East. To the Indian members of the Second East-West Philosophers' Conference which was held at the University of Hawaii in 1949, it was rather a painful experience to know that while they were thoroughly conversant with Western philosophy their acquaintance with Chinese and Japanese thought was meagre. Now that India is free, she must begin to know her neighbours better. It is time that more and more of Indian scholars turn their attention to a study of the civilizations of the East.

As a result of the experience gained in the second world-war, some of the universities of America have organized departments of Area studies. The idea behind this move is that if you want to understand a culture you must study all its major aspects in a co-ordinated manner, its language and literature, philosophy and religion, art and industry, political, economic and social organization, etc. Increased attention is being paid to the contemporary problems of the Orient; and as these problems cannot be understood without a knowledge of the past, that too comes to be studied.

Apart from academicians and academic bodies, popular institutions such as the Ramakrishna Mission and Theosophy have also been instrumental in making India and the Orient known in the West. Swami Vivekananda, the founder of the Ramakrishna

Mission, was in fact one of the very first bridge-builders between the East and the West in our age. The great impression he made at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 was responsible for the forging of a new link in East-West relations. William James, who met him, described him as the paragon of Vedantists. The foundations laid by the Swami for the spread of Vedanta in the West have proved to be enduring. The work is being carried on by several Hindu monks and an increasing number of people in the West have come to understand and appreciate the religio-philosophical culture of India.

With the dawn of the present century the pace of India's march westward was accelerated. The poems of Tagore, the teachings of Gandhi, and the writings of Radhakrishnan have brought to Europe and America a widening knowledge of Indian thought. The personality and policies of our Prime Minister have made it possible for India to take her legitimate place in the comity of nations. He has been primarily responsible for the substitution of the term 'Asian' for the usual expression 'Asiatic'. Many of the leaders of the West are beginning to realize that there can be and is what may be called an 'Asian' point of view. This consummation would not have taken place but for the patient and persistent labours of the Orientalists.

One of the verses inscribed on the foundation-tablet of the Indian Institute at Oxford reads thus:

Īśānukampayā nityam āryavidyā
mahiyatām
āryavarta-ānṣh bhūmyoś ca mitho
maitrī vivardhatām

This is a prayer that Indian studies should be fostered so that the friendship between India and England may grow. The same sentiment holds good in regard to East and West too. Let there be understanding between the two hemispheres, which do not really have any dividing line, through intense study and mutual appreciation.

SPIRITUAL IDEALS OF ISLAM

M. HAFIZ SYED

There is no religion, ancient or modern, which is devoid of moral principles and spiritual elements. Unlike other faiths Islam has clearly and unmistakably recognised the fact that God has been merciful enough to send teachers and prophets to every nation and country from the earliest days of Adam up to the last prophet Muhammad through whom Islam was given to the world. Therefore every devout Muslim who has faith in the revealed religion has to respect religions other than his own. The Holy Quoran says that no distinction is to be made among the prophets.

Islam like most of the religions of the Aryan and the Semitic stock believes that God is the Supreme Source of all creation, and as the Father and Originator of all human beings is equally interested in the spiritual welfare of all mankind. As the source of our being is One we have a common destiny, namely spiritual evolution and perfection in due course of time.

As all religious teachers were ordained by the Higher Power to serve human beings without any distinction, the essential teachings of almost all the great religions of the world, not only bear striking similarities, but in certain cases, one is agreeably surprised to find identity in some of the ways of God realisation and the final destiny of man. It is right to presume that the essential unity of various schools of mystical thought is based upon rational grounds. As human beings differ in tastes, talents and tendencies, so they are divided into various races, religions and tribes. This division however is not vital and essential.

Sādi the great mystic poet of Persia says that all men are limbs of one body. In view of these basic facts it will be very interesting and instructive to learn that there is a common ground on which the Muslims of the

World can meet their brethren of Hindustan and of other countries on a common platform of goodwill and mutual fellowship.

The Sufis are divided into innumerable orders. The two original orders are: (1) *Hululiya*, which means the inspired. This order believes that God has entered into them and that the divine spirit enters all who are devout and lead an austere life, purifying their hearts of all impurities and evil thoughts. (2) *Ittihadia*, which means the unionists. This order believes that God is joined with every enlightened beings; that He is as flame and the soul as charcoal (ready to flame); and that the soul by union with God becomes God.

The Muslim mystics are agreed that God is one, Alone, Single, Eternal, Ever-lasting, Knowing, Powerful, Mighty, Majestic, Generous, Clement, the Master, Merciful and Compassionate; that He is qualified with all the best names; that since eternity He has not ceased to continue with His name and attributes; that there is nothing eternal but He and no God besides Him; that He is neither body, nor shape, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident. One of the great Sufis says that He is hidden in His manifestation, manifest in concealing, He is outward and inward, near and far; and in this respect He is removed beyond the resemblances of creatures. They are agreed that He is neither perceived by the eyes, nor assailed by thought, that His attributes do not change, and that His names do not alter; that He is first and the last, the Outward and the Inward, that He is acquainted with everything, that there is nothing like Him, and that He sees and hears.

The conception of the Unity of God is the pivot round which revolves all other doctrines. The oneness of God is acknowledged by all schools of mysticism. The pure existence of the Supreme Reality is called *Zat*,

without any reference to His attributes. It is known through its qualities and attributes called *Ism-e-Sifat*. The neophyte is expected to meditate on the Divine attributes and through his constant meditation, prayerfulness and singleminded devotion, a glimpse of His Beauty, Greatness and Grandeur is vouchsafed to him. The aspirant is enjoined to draw a curtain over his mind against *Masewa*, that which is not God, and desire nothing but Him and the ability to do His will. Islam really and literally means complete resignation and surrender to the will of God, which attitude becomes to him the only ruling idea of his life. He owes allegiance to no other being. He bows down before none, kneels down before the Almighty Allah who is his Soul-Refuge — Benefactor and Supreme master.

The first step enjoined by Islam to attain one's goal is five times prayer, a full month's fast once a year, sharing at least one fortieth of one's property with the poor and performing a pilgrimage to Mecca, called Hajj. The second step is constant repetition of God's name, mentally and verbally, and meditation on Him and His qualities. In order to fully succeed in his effort of spiritual realization he has to seek the help and guidance of *Murshid*, *Guru* to whom he offers his utmost devotion and who in his turn initiates him into the mysteries of divine wisdom and takes him along from one step to another in the sphere of spiritual development. In this connection three kinds of meditation are practised. The first is called *Teaswwur-e-Shaikh* (meditation on one's teacher), the second *Teaswwur-e-Rasul* (meditation on the Prophet), the third *Teaswwur-e-Allah* (meditation on God). Thus an aspirant is led from one step to the other systematically till he attains His grace and an insight into the mystery of Divine wisdom.

The most manifest of existences is the existence of God. The existence of things is by the light of God. The perception of your self is the perception of God. He who has understood *Nafs* (real self) has understood God.

The reality of God is His existence which is really His *Dhat*. The absolute existence has no form, shape, no limitations, neither beginning nor end; and in spite of this He has manifested Himself in different shapes without any change in His *Dhat*. It is like a person surrounded by mirrors of different sizes, makes and colours appearing in the mirrors, according to the requirements of the mirrors without any change in His own personality.

Dhunnun-e-Misri has said:— Knowledge in God's *Dhat* is ignorance. No prophet or Wali has ever reached or will ever reach that point. The Prophet has said: *ma arafnaka haqqa marifatika*. I have not known Thee to the extent that Thy knowledge demands. The Sufis believe that God has two aspects: (1) *Tanzih* corresponding to *Nirguna* and (2) *Tashbih* corresponding to *Saguna*. They also believe that He is both present and absent, both one and many. He thus joins in Himself contraries and contradictories.

The Prophet once said: 'I am from the light of God and all things are from my light'. Truly God is beautiful and He loves beauty. Beauty is the personal attribute of *Zat*. God created man in His own face, says the Sufi. 'He clothed him with His own attribute of beauty. Man is therefore inclined to the beautiful. God was thus Beauty and Love. His beauty was love, and His love beauty. He was the lover and beloved at the same time. He saw himself in the mirror of His own beauty. He loved himself.

The *Murid* (disciple) must observe the *Jamal* (beauty and grandeur of the *Pir*) the *Pir's Jamal* must be reflected in the mirror of the *Murid's* heart. 'Whoever hath seen me hath seen God' says the Prophet. 'The reality of *Iman* is the Observance of me', says the Prophet again.

Shank-i-Akbar says that a *Murid* who seeks another *Pir* during the life time of his own *Pir* breaks his Covenant with God which he made at the time of performing *Bayat* (initiation). The follower of the Prophet cannot become a follower of another during the former's life-time.

The object of *Shagal* (practice), *Zikr* (repetition of God's name) and *Muraqeba* (deep meditation) is to enable the mind not to retain in itself the remembrance of other than God. The beginner should not be apprised of his defects so that he may not be estranged from the path. After the purity of heart is established, all defects disappear of themselves.

The *Shaikh* can be in the west and aware of the condition of his *Murid* in the east. The least capacity of the *Pir* is that he possesses *Kshaf-i-Qulub* (that is, he is conscious of the condition of the hearts of people), if he has not this capacity it is forbidden for him to accept any one as his disciple. He should know the past and future conditions of the world. He is the *Khalifa* of God on earth. 'We have made him', says the *Qur'an*, 'Vice-regent on earth'.

Murids are of two kinds, ordinary and special. The *Pir* instructs them in different ways, according to their aptitudes and temperaments, the one gets ordinary instructions, and the other gets instructions that are kept back from the ordinary *Murid*. '*Shariat* is my word, *Tariqat* is my action and *Haqiqat* is my personal condition' said the Prophet (peace be on him).

The question of the perfection of men, according to Muslim mystics, might be answered in different ways. In a word a perfect man may be defined as a man who has fully realised his essential oneness with the divine being in whose likeness he is made. That this exalted position is enjoyed by prophets and saints and shadowed forth in symbols to others, is the foundation of the *Sufi* theosophy. Therefore the class of perfect man comprised not only the Prophets from Adam to Muhammad but also the superlatively elect amongst the *Sufis*. That is, the persons named collectively *Awaliya*. Since the *Wali* or saint is the popular type of perfect man it should be understood that the essence of Muslim saintship, as a prophecy, is nothing less than divine illumination, immediate vision and knowledge of things

unseen and unknown when the veil of sense is suddenly lifted and the conscious self passes away in the overwhelming glory of the one true light. It may be noted that an ecstatic feeling of oneness with God constitutes the *Wali*.

The Mystics in Islam enjoined their followers to choose a teacher carefully and conscientiously. When one is convinced of all the requisite qualities that a teacher possesses, all that he has to do is to surrender himself completely to his will, and the teacher would, in his turn, take him into his hands and guide his spiritual evolution. The word *Bayat* means selling oneself to one's *Pir*. In the first stage of spiritual development he has to concentrate his mind upon his teacher and this method is called *Tasawwur Shaikh*.

It has been the custom among the Hindus from time immemorial that a person desirous of leading a religious life must seek a guru for himself. For instance the Hindu scriptures say, 'The supreme mystery in the Vedanta should be given to one who has the highest devotion for God and for his spiritual teacher even as for God; for the sake of this knowledge (of Brahman) let him go *samit* in hand to a spiritual teacher who is learned in the scriptures and established in Brahman'.

It is very striking that some aspects of the *Sufi* and Hindu conception of God are similar. The Sufis believe in the monistic conception of God called *Wujud* and *Shuhud* which imply a moderate type of pantheism. These two conceptions, correspond to the Hindu philosophical ideals of *Advaita* (non-dualism) and *Visishta Advaita* (modified non-dualism).

In the *Insanu'l Kamil* the nature of the Supreme Reality, one without a second, is expressed in the following words: His manifestation interpenetrates all existence and He manifests His perfection in each atom and particle of the universe. He is not multiple by the multiplicity of the manifestations but He is one, the totality of manifestations, solely by what His noble Essence

necessitates in its very nature ; and so on from the attributes of perfection to His manifestation in every atom of His existence (He is one in them all). The whole group is distinguished by the permeating (one) existence in the aggregate of all existences, and the mystery of this permeation is that He created the Universe out of Himself. And God said : "We have not created the Heaven and the Earth except by creative Truth, Haqq." The Universe is like ice, and God, the Magnified and Exalted, is the water which is the origin of this ice. The name ice is lent to that frozen thing and the name water is the right name for it.

In one of the Upanishads (the *Chandogya*) similar ideas may be noted : Just as by one piece of clay every thing made of clay may be known, the modification being merely a verbal distinction, a name, the reality being just clay ; so in this teaching.

The similarity between the two conceptions of the Hindu ideal of liberation and the Muslim ideal of *Fana* and annihilation and subsistence, is again most striking. The Sufis believe that the human personality is annihilated but his individuality subsists in a way when the soul frees itself from all restrictions and imitations and enjoys divine bliss by its contact and final mergence in the Divine spirit.

The *Mundaka* Upanishad says : As the rivers flowing into the ocean disappear, quitting name and form, so the knower being liberated from name and form goes into the Heavenly Person higher than the High.

The Sufis believe that the souls of men differ infinitely in degree but not at all in kind from the divine spirit whereof they are particles, and wherein they will ultimately be absorbed ; that the spirit of God pervades the universe, ever present in his work, and ever present in substance ; that He alone is perfect benevolence, perfect truth, perfect beauty ; that love for Him is true (*Ishq-i-haqiqi*) while love of other objects is illusory love (*Ishq-i-maiazi*) ; that all the beauties of nature are faint resemblance, like images in

a mirror, of the divine charm, that, from eternity without beginning to eternity without end, the supreme benevolence is occupied in bestowing happiness ; that men can attain it only by performing their part of the *Primal Covenant* between them and the Creator ; that nothing has a pure absolute existence but spirit ; that material substance are no more than gay pictures ; that we must beware of attachments to such phantoms and attach ourselves exclusively to God who truly exists in us as we solely exist in Him.

There are four stages in Sufism which must be passed before man's corporeal veil can be removed, and his emancipated soul, mixed with the glorious essence, whence it has been separated but not divided ; (1) *Shariat* : The disciple observes the *Shara* and the rites of Islam ; he ever bears his *Shaikh* in mind, he effaces himself through meditation, makes his teacher his shield against evil thoughts and regards his spirit as his guardian ; (2) *Tariquat* : The disciple attains power, enters the path in right earnest and abandons the outer formalities, solely devoting himself to inward worship and introspection. It may be noted that without great piety, virtue and fortitude he cannot attain this stage ; (3) *Marifat* : The disciple has attained to supernatural knowledge and is regarded therein equal to the angels ; (4) *Haqiqat* (Truth) : The disciple has attained his union with the Divine essence whom he sees in all things.

Hazrat Ali, the originator of the mystical system, the foremost of all of them, when he was wounded by an assassin, said, 'Lord of the land am I ; yet with my body no concern have I. Me thou hast not struck ; thou art only an instrument of God. One God, who shall avenge Himself.'

Ba Yazid-i-Bistami and Uthman-i-Khybar were saying their prayers together. The latter concluded his prayer thus : 'O God grant all that I desire.' The former concluded : 'O God cut off all that I desire. Uthman said, 'How is this ?' Yazid said 'What has a seeker after God to do with the desires of His Nafs ? He relinquishes all

Ma-siwalah (other than God) and forgets his own existence.'

It may be added that the knowledge of Divine wisdom is available to those alone whose eyes are fixed, like an archer on the arrow and the object at which he aims and that without purity of purpose and an unceasing effort, deliverance or salvation cannot be obtained.

Muslim mystics declare life to be a journey over an unknown Path which is as straight and narrow as a razor. There is no other light but that of faith to guide the seeker, no sustenance but devotion. The track

cannot be seen, going is uncertain and pitfalls await the unwary. The seeker must travel in the dark. He must not cry for a candle to grope in the gloom or seek the rush light of reason. He must go steadily forward in the hope of reaching a great illumination, which awaits him at the journey's end. It would profit little to dwell merely on the system of Sufism. Volumes have been written in Persian and other languages on the subject. It is not a system really, it is a way of life. It is beyond the range of reason. It cannot be comprehended but it can be realised.

चरैवेति

MOVES THAT WIN

As children we saw and heard many things. It was not possible for our young minds to grasp the significance of most of them. The natural tendency to possess objects for ourselves or to acquire skills and imitate grown up people no doubt helped us to some extent.

For example, when festivals came, we assisted in decorations and worship. But our share was limited mainly to the plucking of flowers and arranging them, or to the beating of drums or ringing of bells. We did not, or could not at that stage, know why or in what moods these should be done. It did not even strike us that only a greater interest in gardening could assure us a steady supply of flowers throughout the year. Later experience, often painful, taught us that without hard and steady work nothing worthy can ever be had.

In the adjacent temples pipers played at stated times. It was a joy to wake up with their music. Folk songs and mythology helped us to imagine that the deities too were doing the same thing then,—not only starting

their day, but dressing, eating and going around, listening to music. We observed the pipes and fashioned little instruments like them out of cocoanut leaves. These had no provision for stops. So we could produce only the monotonous basic note ! After some practice we learned the art of sucking air through the nose while the cheeks were engaged in squeezing regulated quantities out. This assured us an unbroken sound as long as we wished. It was only play then. But it contained a beautiful lesson for life. As we grew older we became alive to the fact that life means to everyone a protracted struggle. The need to keep ourselves safe and well-balanced made us examine past impressions to see if they could not give us helpful suggestions. Then we saw that the piper's technique could be applied to every situation in life. Whenever anything is 'produced', the cause, or our stock, becomes steadily exhausted, like the air in the piper's lungs. And we are bound sooner or later to come to a dead stop, or go 'bankrupt' unless we know how and from where to re-

deplete our dwindling store. It may be air for the pipe for childhood games. But as years pass, it is sure to appear in the shapes of physical energy, sound health, fund of knowledge, grip over relevant facts, moral courage, resourcefulness, active sympathy for sufferers, and unfailing good will for all. We have to incorporate into our daily life suitable disciplines to make these flow steadily into us from their invisible fountain-head.

Human personalities are in a way like musical instruments. Each has its 'stops'. We have to find them out, handle them with a delicacy of touch, and tap and release the energies to make them work. We have also to co-ordinate the movements to produce a harmony which all can enjoy. These are some of the grand possibilities inherent in the impressions left by childish fun. What is wanted is a recognition of their higher values, and the creation of incentives to realize them as situations arise.

One more incident will suffice for the present. It is connected with milking. Children take a delight in accompanying the mother to the cow-shed, holding the impatient calf in check, and even seeing for themselves how the warm milk flows with a noise into the vessel held below. Sometimes the animal gives a light kick because of the tickling caused by the unpractised fingers. Would the mother allow the child to beat the animal by way of punishment? She would stop it with the quiet remark: 'The angry or frightened cow cannot yield us milk.' And yet, if we watch our adult attitude towards our neighbours, we shall often find that we have not learned to apply this simple lesson in our dealings with them! We use our funds, social position, and even political power, wherever possible, openly or secretly, to harass others. We put them into such tight corners that physically at least they cannot make any adequate defence. Who cares for the mental side? And we take away from them all that

even a fraction of what the real mood of 'milking' could have given!

Probably deep within our mind the argument runs: 'We close all other apertures. We send in steam from one end. The piston has to move to the opposite end till the automatic valve opens. Meanwhile we so arrange it that steam is made to enter from the extremity. The piston cannot but be 'thrown back to the starting point. The engine must run, since there is no other alternative!' We are living in the age of 'pressures'. Having excluded mind from the category of entities with motions of their own, we look upon the world of men,—as individuals, or in groups, nations, and races—as units of raw materials which must spin or fuse in accordance with the specially designed framework in which they are trapped and the pressures exerted upon them from vantage points. It is doubtful if such a plan can transform human societies into an earthly 'Cow of Plenty' which will yield any milk at all. So far as the actual four-footed animals are concerned, we are nowadays installing radios in the stalls for them. For we have seen that if a happy mental condition is created in them, the yield is better and the process of milking easy. Is not some kind of music the vital condition that makes humanity yield its best?

We are reminded of the story of Ravana. If King Dillipa and Indra 'milked' their respective regions and lovingly helped to maintain each other, Ravana, tried to 'milk' both the earthly and heavenly areas for his own enjoyment. It was a type of unchecked imperialism-cum-exploitation of those days. One thing is sure: As he persisted in his pressure tactics, tears and blood flowed from everywhere, and lastly from himself! He probably imagined Sitā to be a sort of charming piston. If Rama was shown to be impotent or dead, what alternative had he but to 'throw' himself into an 'alliance' with

earth's limits? Ravana's sister, Sūrpanakhā, too seems to have been a believer in the 'piston-doctrine' of human behaviour. Her argument was that if her rival, Sitā, could be disposed of—preferably as a light meal before the impending marriage—Rama would certainly fill up the 'vacuum' by entering into a 'pact' with her, at least for the duration of his stay in the wilderness. Both brother and sister failed to see that they ought to have dealt with others as they themselves wished to be dealt with by those around them.

Everyone feels pain in the same way as we do, and exactly like ourselves yearns for a helping hand in his efforts to gain wisdom and supreme peace. There is only one Principle appearing in different forms, as others and ourselves. Thus, when we injure others we ultimately injure ourselves. True discipline leads us to the vision of the Divine Essence permeating the animate and the inanimate. It is the most effective way to introduce the feeling of sacredness into human relationships in all fields.

भगवद्वेति ।

SUBANDHU.

OBITUARY NOTE

ON

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

It is with a sense of deep sorrow that we announce the passing away of Swami Siddheswarananda, the Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, on Tuesday, 2nd April, 1957 at Gretz near Paris. The Swamiji earlier had a heart-attack in December 1953, which practically disabled him and he breathed his last after a sudden attack of coronary thrombosis.

Gopal Maharaj, as the Swami was known in the Order, was born in Cochin 59 years ago. He graduated from the Presidency College, Madras and joined the Ramakrishna Math at Mylapore in 1920 at the age of 22. He was initiated by Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj and was ordained into Sannyasa in 1924 by Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. He was the first President of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Mysore and did the pioneering

work there. He worked as the Head of the Bangalore Ashrama also. In Madras Math, he was in the editorial staff of the *Vedanta Kesari* for some years and afterwards worked temporarily as its President also.

In 1937, in response to the earnest request of some devotees and admirers of the Ramakrishna Movement in France, Swami Siddheswarananda went to Paris to preach Vedanta there. After the war he was able to build up an Ashrama at Gretz. Within a decade the Centre has grown much and become very popular. In 1947 he visited India once. He was very amiable, loving and sympathetic. With his passing away the Ramakrishna Order has lost a monk of great idealism and vision. May his soul rest in Peace!

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial: Vedanta has a message to the world. It is the message of synthesis. And it alone can supply the plank on which can be built peace, goodwill and harmony in this conflict-ridden world. If it is potent enough in world-sphere, it is more so in a national context. It can play a specially vital role in the life of India where the atmosphere is still soaked in Vedantic thoughts. Only we must shake off our doubt and indecision and try to translate the ideal in our life. The Editorial suggests a few spheres in which this ideal could be fruitfully applied to give our new political nation a cultural and spiritual background for effecting all-round unity.

Our contributors:

Sri P. Seshadri Ayyar is the great linguist of Kerala and a disciple of Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj.

Swami Tejasananda is the Principal of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira and a former editor of Prabuddha Bharata.

Sri M. Sivakamayya, M.A., B.Ed., is the Head of the Department of English, Andhra Jateeya Kalasala, Masulipatam and Joint Editor of *Triveni*. His article on 'Buddhism and Modern Thought' is the script of a talk given by him for the A.I.R., Vijayawada, through whose kind permission we publish it here.

UNIVERSITY'S ROLE

The centenary celebrations of the three premier universities in three corners of India were observed sometime ago. Much of rethinking about the ideals of education and the role of the university was made by the leaders of the nation. When India is at the threshold of an economic revolution the youth have tremendous opportunities. But the social purpose of the education of India's youth, it is said, will require continuous

Sri Lakshminarayan Sahu of Cuttack is a social worker and a writer of several books in verse.

Swami Nityabodhananda is a former editor of *VEDANTA KESARI*. His article on 'Yoga of effortlessness' is the text of his speech at the Sorbonne University, Paris on December 17, 1956. Modern man suffers from varieties of strains even in his efforts in self-realization. The importance on that account of meditation and other spiritual disciplines is unquestionable. But doubts may arise whether the disciplines and the anxiety to perform them, give birth to new strains and tensions. The Swamiji points out in his article that this fear is without any foundation. Even for rare cases in which strain might develop, he gives some hints and suggests some techniques how that strain could be overcome and poise restored by having an awareness of the immensity of Brahman.

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras. We publish his article with the kind permission of A.I.R., Madras, which broadcast it on 12th July, 1956.

Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.LITT., is a retired professor of the Allahabad University and an old contributor to *Vedanta Kesari*.

adjustment due to the former's mobility. It is true that a readjustment of attitudes must be made to meet the challenge of new problems cropping up from quick changes. But that readjustment must be rooted in the national culture. So Education must transmit the cultural heritage of the group in which the student is born. The various branches of knowledge studied compartmentally are creating chaos in our lives. The university

must bring together varied ideals, interests and avenues of knowledge into one unified, meaningful pattern so that it may drive out all intellectual confusion from the student and enable him to realize the unity underlying all manifestations. This synthesis will enable the individual and the society to acquire and retain integration and vision of the totality lacking which the materially advanced nations are discontent and perplexed amidst plenty.

We do not of course forget the hard realities of life. The university must prepare an individual in a vocation with a view to enabling him to live his life of usefulness to himself and to society. But to avoid disappointment and frustration among the students Dr Rajendraprasad thinks that 'it is absolutely necessary that the universities should devote more and more of their time and energy to the advancement of learning vertically and some other agency should be devised for testing the capacity of candidates for jobs of various kinds.' This he feels is urgently necessary for 'the problem of educated unemployment is fast approaching the saturation point, which it need not do if only we do this screening at a suitable stage and divert those aiming at jobs in one direction and those with a genuine interest in learning and research in the direction of universities.' 'It was for the university' reminds Pandit Nehru 'to give a lead to our thinking and to irrigate the minds of the people'. The university graduates will be in a limited sense the leaders of the society. They must be able to gather new knowledge and at the same time expound the national culture. To properly play their part as leaders it is necessary for them to acquire a perspective of the eternal. Dr Radhakrishnan with this view strongly recommends:

In a university while you study the artistic and intellectual traditions of all peoples, the spiritual traditions of all peoples will also have to be studied.

The material things of the world are to be used for expanding man's knowledge and enriching

the treasures of the spirit. It is not enough to feed the human animal or train the human mind. We must attend to the needs of the human spirit. We must create and develop the forces of the spirit which will revive lost hopes and ignored values.

The university spirit pleads for sanity in a period of hysteria, for moderation in place of intemperance, for the rigours of thoughts instead of easy surrender to partisan slogans.

A study of the classics gave one a sense of serenity, a knowledge of the traditions which had taken centuries to build.

An acquaintance with the old wisdom and an awareness of and effort for achieving the treasures of the spirit will develop the goodwill for others which is another name for peace. All the social institutions of the Hindus give more importance to the social will than to the individual likings, which is essential to avoid the conflict between the two. Mere laws cannot induce the feeling of sacrifice that is necessary to form the collective consciousness. This is to be done by imparting the consciousness of the totality in the mind of the individual by proper education. Moreover, in order to check the denationalisation of the youth we want to regenerate the ancient culture and thus bridge the gulf between the educated and their homes.

The would-be citizens must have a moral outlook from their boyhood. That grounding cannot be had by merely teaching a subject on religion but the whole education must be supplied a purpose. And what else can be the lasting good but spirituality? Opinions matter little, it is the life that is of prime importance.

We are glad to note that the educational thinking is in line with the genius of India and reveals the fact that higher education need not be antagonistic to the highest aspirations of life. In fact, it should lead to that consummation. Once the ideal is correctly envisaged, the immediate role of the university will be to foster that ideal in the heart of its wards. We wish it godspeed in that venture.

SOCIAL REFORM THROUGH RELIGION

India is on the threshold of a new era of development. Her people, her officials, her government are all anxious to effect a quick progress on every front. But how to release the enthusiasm of the masses to heighten the process is a problem. Various methods are being tried. It is beyond doubt that a proper psychological approach must be made. For that our workers must know the minds of the common people. They can do it through error and trial method. The task may be easier if they turn to India's master minds to guide them to that discovery, for it is the great souls with their extraordinary power of observation, keenness of penetration and insight into the nature of man and things, that can help the inexperienced worker to know what appeals to people and thus break the deadlock. India's masses have their problems, their apathy, their superstition. But they have a peculiar psyche and a way of looking at things and they must be approached in their own way. What is the peculiar characteristic of India? In his Madras lecture on "My plan of campaign" Swami Vivekananda declared sixty years ago :

What is my plan then? My plan is to follow the ideas of the great ancient Masters. I see that each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre, the principal note round which every other note comes to form the harmony. In one nation political power is its vitality, as in England. Artistic life in another, and so on. In India, religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life.

I have seen that I cannot preach even religion to Americans without showing them its practical effect on social life. I could not preach religion in England without showing the wonderful political changes the Vedanta would bring. So, in India, social reform has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system will bring.

How profoundly true is this study of India's mind, particularly of her common folk, is the experience of many. Recently a similar experience of the social workers of Raigarh has been spotlighted by Yojana (February 24, 1957). Captioning the incident as 'Ramayana to the rescue' it reports :

The efforts of the lady Social Education Organiser had proved fruitless. The village women were willing to learn a little sewing and needlework, but no reading or writing. All efforts to start a Mahila Mandal had failed.

Suddenly an idea struck Dhodapkar the B.D.O. of Saria in district Raigarh whose headache this was. He thought, 'Why not ask the ladies to meet on Rathayatra Day in the village temple?' The word was sent round to all women to collect in the temple on the auspicious day. Religious sentiment proved to be strong in women and they collected in large numbers; the temple couldn't accommodate them and they had to be shifted to the school-hall. After a short programme of recitation of the Ramayana and a few speeches it was decided that a meeting be held every Saturday to read passages of Ramayana. Village women were enthusiastic and in due course 'Ramayana' meetings became a regular and popular feature.

After listening to Ramayana for some weeks, some of the women wanted to be able to read it. 'Please make arrangements for us to learn how to read the Ramayana', they asked the lady Social Education Organiser. The arrangements were made.

Along with the recitation, some women have begun learning to read and write. They have in reality been initiated into a programme of social education because at these meetings all problems affecting their life are discussed and solved.

The report is revealing, the lesson is obvious. How we wish all our social workers and especially the sophisticated leaders take note of this trait and bring about changes in tune with the temperament of the people without causing violent psychological dislocation. By that, problems will be less and work will be more and better too.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA*

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

The invention of the mariner's compass in the fourteenth century facilitated mid-sea voyage and colonial expansion which brought about great technological changes in Europe. Printing developed rapidly making easy the pooling together of knowledge till then painfully acquired and preserved by solitary individuals widely separated by time and space. The risky medium of a few hand-written copies through which knowledge was transmitted, was soon replaced by the rapid multiplication of exactly similar copies of books through the ever-developing printing machinery.

This ushered in an era of co-operative literary enterprises. One of the most significant outcomes of such combined industry was the production of encyclopaedias and compendiums from the seventeenth century onward. Into the pages of these multiple books vast knowledge acquired by a large number of persons through many centuries in various branches of learning were carefully digested and subjects were properly arranged for easy reference. As in other modern branches of activity here also India is gradually coming to take her place in due order.

Among the few such outstanding contributions of gigantic co-operative literary undertakings the revised and enlarged second edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India* of which the penultimate volume, which is the subject of this review, certainly takes a place of importance. In appearance and arrangement this volume is exactly similar to the third volume of this encyclopaedic work which I had the occasion to review in these columns in March 1954.

This volume bearing the title 'The Religions' is a self-contained anthology of forty-six articles including the Introduction. Of these twenty-three are printed and published here for the first time and the rest are carried over from the first edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India* after revision where it was found necessary. Of this compendium of forty-six papers, there are three articles from the pen of Sri K. R. Venkataraman

of Tanjore and two written by the late Dr P. C. Bagchi. The remaining contributors have one paper each. But the paper on 'Sufism' and 'Defusion of Socio-Religious Culture in North India' are the results of the collaboration of two scholars. It may be mentioned here that although these five volumes together are intended to cover the entire area of Indian Culture, each volume is organised in such a way that any one who is interested in one aspect of it is under no handicap by selecting that volume to the exclusion of the rest. This volume on the religions may be compared to a mansion with six floors represented by six parts bearing sub-titles: Religious sects and cults, The saints and their teachings, Religion in practice, Religion from beyond the borders, Some modern reform movements and Sri Ramakrishna and spiritual renaissance. The beautiful entrance of this imposing edifice in the form of a Foreword is supplied by Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, the well-known linguist and Chairman of the West Bengal Legislative Council. From this one can get a peep into the variety, hospitality and the central unity of religious culture of India accommodated in the various parts of this mansion. The invitingly spacious vestibule is brilliantly illumined and orderly furnished by a full-length Introduction worthy of the philosophic insight, religious apprehension and mature erudition characteristic of Dr Bhagavan Das. An outline of the historic evolution of the religious sects and cults of India following 'mainly the views of modern secular writers, trained in the Western method of scholarship' may be said to be the plinth on which this architectural piece stands. To complete the comparison it may be stated that the last article abridged from the original, first published in the previous edition, forming the last part of this work, may be said to be the last floor or the shining dome of this vast mansion.

It is not possible to point out, within the space available for a review, the trend and the excellence of all the articles or to notice the desirable additions or corrections of thoughts presented, or views stated regarding which one may differ from a contributor. All the apartments in a royal mansion are not equally illumined or of the same dimensions or furnished with equal pains and expense. Yet each part of the royal edifice

* *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, The Religions. Revised and enlarged second edition, 1956. Editor: Haridas Bhattacharya. Introduction by Bhagavan Das. Published by the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta-26. Pages 777. Price: Rs. 35.

has a distinct purpose and forms an integral part of the whole, enhancing the beauty and usefulness for which it is made by design.

The format, typography, binding and paper of the volume keeps to the highest standard avail-

able in India and are not below the prevalent standards of the West. The release of this volume however has whetted the eagerness of the reading public to welcome the remaining volumes of this great work.

2500 YEARS OF BUDDHISM*

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

This official publication of the Government of India is part of the welcome accorded to Buddhism on its home-coming, two thousand and five hundred years after the Buddha's Mahaparinirvana. The great demonstration of reverence and enthusiasm made on the occasion was not more than the reparation due to a great faith for the neglect it had suffered for centuries in the land of its origin. As a mode of spiritual realization, the Buddha's nirvana has always been in the tradition of the sages and seers of this land, even from before the origin of Buddhism, as also after its disappearance from this country. Many of the salutary practices and reforms it effected in the life of the people have been absorbed into Hinduism. But even so it does not make pleasant reading that 'not a single Buddhist work, with the exception of *Manjusrimulakalpa*, has been found within the borders of India... the Buddhist literature that we study today has come to us from monasteries outside India, in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Nepal and in translations from Tibet, China and Mongolia.' In the discovery of these works and in their critical exposition also, European scholars stole a march on us. English, French, Dutch, German, Danish, Russian and American scholars have done work that we should have shared with them at least on equal terms, but have not. Alexander Csoma de Koros, who has written a Tibetan Grammar and compiled a Tibetan Dictionary of immense use in the study of Buddhism, was a Hungarian who made a daring journey (1818 to 1823) from his native Transylvania to India and learnt Tibetan from the monks of Ladakh.

While bringing home our remissness in the past, the book under review also records achievements in more recent days, which somewhat rehabilitate our national scholarly pride. Rajendra Mitra, Hariprasad Sastri and the Buddhist Text Society of Calcutta have done much

in this regard. Sarat Chandra Das emulated the exploits of Csoma de Koros by undertaking an adventurous journey into the interior of Tibet and coming home laden with much material from ancient libraries there. All this belongs to the last two decades of the XIX century. Early in this century, a Mahatashtrian saint, scholar and savant, Dharmanand Kosambi, wandered over India, Burma and Ceylon to gather wisdom and to spread it and went even to America to edit some Buddhist texts for the Harvard University.

At the institutional level, the Bihar Government has found a Pali Institute at Nalanda—which is the very perfection of appropriateness. Private bodies and the Universities of Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bombay and Baroda are making contributions to Buddhist studies. But the University of Madras seems to be singularly negligent of our Buddhist heritage, though Manimekhalai was a Tamil Buddhist classic and Nagapattinam, Mayurapattinam, Urayoor(?), Tirumalai and Srisaillam figure in the history of Buddhism and its literature. The founder of the Zen school of Buddhism in China, the great Buddhaghosha, was a scion of the royal house of Kanchi.

The book under review is not entirely a survey of Buddhist scholarship in India, though all the contributors are scholars. Some of them are scholars from other Asiatic countries engaged in Buddhist research in India; one is a German and another an Austrian by birth, both domiciled in this land. The General Editor, Prof. P. V. Bapat succeeded Dharmanand Kosambi in the Fergusson College, Poona. They are not engaged in presenting a consecutive narrative or a systematic exposition of Buddhism, but in presenting various striking facets in the history of the faith so as to stimulate further interest. The expansion of Buddhism, the various schools of Buddhism and Buddhist Education are some of the aspects dealt with. The knowledge contained in the book may be disjointed, but some of the items of information stand out vividly. The reader learns that in the days of Yuan Chang, the teachers in Nalanda numbered 1,500 and the learners 10,000; as many as 100 chairs or pulpits were daily arranged for

the lectures and discussions; a working day for teachers and students was eight hours. One reads also of a born Prince of Bihar who turned a *sramana*, wandered all over India and even as far afield as Sumatra to sit at the feet of all the famous Buddhist sages of the faith, rose to be the head of Vikramasila University and when he was approaching his sixtieth year and an invitation came from Tibet to teach the pure faith in that land, undertook the strenuous journey, having first given away for good causes the gold that accompanied the invitation. He stood the rigours of the Tibetan climate for more than a decade and died full of years and honour in 1054 A.D. Tibet even today honours Dipankara Srijnana, but how many Indians have heard of him?

We catch glimpses of Buddhist history of a less edifying kind also. There have been monks in one Buddhist land where, having renounced the world for attaining to Buddhahood, they spent their energies in wrestling with such problems as what a monk was to do with an elephant, if a king made a hypothetical gift of it; or what the proper discipline prescribed by the *vinaya* was for a monk going out begging, to cover both the shoulders or only one with his robe. Whereas in the early Theravadin Canon the Buddha is represented as complaining of his eighty years and a pain in the back, some later Buddhists thought so poorly of the human body that they must needs believe that the Buddha's appearance in bodily form was only an illusion, the Buddhist version of the Christian Docetic heresy.

The book is a scholarly and yet very human presentation of the many aspects and stages of a great religion, certain to inspire students to a strenuous and systematic study, thus strengthening a ligament binding us to the rest of Asia.

Places of Buddhist Interest: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Pp. 52, Price: As. 8, 1sh., 15 cents.

This pamphlet is an illustrated reprint of a chapter in *2500 Years of Buddhism*. A map of India with the places of interest marked by dots is included. But since neither the means of travel nor the amenities available in the various places are indicated, this publication is not very helpful to the pilgrim or tourist, for whom it is presumably intended. If one should go to Nagapattinam (Madras State) expecting to find the least vestige of what is mentioned in this hand-book he will be disappointed. A book intended for practical use should be more efficiently compiled.

"The Mahabodhi temple in Burma is a prototype of this grand temple" (at Bodh Gaya) p. 8

is a poor specimen of English. A prototype is not a copy.

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

Buddhist Sculptures and Monuments: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Price: Rs. 1/8. 3sh., 50 cents.

Here is a bargain of 21 plates printed on good art paper, on one side, and perforated at the bound end. Those who so desire can detach and frame each plate. There is an explanatory note at the end of the book. The cover carries a good print of the Bodh Gaya Temple.

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

Women Saints of East and West: Foreword by Vijayalakshmi Pandit. Introduction by Kenneth Walker. (Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London). Pages 274. Price: 16s. 6d. or \$3 or Rs. 10, First Edition 1955.

The Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre is to be congratulated on this publication intended to celebrate in its pages the birth-centenary of Sri Saradamani Devi, the divine consort of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Womanhood has been idolised and worshipped in India in a manner and to a degree unknown to other countries. The Indian soil was congenial to the development of the best in womanhood and 'it is not surprising, as Swami Ghanananda observes, 'that through the ages and in such a vast country, men and women should have been produced in large numbers who were fit for the final stage of spiritual evolution—the life of renunciation—and became saints.' In fact, it will not be wrong to say that every Hindu woman as the *Saha-dharma-charini* of her husband is a saint in the making. The topnotch of mystic devotion known as bridal mysticism, the *nayaka-nayaki-bhava* is artificial in a sense in the case of men saints as they have to educate themselves to it; but it is easy being natural to women saints. In fact all women saints without exception hankered for the God of their heart with the longing of a bride for her bridegroom. The tradition of such women saints in India which has its beginnings in the recorded Vedas extends through an unbroken succession down to our present times and attained its peak in the person of the Holy Mother. The roll of women saints is not confined to India or to the Hindu religion alone. All the world over, all religions have been the nursery of such saints.

In this book, we have short sketches of a representative variety of the women saints of the East and West by scholars who could write with autho-

* *2500 Years of Buddhism*, edited by Prof. P. V. Bapat; foreword by S. Radhakrishnan. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. Pages 503. Price: Rs. 3/8, popular edition; Rs. 6, library edition, bound in khadi silk.

rity. Apart from those belonging to the Hindu and Christian religions, the women saints of Buddhism and Jainism on the one hand and of Judaism and Sufism on the other are comparatively less known and this book presents them for the reverential study of the earnest reader. It is a pleasant feature of this book that in the delineation of each saint, the chronicle of her life and the account of her mystic outpourings are equally balanced. The discerning student of Saintliness will be struck by the common features in the yearnings and achievements of the several mystics underlying the dictum that though religions differ, Religion is one. The subject matter is made fascinating by excerpts in translation from the outpourings of the various saints. Swami Ghanananda writes a very instructive Introduction on the 'Spiritual tradition among Hindu women'. We commend this very valuable book to the notice of all devout men and women.

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

**THE MADRAS SANSKRIT COLLEGE AND
S. V. V. PATHASALA GOLDEN JUBILEE
SOUVENIR, 1956**

This attractively printed and suitably illustrated publication of 240 pages contains (1) an account of the circumstances that led to the foundation of the Institution by the philanthropic and farsighted late Sri V. Krishnaswami Ayyar at a time when the value of the type of formal education in Sanskrit combining the excellences of traditional and modern methods was not very widely recognised, (2) some insight into the life of the founder and history of the growth of the Institution, (3) appreciative letters and poems from high-ranking citizens and scholars both in Sanskrit and English, (4) some general papers such as on *A Common Script for India, Hinduism and Tolerance*, and a *Plea for Sastra Abhyasa*, (5) an illustrated account of about 75 distinguished alumni of the college of whom a few have made first-rate contributions to Sanskrit studies.

The volume opens with a coloured plate of Saraswati Devi and Sri Sankaracharyaswamikal of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. The blessings of Religious Heads of all important Sampradayas in the South specially adorn the exordium of the publication. On the whole this Jubilee volume is a worthy symbol of the pride of past achievement and a guide to the future in so far as it helps to inspire hope and courage in the minds of the illustrious descendants of the founder who still bestow the best interest on it and the public interested in promoting the Sanskrit studies through this time-honoured Mahavidyalaya.

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

India's Ancient Literature: By Kewal Motwani M.A., Ph.D. Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Pages 55. Price: Re. 1.

Some of the writings of the author which appeared in the Sunday magazine pages of a Ceylon Daily have been gathered here in a single small volume. A glance at the contents enables one to feel the unity of purpose with which they have been strung together. India's culture—a perennial source of interest and inspiration—has been vividly portrayed here as borne out in the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Sastras and Puranas. Not satisfied with what is contained in these texts and scriptures, the author in the concluding two chapters, aids the reader with his specific for self-integration and purposeful living, as visualised by Seers of old.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Contemporary Indian Literature: A Symposium (Published by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. Pages 299. Price: Rs. 2/8, 5 sh., 75 cents).

The Sahitya Akademi at New Delhi has planned a number of good things among which is the one of a publication of the history of modern trends in some of the Indian literatures. The attempt has been crowned with more than moderate success in that proper persons have been chosen to contribute to the task. Travelling through the contents, one is sure to be met with some of the important names in the respective fields of literary craft mentioned, though in a venture of this kind there may not be absolute identity of taste and unanimity of opinion in the matter of selection of authors for mention. Natural therefore, for omissions and commissions to creep in, especially when modern writers are dwelt upon, for the needed perspective and detachment of outlook cannot be vouchsafed any writer, when called upon to briefly narrate recent literary activities with apposite illustrations.

It is certainly a matter for congratulation that Dr V. Raghavan has been able, by his assiduous labours and care to collect very many names working in the various departments of Samskrita literature, which only proves that despite the present uncongenial atmosphere for the growth of Samskrita literature, people there are yet, who have not given up Samskrita as the medium of expression for even modern thoughts and fancies. The chapter on Indian Writing in English from the pen of a discerning critic and writer like Dr K. R. Srinivasa Ayyengar is bound to be valuable considering the material and minds he has to deal with, belonging to a circumscribed ambit. Tamil literature by T. P. Meenakshisundaram

Pillai suffers from inadequate information concerning modern writing. Even among the pioneers of the past three decades and more, important names such as B. Rajam Ayar, A. Madhaviah, Pandit Natesa Sastri and Vedanayakam Pillai hardly get mentioned. Among the moderns, beyond Pudumai Pithan hardly any other finds even a brief reference. Telugu literature by Sri K. Ramakotswara Rao, a devoted student of Telugu literature as well as an authentic purveyor through translations of its treasures, succinctly enough provides us with what a generation before his, his own and later to himself, had and have been doing in order to make Telugu language a repository of all that is great and good in literature.

On the whole Kumar Barua, Vatsyayan, Kunhan Raja and Gokak dealing respectively with Assamese, Hindi, Malayalam and Kannada literature are satisfactory to a great degree in not having omitted the salient features and important writers in their respective fields.

We have, in short, to express our gratitude to the Sahitya Academy for their sense of values and imagination in ushering in a collection of this type which can never be too late.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Divine Love and Amorous Sentiment:

Love's Kingdom on Earth and Spiritual Stairway for its Descent:

By Y. Jagannatham, B.A. Published by the Author, Venkatrapet, Eluru (West Godavari District). Price: Re. 1 & Re. 1/2. Pages 69 & 98.

The two brochures deal with the Divine Love according to the Chaitanya School of Thought. With Lord Sri Krishna as the Ultimate Principle, the philosophy of Divine Love has been expounded in precise language. They breathe freely the spiritual fervour from a true devotee and no doubt every reader will fall into the emotion of forgetting himself in Lord Sri Krishna, who is the solace of mankind and our spiritual guide.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

Mean You: By Swami Pratyagatmananda. (13, Mahendra Road, Calcutta-25). Pages 32. Price: Rs. 2/8, 3½sh.

Poems in English are not generally happy either in form or of expression when rendered by Indians, though no doubt there have been exceptions also. Versification in a foreign language and that too to express highly mystical thoughts, is really a difficult task. Here we have in this tiny collection of well printed pages some of the intimate outpourings of a soul which had renounced the world and taken to a Yogic career. Naturally, therefore, we come across glimpses and experi-

ences of an evolved soul which, to speak the barest truth, is soaked in a deep and lasting sense of eternal values. It is not quite easy to select any one of the poems here for any special mention, for they are uniformly of the same character and milieu. To provide readers with a better understanding of the subjective nature of these outpourings, notes are added in the end of the book.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Notable Horoscopes: By Sri B. V. Raman, Editor, *The Astrological Magazine*. (Raman Publications, Bangalore.) Pp. XVI plus 415.

To students of Astrology, Sri B. V. Raman has done one more act of service in his publication of the 'Notable Horoscopes', which consists of 77 horoscopes of great and eminent persons taken from all classes, together with their life-reading. The volume under review starts with the horoscopes of Sri Krishna and Gautama Buddha and passes on to those of Shankara, Ramanuja, Chaitanya and other men and women of great repute. Alexander the Great, Jesus, Chengiz Khan, Hyder Ali, Lincoln, Hitler, Wells are some whose horoscopes are treated in the book. The author's patience and perseverance in collecting this mass of data and casting the horoscopes deserve great appreciation. Sri Raman has arranged the horoscopes in a strictly chronological order and one is pleased to note that he has confirmed the date of Sri Shankaracharya as being before Christ. The subjects of these horoscopes belong to different religions and race and hence present a bewildering variety of eras. But Sri Raman has successfully overcome the confusion presented by eras like the Saka and the Samvat, the Gregorian and the Julian and has presented the date of birth in the Christian era. The author himself is conscious that in a few cases, his dates may not be correct. It is bound to be so from the very nature of the case.

To the superficial reader, the advantages of such a compilation may not be obvious. It is an invariable phenomenon that the student of astrology who is facile in his calculations and theory feels much worried and thinks that he is treading thin ice in the predictive aspect. Successful prediction requires considerable practice, insight and a careful adjustment of the relative strength and weakness of the planets individually and in group. In this respect Sri Raman's book is likely to be of very great use to the student who fights shy of predictions. As one goes on reading the various predictions based on combinations or Yogas, one comes to feel that there is nothing incongruous in astrology explaining the historical march of events.

The movements in history are initiated by people who are in power and their lagna and planetary combinations give us an insight into the 'why' of these phenomena.

In spite of publications like this, astrology is a much maligned science. Sri Raman is an indefatigable worker in the cause of astrology and has been championing it with a knowledge and zeal which deserve very high appreciation. We congratulate him on this latest publication which is sure to be of great use to students and what is more may enable astrology to be on a par with other sciences.

S. R. SASTRI

BENGALI

Sri Sri Ma O Sapta-sadhika: Published by Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Pitha, Belur Math. Pages 168. Price: Rs. 2.

Bhagini Nivedita: Published by Udbodhan Karyalaya, Calcutta-3. Pages 119. Price: Rs. 1/4. Author: Swami Tejasananda.

The first book gives the life of Sri Sarada Devi the Holy Mother as well as short lives of seven women devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. Rani Rasmani is famous for founding the Kali temple at Dakshineswar, the place where Sri Ramakrishna performed spiritual disciplines, and had his realization. Bhairavi Brahmani was the spiritual guide of the Master in his Vaishnava and Tantra

sadhanas. Gopala's mother was the epitome of divine love for God in the form of a child—Gopala. Yogin-Ma and Golap-Ma were the associates of the Holy Mother. Gauri-Ma is credited with starting the first nunnery and education centre for women and Sister Lakshmi was the niece and devotee of the Master. The salient features of all the lives have been well brought out by the author in a short compass. The style is simple, lucid and direct. The introduction by the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has given an added value to the book. The sale proceeds will be utilized in giving scholarships to poor but meritorious students of the residential college at Belur Math. It will be a suitable text book for school students.

Bhagini Nivedita was the famous Western disciple of Swami Vivekananda. She dedicated her life for the education of Indian women and had profoundly influenced some of the great men of India in the fields of politics, art and literature. Her books interpreting the Indian ideals and aspirations are still read with interest and profit. The present book forms the text of three talks given by the author in the University of Calcutta as its Nivedita-lecturer. A few views of Nivedita appended at the end of the book gives an idea of her originality and freshness of outlook. We hope Sister Nivedita's life will be read by all interested in national development and women's education.

NEWS AND REPORTS

HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS—A SHORT REPORT

The authorities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission at Belur Math in order to celebrate the birth centenary of the Holy Mother Sri Sarada-Devi in a fitting manner formed a provisional executive committee. This committee undertook the task of publishing a commemoration volume entitled 'Great Women of India' dealing with the lives and contributions of Indian Womanhood in different epochs of history, besides two short lives of her in English and Bengali. The committee also purchased, at a cost of Rs. 2,300, the house in which Holy Mother lived at Jayarambati.

A General Committee and an Executive Committee were formed in a public meeting called on 1st April, 1953.

The executive committee in turn appointed various sub-committees to take necessary steps to conduct the centenary scheme. The detailed list

of the various sub-committees, office bearers, members, donors, and statement of accounts are given in the report.

Inauguration of the centenary at the Belur Math.—A week long programme of celebration was inaugurated on December 27, 1953 at the Belur Math with puja, homa and bhajan. A largely attended meeting under the presidentship of Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary, was held in the Math, where Srimat Swami Sankaranandaji, General President, read the message of goodwill. At 7-45 p.m. Swami Avinashananda gave a radio talk on the Holy Mother. Another meeting was held at the Calcutta University Institute on 30th December 1953 to discuss the various aspects of the life and teachings of the Holy Mother. The inaugural celebrations at the Belur Math were concluded on 3rd January 1954 with a pilgrim procession to Dakshineswar.

The centenary celebration was observed with solemnity not only at all the branch centres of

the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and abroad, but at various other places not formally connected with the organization.

In commemoration of the great event a beautiful marble statue of the Holy Mother was installed on 8th April 1954 at Jayarambati by Srimat Swami Sankaranandaji, and a Math for women aspirants, named as 'Sri Sarada Math' was started at Dakshineswar on 2nd December 1954.

Convention of the Women Devotees.—A convention of the women devotees with fifty delegates from different parts of India and abroad was organized at the Calcutta University Institute Hall under the presidentship of Srimat Swami Sankaranandaji. The convention held four sessions and symposia which threw a flood of light on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother.

Central Celebrations.—With a view to bring forward the glorious achievements of Indian womanhood in various spheres of life through ages, an exhibition of Arts, Crafts, and Culture with special reference to women, an all-India women's music conference and competition and a women's cultural conference were organised. An essay competition was conducted to which students from all parts of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon took part. The celebrations came to a close by December 1954.

The management while thanking all the participants of the function observed: 'It is our fervent hope that the vital forces unleashed by the year long centenary celebrations will not again become dormant, but will be sustained and intensified by our positive acts of service for a steady march towards the cherished goal, individual and collective. May the Holy Mother give us the moral stamina to be worthy of the untold blessings she has showered on mankind through her divine-human personality'.

BIRTH ANNIVERSARIES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT DACCA

The Birth Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna (122nd) and Swami Vivekananda (95th) were duly celebrated at Ramakrishna Math and Mission Centre, Dacca (East Bengal), with seven-day programme (March 3—9).

The first day opened with special puja and chanting and reading from the Scriptures, and discussions on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

All these days the Ashram attracted thousands of visitors to entertain them with an educative and interesting programme. Swami Pranavatmanandaji's lantern lectures on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and

Sri Sarada Devi were much appreciated by the public. The drama "Sirajer Swapna" staged by the boys of the Mission School on two nights were really very pleasing features of the celebration. The Jatra performances—Rakta Tilak, Devatar Grash and Chander Meye—on three nights by the amateur party of the D. C. Mills No. 2, delighted the big crowds.

On March 7, there was a students' meeting presided over by Sri Manoranjan Dhar, Minister of Finance, Government of East Pakistan. Education and Service was the topic for discussion. Dr Quazi M. Hussain, Prof. Ajit Guha, Sri Amitava Mandal (student) and Swami Satyakamananda nicely dealt with the subject with short speeches. The President recalled his memory of younger days and described with emotion his love and admiration for the ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement.

On March 8, there was a Community Feeding. About 5,000 men, women and children were treated with 'Prasad'.

The celebration concluded with a public meeting presided over by Janab Abdul Hakim, Speaker of East Pakistan Assembly. The Chief Minister being ill was unable to be present and preside. Dr Gobinda Chandra Deb, Srimati Ashalata Sen, Sri Santosh Gupta and Swami Pranavatmanandaji discussed about the 'Contributions of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda to the World Culture'. Begum Sufia Kamal, a renowned poetess of East Pakistan and Sri Sib Narayan Roy, a student of the Dacca University read out poems composed by them on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The President's speech was illuminating and at the same time entertaining. 'It was the child-like simplicity in Sri Ramakrishna', he said, 'which enabled him to understand the mystery of the Universe'. He pictured Sri Ramakrishna as an *Eternal Child*.

Earlier, Mr Hakim, presided over the prize distribution ceremony of the Mission's School. About 50 boys received prizes for their efficiency in studies or sports.

The Secretary of the Dacca centre of the Ramakrishna Mission in presenting his brief report of the accounts and activities for the year 1956, discussed about the origin and development of this great organisation with its ideal of Renunciation and Service.

VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS, U.S.A. REPORT FOR 1956

A. Sunday Services

Swami Satprakashananda, who is in charge of the centre, spoke on different religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel at 10-30 a.m.

On March 25, Swami Madhavananda, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was the guest speaker. Students of Comparative Religions came to the services from Washington University, United Hebrew Temple, and other educational and religious centres. The lectures were suspended for six weeks during the hot season. The total number of Sunday lectures was 47.

B. Meditation and Discourses

On Tuesday evenings Swami Satprakashananda conducted a meditation and gave discourses on the Katha Upanishad and Narada's 'Aphorisms on Divine Love' successively. He also answered questions.

C. Visiting Swamis from India

The remarkable event of the year was the visit of Swami Madhavananda, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and Swami Nirvanananda, its Treasurer. They came to St. Louis on Thursday, March 22. Swami Satprakashananda and some members of the Vedanta Society received the visitors at the airport on their arrival and garlanded them. Swami Madhavananda gave a public lecture in the Society's chapel on Sunday, March 25. His subject was 'Sri Ramakrishna and World Peace'. One of the devotees sang devotional songs, the same as Sri Ramakrishna used to sing or hear. Swami Satprakashananda introduced the visitors to the audience. A dinner was held in the afternoon in their honor. During their stay in St. Louis the visiting Swamis were taken around for sight-seeing by the devotees. They left for New York by air on Tuesday morning, March 27.

D. Television Talk

On February 23, Swami Satprakashananda participated in a television program at Stephen's College, Columbia, Mo., under the College course 'Ideas and Living Today'. He answered the following five questions from the Hindu point of view: (1) What is the nature of the world we live in? (2) What is man? (3) What is man's highest destiny? (4) How can man realize his destiny? (5) How should society be ordered? About nine hundred college students and faculty members as well listened to the Swami. Professor Huston C. Smith of Washington University, St. Louis, asked the questions one by one. After the talk the Swami had lunch with the faculty members. There was an interesting discussion at the luncheon table.

E. Occasional Lectures and Discussions

The Swami was invited to speak on Hindu Religion and Philosophy at the Theosophical Society and three prominent Christian Churches of St. Louis. He also answered questions.

At the request of Professor Theodore Bundenthal of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, the Swami held a special meeting in the Society's chapel on April 18. The professor came with about forty students. The Swami spoke on the Vedantic view and way of life and answered questions.

On September 29, the Swami gave a talk on the Hindu View of the World at the Student Center, Washington University on the occasion of the celebration of 'India Day'.

F. The Birth Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Brahmananda were duly observed at the Center. Devotional worship and special services were the main features of the celebrations. Special meetings were also conducted in commemoration of the birthdays of Sri Krishna, Buddha, Shankaracharya and on other festive occasions, such as Good Friday, Worship of the Divine Mother, Durga, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Eve.

G. Guests and Visitors

The Society had the privilege of receiving about thirty guests from many different places. Most of them interviewed the Swami and attended the services. They were usually entertained with refreshments or dinner. Among the notables were Swami Akhilananda, head of the Vedanta Society, Boston, Massachusetts; Humayun Kabir, Educational Adviser to the Government of India; Dr S. P. Gupta, Associate Professor of Pathology and Bacteriology, Lucknow Medical College, India; Mr Chandrasekhar Ghosh, Professor of Electrical Engineering, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; Dr D. M. Nundy, Cancer Specialist, Surgeon Rangoon Hospital, Burma; Dr L. A. Ware, Professor of Electrical Engineering, State University of Iowa.

H. Interviews

A number of persons came to the Swami for the discussion of their personal problems and for spiritual guidance. He gave ninety-eight interviews.

I. Library

The lending library was well utilized by its members and friends of the Society.

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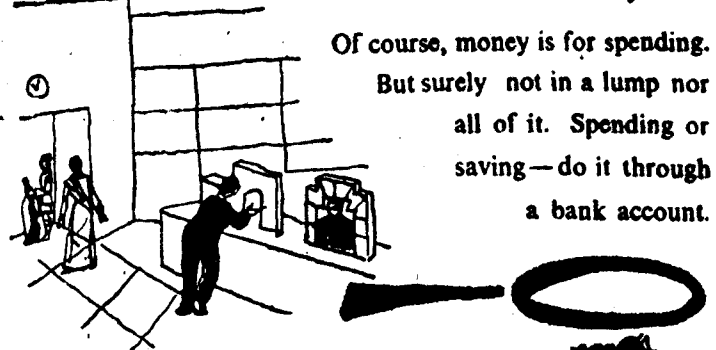
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You cannot help anyone; you can only serve; serve the
children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have
the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help any-
one of His children, blessed you are; do not think too
much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that privilege
was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as
a worship. The poor and the miserable are for our sal-
vation, so that we may serve the Lord coming in the
shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic,
the leper and the sinner.

The only God to worship is the human soul in the
human body. Of course, all animals are temples too, but
man is the highest, the Taj Mahal of temples. If I cannot
worship in that no other temple will be of any advantage.

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Scenes from his life for meditation

June 1884—Sri Ramakrishna arrived in the morning at the garden-house of Surendra in Kankurgachi, near Calcutta. Many devotees had also come to the religious festival. The musicians were singing of Krishna's life, the Gopi's love, Radha's agony at her separation from Krishna. The Master was again and again immersed in divine ecstasy.

When the musicians sang, 'Where are you, beloved Soul of the Gopis?' Sri Ramakrishna was on his feet, again in deep samadhi. Regaining partial consciousness, he said in a half articulate voice: 'Kitna! Kitna!' He was too much overwhelmed to utter Krishna's name distinctly.

As the music came to a close, the Master led the chorus, singing to the accompaniment of drums and cymbals: 'Radha, Krishna, hail! Radha, Krishna, hail!' Sri Ramakrishna danced in ecstasy of bliss, and around him sang and danced the devotees drunk with joy.

After the music the Master talked with the devotees.

Master (to M.): 'Ah! What devotion had the Gopis! Separation from Krishna created such a fire of anguish in Radha's heart, that it dried up even the tears in her eyes! Her tears would disappear in steam. At other times nobody could even notice the depth of her feeling. People don't notice an elephant plunge in a big lake.

'Ah! If anyone has but a particle of such love! What yearning! What love! Radha had not only hundred per cent of divine love, but hundred and twenty-five per cent. This is, what is called 'mad with love for God'. The whole thing is, one must love God, must be restless for Him.

'It doesn't matter whether you believe in God with form or in God without form. You may or may not believe that God incarnates Himself as man. If you have that fervent yearning, then He Himself will let you know what He is like.

'If you must be mad, why should you be mad for things of this world? If you must be mad, be mad for God alone.'

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AND SRI SANKARA

Sri Sankara was an ideal teacher. He was first a spiritual aspirant and underwent the details of spiritual discipline. He became a siddha having the highest realization. Moreover, he recorded his experiences and opinions to avoid speculation about religious matters by people without realization. Every religious system prescribes a regular discipline to its votaries to lead them to the ultimate goal of life. This discipline is naturally formulated in tune with the conceptions of the system about the ultimate reality and objective of life. Advaita Vedanta of Sankara is both a philosophy and a religion. And Sankara while establishing Brahman as the Highest Truth points out the methods of sādhanā embedded in the Vedanta books. The different statements and descriptions regarding the Reality in the Upanishads have been harmonized and given a well-integrated form by Sankara through his theory of the levels of reality. From the Absolute standpoint the supreme Reality is Nirguna Brahman, which is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute. From the relative standpoint it is Saguna Brahman or Isvara, who may be worshipped. The highest goal of life is to realize Brahman.¹ The state of realization is called Kaivalya or Nirvana which is ever-attained. A worshipper of Saguna Brahman attains Sayujya of Isvara. After realization of Isvara he is not born again and the knower of Nirguna Brahman is always free from the wheel of birth and death. Brahman being free from all attributes cannot be described as omnipotent, omniscient, etc. All these qualities belong to Isvara. Saguna

Brahman or Isvara endowed with the adjunct of collective consciousness is the material and efficient cause of the universe. From the absolute standpoint, however, there is in reality no Jagat, no Jiva, no Isvara. Though from the purely philosophical point of view they are so, all these entities when looked upon from the standpoint of the Jiva are real.

Sankara points out that Veda is infallible and has a purpose. The very fact that it describes creation is proof positive that it also has a purpose. And according to him the purpose is Upāsana, contemplation. *Brahmasutra* expressly puts that all limitations of Brahman are for Upāsana (1.1.20). Sankara makes the point clear in different contexts (e.g., 3.2.33, 1.2.14).

Instead of entering into the discussions in the commentary on *Brahmasutra* we shall merely state the conclusions relevant to our study. While explaining the Sutra, 1.1.4., Sankara says that texts dealing with creation in Vedanta refer to sādhanā. Sādhanā is possible only during one's lifetime when bondage is considered real at least temporarily. The effect of sādhanā is the destruction of good and evil Karma the root cause of bondage. In *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya* he makes it clear that sādhanā is meant for one who has not realized the Self; through sādhanā knowledge dawns and Self is realized. In this venture work is an indirect means to knowledge. He further explains that work has no part in producing liberation, but it purifies the mind,² when knowledge dawns. So for an aspirant endeavour is of supreme importance. for this only is within his domain.

The one instrument of realization is Jñāna, knowledge, pure and simple.³ But an aspirant must be fit to have it. As for the fitness of the Jiva for realization three rare things are necessary—human birth, intense longing for liberation and refuge in a great soul.⁴ A proper teacher is he who can encourage the disciple and show him the way. In *Mānishā-panchaka*, he says that whoever has firm realization is fit to be a Guru.⁵ In the commentary on *Taittiriya* (II.1) he speaks of intense desire, capacity, opportunity and freedom from disabilities as necessary for fitness. *Sādhana-panchaka* prescribes a number of qualities. The first few lines of his other books also generally enumerate the qualities. But four qualifications are the most important to make an aspirant fit for knowledge. Only after acquiring them one should take up inquiry of Brahman.⁶ These instruments are essential to make the aspirant capable of transforming life, to be steady and tranquil and to enable him to be non-attached even to thoughts and ego. The purpose of discipline is self-control, development of will-power and strengthening of buddhi or determinative faculty. By purified buddhi the detached nature of the Self is to be understood and all identification with the ego is to be given up, for bondage according to Advaita means the identification of the individual soul with the adjuncts.

The sādhanā chatustaya or four instruments of spiritual knowledge are Viveka, Vairāgya, Shatsampatti and Mumukshutva. (SB. 1.1.1.2.)

1. Viveka is discrimination between

the Real and the unreal and arriving at an intuitive and unshakable conviction that Brahman alone is real and everything else is unreal and illusory.

2. Vairāgya or renunciation is the utter disregard of all pleasures of this world and of the next, for they are transitory and bind the soul to the chain of Karma.

3. Shatsampatti or the six treasures form the ethical foundation of spiritual life. They are:

- (a) Sama or calmness. It means, withdrawing the mind from sense-objects one should dwell on Brahman only.
- (b) Dama or self-control. It consists in restraining the organs of perception and action.
- (c) Uparati or self-settledness consists in not allowing the mind to drift back to the objects and also in complete withdrawal from the demands of life.
- (d) Titikshā or forbearance is the endurance of all afflictions and to be free from anxiety or grief and pairs of opposites.
- (e) Samādhāna is complete concentration guided by the teacher and scriptures.
- (f) Sraddhā is faith in the words of the teacher and scriptures. Its characteristic is optimism and affirmative attitude towards the endeavour but not a mere mechanical or unquestioning belief.

4. Mumukshutva is intense longing for Liberation. It must be coupled with one-pointedness, faith, etc.⁷

³ SB., 3.4.1. Also in 1.1.4. मति च विधिपत्तेर्यथा स्वर्गादिकामस्य अग्निहोत्रादिसाधने विधीयते, एवम् अमृतत्वकामस्य ब्रह्मज्ञानं विधीयते इति युक्तम् ।

⁴ दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतदेवानुग्रहेनैव । मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः ॥ V.C. 3.

⁵ सैवाहं न च दृश्यवस्त्विति दृढप्रज्ञापि यस्यास्ति चेत्

चाण्डालोऽस्तु स तु द्विजाऽस्तु गुरुत्विश्या मनीषा मम ॥ *Manishā-panchaka* 5.

⁶ तस्मात् यथोक्त साधनसम्पत्त्यनन्तरं ब्रह्मज्ञानासा कर्तव्या । SB. 1.1.8.

⁷ VC 21-27. See also *Ātma-bodhaḥ* (Introduction by Swami Nikhilananda) p. 43.

¹ ब्रह्मावगतिर्हि पुरुषार्थः । *Sūtra Bhāṣya* 1.1.1.

² निष्कम्पं वाक्ते कर्म न तु चक्षुष्यत्वधने । *Viveka-cudāmaṇi*, 11.

All these sādhanas must be done with interest and devotion. These are the pre-requisites of Vedantic sādhanā. These are essential. But in *Atmānātmaviveka*, Sankara is more liberal and says that the householders even if they are not endowed with the four sādhanas may derive much benefit by discrimination about the Atman.⁸ However, for the maximum of benefit, the four sādhanas are essential and they are the preparation of an aspirant for further Vedantic sādhanā. Its method of arriving at Truth is known as *Adhyāropa* and *Apavāda*, superimposition and negation. Through inscrutable ignorance the attributes of the Self are superimposed upon the non-Self and one regards the Real as the unreal and *vice versa*. *Apavāda* is the elimination through discrimination of the superimpositions to find out the Truth. To make the bound soul aware of the superimposition, cosmology, five sheaths, three stages, etc., are discussed and discarded by the process of 'Not this, not this' and the *Mahāvākyas* (great sayings) are prescribed for contemplation and repetition. When the duality is removed Brahman shines supreme. But it requires long practice and purity of mind.

To have the direct realization of Brahman certain steadying disciplines are necessary. They are *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana* and *śamādhi*. After *hearing* of the oneness of Jiva and Brahman repeatedly, one *reflects* on Brahman constantly and strengthens his conviction by reasoning and then turns the mind to dwell without break in the thoughts of Brahman. And this is *meditation*. When he is successful he enters *śamādhi* or *absorption* in Brahman. Later Vedanta teachers recom-

mend the yoga of Patanjali and analyze *śamādhi* into *Savikalpa* and *Nirvikalpa* and enumerate the obstacles and their remedy. The four Vedantic disciplines called *Yogas* are also developed. Sankara accepts *Jñāna*, *Bhakti* and *Karma* though he makes the latter two subservient to *Jñāna*. Sri Sankara prescribes *Upāsana* for purifying the mind-stuff. *Upāsana* is of three types: (1) *Angāṅgābaddha*, where a part of a sacrifice may be meditated on as Brahman, (e.g. Horse-sacrifice in *Bṛihadaranyaka*). (2) *Pratika*, where meditation on Brahman is done through some symbol, considering it as Brahman (e.g., Emblem of Siva or Vishnu). (3) *Ahaṁgraha*, where the Self is taken as Brahman. According to *Nirguṇa-mānasa-pūjā* (9.19) the chosen Ideal of such a worshipper is *Ātmalinga*. *Upāsana* has been described as *Saguna* and *Nirguṇa* also according to the conception of Brahman with or without attributes.

Sankara recognizes the value of worship. For the bound soul the world is real and *Isvara* is its creator, preserver and destroyer. From the relative standpoint *Jiva* is not equal to God as a clay rat is never equal to a clay elephant. The waves may belong to the ocean but the ocean never belongs to the waves.⁹ *Jiva's* relation to God is one of worship, service, love. Thus the whole range of *Bhakti* discipline is accommodated by Sankara in his scheme. He accepts the importance of prayer and devotion to the Personal God though the ultimate goal is the realization of the identity of both *Jiva* and *Isvara* in Brahman. Of course, the symbolic nature of Personal God is not forgotten by the advanced souls, who look upon God as the highest manifestation of the

Absolute. Rituals are useful but inadequate if the basic idea of Brahman is forgotten and is not performed with devotion. *Bhakti* is the single-minded zeal and unswerving passion for the realization of Truth. Needless to say, it is not dry intellectualism or speculative philosophy or scientific endeavour for details. As Sankara says, 'Among things conducive to liberation, devotion alone holds the supreme place.'¹⁰ And 'the seeking after one's real nature' or 'the nature of the soul' is designated as devotion.¹¹

Sankara says that without knowledge liberation does not come even in a hundred lives with mechanical worship, bath or gifts¹² and also that the Absolute cannot be formally invoked or worshipped.¹³ But when not absorbed in communion with the Absolute or not engaged in finding the rationale of Truth, he exhibits a very exalted spirit of adoration for different aspects of God, and is not behind any devotional teacher in that respect. He takes refuge in *Bhāvāni*,¹⁴ prays to Vishnu,¹⁵ worships

Govinda,¹⁶ prefers to be a fish in the waters of the *Gangā*,¹⁷ considers all achievements of life useless unless the mind goes to the feet of the Guru,¹⁸ prays to Siva for forgiveness and protection from the suffering of *samsāra*,¹⁹ tells Mother that there is no sinner like him and no destroyer of sin like Her.²⁰ A perusal of his hymns will convince anybody that Sankara gave great importance to devotional attitude towards God.

By undergoing the disciplines of *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna* the mind gets purified and knowledge dawns and by experiencing the ineffable Peace, Knowledge and Reality the sadhaka becomes *Āptakāma*. *Viveka-chudamani* graphically describes how a knower expresses his first amazement on emergence from the experience: 'Where is the universe gone? By whom is it removed? And where is it merged? It was just seen by me; and has it ceased to exist? This is passing strange!' ²¹ 'Blessed am I. I have attained the consummation of my life.'²² After repeated practice of *nirvi-*

¹⁰ मोक्षकारणसामग्र्यां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी । V.C. 31.

¹¹ स्वस्वरूपानुसन्धानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते । V.C. 31.

स्वात्मतत्त्वानुसन्धानं भक्तिरित्यपरे जगुः । V.C. 32.

¹² कुरुते गंगासागरगमनं व्रतपरिपालनमथवा दानम् ।

ज्ञानविहीने सर्वमनेन मुक्तिर्न भवति जन्मशतेन ॥ *Carpaṭa-panjarikā* 17.

¹³ पूर्णस्यावाहनं कुत्र सर्वाधारस्य चासनम् । स्वच्छस्य पाद्यमर्घ्यञ्च शुद्धस्याचमनं कुतः ॥

Ātmapūjā 2.

¹⁴ गतिस्त्वं गतिस्त्वं त्वमेका भवानि । *Bhāvānyaṣṭka*

¹⁵ अविनयमपनय विष्णो दमय मनः शमय विषयमुगतृष्णाम् । *Viṣṇu-ṣaṭpadī* 1.

¹⁶ भज गोविन्दम् । *Carpaṭa-panjarikā*

¹⁷ वरमिह नीरे कमठो मीनः । *Gangāstotra* 11

¹⁸ गुरोरङ्गिण्यो मनश्चेन्न लग्नं ततः किम् ... । *Gurvaṣṭkastotram*

¹⁹ क्षन्तव्या मेऽपराधः शिव शिव शिव भोः श्रीमहादेव शम्भो । *Sivāparādhakṣamāpaṇastotram*

संसारदुःखगहनाज्जगदीश रश्मि । *Śiva-pancākṣarastotram*.

²⁰ मत्समः पातकी नास्ति पापघ्नी त्वत्समा न हि । *Devyaparādha-kṣamāpaṇastotra* 12.

²¹ क्व गतं केन वा नीतं कुत्र लीनमिदं जगत् । अधुनैव मया दृष्टं नास्ति किं महद्भुतम् । VC 483.

²² धन्योऽहं कृतकृत्योऽहं । VC 488.

⁸ साधनचतुष्टयसम्पत्त्यभावेऽपि गृहस्थानामात्मानामविचारे क्रियमाणे सति तेन प्रत्यवायः नास्ति, किन्त्वर्तीय श्रेयो भवति । A. 3.

⁹ सामुद्रो हि तरंगः कचन समुद्रो न तारंगः । *Viṣṇu-ṣaṭpadī* 3.

Chilkapita House,
Almora.
The 18th Sept. 1915.

My dear R—,

I have not heard from you for a long long time. Perhaps it was in Kankhal that I heard from you last. I went to Benares from Kankhal at the request of Swami Brahmananda to attend the Kali Puja Festival there last year and lived there with him and other brother disciples for more than five months. I came here with Swami Shivananda and one Brahmacharin on the 8th of April last for a change. You know I have been suffering from diabetes since last five or six years. I have been feeling a little better after I came here. How many times I thought of writing to you but could not do so some how or other. But you were in my mind always just the same. Not a day passes without thinking of you. Whenever I light the incense before the Lord every morning and evening I remember you first. I would be very glad to hear from you in reply to this at your earliest convenience. I mean to stay here for some time yet. The months of October and November I hear are very fine and lovely and possibly we would not leave here before that anyhow. I hope you are doing well in every way. Let me know everything about you as I have not heard from you for such a long time. I shall ask you to send me some incense sticks after I have heard from you.

Trust this will find you well and prosperous. With best wishes and love to you as ever,

Yours in the Lord,
TURIYANANDA.

Chilkapita House,
Almora.
9-11-'15

My dear R—,

I received your kind letter of the 5th November duly and the parcel of Sandalwood shavings and that of the incense sticks too have reached me in time. I thank you heartily for them all. I am sorry to learn that you have to work so hard that you

seldom get time for meditation even. Of course it is good to work especially when one is young. But one must have leisure for worship and meditation without which life will have no meaning at all but will be an useless burden only. You must make time to meditate daily any how at least in the morning and evening for half an hour each time. I am so glad to know that you have been able to keep your ideal before your mind's eye even under such trying circumstances and long for the company of Sadhus which is so essential for developing and maintaining character. It is very unfortunate indeed that our Mission could not send any one to your part of the country to live amongst you permanently though you applied for the same more than once. I shall again remind the authorities about it conveniently and see what could be done in that direction. I myself could have gone there at least to pay a visit to you, if not for anything else, had I been in a position to do that. How happy I would feel to see you after such a long long time. But my present condition of health would not allow me to do that. But I feel sure Mother will take care of you as She has been doing ever since you left Mayavati and lead you on by the hand and will not let you alone but take you into Her bosom as Her dear child for all time to come. You are so devoted to Mother. Stick fast unto Her and you are sure to have Her grace under all circumstances, by which you will have no difficulty whatever in life. You know how exceedingly kind Mother is to those who look up to Her for help and guidance. So whenever you feel any difficulty speak your heart to Mother who is within you and She will listen to your prayer. Don't think you are ever alone. No, She is with you always and ever more. May She protect you and keep you in Her bosom is my earnest and sincere prayer. Hope this will find you well and prosperous. With my best wishes and love.

Yours affly,
TURIYANANDA.

P.S.—

Swami Shivananda who has been living with me here since we came together has left for Banaras the other day. I shall spend the winter here with two Brahmacharins with me. The Swamis and Brahmacharins at Mayavati are very eager to have me there and wrote to me to go there immediately without delay and were ready to send coolies and dandy on receiving information from me. But as it is very cold there just now I could

not act according to their request presently. I wrote to them that if possible I shall try to go to them in April next. They all are doing well there. Have you seen the Life of Swami Vivekananda published by the Mayavati Ashrama? The Third Part of it is out. I think it has been excellently written. Good-bye for the present.

Yours,
TURIYANANDA.

WORK, DISCIPLESHIP AND PRAYER

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Q: Will karma yoga alone take one to the highest Brahma-jnana, or is work only for the purification of the mind, not for the perception of reality as stated in *Vivekachudamani*? Is the latter conception contrary to Swamiji's worship of God in man?

A: The old idea was as Shankaracharya put it: that karma is only for the purification of the mind; it does not directly lead to Brahma-jnana, that is, realization of Brahman. But Swami Vivekananda has definitely said that just as there are other paths besides the path of reason leading to the realization of God, to the God immanent in us, similarly, karma yoga (work done in the spirit of service without any attachment) is equally a means to the realization of Brahman. I have found a sort of solution which I shall place before you.

It is true that karma, work, done properly in a spirit of yoga, without any attachment, purifies the mind; and it is an accepted principle among us Hindus from time immemorial that in a purified mind the truth will flash of itself. Now a little reflection will tell us thus: supposing the work we do is performed one hundred per cent in the spirit of karma yoga; then naturally the effect also will be that the mind will be one hundred per cent pure. And if the mind is so pure, how long will it take for that absolutely pure mind to get the reflection of

the Lord, who is already there? I take it there will be absolutely no lapse of time. The moment the mind is one hundred per cent pure through karma yoga, that very moment the truth will flash of itself, it will not require any time. I can illustrate with a small example. Imagine there are steps leading to a roof. In the old days it was always the case that the last step of a staircase was some inches lower than the roof, but now-a-days they have started constructing steps so that the last step is of the same level as the roof. So it is like this: karma yoga properly done is tantamount to, or on the same footing as, Jnana yoga or any other yoga that gives direct realization. That is my opinion, and I should refer to a statement in this connection made by Swami Turiyananda, who was one of the great disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. A young Swami told him about the doubt of one of the pandits who used to teach Sanskrit to our sadhus in our headquarters. This pandit, who was an orthodox man, had said, 'Swami Vivekananda said that karma yoga leads directly to mukti—realization of one's own Self—but the old scriptures tell us that there must first be the practice of karma yoga, which will lead to purity of the mind; then there will be the dawning of knowledge; then there will be destruction of the mind; then there will be destruction of

desires — and so on. There are so many steps, how could Swamiji say that ?

Swami Turiyananda's answer was very significant. He replied to the young Swami, 'You tell your pandit, "Pandit Mahashay, the day when Swami Vivekananda said this, a new shastra, a new scripture, was created."' That means that Swami Vivekananda was a man with authority ; he did not take things simply on trust or learn things by rote and then just disgorge them. He was as much of an authority on detecting what is truth and what is not as were the great sages of yore in India. So his words are to be taken as authoritative. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Well, from age to age coins lose their validity. The mohurs, the coins of the age of the Nawabs (minor kings), will not be legal tender in the age of the Badshas (emperors).' Coins of one age become useless during another regime, that is all. In the same way, in this age we have to give more value to Swamiji's opinion than to those of teachers in other ages.

Then there is the second portion of the question : 'Is the latter conception contrary to Swamiji's worship of God in man ?'

There is no reason why it should be contrary. Rather, the idea that work is for the purification of the mind should be so used that it will contribute to the worship of God in man. We can very well combine it with Swamiji's idea of karma yoga. But really the worship of God in man is not karma yoga. I consider that the way Swami Vivekananda has advised us to worship God in man, or to worship man as God, is bhakti yoga. As soon as you have the idea of worship, it remains no longer confined to the sphere of karma, not even karma yoga, and we can call it bhakti yoga. It is the path of devotion, because the concept of God is there and we are trying to worship Him, to please Him, to propitiate Him, to make Him our own, to compel Him to reveal Himself as it were through our devotion that is being offered. For those who do not believe in God, of course, the term karma yoga is to be used, though there is still worship, some other

word — 'service' or something like that — can be used. But as soon as we say 'worship of God' that means it has come to the level of bhakti yoga and has transcended the bounds of karma yoga. So there will be absolutely no contradiction ; it will be helpful.

Q : When Shankara mentions karma does he mean unselfish action or just ritualistic action ?

A : He means ritualistic action, because unselfish action as Buddha or Swami Vivekananda preached it was not the problem in Shankara's day. People wanted to go to heaven by sacrificing goats and other things, making a holocaust of a slaughtered animal, and generally karma meant some karma-kanda, an action or rite done for some lower motive such as going to heaven in order to enjoy the continuance of the joys that we experience here. That was all that it meant : karma-kanda, action with motive, ritualistic action.

Q : Is there a point where all paths meet in jnana yoga ?

A : Every path, whether it is karma yoga or jnana yoga (the path of knowledge or reason), or bhakti yoga (the path of devotion), or yoga proper (raja yoga, mysticism), all these lead to a common point, converge in a common point, namely, realization. It is not correct to say, 'Is there a point where all paths meet in jnana yoga ?' There is not. Jnana yoga is the end of one radius ; bhakti yoga terminates also in the same center ; karma yoga and yoga proper, mysticism, also, all converge in the same point, the point of realisation, we may say. So it is the end of jnana yoga as well as all the other yogas.

Q : What constitutes the essence of discipleship ?

A : Discipleship means putting oneself under the guidance and instruction of some worthy teacher, a qualified teacher, so that there will be a natural means of communication, heart to heart, between the teacher and the taught. In other words, there should not be any egotism. Egotism is the barrier

that stands in the way of our realizing truth. And the disciple must have full faith in the qualifications of the teacher in the path of supreme knowledge. Not only that, but there should be the readiness to serve him, because without service real rapport, real communication, is not established between the teacher and the taught. Discipleship should not be for obtaining something material, rather for giving something, for surrendering ; that is the proper attitude.

There is a funny little story. A man came to a great sadhu and wanted to become his chela, his disciple, and so he asked what were the qualifications of a disciple and what duties he would be called upon to perform. The teacher said, 'Well, you will have to serve me ; you will have to serve others in the ashrama ; you will have to draw water, to cut wood and so on,' and the list of duties was presented to him. Then the man said, 'And what are the duties of the guru ?' 'Oh, to sit here and accept your service, take your offerings and so on.' Then the man said, 'Well, then, make me a guru please, not a disciple !'

As I said, one thing at least that discipleship connotes is the absence of egotism. He or she must never assume a superior position or even an equal position to the guru but always should be serviceful, and submissive, believing that here is a person who has himself obtained something and can impart something, and in all humility, considering it is a blessing, must remain always in that spirit of receptivity — that is what is meant by discipleship in a general way. If the disciple continues in that state, then sooner or later the truth is bound to dawn, because after all this happens through the blessings of a superior person, one who has actually realized the truth himself. There may not be an exchange of many words, but the very state of conferring blessings — 'I am satisfied with your service, I bless you ; be thou free, be thou a person of realization' — that itself will tell. In such cases absolute sur-

render (but an intelligent surrender, knowing that it will help personally) is there.

Q : Is it enough just to pray and be devoted to Sri Ramakrishna so that he will grant freedom in this life ?

A : These words look very simple, 'just to pray and be devoted to Sri Ramakrishna,' but prayer, if really, sincerely offered, is said to be a potent force. It should not be called just a small thing, 'just to pray,' if the prayer is directed sincerely from the bottom of one's heart, and if it is to Sri Ramakrishna. Always, whenever a person prays to somebody, he or she has a conception that the person prayed to is a fragment of Divinity at least, if not the Almighty Himself. In the case of Sri Ramakrishna, only those who actually look upon him as an Incarnation of the Lord really pray to him, and if they continue to be devoted to Sri Ramakrishna, naturally many things will be done automatically because praying and being devoted to Sri Ramakrishna means that the disciple or student has also had to mould his life according to the precepts of Sri Ramakrishna. He cannot simply profess, 'Well, I obey him, I worship him as the Lord,' and then go contrary to his teachings. That cannot be. The life and character would be moulded gradually by the mere fact of allegiance to and a prayerful attitude toward Sri Ramakrishna. And Sri Ramakrishna, as you know, is the embodiment of all religions. He never asks one to be dogmatic. He gives the fullest latitude to everybody to choose his own particular form of the Divinity, personal or impersonal, and stick to it. So the expression, 'enough just to pray,' should not be used to refer to this kind of prayer. If one can pray to Sri Ramakrishna and have devotion to him, everything may be at one's beck and call. And he can grant freedom. Why not ? If Sri Ramakrishna or any Incarnation of God is sincerely followed, if one's prayers are sincere, and if one is ready to live up to one's allegiance, the Lord in that manifestation, that form, always is capable of blessing the individual concerned.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

Man is one, although men are many ; Religion is one, although religions are many ; Philosophy is one, although philosophies are many ; all are one, although all are or seem to be many.

Man is man by his mind and consciousness. Man is man by the ideas and ideals he cherishes ; man does not live by bread alone, although bread is the prerequisite of man's ideas and ideals. Most men are satisfied with the sense-deep world. They do not dive deep enough into the deeper levels of consciousness as to gain the foretaste of the real life of the Real Self of man. Hence they live and die like mere men.

But supermen are those who have won the battle against the illusions of sensory life, who have cut the knots of selfishness and have become inwardly free. Men live and die on this side life of life, the life of phenomena, that transient flux of men and things, lost in the world of impermanency, tied to the pillars of Time and Space. But supermen have reached the yonder shores of existence ; they have seen through the game of life, have rent the veil of the vagauge, have penetrated into the inner sanctuaries of the Noumenon, the Absolute Reality behind the limitations of the time-space-bound world, and they stand firm on the rock-bottom of their Real Self, the One without a second, the One whence proceed and return the many.

Supermen are the twice-borns, while men are the first-borns. A bird, they say, is a twice-born creature. First is the egg to come out into the world ; but the chick is still within the shell. It becomes twice-born when it breaks the shell and the chick comes out into the open air and begins to fly into the infinite expanse of the skies. Men are the first-born creatures, all enclosed in their shells, the shell of self and sex, of sense and vanity. They cannot fly ; they are not

really free, being creatures of circumstances, victims of iron-laws of Nature. But supermen are twice-born by breaking open the shell of selfishness, sexual craze, sensual cravings, vanity, pride and all those qualities which bind man hands and feet, mind and heart, to the world of sense and sex.

The birth of men is from sex-union, sex being the concentrated essence of that sham happiness of the first-borns. The birth of the supermen is from Self-union, conscious union of mind with the Cosmic Intelligence, of the individual self with the Universal Self, of *jivatma* with *paramatma*. The New Testament says : 'You must be born anew ; he who is born of the flesh is flesh, he who is born of the Spirit is Spirit'. This is what the Upanishads say : 'He who knows that Supreme *Purusha* becomes That'. This is what the Sufis say : 'born of Adam, re-born of God'.

Men live in this world with the burning desire to draw as much as they can from pleasurable and enjoyable objects. They sate and drink the last drops from the vine of sensuality and sexuality until they die exhausted. Being slaves of their passions and blind instincts they become slaves of men, potentates and governments and states. Politicians exploit the herd instinct of the first-borns who believe in racialism, caste, aggressive nationalism, war and violence, police and military force, in money that is mammon, in paper currency, gold standard and other illusions on which societies and states of the first-borns are built.

But supermen are here in this world to give their best in befriending the groping first-borns. If they take from the society their basic essentials like the trinity of food-clothing-shelter, they pay back the society a thousand times more through their productive labour, through services of various kinds. Like Socrates of yore and Gandhiji

of our own days they live poor in order to enrich mankind, they lie low in order to raise the fallen, they emit radiating heat of Love, Humanity, Service everywhere, on all, irrespective of caste, creed, sex or race.

Men need money. Their real god is gold. They amass wealth in the hope of enjoyment, and they insure their insecure life under the mantle of social security. But supermen live dangerously every hour, and they take this life as a mere preparation for the Unseen Beyond. To them productive labour materialized in Time is money, not gold and silver ; and exchangeable services is the only currency they need, not promissory notes and security deposits.

Men grow depressed in misfortunes, grow elated in enjoyments, pleasures and skin-deep happiness. But supermen stand firm unmoved in the dual opposites of life. 'He whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who is not hankering after enjoyments, who is freed from lusts, fear, and anger is the sage of steady wisdom', says the Gita (II. 56).

Men suffer because they are what Lord Buddha calls 'mere aggregates of the five confections'. They do not know the whence and whither of human life. They are like, in the language of the Katha Upanishad, 'blind men led by the blind'. Enveloped in the dense darkness of the sense-bound world, men have no orientation to the Goal in life. But supermen have the right mental attitude towards the dual opposites of life. It is the mind that makes of hell a heaven and of heaven a hell. Hence supermen, after being re-born out of the common clay, know how to walk on the razor edge, maintaining the balance and live fruitfully operative in bettering the conditions of society.

Men are self-centred, their interests restricted to their own sweet selves, their

families, caste, or clan or nation. But supermen have interests of Mankind at heart. They move in the inner circle of God, His prophets, sages, seers and saints who conquer hatred through Love, error through Truth, ignorance through Knowledge which is the *Jnana* of the Vedantins and *Gnosis* of the Neo-Platonists, and death through Life, darkness through Light. God alone is the Universal Self, Absolute Truth, Infinite Beauty and Eternal Love. Hence supermen revolve around God as the planets around the sun, the bees around the flowers, lovers around a nymph who is a paragon of Beauty. It is this conscious communion of human soul with the Over-Soul, of man with God, of mind with the Cosmic Self that enables supermen to retain interest in the life of men and events through sympathy, love, compassion, *maitri* and *karuna*.

Hence supermen are sensitive to the sufferings of fellow-humans. They 'weep with the weeping, and smile with the smiling',—to use the words of St. Paul. They spend their time and energy to raise the down-trodden and the underdogs. Mahatma Gandhi has left us the pattern of a superman to whom the untouchables were *harijans* — the people of God. Such was the interest of this superman in the underdogs that he once equated God with bread, saying : 'To the hungry, God appears in the form of bread'.

Men belong to this nation or that, this religion or that ; but supermen belong neither to this nation nor that, this religion nor that, but belong to all nations and all religions and all cultures. Supermen alone are true world citizens, heirs of world culture, embodied archetypes of God's truth, beauty and love, patterns of highest Humanity attainable here below.

VEDANTA AND CIVIC LIFE

SRIMATI CHANDRA KUMARI HANDOO

It is a truism to say that the individual is more closely knit and more intimately related to the city than to the country ; and it should not be necessary to add that if a strong and coherent national life in India is to be built up, the unit from which we must start working must be our home town and villages. Servants of humanity and lovers of the motherland are high sounding phrases that one often hears, but the true patriot and humanitarian builds on the material nearest at hand, and the service of the smaller group or city must form the training ground for those who would work in wider fields of the nation or the world. We may in illustration, quote the example of our Prime Minister who started his public life as chairman of the Allahabad municipality. Did we then realise the potentiality of that seed of service now matured into leadership of peace and good-will amongst the nations of the world !

At the present moment all thoughtful Indians are very much concerned to see the poor standard of honesty and integrity in the public life of to-day. There is an idea current amongst our people that since civic life as known in the West is a product of the modern age, we who belong to an ancient race must inevitably be lacking in it. This is a hasty and superficial conclusion not supported by historical evidence. The fact is that a vast civic culture existed in ancient India which had its own appeal, method of work and norm of conduct. It is however also true that the same is in a state of disintegration just now due mainly to two causes. Firstly, a strong civic spirit is best maintained by the development of communal life and this condition always found its fulfilment in India ; but industrial towns that are growing fast in the modern days are presenting enormous problems one of which is the destruction of the communal organisations of the past and so far nothing has been

done to replace them. Secondly, this is an age of internationalism and synthesis, so the concepts under which we work must be broadened and made all-inclusive. It is apparent then that an enduring civic culture has to be built up not in imitation of the West but on its own solid foundation with adjustments and modification according to present circumstances.

Vedanta the central theme of Indian Culture

How can this be done is now the question. We all know that the central theme of Indian culture is the Vedanta. Since its one and only doctrine, the unity of life is now acceptable at least in theory to all modes of progressive modern thought, Hindus and Muslims, Parsis and Christians, can all rally under its banner. It is the most universal concept of knowledge and is therefore very well suited to the needs of the modern age. We are able to see for ourselves that the old lines of differentiation and demarcation are disappearing rapidly. In politics and sociology, problems that were considered to be national cannot now be solved unless looked at in the broader perspective of internationalism. In science also matter is losing its solidity, and by becoming less and less material, it is coming closer and closer to a spiritual entity. The widespread problems of labour and capital, the controversy between democracy and communism, the disruption of family life, and the general revolt against authority and tradition are perhaps indications of the travail and pain through which the human race is passing so that a new world order may be born. Briefly we may say that the Indian idea of an all-pervading Divinity consciously expressed through the Vedanta is seeking new avenues of thought ; in trying to remove the disabilities placed on man against man, or breaking the barriers of

high and low, race and caste, Vedanta is unconsciously expressing itself in every sphere of life and in this lies the greatness of our present age.

At such a moment when Vedanta is in the very air so to speak, it would be the greatest tragedy and failure on the part of India if she discarded the Vedantic way of life and thought. So both from the national as well as from the international point of view, the shaping of our civic ideals according to Vedanta, and bringing them into practice is the foremost task of reconstruction before us. This would include the capacity to deal with the problems of the modern world including the power to resist its forces of evil and aggression. In a suggestive little book called 'Civic and National Ideals' Sister Nivedita pertinently says, 'The mind of our civilisation is awake once more, . . . while before us lies the task of actualising close mighty ideals of civic and national life by which the . . . achievements of our fathers are to be protected and conserved . . . The bricks lie there, in abundance, for our work. The elements abound, in our history, in our literature, our traditions, and our customs, by which we can make ourselves a strong and coherent people. It needs only that we understand our own purpose and the method of its accomplishment. As an architect builds to a plan, so is a nation fashioned by its own dreams.' (p 4-5) And this power of dreaming we must use at present in the building up of our national life.

Civic life and the concept of dharma

To enable ourselves to deal efficiently with our task of reconstruction, let us first of all examine a few important elements of our ancient civic life. As far as I have been able to understand this problem, I would say that all civic duties in the past centred round the idea of *dharma*. This is a deeply rooted trait of the Indian character ; it embraces life in all its aspects and its importance cannot be overlooked by any group of workers who aspire to serve the motherland

in either the political and economic field, or in the social and cultural one. Though a handful of English-educated, town-bred people may look upon *dharma* as an old-fashioned and unprogressive idea, and they may be willing to barter this rich inheritance for the sake of 'getting on in the world', as the saying goes, it is not so in the case of the bulk of the Indian population. An example from modern times will show how powerfully the hearts of men can be moved through *dharma* even up to the present day. It is well known that the unprecedented success that Mahatma Gandhi was able to achieve in awakening the political consciousness of the masses was due to *dharma* twice over—firstly because the purity of his character and his austere mode of living was fully in accordance with the Indian ideal of a *dhārmic* life, and secondly because his appeal to the people was termed in the same phraseology. The response of the Indian people was simply amazing ; it astonished all of us and flabbergasted our British rulers in the bargain !

The discipline of the joint family

The basis of all *dharma* is discipline. It has been well said that, 'Discipline is nothing whatever but unselfishness, organised and directed. Indiscipline is simply a baleful form of selfishness.' (C. B. Fry, quotation from the *Statesman*, 10th May 1954.) The greatest discipline imposed by society on the individual was his responsibility towards the joint family. No man could live and work for himself alone, nor could he reserve the fruit of his labour for his children and grand-children exclusively. Whether from fear of social censure or from a traditional way of thinking, every man was obliged to share his home and fortune in varying degrees with a large circle of kinsmen. The same function is now being performed by the State through death duties and higher rates of taxation, only now it is obligatory by law and works mechanically, but then its rigour was redeemed by per-

sonal contact and the sacrifice made easier through family affection. Thus it was within the sheltered walls of the home that the seed of civic duty was sown and fostered. And so it is not surprising that with the destruction of the larger family group and the breaking up of the communal fraternity the civic sense of India has also suffered a very great loss.

The family was the basis of all social life ; according to the Hindu idea even if God had to be worshipped the relationship of father, mother, son or daughter had first to be established with Him. The elastic and ever-widening circle of the family was large enough to include the inhabitants of the home town and village. The proof is to be found in many phrases commonly used in our vernaculars, such as, 'my village brother' or 'a daughter of my neighbourhood'. The same idea may also be traced in religious and historical literature, as for instance it is said in the *Brahma Purāṇa*

मातरित्येव शब्देन यां च संभाषते नरः ।

सामादृतुल्या सत्येन धर्मसाक्षी सतामपि ॥

(ब्रह्मपुराण, ब्रह्मसंहिता १०-५०)

'A woman who is addressed as mother in speech is to be truly looked upon as mother. *Dharma* is a witness (to the truth of this saying) and it is also the opinion of the wise.' In history there were cases of chivalrous Rajput princes responding in brotherly fashion to the sisterly appeal of princesses in distress. I once had a talk on the joint family with a German doctor. In all earnestness he asked me over and over again, 'Why don't you teach us how to live together? Why are you giving up this good custom yourself? The tolerance and patience of your political leaders (and Gandhiji was then alive) must have been acquired in the family and what is the world but a family of nations?'

Simple things are most effective and so if we are to think in terms of reconstruction the point is not that the joint family should

be re-established in its old form or the rigidity of the caste be revived. No pattern of life can be fixed for ever, least of all in the changing conditions of the modern world. But this is in regard to external form only ; a change in the ideals of the *Sanātana dharma*, morally sound and rooted in the past is in no way desirable. वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् 'The world is our family', is our Indian ideal. It is also fully in keeping with Vedanta to extend an attitude of loving relationship to everyone in the world. Since we have no direct contact with the world, nor even with our countrymen as a whole, we can make a start with our own city in token of our sincerity and good-will. When the thought is there in all its fulness, ways and means of rendering service also easily suggest themselves.

Fragments of old civic consciousness

It would not be out of place to quote a few examples of old civic duties still in force to-day. India being a hot country, to give a drink of water to the thirsty was considered to be an act of great merit, so the digging of wells and tanks, and the distribution of drinking water to pedestrians and travellers at railway stations and other public places is still carried on extensively. In the summer months when great crowds assemble on the Calcutta maidan a Marwari committee of service sends a huge water wagon there every evening. Cold water is a boon to the passer-by as is evident by the large number of people who avail of this facility.

Other fragments of the old civic consciousness that we see amongst our people is the feeding of fishes with 'Rāma-nāma-kī-goli' (balls of flour each enclosing a slip of paper on which the word Rāma is written), the feeding of ants and birds with grain or sugar and the maintenance of *gow-sālās* (homes for old and useless cattle) and *dharma-sālās* (houses where strangers may live) at public expense. In most homes grand-mothers never sat down to a meal until one needy person was fed. Education

also was, for a long time, a charge on the public ; and not only teachers but even Vaidas and Hakims till recent times demanded no fees. Then again, the pursuit of knowledge being an end in itself, Brahmins who were looked upon as the custodians of knowledge and culture were also supported by charity. For men of the learned professions like teachers and physicians to ask for fees was considered to be a sign of vulgarity. This was possible because the wealthy were ever ready to help a deserving cause or individual. Besides these people, widows, orphans, the aged and invalids, all found a home within the circle of the joint family. All these examples functioning to some extent in the present times also surely denote a high stage of development in the civic consciousness of the past.

Another expression of Indian civic life was through hospitality. In ancient times it was the duty of every householder to feed at least one guest or *atithi*, who was to be looked upon as *Nārāyaṇa* Himself. It must be remembered that an *atithi* is not an uninvited guest but an unexpected visitor ; in most cases he was a stranger, perhaps a wandering *sādhu*, a new-comer to the village or a traveller passing through ; in any case nothing was expected from him in return, so *atithi-satkāra* (welcome to the unknown guest), widely prevalent in all parts of India must be classed as true civic hospitality. I, for one, am grateful to more than one person who fed me lavishly while travelling. I could not recognize my kind hosts and hostesses if I met them now, but a sweet memory of their large-heartedness remains ever fresh in my mind.

Civic responsibility is also noticeable on special occasions such as marriages and deaths. To help a girl get married was always known to be a virtuous deed. This could be done in many ways, such as by finding a suitable bridegroom, by a secret present in cash or kind if the family be poor, or by looking after the comforts of the bridegroom's party. The girl in town was always

a daughter and the pride of the city was at stake if things went wrong at the marriage. Similarly when death visits a home, it is everybody's business to arrange for and accompany the funeral, have the first meal prepared for the bereaved relatives after the cremation and to console or condole with them as best as is possible.

Civic Vedanta as taught by Swamiji

In the building up of the modern civic consciousness, it would be a great help to us if we took a leaf from the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. From the point of view of ideology as well as organisation and efficiency, the centres of the Ramakrishna Mission furnish us with the best examples of civic Vedanta. Here we find ancient ideals combined with new forms, coherence and consistency brought into fragments of the old civic sense, emotions integrated under one dominant appeal and the will strengthened into selfless activity. Many homes and associations of public service have sprung up all over the country since Swamiji preached his famous doctrine 'Jīva is Śīva', or that man is an embodiment of God. His arresting phrase '*daridra Nārāyaṇa*,' the poor God has stamped itself on the heart of India. This all-comprehensive idea is Vedanta in its most practical aspect, and there can be no doubt that India is alive to the claims of its teeming millions to-day. For instance, Vinoba Bhave's *Bhudāna* (the gift of land) movement is peculiarly Indian in its appeal and expression, and *Śramadāna* (the gift of labour) is a word which is widely known and practised these days.

Amongst other things to be learnt from the movement initiated by Swamiji is the power of organisation. This is an absolute necessity in dealing with such vast problems as this country presents ; a lack of organised activity has also been our weakness in the past. For those who cannot dedicate their lives in the service of their fellow men, it is best to support or join any such existing institution or organisation so that their

contribution small as it may be, may gain in strength by being harnessed to a great cause. India has always held that character is greater than organisation, and so it is, but co-operative activity is also a great test of character and we must not be found wanting in this essential quality at such a crucial moment in the history of our land.

Love for mother-country, an old tradition !

One thing more remains. According to the Indian idea the land which has given us birth is also a kind of mother. It is in the service of this mother, the *janma-bhūmi* (land of birth) that the distinction of the high and the low, the rich and the poor and the differences of faith must be forgotten. A Sanskrit saying says,

जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी

'The mother and the motherland are greater than heaven itself.' To foster this idea in modern times a temple dedicated to India has been built in Banaras. The shrine consists of a relief map of India ; it is a novel idea and not without significance in the present age. Indian poets in the past have sung high praise of India while modern patriotic songs of the last two decades are distinguished by their love for the mother country coupled with a passionate desire to see it free once again and restored to its original glory.

The city also is a symbol of nationality, and is to be looked upon as a personality, a mother whom we cherish and adore. Cities already seem to have a character of their own. For instance, Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur and Banaras, four towns in Uttar Pradesh which exist side by side are so different to one another. Lucknow stands for gaiety, refinement and enjoyment — a legacy inherited from the Nawabs of Oudh; Allahabad, a place of pilgrimage has a serenity and quietness that is difficult to beat, Kanpur is a modern industrial town while Banaras has definitely an old world atmosphere in keeping with its ancient religious tradition. Old citizens bear

the stamp of their home towns which they love in return with a passionate partisanship. It is now for us to intensify this love for the common home and transplant it wherever necessary, to our ugly industrial towns with their shifting population, noise and soot, and the corruption and hardness that come from living in such surroundings.

Sister Nivedita says that three things go to make a city loved by its citizens ; firstly, some sacred object like a temple or university that creates pride of place, secondly, communal festivities and thirdly civic gatherings. All three have been common features of our village life and are to be cultivated anew by enlarging their scope and meaning. So far civic gatherings have been mostly political, but they need not always be so in future. When non-cooperation was at its height and people were seeking ways and means of uniting the Hindus with the Muslims, the citizens of Lahore conceived a novel idea which proved successful at that time. When the Muslims went out in a procession during Moharrum the Hindus supplied them with cold drinks on the way and the Muslims reciprocated the gesture during the Hindu Dasehra. Thus both religious festivals acquired a civic significance in this manner. Basant Panchami, the spring festival was also widely celebrated in Lahore by the flying of kites from the roof tops and the wearing of gay yellow clothes on the plains of northern India. When spring turns into summer, friendships renewed by the sprinkling of coloured water on the Holi day may also be adopted as a national festival. The birthdays of great men may equally be celebrated by all sons of the soil. If, for example, Rama and Krishna are venerated by the orthodox Hindus as incarnations of God, non-Hindus may revere their memory as national heroes.

Charity in India though vast is mostly impulsive and haphazard ; this could be canalised by the creation of trusts and good institutions. All modern methods must be

employed to combat poverty, ignorance and disease, but ultimately we venture to say that the whole civic structure depends not so much on organisation, wealth or education as it does on the honesty and integrity of men and women. Character can solve many problems, so with the civic duties of keeping the city clean and beautiful, looking after the orphans, the sick, the aged and the destitutes, and providing fellow citizens with a hundred other amenities demanded by life in all its growing complexity, must be added the building up of the character of the young.

Indians are religiously minded people and the moral appeal of civic duties must be inspired by religion so that the existing fund of devotion may be utilised in the service of man. In Tulsi Ramanaya, Rama gives a modern definition of duty when he says to Hanuman :

**सो अनन्य जाके असि मात न टरे हनुमन्त ।
मैं सेवक सचराचर रूप स्वामि भगवन्त ॥**

(किष्किन्धा काण्ड)

'He who looks upon the movable and unmovable as the forms of the Lord and considers himself to be the servant of all—one who is steady in this belief, O Hanuman, know his devotion to be one-pointed and unwavering.' So while we bow low at the feet of those high souls who spend their time in Vedantic meditation and help the world by their pure and concentrated thought the needs of the age are such that Vedanta must be brought to the door of the common man. And what better homage can we men and women of ordinary calibre pay to this ancient treasure of our land than to offer our small and humble service to that One, who though without name and form, has incarnated itself in the great mass of humanity that inhabits our beloved motherland ?

SANKARA ON BUDDHISTIC METAPHYSICS

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

The message of the Buddha is accorded great veneration in India at the present time. It is praised for its rationalism, its freedom from superstition and ritualism and its exalted ethics of universal compassion. There is repeated expression of regret over its disappearance in medieval India and a jubilant hope is entertained over the prospects of its revival in the land of its origin. The time-honoured belief that the forums of thought that superseded it have incorporated into themselves all the elements of lasting value in it is not given due recognition. The humanistic ethics and the dissolution of the rigid caste order have undoubtedly passed into the main stream of the Bhakti movement. The specific symbolism and ritualism of medieval Buddhism is not considered as its main attraction by the revivalists. The

strictly metaphysical element, the intellectual core, of Buddhism is what seems to exercise fascination. The classical Hindu thought attacked precisely this philosophical part of Buddhism. In anything like an honest and systematic effort at the re-affirmation of Buddhist philosophy, a serious examination of the criticism of Buddhist philosophy by the thinkers like Kumarila, Sankara and Vachaspati is called for. One of two conclusions is possible. It may be established that the Hindu philosophers misunderstood the principles of Buddhist thought or that their criticism is faulty and irrational. If this critical labour of answering Hindu refutation of Buddhism is not discharged properly the movement of Buddhist revival would lack intellectual substance whatever may be its sentimental ex-

uberance. The first stage in the performance at this essential task is to formulate precisely the lines of refutation to be countered. Sankara is an outstanding representative of the Vedanta critics of Buddhism. In the present essay his criticism of Buddhism is sought to be briefly restated. His adverse reflections on Buddhist philosophy are scattered in many of his works. Something like a clear and comprehensive criticism is given in his commentary on Brihadaranyaka. But the fullest examination is conducted in his Sutra Bhashya where a special section is devoted to the examination of the non-vedantic schools of thought. The following is an attempt to restate his fundamental criticisms, as formulated in Sutra Bhashya. In the opening sentences Sankara designates Buddhism as the 'Sarva vainasika' school, as one that propounds complete annihilation. The designation might imply an evaluation of the Buddhist ontology as well as axiology. He notes that there are three principal schools of Buddhism. The first school comprising of Vaibhashika and Sautrantika is really constitutive of one inclusive trend and is called 'Sarvasti vada'. The term signifies realism. Acceptance of the reality of 'all' really connotes the acceptance of the reality of the external objective world. The name distinguishes the school from the subjectivist school which denies the reality of the objective world. The second school admits the sole reality of 'Vijnana' or consciousness. This is pure subjectivism. The third school asserts that all, the subjective world as well as the objective, is 'Sunya'. The term 'Sunya' has engendered diverse interpretations of late. For Sankara it signifies the anti-thesis of 'Astitwa' or being and his criticism confirms that he understood it in the nihilistic and not in the transcendentalist sense.

It may be said at the outset that Sankara's criticism of Sarvastivada is elaborate and applies to both Vaibhashika and Sautrantika schools which are identical ontologically whatever their differences in epistemology

and his analysis and refutation of vijnana-vada is also thorough. Only Sunyavada he considers as not worthy of the labour of refutation and offers only one fundamental argument against it.

SARVASTIVADA

This school admits the psychical and physical worlds. It regards the physical world as constituted of the four elements, earth, water, fire and air. The atoms of these elements with their distinctive properties combine into aggregates and they form the outer physical universe. Analogously the subjective and psychical world is also an aggregate composed of five factors, called the Skandhas. They are form (rupa), consciousness (vijnana), feeling of pleasure and pain (vedana), conception (samjna), and the passions (sanskara). It is easy to see that the factors comprise of the body, mind and the three aspects of the mind, feeling, cognition and volition. This psychical aggregate constitutes personality.

After this reference to the central contention of the Sarvastivada that both the subject and object in the universe are of the nature of aggregates or compounds with no central abiding core of unitary being, Sankara proceeds to frame his criticism.

I

This first charge is taken over from his argument against the previously examined accounts of cosmic causation. He urges that the aggregation of elements whether subjective or objective need a controlling cosmic intelligence. The non-postulation of such a principle renders the contingent origination of aggregates inexplicable. If the non-conscious elements are responsible for the process, the process must be unoriginated and ever-lasting. If it has a beginning only a self-conscious spirit must in its freedom initiate it. All the consciousness that is part of the actual world is admitted to be an effect and hence could not initiate the process of causation. The causal nexus is not conceived as an abiding system trans-

cending the particular formation. The constitutive factors being regarded as perishing particulars are incapable of action for action requires the persistence of the agent. Thus the aggregation of the component factors fundamental to the view is definitely unaccountable. The principle of the argument is simple. Creative activity and causation are the functions of spirit. Nothing unconscious can by itself be creative. Buddhism along with all schools of materialism seems to attribute causal efficacy to what is non-spiritual. This tendency is due to the neglect to analyse the implications of causation. Either causation is a subjective illusion or there is a spiritual principle in nature manifesting itself through the cosmic order inclusive of causation. The principle of causation is a demand of the reasoning intellect and to the extent to which we admit causation to be objective and real, we must admit the objectivity of a cosmic intelligence.

II

Sankara represents the Sarvastivadin as re-affirming his position. He is made to contend that no abiding spirit is needed to function through cosmic causation. The world-process is a flux. It proceeds from stage to stage. If we take a total perspective we find it to be a cyclical process. Ignorance generates passions, passions generate consciousness. Consciousness generates names and forms. They bring about the senses. Hence follow sense-contacts. The contacts generate sensations. They lead to craving. Craving leads to effort. Effort leads to being. Being brings about birth, old age, death, sorrow, grief, misery, and mental agony. The number of the items of the series or their definition is not of importance. We have here a chain of life-phases and it is a process that cyclically perpetuates itself. As the basis of this life-flux the aggregation of elements is to be postulated.

Sankara pronounces this restatement as ineffective in meeting the criticism. This progression of states may account for the

emergence of the varied conditions of the life-cycle. But it does not account for the basic aggregation of elements in the subjective and objective spheres. It has been argued that the combination of elements is necessary for this life-flux and hence must be postulated. While the necessity for postulating the combination may be accepted, there is still the need to explain how this combination is brought about. The ground of the possibility of combination must be explained, whatever the need for the combination in a particular account of the life-cycle. The combination of atoms to produce the cosmic structure, even on the supposition of their permanence and the existence of supporting individual selves, has been demonstrated to be impossible in the refutation of Vaiseshika theory. In the present theory which admits no supporting selves and conceives of atoms as perishing the combination is impossible *a fortiori*. Is the life-cycle itself the ground of the combination? Then it could not be based on that combination as supposed. If it is held that the aggregates produce other aggregates, the life-cycle beginning with ignorance falls within these aggregates and this continuous series of aggregates is what forms the cosmos, further clarification is called for. Does an aggregate produce its own kind or does it produce simply another aggregate of some kind? On the first alternative transmigration of individual, from one species to another as admitted by the school is ruled out. On the second interpretation the aggregate of one kind must produce in its place an aggregate of another kind and then another aggregate must come about with no law of sequence or regularity of succession. Either transmigration is impossible or in the same life unpredictable succession of different life-possibilities must occur.

III

Further the combination of the basic elements cannot be the cause of either worldly experience of pleasure or emancipation. Both these processes are possible only for a self

which lives continuously from the stage of aspiration to that of fulfilment. If a persistent aspirant is not admitted neither secular enjoyment nor the religious ideal of emancipation is conceivable.

Continuity of personality between the phase of felt need and that of achieved satisfaction is necessary for any process of self-fulfilment.

IV

The causal series starting from ignorance was admitted as possible and the impossibility of accounting for the necessary combination of elements was demonstrated. Now that provisional admission is withdrawn. Causation cannot be consistently explained by the Buddhist philosophers of Sarvastivada. The units constituting the causal series are taken as momentary, as perishing particulars. As the effect arises, the cause perishes. With this hypothesis forming the pivot of the school it is impossible to combine the assertion of causal connection. What perishes in the previous moment cannot produce what arises in the next moment. What is annihilated already cannot discharge the causal function. If it exists while being productive of the new factor it cannot be conceived as momentary. It must be before causing the new and must be while causing it. It may be urged that the existence of the cause is itself the causal function and that no distinction between being and operation is to be made. Even then the effect must bear within itself the character of the cause. In other words the cause must persist as embodied in the effect. That would militate against momentariness. If the effect does not incorporate into itself the cause, as there is no necessary continuity between cause and effect, any effect can arise from any cause. Further how to conceive of origination and destruction? Are they the essential being of things? If they were the words 'origination and destruction,' they would be synonymous with the names of things. If they are qualifications of things,

features making a difference to the essential being of things, then that being running through the states of origination, continuance and destruction would transcend all of them and would not be a perishing and momentary entity. If the entity is different from them it would be something not affected by them and so permanent. If by origin and end, only appearance and disappearance of things to consciousness are meant they would be subjective and the object of consciousness would be originless and endless. Thus causal connection between factors conceived as momentary is utterly unthinkable. If, on the other hand, causation is not admitted, the conception of life as a series of causally determining phases would have to be given up. How the Buddhist could speak of the causal nexus and at the same time deny all permanence is really incomprehensible.

V

Three forms of non-being are allowed as permanent while all else is asserted to be momentary. They are natural destruction, destruction voluntarily effected and *Ākāśa*. The contention is that these three are not temporal and are not positive in character. Only what is of the nature of non-existence can be non-temporal. All that is positive, is momentary. Now the two forms of destruction are by no means negative in nature. Everything that ends, ends into something that is positive in nature. The entity that is supposed to be annihilated, first transforms itself into some other form of being. There is no mere annihilation as such. What is ended is recognized as continuing in existence in what succeeds the ending of the entity. The factor that emerges out of every destruction, contains in a new form the substance destroyed. In some cases this phenomenon of the survival of what is destroyed is obvious. In other cases it has to be construed on the analogy of obvious cases. Neither the series, nor the units composing the series is ever subject to total annihilation. Further *Ākāśa* or space is no

mere emptiness. Space as such is not emptiness. Parts of space may be so. Thus the states of being filled or empty are determinations of space and not constitutive of space. In Buddhist scriptures themselves the positive character of space as the locus of other elements is recognized. Thus the three categories are not negative in character. The temporal or non-temporal characters of sheer non-entities cannot be spoken of. They must be positively constituted substances to bear the properties ascribed.

VI

Now the Buddhists affirm the momentariness of all existence. This doctrine is contrary to the fact of memory which establishes the continuity of the remembering consciousness. With regard to an external object, it is possible that recognition and the consequent affirmation of its continuity may just be due to similarity of two objects. But even that mistaking of similarity for sameness needs an identical observer. The explanation breaks down when applied to consciousness cognisant of its persistence. The mistaking of similarity for sameness presupposes the sameness of the observing consciousness.

VII

The discussion of causation is taken up again. In the first place, if the cause perishes before producing the effect, its non-being must be held the cause. Non-being cannot have any causal power. Non-being of anything cannot give rise to the being of a specific entity. It must be the non-being of the so-called cause that could do so. This would amount to making distinctions within non-being, thereby converting it into a form of being. If any entity could arise from non-being, there is no causation. Causation precisely means that an effect springs from a specific entity and not from nothing. When the cause produces its effect, some elements of its being may be lost, it may lose its former state and its residual nature gets re-embodied in the effect. What dis-

appears in the cause in the course of its production of effect is not the cause. What continues of the cause in the effect is the real cause. This disposes of the Buddhist argument that unless the cause is destroyed the effect is not produced. What perishes of the cause is not constitutive of its causal nature and that element in the cause which survives in the effect is the cause. The Buddhist does not see the contradiction between his doctrine of the causation of the world by certain ultimate elements and his contention that effects originate from the cessation of causes.

VIII

The ethical consequence of the virtual denial of causation is deduced. The basis of moral progress to the attainment of the end through the employment of means implies the reality of the casual process. In fact causation as an ontological principle is the basis for the conception of ends secular and spiritual as realizable through the utilization of appropriate means and methods. Elimination of causation necessarily involves the abandonment of the pursuit of ends through the required means. The cessation of the causal series beginning with ignorance is taken as the highest ideal of life. Is this ideal to be achieved through enlightenment? Or does it happen by itself independent of all effort on our part? The first alternative would militate against the denial of causation and the view that non-existence originates existence. The latter alternative would render the Buddhist teaching of *Marga* or the path to *Nirvana* futile and meaningless.

The foregoing constitute Sankara's chief arguments against Sarvastivada. They may be summed up in a few propositions.

(1) The initial combination of basic elements constituting the universe without a cosmic intelligence is impossible.

(2) The idea of momentariness of entities rules out all possibility of causal connection.

(3) Consequently all moral effort is rendered impossible.

(4) Destruction and space are not negative categories.

(5) Facts of memory and recognition imply the non-temporality of spirit.

VIJNANAVADA

Sankara prefaces his criticism of Vijnanavada with a brief but solid statement of that theory. Buddha really aimed at subjectivism. But seeing the realistic predilection of some of his disciples, he preached Sarvastivada to them with a view to educate them gradually to the final truth. The ultimate principle is consciousness. All distinctions like the knower, the known and the knowing and the practical distinctions of end and means are formations within the matrix of consciousness. Even when external objects are admitted, all theoretical and practical functions of consciousness need their representation within consciousness as a basis for all reactions to them. The world as it is for consciousness is the world in which we live. To postulate a world independent of consciousness is superfluous. In support of this doctrine many arguments are advanced.

What exactly is the external object? Do we mean by it the atoms composing the object, the ultimate physical units of existence? We are not conscious of these constituents of objects. They are not facts of experience. They are entities, inferentially constructed to account for actual phenomena. There is every possibility of these inferential constructions being fallacious. Is the external object, then, the grouping of these atoms into some larger compound? There are fresh difficulties. What exactly is the relation between the components and the compound? It is impossible to form a clear conception of this relation. Neither perfect identity nor perfect difference between the two is understandable. Nothing is seen in the compound falling outside the components and the components individually

or collectively do not exhaust the compound. The relation is indeed a riddle and hence is a proof of the unreality of the object. The same inexplicability extends to the relation between the universal and individual.

The object cannot affect consciousness and cannot give rise to specific cognitions unless the object is represented by consciousness itself to itself. All perception is representative perception. All apprehension is the apprehension of a mental counter-part of an object. The object may be supposed to cause consciousness to represent the object to itself and the actual knowing is the knowing of this representation. Now if this theory of knowledge is admitted and if apprehension is of a psychical image of an object, there seems to be no necessity to postulate the external object. The mind is confined to images and copies constituted by itself. As such there is no possibility of knowing the external object and there is no necessity for postulating it. Further, we know no object unrelated to the subject and no subject unrelated to some object. This mutual relativity is a proof of the fundamental unity of the subject and object. The intimacy of mutual implication is such that there is nothing to prevent the conclusion that the subject and object are finally one. We are familiar with forms of consciousness which are universally admitted to be without external objects. Dreams, hallucinations and illusion supply us ample examples of experience where the subject apprehends objects purely subjective in origin and nature. On the same principle the entire realm of experience must be idealistically explained. What is true of some forms of experience must be true of all. Multiplicity of explanations for essentially similar facts is illogical. Principles should not be multiplied beyond necessity and uniformity of interpretation is the only logical course. It may be asked as to how we explain diversity of apprehensions if there is no diversity of objects. The explanation that consciousness is a store house of limitless psychical

dispositions and traces and that diversity of faces causes diversity of presentations fully meets the situation. Consciousness is no passive spectator. It is dynamic. It has a rich possibility of endless presentations.

Experience of diversity is nothing but an unfoldment of this intrinsic potentiality of consciousness. It is a spectator of the endless diversities of presentation it itself engenders. There is nothing impossible in the process. Dreams are daily illustrations of the subject itself supplying itself with an endless procession of objective presentations within itself. Subjectivism can quite adequately deal with the fact of multiplicity within experience.

After thus presenting the purvapaksha Sankara begins the counter-attack.

In the first place, facts of experience must be squarely and fairly admitted. There is no reason in disowning plain and self-evident facts. Knowledge is of varied objects. The consciousness of objects itself presents them as independent of itself. The mode of experience itself claims the objectivity of facts experienced. It is for this reason that even the subjectivist holds that internal facts are cognized as if they are external. The very manner of the subjectivist statement betrays him. Externality is a fact of experience. Hence the Vijnanavadin cannot boldly assert the subjectivity of objects. He has to concede that the subjective presentation poses in experience as objective. If the external object was a pure unreality, not given to experience in any way, there is no reason to regard the subjective phenomena as appearing objective. Nothing can be mistaken for the non-existent. Externality is not non-existent if presentations are mistaken for external objects. Thus the external world is an actuality for experience.

It may be contended that since the external object is impossible or inconceivable it has been denied. The reasoning here is wrong. Possibility and impossibility are determined by knowledge. Facts ascertain-

ed by strict ways of knowing cannot be explained away on grounds of some preconceived notion of possibility. Whatever is presented by any veridical source of knowledge is a definite possibility. Whatever is unknowable through any such source is impossible. Objects presented as external and real by universally recognized modes of knowledge cannot be quibbled away by any imaginary logic of possibility. Whether the object is different or non-different from the atoms may be indeterminable. But that cannot abolish the indubitable knowledge of external object. If consciousness represents to itself objects, that fact of representation cannot nullify what is represented. The experience of things unsullied by false theory presents them as existing independent of their being experienced. The mutual and concomitant relationship of object and cognition must be construed as indicative of their relationship as means and end and not of their identity.

The knowing and the object known can never be identical. Knowledge is common to all cases of knowledge while the objects known vary from case to case. The object may be the same but the manner of the consciousness directed towards it may vary. This divergence between knowledge and objects in the matter of being one or many proves their mutual difference. Further, consciousness itself is conceived as constituting a process and a flux consisting of perishing acts of consciousness. One act of consciousness perishes before another emerges into being. Therefore no comprehensive description of the stream of consciousness as a whole, as developed by Vijnanavada, is tenable. There is no co-existence of the apprehending and apprehended consciousness. Each act cognizes itself and passes away. There is no possibility of developing a total perspective as there is no abiding and all-inclusive principle underlying consciousness.

While experience presents experiencing and objects of experience, why is it that the

experiencing consciousness is admitted and objects are declared unreal? The reason adduced is that consciousness is self-cognized while the objects are not so and as such the claim to reality of the former is irresistible. This is a doubly contradictory statement. Consciousness cannot cognize itself just as fire cannot burn itself and the well-established fact of objects being cognized by consciousness transcending them is contradicted.

It may be objected that if consciousness is to be illumined and cognized by another principle, that latter principle also would require another principle to cognize it and that if consciousness and the principle that cognizes it are both of the nature of knowledge, one cannot be the cognizer and the other the object of cognition. Both the objections are untenable. In the first place, the witness of consciousness, just because it cognizes consciousness does not require another principle to cognize it. The witness is self-luminous and cannot be negated and as such no cognition of it is required. Secondly the witness and the functions of consciousness it witnesses are different in nature, one being the knower and the other known. Therefore they are not of the same nature to preclude the possibility of the first being the cognizer and the other the cognized. If consciousness is independent of any cognizer and manifests by itself, it only means that it is unknowable and unrelated to any cognizing principle. Thus it becomes a purely imaginary entity. If it is urged that consciousness is of the nature of pure experience and that its being unknown and knower-less is an admitted implication, the actual difficulty remains unsolved. Light, though luminous, shines as illumined by the inner knower, different from itself and operating through the eye. In the same way, whatever be the luminosity of consciousness in relation to objects, it itself must be cognized by another knowing principle. Consciousness rendering objects known, being itself a determinate process conditioned by the influence of

objects, does require to be apprehended by another transcendent spiritual principle. It is characterized by the attributes of the known.

The Vijñānavādin may contend that we, who uphold the self-evident character of the transcendent knower, are simply accepting his own position that consciousness is self-knowing with just a little modification of terminology. The fact is not so. Consciousness for Vijñānavāda, is a flux, composite within itself and has empirical determinations characteristic of the objective. The transcendent self of the Vedāntins is timeless, one, and indeterminate and is divested of all the characteristics of the objective. There is every meaning in its being self-evident while the consciousness functioning in relation to empirical apprehension of objects is, by its very nature, objective requiring a transcendent subject to be apprehended. The consciousness whose reality Vijñānavāda asserts is not subjective enough to be really self-evident. The subject of Vijñānavāda is not completely freed from the taint of the objective and hence it needs a subject transcending it to illumine or know it. Thus Buddhist subjectivism has a two-fold limitation. It does not succeed in reducing the objects of consciousness to consciousness. By its empiricist description of consciousness, it annuls the latter's subjectivity and necessitates the postulate of a transcendent self.

The phenomena of dreams and hallucination are not very helpful for establishing the subjectivity of waking experience. There is a radical difference. Dreams are subject to sublation or contradiction by waking experience. But the latter does not suffer any such subsequent cancellation. In the face of this fundamental distinction, mere similarity between the two, on the ground that both are experiences, cannot prove the illusoriness of the world of waking consciousness. Argument from analogy discloses a logical weakness. As it is impossible to prove directly the unreality of objects experienced in the

waking state, the analogy of dream is pressed into service. Analogy cannot alter the essential nature of things. The radical superiority of waking experience on the ground of its freedom from contradiction cannot be nullified by mere analogy.

The power of consciousness to throw forth diversity of presentation within itself uninfluenced by any objective factor needs demonstration. Experience of objects leaves traces behind in the mind and these traces may reproduce the originating experiences under certain conditions. If there are no objects to deposit these traces of their experiences in the mind, how there come to be traces in the mind is ununderstandable.

The postulate of the unoriginated existence of traces in the mind is a desperate remedy and throws no light on the issue. Ordinary experience suggests no case of a trace in the mind not being caused by an originating experience. We have cases of experience of previously unknown entities not arising from any antecedent trace and we have no case of a trace of experience not resulting from an experience. By trace we mean some impression of experience subsisting in the mind. Subsistence of impressions needs an entity to subsist in. Now in the theory under discussion no such entity capable of sustaining the impressions and dispositions is admitted.

It is true that a phase of consciousness termed 'Alaya-Vijnana' meaning 'abode-consciousness' is posited. But this is also described as perishing and therefore cannot be the locus of impressions. If this Alaya-Vijnana is regarded as abiding, it can be the locus of impressions. To regard it so amounts to an abandonment of the original

dogma of the school asserting universal momentariness. All the criticism applicable to Sarvastivāda in connection with this dogma apply with the same force to Vijñānavāda, as it too subscribes to the dogma of momentariness.

Thus these two branches of Buddhism, Sarvastivāda and Vijñānavāda, stand refuted.

The third branch, namely, Sunyavāda is so thoroughly opposed to all experience and reasons that there is no purpose in refuting it. This is Sankara's verdict on the school. He advances only one argument. All negation must be significant. Denial must be based on affirmation. Denial of all existence without affirming some entity as genuinely real is self-destructive. To the extent to which Sunyavāda is pure nihilism, it is powerless to repudiate the realism of common consciousness. Effective negation must be more than pure negation.

Sankara concludes his criticism with a general historical reflection. In whatever direction we may formulate the doctrines of Buddhist philosophy, on examination it breaks down hopelessly. The weakness is inherent to the very foundations of the system and therefore no particular formulation is responsible for its indefensible character. Liability to mutually conflicting interpretations is no credit to a prophet. The principles that the Buddha propounded are supposed to authenticate all the schools of Buddhist thought which are mutually inconsistent. Such an equivocal prophet cannot furnish guidance to humanity. This, substance, is Sankara's estimate of Buddhist metaphysics.

A SHORT STUDY OF MĀNDŪKYOPANISAD

OR

THE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS ACCORDING TO VEDĀNTA

L. A. RAVI VARMA

This study is based on the teachings of Māndūkya, an Upaniṣad of the Atharva-veda. Though a very short one, consisting of just twelve mantras or verses, it is recognised as one of the ten major Upaniṣads. Gaudapāda has written a Kārikā (almost a supplement) to it and Śankara has commented both on the Upaniṣad and the Kārikā. It may here be noted that in ancient India it was usual to compress works of importance, whatever the subject, into as small a compass as possible, since voluminous works tended to die out for want of facilities for manifold-ing and due to difficulties of memorising. Such compression has made these texts very terse, often serving only as memory-aids pointing out the bare fundamentals, thereby demanding very careful analysis of every word and even syllable to get at the full import of the teachings.

The main theme of Māndūkyaopaniṣad is the study of the nature of CONSCIOUSNESS in its four states, three relative and one real or absolute. These four states are known by the names Jāgrat or the waking-state (from 'jāgr'—to be awake), Svapna or the dream-state (from 'svap'—sleep and 'nī'—to lead; total meaning, leading to sleep or before full sleep), Suṣupti or state of deep sleep (from 'su'+supti—deep sleep), and Turiya or the fourth state. The first three correspond to the three states recognised by psychology as waking-consciousness, dream-consciousness or sub-consciousness and unconsciousness. The fourth state is not recognised in modern psychology and hence it has no name for it. A comparison of the ancient and modern teachings will show, among other things, the high level to which Indian thought had arrived even as early as the Upaniṣadic period which may not be much later than 1000 B.C. Such a study will be of interest for other and intrinsic reasons as well.

Śankara begins his Commentary with an invocation verse which reads 'Prajñānāmsu-pratānāḥ sthira-cara-nikara-vyāpibhir vyāpya lokān Bhuktṛvā bhogān sthaviṣṭhān punarapi dhiṣaṇodbhāsītān kāmajanyān Pitṛvā sarvān viśeṣān svapiti madhurabhūn-māyayā bhojayan no Māyā samkhyā īriyam param. amṛtam ajam Brahma yat-tan-natasmī.' This may roughly be rendered as 'With the tendrils (as it were) of cognising rays (sensory organs), IT apprehends the world of fixed and moving forms (non-living and living) and enjoys the concrete (objective) world; IT enjoys the desire-born factors (unsatisfied desires) through memory on which earlier impressions come to recognition ('dhiṣaṇodbhāsītān'); IT enjoys the sweetness of deep sleep; let us adore IT, the ever-existent Brahman'. In the second quarter of this verse, the dream state or svapnāvasthā is described as desire-born or arising out of desires (kāmajanyān). A desire when satisfied is no more a desire; hence the term desire-born in the verse can only refer to unsatisfied desires. The idea contained in the phrase 'enjoys the desire-born factors through memory on which earlier impressions come to recognition' ('dhiṣaṇodbhāsītān kāmajanyān pitṛvā sarvān viśeṣān') apparently anticipates Freudian thought on the subject.

The first two mantras together enunciate the subject of study. They read 'The word OM is the never-decaying (akṣaram) principle; it comprises everything (sarvam). Conceptions of past, present and future are its subsequent interpretations (upākhyānam) and what is beyond the conception of past, present and future is as well THAT.' ('OM ityetaḍ akṣaram idaṁ sarvam; tasyopavyākhyānam bhūtam bhavad bhaviṣyad iti sarvam OMkāra eva; yaccānyat trikālātītam tad apyomkāra eva'—Mantra 1.

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so'yam ātmā catuṣpāt'—Mantra 2.) This trikālātītam-notion or the notion of beyond past, present and future, is very intriguing and brings to mind the time-space-continuum of modern physics. Śankara in his commentary, gives for the term trikālātītam the meaning of 'kāla'paricchedyam avyākṛtādi' which denotes 'beyond expression in terms of time or manifestations', that is, beyond the possibility of expression in terms of time or space. In effect, the sense is the same as conveyed by the idea of a time-space-continuum which does not admit of a conception of a definite factor in respect of time or space. It is interesting to note that India arrived at such a concept metaphysically, though not mathematically as the moderns have done it. This ever-enduring entity is Brahman which is Ātmā or Self (psyche as opposed to soma). Indian thought conceives soma (the materia corpora, in effect, the material world), as a projection as it were, of the psyche. This is the Māyā-vāda of Vedānta. This conception is essentially the same as the Kantian idea, though the methods and argument used by Kant to arrive at the conclusions are different. In this connection it may be noted that Vedānta philosophy does not contemplate a personal god with qualities as love, hate, wrath, mercy etc., not to speak of an anthropomorphic god; it was satisfied with the above described Universal psyche (paramātmā), in essence, the same as the individual psyche (jivātmā). It should be noted that what appears as personal gods with powers and attributes as seen in the work-a-day religion of the Hindu is this abstract principle symbolised to meet the needs of those whose capacity for abstract thinking is poor. Such concretisations are known as 'adhyāsa' (superimposing). The Universal Psyche or Paramātmā is the Brahman or God for the Vedāntin. Implications of such a god-head are many and extensive; for one thing, it makes the religion based on this conception logical and independent of mythologies and dogmas such that, it will always be capable of

accepting the newest scientific thought which may be at variance with the mythologies. It is this, among other factors, that has caused Hinduism to survive the many onslaughts it had to suffer during millennia.

This Universal Psyche is described as having four phases. (So'yam ātmā catuṣpāt). Śankara in his commentary calls attention to the word 'pāt' and says it does not mean 'feet' as those of animals but denotes values as in the case of coins etc. ('Kāṣṭhapaṇavat na gauriva'). These four phases are described in the subsequent mantras which form the study.

The third and the ninth mantras together describe the first phase, Jāgrat or the waking consciousness. The mantras are 'Jāgaritasthāno bahiḥprajñāḥ saptaṅga ekonaviṁśatimukhaḥ sthūlabhūḥ vaiśvānaraḥ prathamāḥ pādaḥ.' (Mantra 3). 'Jāgaritasthāno vaiśvānaro'kāraḥ prathamā mātrāpter-ādimatvād vā āpnoti ha vai sarvān kāmānādisca bhavati ya evam veda' (Mantra 9). The sense of these two mantras, as far as this study is concerned, is 'that in waking consciousness it is extorose (bahiḥ-prajñāḥ): it then apprehends the external universe or material universe through the senses and enjoys the objective or gross universe (sthūlabhūḥ). In this phase the Universal Psyche is designated as Vaiśvānara (from Viśva—universe and anara, same as anala—fire; together meaning 'the light that makes the universe sensible or visible).

The fourth and the tenth Mantras describe the next phase or aspect. It is now said to be introrse (antaḥ-prajñā). The enjoyment here is subjective and independent of the objective universe. The enjoyer is now known as Taijasa. 'Svapnasthāno'ntaḥ-prajñāḥ saptaṅga ekonaviṁśatimukhaḥ praviviktabhūḥ taijasa dvitīyāḥ pādaḥ'. Mantra 4. 'Svapnasthānas-taijasa ukārod dvitīyā mātrotkarṣād-ubhayatvād vo'tkarṣati ha vai jñānasantatim samānaśca bhavati nā'sya brahmavitkule bhavati ya evam veda'. Mantra 10.

Taijasa from 'tij'—niśāne, to be sharp or quick; denoting the great quickness in the dream state. Here memory supplies the object for its enjoyment. In this, the enjoyment derived, that is, the subjective satisfaction derived is said to be identical with the satisfaction derived in the first, (jñāna-santatim samānaśca bhavati). This state partakes some of the qualities of the first and third phases (ubhayatvād vā). This is the subconsciousness of modern psychology.

Śankara's gloss on the memory and dream-mechanism is very interesting; it reads: 'jāgrat-prajñā anekasāadhanā bahirviṣaye va bhāsamānā manaspaṇḍana mātṛā sati tathā-maṇaḥ tathā saṃskṛtam citritā iva paṭo bhāyasāadhanā' napekṣam avidyākāmakarmabhiḥ preryamāṇam jāgradvadavabhāsate'—Śankara's commentary meaning 'during waking consciousness objective universe creates impressions (spandana—lit. vibrations) on the mind; these remain there as figures painted on a canvas. When Avidyā, desires and actions urge, these impressions appear as if they are actualities in the waking state'. It should be noted that 'avidyā' in Vedānta is not ignorance or want of knowledge, but a wrong or mistaken knowledge as that of a snake for a rope; in other words it is wrong recognition based on slight resemblance. This 'slight resemblance' is the sine qua non of avidyā. It may here be remembered that symbolism is, essentially, a recognition of something in some other thing having some, however slight or far-fetched, resemblance with the first. When viewed in this light, 'avidyā-kāmakarmabhiḥ' would mean, resultant activities of unsatisfied desires acting on mistaken semblance-recognitions. This practically is the symbolic satisfaction of unsatisfied desires in dreams as contemplated by Freud, though expressed in a much compressed form.

The fifth and the eleventh verses ('Yatra supto na kancana kāmam kāmāyate, na kancana svapnam paśyati, tat susuptam, susuptasthāna ekibhūtaḥ prajñānaghana

evā'nandamayo hyānandabhuk cetomukhaḥ prājñas—tṛtiyāḥ pādah' Mantra 5. 'Susuptasthānaḥ prājño makāras-tṛtiyā mātṛā miterapitervā minoti ha vā idam sarvam apitiśca bhavati ya evam veda' (Mantra 11.), describe the third phase and read 'Where there is no desire and no dream, it is deep sleep. In this state, consciousness is, as it were in a congealed form (prajñānaghana) or hibernating condition'. This is the 'unconsciousness' of modern psychology; but it is not a state of complete 'non-existence' of consciousness according to Vedānta. The enjoyer is now known as 'Prājñah' (pra=good and jna; stands for the primary form of individualised consciousness, very nearly the sense of ego or I in the form of 'I slept well' etc.). In this state it enjoys peace (ānanda) and has its face turned towards 'cetas' (cetomukhaḥ). The phrase, 'has its face turned towards cetas' shows that the condition is not recognised as one of absolute no-consciousness but as form of consciousness itself. This remnant of consciousness may be called 'vegetative awareness', the substratum of consciousness which is alert and aware of biological and vegetative needs. The existence of this awareness becomes patent only when the biological functions get disturbed in some manner even as a uniform motion goes unrecognised without a body of reference until its uniformity gets disturbed. If the need or logic of this hypothesis is questioned the only answer possible is to show that this is in every way similar to the hypothesis of the existence of an electro-magnetic field in physics. According to Vedānta, Jāgrat is the normal phase in the animal kingdom, Svapna in the vegetable, and Susupti in the mineral kingdoms. It is essential to note here that Indian thought recognises no differences in kind between animal, vegetable or mineral kingdoms; there are only differences in degree and in the manner of manifestations or responses. Indian thought also does not recognise anything whatsoever as arising de novo at any stage. These two are pivotal hypotheses of

Vedānta philosophy and are expressly stated in very many places in Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads, Sūtras and even Samhitās. If these two fundamental hypotheses are recognised, the Indian view will be fully logical and rational. Both the hypotheses too are, perfectly rational, one being fully accepted in the form of conservation of matter and energy in physics.

The fourth state is enunciated and described by the sixth, seventh and twelfth verses. 'Eṣa sarveśvara eṣa sarvajña eso'ntaryāmyeṣa yoniḥ sarvasya prabhava-pyayau hi bhūtānām'. Mantra 6. 'Nāntaḥ-prajñam na bahiḥ prajñam no'bhayataḥ prajñam na prajñānaghanaṃ na prajñam na'prajñam. Adṛśyam avyavahāryam agrāhyam alakṣaṇam acintyam avyapadeśyam ekam ātma-pratyayasāram prapancopāśa-mam śāntam śivam advaitam caturtham manyante sa ātmā sa vijñeṣaḥ'. Mantra 7. 'Amātraḥ caturtho'vyavahāryaḥ prapancopāśamaḥ śivo'dvaita evam-onkāra ātmaiva samviśatyātmanātmānam ya evam veda ya evam veda'. Mantra 12. They read 'This is the supreme Lord, the all-knower, the omnipresent, the origin of everything, the beginning and end of everything. It is neither extrorse, introrse or both; nor is it consciousness in abeyance, unconsciousness or its reverse. It cannot be apprehended by the senses (adrśyam), it defies description and is not tangible (agrāhyam). It has no qualities by which it may be recognised (alakṣaṇam). It cannot be conceived (acintyam). It is the resting point of the universe (prapancopāśamam); it is peace (śāntam), it is the unitary THAT in which everything rests (śivam; from root śi=to lie down; meaning the resting place of everything). This is Ātmā which should be known'. This is the Universal Psyche recognised in Vedānta by the term Brahman.

The description of the fourth state is a completely negative one. Why should such a negative proposition be posited at all and how is one to know that such a state has any

real existence? A parallel may perhaps help to understand the position. In physics old notions of mass and energy have given place to an amorphous, intangible, insensible and well-nigh indescribable something pervading an infinite time-space continuum. In fact, this notion can be formulated or understood only in terms of abstract mathematics. What mathematics is to physical science, metaphysics is to psychology and to biological, fundamental conceptions in general. In a sense, this Universal Psyche, Brahman or Paramātmā of Vedānta may be equated with the amorphous Primary factor, the root of everything, that pervades the infinite time-space-continuum. Everything must perforce arise out of this and this alone, as there is nothing else existent; and this will have to be conceded as existing even though its existence cannot be positively proved. In Vedānta this is often described as 'beyond existence and non-existence' (sad-asad-param). This is the Fourth State of consciousness or Consciousness Absolute. It will be clear that this and nothing else ever really exists. The individual psyche is, as well, this. Be it noted that it is not a part of the Universal Psyche as anything infinite cannot be conceived as made up of parts, since Infinity upon n remains infinite ($\infty/n = \infty$). This is supreme knowledge or real knowledge, VIDYĀ as opposed to AVIDYĀ according to Vedānta. This knowledge vouchsafes no material benefit but bestows that perfect satisfaction which effectively stops all further queries of why and how.

In Yoga philosophy it is said that it is a flash of this absolute consciousness that geniuses get when in a state of complete relaxation and it is out of such occasional flashes Great Truths get elaborated. It is sufficient to recognise that the Fourth State is the State of the Primordial Consciousness and the three states known as Jāgrat (waking-consciousness), Svapna (sub-consciousness) and Susupti (unconsciousness) are but the manifestations of the Primordial Consciousness.

WIDER OUTLOOK AND SAFER PATH

How do we look upon Reality or Truth? It is clear that no single, simple concept will be found to be totally satisfactory. As we gain in experience new meanings are likely to arise in our minds. It is, therefore, necessary to keep this question constantly before us and learn to view it from fresh angles whenever possible. That will give us a standard of reference for readjusting our attitudes.

To some, at some stage, Truth may mean certain fixed laws regulating the operations of nature, the individual, and the Creative Power behind both. It is the duty of the aspirant to understand these laws and make his conduct conform to them. There is nothing unusual in this. When we know the laws of health, we follow them and avoid the conditions that lead to disease. When we grasp the principles of economics, we try hard to apply them so that we can increase our wealth and raise the standard of our life. From intellectual certainty, we invariably try to bring knowledge into the field of action.

Now, what is the special aspect of the fixed laws that appeals to the intellect? Let us grant for the time that we are impressed with the idea of the Creative Power as the giver of support to one and all without exception, — plants, animals, and men. If we cultivate that equal attitude in ourselves, we shall gradually become transformed into an instrument for public good. But that transformation does not take place smoothly. For, while translating the thought into deeds, we shall come into clash with every force employed by the selfish to concentrate all the good things of life in their own hands. At home, among the neighbours, in the market place, and in council chambers, the

desire of 'equal support' will rouse bitter opposition, and not unoften put life in danger. If we resolve to uphold the formula with religious fervour, we shall make no distinction between a small cause and a big one. All occasions will appear equally sacred for invoking Truth as we see it, and we shall stake our very existence to see it manifested. Internally it will be a picture of total dedication. Externally, however, it will be a series of battles, punctuated by what people who judge surface events may call success or defeat.

It might also strike us, either at the start or at some later stage, that all struggles are at bottom meant to bring out the best from each unit. The beauty of the flower and the holiness of the saint are expressions, each in its own way, of the matchless beauty and goodness of the Creative Principle. They are present everywhere, and particularly in the human heart, although in a dormant condition. If we introduce the idea into our personal lives, we shall have of course to get rid of thoughts and emotions inconsistent with it. To that extent clash and struggle will continue unabated. But their character will be altered. For the main motive will be to pick up the seeds of goodness lying scattered in different sets of unconnected memories, and sow them according to a well-arranged plan. With proper care and attention bestowed upon them, they will grow up into sturdy plants, whose flowers can make the entire personality sweet and captivating. It matters little whether the personality concerned is our own or some one else's. The policy is the same, — to recognize the virtuous elements, collect them, and nourish them till they dominate the field. What is unwanted dies out without being

directly challenged for an open fight. If only one unit of thought is given to us, shall we gladly charge it with all the good at our command, or shall we use it for aiming a blow at the evil appearing near by? If we are certain that evil is merely darkness, the most effective blow we can deliver is indeed to strike a match; the resulting light will do all that is needed.

Looking from another angle, we may conclude that Truth is ever perfect and that it remains so even when we feel ourselves bound to a relentless seesaw of joys and sorrows. We habitually judge things from the standpoint of the limited ego. That is why we get a disproportionate view of our evolution from a lower or 'seed' condition to a higher or more developed one. Consciousness which gives us such a picture is not really limited to it, or by it, or by anything else. Consciousness is immutable. In this respect it is unique. So it is impossible to find an example fully suited to it. We can get some hint by comparing dream and waking states. Delights and miseries are permitted to roll on in dream till we wake up. Afterwards we do not ordinarily bother about them. We also see that even when they appeared to affect us, we were remaining unmoved and unaltered. The defect of this example is that waking and dream states exclude each other while spiritual illumination excludes nothing except, of course, ignorance and selfishness. We can, however, learn something about spiritually awakened consciousness if we discern that 'reflection', which helps us to compare the two states, actually, includes, judges, and transcends them both. In a most 'natural' way it undergoes the state of deep sleep in which the ego-sense is shed, and comes out 'unleashed', to assume the 'reflecting' role as before. Reflection indicates freedom. He who masters 'reflection' becomes an awakener of those who yearn for it.

There are pitfalls in every path. Indeed

all paths lie through a jungle of thoughts, fancies, and calculations of immediate profit or loss. Often through impatience and exaggerated notions of one-pointed effort, we ignore bodily needs or the ability of the mind to withstand strain. The result is a breakdown somewhere, leading to various forms of self-deception. The ego knows how to hide its attempt to stage a come-back by presenting apparently sensible programmes of doing good to 'others'. The way to prevent such set-backs is to proceed cautiously, avoiding extremes of all kinds.

The body and the sense-organs, made out of gross elements, cannot be at fault. For they only obey thoughts. The mind too cannot be at fault, as the thoughts that enter into it depend upon the convictions and decisions operating at the time; and there is nothing in the structure of the mind itself that prevents the highest spiritual values from becoming their foundations. Hence we are advised not to employ violent methods¹ that injure bodily organs or destroy the invisible 'feelers' that enable us to detect subtle principles and introduce them into the thought stream. We can derive undoubted benefit by treating the body and the mind as essential parts of a delicate instrument intended for the playing of divinely-inspired music.

Sona, a disciple of the Buddha, it is said, once got into a mood of excessive zeal to rid his mind of sensuality, clinging to life and other evils. Rushing along that single track, he failed to notice that discrimination was left far behind. He paced up and down and did not mark that his feet began to bleed, making the place look like a butcher's shambles. Then fancy entered into his mind suggesting to him that it would be proper to leave off his present pursuit which brought him no success. His wealth remained intact at home; by going there and using it, he could surely do much good work! Knowing what was happening, the Master went to

¹ Cf. Kāśīyāntah śārirastham bhūtagrāmam-acetasah, etc. Gītā, xvii. 6.

him and entered into a quiet conversation. Sona had been skilled in playing on the lute while at home. So he was asked if he ever found the instrument fit for playing if its strings were overtaut. Sona said that he did not find it suitable. Next he was asked whether he found it fit if the strings were neither overtaut nor overslack, but evenly strung. Naturally he replied in the affirma-

tive. Then the Master drove his lesson home by saying that even so, excess of zeal leads to self-exaltation while absence of zeal leads to sluggishness. 'Wherefore persist in evenness of zeal, be a master of your faculties, and make that your mark.' Sona, says the story,² followed the advice and before long attained the Goal.

भग चरैवेति ।

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial :

Acharya Sankara is well known as the systematizer of the Vedanta philosophy. But Vedanta is not a mere philosophy. It is religion, realisation. Hence innumerable hints are given in his writings how an individual soul could achieve or experience Brahman, the object of philosophical inquiry and consummation of spiritual life. Some of his important suggestions on sadhana or spiritual discipline are brought together here.

Our Contributors :

Swami Madhavanandaji, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, visited America last year. The present article forms his answer to some of the questions put by the devotees and friends of the San Francisco Vedanta Society at that time.

The title 'Man and Superman' has evoked the imagination of many writers beginning with Nietzsche and Shaw. Sri Anthony Elenjmittam has nicely brought out here

the difference between man and superman with a series of antiphons.

Srimati Chandra Kumari Handoo M.A., is connected with various cultural activities in the country. She wrote a life of the Holy Mother also during the latter's birth centenary. In her thought-provoking article here she points out how the conception of dharma, and a practical application of Vedanta shown by Swamiji, a sharing attitude that was at the back of the age-old institution of joint family and an intense love for one's country and tradition, will be a great help in fulfilling the onerous task of building a broader and enduring civic culture in tune with the genius of the land.

Sri S. S. Raghavachar M.A., is a lecturer of philosophy and logic in the University of Mysore. He brings together the criticisms of Sri Sankara against Buddhism.

Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma is a Sanskrit scholar and Ayurvedic physician of Trivandrum.

A NEW COMMUNALISM

The 2500th parinirvana of Lord Buddha has been lately observed throughout the length and breadth of India. Dr. Ambedkar ultimately embraced Buddhism. Due to his sudden death a tremendous emotional upheaval naturally took place among his fol-

lowers. There were determined and enthusiastic persons to take advantage of that emotional unbalance of the simple, illiterate folk and convert them to the faith of the leader. An astonishingly large figure of more than 35 lakhs of the new converts has

been given by some newspapers. As the conversion is sudden and only nominal, there is very little chance of the quality of life being improved, in spite of a few well-meaning people aware of the problem. That the motive is other than religious is clear from the fact that in a short time some of the leaders of the group are demanding special privileges. A new communalism is being imported in the arena of Indian society and politics. The recent trouble by neo-converts in Aligarh (already notorious for another type of communalism) is proof positive that neo-Buddhism has fallen in the hands of unworthy leadership.

The Buddhist movement in India has been sponsored and strengthened by the liberal Hindus. Even now they are the main supporters of this movement. It is time for them to take note of this new development and pull up the active workers engaged in nauseating communalism. It is their bounden duty, for they have lent their names and worked for enhancing the movement. We want to retain Lord Buddha and his teachings and are not against the Sangha flourishing, but we are sorry that the new converts are guided by extra-religious motives and cultivate a communal attitude. Already the Indian atmosphere is too much polluted by bigotry and narrow group mentality. Buddhism is noted for its catholicity and width of vision. It is a travesty of Buddhism to associate it with communal feeling. Yet a movement around Buddha is turning more and more separatist as it gathers strength. The society must take note of the growth of the menace of this new communalism and try to eliminate it before it becomes too strong. The Hindu society is fast shedding off social disabilities of the backward communities. Legally it has completely liquidated them. But the political leaders are hesitant in purging the aggressive religions of their communalism. The leaders of new converts seek to retain their hold over their followers through the easy method of exclusiveness

and bigotry and take shelter behind a religion outside Hinduism which, they know, will not be touched by the Government.

When it is time to liberalize Christianity, Islam and different sects of Hinduism, we cannot allow a new bigoted group coming up. The Government have a clear duty to prevent this ugly development, for it was they who gave an extraordinary filip to the new revival. The Hindus on their part should quicken the process of eliminating the causes of bitterness among the backward communities and must be vigilant enough not to allow a big landslide from its followers. The Buddhists also should not forget the lessons of history. Buddhism is being supported by the Hindus because it is considered 'an aspect of Hinduism' as Sri C. Subrahmanyam, Finance Minister of Madras, recently pointed out. (*Hindu*, April 30.) The great appeal of Buddhism to modern Indians is due to its absence of connection with any bigoted group. Once they make it so, we are afraid it will lose all sympathy from the liberal-minded Hindus. And then, even if it survives, it will be the religion of a microscopic minority. Do they like a small number of illiterate people unsuccessfully follow the highly philosophical religion or prefer to have it as 'an aspect' of Hinduism and thereby drawing the love and allegiance of the whole country? It is for them to decide. As for us, we deplore the unjudicious manipulation of a fine religion for fomenting tension and dissension. Already this country is turning more and more towards secular and anti-religious ideals. And if the religious groups behave in this irreligious way there will be an additional ground even for well-meaning people to turn hostile to religion itself. And neo-Buddhism also will not escape the Nemesis. We know there are idealistic people among the leaders of this group who may see the danger of communalism, but will they have influence enough to curb this tendency?

² *Buddhist Stories*, Stories, by F. L. Woodward, M.A.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDUISM THROUGH THE AGES: By D. S. Sarma. (Bhavan's Book University—Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay). Pp. 303, Price: 1-12-0.

This book is a revised and abridged edition of Prof. D. S. Sarma's earlier publication under the title of *Renaissance of Hinduism* brought out by the Banaras Hindu University. The greater part of the book which is also the latter part is devoted to the *Modern Period* and deals with the lives and teachings of Hindu revivalists like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ranade, Dayananda Saraswati, Tilak, Annie Besant, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi, Aurobindo and Dr Radhakrishnan. The account of each of these is marked with a fidelity to original and lucidity of presentation. These moderns except Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda either portray a particular brand of Hinduism which they originated or claimed to interpret as the true Hinduism. But the same cannot be said of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. While the great Swami exhibited the rational and scientific character of the Vedantic religion, Sri Ramakrishna was an encyclopaedia of religion in general and an expression of every facet of the Hindu religion in particular. One may or may not agree with the teachings of others; but so far as Sri Ramakrishna is concerned, there is no question of agreeing or disagreeing with him since he did not come to expound any new school or interpretation of the Hindu religion.

The first part of the book deals with the ancient and medieval periods of Hinduism in about 60 pages and the account forms a philosophical and religious background for the understanding of the developments of the modern period. Prof. Sarma has helped the reader to visualise Hinduism through the ages by means of a tabular statement relating to each Age in which are given in succession details of the History, the Religion, the Literature, the Arts and Great Men connected with it.

We would draw special attention to the concluding chapter entitled *The Present Situation* in which the learned author takes stock of the past and plans for the future of Hinduism. He does not favour an eclectic process to pass for the much advocated universal religion. For, says he: 'No religion can flourish which has not its roots in an authoritative canon and which is not protected by appropriate ritual, as a tree by its bark'. He calls attention to the fact that the soul of religion is

different from its body and so like all moderns, he considers 'social arrangements' as of subordinate importance. He desires that the 'remnants of the caste system which still form a great obstacle to our progress as a nation' should be 'cleared without violence and mutual recrimination'. He pleads for the religious education for the young. He makes the interesting suggestion that 'some of our University men should undergo special training and become priests as they now become teachers'. Prof. Sarma's book is at once instructive and provocative of earnest thought about our duty to our religion.

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

THE ATHARVA VEDA VRATYAKANDA WITH SRUTIPRABHA COMMENTARY in English: By Hon'ble Sri Sampurnanand, Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh. (Publishers: Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17). 1956. Pp. vi plus 62. Price: Rs. 3.

The most proficient scholar of the Vedic literature was described as a Chaturvedi or one who has mastered the four Vedas, the importance of each one of which is appropriately recognised in the Hindu tradition. The presence of incantations and spells in the Atharva Veda has led some students of this work to consider it inferior to and later than the other three Vedas. This inference cannot stand scrutiny. If rituals and incantations employed for their efficacy in bringing about Shanti and Pushti lend themselves to be construed as a criterion for assessing the age and worth of Atharva Veda, it will be found that the first two Vedas also are not free from similar passages. Careful study of the Atharva Veda Samhita could reveal that after the Rig Veda Samhita it is the most original and philosophic compilation. To trace the development of the religio-philosophic ideas from the Rig Veda to the Upanishads one has to take into consideration the philosophic passages in Atharva Veda. For one is able to discover many missing links in the evolution of thoughts in this Veda.

Honourable Sri Sampurnanand, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has presented here the *fifteenth khanda* of the Atharva Veda in the Saunaka recension in two Anuvakas consisting of two hundred and twenty mantras mostly in prose. This part of the Atharva Veda is called Vratyakanda, because its Devata is called Vratya. The import of the word Vratya is made a matter of dispute by some historical scholars. Indian tradi-

tion however takes that the word denotes an individual or a group that has not conformed to the customary sacraments of the Vedic community. The author of the book holds the view that this interpretation cannot give a meaning to the word which fits in every context in which it is used. The word is employed to denote God and the man who knows God through the discipline of yoga. 'The book contains philosophic discourses about God and hymns in praise of the yogi'. The author originally wrote this commentary on this text called Srutiprabha in Sanskrit a rendering of which is given here. The introduction gives details about the situation of the text and views of others on it. It is refreshing to note that the learned author has viewed the Vratya as a member of a sect that worshipped Rudra, practised yoga and led a gyrovagant's life. The translation of the text is as clear and faithful as far as the text permits and the explanation is consistently supported by elucidations from other parts of the sruti. Similar studies of other parts of the Veda undertaken with the mental climate indicated in this work will help much to restore faith in the religion of Veda, which is to some extent shaken by cold anatomic dissection of critical scholarship. The printing and the get-up of the book leave nothing to be desired.

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

ANATOMICAL ALPHABET AND COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LITERATURE, Book I: By Swami Shankarananda. (Published by author, 498, Shaniwar Peth, Poona-2). Pp. 112. Price Rs. 10.

The book is a masterly treatment of the anatomy of the Sanskrit Alphabet. The treatment is scientific and the book raises amazing controversies and solves them with ample quotations from many works. There is an interesting account of the origin of Language.

The history of Nature teaches us culture which results in civilization and life becomes an experience, a duration of unceasing change of successions of such experience. People are but tools in such a cycle; they pick up the environment and in them sounds undergo articulation. As a result, literature and language emerge therefrom. 'Under the guidance of intelligence of brain, these came to possess a fixed communicable meaning and gave birth to speech. It was a gift of logical thought'. This suggests to us that the language owes its natural origin to mankind and to an instinct that was inherent in them. The learned author then substantiates that language is divine revelation and that speech must have preceded thought.

since it could not have been invented by man. It must have been communicated to him by God. The psychologists may not wholly accept this argument, for, whence can speech arise without conceiving the idea of it before. But if it is thrust on us dogmatically to believe that speech is divine revelation, any amount of logic will not touch divine communication. But the author believes that language is the expression of intellectual emotions and environments, and that letter, consequently articulate sounds, come from within.

In the section on Geometry of expressions, the author views that the Geometrical signs have an emphatic reference to the Alphabets and 'these signs and symbols, gestures and movements, in course of time, took the crude geometrical forms, . . . to facilitate the means of communications, this crude, primitive and elementary art was developed into the art of fixing the possible equivalents of such pictures, signs, symbols, and corresponding sounds. The equivalents in course of time, became the letters of the alphabet'. This would indeed give much brain work to pioneers in the origin of alphabets, who would have been familiar with only diagrams of Sun, crescent Moon, etc., representing certain letter in ancient times when writing was unknown.

Several interesting topics like the civilization of Greece and India (compared), Haas and Ayurveda, date of Rigveda, have been treated with a bias for the priority of Indian and Indian culture. He tries to prove that everything had its origin in India and migrated in course of time. Ramayana, he considers as the oldest and finest of poetry and is the source of all Indian culture.

Certain curious observations have also been made. River Nile of Africa is the River Amara of the Puranas and the present Rajaputana was once a sea and reference to such seas have been made in Rigveda. The cradle of the Aryan race is Sapta-Sindhu (modern Punjab) and not Europe. In order to prove his statement, the author tries to disprove the theories of philologists and accept those of the anthropologists. It is really very much thought-provoking when the author tries to establish the antiquity of Indian heritage from Palaeolithic age, which is still a puzzle to anthropologists and geologists. However, one will feel sincerely, after a study of this book, that there is much to be achieved in most of the subjects that are familiar to us. Tables of Penta-Bhauitic classification of letters, Rashmi krama of letters and Elemental respiration have been explained in the Tantric language and they provide a thoughtful reading. The book is supplied with two appendices giving a free rendering

of some of the anatomical words. The book is very valuable and worth reading.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

THE POETRY AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE TAMIL SIDDHARS: By A. V. Subramania Aiyar. (Published by S. Mahadevan, Book-seller and Publisher, Tirunelveli Jn.). Pp. 87. Price: Rs. 2.

This is an essay in criticism giving an idea of the contribution of Tamil Siddhars to Tamil Literature and reveals that there is richness as well as variety in the literary inheritance of the Tamils. The author deplors that 'Tamil Literature as a whole has not been methodically, critically and adequately studied and evaluated as literature should be in the modern age'. He pleads for a sound literary criticism as well as a disinterested and critical study of all the periods of Tamil Literature. He staunchly advocates that there is much of Truth and value in the works of Tamil Siddhars which one should not pass off as of little value, but evince keen interest in developing their thoughts and endeavour to fulfil their mission. He consolidates his view as 'the proper study of any poet or any literature of a period requires an approach of sympathy and of understanding of their special features'.

Chapters III to VI deal with those luminaries of the hymnal period like Tirumular, Sivavakkilar, Patunathar and Bhadrachariar. Chapter VII deals with Siddhars of the post-hymnal period and Chapter VIII deals with three philosophic poets—Saint Vagisar, Kannudayavallalar and Thandavaraya Swamikal. The treatment is simple, direct and thought-provoking.

The author richly deserves appreciation for presenting controversial topics like the identity of Sivavakkilar and Tirumalais Alwar, the Vaishnava saint, etc. in an easy style bringing home his views without much of difficulty. There is valuable reasoning in the arguments advanced. There is also given much of reliable information with regard to the Tamil Siddhars, their life, and mission. The book has been nicely got up and is worth the price of it.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

PRACTICAL NATURE CURE: 9th Edition. Pages 584. XVI by K. Lakshmana Sarma. Published by: The Nature Cure Publishing House, Ganeshnagar, Pudukottai, S. India. Price: Rs. 12/8.

The book under review gives the principles and the practical details of a well-known science, which is elementary and practical. Diseases are but masks of names and forms, concealing the reality which is diminution of health. Health is

the only reality not disease. The latter is like darkness, while the former is like light. As, when the light is brought in, darkness vanishes, so when health is brought back diseases vanish of themselves. Numerous examples of cases of incurables given in the book show that this is the soundest policy of all. No drugs are necessary, nor proper. What is needed is only the right use of the five materials of which the living body is composed, namely Food (Earth's contribution), Water, Sunlight, Air in the sky (Ether). This last, being the subtlest of all, is the source of vital energy and the secret of it is here explained as vital economy, which includes self-denial and self-control in eating, in sex, in exercise and so on.

The mind must co-operate, as otherwise the prescribed course of conduct cannot be carried out. To this end self-surrender to God with reliance on Him alone, and right knowledge are stated to be the means. To heal the mind itself which is often in a sickly state is the province of religion. But religion itself enjoins the eating of sattvic food in the sattvic manner, according to the Divinely ordained laws, along with devotion and growth towards right awareness of the real Self. Such in brief is the teaching of this old new science as given in this book which aims at enabling every man to become and be his own doctor. One must rely on God the real healer and approach Him with righteousness and purity.

'Turasu'

TRUTH OF LIFE: By N. R. Balakrishnan. Foreword by Dr. M. S. Vairanapillai, M.A., Ph.D. Vivekananda Press, Madurai, pp. viii plus 95. Price: 8 As.

'Truth of Life' is a small brochure by Sr. N. R. Balakrishnan, in which the principles of life to be practised by all irrespective of race and rank, community and creed, are outlined. The object of this small book is, as the author points out, to show how, if we sincerely strive our utmost, the realisation of truth can be attained and how this will help to create a better and happier world for all ages to come. Sr. Balakrishnan manages to make a survey of the basic principles of life in a brief but precise and lucid manner. Starting from 'The Religion of Love', he refers to the importance of our realisation of, and adherence to truth. There is a passing reference to the 'law of karma' and 'sacredness of work'. The author admirably sums up the essential teachings of the various religions under 'unanimity of all religions'.

The net sale proceeds of this book will go to the Bhoodan movement. The proof correction has not been carefully done.

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN.

THE TEMPLE OF JOY: By A. H. Jaisinghani. (Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17). 1956 Edition. Pp. 74. Price: Rs. 1-8-0.

This book deals with Joy, pure and simple, which we will experience in the realm of Supreme Divinity and the author has shown that the three messengers, Failure, Suffering and Separation, lead us to that Kingdom of Happiness wherefrom we cherish no desire to return to the world of materiality. The book reveals very strikingly that the author has probed deep into the fundamentals of our existence to find out the means towards redemption. There is no doubt that the book shall prove to be a lodestar unto many aspirants who desire to become one with That—Sat-Cit-Ananda.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

SONG SUBLIME or GEETA: By Prafulla Kumar Lahiri. (Published by the author, 57, Monohar Pukur Road, Calcutta-29). Pp. 148. Price: Re. 1.

The book is a very handy English edition of the Bhagavad Gita in rhyme. The rendering is very simple and as far as possible faithful to the original text. The attempt is commendable.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

SANSKRIT

PRATAH-SMARANA-MALA (Rosary of Morning Prayers): By M. D. Gadgil, Engineer, Ananda Vilas, Kachiguda, Hyderabad. (Published by the author). Pp. 82. Price: Re. 0-12-0.

The book under review is very useful for those who believe in the efficacy of Prayer and meditations. Though mainly embodied as prayer to the morn, it inspires spiritual enthusiasm and paves a way towards the siddhanta of Adhyatma vidya. There is a variety of collection and the Swarajya Prabodha Mala is a notable addition in the sense, the tenets of Philosophy have been precisely brought out. Every stanza therein breathes spiritual fervour and is pregnant with meaning diving deep into the subtlest of truth.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

MALAYALAM

VEDARTHAVICHARAM: By Sri V. K. Narayana Bhattathiri. (Published by the Mathrubhumi Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd., Kozhikode-1). Pp. 203 plus xvi. Price: Rs. 2).

This is a collection of thirty-six articles written by the late V. K. Narayana Bhattathiri, a noted scholar and a well-known writer in Malayalam. The most inspiring and striking feature of these

articles is that they, as the title of the book indicates, are comprised of vivid and clear thoughts about various aspects of the Veda.

Nowadays there is a tendency either to reject the Vedas as obsolete literature or to twist their meaning in a most secular way to suit our present tendencies. Sri Bhattathiripad points out in his articles that people who hold these opinions do not care to understand the true spiritual meaning of the Vedas. In recent times Dayananda Saraswati and Aurobindo Ghosh are the two persons who have given much thought to the Vedas and tried to create some interest among the people in their study. But among them Sri Aurobindo gets more credit for his deep thinking and clear exposition of intricate portions of the Vedas. The author of the present book who could not get satisfaction from the interpretation of Dayananda Saraswati was much inspired and benefited by the writings of Sri Aurobindo. A careful study of them gave him an insight into the Vedas unravelling the mysteries. So he expresses his deep indebtedness to Sri Aurobindo in many places and recommends his works to the sincere students of the Vedas.

Usually our Vedic scholars of traditional type are most orthodox and they live in a world without looking to the social surroundings. But Sri Bhattathiripad, although his scholarship is as profound as that of orthodox Vaidikas, is modern in his outlook and interpretation in so far as he has endeavoured to explain ancient truths in a way applicable in all times. He holds the opinion that the Veda must give a solution to the present-day problems if it has to survive. So in this book he explains how the study of the Vedas can be helpful in solving them. Many of the articles are written with the purpose of showing the way in which we should approach the allegories in the Vedas following the line of the adhyatmika meaning and find out the true meaning of the deities, Indra, Varuna, etc., explained in this light. The famous and popular bhashya of Sayana mainly written for the purpose of explaining karma will not be much helpful in discovering the real purport of the Vedas which is jnana. The present book throws some light on that way of interpretation and helps the readers to understand the central theme of the Vedas.

This book with its valuable contents and excellent printing and get-up will be gratefully received and appreciated by all Malayalam knowing people who have got some regard and respect for the Indian culture, as a guide to the inner meaning of the Veda which is the fountain of our culture and civilization.

M.

PERIODICAL

HINDI

SIDDHANTA: (Special Number). Published from Gangataranga, Nagawah, Banaras. Pages 392. Price: Rs. 3/-.

This Special Number of the Journal *Siddhanta* is exclusively devoted to a clear and learned exposition of the four Purusharthas viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The Special Number has been very well planned giving at first an introduction of the Purusharthas in general and

a learned article from Sri Akshaya Kumar Bandyopadhyaya brings out the essentials of Purushartha as revealed in Srimad Bhagavata. The whole Number is divided into four chapters, one chapter devoted to each of the four Purusharthas. There are interesting articles in each of these sections and the Number gives a very good idea of the four values of life. The Moksha section which forms fittingly the concluding section of the Number reveals beyond any shadow of doubt that Liberation alone is the highest Purushartha of the four.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

REPORT FOR 1953-55

The Institute of Culture, Calcutta was founded in 1938, in commemoration of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, with a view to promote Indian culture and for the proper interpretation and appraisal of it. It completed its eighteenth year of useful service in 1955.

Weekly classes for the study of Indian culture, study circle, Hindi classes, study of Sanskrit philosophical literature, and weekly lectures are some of its activities. International symposia on various cultural aspects of India and abroad which help to bring together on a common platform Eastern and Western scholars representing diverse schools of thought, are the regular yearly cultural activities of the Institute. Besides the above, the Institute conducts a public library containing 22,494 volumes. It conducts a students' hostel and renders assistance to some research scholars and maintains a guest house.

The Institute maintains cultural relation with other countries through the publication of their monthly bulletin, inviting for lectures and discussions foreign delegates in India and the publication of books on culture, specially the *Cultural Heritage of India*.

A seminar was conducted in two sessions in May 1956, in order to carry out the cultural work undertaken at the request of the UNESCO in 1955, its nature being a study of the present state of the traditional arts and the traditional uses of Indian literature in the community life of villages near Calcutta.

The Institute observed the birth centenary of Sri Sarada Devi in 1954, with solemnity.

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Public libraries which apply for the Bibliography will be supplied with a copy free of cost as soon as it is ready. Applications may be made either to the Dev Vani Parishad, 27-A, Raja Basant Rai Road, Calcutta or to Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, Convener, Sri Sankaracharya Golden Jubilee Committee, 13, Kalpakambal Nagar, Mylapore, Madras-4.

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July 1885 — It was the day of the Car Festival. Sri Ramakrishna was sitting in Balaram's drawing-room with the devotees. He was filled with intense spiritual fervour. Now and then he narrated his profound spiritual experiences to the devotees.

Master: "I went to Benares with Mathur Babu. Our boat was passing the Manikarnika ghat on the Ganga. Suddenly I had a vision of Siva. I stood near the edge of the boat and went in samadhi. The boatman, fearing that I might fall into the water, cried to Hriday: 'Hold him! Hold him! Lest he may fall!'"

When Mathur's boat came to the Manikarnika ghat, where the dead bodies are burnt, all was full of smoke rising from funeral pyres. As soon as the Master happened to cast his eyes in that direction, he was completely beside himself with joy. He was standing calm and quiet, absolutely motionless. A wonderful light and smile illumined his face and made that place pure and effulgent as it were.

Master: "I saw Siva standing on that ghat, a tall white figure with tawny matted hair; with solemn steps He walked to each pyre in the burning ghat, raising carefully every Jiva (soul). He imparted into his ear the mantra of supreme Brahman. At the other side of the Jiva, Mahakali, the all-powerful Mother of the universe, was sitting on the pyre. The great Goddess Kali untying all knots of bondage, gross, subtle and causal of the Jiva produced by past impressions, was sending him to the indivisible Sphere by opening with Her own hands the door to Liberation. Thus did the Divine Lord of the universe endow the Jiva in an instant with the infinite Bliss of realizing non-duality, which ordinarily only results from the practice of yoga and tapas for many cycles. Thus did He fulfil perfection of the Jiva's life. At first I saw Siva at some distance. Then I saw Him approaching me. At last He merged in me."

In silent wonder the devotees listened to his words.

FUNDAMENTALS OF DIFFERENT FAITHS AND UNIVERSAL RELIGION

यं शैवाः समुपासन्ते शिव इति ब्रूवन्ति वेदान्तिनां
बौद्धा बुद्ध इति प्रमाणपटवः कर्ते नैययिकाः ।
अद्वैतियथ जन्तुसामन्तराः कर्मेति मीमांसकाः
सांख्ये नो विदधानु चाञ्छितफलं ब्रूवन्त्यनाथा
हरिः ।

Every religion is based upon a few fundamental principles. There is an essential unity running through all faiths. But the very fact that there are quite a number of them shows that there are differences also. These grew because of difference of countries, languages and approach, for during all these centuries religions grew in isolation. With the annihilation of distance because of quick transport and with all the nations huddled together, a cosmopolitan outlook has begun to grow. For full understanding between diverse groups, it is imperative to know one another. That can be done by knowing one another's environment, tradition, culture and religion. Religion has a great moulding influence upon the aim, aspiration and action of men. With the knowledge of one another, a world culture will emerge in course of time and a universal religion is also a possibility. Let us see the fundamentals of a few religions which shape the life, attitude and activities of diverse peoples. It is possible now to trace the characteristics of only the major religions, and that too their main ones.

Let us take up Christianity. It is a revealed religion. It thinks that God reveals Himself and His purposes progressively in the world, which process culminates in Jesus Christ. The vehicle of revelation is the Word (Logos) incar-

He who is worshipped as Siva by the Saivites, as Brahman by the Vedāntins, as Buddha by the Buddhists, as Kartā by the Naiyāyikas versed in reasoning, as Arhat by those who are devoted to the teachings of Jinas, as Karma by the Mimāṃsakas, — may that Hari, the Lord of the three worlds, fulfil our desires.

nate in Christ and articulate in the Bible. It is a religion primarily of regeneration and redemption of the sinful by the grace of the all-merciful God whose presence may be known through His works and ways. 'The abundant life' is possible through faith and faith alone. Christianity is a historical religion, trying to realise eternal realities and values in time. Christ who came at the fulness of time, founded the Kingdom of God. Christianity is intuitional and has a systematic theology. The doctrine of Trinity stands for the completeness of God. Christ of Faith is the Jesus of History who died upon the cross for the vicarious atonement of the sins of men. Man is made in the image of God but fell from the grace because of original sin. In resurrection he will be transmuted into a spiritual body to enjoy the fruits of faith. Satan is the personified evil which arises out of the heart of man but will be ultimately defeated by the greater power of God. Christianity believes in a beloved community, bound by the common Fatherhood of God and also in winning new adherents to the Christian way. The Christian principles are implemented by a system of ethics grounded in the Divine will. Bringing about the Kingdom of God on earth is the aim, the chief agency for which is the Church, which is the body of Christ.

Another world religion is Islam. As a Semitic faith it also has definite doctrines to which all the faithful subscribe. It has two sects, Sunni and Shia. The latter represents the liberal branch of Islam from which have emerged the mystical, Vedantic Sufism and the messianic Bahai. A Muslim is he who has made submission to Allah's will. The main principles of Islam are belief in God, Divine revelation, Day of Judgment and spiritual discipline of doing good to others. The chief message consists in the unity of Godhead. Angels as His intermediaries are also recognized. The chief source of revelation is the Koran which is the created word of Allah, revealed to Prophet Mohammed by Gabriel. Heaven and hell are elaborately portrayed and the people are prepared for the Day of Judgment when the book of their deeds will be read and they will be either rewarded or punished according to their deeds in this world. The spiritual discipline consists of five duties (din), profession of faith by repeating the creed daily, prayer (namaz) five times a day facing Mecca, charity to the poor, fasting in day-time throughout the month of Ramzan and pilgrimage to Mecca (haj) once in a life-time.

Zoroastrianism, the faith of the Parsees, was developed in eastern Iran by Zarathushtra. It flourished in Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Asia Minor, languished after the conquest of Alexander, revived for a short time and then was crushed by the Muslim conquest in the 7th century. A mass migration to India saved it from total extinction. The main emphasis of this religion is on practical moral life. According to it two eternal spiritual beings are engaged in cosmic battle to decide the issue between good and evil. Ahura Mazda is the supreme God. Spenta-Mainyu is the good spirit and the Angra-Mainyu (Ahriman), the spirit of darkness. They are

supported by angels and archdemons respectively. The Good God requires the help of His creatures to eradicate evil from the world. Allegiance to Him is manifested by good thoughts, good words and good deeds. On the Day of Judgment men will be weighed by their deeds and sent to heaven or hell. At the end of the cosmic struggle, however, all souls will be purified by fire and a new eternal kingdom of righteousness will be established, Ahriman being banished to the region of darkness. For the Parsees Sun is the symbol of God and Fire is the Sun's representative on earth. So they turn towards the Sun or Fire while they pray. The great Zoroastrian law is purity. Individuals are asked to harness, curb and subdue evil in life and not merely practise virtue. Obedience to God's will and service of humanity are also important. Several God-given aids are there, of which the most important is the Revealed Religion given to Zarathushtra which is recorded in the *Yasna*, including the *Gāthās*.

Next we come to Buddhism. Buddhism and Jainism are really the reform movements of Hinduism, getting separated in course of time. Some say that Buddhism is not a religion, for there is no worship of God in it, nor is it a philosophy, for Buddha was not in favour of speculation about the origin of the universe. However, later Buddhism satisfies both. Its two main branches are Hinayana and Mahayana. Buddhism took different shapes in different countries. Thus Lamaism, Zen Buddhism, etc., came into existence. Through meditation and rational investigation of life, Buddha discovered the four noble truths. The truth of suffering points out that all existence is pain or suffering, because it is bound to the cycles of birth and death. Suffering is caused by craving, which is due to ignorance, as

explained by the twelvefold chain of causation. It is possible to effect cessation of suffering. It is only clarity of vision and correctness of thought that can root the craving out. The fundamental way leading to the eradication is the noble eightfold path, though it implies a comprehensive system of moral cultivation, following the ten precepts. Later the threefold learning represents the reduced form of the eightfold path. Morality purifies behaviour, meditation penetrates into the heart of things and wisdom reveals the truth of impermanence and craving. The watchword of Buddhism is moderation, and hence it is known as the middle way. Mahayana system of Buddhism developed elaborate rituals and prayers, addressed to a number of deities. Its ideal is Bodhisattva whose essence is wisdom and who sacrificed his life in 500 births for the sake of suffering creatures. It does not take Nirvana as void like the Hinayana. For the latter the ideal is Arhathood and the stress is on the transitoriness of the soul. Though it emphasizes on contemplation, the image of Buddha is put in its temples.

Jainism is older than Buddhism. Mahavira was the founder of its organized movement but he was the 24th of the Tirthankaras. Austerity is the main characteristic of Jainism. Self-effort and ascetic practices are the means of liberation. The three jewels (Triratna), right knowledge, right faith and right conduct, are stressed as the way to final release. Ahimsa is particularly stressed in this faith. It accepts Karma. To counteract Karma, five vows, non-violence, truth, non-stealing, continence and non-acceptance of gifts, are observed by the Jainas. For householders the rules are a little less rigorous and are called the minor vows (anuvratas). A householder practising right conduct,

having eleven stages, including the four instructive vows, is fit to embrace the much more arduous and abstemious life of a monk. In the thirteenth, out of the fourteen stages of spiritual advancement, a Jaina becomes a Tirthankara. At the last, at the fall of the body, he becomes a Siddha.

Hinduism has been described as the mother of religions. In fact it is a comity of faiths. So it is difficult to reduce Hinduism into a group of doctrines. Scholars have been baffled to state what really is its exact nature. However, a few fundamental ideas are common to different faiths in Hinduism. For the Hindu, the Veda is the source of knowledge and is the final authority. It is without beginning or end in time. It has no human author but is revealed from time to time to seers. Its truths are corroborated by reason and experience, given by the Acharyas. Hinduism believes in the unity of existence, one Brahman pervading the entire universe but not limited by the latter. It believes in infinite expressions of the Divine. He is both personal and impersonal. He incarnates himself whenever virtue declines and vice prevails. Hinduism insists on a view of life that world is transitory and Brahman alone is real. Vairagya is thus an important virtue. The universe is projected out of Brahman, subsists in Him and is dissolved in Him. It is empirically real. The individual soul is potentially divine. On account of ignorance it identifies itself with matter and becomes limited. Through the realization of God it knows its real nature and attains liberation from birth and death which it repeatedly undergoes because of the results of its accumulated past actions. Karma is thus the law of cause and effect. Experience and purificatory discipline in different paths make an individual soul perfect, and it enters into samadhi which

is the highest state of life. Religion, according to Hinduism, is realisation, experience. Different souls require different disciplines in accordance with the temperament, evolution and past impressions. Thus four yogas are prescribed to the spiritual aspirants. That different religions are different paths to the Divine, is the conviction of Hinduism. Immortality according to it is the goal which is achieved through freeing oneself from egoism and attachment, due to ignorance. In the state of liberation suffering ceases and bliss is attained. Hinduism believes that unity in variety is the plan of creation. Though the creation reveals diversity, there is one entity of Brahman behind it. Four values of life—righteousness, wealth, pleasures and liberation—are the objective. This goal is obtained through the four stages of life, leading gradually to further and further purification, and ultimately enabling one to realize Brahman directly. And this is liberation.

We have enumerated some of the fundamentals of a few of the religions. Each religion differs from the other in philosophy, mythology and ritual. But there is a common aspiration of transcending the limitations of life and realizing the Highest. Some more similarities can be traced in their approach and method of sadhana. But still the doctrines seem so dissimilar. Man however wants a rational and integrated view of different religions, all of which seem to be so sincere and potent, commanding tremendous emotional appeal to thousands of followers. How to achieve it is a problem. One religion replacing all others is out of the question. Hinduism possibly can show us a way. It has harmonized with its Vedanta philosophy the different sects and faiths which have sometimes been described even as separate religions. The theory of the Chosen Deity (Ishta) has done that wonder-

ful work. It says that every aspirant worships the same ultimate Reality whenever he worships and prays. The absolute manifests Itself in a variety of forms in accordance with the attitude of the devotee. The different conceptions of Godhead are the symbols of the Absolute and diverse disciplines are the several ways to reach It. By this, Vedanta brings about harmony of various sects in Hinduism. With this attitude, an aspirant discovers deeper and finer contents in the credal ideal itself, till it represents the Highest. Vedanta thus provides a background of clear understanding of various faiths and supplies a fundamental unity for all of them.

With the Rigvedic dictum, "Truth is one, sages call it variously", Vedanta can harmonize other religions also. With the Vedantic outlook a man can easily find out that all religions believe in some form of immortality, union with Divinity and freedom from the trans-migratory existence. They show the way to spiritual advancement through faith, prayer and worship. All the sadhanas can be classified under the four yogas satisfying the intellectual, emotional, mystic and active natures. The essential agreement lies in the recognition, explicit or implied, of the oneness of life, divinity of the soul and the discipline of being good and doing good to others. Ethical perfection is envisaged by all faiths. Love is their backbone. Buddhism speaks of friendliness to all creation, Jainism of non-violence, Islam of brotherhood and Christianity of loving the neighbour. As a result of inner development all the faithful come nearer to one another. Through spiritual practice by any path, there come a change of character, an exaltation of feeling and a widening of consciousness. The mystics all over the world speak of the similar experience of God. Sri Ramakrishna's realization in modern

times, of 'As many faiths, so many paths', bears testimony to the validity of all religions. Intellectually also it is quite satisfying. How do we find the universality? A man and a woman meet as human beings. Human beings and animals meet as living beings. Vedanta says the universal existence is Brahman. In Him we are all One. This universalism already exists, only we do not see it. The grand contribution of Vedanta is to discover this unity. It is thus a generalized religion, a unified whole. It syn-

thesizes spiritual ends and means, while allowing the difference in manifestation. It is thus the Religion of religions. Eclecticism could not achieve this, for it lacks inspiration, and being a new product, would meet with opposition. Vedanta is capable of liberalizing other religions and paving the way for co-existence in the beginning, and for full integration in future. The universal religion of Vedanta, whether it is called by this name or not, will be the future religion of mankind.

THE NECTAR POT

R. K. M. CHERLA

Descend my Lord, O God of Grace,
That song Divine I long to listen;
My voice-stage welcomes thy phase
Thy magic flute with music solemn.

To spy I pine, thy mystic dance
That supple step and nimble motion,
Entreat Thee, lead me soon to trance
Filling my cup with blissful potion.

As autumn moon's responseful rays
On wondrous green Brindavan theatre
In raptures glow and gaily trace,
With music fill thy flute my Master.

Let charming Jumna horripilate
In listful ripples blue and mute,
Let Gopis' bosoms rise in spate,
My master blow thy heavenly flute.

That miracle reed kissing thy lip
And yielding sweet immortal hymn
And holding herds of kine in grip
Who gave you tell, which sylvan queen?

With psalm of Om, Thy song eternal,
Imprint my heart, O master-mind,
The song which dips the Gopis carnal
In death-less pool of peace sublime.

Thy ringlets fine with peacock plume
Like rainbow-rounded hue-some clouds
Why hide and smile and make me swoon
Let flow thy grace on me in floods.

The butter-hearts of cow-herd maids
To melt my Lord, is it an art?
Take up the glove, begin thy raids
Anon dissolve my stony heart.

The Gopis' scarfs just as you stole
And kindly gave to them redemption,
Come, lift this covering, heal my soul
Relieve my self from this affliction.

An ugly wench of Kamsa's harem
Became an angel by thy pat:
Will not my artless poem become
By grace of thine a nectar pot?

LETTERS OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Kankhal,
21-11-'06.

My dear R—,

Many thanks for your kind card of the 14th inst. I am glad to know you met Swami Abhedananda and had talks with him. He could not come to this place for want of time and I could not see him. My health is not satisfactory though there is not so much pain just at present. I suffered terribly from toothache. I feel a little better now. I hope you are doing well. It would be nice if you can start a branch of the Vedanta Society at Bombay. There would be no lack of teachers, if there is real earnestness of purpose in the people to learn. The inmates here are doing well. My best wishes and love to you.

Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda.

Rishikesh,
13-3-'06.

My dear R—,

Your kind post card of the 8th inst. is to hand. I also received duly your kind letter of the 20th December last when at Kankhal. I am sorry I could not acknowledge it earlier. I left it behind when I came here and as all the members of the Ashrama went to Magh Mela at Prayag I could not get it. I could not remember your address. I liked to write to you but could not. I did not go to Prayag. Nirbhayananda went there from Mayavati. I am glad you have heard from Swami Swarupananda at last only the other day. I heard about the arrival of the new comers just when they came. I have not heard from Mayavati after that again. I am sorry you are not making much progress. I hope you are getting along nicely with your editorial work there. Do you see Mr. Tilak often? I am doing so so. I felt much better after a few days I came here but that effect did not last long. I intend leaving this place shortly as it would become hot here. I do

not know where I shall go. But if you write to me at my Kankhal address I will get the letter wherever I might be. I would be so happy to hear from you from time to time. Do you hear from Hrishikesh? I never heard of him again. With my best wishes and love to you as ever,

Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda.

Chilkapita House,
Almora.
7-2-'16.

My dear R—,

I am in receipt of the parcel of Dhupa you have so kindly sent to me. It is so good and mindful of you to send the same just before the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Guru Maharaj when we shall need and make use of them. May the blessings of Sri Guru Maharaj be on you ever more. I hope you are well and prosperous. I am doing so so. I think of you often though I cannot write to you as often as I wish. We are having a cottage built here and I thought of writing to you about it. It would be a nice little cottage when completed and would come to great use for the members of the R. K. Mission. Hoping to hear from you soon, with my best wishes and love,

Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda.

The Ramakrishna Cottage,
Almora.
30-11-'16.

My dear R—,

It is indeed a pretty long time since I wrote to you last. But although I could not write to you so long be sure you were never out of my mind. For you come to mind at least twice daily when I light the Dhupa before our Lord's image every morning and evening without fail. Still it is nice to hear from you once in a while. I trust you are doing well in every way by the grace of the Lord. I have begun to feel a little better since the

cold has set in. But I won't be here for long. I will have to go to the plains soon. Swami Premananda and Swami Shivananda have come to Benares from the Math. They have been requesting me very urgently to come there; they want to take me to Belur Math at the time of Swamiji's Birthday Anniversary there as I had not been there for years together. I will have to go but I may come back in the beginning of Summer next. A Brahmachari will stay here in my absence. Please send some Dhupas here at your convenience to be used here in Sri Ramakrishna's cottage. Perhaps you are aware of the fact that we have got a cottage built here last year of the above designation. Of course it is a poor simple cottage consisting of four rooms only on a small piece of ground. But its position is nice and it is very cosy. I am going to Lucknow first. Are you coming this year to attend the sessions of the Congress there? If you come please try to see us there in our Ashrama at Benares. I shall be very happy to see you after so many years' long separation. By the by, have you seen the *Gita Rahasya* by Bal Gangadhar Tilak published only of late. I have seen the translation of it in Hindi by Madhab Rai Supray. Oh, it is a grand work indeed. It is such a wonderful book. I have only seen it here the other day just looking over its pages here and there. That was enough to convince me of its superiority and excellence. Can you send me a copy of the same? How I love to have a copy of it for myself. I want to make it my constant companion. I shall be very thankful to you if you would kindly send me one. You might get it from Kesari Office, Poona. It would cost you three rupees or more. But it would give immense delight to me and therefore I think you won't mind it much.

Hoping to hear from you as early as possible, with my best wishes and love to you as ever.

Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda

The Ramakrishna Advaita
Ashrama,
Luxa, Benares City, U.P.
The 13th January 1917.

My dear R—,

I am in receipt of the *Gita Rahasya* by Bal Gangadhar Tilak which you so kindly sent me at Almora by Registered Book Post. It was redirected to me here as advised before. I already had acknowledged the parcel of Dhupa to you from here the other day. I hope you have got that by this time. I expected a letter from you. But I think you must be very busy and cannot make time to write. I trust you are doing well in every way. I am doing a little better just at present. Swami Shivananda and Swami Premananda and myself are going to the Belur Math very shortly. I will be there for some time, may be till the Winter is over and when it is hot I may again go to the mountains with Swami Shivananda who loves to be there especially in Summer. I shall feel happy to hear from you about your well-being in reply to this. My best wishes and love to you as ever. With sincere greetings.

Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda.

Saxi Niketan,
Puri, 24-9-17

My dear R—,

Many thanks for your kindly sending me the packet of Dhupa which I received day before yesterday. I awaited your kind letter. I hope every thing is well with you. Please let me hear from you from time to time. That would give me immense delight. I am doing so so. Swami Brahmanandaji and party are doing well. We intend going to Bhubaneswar very shortly. There we mean to have an Ashrama of our own. They all are doing nicely at the Belur Math. Why not try to come this way. Are you coming to the Congress at Calcutta this year? If so, then don't fail to be at the Belur Math on that occasion.

With my best wishes and love to you as ever,
Yours affectionately,
Turiyananda

THE GRIP OF THE BY-WAYS

M. S. KALYANASUNDARAM

Beneath a tree was a sage.

I vaguely thought I knew him.' He smiled and asked, 'Do you desire to step into the path again, or do the by-ways attract you still?'

I felt I knew his thought, nor yet sure was I.

'My Lord...' I said.

'No "lord",' he gently waved his hand and smiled. 'Along this Path, lords and slaves tread not. Each is a mighty king and lord of Nature's power and strength, and slave alone to the Law of Karma, which is absolute.'

The words and voice were not new. Past memories, now certain, now faint, took hold of me. The gentle voice, soft like the lightly falling snow from heaven, was not intrusive, nor lacked in faith. But I could not say when and where I heard it last.

'The Path you speak of, oh Ancient Sage, where lies it, and whither does it lead? I see it not!'

'You see it, my son; you do. It is ever at hand. Only, its ends are concealed from you, and you are afraid. The by-ways being less in scope, are better known and hold you bound.'

'And whither does the High-way lead, my Sire?'

'To Him Who ever strives after perfection through us who are of Him.'

I felt a pang of sorrow, a thrill of joy.

'Is He not perfect, then?' I asked — hesitant, yet eager.

'No, not quite. But seeks to be — like the Himalayan snow which resolves, again and again, to melt and roar through moun-

tain gorges and creep by towns and hamlets, mix with saltish waters, rise as dark and welcome clouds and float gently down again like Siva's favourite flower.

'And is the road rough and perilous or soft and cool to tread?'

'Diving for pearls, he shrinks not from the slimy depths, nor the huntsman from the dangerous woods; the ardent seeker does not know the nature of his path.'

'And what if I tarry, Sire? The familiar groves...'

'No loss, my son — not much; for, now or later, you are bound to come — only to be sent again to make a brighter world brighter still. And though you are counting now in days and months and years, there is that in you which knows not *was* neither a future state, but lives in one Ever-lasting is. Stay how long you will — it will be as a drop in the mighty deeps of Time. But why, knowing, court these bonds? Now advancing, now retreating, why keep in longer bondage and strain and vex your rarer, finer part? Many and many a time it prompted you to step into your final road. You heeded not, but got more and more entangled in self-made karmic coils.'

The breeze blew soft and gentle and caressing.

'The grove, my Sire, mellow with the rising sun, is kind to me. How the High-way and I would like each other, I know not...'

He smiled a sweet, sad smile of Peace and Hope.

I opened my mouth, but no sage was there to hear.

GOD AS CHILD

T. C. SANKARA MENON

'Some people think of God as a cow', said Eckhart the philosopher, 'for the milk and butter they want'. Millions think of Him as Matsya or Kurma or Varaha and so on, but not for a tortoiseshell comb or a pig-skin purse. The tortoise concept suggests that a withdrawal from sense-materials is necessary if we want happiness, and from these various concepts in general we might understand that God is present even in the much despised animals.

Apart from God as animals, there are other concepts, e.g., God as Father, as Mother or as Child and there are some purposes behind these concepts.

The concept of God as Child is perhaps peculiar to Hinduism and Christianity. The religious literature of the Hindus is rich with references to Infant Krishna; they worship little Ganesa as the remover of all obstacles. There are references also to Balasubramaniya and Bālā or the Divine Mother as a little girl. Similarly we read of Infant Jesus in Christian religious literature.

Such a concept is very useful to rouse in us a love of God. Who can hate a baby, except a Kamsa or Herod? What is more lovable than a baby? A tender little thing, innocent and trustful, easily pleased, quickly forgiving, easily accessible, attracts us powerfully. We cannot help loving him intensely. In our love for him what antics do we not play, forgetting age, health, and status, to please him. We bark like dogs, mew like cats, go down on all fours to be an elephant for him to ride. We suffer his kicks and slaps with a peculiar joy. Specially intense is the love of a mother for the baby which is so well illustrated in the section of the Bhagavatam dealing with the love of Yasoda for Krishna. Whatever a mother is doing, sewing or cooking, visiting or washing, her

mind is always alert to the child. That is how we should feel towards God, thus the Mahatmas advise us. He should always be in our mind. The love for a child is one of the best and purest forms of love because it seeks no return and the whole joy is just from the act of loving. Similarly, our devotion to God shall be with no expectation of any specific gift from Him. The joy of devotion, of surrender, should be an end in itself.

The attachment felt for an infant is all the greater when it is surrounded by dangers. Infant Krishna had Kamsa and a host of others ever on the alert to destroy him. Infant Jesus had Herod and his hordes searching to kill him. The stories of the struggle of the God-child against opponents, heard in our childhood, appeal to us more forcibly than if the Gods were adults. Who fascinates us more? The adult Krishna, King of Dwaraka, or the little Krishna defying Kamsa, destroying Kaliya, little Krishna playing hide-and-seek with his mother among cows, pleading for a little more butter, and occasionally thrilling the entire region with a divine tune from his flute? The eternal watch, the heroic, selfless and successful contest of the God-child against powerful enemies inspire in the children an admiration and respect for God. At any rate, such was the influence which the stories from the Bhagavatam and the Bible had on me when I heard them in my childhood from my parents and elders. Thus the stories of the achievements of God as child more than those of God as an adult, serve to lay the foundations of religious faith in the young mind and create there a belief in the superiority of good against evil. These impressions once formed in the young mind are not easily removed and prove a fine discipline for the whole life.

Other stories bring out other aspects in the life of the God-child. For example we read that the boy Krishna was subject to the discipline of his mother. He submits himself with tied hands to his mother's questioning and allows her to bind him to a big mortar as punishment. Similarly, in the story of Christ we learn that the boy Jesus stayed back in the temple at Jerusalem without his parents' knowledge, but afterwards, 'in obedience to their wishes, he returned to Nazareth and was subject to them'. These incidents in the life of the God-child emphasise the idea that children who later make a mark in the world are those who grow up listening to the advice of their parents and elders. Those who would command must first learn to obey, those who would lead must first learn to follow, those who would rule must first learn to be ruled.

We learn that the child Gods were courteous and considerate to their parents and friends, proving that humility is the jewel of greatness. Pomp is a proof of meanness. Some people mistake humility and courtesy for weakness and cowardice. They do not realise that true humility is the outcome of confidence. Only the profound and the courageous can afford to be humble and courteous. The coward and the fool hope in vain to survive by noise and arrogance. The example of the child God assures us that humility, courtesy, and gentleness are not shameful qualities to be discarded, but divine qualities to be acquired.

The stories of the hardships and of the struggles of the child Gods against enemies might be viewed as symbolic of the rivalry between good and evil. Krishna is born of humble parents in a prison-cell. Christ is born of humble parents, in a small stable! They grow up facing dangers. Each overcomes difficulty after difficulty, removes enemy after enemy and grows stronger and stronger. These again assure us that good shall ultimately prevail over evil, even though the forces of good be minute and those of evil be mighty. It creates a confidence that

good has in it a terrific power as in an atom, to smash up evil of any magnitude.

Such stories and legends have a greater reality to children than to adults, in the same way as the incidents seen on the cinema screen have a greater reality to the little minds than to the grownups. In his essay on Shelley, Francis Thompson explains this point. He says, 'To be a child is to be different from the man of today. It is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief. It is to be so little that elves can reach up to whisper in your ears. It is to live in a nutshell and count yourself the king of space; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses; lowness into loftiness, and nothingness into everything. For, every child has its own fairy godmother in its own soul.' To me in my childhood, the pools which formed in our yard after the monsoon-rains were the boundless seas, the paper-boats which I floated on them were huge steamers with passengers and precious cargo. Thus when we are children we can get a joy and satisfaction from seeing things different from what they appear to be. Perhaps you will recollect Tagore's words: 'Pure joy is the children's joy. They have the power of using every trivial thing to create their world of interest, and the ugliest doll is made beautiful with their imagination and lives with their life.' It follows that when our minds are childlike, simple, believing in belief, it would be possible for us to see God even in a little child in hapless surroundings.

Thus the concept of child God is a test and a discipline. It is a test of our faith, our humility. King Mahabali, proud of his vast possessions, could not recognise the identity of the child Vamana who came begging for just three paces of land: Kamsa, in his arrogance, did not know who the infant girl was, whom he had swung aloft to smash against rocks. Neither Kamsa nor Herod realised, when they ordered the massacre of the innocents, that the babies born to drive them from their thrones had anything divine

about them. Let me present to you, in Bishop Sheen's words, the picture of a proud man entering the stable in Bethlehem and seeing a little baby lying on the straw. He will not see God at all. The man feels 'so big that he thinks there is nothing bigger than himself, so wise that there is nothing wiser than himself, and so self-sufficient that nothing could ever add to his sufficiency. He is so big mentally that to him everything else is little. To him, What is bigger than the universe is only a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and What is Eternal Wisdom is only a speechless organism. . . . He lifts his eye-brows at the Virgin Mother. . . . He condescends a glance at Joseph, the man of rags. . . . He dwells on Relativity and then on the absurdity of calling a glorified amoeba as the Lord of Heaven and earth; he recalls how much Birth Control has helped the poor from bringing children into the world and how foolish was the mother of that Child who could offer him only a stable, and a few straws for a bed. He missed the Infinite because he was conceited. He missed discovering God, because he was too big'.

On the other hand, what did the simple shepherds see in the Bethlehem stable, and the wise men who were humble because of their profound wisdom? They looked at the same scene as the proud man, but they saw something different. They looked at a little baby and saw One whom even the universe could not contain, a baby but the Creator of the human race, 'a divine Son who existed before his mother,' the King of the world, the Moulder of the universe!

It is doubtful whether the proud man would have even discovered the babe at all, let alone the God in the babe. Proud of his knowledge he would argue that there could never be stars capable of guiding people. Yet when Christ was born and 'Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger,' the humble shepherds saw a star to guide them and also heard the message of the Angel, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy,

which shall be also to all the people; . . . he has been born to you to-day in the town of David, a saviour who is Christ the Lord.' The humble Wise men also could recognise the unusual significance of the brilliant star and they too came asking, 'Where is the King of the Jews, for we have seen his star?' Thus, while the proud miss everything, blessed are the humble because they can recognise the light which would lead them to God. 'Unless you be as little children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven'.

The conceited Kamsa and Kalya could not understand the real nature of the child Krishna, but the simple shepherds and shepherdesses of Gokulam discovered God in him easily and derived therefrom supreme joy and contentment. The unshakable faith, deep devotion and the spirit of absolute surrender of the Gopa and Gopis made them the beloveds of the boy Krishna who granted them the security of divine protection and happiness of divine companionship. Thus the concept of God as child provides an effective test of the great virtues like humility, loyalty, devotion and faith.

Fortunate are the people who possess these qualities, because they will realise the presence of God soon, whether he appears as a little baby in a stable or in a prison-cell or on a leaf bobbing on the waters of a deluge. They will also realise his gracious offer to lead them from appearance to Reality, from darkness to Light, from death to Immortality. In the words of Bishop Sheen, it is as if the child God say, 'You give me your humanity, I will give you divinity; You give me your little time, I will give you eternity. You give me your weary body, I will give you redemption. You give me your broken heart, I will give you love. You give me your nothingness, I will give you God'.

Blessed are the meek, because, recognising and accepting this exchange as from God as a child, they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

TAGORE AND THE MYSTERY OF EXISTENCE

S. SUBHASH CHANDRA

A cautious perusal of Rabindranath Tagore's writings bears out a complete and coherent world-view or *Weltanschauung* which is of considerable value in the context of our contemporary disputations in the domain of philosophy. In all the writings of Tagore, even a cursory student will discern a unity of thought and consistency of purpose. Tagore is vitally concerned with the meaning of life — or with 'the meaning of this pilgrimage', as he puts it — and endeavours to comprehend the implications of the endless adventure of existence. Tagore never considered himself anything besides an artist and a poet. No wonder then that he characterises his philosophy as the Religion of an Artist. In the preface to his Hibbert Lectures, Tagore makes it crystal clear that his system has been maturing within him as a religious experience and not merely as a philosophical subject. But it will be erroneous to infer from this that Tagore's philosophy is merely a cluster of religious intuitions. Tagore himself observes, in the preface to his Religion of Man:

To-day I am made conscious of the fact that the works that I have started and the words that I have uttered are deeply linked by a unity of inspiration whose proper definition has often remained unrevealed to me.

The concept of the divinity of Man, the Eternal, is the very foundation of Tagore's philosophy. Tagore did not arrive at this concept of God through any process of logical deduction. Tagore owes it to an early intuitive vision. He was convinced by this vision, that beneath the fleeting, transitory, and elusive appearance of phenomena, there dwells the Divine Being out of the reach of our senses. This Divine Being is God. God is the sustaining power of life. He is both within and without us. On the one hand we find Tagore affirming:

I feel in the very throbbing of my heart
The stillness of the Infinite.¹

On the other hand, he dilates on:

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.²

God is the truth which kindles the light of reason in our minds. He dwells in the innermost tabernacle of our hearts, and is the source of our strength to act.³ Every accomplishment, however partial, must reflect some facet of the Infinite; just as every delight, however ephemeral, reflects some beam of the divine beatitude. The love of God is the 'golden light that dances upon the leaves, these idle clouds sailing across the sky, this passing breeze leaving its coolness upon my forehead.'⁴ In other words, God permeates the entire universe.

Tagore, however, rejects the cult of the transcendence of God which renders God deplete of all form and function. For if this Absolute exists in total aloofness from the world of name and form, its existence has no meaning and message for us. This supremely indifferent Absolute can neither inspire us to work relentlessly for the progress and prosperity of the world, nor can it comfort us in our afflictions.

For Tagore God is at once infinite-finite. He is the Universal Force which pervades every nook and corner of the creation.

1. *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, Vol. 19, P. 271.

2. *The Gitanjali*, Poem 69.

3. *Ibid.*, Poem 4.

4. *Ibid.*, Poem 59.

He is at one and the same time with endless attributes and without attributes; of infinite forms and formless.⁵ The limitless One manifests itself in the limitless Many.

He neither begins nor ends — He is Eternity itself. Man does not emerge out of nothing at a specified period of time, even though apparently he might have emerged at a precisely calculated period of evolution. But Man neither begins nor ends at a particular time. Because all time is his time, he bears it within himself. As Tagore so cogently puts it:

The truth of Man is in the heart of eternity, the fact of it being evolved through endless ages. If Man's manifestation has round it a background of millions of light-years, still it is his own background.⁶

The exaltation of man is one of the cardinal characteristics of Tagore's philosophy. Nature is what is revealed to man. For our universe is the sum total of what Man apprehends, experiences, visualises, plans, and projects. The world is real to him in proportion to its diverse effects upon his thoughts, feelings, and deeds. This does not, however, imply that the ultimate nature of the world depends upon the whims and fancies of the individual mind. The final nature of the world rests with the universal Man, and not with the finite man.

The creation is the cosmic-play or the 'lila' of God. God without His manifestations is incomplete.

When the Infinite reveals Himself in the finite, He fulfils himself?

The Master joyfully takes upon Himself the burden of creation. The Creator and the creation supplement each other. The Infinite and the finite are not antithetical, they are two mutually integrated aspects of Man the Eternal. To cite Tagore:

The consciousness of the real within me, seeks for its own corroboration, the touch of the Real outside me.⁷

The Boundless Undefinable defines Himself by means of lines in ever-recurrent-finite forms. In size, the forms He takes may be limited but in their multitudinous diversity they are inexhaustible. Conversely, the finite yearns for union with the Infinite. He is not content with his finitude, for differences and distinctions are apparent and not real. The 'I am' realises itself in merging with the 'Thou art'. The Atman alienated from Brahman is like a fish out of water. Tagore observes:

Things are distinct, not in their essence but in their appearance; in other words, in their relation to one to whom they appear.⁸

To Tagore the world is an appearance, but it is a real appearance. The world is neither an illusion nor a chimerical fantasy. 'The world as reality belongs to art', says Tagore. The Great Artist, the 'Mayavin', manifests himself in the world through his 'Maya' or his art. 'The hiding and seeking of thee and me' is the content of the universal Maya. Through Maya, sings Tagore, 'Thou art a barrier in thine own being and then callest thy severed self in myriad notes'.⁹ Maya is the root of all diversity, and therefore the basis of all existence. Maya offers no explanation save that it appears to be what it is. It defies all definitions and eludes the grasp of our logic.

The world is not only a real appearance, it is a meaningful appearance as well. Even the most trivial details of life bear a message from the great world of the World is so constituted that it is not a mere random collection of molecules. As Tagore, in one of his moving poems, fervently declares:

8. *The Religion of Man*, P. 131.
9. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead.
10. *The Gitanjali*, Poem 71.

Death, I refuse to accept from thee that I am nothing but a gigantic jest of God, a black annihilation built with all the wealth of the infinite.¹¹

The knowledge of God, however, is not the end but the beginning of 'Sadhana'. Theoretical knowledge is the stepping-stone and not the stopping-place.

The meaning of our self is not to be found in its separateness from God and others, but in a ceaseless realization of Yoga, of union.¹²

Tagore is never tired of reiterating, 'life is perpetual creation; it has its truth when it outgrows itself in the Infinite'.¹³

By outgrowing itself in the Infinite, Tagore does not mean unlimited expansion or augmentation of wealth or power. The Supreme Truth is within us. Only the complete union with God can release us from the fetters of narrow consciousness. Only by the renunciation of individuality can we attain the Universality: the finite must lose itself in the infinite.

It is for us to realise the Person who is in the heart of All by the emancipated consciousness of our own personality.¹⁴

Tagore dives 'down into the depth of the ocean of forms, hoping to gain the perfect pearl of the formless'.¹⁵

But we cannot attain union with God through the faculty of mind. Human mind is essentially analytic. It tends to classify everything within the limits of its patterns of understanding. It is the primary function of our mind to relate and familiarise us with the world of name and form. With the aid of Yoga alone we can transcend the limits imposed by our minds. When the mental impediments are surmounted, our inner self is suffused with genuine and lasting bliss, which reveals that through such union we are assimilated by the Reality that is the finality in itself and therefore is bliss.

11. *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, Vol. 20, P. 103.

12. *Sadhana*, P. 70.

13. *Ibid.*, P. 151.

14. *The Religion of Man*, P. 115.

15. *The Gitanjali*, Poem 100.

We have already alluded to an early vision of Truth which Tagore had. In his 'Religion of Man' Tagore gives a vivid description of this vision. At that time Tagore was only eighteen years old. One day while gazing at the exquisite beauty of the sunrise, Tagore felt 'an inner radiance of Joy', and the ultimate significance of the universe was revealed to him. In this vision, Tagore experienced the spontaneous expansion of his consciousness in the super-personal world of Man. After four days the vision passed away, leaving its indelible impression on the young poet.¹⁶ It is interesting to note that the vision of Romain Rolland's 'Jean Christophe' is closely akin to that of Tagore.

Suddenly, like an opened sluice, in the yard behind him, a deluge of water, a heavy rain, large drops, down pouring, fell. The still air quivered. The dry, hard soil rang out like a bell. . . . Christophe, under illusion, at fullest stretch, shook. He trembled. . . . The veil was rent. He was blinded. By a flash of lightning, he saw, in the depths of the night, he saw — he was God. God was in himself; He burst the ceiling of the room, the walls of the house; He cracked the very bounds of existence. He filled the sky, the universe, space. The world coursed through Him, like a catenact.¹⁷

The supreme end of almost all the religions of India is 'Mukti', the release of the self from the fetters of name and form. Tagore does not abandon the tradition. But, unlike some seers and thinkers whose striving endeavour is to coalesce completely their personal self in an impersonal Unity, Tagore calls for renunciation and not negation of the finite self. We have already discussed Tagore's view that Infinite fulfils Himself in the finite. Hence, to annihilate the finite self is to make the fulfilment of the Infinite impossible. Every man, according to Tagore, 'must reveal in his own personality the Supreme Person by his disinterested activity'.

16. *The Religion of Man*, pp. 93-95.

17. *Jean-Christophe*, Vol. 1, P. 252. Gilbert Cannan's translation.

5. *Gora*, P. 103.

6. *The Religion of Man*, P. 21.

7. *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, Vol. 20, P. 101.

ties.¹⁸ Sadhana is the dedication of the self and not its effacement. Says Tagore :

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight.

No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.

Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love.¹⁹

Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga are the four paths which lead to Brahman. Tagore opts for Karma (disinterested work) and Bhakti (love and devotion). Bhakti, however, is the preponderant of the two. In this connection, Tagore was profoundly influenced by the Vaishnava poets and other mystics like Kabir, Surdas, Chandidas, Ravidas, Dadu and several others. He was also influenced by the Baul singers of Bengal. With these poets, Tagore urges us 'to come out from the seclusion of our self-centred life into the realm of love and truth.' Tagore's adoration spreads wings like a blithe bird on its flight across the ocean, and drunk with the exuberance of singing, he forgets himself and calls Him friend who is his Lord.²⁰ 'Ah,' cries Tagore, 'thou hast made my heart captive in the endless meshes of thy music, my master!'²¹ The Bhakta (the devotee) cannot bear separation from the Bhagavan (the Lord). He is miserable, unhappy, and restless without his master. His work becomes a dreary toil. Life without the Beloved is barren and insidious. The lover makes it absolutely clear to his Beloved :

That I want thee, only thee -- let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core.

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light, even thus in the depth of my unconsciousness rings the cry -- I want thee, only thee.²²

18. *The Religion of Man*, p. 112.

19. *The Gitanjali*, Poem 73.

20. *Ibid*, Poem 2.

21. *Ibid*, Poem 3.

22. *Ibid*, Poem 38.

There is no jealousy, no petty-mindedness, and no hard-feelings in this love. The love of a Bhakta or of the Lord does not insist on being reciprocated. Tagore knows this unique peculiarity of devotional love, and therefore writes :

By all means they try to hold me secure who love me in this world. But it is otherwise with thy love which is greater than theirs, and thou keepst me free.

Lest I forget them, they never venture to leave me alone. But day after day, night after night, and thou art not seen.

If I call not thee in my prayer, and I keep not thee in my heart, thy love for me will wait for my love.²³

This love is a passion that knows no end, nor does it lose hope. It is patience exemplified. The Bhakti of a devotee does not bear in its bosom the conceit of conquest. It is humble in its success, and does not despair in its failures.

This, in broad outline, is the philosophy of Tagore. Tagore himself is a very modest man. He confesses that his philosophy is a poet's religion. He candidly acknowledges that he cannot 'satisfactorily answer any questions about evil, or about what happens after death.' Tagore might not have been a philosopher in a narrow academic sense, but no one will dispute with W. B. Yeats, who said :

At Tagore, like the Indian civilization itself, has been content to preserve the soul and surrender himself to its spontaneity.

Nor will anyone disagree with Romain Rolland, who could discern in Tagore's writings, 'a vision without illusions, a virile intelligence which firmly confronts the battles of life, yet refuses to let itself be blurred.' Tagore was more than a philosopher; he was a seer. Along with Sri Aurobindo, he symbolised *ZEITGEIST* of the Indian Renaissance.

23. *Ibid*, Poem 32.

OUR MULTI-DIMENSIONAL UNIVERSE

S. N. RAO

When we speak of Time and Space in Science, we probably mean Cosmic Time and Cosmic Space. But Cosmic Space is not just interplanetary space, not even the interstellar space. Cosmic Time is not a period, not a century or a millennium, not even a *kalpa* or *yuga* as the Hindus call it. Cosmic Space transcends both our naked vision and our telescopic vision; it is unlimited and unbounded. And yet, we conceive of Space as having three dimensions of length, breadth and thickness, and we say we live in a three-dimensional world. It is my view that this conception is wrong. The Universe we live in is multi-dimensional. Cosmic Space is multi-dimensional. It is the objects, entities in that Space that are three-dimensional, not Space itself. Any dimension is a limitation, while Cosmic Space is accepted as unlimited and unbounded.

What is a dimension? It is only an extent and the way we measure that extent, lengthwise, breadthwise or any-wise. Dimensionality is a function accompanying finite conceptions; it is a quality pertaining to concrete bodies and substances. Time and Space belong to a different category, and are undefinables in their infiniteness. We have to understand Time as eternal present, as Eternity. We have to understand Space in the sense of all-pervasiveness, in the sense of immanence. If we do not put this all-comprehensive meaning into the terms 'Space and Time', we shall be restricting Time to the duration or period covered by the hands of a clock, and Space to the dimensions of the room in which we are seated. Is there any other meaning for the term 'dimension'? All things having a size, volume, massiveness or some amplitude, have a limit to that size, volume etc. Dimensionality is a limiting quality. Any dimensional level is a limiting level. No dimension can

arise without the non-dimensional all round. All that is dimensional is therefore dependent and conditioned by the non-dimensional; dimension must always begin at one point and stop at another point of the non-dimensional. If Time is taken as having any dimension or dimensions, it must be within the Timeless which is Eternity, and Eternity can have no dimensions. If Space is taken as having any dimension or dimensions, it must be within the Spaceless which is all-pervasive, and anything that is all-pervasive can have no dimensions. In other words, there can be no Time without the Timeless, and no Space without the Spaceless.

What is Causation? Has it also any dimension? Has Causation any limiting quality? Whether we consider Causation as having any dimensionality or not, it has a limiting quality. A particular cause produces a particular effect. Capacity of any cause is limited to a particular effect or effects. Every cause is a particular, and so is every effect. Causality can operate in the time-space ambit of the dimensional category.

Our Universe is thus built up on the triple frame of Time, Space and Causation. It is a three-fold structure from which all dimensions arise and in which all dimensions subsist. If we wish to stick on to a dimensional view of the Universe and insist on a dimensional approach, we then have to take Time, Space and Causation as the three main measures, and consider all others as subsidiary byproducts. Length, breadth and thickness constitute only a single set of those subsidiary byproducts applicable only to Space; they have no rationale either in Time or in Causation. Time has a past, present and a future; Causation has a prior and a subsequent. No model of the Universe is possible

of construction without this triple frame of Time, Space and Causation. Modern Science has laid undue emphasis, has given undue significance to mere geometrical and spatial dimensions, and failed to give prominence and value to the Cosmic dimensions of Time, Space and Causation.

Can there be any first, second or third dimension in the structure of the Universe? Time, Space and Causation go together, run parallel, not one after the other. There can be no Time without Space, no Space without Time. There can be no Causation without Time and Space, and no Time and Space without Causation. There is no stoppage of Time, no limitation to Space, and no beginning for Causation. It seems to be an eternal process. Ideas of a beginning and an end are relevant only in a world of relativity and have no place in Time, Space and Causation, the three eternal verities in the Universe of existences. They co-exist with all and every existence. All events, all phenomena can only take place in Time and Space and by Causation, and no world of manifestation is possible without these three running parallel. You can have length without breadth, and breadth without length, and both length and breadth without thickness; there are mere physical qualities of physical objects and nothing more; they are very secondary constituents in the structure of our Universe.

What is Eternity? Eternity is not just an extension of Time. It is Time per se. The concept of Eternity does not admit either of expansion or of contraction. It is ever a whole and ever remains a whole. It is one non-dimensional whole within which Time being of a dimensional nature has to subsist. Time has no existence apart from Eternity. Space too being of a dimensional nature, has no existence apart from Cosmic Space. Every duration of Time however long or short has a beginning, a middle and an end. So is Space. But neither the Timeless nor the Spaceless has any beginning, a middle or an end.

What is Time? It is one of the undefinables. We can however make some positive affirmations about Time:—

1. Time involves and implies motion or movement. We associate Time with movement, such as the movement of the hands of a clock, the apparent rising and setting of the Sun, Moon etc. 2. We associate Time with change, i.e., birth, growth and decay of plants, animals and men, of empires and civilizations, because all these take time and occur only in Time. 3. All that exists, exists simultaneously both in Time and Space. World itself is a movement because it exists in moving Time. 4. Time is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, all three processes occurring in Time only. Time makes things transient and pass into oblivion. Transiency as a reality in the Universe is the result of the working of Time. 5. All movement is a 'becoming'. 'Beingness' is everything, while 'becomingness' is all movement to realise that 'Beingness' which is in movement and above movement. Finite is in the Infinite, and the attempt to realise the Infinite is what we indicate by the term 'becoming'. Time is an essential factor in that 'becoming'. The two texts in the Gita, 'Kālāḥ kalayātām ahaṁ' and 'Ahaṁ-eva Akṣayaḥ Kālāḥ' will greatly help us in our understanding the meaning of Time.

Now, what is Space? Is it also a movement? Space is limitless extension, limitless expansion, and hence has become all-pervasive. Extension implies movement, i.e. Space moving by itself to extend itself. This movement of Space is however not seen, not observable. And yet, that movement must be there. Otherwise there can be no extension. Movement is implicit in all extension or expansion. How can anything extend or expand without moving? Motion is thus inherent both in Time and in Space.

We have said that Time is a movement, that Space is a movement, and that world is a movement. (We call the world 'Jagat'.)

Causation is also a movement; it is a movement from cause to effect, from effect to cause, from cause to cause and from effect to effect. Are all these movements independent, separatist movements? Certainly not. If they are, the Universe should have been a chaos, not a Cosmos as we call it. There must therefore be a relation, a close interdependence among all these apparently different movements. Or they are all really one, a big Cosmic movement manifesting itself in different ways. It is One Cosmic movement appearing as many. The static in the dynamic, Brahman in manifestation, the Timeless, the Spaceless, the Causeless, — in and through Time, Space and Causation — that is the Universe. And it is multi-dimensional.

Every entity in the Universe, from the atom upwards, all that is organic and inorganic, all that is animate and inanimate, rests on motion, subsists on motion. Motion is the universal sustainer. All phenomena arise because of motion. It is Cosmic Energy manifesting itself in diverse ways and diverse forms; it is Brahman in multi-dimensional manifestation. Modern Science has unwittingly reaffirmed this Vedantic truth by its discovery that Matter and Energy are interchangeable and are one and the same. "Isā-vāsyam-idam-sarvam" and "Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam-iti" are eternal verities, infallible truths, and Brahman is the Truth of all truths. Such is the picture of the Universe, the only picture entirely in consonance with the conclusions of Modern Science. It is a multi-dimensional structure.

THE SUPREME DANCER

INDIRA DEVI

Behold the dancing Lord of Loveliness!
His anklets ring as alights the King
of Heaven the earth to bless!

Now Radha, beauty's paragon,
Chants with Krishna, in unison,
Her golden bracelets tinkling
and the fountains answer a thrill!

In ecstasy, the cuckoos sing,
The arbours beat time murmuring,

The Jumna purls and flowers of spring
their hearts of rapture reveal!

There whirls the Flutist, decked with blooms
Aureate, crowned with peacock's plumes:

They race in joy, Brindaban's maids,
His choir of bliss to swell!

And Mira sings in a trance of love:

"He calls us all to His dream grove:

Run, run to Jumna's bank beyond
our gloom His Gleam to hail!"

(Translated from Hindi by DILIP KUMAR ROY)

INDIAN THOUGHTS IN GERMAN LYRIC

SISTER SAVITRI

Knowing the fundamental ideas of Indian philosophy and the different paths and inner attitudes which lead to Realisation in one or the other form, one feels often struck, while reading works of German literature, by similar thoughts and feelings. There are the same ideals of obedience and self-sacrifice — only here they are primarily dedicated to the Fatherland and the king — there is worship and devotion for God, irresistible search for knowledge and absolute Truth, and a deep, unaccountable yearning for something lost, for something unknown, beyond this world. It seems, as if there must exist some deep-rooted bond between Indians and Germans, from ages long ago — may be from the time of the great migration of peoples; one easily can imagine them to be some late-born sons of Mother India who were destined to settle down in the wilderness and rough climate of Europe as hunters and warriors. But though they carry in them the spiritual seed of their Mother India, due to the premature separation and the rough fighting life, these spiritual seeds took a long time to develop into sprouts and blossoms. These delicate flowers of apparently Indian origin seem to have wider spread and stronger developed in the German mind and heart than in any other of the Western Nations. This may be the reason why Indians and Germans take generally an immediate liking to each other whenever they meet.

As songs and poems display thoughts and feelings mostly in a shorter and condensed form than prose, this relationship between the Indian and the German mind is more striking in poems; and offers at the same time a greater survey of the various features.

Looking back upon the beginning of German poetry, it is strange to find, at its very outset, a saga about the curse of the gold,

specially considering how Sri Ramakrishna stressed again and again that "lust and gold" are the cause of all evil. This saga was transmitted, together with other myths, from primordial times. It is narrated, how once the three highest gods, Odin, Hœnir, and Loki, wandering on earth came to a waterfall in which they saw an otter. Loki kills the otter and takes its fur. At night the gods come to the place of the giant Hreidmar and ask for shelter. Proudly they show him the otter-fur. Hreidmar recognises it as that of his own son, Otr. With help of his two other sons, he overpowers the gods, and keeping them as prisoners, he demands as ransom that the otter-fur has to be filled and covered with red gold. The cunning Loki is sent down to the dwarf Andwari who alone is in possession of the gold. Loki captures him, and asks, in his turn, for the gold as ransom. There is no other way out for the dwarf than to deliver the gold, 'the fire of the flood', but at the same time he utters a curse — death it shall bring to everyone. Loki returns to Hreidmar, delivers the gold and the gods are released. But scarcely is the gold in Hreidmar's possession, and already the curse becomes efficacious: for the sake of the gold he is killed by his own son. From now onward the gold went from hand to hand, and with it the curse, destroying traitors and heroes alike.

Although these myths are very old, their first written form under the name 'The Edda' appeared only between the ninth and twelfth centuries, at a period, from which we have on the other hand, already quite a number of folk-songs by known and unknown poets. These songs, whether of religious or worldly nature, show — probably, all over the world — a child-like faith and an humble surrender to the will of God, combined with

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INDIAN THOUGHTS IN GERMAN LYRIC

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simplicity and purity of feeling, but have scarcely characteristic features.

A CHRISTMAS-SONG

Oh come all you kids,
Do quickly come all,
Come here to the cradle
In Bethlehem's stable.
And look, what a joy
In this sacred Night
The Father in Heaven
Has bestowed on us.

There lieth the infant
On straw and on hay,
Mary and Joseph
Watch it full joy,
The three holy kings
Stand praying nearby.
High above jubilate
The angel's choir.

— Author unknown

A GOMI-SONG?

Were I a little bird
And had also two wings,
I would fly to Thee.
But as it cannot be,
As it cannot be
I am remaining here.

Though I am far from Thee,
Yet I am in dream with Thee,
And talk with Thee,
When I am waking up,
When I am waking up,
I am alone.

No word of night goes by
That not my heart wakes up
And thinks of Thee,
That Thou hast thousand times,
Yes, many thousand times
Given Thy heart to me.

— Author unknown

In the course of the following centuries, more and more discoveries and inventions are made; but the more men achieve in scientific research and technical skillfulness, the more self-conscious they become. They look increasingly at these achievements as their own products of mind and forget that they are caused by the will of God, that all their achievements are in reality the works

of God. Birth and death, and all what happens in between, is no more accepted by all in devout humility and surrender. But men also realize that, in spite of all their scientific research and knowledge, they are yet unable to master death and the sufferings of life. In addition to this — one may even think to emphasise this experience — a gruesome war breaks out, lasting thirty years, from 1618-48, covering Europe with death, horror and destruction.

As it is a characteristic feature of the German nature to pierce down to the last depth in their researches, they, of course, felt also the transitoriness of their works and the whole life, so much deeper. When therefore this awful war, with all its consequences, came to an end and life had settled down again into its normal course, the German Lyric shows now quite new features, specially in the religious and philosophical line. It is now that new sprouts break irresistibly through, and bring forth new flowers, that look as if they were of Indian origin. Besides songs about God of a now deeper conception, there appear also a number of poems about transitoriness; the great questioning begins, together with an unending longing and searching for something unknown. This is shown, among others, by two songs of Andreas Gryphius (1616-64), a witness of the whole thirty-years war.

HUMAN MISERY

What are we men indeed!
A homestead of harsh pain,
A ball of illusory happiness,
a will-o'-the-wisp of time,
A playground of tart fear,
trimmed with piercing pain,
A quickly melted snow,
and burnt down candle-lights.

Alike to a vain dream which
dropping lightly out of heed,
And like a stream disperses,
by no power restrained,
Thus also our name, honour
and fame must vanish.

TRANSITORINESS

All splendour of the earth
Must become smoke and ashes.
No rock nor ore can last,
All this which may delight us,
What we esteem eternal,
Will pass out like a dream.

What else are all these things
On which is set our heart,
But wretched futility?
What is the life of men,
Who ever must hover about,
But a fantastic whim of time?

THE PROBLEM (shortened)

We are put upon the threshold,
We do not know from where?
There glows the morning brightly,
Outside we are longing to go.
The world's sounds and pictures,
The deep-blue spring-delight,
Hill, castle and cool woods
Stand soundless as in dream
And make some secret shudder,
Creeping into our mind:
We are yearning to go home
And know not where to go.

—J. Freilich u. Eichendorff

WANDERER'S NIGHT-SONG

Thou, who art indeed from heaven
Soothing every suffering and pain,
Thou, who givest double balsam
To the double miserable,
Helas! weary am I of the turmoil:
Of what good is all this pain and lust?
Peace, sweet peace,
Come, oh come into my breast

—J. W. von Goethe

LONGING (shortened)

Oh, out of this valley's dream
Covered by cold mist
Could I only get away, oh, how happy
I would be.
Yonder I see beautiful mountains,
Ever young and ever green,
Had I wings to cross the space
To those mountains I would fly!
Harmonies I hear arise,
Soothing sounds of heaven's peace
And the gently blowing breeze
Carry to me fragrance! balm!

But the stream stoppeth my crossing
Which enraged roars in between,
Raising high its foaming waves
He makes shuddering my soul
There a boat is floating near.
But helas! the boatman fails—
Enter boldly! Do not tarry!
Lo! inspirited are its sails!
You must dare, you must have faith
For the gods do give no pawn;
Naught can carry you but a Wonder
To the beautiful Wonderland

—F. Schiller

On the summit of this period, if not of German poetry at all, stands Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), whose greatest work is his world-famous drama, 'Faust'. The hero of the drama, Dr Faust, is a highly learned man who, dissatisfied with all his book-learning, has set out on the search for the Absolute Truth. His opponent and yet, strange enough, his guide on this path is Mephistopheles, 'the spirit who ever denies', a special aspect of Satan. With the intention to get Faust in his power, Mephisto is leading him through all regions between the netherworld and heaven, showing him all sense-pleasures of the past and present, but in vain. The urge for Truth is stronger in Faust than anything else and in the end Faust is rescued, for, as God Himself declares to Mephisto at the beginning, in a prologue in heaven: 'a good man, in his obscure aspiration, knows always instinctively the right path'. Two more reasons for his rescue we learn from the choir of angels at the end of the play: 'Whosoever aspires with unceasing efforts, him indeed we can redeem; and in more over, Divine Love has been bestowed on him, then verily the Blessed Hosts meet him with hearty welcome.'

In this drama Goethe displays, in an ingenious way, the whole scale of emotions of the German heart. As Faust is the very exponent of the German character which is revealed already, to a certain extent, in his first monologue, a part of it is following here:

"I have studied now Philosophy
Jurisprudence and Medicine,—
And even, alas! Theology,—
From end to end, with labour keen;
And here, poor fool! with all my lore
I stand, no wiser than before:
I'm Magister—yea, Doctor-high,
And straight or crosswise, wrong or right,
These ten years long, with many woes,
I've led my scholars by the nose,—
And see, that nothing can be known!
That knowledge cuts me to the bone.
Neither scruples nor doubts can now smite me,
Nor Hell nor Devil can longer affright me.
For this, all pleasure I am foregoing;
I do not pretend to aught worth knowing;
Then too, I have neither lands nor gold
Nor the world's least pomp or honour hold
No dog would endure such a cursed existence!
Wherefore from Magic I seek assistance
That many a secret perchance I reach
Through spirit-power and spirit-speech,
And thus the bitter task forego
Of saying the things I do not know.
That I may detect the inmost force
Which binds the world, and guides its course."

(Translated by Taylor)

Although Goethe shows himself as a great philosopher of deepest knowledge, as a poet and seer of sublime visions, yet the path to Realisation even he was not able to find.

The problems of 'Faust' were taken up by another great personality, the philosopher and poet Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), though in a new form and language represented in the figure of 'Zarathustra'. Nietzsche's own personality and works reveal all the sensitiveness of the modern soul, all its desperate fight between ecstasy and breakdown, intoxication and irony, weakness and strength, loftiest vision and malicious intellect and thus seem to reflect the modern mind and its fate. At the same time he deepened the abyss between community and individual. In the very contrast to socialism he demanded the birth of an impetuous creative leader, and the further development of his personality into a super-man. In spite of Nietzsche's radical anti-Christian attitude and the sharp assaults of his pitiless intellect against all existing values as faith,

ethic, virtues, etc., he yet calls in deep, sincere fervour to an unknown God and is able to create a poem like 'Autumn' of sweetest simplicity and self-sacrifice.

AUTUMN

This is the autumn: which —
yet will break your heart!
Fly away! Fly away!
The sun is creeping to the hill
and climbs and climbs
and rests at every step.

Why got the world so withered?
On wearily strung threads plays
the wind his song.
The hope has flown —
he mourns behind her.

This is the autumn: which —
yet will break your heart!
Fly away! Fly away!
Oh fruit upon the tree,
thou tremblest,allest?
Which secret did impart to you the night,
that thy cheek, the purple cheek
is overcast with icy shudders? —

Silent thou keepst, does not reply?
Who talketh still? — —
This is the autumn: which —
yet will break your heart!
Fly away! Fly away!
'I am not beautiful'
— Thus does the daisy speak —
'but men I love
and comfort men —
even now they shall see flowers,
bend down for me,
helas! and break me —
within their eyes then shineth forth
Remembrance.
Remembrance of something
more beautiful than I: —
I see it, see it — and thus die!' —
This is the autumn: which —
yet will break your heart!
Fly away! Fly away!

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Once more before I wander on,
And forward cast my glance,
I lonesome lift my hands
To Thee, to whom I flee,
To whom I solemnly have dedicated alia:
Within the deepest depth of heart,

That at all times
Thy Voice may again call me.
On it, deeply engraved, is glowing
The word: Unto the Unknown God.
His I am, even though I remained
Up to this hour in the offender gang.
His I am — and I feel the snares,
Which pull me down in fight
And even though I flee,
They yet compel me to His service.
I want to know Thee, Unknown One,
Thou, who art reaching deep within my soul,
Thou, who art storm-like brushing through my life.
Thou, inconceivable, yet close-related One!
I want to know Thee, want myself to serve Thee.

The end of the century is approaching 'Le fin de siècle', as the French term for it is, meaning weariness after fighting, and longing, and searching, and all in vain. The way to communion with God, the meaning of life, the path to Realisation has not been found, only illusoriness and transitoriness and endless suffering. All this is encompassed in the German term 'Weltschmerz' — the melancholy from the 'suffering of the world' represented in all its details, by the famous poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal in:

BALLAD OF THE EXTERNAL LIFE.

And children are growing up, with deep eyes,
Who know of nothing, they grow up and die.
And all men go their ways,
And into sweet fruits turn the raw ones
and fall like dead birds down at night
and lie there for a few days and decay.
And always wind is blowing, and ever and anon
we are hearing and talking many words
and feel pleasure and weariness of limbs.
And roads are running through the grass, and
places
are here and there, with flambeaus, trees and
ponds
and threatening ones, and dead-like droughty
What for are they built up? and never
resemble each other? and are innumerable?
What alternates laughing, weeping, paling?
Of what use is this all to us, and all these plays,
to us, who yet are great and eternally lonesome,
and wandering never look for any goals?
What is the use to have seen lots of them?
And yet he sayeth much, who "evening" says,
a word out of which woe flows and melancholy
like heavy honey out of hollow honeycombs

It is said that the Germans, as a rule, show their best qualities in the worst conditions of life. Therefore, having gone through all the horrors of two world-wars and the Nazi-period, there is now a new development clearly visible in the songs of the last twenty years.

Two Songs to Mary, the first from middleage,
the second from nowadays

A PILGRIM-SONG.

Seastar, I salute Thee,
Oh Maria Help!
Mother of God, Sweet One
Oh Maria help!
Maria help us all,
Out of deep misery!

Rose without thorn,
Oh Maria help!
Thou, by God chosen
Oh Maria help!
Maria help us all,
Out of deep misery!
Lily without equal,
Oh Maria help!
To whom angels yield,
Oh Maria help!
Maria help us all,
Out of deep misery!

Fountain of all joys,
Oh Maria help!
Comfort in all pains,
Oh Maria help!
Maria help us all,
Out of deep misery!

THE EXPULSION OF CHILDREN-SONG.

We had a house, and the house not destroyed
We had a home, and the home died.
They drove us, as cattle is driven by sack
They ground us, as corn is ground between
stones.
Oh help us, dearest Mary!

Father is prisoner in foreign land,
Mother is buried in foreign sand,
Have a new father who is called death,
Have a new mother called distress,
Oh do help us, dearest Mary!

In foreign places we are and look around
And all stare at us like deaf and dumb

We stand at the doors and knock and knock:
Oh woe! is there none who will open to us?
Do have mercy, oh dearest Mary!

God is weaving us shirts of tears and grief
With threads of hunger, with threads of shame
The shuttle weaves pain and pain and pain.
Oh do weave us a little joy in the shirts.
Oh weave Thou for us, dearest Mary!

—Ernst Wiechert

THE CONCHSHELL

God, now and then, lifts our star
like a conchshell to his ear
and listens.
There is roaring up
the grey ocean of tears —
Does it frighten the heart
of the world's Lord?

It howls at him the great outcry,
It groans at him the agony of pain,
curse and prayer: Lord, make us free
from falsehood, hatred, ravery!
He heareth it, as be it but one
single heart,
which awful split asunder in itself
is screaming in its glowing
fever-dreams

But God dark is his look,
Weigheth our star within his hand,
And puts it sighing back again
upon its place at the world's brink.

—Fr. Rasche

TRANSMUTATION

Burn up in Thy hearth of flames
Where the fires of the planets stand ablaze.
Melt us out of our gloomy earth
Ninefold make us go through the probation.

Long obsessed by lower powers
Black with ruin and with guilt —
Make us transcend to the righteous
Master, do us lift into Thy Grace!

Moon and sun are calling us,
Wind has touched us with Thy Breath.
Transmute us within Thy furnace
Till Thy sublime art has made us ripe.

Make us radiate in your sign
When Thy secret, Magician, appears
And the Mind before whom flames give way,
Towards our mind inclines.

—Fr. Schnack

These last three songs show a rather striking change in the mental attitude, a new stage of development. The melancholy and weariness have been overcome and, though the poets are not yet able to free themselves altogether from the gruesome experiences and impressions of the war and after-war time, all songs alike reveal a new mental strength with which they face the past events. The conception of God has become deepened and widened in such a way, that 'The Conch-shell' and 'Transmutation' could almost be Indian songs. At least they show a strong influence of Indian mentality; whether this is due to a contact with Indian ideas through books, or, whether it is indeed an age-old Indian heritage which now is breaking forth, will be difficult to decide. The idea of transmutation corresponds with the process of Sadhana, only the German poet seems not to be consciously aware of it, that there exists a path of personal effort through spiritual practice. And, like so many stars which God weighs in his hand, and then puts back upon their place at the world's brink, many of the Germans are standing at the world's end, with a deep abyss at their feet covered by impenetrable mist. There they stand, with all their knowledge and longing and all their technical achievements; but no boat and no aeroplane can carry them to the other shore beyond the abyss. Thus they stand, waiting, waiting — — — until once they may be shown the path of Sadhana, the only means to cross the abyss and attain Realization.

Brihatkathā, though now lost, is reputed to have been written in the Paisāchi Prākṛit, a dialect spoken somewhere in the N.W.F. Province. He might have lived in the 3rd Cen. B.C. and his story book must have been the most ancient of its class in the world. It was already lost even in the 7th Cen. A.D. when Dandin referred to it as 'So they say'. Its two summaries hail from about 1070 A.D. and Bhāsa, Sri Harsha, Anangarāja and many other famous dramatists had already drawn their inspiration from the many stories narrated therein. Along with our two epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, this story book has already been a standing inspiration for our poets and dramatists.

Bharatamuni, another Northerner, who must have lived almost contemporaneously, composed his Nāṭya Sāstra, again the earliest text book on literary criticism perhaps of the world. According to him, drama, which presents before our very eyes facts of a by-gone age in a racy manner, (*Chirānirvṛttamapi Pratyakṣamīva darśitam*, as Vālmiki put it in his inimitable language) is the best form of literature and from the way in which he refers to the ten main dramatic kinds called nāṭakas or Rūpakas and many other *aparupakas*, it is clear that already such types of dramatic compositions should have existed. Incidentally, he deals also with the three basic fine arts, singing, dancing and acting. He suggested that all these should be correlated in the delineation of Rāsa or central motif of literature. This theory was later on perfected by the two greatest literary critics of India hailing from Kashmir, Ānandavardhana (850 A.D.) in his Dhvanyāloka and Abhinavagupta (950 A.D.) in his Lochana, the standard commentary on Nāṭya Sāstra (the great exponent of the Saiva Pratyabhijnā philosophy).

Thus these three, Vālmiki, Pāṇini and Bharata might be designated as the sacred sage-trio, the *Muniraya*, who might also be referred to as heralding the classical age of Sanskrit literature.

Following in their wake, Vyāsa (10th Cen. B.C.), Bhāsa (2nd Cen. B.C. beginning) and Kālidāsa (2nd Cen. B.C. end) (in the literary sphere) and Patanjali (150 B.C.) in the grammatical sphere and Sri Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda in the religious sphere, could be described as the greatest stars in our literary firmament.

Most of our Purāṇas like the Viṣṇu, Mārkaṇḍeya and the Bhāgavata, were re-written in the early centuries following the birth of Christ, following the tradition of Vyāsa's famous epic. They perfected the method of the Harivamśa (the famous supplement to the Bhārata epic) and the Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa. The Mahākāvya of Aśvaghosha (150 A.D.), Bhāravi (6th Cen.), Bhaṭṭi (7th Cen.), Māgha (8th Cen.), Ratnākara (9th Cen.), Sri Harsha (12th Cen.), Vedānta Deśika (14th Cen.) and a host of others too numerous to mention followed the path chalked out by Kālidāsa. The lyrics of Kālidāsa, the Meghaduta and the Ritusamhāra produced a spate of imitations down to Līlāsukā's Krishna Karmāmṛta and Jayadeva's Gita Govinda in the 12th Cen. and many more minor imitations of a rather inferior type particularly in Bengal and Kerala. The drama of Kālidāsa also were followed by a number of them from the pen of Sudraka, Viśakhaḍatta, King Harsha, Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, Bhavabhūti, and the peculiarly philosophical dramas of Kṛṣṇananda (10th Cen.) and Vedānta Deśika. Prose works, though rare, can also be gleaned across the centuries and the fable and popular tale, the earliest of their type in the world, are also abundant in our literature. Philosophy and literary criticism might be perhaps described as being our forte. Thus we can conclude that our literature was fairly representative, technical arts and sciences like Mathematics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Botany, Grammar, Medicine, Archery, Zoology, Law, being also represented here and there with metrical treatises in popular style. It might be remarked also in passing that treatises like the Amarakośa or the Medinikōśa, dictio-

naries of synonyms are perhaps unique among the literatures of the world, being also couched in poetry to facilitate easy memorisation. As a matter of fact, in the *Sampradāya* system of ancient studies, the Amarakośa was got by heart by every student

and consequently the necessity of carrying a dictionary could easily be avoided by him in ordinary life. Our law again was a wonderful combination of religion, ethics, philosophy, social etiquette etc. and even here, the treatment was peculiarly in verse.

चरैवेति

SET-UP FOR INNER SPARK

A visit to an Institute of Science benefits even those who are not regular students of science. Once when we visited an Institute, the expert there showed us a device that had been newly fitted up. What appeared prominently were two strange 'poles' a few feet away from each other. These were connected in a special way with an electric current whose strength was stepped up by means of a separate apparatus. Within a short time we were startled by a dazzling flash of lightning and a 'peal of thunder', both artificial. It was later explained how this instrument was useful for testing the 'reliability' of the big wires employed in electric installations.

Some of us, on our way back, recalled our early days at school, when we turned small machines and produced sparks, or stood in a circle, touching one another, to receive a group 'shock'. We now began to discuss to what extent we were really responsible for 'producing' the sparks in those days. What we actually did then was to put forth the energy available in our muscles. The parts of the machines were so contrived as to be able to transform that energy into an electric current. The next stage was not taken by us at all. It was a 'jump' taken by the current, in which the brightness latent in it

became manifested because of the conditions favouring its appearance. By scientific pursuit the basic requirements for every sort of 'jump' are discovered, and the order in which we should supply them laid down. Our share in each case of 'production' is restricted to the provision of the materials and the forces that constitute those conditions. As for the 'jump', we may put it in religious terms and say: 'The Divine Mother then wakes up and takes the next step in Her dance', releasing latent forms and altering the total picture, probably leading us to greater peace. —or, if we choose the wicked path, to utter destruction!

Nature's demands are more or less strict. She allows some deviation, but its range is small. We know that dirty plugs, or an unnoticed increase of the distance between their points, caused perhaps during an over-enthusiastic cleaning operation, are enough to prevent the sparks; and if we fail to detect this, our car stands unresponsive and 'dead', making us fret and fume on an otherwise exquisitely brilliant day! The damage to our programme due to the disorder in the car is not very serious. But the consequences can indeed be terrific if the 'inaccuracy' happens to be a slight 'rigidity'

of the 'releasing' portions of a parachute, preventing it from opening out in our fall from a few thousand feet above the ground!

Fortunately the margin of 'error' permitted to us by Nature in the management of our body and mind is fairly wide. They are so constructed that they can give us 'reliable' service in spite of many shocks resulting from our rashness and indiscretion. The mind, particularly, being elastic, has a way of springing back into position even after being severely knocked about in the course of our daily occupations. It is only a small fraction of it, in fact its bare surface, that is directly caught in the field of work at any moment. Its deeper levels are accessible only indirectly, through the creation of a 'habit'. The sense of frustration, or of anger and of retaliation are no doubt harmful even when they appear as passing moods. But they do not develop into ever-acting dangerous forces until repetition turns them into habits. Nobody who is aware of this danger will wantonly indulge in such repetition. He would soon learn that at the surface level itself they can be balanced by consciously cultivating their opposites. Playing with the children at home, systematic effort in the evenings to raise up a flower garden, listening to music, — these are some of the ways open to one and all.

The spiritual aspirant can construct for himself a graded flight of steps to help him to carry higher values to the habit level. Chanting of hymns, philosophical analysis, co-ordination of valid conclusions, contemplation, — these do not require the physical presence of men and objects in so-called favourable situations. Being internal, these processes can be resorted to almost everywhere, and more especially without any fuss, when circumstances are adverse. They help us to lift our heads above the clouds of base emotions and gain vantage points from which vital problems can be seen in a better light and activities can be started for tapping the virtues latent in everyone. Belief in

God, if fortified by scriptural study and suitable reasoning, is the best instrument for inducing the feelings of awe and reverence in our hearts. By repetition these penetrate thought and action and play a substantial part in changing the course of events. They act in two ways: first, they step up the total pressure that gradually takes the shape of those events; secondly, they infuse the breath of life into the seeds of goodness uniformly travelling with every pressure, like fat globules flowing with milk. Meanings and intentions are life-giving energies inherent in thought. When made to 'brood' over our daily activities, they make their counterparts emerge from the most unpromising conditions, like flower plants from a plot of land on which farm manure is carelessly thrown. Pure motives, when intensified, set the stage ready for the 'spark' which, according to its own law of motion and 'work', 'jumps' over what we misread as a gap, and releases the pent-up energy of the fuel that drives the unseen engines of Nature's creative regions.

If we do not believe in an Almighty Ruler seated in the hearts of all alike, we shall have to accept at least some cohesive principle like Dharma, to which our exercises for self-purification can be closely connected. The feeling of reverence will not even then be starved out for want of a proper Object to receive it. For it will be surely directed to the earthly Teacher, whom we look upon as an embodiment of Perfection, and wait upon and serve as part of our customary disciplines.

In the early stages words and prayers, suited to our tastes and temperament, may be needed to enable us to catch and retain higher emotions. But exercises can be so framed that for every stimulus coming from the external world, one spiritual faculty or other may always be found ready to spring forward with a prompt and appropriate reaction. When such mastery is attained, words and formulas become spontaneous expressions of inward control, not the means

tentatively taken in the beginning for achieving it. What is important is the introduction of the correct meaning, and then its intensification. The 'spark', visible or invisible, is latent in it.

The concept of an Impersonal Principle operating in and through every creature may not evoke the feeling of adoration which the concept of a Personal Deity can. But in its place we can cultivate *Maitri*, — friendliness, goodwill, and a willingness to minister to their needs. Instead of heart-felt adoration there will then be active compassion. Service follows automatically in either case.

* * * *

Once, says a Buddhist story, a party of disciples who had taken the sacred Pledges retired to a forest for carrying on intense spiritual practices. People of the nearest village agreed to give them alms and to practise with more than usual zeal the rules laid down for lay devotees. In the forest, however, there were many fairies who lived on trees. The presence of the monks inconvenienced them; they felt it wrong for women and children to sit on the branches above while the ascetics were seated below. When days passed and

there was no sign of the mendicants leaving the place, they instilled fear into them by making them catch cold and sneeze and cough, as well as by showing them frightful illusions of bodies without heads and heads without bodies! The men naturally became afraid and returned to the Master. He knew what had happened, yet insisted that they should return to the forest. When they expressed their fears, he told them to take with them a most effective weapon — the weapon of Good Will. He then taught them a suitable song and bade them sing it in chorus on reaching their former abode. The story says that when the fairies heard the song, strange peace and friendliness entered their minds and they came forward openly to offer their service in various ways, some carrying the robes and alms-bowls of the monks, others mounting guard and helping them to stay comfortably and plunge whole-heartedly into their disciplines. The song first intensified the goodwill of the Master's disciples; then the 'spark' made its invisible 'jump' burning up the irritation of the fairies and replacing it with quiet joy and steady helpfulness!

भगवद्देवता ।

SUBANDH

PASSING AWAY OF SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA

We announce with a heavy heart the passing away of Swami Raghavananda on June 10, 1957 at the Belur Math.

He had a brilliant academic career at the Calcutta Presidency College from where he graduated with the unique distinction of being the Ishan Scholar of the year. While a student he came in close contact with Sri Mahendranath Gupta (Master Mahahaya or 'M'), the author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. He used to visit the Belur Math also where he had the privilege of meeting many of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. After passing M.A. and Law examinations he joined in 1913 the Sri Rama-

krishna Math, Madras at the age of 25. He was initiated by Swami Brahmananda Maharaj who later in 1918 ordained him into Sanyasa.

Swami Raghavananda began his active life in the Ramakrishna Order when he was sent to Mayavati Advaita Ashrama towards the latter part of 1913 to assist Swami Prajnananda, the editor of *Prabuddha Bharat*. Thereafter he went to Almora to be near Swami Turiyanandaji Maharaj and also spent some time at Shyamala Tal to help Swami Virajanandaji Maharaj in preparing the *Life of Swami Vivekananda*. The death of Swami Prajnananda in 1918 again brought

him to Mayavati as the editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*. While in the Himalayas he visited various places of pilgrimage such as Kailas and Manasarovar, Kedarnath, Badrinath etc.

In 1923 he sailed for the United States via Europe to assist Swami Bodhananda, head of the Vedanta Centre, New York. From here he went to various places in the States to preach the message of Vedanta, and returned to India after staying there for nearly four years. For a time he lived with Master Mahashaya and later went to the Himalayas for intense spiritual practice. Directed by the Headquarters he took charge of the Puri and Allahabad centres and of Gadadhar Ashrama, Calcutta, but the urge to lead an exclusive spiritual life sent him back to the Himalayas. It was while engaged in spiritual practice in the district of Garhwal that

his health broke down and he was compelled to return to Belur Math.

In 1954 he had an attack of apoplexy due to high blood-pressure and a second attack in October of the same year affected his power of speech. The third attack in April this year from which he could not rally again made him completely bed-ridden. During this period of protracted illness all, particularly his attendants, were highly impressed by his fortitude, simplicity, and dependence on God. On June 10 immediately after dusk he had a fatal attack of cerebral thrombosis and he passed away peacefully at 8.33 p.m. The same night his body was cremated on the bank of the Ganges at Belur Math. He was 69. In him the Order has lost a senior and distinguished monk.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial :

The contemporary world is too full of quarrels and dissensions. When these quarrels have acquired a global dimension because of political and economic factors, religious feuds may be considered as minor problems. But to remove all causes of tension and establish peace on earth, it is necessary to have an all-round understanding between peoples. Poise and peace acquired through religious understanding and progress may influence other departments of life also. Hence is the urgency of finding out and appreciating the common bases of religions which embrace the believers of the entire world.

Our Contributors :

Sri R. K. M. Cherla is a noted writer in Telugu.

Sri T. C. Sankara Menon, M.A. (Cantab), is a member of the Kerala Public Service

Commission. His article 'God as Child' is being published with the kind permission of the All India Radio, Trivandrum.

Sri S. Subhash Chandra, M.A., of Hyderabad gives the philosophy of Tagore.

Sri S. N. Rao of Ootacamund questions the theory of this world being a three-dimensional one, and opines with suitable arguments that the only picture of the Universe in consonance with the conclusions of modern science is a multi-dimensional one. In the course of discussion he shows a few points of similarity between Vedanta and modern science.

Srimati Indira Devi is from Harikrishnashram, Poona.

Sister Savitri is a German writer and devoted follower of Indian thoughts.

Sri U. Venkatakrishna Rao, M.A., is Professor of Sanskrit, Christian College, Madras.

NON-VIOLENCE AND SCIENTIFIC STUDY

Ahimsa was one of the cardinal virtues preached by Lord Buddha. It was specially recommended in Raja Yoga. Gandhiji made non-violence his central teaching. The nation also has accepted it as a principle and tries though with failures to translate the ideal into practice. As an ideal it has its bearings on the totality of man, on his aspiration and behaviour, his objective and endeavour. Indian scientists till now contributed more in the fundamentals of science than in the technological sphere. Happily, very little have they done in developing the destructive aspect of science. Is it because of the spiritual climate of India, its recognition of all creatures as the exhalation of the One Being? When there was a competition among the scientists of the world to invent weapons of war with ever-increasing capacity of destruction, a great scientist of India spent nights after nights in the laboratory to find out that even the vegetable kingdom has life. And in that Bose had been rightly hailed as a true inheritor of Indian culture, for was it not one of its great rishis, Manu, who said that there is inner consciousness even in plants and other lower organism and that they are endowed with the feelings of pleasure and pain also? Even the principle of non-violence promulgated by Gandhiji for guiding the nation and the world had its inspiration from the aphorism of Patanjali on Yoga which held that in the presence of man who is established in Ahimsa even the naturally fighting animals give up enmity and hatred. This principle of non-violence has various implications and can be practised in diverse walks of life. Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, the noted scientist, suggests one such sphere where this ideal could be extended. In an article, 'The ways of the bees' (*Hindu*, June 2, '57), he says on the work on bees:

I describe this work because it was partly done in India, and is quite typical of the non-violent biological research which is teaching us many things about animals which we could never learn by violent methods.

Some months ago in another article entitled 'Some reflections on non-violence' (*Swatantra*, Nov., 10, '56), he had struck the same fresh note in suggesting that India should specialise in non-violent biological studies. This he did because he considers this to be in line with the Indian genius and regards it as 'a challenge to Hindu biologists'. He says:

I believe that this non-violent approach to experimental biology is a fruitful one.

There is a very great opening for non-violent biological studies in India, and, what is more important, they require no complicated apparatus.

If ever I settle down in India I hope to continue the study of the almost non-violent branch of biology called animal genetics.

The professor refers in this connection to his father who instead of trying injurious experiments on animals 'preferred to work on himself or other human beings who were sufficiently interested in the work to ignore the pain or fear'. And about himself he asserts:

I do not condemn those who do experiments on animals which involve their death, or even moderate suffering. But I have never done an experiment on an animal of a kind which I have not previously or subsequently done on myself; and I hope I never shall.

Prof. Haldane is conscious that his suggestion may not be appreciated by all.

Politicians may not like this article. They may say that it calls for a diversion of effort from important to unimportant fields. I do not agree. In my experience kindness to human beings and to animals usually go together. Those who ignore sufferings in animals find it easier to ignore human suffering, and conversely. I think that Indians who love animals are often perplexed because they do not see how to give practical effort to their love. I have made some suggestions, and venture to hope that some of them will be accepted. India has made many contributions to world culture. Perhaps the greatest is the ideal of non-violence. Europe's greatest contribution is the scientific method. If these can be married, their offspring may raise mankind to a new level.

Indian scientists are now active in different branches of study. We hope, as the professor does, that at least some of them will take up the non-violent aspect of biological studies suggested by him.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

UPANISHADIC STORIES and their significance:
By Swami Tatvananda: Edited by Prof.
V. A. Thyagarajan. Published by Sri Rama-
krishna Advaita Ashrama, Kaladi. Pp. 164.
Price Rs. 2.

To teach people who may find it difficult to understand the tenets of philosophy by reading through the original, the essentials of the teachings of the rishis of the hoary past have been embodied in the form of short stories, with suitable introduction and bringing home the significance of every such story, in conclusion. Readers therefore should feel highly grateful to the Swamiji for presenting this booklet, written in a very simple and lucid style, without much of metaphysical pedantry of expressions. The 19 stories, compiled in the orthodox order, from the few important major Upanishads, viz., Kena, Katha, Prasna, Taittiriya, Chandogya and the Brihadaranyaka, are not legendary in character but they are the teachings of ancient seers to enquiring seekers after truth on various occasions.

Prof. V. A. Thyagarajan has done an excellent job in carefully editing the material and supplementing, wherever necessary, with additional information, so as to render the story intelligible to readers, in foot notes, also citing parallels in some cases. On page 46, the foot note 1 reads, 'Whoever meditates on each part of Aum separately, is subject to destruction...' There seems to be a confusion about this idea occurring in the Prasnopanishad... whether it means meditation on each part of Om or meditation on Om as of one part, two, or three. The latter view seems palpable from the point of view of the Upanishad itself. Prasna (V-3.5) says that meditation on Om as of one, two or three matras, respectively leads to the world of men, the path of manes (pitryana), and the path of the gods (devayana). 'The implication of the eulogy', observes Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan in his 'Gaudapada' (p. 172), 'is that the sadhaka should understand the significance of Om and meditate on it; the deeper the comprehension, the greater will be the benefit'.

As far as possible, the spirit of the original has been kept up throughout every narrative and the difficult task of simplified presentation has been achieved with success. Books of this kind are the real need of the day, when there is a clamour for reconciliation of the ancient and modern approach to religion and philosophy, and the book

is a novel feature of preserving the cultural heritage of a nation. Save some of the mis-spelt and mis-printed words, the book has been neatly and nicely got up. The book will be a worthy addition to every library and will provide a useful reading to spiritual aspirants.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

INTRODUCING THE GITA: By Swami Chidbhavananda, Tapovanam Publishing House, Tiruparoyturai P.O., Trichy Dt. Pp. 88. Price Re. 1.

Bhagavad Gita, or the Song Supreme, is a clarion-call towards the goal of Perfection, and a Directory on social fabric and social growth. The plan and purpose of it is to evolve an absolutely perfect personality, given an abundant scope for moral and spiritual growth of an individual. Swami Chidbhavananda has introduced Gita in a striking manner through this book under review, clothed in mellifluous style. The author remarkably brings home the conviction that introduction to Gita is introducing Hinduism itself, and establishes firmly on all levels that Gita is an answer to all problems of life, here and hereafter. In unequivocal terms, it is a divine call for all people to lead a purposeful life. 'Fight the battle of life and let the virtue in you vanquish the vice' formula has been developed so admirably, that the work proves to be a real guide for both worldly and spiritually-minded persons and we shall await the author's commentary on the Bhagavad Gita.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

NAVAJIVAN PUBLICATIONS

Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, must be congratulated for bringing out cheap editions of books by Gandhiji and others in quick succession. Here are some of the books published recently.

FROM YERAVDA MANDIR: By M. K. Gandhi. Translated by V. G. Desai. 4th impression. Pages 67. Price, six annas.

TOWARDS NON-VIOLENT SOCIALISM: By M. K. Gandhi. Edited by B. Kumarappa. Price Re. 1. Pages 173 (with Index).

TOWARDS NEW EDUCATION: By M. K. Gandhi. Edited by B. Kumarappa. Price Re. 1. Pages 96 (with Index).

SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI: By Nirmal Kumar Bose, Second enlarged cheap edition. Price Rs. 2. Pages 320 (with Index).

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL Vol. II. The original in Gujarati by Narhari D. Parikh. First Edition. Price Rs. 5. Pages 493 (with Index).

BHOODAN YAGNA (Land gifts Mission) by Vinoba Bhawe. Price Annas 14. Pages 134.

THE HINDI PRACHAR MOVEMENT: By M. P. Desai. First Edition. Price Annas 10. Pages 70.

PLANNING FOR BASIC NATIONAL RECOVERY. Edited by M. P. Desai. First Edition. Price Annas 12. Pages 92.

THE LANGUAGE PATTERN UNDER THE CONSTITUTION: By M. P. Desai. First Edition. Price Annas 6. Pages 39.

MY CHILDHOOD WITH GANDHIJI: By Prabhu-das Gandhi. First Edition. Price Rs. 2-8. Pages 212.

MY RELIGION: By M. K. Gandhi — compiled and edited by Bharatan Kumarappa. Pp. 166. Price Rupees Two.

Gandhiji is revered as a Mahatma because he was a man of religion. He purified politics by religion; economics was the incense that he burnt at the altar of his religion; his ethics was equated with his religion. Whatever he thought, said or did, like whatever he taught other people to think, say and do, was informed by religion. In this book which is a compilation from the speeches and writings of Gandhiji, Sri Bharatan Kumarappa has gathered together under appropriate heads a representative collection of Mahatma's views on religion. To him religion was not 'formal' or of the 'customary type', but that which 'underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker'. What Gandhiji means by religion 'is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which purifies'. 'Transcends Hinduism' is, we take it, to be interpreted not as indicating that Hinduism is inadequate to express the connotation of religion in full, but as conveying the universal import of religion beyond credal forms of its expression.

The sections on *My religion in Practice and Aids to the Practice of My Religion* are of special interest as bringing out how every detail of Gandhiji's activity was permeated by his religion. When carefully studied, it will be found that Gandhiji developed no new technique, but only re-affirmed in his practice the disciplines that find a place in our scriptures, but which, alas, have gone into desuetude. There are in Gandhiji's interpretation of Hinduism some instances which are not in accord with tradition. One such is when he says: 'In the purest type of Hinduism a Brahmana, an ant, an elephant and a dog-eater *Shvapacha* are of the same status.' The reference obviously is to the Gita verse. But, the accepted meaning is that they are not *by themselves* of the same status; but *panditah*, which means those who have Brahmajnana, are Samadarsins with respect to them. They, who alone are competent to do so, look on them equally as manifestations of the Brahman that they have known and realised. When Gandhiji adds: 'And because our philosophy is so high, and we have failed to live upto it, that very philosophy today stinks in our nostrils,' it is to be feared that this sense of the crusader for the 'downtrodden' has out-run the import of passages such as this. Withal, Gandhiji was an earnest Hindu who had firm convictions about the excellence of the Hindu religion. His acceptance of the 'essentials of other religions' was because, to him they were not opposed to the foundational bedrock of his Hindu faith.

This publication is valuable in so far as it spotlights what the Mahatma spoke and wrote on the subject of 'My religion'.

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

J. C. KUMARAPPA AND HIS QUEST FOR WORLD PEACE: By M. Vinaik. Pages 171. Price Rs. 1-8-0.

The book is a biography of J. C. Kumarappa, the 'Doctor of Village Industries,' written by M. Vinaik of Gandhiniketam Ashram, T. Kallupatti, a very close associate of Dr Kumarappa. As a great social worker, constructive thinker, economist and a great friend of Bapuji, Kumarappa is a very well-known figure in India, as well as in the countries outside. His quest for world peace is an original contribution and is convincing. M. Vinaik, the biographer, has very successfully brought out Kumarappa as a modest, unassuming and original thinker. Smt. Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur's Foreword adds to the value of the publication.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

A COMPASS FOR CIVILIZATION: By Richard B. Gregg. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Pp. v+279. Rs. 3).

Arnold Toynbee counts twenty-one great civilizations that have fallen to pieces. Many to-day feel that our modern civilization also may go the way of its predecessors. Richard B. Gregg, while fully alive to the dangers inherent in the situation, takes a more hopeful view and actually suggests a compass for our civilization. Even the sciences, which according to popular opinion, never take things for granted, are based on certain assumptions. An examination of these assumptions is necessary for progress. Likewise, if we can recognize our assumptions we can save our civilization. Gregg says: 'I name my absolute assumption God or Spirit or Brahman, Tao, Allah, Nirvana, Truth or First Principle, depending largely on what culture I grew up in' (pp. 7-8). Gregg points out that there are two ways of knowing—the usual kind of 'knowing-about' involving the distinction between subject and object, and unitive knowing or intuition. It is intuition that enables us to have a glimpse of the intangible world of Spirit. The actual world in which we find ourselves enmeshes us in pairs of opposites like good and evil, beauty and ugliness. We have to transcend these pairs. The different religions emphasise different kinds of transcending—Christianity emphasises love and forgiveness, Hinduism stresses detachment, meditation and humility, Buddhism, detachment, Islam, charity and so on. Incidentally, Gregg says that we must transcend the self or soul also. Man's innermost essence is the divine Spirit. The Spirit is to the soul as the ocean is to the wave. Realizing this Spirit, man achieves security, certainty and a sense of 'belonging'.

The compass for our voyage is personal individual meditation leading ultimately to what the Christian tradition calls contemplation and other traditions call *dhyana*, *marifa* and *satori*. Gregg recommends the serious study of myths as these give us wisdom. He says that a civilization can no more abandon its myths than a tree can afford to disown its roots.

In the second part of the book, Gregg enters a vigorous plea for rendering the word 'repent' in Christian literature as equivalent to metanoia. He quotes Mathew Arnold's view with approval: 'Of metanoia, as Jesus used the word, the lamenting of one's sins was a small part, the main part was something far more active and fruitful, the setting up of an immense new inward movement for obtaining the rule of life. And metanoia accordingly is a changing of the inner man'.

The publishers are to be congratulated on making available to the reading public a book of real value for the moderate sum of Rupees three.

V. A. D.

KULACUDAMANI NIGAMA: Edited by Arthur Avalon. Published by M/s. Ganesh & Co., (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras 17. Pages 100. Price Rs. 3.

This is another notable work belonging to the Sakta Agama of Tantrics. Kulachudamani Nigama promulgates the Kaula doctrine, one of the seven great acaras enumerated in the Kularnava, an outstanding tantra treatise. The doctrine is expounded in the form of a conversation between Bhairava and Devi in seven Chapters. The Chapters enumerate the Kulasundaris, who are said to be innumerable, the rites of the Sadhakas, the qualification of a Sadhaka, — as he must be well-versed in the acara, he must be *udarachittah* etc.,—method of acquiring powers, and the worship of Mahisa-Mardini. Dakshina Kali is mentioned as the guiding Devi, and that she fulfils all Siddhis. The book contains a learned preface by Karra Ramamurthy, introduction with summary of Chapters and a faithful translation of Mahisha-Mardini stotra by the General Editor, A. K. Maitra. The text in Devanagari follows. Separate index of verses and subjects have been provided. The Publishers have done a good service in again bringing out this excellent edition of the 'Crest Jewel' of the Kaulas, whose secret doctrine is claimed to be the final stage of spiritual Sadhana and knows no distinction of race, colour, caste or creed.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

WESTERN BUDDHISM OR CHRISTIANITY: By Swami Sankarananda. (Published by Sri Nilmony Moharaj, 88, Vivekananda Road, Calcutta-6. Pp. 68. Price Rs. 4/8).

It is the contention of the author of this book that not merely are there similarities between Christianity and Buddhism but also that Christianity is only Western Buddhism. He is aware of the controversial nature of this subject for, he himself says, "To conclude a highly controversial subject, I beg to submit that the evidences though not profuse, are sufficient to identify Christianity as Western Buddhism" (p. 65). He claims in the Introduction that a study of the history of Christianity leads him to this conclusion (p. 1).

The author finds evidence of Buddhism in far off countries like Morocco, Bulgaria and Norway. The chapter entitled 'Buddhist relics abroad' makes interesting reading. He says that the word 'Pope' is of Indian origin and is derived from the word 'Baba' (p. 7), 'Gnosis' is *Jnāna*—'So, it is pure Advaita Vedānta and has nothing to do with the dualist school of the Christians' (p. 64). 'The Essenes appear to be a yogi sect. In India, the god of the yogis is Siva. He has another name *Isāna*. The word Essene might have been derived from *Isāna*. So they were a Saivite sect' (p. 26). Likewise, he finds Indian origin for the word 'Therapeutae' in the word, 'Theraputa' and argues that the Therapeutae were 'most probably a sect of Indian *vānaprasthas*' (p. 29). Elsewhere, we have the statement that 'the Saturnians were the worshippers of God Vishnu—they were the Vaishnavites.' The concluding words of this book are: 'Consequently, our stand that Jesus or Jishu was a corruption of the word 'Jishnu,' one of the names of Buddha is true and correct. In other words, Christianity is Western Buddhism.' (p. 66).

It will be interesting to know the reactions of readers, particularly, Christian and Buddhist, to this book.

V. A. D.

KANNADA

KALPA LATE: By Cha. Sundaresan. Publishers: Sahitya Niketan, Sosale. Pages 63. Price: As. 12.

This book is a collection of articles published in various magazines. It has been divided into two parts known as 'Sadhana' and 'Darshana', each part containing four articles. But they are in no vital way connected with the title of their respective parts, and so is the title of the book. The author mainly deals with the Veerasaivism, its saints, and literature, including the life of Sri Basavanna and Akka Mahadevi. The good quotations selected are all from Veerasaiva literature. The author, because of his too much of love for Veerasaivism, has expressed that the writings of Veerasaiva poets after 1200 A.D. are alone welcomed by Kannadigas and not the writings of the Jaina poets. By that the author has shown his scant knowledge of ancient Kannada literature, particularly that of the Jaina age, where the writings of the great Jaina poets like Janna Kavi have enriched the Kannada literature. On the whole, the book gives a clear idea of the Veerasaiva culture. Nowadays when young men are generally interested in novels and stories, the venturing of Mr Sundaresan in

writing on religious topics who, at the time of the publication of this book, was a student, is appreciable.

BR. RAMASWAMI

PERIODICALS

THE ASTROLOGICAL MAGAZINE, 1957 ANNUAL NUMBER: (Pp. 223. Price Rs. 3-12-0. Raman Publications, Seshadripuram, Bangalore-3.

The Annual Number of this widely read magazine, contains a strikingly erudite array of articles from the pen of many distinguished scholars, both Eastern and Western. That on 'What is Man?' is stimulating reading and Dr Gerda Walther's thesis on 'Astrology and Para Psychology' opens a new field for research. Survival after death is vouched for by facts and instances and both Mr Rishi and Dr Bhat have given helpful guidance on the subject. Palmistry and 'Nadi' Predictions are dealt with in detail. 'Prasna Lanchana' breaks new ground. Dr R. N. Sarma initiates an 'Astrological Assessment' on Sri Krishna & Gouthama Buddha, in the course of an exhaustive, if not provocative, discussion. Mr G. P. Vaidyanatha Iyer's 'Practical Astrology', and the other articles on 'Jaimini's Methodology' and 'Muhurtha Fixing' are instructive. Prof. Ramakrishna Bhatt's 'Masculine and Feminine Physiognomy' evidences considerable research. Dr W. J. Tucker's 'Astronomy in a New Light' and Dr H. Subrahmanyam's 'Astronomical observations' are amongst the valuable features of this Journal.

The Editor's forecast for 1957 for this country is none too rosy; but such pessimism as it undoubtedly engenders, has to be tempered with the reflection that, as stated by Mr Robert Yaget in his scholarly thesis on 'A Scientific Approach to Astrology & Directing' in the issue, 'we must not claim too little for astrology; nor at the same time too much'.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE VOICE OF AHINSA: The Indo-German and Rishabhadeva Special Numbers. Published by K. P. Jain (Editor), The World Jain Mission, Aliganj (Etah), U.P., India — Annual Subscription Rs. 6/-.

The first Special Number is dedicated to Indo-German cultural relations, and the select articles from eminent German scholars reflect the influence of Jain ideas among Germans. 'The life evening of Count Hermann Keyserling,' one of

the leading thinkers of the West, is a notable contribution and with the philosophy of the Jains, his philosophy had a common platform of non-absolutism. 'Jain studies in Germany', 'Buddha and Mahavira', and the Hony. Editor's 'When East and West meet?' are noteworthy. With messages from Dr S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, and Dr Ernst Wilhelm Meyer, German Ambassador to India, the Special Number richly deserves our appreciation.

The Special Number on Tirhankara Rishabhadeva is full of research articles on the Saint and his historicity. Much interesting material has been collected by different writers about Rishabhadeva in the Buddhist, Jaina, Chinese, Kannada and Tamil literatures. One article notices the literature relating to him. The famous images of Rishava have been described in another. One article claims him as the first king on Indian land and another describes him as the inventor of the Brahmi script. Even a casual reader must appreciate the thoroughness with which the topic has been discussed from various standpoints. Much labour has gone in to present such a fine Number, for which the Editor must be congratulated.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

KANNADA

KARNATAKA VAIBHAV — Special Number —
Editors: N. H. Naik and Srinivas Naik.

This is the sixty-fifth annual number of the bi-weekly paper 'Karnataka Vaibhava' of Bijapur. As it has been mentioned, it is also a special number of Deepavali and New Karnataka State formation, mainly dealing with the history, arts, literature and culture of Karnataka, written by scholarly writers like Karanth and R. R. Diwakar. The article of P. S. Patil gives a geographical description of the newly formed Karnataka State. Mr. Karanth has shown how the origin of culture and arts is mainly based on religion, not only in India, but also in other ancient countries like Tibet, Egypt, China and Greece. The ancient paintings, music and dances not only show the

devotion of men towards a Supreme Being but also how the culture and arts move hand in hand. The philosophy of Mr Diwakar seen in the article is no doubt highly rationalistic but some ideas like the denial of Liberation through Karma are questionable. The article of Mr K. Nagaraj shows the influence of Karnataka on ancient Tamil literature. The article on the temples of Belur and Halebid gives the description of the temples, including historical stories, belonging to the time of the builder of the temples, Jakanacharya. The unity of action is specially noticeable in the well-written short story of Mr Srinivas Naik. The language of most of the articles is of North Kannada. The printing mistakes and unsystematic punctuation have adversely affected the inner contents. The part the journals are to play in rejuvenating the cultural, social, and religious status of our land which is the problem to be faced after the achievement of the political freedom, is vast. This 'Karnataka Vaibhava' is one such journal which is devoted to this noble task.

BR. RAMASWAMI

HINDI

KALYAN: (Tirhankar). Editors: Hanumanprasad Poddar and Chimanlal Goswami—Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pages 704. Price: Rs. 7.

This Special Number of Kalyan is an excellent book on the various pilgrim centres in India. It primarily deals with all the places of worship giving a good account of their spiritual affinity and importance. There are plates of the various shrines and maps for the various areas giving rail links. Very useful information has been given of the 12 Jyotirlingas and 108 Divyadesa. The Pithas and Upa-pithas founded by Sri Sankaracarya have been given its proper place adding to the value of the Number. The several Pithas established by Sri Ramanuja, Sri Madhva, Sri Nimbarka etc. have been similarly dealt with. Besides, a good account of the purpose of pilgrimages and stories has been appended for the use of the pilgrims. In all, this is a very helpful guide to all pilgrims knowing Hindi.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

The public celebrations of the birthdays of Sri Sankara, Ramanuja and Buddha were held on the 5th, 12th and 19th May '57 respectively. The main features of the Jayantis were devotional songs and lectures. After devotional singing by Swami Priyananda, Swami Paramatmananda introduced the speakers of the evening. Swami Swahananda delivered a short speech on the philosophical background of spiritual discipline as given by Sri Sankara. Brahmasri K. Ramamurthi Sastri of Madras Sanskrit College in course of his Tamil lecture on Sankara Vijayam explained at length the Advaitic doctrine of Sri Sankara with suitable slokas and quotations.

On the following Sunday, Vidwan Venkatachariar Swami of Karappankadu spoke in Tamil on Sri Ramanuja. In his speech he gave the criticisms of the Buddhist sunyavada and other non-vedic doctrines and it was well appreciated. He also explained clearly how the two great Acharyas, Sankara and Ramanuja, harmoniously taught for the liberation of mankind.

The Buddha purnima was observed in the Math on the 13th May with reading and lecture by Swami Paramatmananda and Swami Siddhasaitwananda respectively. The public celebration was held on the following Sunday evening. A good audience gathered before the finely decorated statue of the Buddha in the hall. Under the presidency of Swami Siddhatmananda, Sri K. Panchapakesan, M.A., L.T., spoke on the life and teachings of Lord Buddha. In course of his speech, he brought home how the noble teachings of Buddha were wrongly interpreted by his followers, which brought confusion in the minds of the people. Swami Siddhatmananda pointed out what great respects were paid by Swami Vivekananda to Lord Buddha, and exhorted the audience to follow the teachings of such great Avatars for individual and collective upliftment.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KOZIKODE

REPORT FOR 1955-56

The activities of this Ashrama are broadly divided into Educational, Medical and Cultural.

Educational.—The High School conducted by the Ashrama aims at training the students as good citizens of the country. During the years under

review, 477 and 583 were on the rolls, out of which 263 and 289 were the recipients of free scholarship; and 36 and 61 enjoyed half-fee scholarship, respectively. The extra-curricular activities, such as literary and debating societies and a manuscript magazine, give enough opportunity for the proper expression of the various talents of the boys. The Ashrama is also conducting a primary school. With a view to meet the problem of accommodation, resulting from the growing strength of the school, the Ashrama has formulated a big plan of development. The Government of India has come forward with a grant. The Ashrama expects from the public Rs. 1,50,000 to completely work out the scheme. The Students' Home for boys inculcates in the tender minds the spirit of service, equality and dignity of labour. During 1955-56 and 1956-57, there were 64 and 70 students respectively in the Home. A similar home of service has been started for the girl students in 1956.

Medical.—The charitable dispensary, run mainly on contributions, treats an average of 175 patients daily. 55,212 and 52,859 were the cases treated in 1955 and 1956 respectively. Children and disabled persons were served with milk also.

Cultural Activities.—Daily puja and bhajana in the Ashrama shrine, celebration of important local festivals, and observance of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Sarada Devi, are the main features of these activities.

Swami Yatiswaranandaji, President of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bangalore, inaugurated in December 1955, Sri Sarada Sangha, a centre of cultural activities for the ladies.

The Managing Committee of the Ashrama thanks all those who have directly or indirectly helped the Ashrama to conduct its activities.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, BANGALORE REPORT FOR 1956

Though the main activities of the Ashrama is concerned with religious and cultural work, it has extended its scope also to the fields of education and social welfare.

The activities of the Ashrama are centered round the shrine, where regular daily worship is conducted. The public freely take part in evening prayer, music, special worship, and yearly celebra-

tion of the combined birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Sarada Devi. Regular weekly discourses in Kannada and English are held, usually on Saturday and Sunday evenings, and classes for students on other days of the week. Since 1911, classes are held in the Bangalore Central Jail for the convicts by a member of the Ashrama.

The Ashrama is running a free library and reading room. The students' home for college boys, conducted by the Ashrama, facilitates the building of character of the boys and supplements the academic education of the University. A Swami of the Order is in charge of the Home and takes all possible steps to mould the character of the inmates. A new and spacious building is under construction and when it is completed it will accommodate nearly 100 students with all conveniences.

Under social welfare scheme to look after the healthy development of the boys and to train them as worthy citizens, the Vivekananda Balaka Sangha was started in April 1953. Vedic chanting, music, bhajan, instruction in cultural and religious subjects on liberal lines, games, milk-canteen, library, hobbies, and gardening are the ways through which they are trained. Daily about 75 boys take part in the activities conducted in the evening and on Sunday mornings, the number comes to 175. A similar Sunday Class for girls is also being conducted by the Sarada Sevika Mandal — a group of devoted lady workers. Some 100 girls are attending this section. Weekly classes and annual celebrations are conducted at the Vivekananda Ashrama, the branch at Ulsoor.

While the Management thanks the supporters, it appeals for funds for the normal maintenance and extensive repairs of the buildings of the Ashrama, as also for Vidyarthi Mandiram building.

combined shrine and prayer and lecture hall and a guest house.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, VISAKHAPATNAM

REPORT FOR 1956

This Ashrama, started in 1938 with an humble beginning has steadily developed through all these years, and is having religious, cultural, educational and social activities. The Ashrama is taking keen interest in giving proper training to the children. The children's programme consists of Sunday morning class, in which prayers, hymns, devotional music and stories from Puranas and Itihasas are taught. A small park, children's library, educative film shows and supply of milk are the other forms of facilities provided to young children.

The middle school started in June, 1955 at the request of the authorities of the Hindusthan Shipyard, has accommodated 71 boys and 18 girls of whom 43 were full free. 14 students were staying in the Students' Home, taking advantage of the facilities given for study.

The free reading room and library, consisting of 1832 volumes, 13 magazines and 6 newspapers, is being properly utilized by the public.

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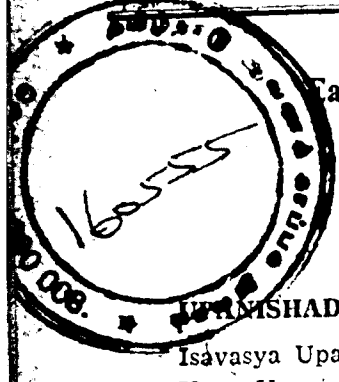
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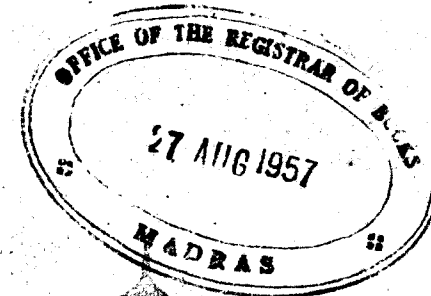
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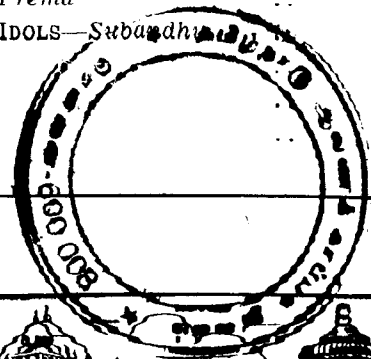
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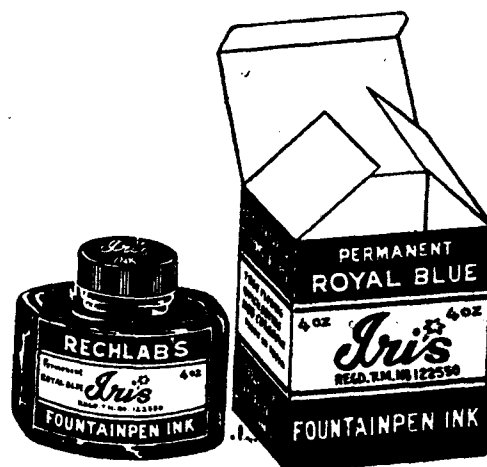
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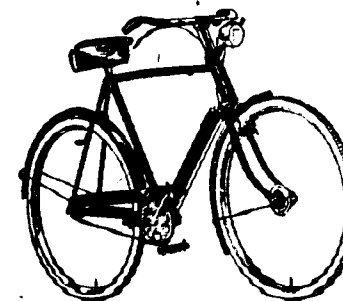
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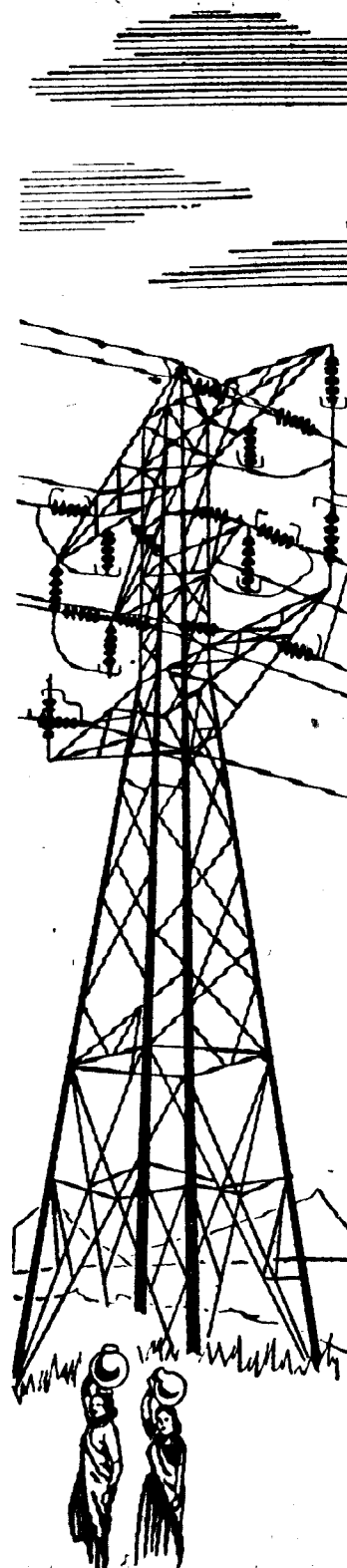
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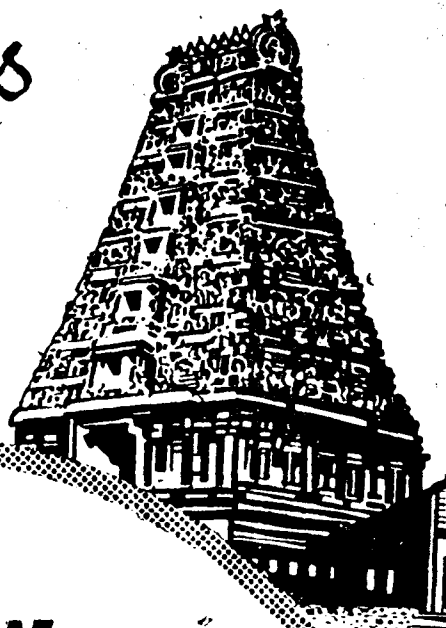
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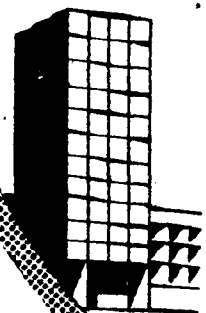
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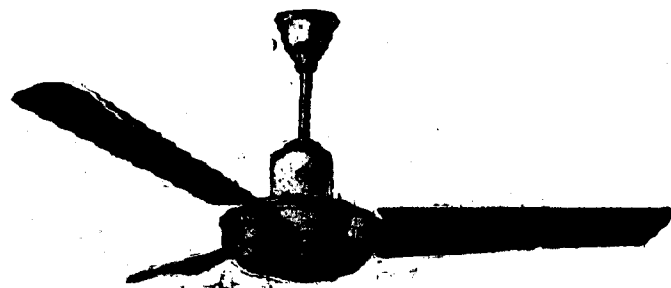
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Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XLIV •

AUGUST 1957

No. 4

FROM MONTH TO MONTH WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Scenes from his life for meditation

August, 1884: Sri Ramakrishna was going to the pine-grove near the Panchavati at Dakshineswar. A gentle breeze was blowing from the South, covering the bosom of the sacred river with ripples.

After a few minutes M. and Latu standing under the Panchavati saw the Master coming back towards them. Behind him the sky was black with a rain-cloud. Its reflection in the Ganga made the water appear darker. Looking at the Master, the disciples felt that he was God Incarnate, a Divine Child five years old, radiant with the smile of innocence and purity. Around him were the sacred trees of the Panchavati under which he had practised spiritual discipline and had beheld visions of God. At his feet flowed the sacred river, Mother Ganga destroying man's sins. The presence of this God-man charged the trees, shrubs, flowers and temples with spiritual fervour and divine joy.

Sri Ramakrishna returned to his room and sat on the small couch Master: 'The important thing is to cultivate devotion to God, to love Him. What is the use of knowing many things? It is enough to love God and follow any of the paths. When you have this love, you are sure to attain God. Afterwards, if necessary, God will explain everything to you and tell you about the other paths as well. It is enough for you to develop love of God. You have no need of many opinions and discussions. You have come to the orchard to eat mangoes. Enjoy them to your heart's content. You don't need to count the branches and leaves on the trees. It is wise to follow the attitude of Hanuman: "I do not know the day of the week, the phase of the moon, the position of the stars; I only contemplate Rama".'

It was now dusk. Sri Ramakrishna, as usually at this time, chanted the names of God and became absorbed in Him. Soon the moon rose in the sky. The temples, courtyards and trees were bathed in its silvery light and millions of broken moons played on the rippling surface of the Ganga.

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'To make a great future India, the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills, — organization alone, is the primary means for all progress and the only way for the conservation of energy.'

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ITS ROLE

'A religious organization is meant for the practice, preservation and propagation of spiritual ideas'. In this one sentence the role of a spiritual Order has been beautifully summarized. Modern Society is familiar with various types of organized groups for furthering different causes. Efficiency comes due to corporate activity by a group of determined people, joined together by a common cause. When the cause is a spiritual one, religious people come together under the banner of it and try to practise the ideal in their lives. When a movement is bubbling with enthusiasm and surplus energy, it goes, 'for the greater glory of God,' to preach the ideas it holds dear; and when it is not so, it simply keeps the ideal secure through the practice of the ideal by its few members.

BUDDHIST SANGHA

The above is true of all religious movements. Buddhism flourished during the days of Buddha and thousands embraced the ideal and the monastic life. During the time of Asoka the efflorescence of Buddhist movement took place and Buddhist monks and nuns traversed the whole of the then civilized world. Though the idea of organization was not very clear in those days lacking quick transport, it grew. Its expression is seen in the different Sangitis or Councils. The first Council took place in Rajagriha, in the Saptaparni cave, the second in Vaisali, the third in Pataliputra during Asoka's

reign and the fourth in Kanishkapura in Kashmir, during Kanishka's time. Afterwards it was not possible to hold it on that scale, for the area was vast, comprising the entire Asia. But each country naturally had some organization, though the monolithic one collapsed.

Buddha, with the democratic training of his race, gave a tremendous prestige to the Order. Buddha, Dharma and Sangha became the three refuges of the faithful. 'बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि, धर्मं शरणं गच्छामि, संघं शरणं गच्छामि' was ringing throughout the length and breadth of the Asian continent. The three 'refuges' are really an integrated whole. People take refuge in the ideal teacher first. His life and activities draw them. But men of realization are no mere personalities. They become one with the ever-abiding principles. So the refuge in Dharma comes next. The refuge in Sangha comes third. The Sangha is like a multi-coloured bouquet, consisting of a variegated development of disciples, representing the different aspects of the teacher and his message. Sangha is therefore considered the body of the teacher. The complete identification with the trinity—the teacher, his message and the Order—makes a disciple an ideal follower. Following only one of them may make a man one-sided and dogmatic. Following only the Order may breed the vice seen often in political fields, 'my party right or wrong'. But a combination saves one from all these pitfalls.

The Buddhist Sangha may be said to be the first attempt to organize religious life and activities. Till then, in the Vedic age, religious life was lived in the society and it formed an integrated pursuit along with other endeavours of the life of a man. The Vedic people took to a life of renunciation at the fag end of their lives. There were individuals, hermits and ascetics, relinquishing the ordinary ways and following a supernatural avocation. The forest universities of old developed round an individual, and it is not clear how the continuity of a particular institution was kept up.

Buddha, as Swami Vivekananda pointed out, 'introduced for the first time the community-life of religious houses.' In the West the Essenes, the Benedictines and a host of others followed this idea. It has been tried in various spheres by different people. The communistic settlements of Ephrata, Harmonists, Hutterites, Shakers, Amarites, etc., are well known. In recent times several great men tried it in India also. These communistic settlements, both religious and secular, must have been indebted to Buddhism for the original idea. However, most of them failed, excepting only the monastic groups, where personal interest is the minimum.

SANKARITE ORDER

After Buddhism, came the revival of Hinduism under the great Sankara. And then grew the ten orders of monks, which exist till to-day. He established four monasteries in the four corners of the country and the implicit idea was that they must be the beacon lights to the people of their respective areas. Sankara revived the classes of Brahmins to look after the social aspect of the religious life of the people. In Catholicism the monks work as priests

also. But Sankara kept the monks free from the day-to-day duties of the society, in consonance with the older ideal of sannyasa. When there were more monks they would go out and form groups of their own. In the famous Kumbha Mela, the sadhus would meet and discuss their problems. The later sects arising in India followed the same pattern, more or less, excepting a few sects which developed the institution of householder preceptors. The self-contained monasteries owed allegiance to a big Math but were not under any direct control. This may be said to be a general picture of religious organizations in Hinduism.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Organization, in the modern sense of a complete control over the branches, developed in Christianity. The West specialized in this art of organization and group action in all spheres of life. The Church and the Papacy are its great symbols. The history of the growth of organized monasticism in the West is an interesting study. The pre-Christian Jewish monastic groups of the Essenes and the Therapeutae must have been its original inspiration. The early Christian monks began their life of asceticism and contemplation in the Egyptian deserts. St. Anthony first organized them and St. Pachomius introduced the idea of a religious Order with set disciplines. St. Benedict perfected it. Then arose the great mendicant Orders of the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Carmelites and the Augustinians. With the Reformation the Jesuits arose. One interesting feature of the Church is, that when different men of attainments with enthusiasm came forward, the Church was flexible enough to accommodate them within its framework by allowing them to start a new Order. Thus came into

existence the above monastic Orders within the Church. The Christian Church undertakes all types of activities and caters to the needs of entertainment, inspiration, information and healing for the sake of its followers.

Islam, however, did not encourage monasticism. But it had also a certain measure of unanimity through the institution of the Caliphate.

MODERN ORDERS AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

In modern times, many socio-religious organizations have been started in India. It was the vision of Swami Vivekananda that brought in the Order of Ramakrishna. It is a well-knit organization in the modern sense with a particular significance. With a deep insight into the history of Buddhist and Sankarite Orders and the knowledge of Western and Christian efficiency due to organizations, he possibly felt the need to organize his Order on the modern lines. The complete detachment and mobility of the monks were the virtues he prized very much. Sister Nivedita remarks :

He regarded a monastic order as an 'army' behind a leader, and the teacher whose followers were all citizens and householders, as without any army. There could be no comparison, in his mind, between the strength of a cause that had, and one that had not, this support.

(*The Master as I saw him*, p. 332)

Romain Rolland observes :

A real leader of men does not omit the smallest detail. Vivekananda knew that if he was to lead the peoples to the conquest of an ideal, it was not enough to inflame their ardour; he had to enrol them in a spiritual militia.

(*Life and Gospel of Vivekananda*, p. 128)

But the old Indian monastic ideal of independence was not completely lost sight of. So on the one side he stressed the usual vow of obedience along with poverty and chastity, and at the other, he envisaged a stage when an evolved soul will transcend all limitations.

Swami Vivekananda reoriented the monastic Order with the object of serving God through the service of humankind. This has influenced the Indian monastic institutions profoundly. Prof. G. S. Ghurye in his *Indian Sadhus* (p. 264) says :

The life of Vivekananda, though short, proved to be deeply vitalizing. Not only did he extend the bounds of Hinduism so as to turn it into a universal religion, but what is more important from our point of view, he also energized and reformed ascetic ideals. Social service of varied kinds has now come to be recognised as a legitimate and important objective of ascetic and monastic life. His personal example has tended to obliterate the rigid sartorial differences between Saiva and Vaishnava ascetics. The ochre-coloured or the saffron-hued garments have come to be recognised as a symbol of asceticism. Ananda-ending names have gained favour among all sects of Indian sadhus. And, what is more important, his example has re-awakened Indian sadhus to the need of wider organisation and of propaganda.

For an organization, plans were necessary but Swamiji was convinced that too much planning does not go well with religion. 'Religion was never preached by planners,' he said. Too much controlling and spoon-feeding have the danger of throttling the higher reaches of thought. In earlier days the Western lack of freedom of spiritual enquiry and experiment led to its bankruptcy in

that field, whereas in India spiritual ideas had a variegated development because of freedom of views. The opposite was true in the cases of the two societies. Freedom is the first condition of growth, he said. Monks he visualized as spiritual nihilists. But still he built up an organization. It is because, it is organization that gives strength, it is the continuance of policy that creates an enduring tradition. Tradition is automatically imbibed by the neophytes. He, however, kept enough scope for freedom of thought and fresh experiment. His Master's realization of 'As many faiths, so many paths' must have given him the clue to it. So he wanted his organization to give a general direction about conducting of life, and leave the rest to the individual. This development took place, possibly also, because of the Indian tradition and atmosphere granting full freedom to an Atyāsrami, who has gone beyond all formal duties.

ITS NECESSITY

Does religion require organization? This is the doubt of many people. In answer, we may say that a need has always been felt throughout the history. In primitive communities it was rigidly followed. Afterwards the refined religions came in and the priests arose. Religion slowly turned national, interstate and universal. The early masters of every religion were conscious of divine mission. But the organization developed afterwards. Every society requires religious organization as all people must be helped to think for themselves, and education is to make people fit for that. Religion unifies men and develops the feeling of brotherhood. The higher values to be properly transmitted require education which implies an elaborate organization, specialized personnel and institutions, as well as

strong personal motivations. Thus the aim of organization is to conserve the noble values as taught by the masters and transmit them to others. It is to be a model one and not a huge monolithic organization covering a vast area or dictating every aspect of life. It is to broadcast the ideas in their pristine purity. Smaller groups are to translate them into action.

Religious feeling is nowadays shaken by the growth of industrialization, social mobility and urbanization. The material needs are now considered more important. As a result, individual outlook is encouraged and social outlook and altruistic tendencies are lessening. It will be the aim of religious organizations to properly educate the people for a healthy spiritual outlook. As it is the deepening of the inner life of man, mere propaganda will not do, for the latter touches the outer fringe of life only.

Even for the monks, organization is necessary. Their common interest naturally brings them together. The religious organization is a form of social organization. Love is its basis. As Swami Premananda said, 'Love the whole world, and conquer it. That is the Ramakrishna Mission.' As a religious family, the organization gives security to the individual—to the old in suffering, to the young for proper adjustment and growth of personality. By the consciousness of 'my' people and consequently loving them one feels secure and then goes to love the whole world. The socialization is done with a higher ideal. As a result, the devotion to the group ceases to be antagonistic to the good of the world. Of course, if the noble, cosmopolitan idea is lacking in an organization, it becomes a source of evil. The Order keeps up the religious tradition and cul-

ture through its way of life. If there is confusion in society, it will be reflected in the organization also. It adjusts with changing conditions and is ever growing, for it is the meeting ground of old and new. Still it is temporary, like fencing for a young plant, and there must be provision for retirement. 'It is better to be born in a Church, but dangerous to die in it,' as Swami Vivekananda used to repeat.

The eternal conflict between the individual and the group cannot be completely avoided in religious organizations also. Whenever there is maladjustment, there is disorganization. Hobbes and Mill thought that society was in its very nature inimical to the expressions and development of individuality. But here the self-interest is reduced to the minimum. Still discipline is necessary. It is prompted by the idea of preserving the community. Training is necessary to introduce the individual into the culture of the community and enable him to develop all his innate capacities. It consists in inculcating a spirit of co-operation, accommodation, and sharing, for the fundamental idea of group life is sharing the goods of all types. Egotism being a great enemy to corporate life, is discouraged and the guidance of elders and training by examples are stressed.

VALUE OF RENUNCIATION

Men have been divided broadly into introverts and extroverts. Both the types of people embrace the life of renunciation. The extroverts come out with a missionary zeal. There are other people who are individualistic in their outlook, who follow religious ideas for personal salvation. The objective of the hermits of the middle ages was to deliver the soul from the captivity of the body and the method was asceticism. Buddha and other religious

leaders, however, stressed the middle way. The vow of voluntary poverty was necessary to conquer the instinct of acquisitiveness, chastity to conserve and increase the vital energy and obedience to continue the corporate life. But these hard disciplines could be properly practised and passions subdued only when an aspirant had deep love for God and diverted all his instincts towards Him. Bernard Shaw recognizes this in his *Man and Superman* thus:

Do you think that anything is strong enough to impose oughts on a passion except a stronger passion still?

He only renounces who is discontent with the sense-bound life and seeks fulfilment in a larger life. With the awareness and proximity of a higher life, his sense of values changes. With the awareness of the existence of a higher Reality, his sense of reality too changes. With the change of outlook his behaviour also changes and he may withdraw from the din and bustle of life for the time being, but he comes back with overflowing love and redoubled energy. As Eckhart puts it:

What a man takes in by contemplation, that he pours out in love.

And Romain Rolland explains:

A great 'Introvert' will know at the same time how to be a great 'Extrovert'. Here the example of Vivekananda seems to me to be conclusive.

(*Life and Gospel of Vivekananda*, p. 380)

The main advantage of a monastic life is that there are less of temptations in it. St. Bernard beautifully pictures the merits of this life thus:

A Religious lives more purely, falls more rarely, rises more speedily, walks more cautiously, is bedewed more fre-

quently with heavenly graces, rests more securely, dies more confidently, is purged more quickly, and rewarded more abundantly.

Renunciation is an active virtue. It is not a yoke that is received passively. A monk is not servile in nature. He is obedient because he holds nothing dearer to him than God, because of his loyalty to the cause, because his mind is detached from the things of the world and because he accepts the order of the Sangha as the command of God and because that order is in tune with his conscience. Obedience is not a mechanical one, suppressing the audible murmur. Self-will is overcome by willingly submitting to the suffering, to the elders and to the will of God. And then the aspirant enters into the real monastic spirit which is a spirit of silence, of recollection and of prayer and meditation.

CRITICISM MEANINGLESS

The monastic outlook need not be considered pessimistic. The strong conviction that there is an eternal life with an eternal Being, and the robust optimism that one can realize that One, are quite evident. Sir Sivaswami Aiyar says:

Dissatisfaction with the imperfections of our lot on earth or aspiration to a brighter and happier world does not amount to a negation of the value of life or of the worthwhileness of attempts to ameliorate and improve man's condition here.

(*The Evolution of Hindu morals* p. 169)

Sometimes it is said that monasticism has a very noble ideal, but it is difficult for people to achieve it fully. To this Sivaswami Aiyar may be quoted again:

The ethical progress of a community has to be judged more by the ideals of conduct which it sets before itself than by the extent of the conformity of its members to its ideals.

As Swami Vivekananda explains:

If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand.

There is a tendency nowadays to decry monasticism. It betrays the weakness and jealousy of the critics. The modern fad is to rationalize one's desires, to develop a convenient philosophy of life and to establish that what one does is the best. But any form of austerity or sacrifice has an awe-inspiring quality and the lesser souls feel a sort of inferiority complex before people practising it. This possibly is the reason, if not sheer ignorance, why some people are so much vociferous against this institution. Dr. Radhakrishnan remarks about the critics in the following words:

Those who tell us that asceticism is superfluous, that contemplation is perilous, and the precept 'be perfect' means 'make a success of life and attend if possible to the perishing moment,' do not understand the high destiny of man.

(*Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 114)

We can understand the objections of the ultra-moderns, who want to be free from all moral compunctions arising from the existence of high ideals nearby. We may even appreciate the denunciation by the materialists for the cogency of their theory. But we cannot follow the minds of people who love the higher values, want to maintain a moral standard in the country, are ambitious

to solve the problem of population, are unable to dissolve unemployment, but at the same time cry down the fine ideal of renunciation, sacrifice and self-immolation, which helps in the partial solution of all these problems. If this ideal is to remain in society, there must be a batch of people doing research and specializing in it. As for the existence of unworthy people, well, all human institutions are liable to that. You cannot expect hundred per cent following of a camp, rising as high as the ideal. But the ideal is the pole star, looking at which people should find their way. When we speak of non-violence as an ideal, we do not claim that the instinct of pugnacity has been conquered by every one, or it is ever possible to be sublimated by all and sundry.

One charge of the critics is that the spirit of monasticism withdraws the best people in various spheres of activity. So we see exclusive little communities circumscribing their activity within their families or politicians turning recluses, being fed up with party-politics and detaching from the rest of the world. This charge may or may not be quite correct. Even if it is true, it bespeaks of the weakness of politics without a moral ideal. Moreover, safeguards against such development have been provided by the religious idea of service to fellow-beings as service to God. Further, is it necessary that all members of a society should be anxious to serve in the larger fields? Is it not enough if each one of them creates a better atmosphere in his limited surroundings? Rabindranath Tagore, in a brilliant essay entitled '*Panara anna o ek anna*', sarcastically says that one *anna* of people, anxious to change the world, have already filled it with so much of noise, and if, instead, fifteen *annas* of

people did that, God knows what would be the condition of the world! It must be admitted that the underlying, often undetected, motive of the craze for reforming society is the desire to come into limelight, which fact takes away much of the credit and capacity of the individual concerned.

RENUNCIATION, A SOCIAL IDEAL

The mere existence of the monastic ideal in a society is of great value. By the sight of a group of people, free from the idea of enjoyment and ambitions, other members of the society will imbibe the qualities of discipline, self-control, sacrifice and unselfishness. As Sister Nivedita puts it :

Every advance in human knowledge, every invention, every achievement, almost without exception, throughout the history of humanity, has been gained by those who abandoned the idea of profit for themselves, and who are contented to labour for the profit of mankind. We are too apt, in India, to regard this as an ideal proper to the *sannyasin* only. We have to learn today that there must be no society without its *sannyasins*, and that many social applications have yet to be found for *sannyas*.

(*Religion and Dharma* p. 40)

Though we have discussed the various aspects of religious organization with a special stress on the monastic section of it, the religious life comprises of both monastic and lay people. And the monastic institution is for the good of others. The Indian ideal for a householder is devotion to God and unselfish service to the family and the society. For the *sannyasins*, it is complete dedication and detachment. Both are noble ideals. The core of both is renunciation—renunciation inside for the householder and renunciation both inside and outside for the monks. The social milieu

of India is fast undergoing a total change. The family, which inculcated the religious ideals, is in the melting pot. The religious life in Hindu society is not so organized. Its age-old custodians are in the process of liquidation. Considered in this context, it will be clear how great is the necessity of religious organization in the Hindu society. The householder also must be imbued not only with the ideal of sacrifice and service but also with the idea of discipline and organization. The different groups,

such as Harisabhas, Bhajan Sanghas, etc. which are doing great service in preserving the ideal in the society, must be more well-organized to be of greater use and influence. The society requires a band of people, both lay and monastic, dedicated to Godward view of life and to higher ideals of renunciation and selfless service. Sporadic actions will have little enduring effect. Hence they must be organized. This is an urgent and immediate duty of the religious people of India.

DOES INDIA WISH TO HELP THE WORLD ?

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[In response to our request to contribute an article for the Special Issue Sri C. Rajagopalachari writes the following lines.]

Does India wish to help the world? Does India desire to set a shining example before the world? Do we seek to be really happy?

The only way to achieve all these is the way shown in the Upanishads, in the Gita, in the songs of the seers: the practice of the constant comradeship of Govinda, the best and most reliable of friends, the most for-

giving and the most efficient of all companions. He makes all sorrows into joy and all work into most enjoyable pleasure. Everything with His companionship becomes worship. Let us put all our heart into this effort and realise that we are ever in the company of Govinda as Sri Ramakrishna did and as he taught. This is not just religion. It is politics, it is socialism, it is wisdom, it is Truth.

HINDUISM—ITS CHIEF TENETS

SWAMI AGAMANANDA

The Hindus consider the Vedas, the Sāstras, the Smritis, the Darsanas, the Itihāsas and the Purānas as authoritative records of their religion. But the Rishis have enjoined and the āstikas have accepted the four Vedas alone as the bed-rock and basis of religion. The importance of other records and books mainly depends upon the extent to which they could conform to the four Vedas viz. the Rig, Yajus, Sāma and Atharva.

The Vedas have two phases : Karma-kānda and Jnānakānda. Some believe that there is yet another side known as Upāsanā while others maintain that Upāsanā forms only a part of Karma-kānda. Of these, Jnānakānda is nothing but Vedānta. This is also known as Upanishads. The word 'Upanishad' (upa+ni+sad) is interpreted by Sri Sankara as that which destroys Samsāra and which leads to Brahman. The Karma-kānda deals primarily with rites, rituals, rules of conduct and codes of discipline and prescribes modes and methods of their performance. The purpose of Jnānakānda is to express clearly the tenets of religion and the path of liberation taught in the Karma-kānda in a dilute form.

Many are the Upanishads. Of these, ten are very ancient and Sri Sankara has written commentaries on them. They are Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Māndukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chhāndogya and Brihadāranyaka. In one of the Mantras of the Mundaka Upanishad, all the chief tenets of the religion are briefly narrated. The Mantra is this :—

सत्येन कर्म्यस्तपसा ह्यप आत्मा
सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।

अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो
यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥

Based on these, the following tenets can be briefly summarised :

(i) The supreme object of human life is to gain eternal bliss by destroying misery once for all.

(ii) That supreme bliss and eternal destruction of misery are obtained by realising the Paramātmā, the one without a second.

(iii) Paramātmā is self-effulgent and free from all impurities.

(iv) He is omnipresent and therefore resident in all bodies.

(v) He has been realised by yogis whose mind has been freed from Rajas and Tamas and He can be realised even to-day by such people.

(vi) Truthfulness, concentration, right knowledge (discrimination) and perfect Brahmacharya are essential to attain that stage.

The above-mentioned tenets of Hinduism are all-comprehensive. They vividly point out the ultimate goal of mankind and the ways and means to achieve it. Performance of rites and rituals are only means to cleanse the mind. At one time or other every life is bound to enjoy eternal bliss. It is certain that a cycle of births and deaths will induce every soul to attain that stage. That enjoyment of eternal bliss is Moksha. Moksha can be achieved in one's life-time. The existence of Jivan-muktas, who enjoy perennial peace and bliss in their life-time, is proof positive of Moksha.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA — SAINT AND DEVOTEE

A Reminiscence

K. BALASUBRAMANIA AIYER

I feel it a great privilege and pleasure to give expression to what I have known of Sri Swami Ramakrishnananda. It was during my immature years that I saw Swami Ramakrishnananda, but the remarkable characteristics of the great saint and devotee made an indelible impression on me. It was well known that Sri Swami Vivekananda when he established the Mission here in Madras for the purpose of carrying on his great work, specially selected Swami Ramakrishnananda, as he felt that Swami Ramakrishnananda's personality would impress the people of the South. Swami Vivekananda even went to the extent of saying that an orthodox person would be most suitable. Truly did Swami Ramakrishnananda fulfil the expectations of Swami Vivekananda. Madras received him very warmly. One of his best friends was my father, the late Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyer. As soon as the Swami arrived here, one of the very first persons he saw was my father, who was an ardent admirer of Swami Vivekananda and his great work. He was the Secretary of the Reception Committee which was constituted to celebrate in a grand manner the arrival of Swami Vivekananda from America in his triumphal march from Colombo to Madras. The joy of the citizens of Madras knew no bounds and they gathered in large numbers to give a rousing reception to the Swami. Naturally therefore Swami Ramakrishnananda who was guided in his movements from the very beginning by those two selfless devotees Sri Ramu and Ramanju called on my father to seek his assistance in carrying on his work in Madras. With his characteristic enthusiasm my father, the late Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyer assured him of his whole-hearted support. From that time onwards throughout his stay in Madras Swami Ramakrishnananda used to meet V. Krishnaswami Aiyer frequently and discuss with him

many details about the manner and method of his work. Even though there was great enthusiasm in Madras during the visit of Swami Vivekananda, as often happens in these cases, there was a lull after he left. Owing to the impact of western civilisation and thought, the immediate reaction was an apathy towards our Religion and Culture, and an admiration for all things western. Hence, Swami Ramakrishnananda had to fight hard against this indifference. Madras is generally attracted by eloquent speakers in English but Swami Ramakrishnananda was a man of action and not given to eloquent speeches. This was a handicap for him in the beginning. He lived for many years in a bungalow in the beach which was called 'Ice House.' It was then owned by one Billigiri Iyengar, an Attorney-at-Law who evinced great interest in him. When Swami Vivekananda came to Madras he stayed there. From Ice House in Triplicane Swami Ramakrishnananda used to come to Mylapore for his classes. He was also conducting classes in Triplicane. Not a week would pass without Swami Ramakrishnananda coming to our house, 'Ashrama', especially on Saturdays and Sundays. As Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyer was a very busy lawyer and was often engaged with his clients even on Saturdays and Sundays, Swami Ramakrishnananda used to come inside our house and spend some time with us, children, during the period my father was actively engaged with his clients. It was on those occasions I had the privilege of being accosted and blessed by him. Swami Ramakrishnananda was very fond of children. He used to tell us stories about the incidents in the Ramayana and Mahabharata and of Sri Rama and Krishna. We used to listen to those stories with great attention and avidity. It was thus I began to be impressed by his personality, by his radiant, spiritual face.

In those days conveyance from place to place in Madras was a very difficult affair. We had in those days Madras jutkhas, in which it was very difficult to sit, especially for two or three. One should see the jutkha and then only one would realise the discomfort he would experience in going in those jutkhas. Swami Ramakrishnananda was a bulky person and it was with great difficulty that he used to alight from those jutkhas and get into them. On the whole it was very hard time for the Swami. There was very little financial help from the public of Madras. More and more he used to rely on Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyer for his guidance and assistance. It goes without saying that Sri Ramu and Ramanju were always by his side and rendered all possible help. Swami Ramakrishnananda was a man of intense devotion to the Lord and his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was a person of deep emotion. He was fond of doing Bhajana every day and lose himself entirely in it. I have seen how he would go through all the Paricharyas meticulously, which a Sishya ought to do to his Guru. At night he would gently take the photo of Sri Ramakrishna in his outstretched hands. He would imagine as if he was taking his Guru in his flesh and blood and slowly put him to bed. In the morning he would wake him up and prostrate before him. All the time he was feeling that he was in the presence of his Guru and doing all those acts of service to him. It was an inspiration for us young people to see him do all these things.

Swami Ramakrishnananda was well versed in our Sastras. He was able to instil in the minds of his listeners and Sishyas the religious spirit and respect for our Religion. He was fully alive to the modern trends of thought and to the scientific spirit of the age. He was therefore able to dispel many doubts in the minds of his listeners by his rational and scientific explanations. He worked hard and his whole life was one of intense devotion and spirituality. But, alas! his health was being undermined by the dire disease Diabetes, which in the beginning of

the 20th Century, in the absence of Insulin and other medicines claimed many victims from the educated men including my father. It is a curious coincidence about which I have often reflected that Swami Ramakrishnananda and my father both passed away in the latter part of 1911. Some months previously Swami Ramakrishnananda left Madras and went to Calcutta. My father would constantly enquire about his health and I well remember the touching scene when Sri Ramu had a long conversation with my father before he left for Calcutta to see the Swami there. My father with great emotion sent help and medicine to Swami Ramakrishnananda. He asked Sri Ramu earnestly to stay in Calcutta for sometime and look after the health of the Swami. Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyer was overwhelmed with grief when he heard of the passing away of Swami Ramakrishnananda in August 1911.

On one occasion when Baba Bharati came to Madras from America, my father sent me to accompany Baba Bharati during his visit to Swami Ramakrishnananda in the Mission. The meeting of the two was very impressive. They embraced each other and each went into an ecstatic mood. There was a Bhajana arranged in the Mission Quarters and Baba Bharati sang songs of Chaitanya. Tears of joy rolled from the eyes of Swami Ramakrishnananda. Though I was a young man and was not able to understand fully the significance of them, I was impressed with the sincerity of the two souls. This was in 1907.

Had it not been for the unselfish and hard work of Swami Ramakrishnananda and the intense devotion which he exhibited to his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Ramakrishna Mission would not have taken such deep root in Madras as it has done now. All honour and glory to the Swami.

I consider myself truly blessed that I should have had the good fortune of having met the Swami in my young days and the privilege of being patted on my back by his holy hands.

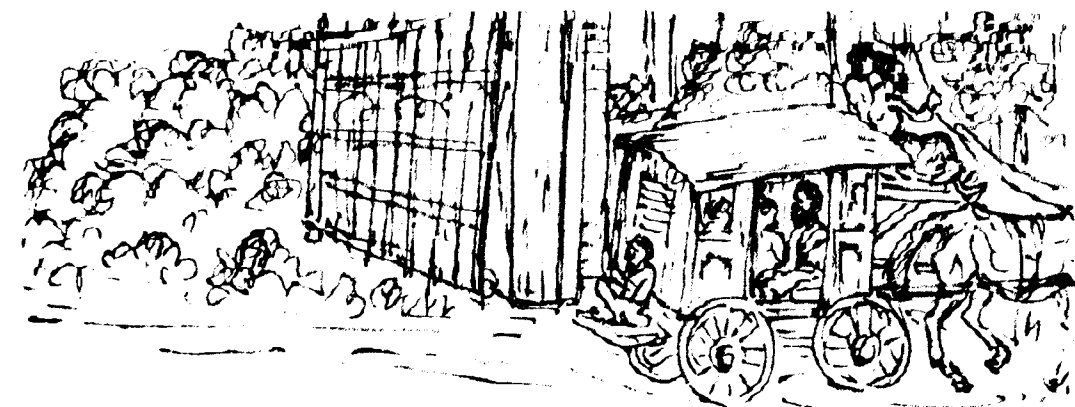
SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AN ARTIST'S STUDY

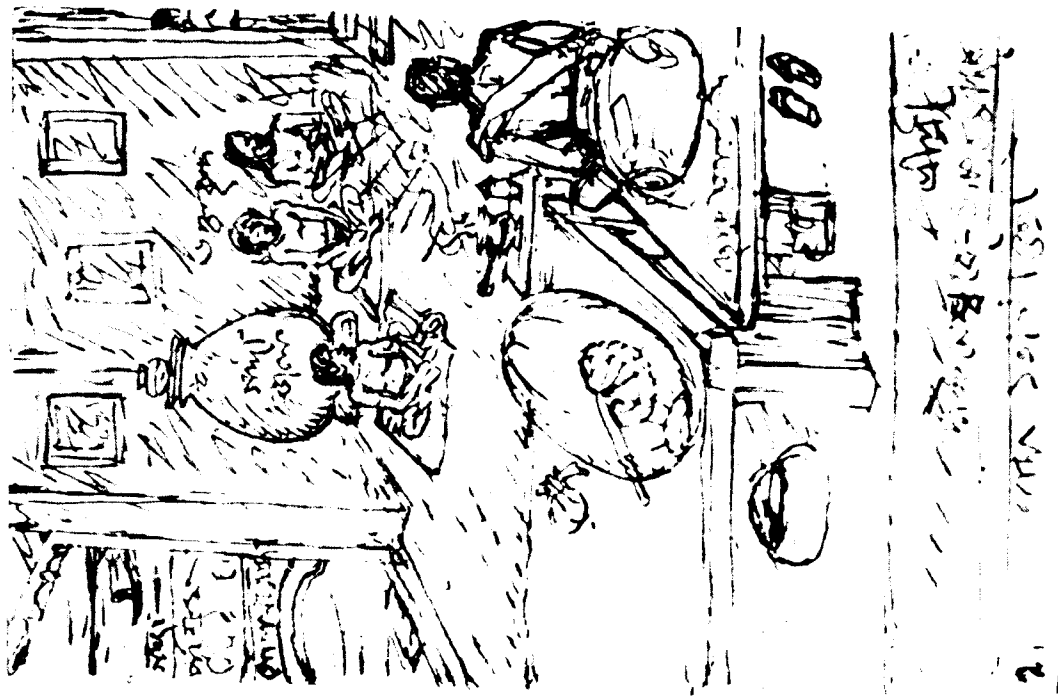
NANDALAL BOSE



SRI RAMAKRISHNA STANDING ON THE BANK OF THE GANGES.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN A CARRIAGE ON THE WAY TO CALCUTTA.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA AT DAKSHINESWAR.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA — DANCING IN A DIVINE MOOD.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN PANCHAVATI.



THE PARABLE OF POUNDING RICE KEEPING THE MIND ON THE HUSKING MACHINE



SRI SARADA DEVI — WITH EIGHT DIVINE COMPANIONS AT KAMARPUKUR.



SRI SARADA DEVI REQUESTING THE 'DACOIT FATHER'.



8 *gopala's mother*

GOPALA'S MOTHER WITH THE DIVINE CHILD.



9

GOPALA'S MOTHER WITH GOPALA ON HER BREAST
RUSHING TO DAKSHINESWAR.

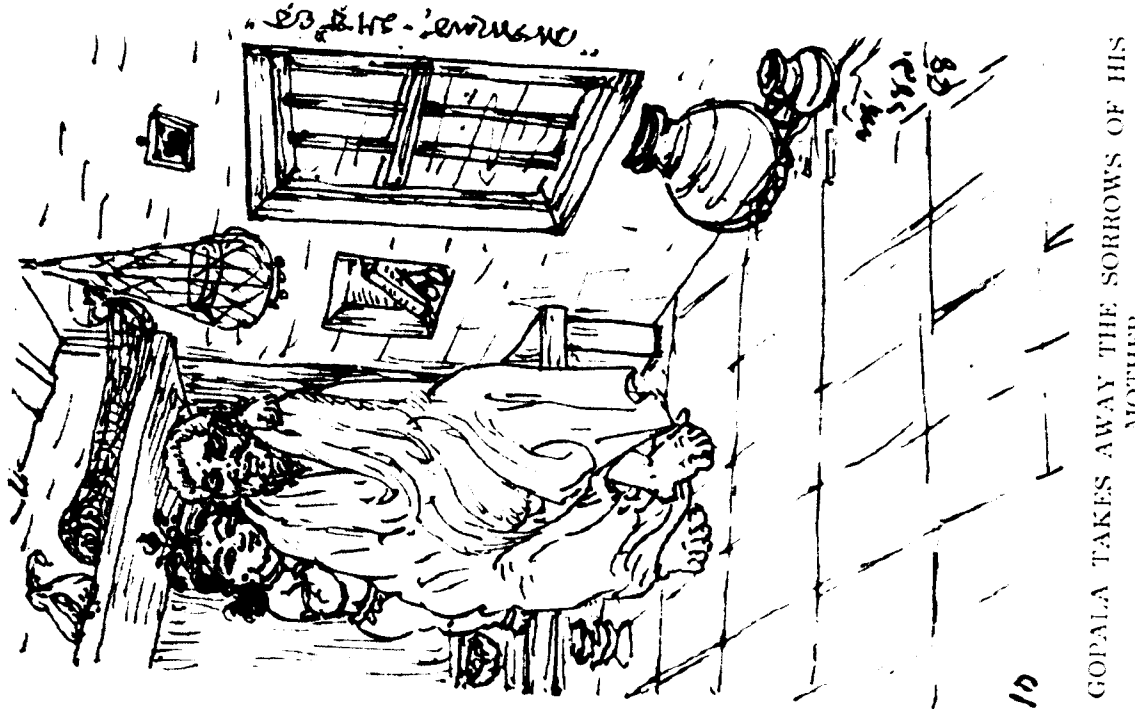
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND ART

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Writing of the poet Rabindranath Tagore, Masti Venkatesa Aiyengar, the great Kannada writer expressed in significant words : 'At his best he (poet) speaks not only for his art but for all art, and not for art only but for philosophy and religion, for economics and sociology, for history and science. He is not lost in any of them, yet each has its place in him'. Indeed, no truer statement, born of a fine understanding of genuine poetry and thought, has escaped any one else. Perhaps, we can only add that in this great country of wonderful poetic tradition, it is but natural for any one, imbued with the culture of our forefathers, to have given such utterance. For there is a belief that a poet is a *Krānta darshee* (कविः क्रान्तदर्शी) meaning, a poet is one of penetrating insight or comprehensive vision. Sometimes a poet has been assigned an honoured place equal with that of a *smṛiti-kāra*. Thus Kalidasa was acclaimed as more than a law-giver. Evidently the poet is a fine combination of all that spiritual experience can provide any one, and naturally too a saint becomes in this country easily a poet just as poet or artist turns into a philosopher and a highly-evolved soul.

No surprise then that Swami Vivekananda with his extraordinary power of intellect and range of studies should have, in moments of inspiration, expressed opinions which really stagger minds of ordinary capacity by their innate sense of values and unconventional yet highly informed quality. What required an Anand K. Coomaraswamy to take some years to unravel to Indians the intrinsic worth of their own Art, Swami Vivekananda seems to have, with rare intuition, suggested in a sentence or two. Well, Indian Art by itself has baffled many of our countrymen who do not have turned aliens in their very homes. The physical eye of the observer likes usu-

ally to gaze at the replica of scenes and sights around on the canvas. Hardly it ever occurs to any one that art has to interpret life and not merely imitate nature. Further nature being infinite cannot be reproduced by man, however much he may develop his faculties of observation and imitation. According to Indian aestheticians the function of art is to idealize life, interpret it so carefully that the enjoyer of beauty (सहृदय) does not stop with merely appreciating things which his eye or sense has been accustomed to notice in life and nature around, but is made to plunge into the deeper meanings of what hitherto he has mistaken to be quite unworthy of penetration. As in poetry and literature, so in painting, sculpture and music the mere physical form alone may not satisfy the real Rasika but something more of abiding value and purport ; which can fill his soul and replenish his inner stirrings. Indeed, it will become so very pressing upon him that he will eschew all conformities to external vision as but ephemeral and strain his intellect to catch something elusive but which he reckons as the Real, which all Art, all philosophy, and all science have been striving so far to reach. In more than one essay of his, Dr Anand K. Coomaraswamy has reiterated that, 'Religion and Art are thus names for one and the same experience—an intuition of reality and of identity'. This is no doubt typically a Hindu view of Art. Still, stray individuals in countries of much less spiritualised outlook have opined similarly. It shows, therefore, that human experience everywhere must in its final evaluation of things reach the same goal. Only in India there has been a greater concentration of thought and reasoning on these subjects and hence more systematised thought has developed making it thereby easier for us to get into the spirit of it. Thinking minds of the West have also found out the kernel of



GOPALA TAKES AWAY THE SORROWS OF HIS MOTHER



GOPALA COLLECTS WOOD WITH HIS MOTHER

the function of Art. For instance Margot Asquith, the astute wife of the late Lord Oxford, in her *Lay Sermons*, said somewhat trenchantly that copying nature is not the aim of Art and if at all it should copy nature let it copy nature in not copying anything.

Swami Vivekananda casually, in one of his lectures, gave expression to profound views pertaining to art. He said: 'The secret of Greek Art is its imitation of Nature even to the minute details: whereas the secret of Indian Art is to represent the ideal. The energy of the Greek painter is spent in perhaps painting a piece of flesh, and he is so successful that a dog is deluded into taking it to be a real bit of meat and so goes to bite it. Now, what glory is there in merely imitating nature? Why not place an actual bit of flesh before the dog?'. According to him art must be in touch with nature and yet be above nature. In other words, art should not depart from certain norms of physical objectivity, yet should retain within itself enough to feed the soul of the on-looker. Developing the thought the Swami would go on to the subject of architecture and draw a difference between architecture and an ordinary building. While the former expresses an idea, the latter is merely a structure built on economic principles. While the one will stimulate thought by its very proportion and design, the other can only impress people by its convenience and utility. From this and various other instances it could be said without fear of gainsaying that art to the Swami meant more than the physical contents. Rather, as suggestion in poetry or literature makes for its primary distinction from mere exercise in writing, so does an interpretation of life by art convey a real purpose or function of its existence.

Swami Vivekananda has written much which can compare favourably with the best writing known to the modern world. His aim, as in the classics, was to attempt through language expression of the soul.

The Indian aestheticians have always considered poetry and literature to enshrine the soul. Mere words stacked together never appealed to them, despite stylists having prospered a good deal. Having considered Patanjali's *Mahābhāṣya* as the model for best prose in Sanskrit, the Swami cannot himself resist richness of style which is the domain of art. In a beautifully worded letter in Sanskrit addressed to a disciple, Saratchandra, in the concluding lines of invocation for God's blessings on him, he has employed a series of epithets which apart from their utter sincerity create a finished sense of rhythm distinguishing the disciplined stylist from the novice at the art.

सैव सर्ववैषम्यसाम्यकरी भवव्याधिनीरुजकरी
प्रपञ्चावश्यम्भाव्यत्रिनापहरणकरी सर्ववस्तुस्वरूप-
प्रकाशकरी मायाध्वान्तविध्वंसकरी आद्यहस्तम्ब-
पर्यन्तस्वात्मरूपप्रकटनकरी प्रेमानुभूतिर्विराग्य-
रूपा भवतु ते ।

(S. V. Works V. 101)

Poems of the Swami reveal a sense of the soul-power which generally characterises all his utterances. Though there is no deliberate attempt at mellifluousness, still his winged words lift us with such lightness that we cannot but confound them with the work of a veritable poet. The lines to a Violet—a mere flower, wrings our hearts. Let us to his verse:

What though thy bed the frozen earth,
Thy cloak the chilling blast;
What though no mate to cheer thy path,
Thy fragrance strewed in vain;
What though if love itself doth fail
Thy fragrance strewed in vain;
What though if bad o'er good prevail,
And vice o'er virtue reign;

Change not thy nature, gentle bloom,
Thou violet, sweet and pure,
But ever pour thy sweet perfume
Unasked, unstinted, sure!

No comment is needed to commend these exquisite lines where words are wedded to thought of an ever increasing freshness. The

bloom, the perfume, the shedding of its aroma unasked—everything denotes what insight of a poet he has treasured within. Or was it the peak of his Advaitic experience that has made him recognise the service of the flower even as he would have done of a great reformer? Whatever it be, the lines elevate the mind that peruses them by their plaintive sweetness and tender thought—marks of true poetry.

Instances can be multiplied of the Swami's capacity to dower humanity with lines of authentic poetry from the fathomless depths of his soul. Still space forbids any such elaboration, especially when a short poem or two will easily serve our purpose. His constant bringing in of the analogy, to spiritual awakening of the soul, of a mass of roses blooming with the falling of the dew at night, unseen and unheard, is typical of a highly surcharged heart that takes not much effort to draw a simile or analogy to human situations from the sister realm of nature, thereby reminding us as well of the oneness of experience everywhere in God's creation. In short the Swami's religion and poetry are the same experiences of his soul. It is another proof of the age-long concept in our Land of the oneness of all experiences so long as they are closely knit to the soul.

Simplicity is the secret of all great writing, and the Swami has many a time harped on it to the extent of even decrying stylistic effects in writings achieved by some of our great classical authors in Sanskrit. But there can be no gainsaying the fact that if language tries to become fold upon fold of literary dressing to the limit of hiding

thought and even preventing the natural charms of its appeal, then certainly the death-knell to true literature has been sounded.

The efficacy of language bearing us the power and potentiality of the writer or speaker really depends in a great measure on its utter simplicity. If Gandhiji's words strike us often as some of the sayings enshrined in the Upanishads, the Swami's no doubt lash us to a wider awakening than ever achieved by the solemn yet stimulating exhortations of the Rigveda. Both of them spoke from the bottom of their spiritual experience and both attracted a vast concourse of humanity by their very self-integration. In both, language sought little of further aids than necessary for conveying the depth of soul.

Art to be convincing must secure economy of medium. Whether it be words, whether it be colours, whether it be *Sangatis* in music, whether it be working of minutiae in stone—they have all the same objectivity of vivifying the impression of the contents. But if elaboration becomes the main pre-occupation of the artist, to that extent his art suffers. However much sometimes popular acclamation may drown the sure but art-informed voice of the Rasika, yet in the long run, it is his judgment that will prevail over even years of accumulated popularity. If the Swami's intellect perceived of the genuine source of power as consisting in the restraint exerted over emotions and transmuting them into rarer types of art expression, we have only to bow our heads in reverence to his mastermind.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION—CHRISTIAN AND BUDDHIST

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

Over half of the world population is either Buddhist or Christian. This fact of the majority of mankind owing allegiance to Buddha or Christ is important not only historically, but more so psychologically, ethically and spiritually. Numerical strength, certainly, is not all; but there is truth behind the number not in democratic elections only, but in religious organisations also. *Vox populi, cor Dei*.

Asia predominantly is Hindu-Buddhist, while Europe is Christian. As Buddhism is the heart-beat and fulfilment of Hinduism, so Christianity is the crowning pearl of the best in Judaism, Greek culture and Roman law. Nevertheless, the proposition that Buddhism stands in the same relationship with Hinduism as does Christianity to Judaism is incorrect. Hinduism, certainly, is not one religion; it is the Religion underlying all religions, the bed-rock of a rich variety of religious experiences and realizations, sects and groups, religious philosophies ranging from the Charvaka atheistic materialism to the Advaita Vedanta, theism, polytheism and animism, all sheltering under the hospitable wings of Hinduism. Even Buddha is included in the *dasavataras* or ten incarnations of Hindu pantheon. This is in sharp contrast to the stern monochord of ethical monotheism of the Jews whose religion was race-bound, nationalistic and rigid. It was Christianity that broke the doors of the Israel to the Gentiles through its universal truths, its great receptivity and assimilating power, synthesising what was perennial in Judaism with eternal verities enshrined in the civilization of Greece, Rome and other nations where the Christian Gospel reached.

Christianity emerged as a distinct religion cutting asunder the umbilical cord that once

tied it to the Jewish religion. Buddhism also became a clearly distinct religion, specially when it left the frontiers of India and invaded the colourful continent of Asia.

Buddhism and Christianity, the two largest religious organisations of history, are fundamentally and essentially different, nay opposed to each other in their broad approach towards life, though not so much in their philosophies and ethico-religious evaluations. The alleged similarities between the lives of Buddha and Christ and their respective teachings are more on the surface layers than in deeper roots.

The most fundamental and cherished idea of God of Christians is either denied or ignored in Buddhism. The God of Christians is a personal God at once transcendent and immanent, transcendent as the Prime Cause of all, immanent as the ocean in which the whole creation 'lives, moves and has its being'. Buddhism denies such a personal God both in the theistic faith and the trinitarian sense. Nevertheless, Buddhism admits the Absolute and the Permanent beyond all the relative and impermanent beings and becomings. Buddha says:

"There is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed. If there were not this Unborn, this Unoriginated, this Uncreated, this Unformed, escape from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed would be impossible. But since there is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed, therefore is escape possible from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed".

— UDANA. VIII. 3.

It is, therefore, incorrect to say that Buddhism has sealed up everything in imper-

without a second — *ekamevaadvitiam* — is the common patrimony of Buddhist, Vedantic and Christian philosophies. Strangely enough, there are fundamental similarities between Buddhism and Christianity, if we consider them as philosophies and not as religions. Philosophy is the product of brains, while religion springs from the heart. Philosophy speculates about the Absolute and the relative, inquires into the whence and whither of human existence, teaches resignation and imperturbability; but religion brings in joy, enthusiasm, zeal, fire, love. As the mind and heart of man are integrated in a bigger whole called human personality, it is but natural that philosophy should trespass its limits and enter the field of religion and vice versa, building up religious philosophies and philosophical religions wherein differences between systems are narrowed down and bridges built between apparently unbridgeable gulfs.

It is through the invasion of philosophical brains and religious hearts into the domain of each other that created fundamental similarities between Buddhism and Christianity from what were once basic differences and even oppositions between the original Christianity of Jesus Christ and the primitive Buddhism as it emerged out pure from the heart of Buddha. It is in this way that we come across so many similarities in cult, rites, philosophies and religious organisations between the Mahayana type of Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. I have lived in a Tibetan Lamaist monastery and it was a revelation to me to know the world of similarity between Catholic monastic life and Buddhist Mahayana practices. Yet, keener minds and historic sense can still detect basic, essential differences too between the two religious organisations, differences that mould the lives of Buddhist Bodhisattvas and Christian saints.

One such fundamental difference, after the idea of God, is the pathway leading man up to the peaks of spiritual perfection. In Christian religion of all shades and sects,

stretching from Roman Catholicism to the extreme leftist Non-Conformist group of Protestantism, salvation comes through the grace of God, through the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, the Saviour. In Buddhism, no god is held responsible for either man's sins or his virtues, his salvation or perdition. Each man is held to be responsible for his life, each captain of his own soul, the architect of his own destiny. In Buddhism no outside god or saviour purifies. Only self-effort and self-enlightenment lead man to the path of liberation, to nirvana, which, certainly, is not the blowing out of self, but of selfishness, not of existence, but of isolated individuality. Says Buddha:

"By oneself the evil is done; by oneself one suffers. By oneself is left evil undone; by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself; no one can purify another".

— DHAMMAPADA, 163.

This bold auto-redemptive character of Buddhism reaches its peak when Buddha said: 'Not even a god can change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself'. — Dhammapada, 105. Here is the individual responsibility to make or mar his future. He is not a helpless victim of the crushing dead weight of the universe, of the cosmic law of *karma* or cause-effect link in the phenomenal world. He can undo his past *karma*, he can terminate the flow of karmic determinism, and end the cycle of births and deaths, if he will. But he must pay the price for it, and that is death of lower self, ego that creates the illusion of 'I' and 'mine', and let thereby his higher Self awake from slumber through enlightenment, *Bodhi*, through the realisation of the ceaseless flow of becomings and grasping on to the timeless eternity of the 'Unborn, Unoriginated and Uncreated and Unformed'. All the self-efforts, self-control and self-realization described in the Pitakas are but means to reach the Goal.

Contrasted to this is the Christian concept of an individual soul struggling to conquer

lower passions through both God's grace and self-effort. Hence the classical saying of St. Bernard: 'Work out your salvation as though everything depended upon your efforts, but pray as though everything depended on God'. Self-effort is as much part of Christian view of life as in Buddhism. But Christianity goes still beyond and looks to God, the Provident Father and Sanctifier of souls, to come to his aid, a point which to this day is opposed by the Hinayana Buddhists, but accepted and developed by the Tibetan Lamaists. Theravadins have no God and prayer which are essential to Christianity.

Before we come to the organisational life of these two great historical religions, there is one more point which we should dwell upon, and that is the concept of soul in Buddhism and Christianity. Christianity has inherited from Judaism and Greek thought an idea so predominant in Christian religion and Christian civilization, the idea of personality, while in Buddhism the dominant note is that of amorphous impersonalism, of 'confection' in the place of soul conceived as a permanent individual entity, preserving its inner core and unity of being and identity of existence amidst the changing phases and flowing streams of impermanent flux. In Buddhism the Nirvanic bliss is not for the individual person. In Vishuddhi Magga (XVI) we read:

'Mere suffering exists, no sufferer is found.

The deed is, but no doer of the deed is there.

Nirvana is, but not the man that enters it.

The Path is, but no traveller on it is seen'.

But in Christianity the traveller is a personality; the one who reaches God, the harbour of peace and source of Bliss, is also a person.

Deep and basic though the differences be between Buddhism and Christianity as sys-

tems of philosophy and religion, from the organisational side we can notice kindred spirit in them. The most permanent and universal meeting ground between Buddhism and Christianity is the monastic organisation in these two great religions, the army of monks and nuns who aspire after religious perfection, and, at the same time, form the rock-bottom and bulwark of the Buddhist and Christian religious organisations. Monasticism in both Buddhism and Christianity is based on the triple vow of *aparigraha*, non-possession or voluntary poverty, *brahmacharya* or chastity to the point of complete continence and virginity, and *dharma* or obedience to the rule of spiritual perfection.

Atheistic Theravada monks and theistic Catholic monks have this in common, their religious vows. Nothing is more interesting for a student of monasticism than the same focussing point of spiritual realization which a genuine Buddhist monk and a Christian friar experience as they tread along the hard and thorny path of spiritual perfection. The joy, peace and inward happiness which monks enjoy, whether they belong to the atheistic branch of Buddhism, monistic branch of Hinduism or theistic faith of Christianity is basically the same. This is a clear proof that the divergence in the ideological and doctrinal fields between Buddhism and Christianity is due to different angles of vision of and approach towards the self-same Reality which in Buddhism is realized through the all-comprehensive term *Dharma*, while in Christianity through the love of God.

Just as Buddhism, taking its birth from the bosom of Hinduism, retained, accepted or re-interpreted some of the cardinal tenets of its parent religion, such concepts as *samsara*, *karma*, *atman*, *moksha* or *Nirvana*, so Christianity, springing fresh from the bosom of Judaism, accepted the basic tenets of its mother-religion, or gave them a new interpretation that would throw open the doors of the kingdom of God to the incoming flocks

from Greece, Rome and the rest of the wide world. There is no doubt that both the religions expanded their conquests and consolidated their position through a large degree of give-and-take policy, enriching thereby the national culture and also making the gospel of both Buddha and Christ firmly rooted in the soil. In the Hinayana countries like Ceylon, Burma and Thailand purer Buddhism, nearer to the teachings of Buddha — has been preserved almost at the expense of their national culture, while in the Mahayana countries like Tibet, China and Japan Buddhism triumphed through its vital assimilation of Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism and other currents of national culture. The power-house or lighthouse that preserves the cultural heritage of Buddhism in these countries and then, through missionary efforts, launches *Dharma* into virgin lands and pastures new, is always monasticism, those battalions of monks and nuns of common life, renunciation and detachment, who imbued with the ideals of their Founder and with power born of renunciation, sound the trumpet call of religion and lead many to the joy, peace and happiness of *Dharma*.

Buddhism is analytic and positivistic. Rhys Davids used a hyperbolic expression when he said that Buddha was August Comte born two thousand years earlier. But, unlike the modern Freudian psychoanalysts, Buddhism is not merely analytic and positivistic. It is synthetic and metaphysical too. If, analytically and positivistically, all the component things, all life is sorrow or *duhkha*, synthetically and philosophically

Buddhism points out the way to positive happiness, to ineffable nirvanic bliss. Its idea of *karuna*, *maitri*, love in the most dynamic and practical sense, belongs to the positive side of Buddhism. Similarly, in Christianity, renunciation of self, symbolised by the words: 'carrying of the Cross' and 'crucifixion of the flesh', is the negative side, while resurrection or positive triumph of the spirit over the tyranny of matter, of the soul over the body, of God over man, is the positive side of the Christian way of living. Buddhist *Duhkha* and Christian idea of the original sin have much the common roots.

The world is growingly becoming chaotic, cynical and fear-hunted. The atomic missiles and hydrogen bombs are hanging on the war-smitten mankind like the drawn-out sword of Mammon. Moral values are being ignored in politics and economics. At this juncture, religions, far from creating communal walls and antagonism, should pool their resources and form a united front in raising the moral tone of social life and bestowing the gospel of inward peace, spiritual joy and God-vision. As one who lived and worked with Christian monks for two decades and with Hindu-Buddhist monks for over a decade, I feel in duty bound to say that we have now to work hand in glove and make common cause with Buddhists, Christians and Hindus and members of other religions, breaking barriers and building bridges between them. This is the need of the hour.

There is no way, none whatsoever, to the solution of the profound mystery of this life except through renunciation. Renunciation, renunciation and renunciation. Let this be the one motto of your lives. For men, all things on earth are infected with fear. *Vairagya* alone constitutes fearlessness.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

LIFE IN A BUDDHIST MONASTERY

VEN. B. ANANDA MAITREYA NAYAKA THERO

Since the days of the Buddha, monastic customs and traditions have been preserved in all Buddhist countries where Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism are in vogue. Except for some minor differences, almost the same religious tradition is noticeable in both these schools of thought.

In this article I shall explain a few customs and traditions found in the Theravada Monasteries of Ceylon. Although in recent times there has been a fall from the high religious traditions of the past, signs of revival are clearly noticeable at the present day. Although these religious customs are not fully observed in certain temples in Colombo and some other towns, they are carefully preserved and kept alive in the provincial monasteries by monks who regularly congregate for the purpose.

After a person is ordained a monk he is taught the daily routine of a monk's life together with the customs that one should follow. According to this routine a monk should rise at dawn and attend to his morning ablutions. This done, he should sweep and clean the precincts of the Shrine Room, the Bo-tree and the monks' living quarters. He should then offer flowers and kindle oil lamps before the shrine of the Buddha and the Bo-tree. He then takes refuge in the Triple Gem and meditates on the Qualities of the Buddha, on Loving Kindness, on the Loathsomeness of the Body, and on Death.

The novice should next perform his duties towards his teachers and preceptors by attending on them. Later in the morning he should either go on his begging round or partake of the meal prepared in the alms-hall. After the breakfast he engages in study or further meditation. He continues this study or meditation or both till it is time

to go abegging for the noon-meal. At the end of which he washes his bowl, and having paid obeisance to the Triple Gem and his teachers, he rests awhile. He commences the afternoon session with his studies or religious contemplation. In the evening the novice should prepare flowers for offering, sweep and clean the premises and attend on his teachers' requirements. After this he pays his respects to the Buddha, the Bo-tree and the Dagoba, takes refuge in the Triple Gem and chants Pirith.¹ Towards night fall he recites from memory the stanzas he has learnt by rote. After this he studies or meditates till mid-night. This is the normal routine of a monk's life practised from day to day in the Theravada monasteries in Ceylon.

Somewhat different is the routine followed in monasteries devoted entirely to meditation. The forest hermitage of Dimbulagala was once the foremost centre of Meditation in Ceylon. It was destroyed by King Rajasinghe of Sootawake four centuries ago. Later on with the arrival of the Siamese monks many village and forest hermitages were established, all over Ceylon. The monastery of Sangaruvanketa (Hanguranketa) was for a long time a flourishing centre of meditation. Subsequently the other forest hermitages were established at Kirinda, Batuvita, Mihintale, Melakada and Kalugala etc.

Today the number of monasteries of this kind are increasing more rapidly than during the last centuries.

1. Pirith - Pali, Paritta, Sanskrit, Paritra or Paritrana is a selection of the Buddha's sermons and some later compositions used as a protection from evils, ward runes quite similar to 'Kavacas' or Devastotras of Hindus.

In recent times many hermitages were established by the Burmese monk U. Sujatha. The most developed meditation centre is situated at Kanduboda nearly 20 miles from Colombo. An examination of this centre will reveal the nature of an ideal centre of Buddhist meditation. It is located in a spacious coconut estate. A section is for female devotees too and the entire hermitage is well provided with separate hermit-cells, walks for meditation, alms-houses and bathing places. In this centre the way of Mindfulness is the form of meditation practised. Every day groups of devotees from all over Ceylon assemble and supply alms. These devotees arrive at the hermitage on the previous day and listen to the advice of the meditation masters and take part in the meditation themselves. On the following day they supply the morning and the noon meals. When this group leaves in the afternoon, another group takes up its place. The daily routine observed in this hermitage is as follows.

At midnight the hermits go to beds and after three hours' sleep they commence their meditation. At 5 a.m. they take their bowls and proceed towards the alms-house with mind possessed. They take their seat in the alms-house according to their seniority. The most senior monk delivers a discourse to the assembly, either before or after the meal. After the meal the hermits return as they

came and rest for a short while in their cells. At 6 a.m. they all assemble in the meditation hall and meditate for an hour at least. This same group-meditation is practised at 12 noon and at 6 p.m. in a seated posture. The rest of the time is spent individually in walking or seated meditation. Every evening between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. the hermits meet their teachers and detail their experiences and clarify their difficulties. This course of mindfulness is practised during the whole period of meditation.

The preliminary result expected from this course of meditation is the Entrance to the Holy Path. The hermit who succeeds in this achievement leaves the hermitage to continue his meditations alone, for he realizes that further achievements depend on himself only. A few hermits remain till the First-stage of the Path is reached. Many leave the hermitage before the course is complete. Once or twice a week a sermon is delivered to all the hermits by a master of meditation in order to encourage their further meditation. To a special assembly of the developed hermits the meditation master delivers a discourse detailing the stages of their mind-development. This discourse is intended only for those hermits who have advanced towards the goal of Buddhist meditation. Such courses of meditations as these are practised in many other similar centres all over Ceylon.

For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, is the sanniyasin born. His life is all vain, indeed who, embracing sanniyasa, forgets this ideal. The sanniyasin, verily, is born into this world to lay down his life for others, to stop the bitter cries of men, to wipe the tears of the widow, to bring peace to the soul of the bereaved mother, to equip the ignorant masses for the struggle for existence, to accomplish the secular and spiritual well-being of all through the diffusion of spiritual teachings and to arouse the sleeping lion of Brahman in all by throwing in the light of knowledge.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

MATHS IN SOUTH INDIA

[EDITORIAL NOTE :

(a) *A plea for research* : The monastic Orders were brought to the limelight by some Western scholars, mostly of the British bureaucracy in India, for these Orders played an important part in history. But sometimes their understanding of the tradition was meagre or the motive questionable. However, they gave a wealth of information regarding the Maths. Some of their books have been translated or their summaries brought out in Indian languages also. Recently Prof. Ghurye of Bombay has brought out a book entitled *Indian Sadhus*. This book gives much information about North Indian Orders. In South India, he says, there were few Orders as such. Most of the Ashramas are self-contained. But they have common allegiance to a particular religious philosophy or saint and have a unanimity. Hence they satisfy the criterion of an Order in the Indian pattern. Sringeri is the original source of a large number of monastic Orders. The Saiva Maths are interconnected and sprang more or less from the same source. The Lingayat Maths are well organized social service institutions and have great hold upon their followers. The Vaishnava Maths in the South, unlike their counterparts in the North, do not have many monks, even though they give an important place and great respect to individual Mathadhispatis.

Almost all the saints who regenerated India were monks and their message is still a potent force moulding the lives of the inhabitants of this country. It is necessary to know about the saints and their message as also the vehicles through which that message is conveyed. But we must approach them with a real perspective. Some study on modern lines is being made about the saints and their teachings. But very little has been done about the monastic Orders. Abundant material is lying for discovery. Clearly there is a great scope here for research. While

trying to gather articles and materials regarding the Maths, we have the feeling that much remains unrecorded. It is necessary that a few scholars should devote some time and energy doing research on them and writing some authoritative book. A similar book should be written on temples also. Some of the Maths and temples make endowments for various causes. We hope one or two such endowments will be made for encouraging research about the Maths and temples. At least, each one of these institutions should bring out its history and activities as exhaustively as possible, making the task of the future historians easy.

(b) *About this series* : Of late, there has been a veritable crusade from some quarters against the ancient religious Maths. It is alleged that the Maths have outlived their age and that they are an anachronism. This idea is the outcome of total ignorance. The purpose of these articles on ancient Maths and their activities is to make the public familiar with them. It will be clear from this study that the allegation against them is uncalled for : the Maths have been taking lively interest in public affairs, particularly in the field of religious and secular education. This possibly is for the first time in recent days that current information about almost all the ancient Maths in South India has been brought together.

We like to acknowledge gratefully the help rendered by the representatives of the various Maths and also by the Commissioner for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, Madras and the Commissioner for Charitable Endowments, Mysore. Sri T. S. Raghavan has taken keen interest in gathering materials for this series. We have tried to make the articles as authentic as possible. Most of the writers of these articles are themselves either devotees of the Maths concerned or intimately connected with them.

Though much could be written about each of the Maths, we have restricted our scope. The different honorific titles or particular terms etc., which should invariably be used in connection with holy personages and rituals have been lessened for easy reading and for bringing about uniformity. To include the greatest amount of information about the institutions within a limited space and for other obvious reasons, we had to restrict the information about the present pontiffs. But in some cases, the personalities far outweigh the institutions, and the activities revolve round them and so more information was given about them. This does not mean that others had less influence or were less active but it means that their institutions had more information for the report.

We have grouped the Maths in accordance with their philosophical persuasion. Four important Saivite Maths following the Saiva Siddhanta (viz. Dharmapuram, Tirupananthal, Tiruvavaduthurai and Tiruvannamalai-Kunnakkudi-Adhinam Maths) are dealt with first. The Lingayat Maths following the Karnataka variety of Saivism, come next. The Maths of Udipi are followers of the Dvaita system of Sri Madhva. The Ahobila, Parakala, Melkote and Vanamamalai Maths belong to the Visishtadvaita School of Sri Ramanuja. While Ahobila Math is the central one to the Vadakalai sect of Sri Vaishnavism, the Vanamamalai Math is that of the Tenkalai sect. Sringeri and Kanchi Maths follow the Advaita system and are connected with Sri Sankara. The Siddharudha Swami Math is a rich and influential Vedanta Math of North Karnataka, centred round a holy man. One big Ashrama in Andhra having many branches and following the Advaita doctrine, more or less, has also been treated. The last two will give an idea how the individual Maths of recent origin function. The article on Maths in Madras City, however, tries to report about all important monastic institutions. Two titles (Udipi and Melkote) have been twice

treated causing a little overlapping. But as the latter articles have some new information, we have retained them.

One thing perhaps should be made clear. Math in North India means a monastery, and Ashrama also normally means that, though the latter term is loosely used for all religious houses. Math in South India, however, means also the religious houses and temples owned by the monasteries. And they are too many. That is why we had to restrict our scope mainly to monasteries or institutions managed by monks. Many smaller monasteries with one or two sadhus could not be noticed for lack of exhaustive information. But it must be admitted that these smaller institutions spread over in every nook and corner of the country have real personal contact with the people. So they do the vital spiritual service to the people at large. Here again there is enough scope for research. We hope these articles will encourage some individuals and institutions to take up the work in an elaborate scale requiring enough funds.

(c) *Our contributors on the Maths* : Sri T. S. Raghavan, M.A., has visited most of the Maths about which he writes. His articles on the Saiva Siddhanta Maths are mainly based on the information received from the Maths concerned.

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SAIVA SIDDHANTA MATHS

T. S. RAGHAVAN

DHARMAPURAM ADHINAM

Dharmapuram Adhinam is situated at Mayuram in Tanjore District. This Adhinam propagates orthodox Saiva Siddhanta philosophy or what is called the Suddhadvaita school of Saiva Siddhanta. It subscribes to the existence of three eternal entities, Pati (lord), Pasu (soul) and Pasa (bondage). 'Pati is the supreme king, Pasu is the individual soul, which is bound by Pasa or the obstructive principle of ignorance which hinders the soul from realising Pati.' 'The terms Pati, Pasu and Pasa are relics of vedic ritual. Pati is the Lord of the sacrifice. Pasu is the animal offered in sacrifice. Pasa is the rope which binds the sacrifice to the altar.' The symbolism of these three is still found in every saivite temple. As we enter a saivite temple, we pass through the Bali-peeetha (the sacred altar) and Nandi into the sanctum sanctorum. The significance of these is that we surrender our ego, maya and karma (pasu) at the Bali-peeetha and as the Nandi faces the Lord losing its individuality, we (pasu) place ourselves at the service of the Lord (pati), so that the realization of Siva shall dawn upon us. The songs of the Nayanmars (poet-saints) of this school of thought expound the philosophy. They accept the theory of causation as effect is held to exist in its cause and also accept that an entity which does not have component parts does

not undergo any change. Meikandar is the greatest of such poet-saints. His Siddhanta is an inspiration from Sivadvaita of Sri-Kantha, though there are slight differences between them in certain aspects of mukti. World is accepted as real and the Supreme Being is considered to be saguna. Mukti, according to this school, is called Kailasa mukti and that is why the Guruparampara is styled as Thirukailasaparampara. The Gurus are traced from Dakshinamurti, Sanatkumara, and Nandi. The parampara is also called Nandi marapu, as descendants from Nandi. 'The canonical literature of the poets was compiled in the Eleventh century A.D. by Nambi-andar-Nambi in a collection known as 'Twelve Tirumurais'. The canonical literature of the philosophers was written sometime between 1000 A.D. and 1400 A.D. and this collection is known as the Fourteen Sastras or the Fourteen Books, which teach the Divine Truth. In them, the Siddhanta is treated as a system and cognizance is given to opposing faiths and their antithetical arguments.'

Gurugnanasambandha Paramacharya Swamigal founded the adhinam between 1551 A.D. and 1556 A.D. And since then there have been successions to the Gnanapeetha. The presiding Guru himself selects his successor. Guru Kumaraguruparar Swamigal, a disciple of Guru Masilamani Desiga Swa-

migal, fourth Guru in the Guruparampara, founded the Sri Kasi Math now at Tirupandal, Tanjore District. During the time of the tenth Paramacharya, the Math as well as the temples were renovated. Many great works of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy have been written by the illustrious line of the religious heads—viz., *Gnanavarana vilakkuurai*, *Muktiniscaya perurai*, *pandara sastras* and *stotras*. Saiva Sannyasa Paddhati is a notable contribution, in a sense, it has solved a long standing controversy as to who are competent for Sannyasa. The Sannyasa according to them is based on saiva agamas and saiva puranas. Thirty-six tattvas have been accepted. Devotion to the lord occupies a pre-eminent place. The Guru and his disciples wear kashaya (ochre coloured) dress. They represent the Devalaya (temples) and Dharmasthapanas (charitable endowments).

There are twenty-seven Siva temples and endowments under the administrative control of the adhinam. A pathasala for the teaching of Thevaram hymns has been started in 1942. The students here undergo a course of five years and master the hymns. Besides teaching the Tamil literature, grammar and religious lore, they prepare them for the Tamil Entrance examination of the University. The students and teachers take part in Thevara Goshtis (singing-groups) in temple festivals. The students are offered scholarships and prizes so as to encourage many to join. 'Thevara isai mani' title is given to the students at the end of the course. Anama pathasala has been opened in 1943 to train temple archakas. This is a five year course and prepares them for the Sanskrit Entrance examination. Anama pravara title is given to them at the conclusion of the course of study. An Oriental College affiliated to the University of Madras has been started in August 1956 with separate sections for Tamil and Sanskrit. All the junior Tamilians of this Adhinam are being educated here. They qualify as Vidvans after passing the University examination. The Oriental High School and Higher Elementary School are also managed by this

adhinam wherein instruction is offered in all general subjects and is aimed at a higher standard in Tamil and Sanskrit. No fees are charged for pupils. Religious instruction and training is given in all institutions. Refresher classes are also conducted in Saiva Siddhanta and religion. The adhinam undertook as part of its duties tours by the Propaganda mission and has placed at its disposal two vans which have taken them to all places of Tamilnad and neighbouring Travancore-Cochin and Mysore states. Propaganda in slums has also been undertaken. Religious conferences for several days are also arranged when great savants are brought together to deliver lectures to the public. The adhinam owns a press wherein most of its publications are printed and a journal *Gurugnanasambandham*. Special editions of Tiruvachakam, Tirukkural in various editions, Tirumurais etc., are also published. A good library is maintained by the adhinam which has a rare collection of about 15000 volumes on several subjects in several oriental and European languages. Enormous sums of money are spent on buildings, charities and for public benefit. Renovation of temples are given the periodic attention. A Maternity and child welfare Hospital was opened at Mayuram Town and it has been handed over to the Municipality for management in 1950. Donations have been given liberally for Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Sengipatti, Tanjore District and to many other hospitals. Midday meal is given to Harijan children studying in the adhinam Schools. Facilities have also been extended for them in the shape of roads, wells etc. at the slums. Harijan entry into temples was accomplished even before the enactment of law. An Orphanage is also run by the adhinam at Vaitheeswaran Koil in Tanjore District. Gold medals are also given to best Tamil pupils in many schools in Mayuram, Sirkali and Tiruchi. Poor villagers are looked after. Several associations and institutions receive financial aid from this adhinam for promotion of their objects and renovation works are also encour-

raged by substantial grants. A co-operative stores has also been opened for the sake of the adhinam. Thus it may be seen that the adhinam is trying to be helpful to many at large without allowing its main purpose of propagating the saiva siddhanta philosophy impaired in any way. Full of activity, religious, philosophical and social, the adhinam has been serving the cause of the public in many ways and has evinced keen enthu-

siasm to help and guide the masses ever longer.

A propaganda centre of the adhinam has been established on 28-9-1953 at Thyagarayanagar, Madras, where strenuous efforts are being made to effectively propagate the Saiva Siddhanta by the Head of the math, twenty-fifth in the line, Sri-la-Sri Subramanya Desiga Paramacharya Swamigal.

TIRUPANANDAL MATH

Sri Kasi Math, Tirupanandal, Tanjore District, was founded by Saint Kumaraguruparar Swamigal about 300 years ago in the Seventeenth Century who has sung hymns in praise of deities at Mathurai, Tiruvarur, Vaitheeswaran Koil, Chidambaram. He was called to Holy Orders by Saint Masilamani Desigar Swamigal, the fourth pontiff of Sri Dharmapura Adheenam. He had visited Benares and other places. He sang Sakalakalavalli malai in praise of Goddess Saraswati and by Her Grace obtained mastery over Hindi. The Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb is said to have been much impressed by his depth of learning and broad vision and he ordered the grant of lands on the banks of the Ganges. Here he built the Kedar Ghat, Kumaraswami Math and arranged for free feeding of Brahmins and other pilgrims. Saint Tulasi-das is reported to be indebted to him for several scenes from Kambaramayana in his Tulasi Ramayanam. Sri Velli Ambalavana Tambiran and others were also taught by him.

While feeding charity was going on at Benares, his successors obtained grants of lands from the Rajas and Zamindars of Tamil and Andhra countries to continue feeding at Benares and Rameswaram. In order to obtain the maximum benefit from the lands and manage them, it was found necessary to construct a math called Kasi Math at Tirupanandal about 200 years ago, during the time of the sixth head of the math, Sri Tillai Nayaga Swamigal. The

epoch of feeding charity at Benares and Rameswaram was succeeded by the epoch of endowments about the year 1940 when the then head of the math Sri-la-Sri Kasi-vasi Swaminatha Tambiran Swamigal made a grant of one entire village to the Annamalai University for publishing Tirumurais and another grant of a few lakhs of rupees to the same University for holding examinations annually in about a dozen subjects relating to Saiva Siddhanta, advanced grammar and literature and awarding prizes.

Sri-la-Sri Kasivasi Arulnandi Tambiran Swamigal, the present head of the math has elevated this math to the front rank by his sagacity, prudence, forethought and careful husbandry. He has brought his intellectual powers and practical knowledge to bear on the religious, cultural, educational and philosophical activities of the math. So far, he has founded 237 endowments all over India from Kanyakumari to Rishikesh and Kedarnath in the Himalayas for all people without distinction of caste, creed or sex. One noteworthy feature of his endowment is the institution of prizes for boys and girls in schools for proficiency in Tirumurai. mould their minds in the proper way while young. The math maintains one Secondary School (College) and one Higher Elementary School at Tirupanandal and an elementary school at Tiruboli. Large donations have been given to Sri Kumaragurupara Swamigal High School, Aduthurai, Sri Kumaragurupara Swamigal Boys' School,

Srivaikuntham, Sri Kumaragurupara Swamigal Girls' High School, Srivaikuntham, Tirupanandal Dispensary, Veterinary Hospital at Tirupanandal. Special mention must be made about the Saiva Siddhanta Chair at Benares Hindu University, publication of Tirukkural at Mylapore, and an annual grant to the Thevara Pathasalai at Srivaikuntham. Oduvars (who sing the Tamil sacred lore) have been appointed under separate endowments at Tirunaraiyur, Chidambaram, Mathurai, Kanchee-

puram, Old Papanasam and Courtallam. Gosamvardhana endowments have also been instituted in many places.

It will be seen thus that the endowments made by the present head of the math embrace all aspects of life and many modern Universities in India are benefited by the munificence of this math, which propagates the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and dedicates itself to Tamil culture and public benefits.

TIRUVAVADUTHURAI ADHINAM MATH

The adhinam is called Tiruvavaduthurai adhinam of Tirukkailaya parambarai and is situated at Tiruvavaduthurai in Tanjore district. The adhinam was founded by His Holiness Sri Namasivaya Paramacharya Swamigal as ordained by his siddha guru Sivaprakasa Swamigal, a saint descending from Meikandar to perpetuate and preach the Sivagnanabodha saiva siddhantam to the world at large. The truth of the origin of this paramparai (succession) is found in a stanza by Dakshinamurthi Desigar. Saint Tirumular has sung his three thousand stanzas here. Legend has it that the shrine here owes its origin to Saint Tirumaligai Thevar, who was favoured and blessed by his Guru Boganathar. This place is also called 'Navakoti Sittavada puram' on account of the legend that nine crores of Siddhars have lived and flourished here.

Since this adhinam was established by H.H. Sri Namasivaya Paramacharya Swamigal, this has come to be known as the 'Panchakshara Desikathinam'. The succession of saints from Meikandar to Namasivaya (founder of the adhinam) is called Bhuta Paramparai. It is said that at first Nandi taught the Truths of Sivagnanabodham to Sanatkumara, who in turn taught Satyagnanadarsini from whom Paranjothi Munivar learned the truths. This paramparai is known as Deva Paramparai. Upadesa Paramparai is

the general name given for the above two Paramparais. The succession of saints after the founder, is called 'Abhisheka Paramparai'.

The present head of the adhinam is His Holiness Sri-la-Sri Subramania Desikar who ascended the Gadi in 1951. Besides daily worship that is offered at the temples belonging to the adhinam, notable renovation and improvements are carried out. Many educational institutions and Thevara schools are being conducted and scholarships are offered to deserving students. Periodic religious lectures are delivered in various centres by a group of Tamil scholars and preachers. The adhinam owns a press through which rare and valuable books are printed and published. Annual Conferences are convened at various places for the propagation of religious knowledge. A library with a vast collection of books, rare manuscripts of old palm leaves, is run by the adhinam. Poor feeding is a special feature in the maths belonging to the adhinam. Liberal donations are given by the math to literary and religious associations, libraries, educational institutions, hospitals and clinics.

Saivism and Tamil are the sacred words here and the adhinam dedicates itself wholeheartedly for their furtherance.

KUNNAKKUDI MATH

More than five-hundred years ago, Srimat Deivasigamani Desiga Paramacharya Swamigal founded a Saiva Siddhanta math at Tiruvannamalai in North Arcot District. Later on, the disciples of the math settled down at Piranmalai. About two-hundred years ago, due to religious and administrative convenience and at the request of the Sethupathi Raja of Ramnad, they shifted their centre of activity to Kunnakkudi in Tiruppattur taluk of Ramanathapuram District. The math is now called Tiruvannamalai adhinam math at Kunnakkudi. It is learnt that the founder of the adhinam had very cordial relationship with Vellala Maharaja. It is also said that the founder is the disciple of Arulnandi Sivacharya Swamigal who established Saiva Siddhanta philosophy in Tamil Nad. The founder belongs to Adisaiva family and is the primary priest of Tiruvannamalai Arunachaleswara Temple. The Swamigal is credited with having performed feats of wonderful deeds and they are inscribed in the Garbha Griha and in the northern wall of the Tiruvannamalai Temple in North Arcot District.

There had been forty-four heads of the math since it was founded and the definite date of ascent to the gadi is known only of the thirty-ninth pontiff Srimat Arumuga Desiga Paramacharya Swamigal on 18-6-1881. Most of them were learned and have contributed not a little for the propagation of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. Srimat Annamalai Desiga Paramacharya Swamigal, forty-second in the illustrious line of the Holy order, has been held in high esteem and reverence that the Dwadasa Thottiram (Twelve stanzas) is sung in his honour. The disciples of Gnanaprakasa Tambiran and Arumuga Tambiran have worked in the literary field of this math. The former has written commentaries for Sivagnana Siddhiyar, and booklets in Tamil and Sanskrit. Arumuga Tambiran has written commentaries for Peria Puranam.

Srimat Deivasigamani Arunachala Desiga Paramacharya Swamigal is the present head of the math since 16-6-1952 and he has been doing good service to the cause of religion and Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. Since he was holding the title of "chinnapattam" (heir) of the math he has sought to improve the condition of Anju Koil Devasthanam consisting of Piranmalai, Tiruppattur, Tirukolalakudi, Thenakshiamman and Kunnakkudi Devasthanams and now during his headship of the math this has been benefited. Besides, inscriptions of Thevaram songs, renovations and kumbabhishekams of temples have been made and a library has been established for the Devasthanam at Kunnakkudi. Repairs to temple cars and public amenities have been given prompt attention. Thevara discourse has been arranged in all the temples.

The present swamigal of the math has toured on a propaganda mission throughout the whole of Tamil Nad, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore and South Eastern Asia delivering lectures on religious subjects and Arulneri creeds. He has also established Saiva Siddhanta institutions at important places. The Tamil Nad Arulneri Manram with the objects of propagating Hindu religion, establishment of educational institutions, orphanages, veterinary first aid centres, etc., has been founded on 10-6-1955. Under the auspices of the above Manram, ten schools and institutions are being run at Kunnakkudi and other places. The Swamigal has also taken an active part in the Bhodan movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave during his tour of Tiruppattur taluk in February 1957. In the religious field, he has been more active by introducing singing of Thevaram in temples, archanas in Tamil as a new measure continuing side by side with the existing practice of veda parayanam and archanas in Sanskrit. It will be seen from the foregoing that this math has also continued to guide and help the people and infuse in them a

belief in God and Guru so long.

There are branches of the above adhinam and there is one in Mylapore, Madras, where

steps are taken to propagate more effectively the philosophy of the math by religious discourses and lectures.

THE VEERASHAIVA MATHS OF KARNATAKA AND THEIR PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES

PRABHU SHANKARA

It was in the 12th century A.D. that Veerashaivism took an organized shape under the able guidance of Sri Basaveshwara. The incentive and energy for its organization and perpetuation were drawn directly from the dynamic life of this unique spiritual luminary. His life is a living volume of spirituality, every page of it speaking of his intense yearning for the vision of God and subsequent illumination, in the convincing language of the scriptures coupled with great poetic beauty.

Yet, he was not an all-renouncing monk. Far from it—his was a complex personality, with countless entanglements, so strong and baffling, that they would have bound any ordinary soul to the soil for ever. He was the chief minister to King Bijjala, executing his administrative duties with so great a deftness that the king, though belonging to a hostile faith of the day, had nothing to complain against on these grounds. He was the sole organizer of a religion that was in a comparatively chaotic condition. Novices of different creeds and culture were being brought under a single religious banner. These, naturally, offered innumerable, apparently insurmountable, obstacles on the path of a soul that could not rest contented without attaining self-realisation. His love for God was so intense that it supplied almost inexhaustible energy to discharge all the mundane duties and along with that apply himself assiduously for the task of attaining Self-illumination. He subjected himself to endless self-analysis, routed every base desire in him, declined to accept the vicious but

much coveted crown of fame and with one-pointed devotion became the master of the island of peace and bliss in the midst of this stormy ocean of samsara.

Sri Basava was a socio-religious reformer, who laid great stress on manual labour. Kayaka—Manual labour—is Kailasa—the veritable heaven—that was his firm conviction and forms a good part of his message. A cobbler here, a washerman there and a commander-in-chief elsewhere were initiated into the art of meditating on the Supreme Being, simultaneously attending to their professional needs with greater zeal and love of labour. He was a paragon of perfection in this seemingly paradoxical way of leading the two self-contradictory lives of the world and the spirit. And his followers—at least some of them—took up this life and led it successfully.

Even during the lifetime of Sri Basava there were monks of a very high order of renunciation. Allama Prabhu who initiated Basava into the realms of highest advaitic experience was himself a great monk. As free as air and water he was moving about from place to place awakening the spiritual consciousness in many a man and woman whom he came in contact with. To borrow a simile from Sri Sankara, he was like the celebrated spring that moves about for the good and gaiety of the world. But he was not the founder of any monastery, while, on the contrary, he loathed all such ideas.

In the life of Siddharama, a born yogi and sannyasin, we find a real Karma yogin. He was the contemporary of Sri Basava and

Allama. After a strenuous sadhana, he attained self-realization and soon found himself as the head of a monastery. Hundreds of men and women were attracted by the burning purity and intense austerity of this saint and joined the monastery, thereby forming a machinery to dispense with the various philanthropic activities that were undertaken by their leader. He nursed the sick and served the poor. Nor was his service and compassion confined to the human world. He was a yogin with equal vision that encompassed the bird and the animal world as that of the human beings. He and his hundreds would smile with the rosy dawn and engage themselves in the hard task of digging a huge tank; the noon sun would himself tire by gazing at the tireless toilers that would be still digging, drenching the soil with the sweat of their body. Thus did they dig for days and days and complete the tank, invoke all the holy rivers to reside there and further sanctify them by prayers and meditation. The whole ambition of the monk was to create an opportunity for the insects, birds and animals to attain salvation by drinking the holy waters of the tank, for they could not go and take darshan of the Lord in whose glory he had built a huge temple! This very well brings out the compassion the stern sadhu had!

It was on these models that the Veerashaiva maths of Karnataka were founded. It was a Basava, an Allama, a Siddharama and various celebrated Acharyas like Sri Renuka and Revana that inspired the monks of these maths with the spirit of service and renunciation. Some of the major Veerashaiva Maths even claim that they were once the seat of dispensation of knowledge, zealously undertaken by one or the other of the above-mentioned celebrities. It is hardly possible to attest to the truth of their claims by any historical evidence.

That apart, it is an undeniable fact that many of these maths were fortunate in having great men as their heads, who dived deep into the realms of the Spirit and shared their

blissful experiences with the devotees that approached them. They trained novices and prepared them for the responsible task of occupying the Gurupeethas. They were generous regarding the spreading of spiritual ideas among the common people. A lively contact was established between the monasteries and various classes of society. Religion was thus kept alive.

There are over a hundred maths in Karnataka—big and small. Though many are feeling a sense of fulfilment in confining themselves to silent spiritual activities, a few of them have emerged out of their respective shells with the pronounced idea of rendering service even in the so-called materialistic side. They have perceived, rightly, that food and education are the greatest need of the day and the rest follow. On the firm foundation of spirituality they are erecting edifices of social service. Wonderful are the results. Thousands of educated people owe their existence and social position to these charitable institutions and are in turn strengthening their cause by offering assistance, financial and otherwise.

The scope of the present article does not permit one to name all the monasteries and delineate their spiritual and philanthropic activities. We are, therefore, bound to be satisfied in mentioning a few at random and suggest that many others are functioning on the same lines.

'Navakalyana Math' of Dharwar can be mentioned to represent the class of monasteries that have solely dedicated themselves for the dissemination of spiritual ideas among the common people. It is a math of comparatively recent origin—so recent as 1935, but the founders had, as the fountain of their inspiration one 'Sri Guru Siddha Prabhu Deva', who was a mine of spiritual powers, the outcome of the austerities he undertook for long years of his life. His devoted disciple 'Sri Kumara Swami' is the present mahant of the math. He took the monastic orders after successfully completing his university education and securing the

B.A. degree. The modern university education has given him the right perspective in the light of which he is expounding the invaluable teachings of the orthodox acharyas, of which too he is a great repository. His 'pravachanas' or spiritual discourses are very popular. Through them he has reached the hearts of many a lover of religion and truth and has guided the spiritual aspirants with great care and affection.

The Swami is the author of many books, both in Kannada and in English, which have won him the admiration of some of the outstanding scholars. To name a few—*The Veerashaiva Weltanschauung, Religion of Humanity, The Veerashaiva Philosophy and Mysticism, A World Expectant and Anatomy of Man and God* in English and *Veerashaiva Darshana, Kāla Pravāha, Meenkan and Anveshane* in Kannada. The math has, besides, published books in Hindi, English and Kannada by various other authors of renown.

It is really very difficult to attract the attention of the noise-loving world and directing it to the sublime ideal of God-realization by mere discourses and publications. But Sri Kumara Swami has been bestowing his undivided attention on this arduous task and has attained admirable success.

Then about the monasteries that have engaged themselves in various activities of social service in addition to cultivating devotion to the Lord in the hearts of inmates and lay disciples. Founding of schools and colleges, feeding the poor, and maintaining hostels for school and college students are the general characteristics of service undertaken by these institutions.

Siddhaganga, a place situated at a distance of about three miles from Tumkur, has been a place of pilgrimage for thousands of people for centuries. A small but beautiful Shiva Linga, enshrined in a temple on a hillock there, is the presiding deity of the place, and that is the main source of attraction for the enthusiastic pilgrims. Myth and tradition

have obscured the exact year in which, and the circumstances under which, the math was founded. But there are evidences to show that at least two or three centuries have silently crawled under the Feet of Lord Shiva of the place! Great Swamis like Sri Atavishwara Shivayogi, Uddana Shivayogi and Marularadhya Swami have toiled for the glory of the Math. Its present head is Sri Shivakumara Swami. He is a university graduate. The best in the Western education has been assimilated by him and used for the extension and organizational purposes of the ashrama. The Swami is an erudite scholar of a very rare type. There are very few towns and villages in the Kannada land that have not listened to the amazing oratory of the Swami. He is an able organizer and it is but natural that the math has, under his guidance, assumed a huge proportion in its philanthropic activities.

It is said that feeding the needy and worshipping the *Atithi bhagawans* have been attended to as the primary duties of the math ever since its inception. Apart from offering food to one and all that arrive there at noon on ordinary days, at the time of the annual jatra 20 to 30 thousand cattle and 40 to 50 thousand people are fed for ten days at a stretch! It crosses the border of credulity, but all the same it is a fact!

A Sanskrit school, attached to the math, was inaugurated by Sri Uddaneshwara Shivayogi as early as 1917. The school began with 20 students, with a monthly Government grant of Rs. 10! The school's growth was rapid and it was recognized by the State Government as the Sanskrit College in 1938. Now there are nearly 600 students studying in this institution.

Swami Vivekananda dreamed of a Vedic College. Dreams of the great spiritual giants do materialise very soon. Sri Atavishwara Swami, a contemporary of Sri Swami Vivekananda started a Vedic College. But, for various reasons the school had to be closed, only to be reopened in the regime of the present Swami in 1928, on a firmer founda-

tion. The school that was started with a handful of pupils, has surprised the moderners, who are pessimistic about the younger generation and is flourishing with an incredible number of 184 boys zealously studying the Vedas.

From here we step into a source of greater amazement. The math is running a free hostel that has accommodated 750 students of 30 different communities! Free boarding is provided to all the 750 boys. In addition to the students of the above-mentioned Sanskrit and Vedic Colleges, the hostel has sheltered students studying in the various high schools and the college at Tumkur.

A high school was started at Tumkur at a total cost of Rs. 1,60,000 in 1944. The strength of the school is 700. Taking a sympathetic attitude towards the boys that had to cover nearly six miles every day the Swami has, in 1955, started a residential high school at Siddhaganga itself.

The math has its own library for the benefit of the inmates—teachers and students. It has succeeded in collecting about 3,500 books.

'Sri Veerasimhasana Math' at Suttur, a place very near Nanjangud in Mysore district, appears to have been founded as early as 1000 A.D. circa. There are inscriptions referring to the donations made by Rajendra Chola (1012-1048 A.D.) to Sri Ishaneshwara Oocya, one of the earliest mahants of this math. Sri Shivarathri Swami, the elder, and Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Swami, the younger, have been of great help to the present-day student generation. They are the custodians of the good traditions of the math and are sparing no strain in serving the society. The younger Swami is the charamurti. A mere cursory glance at the magnitude of work that the math has achieved in a short span of time, leaves one completely baffled.

The first speciality of this math is its having founded a 'Gurukula' of a unique type. Monks and mahants are not merely born but also are made. More than thirty young mahant-designates are receiving intense spiritual training in this centre. They

are receiving instructions in poetry and scriptures at the Maharaja's Sanskrit College and also at the Kyathanahalli Siddalingayya Sanskrit School. The starting of this school testifies to the vision the founders have had regarding all the requirements for a full-fledged monastic life.

With his superhuman efforts Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Swami has achieved commendable success in providing free board and lodging for 1,800 students throughout Mysore State. Students studying in arts, science and technical colleges are being greatly benefited by this generous scheme of the math.

Like the Siddhaganga math mentioned before, this math is also running a Sanskrit school in Mysore. Nearly 200 students are receiving Vedic and classic education in this school.

The Swami has started a special hostel accommodating about 50 students for the benefit of the boys belonging to the depressed classes. It can be mentioned here that students of all communities are being fed in the other hostels too, run by the math.

A high school has been started in 1956 and one hundred students received education during 1956-57.

This is by no means a full and all comprehensive report of the entire Veerashaiva maths of Karnataka. There is for example the Sirigera math, Sri Shivakumaraswami as its head, which is maintaining a hostel with a strength of 450 boys belonging to all communities. It has built a high school with the manual labour of the inmates of the hostel. Sri Murugharajendra math of Chitradurga has built hostels in many an important town of Mysore State.

It is to be borne in mind, as a special feature of the Veerashaiva maths, that they are feeding needy students of all communities. They are, naturally, depending solely on the charity of the Veerashaiva public, who look upon the upbringing of the backward Veerashaiva society as their great responsibility.

Sanyas is not a mask to escapism. Nor is it an order, sheltering parasites of society. Induced by a real onrush of renunciation, men take shelter in God, only to serve humanity, His children, with greater strength and detachment. The Veerashaiva sadhus and maths have sacrificed quite a good lot of

their self-interest in establishing the saying of the great Swami Vivekananda that sanyas is for *Ātmano mokshārtham Jagaddhitāya cha*; 'for the liberation of the individual soul and also for the good of the world'. Hence they are worthy of the honour and gratitude of the whole country.

THE UDIPI MATHS

KOWLAGI SESHACHARYA

About 600 years ago according to tradition, one morning, an anchorite after his ablutions was sitting on the sea shore at Malpe on the West Coast in deep meditation. When he opened his eyes he saw a ship caught in a storm and struggling for existence. He immediately waved his garment and the ship reached the shore safely. The monk took just a lump of clay called 'gopichandanam' that was found in the ship as a reward for his succour. When he broke up the lump, he found in it a beautiful stone image of Lord Krishna which he brought to Udipi. The monk who saved the ship was no other than Sri Madhwacharya, the exponent of the Dvaita system of Vedanta who flourished in the 13th century A.D. Sri Madhwa duly installed the image at Udipi and established eight Maths, each with a celibate monk to conduct the worship of Lord Krishna by turns known as 'Paryaya'. This, in short, is the origin of the Udipi Maths.

Sri Madhwa was born in a poor but pious family of Bhattas, living in Pajakakshetra some 600 years ago. The family later on migrated to Udipi which became the centre of Sri Madhwa's spiritual activities. He was initiated into the holy order of Sannyasa by Sri Achyutapreksha, a monk of Advaitic persuasion. Sri Madhwa studied under his guru the system of Advaita Vedanta and realised that its impracticability and abstraction did not satisfy the spiritual cravings of the human soul. So he expounded a system of Vedanta popularly known as Dvaita the

tenets of which may be briefly summarised as follows. Sri Hari is the overlord of the universe which is as real as Hari Himself and which consists of a plurality of selves based on the principle of hierarchy. Each soul has an individuality of its own which remains unaltered even in the last analysis. Final beatitude consists in the enjoyment of one's inherent bliss which is possible only by the grace of Sri Hari. Pure and unalloyed devotion is the means par excellence to deserve Sri Hari's grace. Perception, inference and scriptures are the three means of valid Knowledge. Sri Hari who is the God of religion and the metaphysical absolute as well, can be known only through the instrumentality of the Vedas. Sri Madhwa based his system of thought on the authority of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras, the Gita, and the Puranas, and wrote thirty-seven works. He travelled all over India and proclaimed and propagated the new thought which was a direct antithesis to Advaitic thought. It is rather surprising that the hinterland on the West Coast popularly known as the land of Parashurama which extends from Gokarna right up to Kanyakumari should have given birth to two great Acharyas proclaiming diametrically opposite systems of philosophy.

It should not be supposed that the establishment of eight Maths namely, Admar, Palimar, Krishnapur, Puttige, Sode, Siroor, Pejavar, and Kaniyoor at Udipi (these names indicate the villages in which vast properties

of the Maths are situated) by Sri Madhwacharya was solely for the purpose of conducting worship of Lord Krishna. That the dissemination of the new system of thought to their disciples and its propagation were also incumbent on the part of the pontiffs of the Udupi Maths is evidenced by the fact that many who were inducted to the Udupi pontificate were men of outstanding scholarship and saintliness. Though it is not possible to trace the entire gamut of such outstanding personalities of each Math in the short span of this article, yet particular mention should be made of Sri Vadirajaswami and Sri Vijayadhwaja Tirtha.

All the lovers of the *Bhagavata* in general and the Madhwa community in particular owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sri Vijayadhwaja Tirtha of Pejavar Math. This saint famous for his piety and devotion of the highest order wrote an elaborate and lucid commentary on the *Bhagavata*, the refining influence of which is felt even today by all pious souls. This Swamiji flourished in the 15th century.

Sri Vadirajaswami who lived in the 16th century, belonged to the saintly order of Sode Math. He lived a full hundred and twenty years. He was a very bold reformer of his times. It was he who raised the period of Paryaya of each Math from two months to two years. He was an erudite scholar, an uncompromising critic, a poet and a mystic. He wrote a number of polemical works defending the Dvaita Vedanta against the onslaughts of the rival schools of Thought. His magnum opus 'Yuktimalika' in verse contains fine analogies drawn from nature and life in illustration of the difference between the Finite and the Infinite. 'Rukminisa-Vijaya' which is a mahakavya brings out in full measure the poetic talents of the saint. His compositions of devotional songs in Kannada bear ample evidence of his mystical mind. He wrote some works in Tulu also, which was his mother tongue. No wonder that this saint has left a deep impression in our memory, and is being held

in high reverence next only to Sri Madhwacharya. His works number more than 104.

Next to Sri Vadirajaswami the only swami so far who lived a full hundred years was Sri Sudhindra Tirtha of Puttige Math whose centenary was celebrated with great eclat in March 1956. This oldest saint who passed away recently had convinced beyond doubt all who saw him by his remarkable simplicity, integrity and piety that India did possess sages of commendable and worthy spiritual standard.

The Swamijis of Udupi Maths have always stood for patronising all worthy causes. Though sequestered life is imposed on them, yet whenever their active participation in public life meant some spiritual elevation of the public, they have never lagged behind. The Sriman Madhva Siddhanta Prabodhini Sanskrit College, started on the foundations of the then existing 'Gurukula' the nucleus of which can be traced back to the period of Sri Madhva's studentship, by the eight Swamijis of Udupi 53 years ago, to disseminate Dvaita philosophy among their disciples, has now grown into a very big institution affiliated to the University of Madras. It now provides for instruction in five branches of Oriental Learning, namely, Dvaita Vedanta, Jyotisha, Nyaya, Sahitya and Kannada. Perhaps this is the only institution in the whole of India which offers free education, boarding and lodging. The College stands today in the heart of Udupi town in a magnificent building of its own, built at a cost of over 2 lakhs of rupees as a monument of co-operative effort of the eight Swamijis of Udupi backed by public munificence. That the colleges, namely, the M.G.M. College and the Kasturba Medical College, recently started at Udupi, should have received the blessings and support from the Swamijis of Udupi, proves amply the catholicity of outlook and generosity of the Udupi Maths.

The hospitality of the Udupi Maths is proverbial. Feeding the guests, pilgrims and the masses in Udupi is conducted on a colossal

scale. One has to witness it during the Paryaya ceremony which comes off once in two years generally in the third week of January. It is an occasion when a particular Swamiji according to his turn will be inducted to the seat of Sri Madhvacharya by which he acquires his right to worship Lord Krishna for a period of two years. People from all parts of India congregate in large numbers to witness the induction ceremony and have the darshana of Lord Krishna. Needless to say, that all the pilgrims will have the benefit of free boarding and lodging throughout their stay. Every day all the students of the Sanskrit College, many students of other colleges and schools, are given food. Some poor people including destitutes are also fed by the Paryaya Math. Apart from the floating population of Udupi which consists mainly of pilgrims, on ordinary days alone the number of people that has the benefit of food comes to about 600.

It is heartening that a band of young saints fully conscious of the time spirit is trying to put Udupi on the map of India and revive its spiritual greatness. The present Paryaya Swamiji, Sri Vibudhesa Tirtha, head of Admar Math, is running a Sanskrit institution at Padubidire. He is the only Swamiji among the eight Maths who has had the benefit of English education and this has stood him in good stead in many of his praiseworthy ventures. At Admar Village he constructed a big building for the high school and gifted away to the District Board. A free Veda Pathasala recently started by him here, is imparting instruction in all the Vedas for more than a hundred students. He has been taking active interest in many of the rural welfare schemes. His plan to have a silver car constructed for Lord Krishna as a memento of the centenary of His Holiness Sri Sudhindra Tirtha Swami of Puttige Math is already on the path of progress, and the sincerity of purpose has drawn liberal donations from all over India. He is well versed in Nyaya and Vedanta. The leadership of

this Swamiji backed by the active support of the other Swamijis was responsible for the ushering in of the magnificent building of the Sanskrit College at Udupi.

The Swamiji of Pejavar Math, Sri Visvesa Tirtha is a type by himself. His effort to achieve a moral revolution by making men honest, just and good in this highly sceptical age reminds one of Savonarola, the Italian saint of the 15th century minus his political moorings. Having had the denominational education in full measure under a very competent guru, Sri Vidyamanya Tirtha of Bhandarekere Math, with all the rigour and discipline that the saintly order imposed on him, this swamiji brought Udupi to limelight during his Paryaya. For the first time in the history of the Madhwa community, a conference of Madhwas of an all-India character was held at Udupi in 1953 under his inspiring guidance. The establishment of Akhila Bharat Madhva Maha Mandala and its branches in various places, the running of hostels at Mysore and Dharwar for the benefit of poor boys, the founding of a Vidya-pitha in Bangalore to train boys in ancient gurukula methods have been some of the achievements of this young swamiji. The Sanskrit institution at Ramakunja in Puttur taluk is flourishing under his patronage. He has great vision backed by dynamism.

The present young swamiji of Sode Math, Sri Visvottama Tirtha, who belongs to the spiritual lineage of Sri Vadiraja Swami, has made substantial donations towards construction of a hospital for the Kasturba Medical College. Another act of his unostentatious generosity is the construction of a hostel for the M.G.M. College, which is nearing completion. Sri Hayavadana Swami High School, the S.V.S. Elementary School and the Vadiraja Gurukula at Innaje are being financed and maintained by the Swamiji. For the improvement of the S.M.S.P. Sanskrit College Library, the Swamiji has donated a sum of Rs. 5,000. The donations made by the Swamiji for various philanthropic purposes so far amount to more than a lakh of

rupees. In his Math the Swamiji has a collection of rare manuscripts and with the help of competent pandits he is bringing out many of the unpublished works of Sri Vadiraja Swami. 'Lakshaharana' which is in the nature of short commentary on the Mahabharata by Sri Vadiraja Swamiji is now under print. This Swamiji who is very modest, affable and learned believes in talking less and doing more.

The Senior Swamiji of Kaniyoor Math, Sri Vidyasamudra Tirtha has justified his name by his deep scholarship in Vyakarana and Vedanta. He has practically withdrawn himself from the worldly affairs and is living the life of a sthitaprajna. Sri Lakshmindra Tirtha of Siroor Math is also a great scholar. He has written Gitadarsa and Dvaitadarsana in Kannada which have been distributed free of cost. Sri Sujnanendra Tirtha of Puttige Math who is a 'Vidyavallabha' has specialised in Ayurveda, the benefits of which are being availed of by many. Sri Vidyaratna Tirtha, the present pontiff of Krishnapur

Math has a flair for books and is building up a substantial library. A cultural monthly magazine called 'Prakashini' in Kannada is being published by the Math. Sri Raghuvalabha Tirtha of Palimar Math is taking active part in the activities connected with the uplift of the youth of the community. He is the youngest of the Swamijis of Udipi Maths.

It may be of interest to note that the Swamijis of Siroor, Admar, and Pejavar Maths were associated with the Sanskrit College as honorary professors for some time. In short, the Swamijis of Udipi have never felt that their spiritual way of life is incompatible with their participation in many social functions. Instances are not wanting to show how on public occasions the Swamijis have willingly come and presided over them. Their readiness to adjust themselves in a democracy characterised by secularism without sacrificing their holiness, purity, chastity, charity and spirituality raises new hopes in a changing world.

THE EIGHT MATHS OF UDIPI

P. N. MADHAVA RAO

The ancient town of Udipi, 36 miles from Mangalore, which is the nearest Railway Station, is chiefly known for the temple of Sri Krishna and the Ashta Maths found therein. The eight Maths are the following: Palimar, Admar, Krishnapur, Puttige, Shirur, Sode, Kaniyur and Pejavar. Both the temple and the Maths were founded by Sri Madhwacharya, the well-known propounder of dualistic theism, who lived and preached his doctrines in the 12th century. The idol of Sri Krishna installed in the temple is said to have been originally made by Arjuna and worshipped by Sri Rukmini Devi, Sri Krishna's consort, at Dwaraka. Great sanctity is attached to this idol and Sri Madhwacharya constituted himself into a pujari for the time being of this idol and he also

ordained eight Balasanyasins for carrying on the worship in his absence and after him. These Balasanyasins appear to have originally resided in cubicles built round the garbhageiha of Sri Krishna temple and to have worshipped Sri Krishna for two months at a time. Later their successors took up residence in separate Maths of their own in what is now known as the Temple Square. The Temple Square has been built round two ancient temples of Udipi known as Sri Ananteshwara and Chandramouleshwara temples, the temple of Sri Krishna itself being situated in the north-east corner of the Temple Square. Sometime after the shifting of the residence of the eight Swamijis to buildings of their own outside Sri Krishna Temple, they appear to have

decided to perform the worship of Sri Krishna for two years at a time instead of two months as hitherto. This change took place in the 16th century under the guidance of Sri Vadiraja Swami of Sri Sode Math. Sri Vadiraja Swami is credited with having introduced the elaborate rituals and festivals for which Udipi is famous at present. The main reason why the Swamiars resolved to extend the period of each Swamiar's worship of Sri Krishna from two months to two years is said to be that by the 16th century the expenditure on pujas and festivals connected with the temple, as also the cost of feeding the huge concourse of people who began to flock to Udipi at this time, became so heavy that the Swamiars had to go on tours for the purpose of levying contribution from the faithful for the expenses of their Paryayam.

The word Paryayam literally means a 'turn'. In connection with the Udipi Maths, however, it means the festival connected with the occasion when a Swamiar assumes his turn of worship in Sri Krishna Temple. The Paryayam is the most popular event in Udipi and is celebrated with great pomp and ceremony when thousands of visitors flock to Udipi.

The eight Swamiars assume charge of Sri Krishna Temple according to a well-established usage. The Swamiar on whom the custodianship of the temple devolves for the two year period is known as the Paryayam Swami. The Paryayam Swami admittedly has certain honours and privileges above those enjoyed by the Swamis of the seven remaining Maths. He has also absolute power over the performance of the rites and ceremonies in Sri Krishna Temple.

The eight Maths of Udipi are linked together in four groups of two each as 'Dwandva' or 'twin' Maths. This grouping into Dwandvas was undoubtedly intended to ensure co-operation between Maths during times of stress and hardship and it permits, in case of the superior of one Math dying without nominating a successor, the superior

of the other Math to appoint a successor to the deceased Swamiar. The 'Dwandva' groups are the following: Palimar-Admar, Krishnapur-Puttige, Shirur-Sode, Kaniyur-Pejavar. Incidentally the eight Maths enter their Paryayam in the above order, the 'Dwandva' Maths invariably succeeding each other.

From what has been stated above it will be seen that the Swamiars of the eight Maths of Udipi were ordained by Sri Madhwacharya primarily in connection with the worship of Sri Krishna and as Krishna Archakas. The purpose of the Acharya in setting up the idol of Sri Krishna and appointing Balasanyasins to carry on its worship appears to have been the popularisation of Vaishnavism and the Sri Krishna cult which are the chief features of the dualistic philosophy propounded by him. The connection between Sri Krishna installed in the temple and the eight Maths of Udipi has therefore been very intimate. In fact the Ashta Maths may be said to exist in and for Sri Krishna Temple. The income of his Math is freely utilised by the Paryayam Swami for meeting the expenses connected with the worship of Sri Krishna during his Paryayam.

At present the Maths of Udipi have acquired vast properties and jewels. The income of the Maths varies from Rs. 50,000/- (Palimar Math) to Rs. 2,00,000/- (Admar Math). The figures are approximate. The richest of the Maths are the Admar and Sode Maths.

The eight Maths of Udipi derive their names from their chief villages, Sode alone among them being near Sirsi in North Kanara District and the rest in South Kanara. All the Maths have their headquarters in Udipi and their heads reside there for part of the time, unless they are out on tour in other districts or provinces.

The different idols presented by Sri Madhwacharya to and in the possession of these Maths are as follows:

Kaniyur—Sri Narasimha Murti, Pejavar Math—Sri Vittala, Admar Math—Sri Kalinga Mardana Krishna, Palimar Math—Sri Rama, Krishnapur Math—Sri Krishna, Puttige and Shirur—Sri Vittala, Sode Math—Sri Bhuvamaha.

Many of the past Swamiars of the Udupi Maths were celebrated scholars and ascetics. Sri Vadiraja Swami of Sri Sode Math (1480 A.D.—1600 A.D.) was the greatest of them. He was a saint, scholar and poet. Among present-day Swamiars mention may be made of H.H. Sri Sudhindratirtha Swamiar of Sri Puttige Math, a saint renowned for his childlike simplicity and lovable nature. He passed away recently at the ripe old age of 102 years.

The Maths in Udupi are two-storeyed buildings with a central garbhagriha wherein the Swami keeps and worships his deity. On three sides are wide verandahs with a chavadi or open hall on the west facing the garbhagriha. The chavadi is supported by massive wooden pillars with expanding capitals handsomely carved. The ceiling is also of wood, panelled and ornamented, so also the massive doors. Entrance to the Math is gained by means of a wide porch. Within the Math are very many rooms and long corridors lined with windows latticed with pierced woodwork in tasteful patterns. Behind there is usually a wide yard with cattle-shed beyond. Many of the existing Maths conform to this ancient and pleasing pattern but a few of the Swamiars have rebuilt their Maths in modern style.

The Maths are not only residences of the Swamiars but they accommodate scholars and students also. At the present day pilgrims also are accommodated in the Maths.

The eight Maths of Udupi have been conducting, since the last 50 years, an up-to-date Sanskrit College at Udupi, now housed in a magnificent building of its own. H.H. the Swamiar of Admar Math, who is the present Paryayam Swamiar, has undertaken the teaching of Vedas to 100 boys. The Scheme extends to two years, during which period the scholars are provided with free food and clothing. Sri Sode Vadiraja Math runs a High School at Innanje about 8 miles from Udupi. The Mathadhipatis have been making liberal contributions for all educational and philanthropic causes. Some of them have shared the cost of maintaining the Hindu Anathashrama at Mangalore conducted by the religious institutions in South Kanara District. In the temple of Sri Krishna, managed by the eight Maths, there is large-scale feeding, carried on daily, of pilgrims and the poor as well as the boys attending schools and colleges in the town.

H.H. Sri Vishwesha Tirtha Swamiar of Sri Pejavar Math has engaged himself in organising Madhwas on an all-India basis. One of the objects of the organisation started by His Holiness is the amelioration of the social and economic condition of Madhwas. Hostels for poor Madhwa boys are being opened under the auspices of the organisation.

The society of pious men is like the water in which rice is washed. This rice-water has the potency of dissipating alcoholic intoxication. So does the society of the pious relieve worldly men, drunk with the wine of vain desires, from their intoxication.

—SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE AHOBILA MATH

S. RANGACHAR

The Ahobila Math was founded in the year 1398 A.D. in the Ahobila¹ Kshetra by Srinivasacharya who became a Sanyasin at the age of twenty and thereafter used to be called 'Adivan Sathakopa Mahadesikan'. He was born in 1378 A.D. at Melkote² the most important of the Five Narayana Kshetras in the Mysore State. He was thoroughly trained in the Divya-prabandhas, Veda and Vedangas by his own father Sri Kesavacharya and was then sent to Kanchipuram for training under Ghatikasatam Ammal.³ Srinivasacharya studied for about five years at the feet of Ghatikasatam Ammal and acquired proficiency in all branches of learning and the Visishtadvaitic texts in particular.

Getting a divine call to Ahobilam, when he was about 20 years of age, the young scholar Srinivasacharya proceeded to that place and was received well by the people there. The traditional account is that one day Lord Narasimha appeared before the young bachelor as a sanyasin and initiated him into sanyasa.

Many people who had been already amazed at the learning of Srinivasacharya, soon became his disciples. Students from distant parts also poured into Ahobilam for higher learning. Thus in a short time the new

¹ Ahobilam is believed to be the place of incarnation of Vishnu as Narasimha. There are nine shrines there of Lord Narasimha and hence the place is called *Navanarasimha kshetra*. These shrines are on the hills called Vedacala and Garudacala in the puranas. It is roughly in the middle part of the long range of hills between Tirupati and Srisaillam. Ahobilam is about 10 miles from Allagadda (in the Andhra State), which is connected by bus-routes with Kurnool and Cuddapah Railway Stations. Tirumangai Alwar has sung the glory of this holy place in ten memorable verses. Sri Krishna Chaitanya visited this place during his South-Indian tour and was the guest of the 7th Jeer of the Ahobila Math who was halting there at that time, as recorded in the *Annals of the Math*.

² See our note on Melukote.

³ 'Ammal' is a title which means 'one who had taken care of the Archavighraha of the Lord like a mother'.

sanyasin had a very large number of followers. A suitable place was required to impart religious instructions to so many people daily. So the spacious 'Kalakshepa Mantapam' was erected in the Upper Ahobilam, very near the cave-temple of Ahobila Narasimha on the bank of the Bhavanasihi river.

In course of time, the fame of this sanyasin at Ahobilam spread far and wide and many people began to invite him to different places. Obviously, His Holiness thought that greater service could be done to people if he moved from place to place. Lord Narasimha also, it is stated, commanded him with the words

ग्रामे ग्रामे च गत्वा पदकमलनतान् मां गृहीत्वा अभिरक्ष. Thus, he took to travel, moved from village to village, house to house, with the deity Narasimha⁴ and inspired religious fervour into one and all. Since then, the Ahobila Swamiji has been a touring religious teacher; and hence there is nothing like a head-quarter to the Ahobila Math. But as the Math was started at Ahobilam, every new Jeer of the Math generally visits Ahobilam during his tour. All over the country, there have been some buildings of the Math in important towns and cities and they are no doubt called 'Ahobila Maths'; but such

maths are mostly like temples of Narasimha, as that deity is invariably installed there and daily worship conducted by an 'Aradhaka'. These Aradhakas are generally Visishtadvaitic scholars and they organise lectures and discourses now and then in their Maths.

The first Adivan Sathakopa Swamiji organised the Math very well, travelled all over India, initiated innumerable persons into the Visishtadvaitic order and controlled the several divisions of the Sri Vaishnava community patching up the small differences among them. He set up numerous centres of Visishtadvaitic studies in different parts

⁴ This is the Utsavamurti of the Malola Narasimha shrine of upper Ahobilam.

of the country and renovated several important temples such as those at Tirupati, Melkote, Srirangam, Trivellore etc. He lived as a sanyasin for full sixty years, and was owned by all as an incarnation of Lord Narasimha Himself. That is why he and his successors are being generally called 'Azhagiasingar'.

All the successive Jeers of the Math have striven to maintain the traditions set up by the founder of their great institution. Almost all of them have been very great scholars and famous religious teachers. We may mention here the names of some of them as authors of great works on Visishtadvaita, Dharmasastra and such branches of learning. The second Jeer of the Math, Sri Narayana Sathakopa⁵ (1458-1473 A.D.) wrote as many as sixty works and got the name **वट्टिपव-ध निर्माता**. The work of the seventh Jeer (1513-1522 A.D.) viz., Vasantika Parinaya, is an excellent Sanskrit drama and throws ample light on the history of his time and the Math in particular. 'Acaryagunadarsa' written by the fourteenth Jeer (1676-1686 A.D.) is of significant importance, as that is the earliest to give us an authentic account of the history of the Visishtadvaitic teachers and of the Math. It is the sixteenth Jeer (1694-1698 A.D.), who got the Padinet-tayirappadi Commentary of the Tiruvoimozhi written by his pupil Devarajacharya (Keshava Sathakopa Swami after he became a sanyasin). The twenty-first Jeer (1748-1758 A.D.) has composed many stotras and devotional songs, both in Sanskrit and Tamil, some of which are being recited daily in the Math even now. The twenty-seventh Jeer (1829-1831 A.D.) has written twenty-eight works of which his *Vaikuntha Vijaya Champu*, *Candamaruta Vyakhya*, *Tatparayaratnavali*, and *Brahmasabdavadartha* are widely known. The thirtieth Jeer (1837-1842 A.D.) wrote ten works and several devotional prayers, of which the 'Suprabhata Stotra' recited early morning daily in the

⁵ The dates given against the names of the several Jeers indicate only the period of their headship of the Math.

Math is one. The *Satsampradayasara* and *Acaryagunadarsa*, which give a graphic review of the achievements of the Math till his time, are works of the thirty-third Jeer (1853-1879 A.D.). His successor the thirty-fourth Jeer (1879-1882 A.D.) has fifteen works to his credit. Of the several works of the fortieth Jeer (1915-1923 A.D.) *Sri-bhasya-manipravala-deepika*, *Satsampradaya pravesika*, *Sri-bhasya-Dusana-parihara* are noteworthy. The forty-first Jeer (1923-1941 A.D.) has been the author of several devotional songs. He has brought out an excellent critical edition of the *Adhikarana-Saravali* along with two commentaries thereon, of his predecessors.

The forty-second Jeer 'Sriranga Sathakopa Yatindra-Mahadesikan' (1941-1953 A.D.) is generally considered to have brought new life to the Math. He started a monthly magazine named *Narasimhapriya* in two languages Tamil and Hindi, which is full of articles on subjects relating to Visishtadvaita. He started a full-fledged Sanskrit college at Madurantakam, which is affiliated to the Madras University. All students there are given free lodging and boarding. He arranged to hold a conference of Visishtadvaita scholars once a year and conduct vakyarthas on significant subjects. He got the 'Visishtadvaita Kosa'⁶ compiled and published by the Math. The said work is the first of its kind and similar works pertaining to other Siddhantas, if published, would be very useful both to the student and the scholar. He has commented on many important works, such as the *Rahasyatrayasara*. He, in fact, opened a publication department in the Math; and to facilitate speedy publication of important works, started the Mälola press at Trivellore. He toured all over South India, renovated many branch Maths and temples. He was a great patron of scholars.

The forty-third Jeer 'Sri-Viraraghava-Sathakopa-Yatindra-Mahadesikan', who is

⁶ A dictionary of the numerous technical terms occurring in the works pertaining to Visishtadvaita.

at present the head of the Ahobila Math, succeeded the forty-second Jeer on 13-3-1953. His Holiness has been noted for his broad outlook. Besides developing the 'Sanskrit College at Madurantakam and the publications department of the Math, he has organised a number of Sanskrit-English free residential Schools in several of the Math centres. In these schools importance is given to Sanskrit and religious instructions, but the students are side by side trained to take the public examinations of the Education Department of the provincial Government. Many of these schools, such as those in Madras, Srirangam, Trivellore, etc., are very popular and a large number of students are being

trained there. The annual Visishtadvaita conference started by the forty-second Jeer is being continued with greater zeal. In order to stir up the religious fervour of people, His Holiness undertook to tour over all parts of India as soon as he assumed the headship of the Math. After having travelled throughout the length and breadth of South India for a period of about four years he is now travelling in the north.

The Ahobila Math, it must be admitted has been doing, within its own limitations very useful service to the country, since its inception. All along, it has placed before it the aim of 'Service to humanity' and 'Spiritual upliftment of people'.

MELKOTE

S. RANCACHAR

Melkote, or more correctly Tirunarayana-puram, is the most famous and important of the five¹ Narayana Kshetras in the Karnataka. It is a town on a small hill, where, during the reign of the Hoysalas a fortress was built, which accounts for the name *Melu-kote* (fortress at the top). The town is about 18 miles from Pandavapura, a railway station between Mysore and Bangalore.

Besides the most beautiful, attractive and devotion-inspiring features of the deity Tirunarayana, the association of Sri Ramanujacharya for a continuous period of 14 years with the temple has been very much responsible for the great renown of the place. Although it is not among the 108 Vishnu-kshetras, the glory of which is sung by the Alwars, it has since the time of Ramanuja become one of the four² principal temples of great significance to all Sri Vaishnavas.

The main deity in the temple is

¹ (1) Vijayanarayana at Belur, (2) Kirtinarayana at Talkad, (3) Yadavanarayana at Thondanur, (4) Tirunarayana at Melkote, (5) Laxminarayana at Gadag. History tells us that all these temples were erected by Vishnuvardhana (12th Cent. A.D.).

Tirunarayana but the 'Utsava Vighraha' is 'Sampatkumara', more commonly called 'Selvappillai'. This idol is believed to have been restored to the temple by Sri Ramanujacharya,³ after getting it from 'Delhi Sultan' in a very dramatic manner. The famous diamond crown called 'Vairamudi' is believed to have been offered to this deity by Garuda, and every year this 'Vairamudi Utsava' is attended by numerous devotees drawn from all parts of our country.

A significant feature of this place is, that since the time of Sri Ramanujacharya, the Harijans are being allowed into the temple for three days soon after this Vairamudi Utsava.

On a peak of the hill, there is another temple of 'Yoga Narasimha'. The Puskarini known as 'Kalyani' is the most important of the many ponds on this hill.

² (1) Srirangam, (2) Tirupati (Venkatadri) (3) Kanehipuram (Little) (Hastisaila) and (4) Melukote (Yadusaila).

³ It is almost impossible to reconcile this story with history, as during the life-time (1137 A.D.) of Ramanuja or earlier, there was no Muhammadan invasion in the South and no Muhammadan rule as such in the north.

SRI YADUGIRI YATURAJA MATH, MELKOTE

M. R. SAMPATKUMARAN

Yadugiri or Yadavagiri or Narayanadri is a small hill some thirty miles to the east of Mysore. A fort appears to have been built there, and the place came to be known by the name of Mel kote (High or Western Fort). According to the Sthalapurana, the vigraha of Narayana worshipped there was installed by Sanatkumara in Kritayuga and the Utsava vigraha of Sampatkumara, which was obtained by Sri Ramanuja from the North, had been worshipped by Sri Rama and Sri Krishna.

Under the pressure of religious persecution, Sri Ramanuja had to go away from the kingdom of the Cholas and enter the area which is now known as the Mysore State towards the close of the Eleventh Century. Tondanur near Melkote was then the capital of a small kingdom and its ruler, Bitti Deva became Sri Ramanuja's disciple. Sometime later, Sri Ramanuja discovered the shrine of Narayana buried underground in a forest. With the help of the king, he built a temple around it and a small settlement called Tirunarayanapuram. It is said that he dedicated to the deity of the temple a decade of verses from Nammalvar's Tiruvoimozhi and to commemorate this, to this day this math commences the recital of the Divya Prabandham with Kanninun Siruthambu and not with Tiruppallandu as is the practice in Vaishnavite temples. He established his own math and supervised the affairs of the village and the temple. This is said to have taken place in 1103 A.D.

When Sri Ramanuja left Melkote in 1109 A.D. for Srirangam, he appointed his disciple, Desadri Kelvi Tirunarayana Jeer first in the line of Melkote Math to succeed him as the head of the math and a signet ring (now lost) was also given to him as an authority. The administration of the temple and the math was vested with the math only till probably the eighteenth century. Later on, as

a result of the unsettled conditions prevailing in Tirunarayanapuram, the temple administration was taken over by the Muzrai department of the Mysore State. It is believed that the bimbasa now worshipped in the math are those originally worshipped by Sri Ramanuja. Sri Lakshmi Narasimha is the presiding deity of the math. Improvements of Tirunarayanapuram, the temple and the math were effected in the middle of the fifteenth century by a Srivaishnava who was a Dandanayaka (perhaps a military governor). During the next century, the math was headed by the well-known Vedanti Sri Ramanuja Jeer, a disciple of the great grandson of Koil Kandadai Annan. He wrote a number of works, of which a commentary on the Ashtasloki has been printed.

Sri Natteri Varadacharya who succeeded to the Peetha in 1858 A.D. founded a branch math at Rewa in Central India which is now functioning independently. Sri Natteri Swami and several other Jeers in the Order undertook extensive tours in North India to propagate the tenets of Srivaishnavism. Two of them — Sri Jeer Sannidhi Tirumalacharya Swami and Sri Chinnakumara Singlacharya Swami — were responsible for the construction of a temple of Sri Rama at Ayodhya by Yogi Parthasarathy Iyengar. In recent times, Sri Assori Anandazhwar Swami as the head of the math from 1921 to 1943 renewed his contacts with the North. He participated in a Pandits' Conference at Benares and later presided over an all India Sanatana Dharma Conference at Madras. An erudite scholar, an eloquent speaker and a poet, he wrote a number of works and devoted a great deal of time and attention in bringing out critical editions of rare unpublished works. He has established a branch math at Triplicane, Madras where lectures and discourses on philosophical and religious subjects are periodically arranged.

Much is hoped of the math under the headship of the ruling Jeer Swami whose deep scholarship and zeal for Vedanta are well known and widely appreciated. It is his ambition to help and encourage students of Vedanta, who are fast declining in numbers. Among many festivals that are celebrated, the Udayavar utsava in Chaitra month, Ardra and the Vairamudi utsava in Phalguni month are famous. Poor feeding is undertaken on

a large scale. The source of income of the math is mainly derived from the property of the math and donations from disciples of the math. Thus it may be seen that Sri Yaturaja math has held aloft the torch of Visishtadvaita for over eight centuries, propagating the Siddhanta of Sri Ramanuja far and wide, pushing through the worst political situation of Mysore in earlier days.

PARAKALA MATH

S. RANGACHAR

The Parakala Math, or to give its present full name, Sri Brahmatantra Parakala Math has its headquarters in Mysore. There have been 33 Jeers so far. The present Jeer 'Abhinava Ranganatha Brahmatantra Parakala Mahadesikan', is an erudite scholar. He was a professor in the Maharaja's Sanskrit College, Mysore, before he adopted sanyasa in 1925 A.D. and became the head of the Parakala Math. During his headship of the Math, he has trained a number of scholars in Visishtadvaita and edited several works of importance. Although old in age, he is even now engaged in writing a gloss on the Sri Bhashya of Ramanuja.

His Holiness is noted for his broad outlook and constructive ideas. Arrangements have been made by him to hold annual public examinations of different standards in a systematic way in (1) Visishtadvaita, (2) Divyaprabandha and (3) Stotras, and heavy cash prizes are offered to every successful candidate. Poor students are regularly fed every day in the Math. His Holiness is the hereditary Acharya of the Royal family of Mysore.

The principal deity worshipped in the Math is 'Hayagriva' which has been handed down to the Math from the time of Sri Vedanta Desika of well-known fame.

VANAMAMALAI MATH

T. S. RAGHAVAN

The galaxy of apostles

All Sri Vaishnavite Acharyas of the south look upon Sri Ramanuja as their patron-saint. Sri Ramanuja (1017-1037 A.D.) the long-expected saviour of souls who was a veritable ocean of divine compassion and the founder of the Visishtadvaitic empire in the land of Bharata, was considered to be an incarnation of Ananta, the eternal servant of the Supreme Being, Narayana. He was the most

outstanding personality in the illustrious line of apostolic succession beginning with Nammalwar, the Dravidian mystic and progenitor of the Sri Vaishnavite people. Tradition has it that even Nammalwar was looking forward with a prophetic eye, to the glorious advent of Sri Ramanuja after several centuries and his crowning achievement of the destruction of Kali (darkness and sin)

on earth which is immortalised in a decad composed by the saint. It is the cherished conviction of enlightened Acharyas that Sri Ramanuja shed spiritual lustre on his predecessors and his successors, thus forming the central gem in the diamond necklace of the spiritual preceptors of the Sri Vaishnavaitic line. Even the Visishtadwaitic system of religion-cum-philosophy, out of deference to the monumental service rendered by him was given the name 'Emperumanar Darshanam' — the creed of Sri Ramanuja. Sri Ramanuja with a view to perpetuate the sway of the Divine dispensation of Visishtadwaita over mankind, established 74 seats of preceptorship (Acharya Peethas) and installed his chosen disciples on them with a command to continue the chain of discipleship for the good of the many in the world. In addition, during his last moments, knowing that Bhattarya, Kuresa's son of immaculate conception, was destined to be the next apostle of the faith, consecrated him as his successor with the blessings of Sri Ranganatha, and commanded him to win a victory over a savant of repute in Mysore, Vedanti by name, by his skill in dialectics and convert him to his faith. Vedanti became Nanjeer who succeeded his guru and he was followed by Nampillai, Pillai Lokachariar, Thiruvoymozhi Pillai and Manavala Mamuni. This luminous band of Acharyas, remarkable for their intense devotion to God, scholarship in the sacred Vaishnavaitic lore in Sanskrit and Tamil (Ubhaya or twin Vedantas), kept alive the system of Visishtadwaitic tradition by their missionary fervour, and by their lucid and learned expositions of the *Brahma Sutra Bhashya* of Sri Ramanuja and the Tamil hymns of Nammalwar and other Alwars. Among them Pillai Lokacharya and Nampillai deserve special mention. The former is the author of eighteen Rahasyas or holy manuals in aphoristic Sanskritised Tamil dealing with the philosophical and the devotional aspects of Sri Vaishnavism, some of which — *Tatvatraya*, *Sri Vachana Bhushana* and *Mumukshupadi* — are highly authoritative, and the latter is the author of

a copious commentary of great repute on *Thiruvoymozhi* (Nammalwar's 1000 hymns), which is a marvel of intellectual insight, emotional appeal, and vast erudition. Manavala Mamuni (1370-1448 A.D.) the last in the list was a unique pattern of devotional humility, penetrating intelligence, and devoted service and a monk of rare renunciation and has been recognised as the second incarnation (Punaravatara) of Sri Ramanuja. He wrote elaborate commentaries in Sanskrit-Tamil style on some of the important works of Pillai Lokacharya, presented the essential teachings of the Alwars in his *Upadesa Ratna Malai* composed in Tamil verse, and democratised Sri Vaishnavism.

Renunciation and service in Maths

Maths are the abode of the monks and the Mathadhipatis (the presidents of the Maths) are men who renounce lust and lucre, hearth and home, and worldlines of all sorts, and engage themselves in loving contemplation of God and His glories whether during their hours of meditation in solitude or their hours of worship and service in the temples or during the hours of interviews or exposition of *Sri Bhashya* or *Divya Prabandhas* to the public. All their time, barring the few hours of attention to their corporeal needs, is taken up with these three types of activities which are a source of spiritual enjoyment to them and the lay folk who look up to them for guidance and solace. These preceptors endeavour their best to be the living embodiments of Bhakti (devotion) and Prapatti (self-surrender to God) and a deep abiding faith in God's mercy, His divine names, and His Divine Dispensation. Consistently with their religious ideals of absolute self-surrender to God, they practise the threefold renunciation of even the least dependence on any one or any thing but God, even the least thought of seeking refuge in any one or any thing other than God, and even the least sense of enjoyment arising from any one or any thing unconnected with God or except God. The attainment of such renunciation and the spirit of dedication to the uninter-

rupted service of God and His devotees in thought, word and deed, devoid of all selfish seeking in any form or degree is possible mostly where the monastic ideal is accepted, and hence the necessity for renouncing the householder's life. Since big temples are usually attached to Maths, the trusteeship of the temples is usually vested or by unanimous consent imposed upon the presiding monks of the Maths, and they joyously undertake the administration of the temple-affairs with a view to see that the worship of God is carried on in accordance with the injunctions of the sacred Agama Shastras for the spiritual benefit of the congregation related to the temples and the world at large.* Festivals and feasts are indispensable items in the routine of temples and are conducted in a spirit of reverential service to God and man. The spiritualisation of all secular activities in individual and communal life and the proper maintenance of the Divine presence in temples with a view to foster the consciousness of an increasing dependence of man on God and intimate communion between the two — these are the purposes served by the temples in the religious life of the community. The leaders of the Maths often make a pilgrimage tour with a large retinue of servants, followers and disciples, to the numerous sacred shrines and other holy places in the land of Bharata, and shed their influence, cultural and spiritual, on all who come in contact with them by their spiritual initiations given to laymen and by their daily religious discourses to crowded audiences and by their encouragement of religious conferences of pundits and sadhus. In short, the monks in the Maths play a vital role in the religious and secular life of the classes and the masses and as a consequence, even social and philanthropic activities in temples and Maths are made to assume a religious colouring and

* Emperumanar Math at Alwar Tirunagari, Perarulala Ramanuja Jeer Math at Tirukurungudy, Sriranganarayana Jeer Math at Srirangam and Tiruvankada Jeer Math at Tirupati are other instances in point.

serve the purpose of binding the members of the congregation to one another and to God.

SRI VANAMAMALAI MATH

Sri Manavala Mamuni is the originator and founder of Sri Vanamamalai Math, Nanguneri, Tirunelveli District, and his followers belong to the Tenkalai (southern) sect among Visishtadwaitins. His disciples, some of whom became monks (Jeers) of the Order, include Vanamamalai Ramanuja Jeer, Pattarpiran Jeer, Tiru Venkata Jeer and other householder Acharyas of eminence such as Koil Kandadai Annan (a disciple of the great grandson of this disciple became the well-known Jeer of Melkote in Mysore), Prativadi Bhayankaram Annan, Edumbi Appa, Appillai and Appillar. These eight disciples have been designated as the Ashta Dig Gajas (the elephants guarding the eight directions) the defenders of Sri Vaishnavism in all directions. They dedicated their lives to the realisation of God's grace, religious propaganda and incessant service of God in the temples and in humanity. They were men of spotless character and exemplary devotion to God, to Sri Ramanuja and other Acharyas; were able exponents of the faith and attracted thousands of souls.

THE JEERS OF THE VANAMAMALAI MATH

Sri Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal, first in the line of the Vanamamalai Math, was initiated by the founder and originator Sri Manavala Mamunigal himself and was ordained to propagate the system in the North. He was also called 'Swarnapadar'. During his leadership of the Math, he sent one of his disciples to Tirukkurungudi to look after the religious work there. Beginning with the First Jeer to the present day, all the Jeers of this math have undertaken extensive tours of India propagating the system of Visishtadwaita. They have all taken great pains to renovate the temples and branch-maths all over India under their control. They have constructed several Mandapams for the use of the temple and the Math. They have striven to collect for the Math large donations, endowments

in the form of gardens, lands etc. The first Jeer Swamigal lived a full hundred years and established the Math on a sound footing. Sri Tiruvankada Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal, fifth in the Order, brought into his fold many disciples and established a Math at Alwar-Tirunagari in Tirunelveli District. Sri Chinna Rangappa Swamigal, ninth Jeer of the Holy line, built separate sannadhi (inner precincts of the temple) for each of the Alvars. Sri Peria Satagopa Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal, eighteenth Jeer, established a Math at Ramanujambudur and another at Aththazhanallur. Sri Peria Pattarpiran Jeer Swamigal established the Maths at Kancheepuram, Triplicane and Tirunelveli, besides attending to many renovations and temple-charities. Sri Kaliyan Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal, twentieth Jeer, established the Maths at Tirukkurungudi and Sriperumbudur. Sri Yogi Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal, twenty-second Jeer, established a Math at Brindavan and the twenty-third Jeer, Sri Chinna Satakopa Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal established the Math at Tirukovalur. The twenty-fourth Jeer, Sri Chinna Pattarpiran Jeer Swamigal established a Math for future Jeers to be in solitude, in case they desire so. The twenty-fifth Jeer Sri Kaliyan Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal is the most important and notable in the sense he was the most active advocate of the System. He approached the Government and made elaborate arrangements for pilgrims to visit many holy places and various conveniences were provided for them. He was patronised by the Rajas of Kasi, Hadhwa, and other states. He had presided over religious and philosophical conferences and had delivered his speeches in fluent Hindi and Tamil. He

established on a firmer ground the Sri Ramanuja Siddhanta Sampradaya. Sanatana Dharma Sabha was conducted at Vanamamalai under his presidency. A Vidvat Sadas (conference of the learned) was also conducted annually. Some of his outstanding achievements were renovations of the branch-maths at Alwar Tirunagari, Pattar Math, Tirunelveli, Badagara, Rajamannar sannadhi, Tirukkurungudi, Sriperumbudur, Triplicane, Nellore, Nuzvid and Tirunayanapuram. Tothadri sthanams were established at Bombay, Dwaraka, Kasi, Brindavan, Malta, Ayodhya, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kanpur, and Prayag. He made many notable improvements in the religious field, like constructions of mandapams to accommodate the temple vananams etc. During his period, a big library and an Ayurvedic Dispensary were opened. He celebrated Sri Andal festival in the Adi month for ten days.

The present Jeer, twenty-seventh in the Order, Sri Chinna Ramanuja Jeer Swamigal is a great scholar and is well-versed in music. During his leadership, lands were purchased and a Math was built at Tiruvindalur. Publications on the growth and development of the Math have been undertaken. He opened a Pandits' Conference and a Gita Mandir during his sojourn at Madras.

Thus it may be seen that the Jeers of the Vanamamalai Math have contributed greatly for the growth and development of the System of Sri Ramanujacharya. They have always borne it as their primary duty to safeguard the religious section of the community by their extensive travels, lectures and discourses.

SRI SRINGERI MATH

V. S. RAMACHANDRA SASTRY

On a scorching summer noon twenty centuries ago, a saint of divine bearings and brilliance clad in maroon was walking along the margins of the sacred river Tunga. He suddenly stopped enchanted by a curious and unnatural sight in front. On a rock, a frog was struggling to be delivered of its offspring. A Cobra—the natural enemy of frogs—was providing protection by distending hood over the labouring frog. Regaining his usual composure a while after, the spectator beamed with the joy and ecstasy of discovering Paradise on earth—an ideal Paradise where the lion and the lamb, the tiger and the cow, the cobra and the frog lived in mutual amity and peace forgetful of all inborn animosities. This auspicious sight thrilled the sanyasi so much that he perceived the holy spot as the providentially ordained centre of spiritual radiation.

Centuries have slipped by since this grandest site-discovery in the long history of our sacred soil. That the spot still continues to be as divine and dignified as when discovered braving all adverse winds and weathers is in itself a convincing testimony to its spiritual potential and deep-rooted divinity. The site has since been drawing devotees and seekers after knowledge from various corners, far and near. To expect the discoverer and the discovered to remain still unidentified by the votaries of Advaita Vedanta would, no doubt, be tantamount to sensing Heaven as devoid of holiness.

Sringeri, the sacred seat of the Pontificate in South India styled 'Sri Sarada Pithah' is situated in a charming spot on the plateau of Mysore, all peaceful and picturesque. Its verdgreen surroundings and forests full of fruit trees and flower plants enriched by the proverbially sweet waters of Tunga and ashioned by an atmosphere of serene silence necessarily remind one of the puranic descriptions of the saintly spots of meditation

and spiritual introspection. The name Sringeri itself is derived from the name of the well-known saint Rishya-Sringa who auspiciously figures in the Ramayana. The Sage Vibhandaka, the illustrious father of Rishya-Sringa and a galaxy of other God-men of the golden era are believed to have added to the sanctity of the spot. And what more need be recalled to memory to convince oneself of the sacredness of 'Sri Sringeri Sarada Pithah'?

Sri Sringeri Pithah is the southern centre founded by Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya for the propagation of Advaita Vedanta. Since its inception, the succession of the Gurus in the Pithah has been regular and uninterrupted. Although the Gurus lived in such a remote spot far in the wild unknown to public view, their spiritual influence and learning were so powerfully pervasive that they drew devotees from far off corners of the country. Their presence and preaching proved inspiring and wholesome to all those who came in contact with them. These disciples, on return to their native soils, gave such a publicity to the latest divinity of Sringeri that it soon won for itself a sacred familiarity in every devout dwelling. And many centuries have glided by in this unobtrusive fashion.

The Gurus of Sringeri have always been renowned for their deep, extensive and exact knowledge. Their religious and literary activities were many-sided and their command over the various departments of spiritual learning was marvellous. Indeed, volumes can be written about the capabilities of each Pontiff.

To skip over without calling to memory a few God-men, at least of the recent past, while pondering over the greatness of Sri Sarada Pithah would sound as ridiculous as talking of honey without mentioning its

sweetness. Sri Vidya-Sankara and Sri Vidyananda idolize the static and dynamic aspects of the spiritual moorings of the Pithah established by Sri Sankara in Sringeri. History has recorded in golden letters as to how Sri Vidyananda, by the force of his 'Tapas', helped the founding of the Vijayanagar Empire with the avowed object of saving 'Hindu Dharma'. His Guru, Sri Vidya-Sankara, the master-yogi, is acknowledged to be still present in his yogic state to guide and bless the mission of this sacred monastery. Sri Narasimha Bharati is another high Pontiff whose austere penance has scarcely any parallel in the arena of saints. His illustrious successor Sri Sachchidananda Sivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Swamy has left us with the memory of a mighty personality presenting countless capabilities each scintillating with a lustre of its own. An ideal among 'Atmajnanins' (knowers of the Self), this Guru was regarded as the re-incarnation of Sri Sankara himself. He desired and prayed that his successor should embody in his person all the great traditions of knowledge and spirituality that the Pontificate has stood for over centuries from its inception; and true to his wishes all of them found their abode in the sacred person of Sri Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swamy who till recently illuminated the illustrious spiritual throne of Sringeri. This peerless sage was acknowledged by all devotees as endowed with spiritual 'tejas'.

The Gurus who presided over the sacred seat were possessed of divinity of the highest degree that their presence could not but help influencing the attention of the royalty of the days. Convinced of the magnetic influence, infallibility and indispensability of spiritual guidance, they made handsome land grants to the Math for the undisturbed performance of the Holiness's 'tapas' and the support of his attendants and disciples. The first ever grant of the kind is recorded to have been made by Harihararaya of Vijayanagar Empire in 1348 A.D. Land grants, special honours and other facilities have all along

been bestowed on the Gurus and the record of royal patronage accorded to this sacred Pontificate is indeed very glorious. Besides the Vijayanagar Emperors, Peshwas and Holkars of Mahratta House, Kaladi chiefs and Mysore Maharajas, Muslim rulers like Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan conspicuously figure on the role of royal patrons. Indeed, Tippu Sultan's confession of his faith in the powers of the Sringeri Guru makes a marvellous reading in the golden history of the Pithah—a chapter of which every devotee need be proud of. He went to the extent of exempting Sringeri Jagagir from taxes and confirmed the Math property as a free hold estate. Many Western visitors have frankly confessed of the deep spiritual inspiration they were blessed with by the very presence of the Pontiff.

What exactly lured these followers of alien faiths for such a qualified devotion towards the Sringeri Saints is anybody's guess. However, the record has it that the Math is exclusively devoted to the spiritual ministrations of its disciples and has never come into conflict with other faiths. Again, the Math does not believe or engage itself in proselytising campaign. While the exponent of every faith in the world history has advocated his own spiritual realisation as supreme, Sri Sankara and his followers alone display the exceptional distinction for being styled 'Shanmatasthapanacharyas' — the establishers of six faiths. Their main effort has always been to weed off the vices which threatened to poison the spiritual life of the times appearing in the garb of religion. Their main mission in life has been the propagation of a system of philosophy which aims at the happiness of all mankind. Moral perfection, spiritual enlightenment and universal well-being combine to constitute the main motto of the Math. No wonder, the Pontificate is capable of lulling every craving heart—craving for happiness on the spiritual plane.

In practice as in preaching, the Math is non-sectarian. As such the Math has made

handsome grants to the Jain Basti in the township. The mosque in the outskirts of the township is known to have been built at the express orders of one of the Gurus for the Muslim employees of the Math. Even today the Math makes a handsome annual contribution to the local Muslim population towards their principal religious congregations. Needless to mention, it is in recognition of such a deep-rooted dedication to the cause of human happiness on the spiritual plane, devoid of all sectarian instincts that the head of the Sri Sringeri Math has been styled the Jagadguru—the Preceptor of the World.

Though the Jagadguru is constantly in 'tapas', the Math activities revolve round the Shrines where regular daily worship is conducted for the welfare of the world at large. Special pujas are offered on holy days and these attract devotees from far and near. Several large festivals occur round the year, the principal being the Navaratri. Though less recognised by those who have not witnessed this festival in Sringeri, it is generally hailed by all devout visitors as shining superior even to the world-famous Dasarah celebrations of Mysore by virtue of its peculiar spiritual characteristics. On these occasions all classes are not only fed at the expense of the Math but sarees and bodices are distributed to women and money to men. Even fishes are considered sacred and are worshipped and fed in certain pools by the Pontiff himself where angling is prohibited.

Although the Math is mainly concerned with the religious and cultural work, it has extended its scope to the fields of education and social work also. The Math has its own Pathasala. About 100 students are fed, clothed and sheltered at the expense of the Math and taught literature, logic, grammar, philosophy, etc., in the traditional style by the Guru and qualified pandits. The Math has an establishment on similar lines in Bangalore for higher studies in Vedanta and Mimamsa. It is worthy of mention in this connection that the renowned educationist

Malavyaji of treasured memory personally sought the blessings of the Sringeri Guru for the rapid growth and prosperity of the now famous Benares Hindu University.

The Math also has a very good library and reading room attached to the Pathasala. The library consists of about 600 palm leaf manuscripts and a large number of printed books of religious and philosophic descriptions. A brief and cursory acquaintance with these manuscripts has brought to light several unpublished works in the form of poems, biographies, philosophical works, religious and grammatical treatises and commentaries in Nagari script.

Sringeri Sri Sarada Pithah is the oldest institution of its kind existing in India. It has had an unbroken record of apostolic succession. The Gurus adorning the Pithah have contributed in a phenomenal degree to the Vedic lore and have been keeping alive the sacred Mantra shastra and the ancient yoga discipline. Documents reveal that 'the Jagadgurus of Sringeri were regarded throughout India with peculiar veneration as supreme spiritual directors whose co-operation and blessings were most eagerly sought by all Hindu rulers and administrators; nay, even by those of Islamic faith; and whose personal virtues and piety commanded the esteem of Christian (European) administrators also'.

Writing about Advaitic Math, particularly the Math at Sringeri, a well-known European scholar says:

The greatest organisation founded by Sankara has withstood unshaken the conquering armies . . . and when we consider the great learning and high philosophical training of its living followers we may be confident that this closely knit association will in no way be weakened by contact with Western thought.

The present position of Sri Sringeri Math is best described by the official communication of the Commissioner, which reads thus:

The Sringeri Guru is the acknowledged spiritual dictator not only of the greater proportion of

the Hindus of South India but also of those leading Mahratta houses such as Holkar and former Peshwas. It may be said that his influence is far greater than that of any other Hindu spiritual guide in India and I presume it is for this reason that he is regarded with such respect. . . . He has in his possession sunnuds of great antiquity from the Nizam, the Peshwas, the Mysore Rajah, the Holkar and others, all enjoining the utmost respect to be paid to him.

Situated within the orbit of the renowned Karnataka throne, it is but natural that the actions of the Mysore Royal House should clearly reflect the spiritual guidance it derived from Sringeri. In immaculate obedience to the dictations of the great 'Shanmatasthapanacharya', this House has sheltered under its roof religious organisations of every complexion. They include institutions not only of the followers of Sri Sankara, but also of Ramanuja and Madhwa and also the Lingayats and the Jains. Even the Muslims and Christians have enjoyed the most sympathetic and generous support in building

their places of worship in the state. That the teachings of Sri Sankara have borne noble fruit in the actions of the monarchs of Mysore is, indeed, a noble portent for the present and future of religion in our infant Republic.

Universally acknowledged as the true admirers of every faith in the world based on morality, the Jagadgurus of Sringeri have been carrying on their mission true to the best traditions chalked out by the discoverer-cum-founder of the sacred spiritual centre. His philosophy aims at the happiness of all mankind. He preached a philosophy of harmony seeking to unite all mankind with all its differences, nay, all creation in its variety. Beautiful and blessed and hallowed by the memories of eminent saints and seers from Sri Adi Sankara onwards, Sringeri continues to be the beacon light of spirituality and morality and we hope it will play a key role in guiding the nation towards its avowed objective on moral and non-violent tracks.

SRI KANCHI KĀMAKOTI PEETHAM

(The Kumbakonam Sankara Math)

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

Like the Peethādhīpatīs of the Maths affiliated to other Vedāntic traditions, the Heads of Advaitic Maths too are personages of great spiritual eminence well-versed in sāstraic lore and their daily life is marked by supreme simplicity and strict austerity. They divide their time between worship of the presiding Deity of the Math, study of the Sāstras and contemplation on the Supreme. Easily accessible to their disciples and to every one who seeks their audience, they make themselves the more so by travelling throughout the country and conferring their benediction on their devotees. As the pontifical successors of the Ādiguru Sri Sankara Bhagavatpāda, these Advaitic Āchāryas are revered as Jagadgurus. Being sanyasins who have retired from the world, they do not

actively participate in worldly affairs, but confine themselves, if they so choose, to offering counsel only when it is sought and to interpreting the dhārmic law when occasion demands. It is believed by their orthodox followers that by their mere presence they waft a fragrance of spirituality about them which is carried aloft by their disciples who come to them for obtaining their darśan and to listen to their discourse. The personal achievement of the Jagadgurus in the theoretical study of the Vedāntic tradition, and in the practice of its tenets is a culmination of that tradition and is calculated to stabilise it in the realm of knowledge and action. Residing in his Math, or travelling about, the Peethādhīpati is a beacon shedding Sāstraic light and pointing out the proper dhārmic

way wherever he happens to be. Receiving instruction and guidance from him, his countless followers have the obligation to engage themselves in acts undivorced from dharma which will contribute to the material welfare and to the spiritual uplift of themselves and of their fellowmen. The Peethādhīpati does not himself directly organise forms of social work. He believes that it is no part of his function to do so; in fact, to the extent that he does so, he takes away from his own time and energy to achieve his spiritual goal. His very being in the excellence of his holiness is a silent exposition, *maunam vyākhyānam* of social service. He worships the Deity installed in the Math as the giver of all good to bless all mankind in accordance with the dictum *lokāssamasthāssukhino bhavantu* and invokes Divine aid for human endeavour for all that makes for the happiness and prosperity of the people in the manner ordained by the ancient and eternal dharma. The properties which have accrued to the Math by gifts from disciples and devotees are intended to finance the Puja in the Math shrine and the *sāmāradhana* which now-a-days is mostly feeding those who come there for darśan of the God and of the Guru.

The activities of the Kānchi Kāmakoti Math have been on the lines detailed above and have been scrupulously performed by each Āchārya who succeeded to the Peetha. The present occupant of the Peetha has, however, added to the aforesaid duties which devolve on him, the initiation of some organisations calculated to direct men's minds in dhārmic ways, to promote *āstikyam*, and to rehabilitate Vedic learning and culture. Bringing about amity among the various sections of the Hindus has been a constant pre-occupation of the Āchārya. A few years ago, he made his disciples start the *Tiruppāvai*—*Tiruvembāvai Āraṅga Mahanādu* making all āstikas sing and understand the *Tiruppāvai* of the Vaiṣṇavite woman-saint, Āṇḍāl and the *Tiruvembāvai* of the Śaivite Manickavachagar in the month of December-

January during which are celebrated Ādrā Darśanam of the dancing Siva at Chidambaram and the Vaikuntha Ekādasi Darśanam of the reclining Ranganātha at Srirangam. In every place that he visits, the Āchārya is very mindful of the welfare of the 'Harijans' and confers his blessings on them directing *prasādams* to be distributed to them. And, he never forgets to instruct that they should be fed sumptuously.

The Kāmakoti Kosasthān is a Publishing House which fulfils the desire of the Āchārya to publish devotional literature at a cost which will be within the reach of the āstika public. *Jivātmakainkaryam* and *Anāthapretasamskāram* are two other lines of activity which the Āchārya has set before his disciples. The former is intended to give encouragement and solace to those afflicted by illness in hospitals and nursing homes and the latter helps to perform charity-obsequies to the dead. In addition, under the auspices of the Math reformation of criminals serving sentences in prison is sought to be brought about by arranging for discourses to them on religious subjects. *Vāravazhipādu*, the system of weekly gatherings in temples is a movement which he has recommended to be observed by all āstikas to secure the twin purposes of infusing devotion to God in the minds of men and of ensuring the proper upkeep of the temple premises and the regulation of temple worship.

Realising, as every patriot of our land does, that the rehabilitation of the village is the first thing to be attended to for the regeneration of our people, the Āchārya has attempted to institute in the villages of the Kāveri Delta Districts what is known as the *Mudrādhikāri* organisation appointing a person in each village to attend to temple upkeep and to renovation of tanks, for the exposition of *Purāṇas* on Ekādasi nights and generally to promote social and spiritual welfare among the community. Periodical instructions regarding the purpose underlying the various aspects of our way of life

and the observance of the holy days in the Hindu calendar, the recommendation to read and discourse on select sections of the Rāmāyana in connection with the Sri Rāma Navami celebrations, deputing learned persons to expound Dharma Śāstras, Purānas and Itihāsas at different centres of our country are other lines of activity under the Āchārya's auspices. *Kamakoti*, a Tamil periodical, chronicles the events taking place from time to time to carry out these objects.

In conformity with the obligation laid on him to protect the Vedic roots of the Indian way of life, the Āchārya established the *Veda Dharmaśāstra Paripālana Sabhā* which fosters scholars in Vedas and Dharmaśāstras and recognises such scholarship by the institution of examinations and the award of monetary grants. A scheme of land gifts (*bhūdan*) to preserve such scholars from want and to encourage others to take to Vedic studies has been adumbrated by him and is in operation. Another institution functioning under the auspices of the Math is the *Advaita Sabhā* started over sixty years ago by the present Āchārya's *Paramaguru*. In addition to providing for a continuous study of Advaitic literature and research into it, the Sabhā holds an Annual Session under the patronage of the Āchārya and often in his presence at which in addition to recognition of scholars who have qualified for it on the basis of examinations, erudite *Vākyaārthas* and popular discourses are delivered at once deepening the springs of Vedantic lore and spreading it among people who are not able to read the texts. The Sabhā publishes a trilingual quarterly known as *Brahma-vidyā* in Sanskrit, English and Tamil intended to carry the message of *Brahmadraita* to a wider public and in its pages are edited rare Advaitic works after careful scrutiny by competent scholars. The encouragement of the study of *Sanskrit* which is the key to our spiritual texts has engaged the earnest attention of the Āchārya and many are the agencies like the *Amara Bhārati Sabhā* which function by his inspiration.

Thus, under the aegis of the Kanchi Kamakoti Math, various schemes of social welfare and spiritual progress are being executed under the abiding care of the Āchārya. The unification of the human resources of the several Maths towards stabilising religious faith in the hearts of men for their spiritual upliftment has engaged his thoughts and for this purpose he has been eager to preserve the sanctity and autonomy of the Maths of all persuasions in the country. But the Āchārya often expresses his conviction that these outward activities help him more in the way of *self-purification* than of being useful for the amelioration of the people at large. He realises that all this is but a drop in the ocean of what will really be of tangible benefit to the people of our Bhāratavarsha.

In the life of the followers of the Vedic religion, there is no separation between the secular and the spiritual. The so-called secular derives its nature and energy only from the spiritual. Worship of God is not only a preliminary to service of man in a sense, it is itself service to man. For, the greatest benefactors of the world are the godly persons, the saints and the mystics who affirm in their very being the Reality that is spiritual. It is necessary for the benefit of the world that there must be an unbroken supply of such great souls who, from the Everest peak of their spiritual achievement can confer benediction on the vast multitude of men and women. These spiritual stalwarts are neither selfish nor self-centered. They are the mountain springs from which the lower regions draw their sustenance and strength. It is for us to translate the inspiration we draw from the vertical heights of their spiritual eminence into the horizontal stretches of social welfare in accordance with the principles of eternal Dharma. The more the interest evinced by their followers in these monastic institutions, the more will they improve not only in their material aspects, but also in their spiritual endeavours. If the community should live and grow along right

lines, it is its duty to maintain such hoary Maths, to adore the great Āchāryas who preside over them and to practise their precepts with reverence and devotion. These Maths are dynamos of spiritual power, of Ātmic energy, functioning to save oneself and to salvage the world, *ātmano mokshārtham jagat hitāyacha*. They are our national

assets, the guardians of our traditional culture, the agencies of our spiritual education. Superficially they may seem oriented to different persuasions, but at bottom there is no contradiction among them in essentials, for, they are affiliated to various aspects of the common substance which is the eternal Bhārata Dharma.

SIDDHARUDHA SWAMI MATH

G. H. GUGGALI

This is a Vedanta Math two miles off from Hubli. It is centred round a holy man who came to Hubli about 90 years ago. His place of birth and other details of his life are not known. Probably he hailed from the Telugu area. He came to Hubli and stayed in the jungle nearby along with another monk named Chidghanananda Swami. Instances are recorded about his deep meditation even in his youth so much so that he would not feel in that state even if live charcoals were put on his body. Such incidents show that Siddharudha Swami was a real *siddha*, an *Arudha* from his early days. He used to live a very simple life and wear mostly a loin cloth only. He used to eat whatever food others gave him. He was often absorbed in meditation. A kind look, a kind word from him turned the lives of many persons. Soon his fame spread far and wide. Hundreds went to him for solace. The devotees built a Math for him. Later on extensions were made. As a result, the jungle turned into a small village. The Swami passed away in 1929 leaving his disciple Sri Gurunatharudha Swami as the head of the Math. This Swami is observing the vow of silence for many years now. All the properties are managed

by devotees and monks on behalf of the Swami.

Siddharudha Math is one of the richest Maths in the northern Karnataka area. It has several autonomous branches also. The main Math organizes two large religious fairs every year when thousands of people visit the Math. On these occasions, lectures, bhajanas etc. are conducted. Two large halls, the 'Sabha Mandap' and the 'Kailās Mandap' are used as auditorium and temple respectively. There are several other temples also. Large choultries provide shelter to the pilgrims. Feeding the poor and the devotees may be said to be the main activity of the Math. On special occasions thousands of people are fed. The Math maintains some boys and gives them elementary education. Minor medical help also is rendered to the needy. Recently the Math organized a Vedanta Conference spending a large sum of money. Its main income comes from lands and buildings. The devotees also offer a substantial quota. Thousands of people visit it with the faith that thereby they will be cured of spiritual and physical ailments. The great hold the Math has upon the masses shows that it fulfils a real need of the people.

VYASASHRAM

J. S. RAGHUPATHI RAO

Andhra Desa has innumerable religious institutions under the name of Ashrams. They have been carrying on their selfless work of enlightening the people towards a path of redemption, side by side carrying on a mission of being helpful to the people in their material advancement. The one important Ashram which has nearly thirty-eight branches all over the Andhra area is the one founded by Srimat Asangananda Giri Swami, popularly known as Sri Malayala Swamiji. Sri Vyasashram in Chittoor district forms the main Ashram founded by Sri Malayala Swamiji in 1926. The main activities of the Ashram are practising, preaching and spreading of Vedanta in the Andhra area. A Sanskrit school, Brahma-vidya pathasala and Kanyagurukulam are main-

tained by this Ashram. Poor and deserving students are encouraged in their studies by providing for them free boarding and lodging. Education of women is also encouraged and in fact there are branch Ashrams solely established for women. A spiritual magazine, *Yathartha Bharati*, is run and the Ashram owns a Vedavyasa press at Chittoor. The annual features of the Ashram are Vedanta sahitya seva, Sanatana vedantajnana sabha, Omkarasatrayagam, Chaturmasya mahavratam and Gurupuja. Similar activities are carried on by the branch Ashrams in the districts of Chittoor, Nellore, Guntur, Krishna, East Godavari, West Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Hyderabad, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Mysore.

MATHS IN THE CITY OF MADRAS

T. S. RAGHAVAN

Sri Sankaracharya math of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Madras city, is a branch of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and it was founded, according to an inscribed stone in Telugu at the math premises, in the Dundubhi year corresponding to about 1862 A.D. Religious discourses in Puranas have been arranged for a very long time. Sri Sankaracharya's Bhashya, Veda Bhashya of Vidyananya are being taught daily. Daily pujas are offered to the bimba of Sri Sankaracharya which has been installed at the math. Annual celebrations are the Sankara Jayanti in the Chaitra month and the Navaratri festival, during which a laksharcana is offered to Devi. Vyasa puja is also performed on that day. The math carries out these activities through subsidy it receives from Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and donations from the munificent public.

Sankara math started recently at West Mambalam also propagates the advaita siddhanta through lectures and religious discourses.

Sri Sankara Gurukulam, Abhiramapuram which was started in 1947 by Sri Thethiyur Subramanya Sastrigal has been conducting periodical lectures in advaita vedanta, religion and puranas.

The Upanishad Ashram, Nungambakkam which has been started in the early thirties by Swami Vivekananda Tirtha, has been holding classes by eminent pandits in Acharya's Bhashyas, Puranas and Yoga-Vasista.

Karapathra Sivaprakasa Swamigal math at Vyatrapadi is situated on the outskirts of the city in a surrounding that reminds us of the

the Supreme Self. Founded in the year 1918 A.D. by Karapathra Sivaprakasa Swamigal himself, this math has been carrying on vedanta pracara efficiently on the lines of Sri Sankara's siddhanta. Classes in vedanta, Sanskrit and Tamil grammar are conducted for the Brahmacharis of the math. Periodic lectures on vedanta are arranged and the present head of the math, Swami Mukta-nanda delivers learned lectures in the city also. Daily pujas to the samadhi of the founder and at the temple are offered. Guru puja in the Phalguna month is an annual feature, when sastra parayanam and Dhyana are conducted at the Samadhi. The activities of the math are carried on through rent from houses and lands belonging to the math. The founder of this math came into contact with one Sri Subbayya and founded along with him in about 1914 A.D. a math at Choolai. He desired the latter to stay at the place and propagate the religion and philosophy to the people there. This math bears the name *Veera Subbayya Swami math*, the prefix 'veera' seems to be the beginning word of Sri Subbayya's Guru who descended from Kovilar in Karaikudi of Ramanathapuram District. From an inscription stone at the temple inside the math it is learnt that Veera Subbayya Gnana Desiga Swamigal left his mortal coil on 12-10-1931 at the age of 53 years. The swamigal was learned in Tamil, Sanskrit and Hindi and many works were written by him. This math follows mostly after Karapathra Sivaprakasa Swamigal math in holding vedanta classes, lectures and pujas to the portrait of Sri Sankaracharya and to the samadhi of the Guru. Books written by the swamigal are published, thus propagating the philosophy of the math. Sankarajayanti in the Chaitra month and Gurupuja are the annual features. Expenditure of the math is met from the endowed property of the founder.

Dharmasivachariar math, Kachaleswarar Agraharam, Madras, is a very old math founded by Dharmasivachariar, a saivite. Disciples of the math are at Tiruvalangadu

in Chittoor District. The math is being managed now by the Aiyira vaisya community under a scheme framed in respect of a civil suit of 1883 by the High Court of Madras. Details of the founder of the math are not made available, though there are certain reports. About three hundred years ago, Dharmasivachariar went to Mysore at the request of the Aiyira vaisya community there and settled down with them for sometime. Later on, he went to Palamalai Hills, near Nerijipet in Bhavani taluk owing to a threat to religion due to the invasion of Mysore by Mohammedan rulers during the time of Tippu Sultan. He founded a math at Nerijipet and the activities were carried out through Kanikkai (donation from disciples). The last in the line of Dharmasivachariar died in 1951 and since then the activities of the math are carried on by Trustees selected from the community, in accordance with the provisions of the scheme governing the activities of the math. Daily puja is offered to Annapurani Kasi Visvanatha at the math, as the favourite deity of the founder. Ardra and Phalguni uttiram festivals are celebrated besides the Navaratri festival. The devotees also participate in the floating festival of Kandaswami Koil (temple). Periodic lectures are held and discourses are encouraged. The activities of the math are carried out with the income from rentals, interest on securities and donations from the community people.

Other maths propagating saiva siddhanta philosophy in the city are Tiruporur Chidambaraswami math and Appar swami math in Mylapore, Pamban swami math at Tiruvonmiyur near Adyar and Dakshina-murti swami math at Mint where a dharma vaidyasala is also run.

Ramalingaswamigal Math, Tiruvottriyur, Madras was founded in honour of Saint Ramalingaswamigal at Tiruvottriyur on the coronation day 12-12-1911 and it has been since then managed by a Committee, which is taking steps ever since its foundation to

propagate the tenets of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and Jivakarunya (kindness to all beings) principles as expounded by the Saint. Weekly bhajan along the streets by devotees of the saint and religious discourses form the chief activities of the math. On Purnami day and other such important occasions, poor people are fed. Birthday celebrations of the saint are conducted every year on a very grand scale. Foundation day of Dharmasala is celebrated in the Vaikashi month of each year at Vadaloor. The math carries out its routine and mission activities through lands and donations from devotees.

Jyoti Math, Tiruvottriyur was founded about seventy years ago by Sri Arutprakasa Swamigal, in whose name too the math is sometimes called. He propagated the saiva siddhanta faith and had the title of his descent from Kailasa parampara. The saint has endowed all his property to this math for the performance of daily pujas to his upasanamurti (favourite deity), Nataraja, who has been installed at the math premises. Puja is also offered at his samadhi. A direct disciple of the saint is performing service under his original instructions and a trustee looks after the activities.

In *Aranagiri Narayana Desigar Math*, Tondiarpet, Madras, a disciple of the founder is helping sick people besides his daily pujas.

Ahobala Math, Triplicane, Madras is an old Sri Vaishnava math belonging to the Vadagalai sect of the Visishtadvaitins. There are no major disagreements in the Sri Vaishnava siddhanta postulated by the Vadagalais and the Tengelais but about eighteen minor differences are present. While the former include more of Sanskrit works into their fold, the latter give prominence to Tamil works of the siddhanta. The activities of this math are more of a temple in character. Festival of Vedanta Desiga, the Vaishnavite leader, is celebrated during the Purattasi month every year and an annual festival in honour of the Head of the math is also celebrated. This is a branch of the Ahobala math at Madurantakam.

Temple priests are appointed by the swamiji himself who will always be touring all over India propagating the Visishtadvaita philosophy to the masses. Donations from the devoted disciples of the math is the source of income of this math. There is another math belonging to the Visishtadvaita school about two furlongs off from the above math which was founded in the Phalgun month, 1804 by one Ramanuja Ammal. The followers of this math belong to the Tengelai sect. Though a math by name, it is also called Ramanuja kootam of Uttaradi desa; this is more of a private temple in character, offering service and puja to the deity installed therein.

Vyasaraya Math at Triplicane, Madras is a dvaita math founded in the name of Vyasaraya Swamigal. The exact date as to when it was founded here is not known. There is a Hanuman temple inside the math and puja is offered there. The Head office of the math is in Mysore State and the math is said to have branches all over South India viz. at Madras, Coimbatore, Trichy, Madurai, Coimbatore, Udipi, Kumbakonam (Tanjore Dt.), and other places. Bhajanas are conducted at regular intervals. Special worship (Aradhana) is performed on many occasions, when people are fed. It accommodates pilgrims and provides them with every convenience. Donations from the disciples of the math and rent from the property endowed in favour of the math are the source of income, wherefrom the expenditure on the math is met.

Uttaradi Udipi Math in the same area is another Dvaita math. There are no differences between the different Dvaita maths and all of them propagate only the Madhva siddhanta without any changes. Religious lectures are delivered here and a few students are taught Sanskrit and sutras. Puja is offered at the temple inside the math and all festivals and celebrations of the Madhva sect are celebrated on a collective scale here, when a large number of people are fed.

Sri Gaudiya Math, Gopalapuram is one of the sixty branches of this organization with its headquarters in Navadwip (Sri Mayapur) in West Bengal, where Sri Chaitanya was born. This Order was established in the nineties of the last century, by Srimat Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati. It follows the Vaishnava philosophy and sadhana promulgated by Sri Chaitanya and his followers. The Madras branch was founded three decades ago. It has a beautiful temple dedicated to Sri Radha-Krishna-Gauranga. This Math celebrates birthdays of Sri Krishna and Sri Chaitanya on a grand scale. A monthly magazine propagating devotional literatures and ideas is also run by the Math.

Sai Samaj, Mylapore, Madras is a registered Society under the registration of Society Act and is managed by a Committee. It was founded in 1939 by Sri B. V. Narasimha Swamigal who was ordained to carry Sai Baba movement and Sai bhakti since 1939.

Sai Baba belongs to that class of saints who reached the masses and carried on their life mission by preaching implicit faith and prayer. He believed in and preached unification of faiths and co-existence of religions. He propagated that one attains spiritual enlightenment only through intense bhakti and surrender unto Guru.

Sai Baba has many devotees all over the

country. Thursday is a notable day for Sri Sai Baba and the daily puja that is offered on Thursdays is called Special Guru Puja. Annually, the Maha-samadhi celebrations of Sri Baba is celebrated on a grand scale, on the Vijayadasami day as the saint is said to have left the mortal coil on the Vijayadasami day in 1918. Besides, Sri Rama Navami is celebrated in the Chaitra month, Guru (Vyasa) purnima celebration in July every year and other such important festivals. Poor people are fed on these occasions and to orphans every possible help is extended. A public general library of nearly 3,000 books covering a variety of subjects is shortly to be declared open. Since the last three years a free allopathic dispensary is being managed. Along side, Baba literature is published at regular intervals and his thought propagated. A monthly journal "Sai Sudha" is also published. There are members of the Samaj and by annual subscriptions and donations, the various activities are carried out. It is not a monastic institution, but there are many dedicated souls attached to it.

There are many other religious institutions in the city, managed by monastic and lay workers. These institutions along with the well-established ones mentioned above try to cater to the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of the Madras city.

Different creeds are but different paths to reach the one God. Diverse are the ways that lead to the temple of Mother Kali at Kalighat in Calcutta. Similarly various are the paths that take men to the house of the Lord. Every religion is nothing but one of these paths.

—SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BHAGAVAN SRI KRISHNA AND THE VAISHNAVA SAINTS

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Beauty is the only thing which attracts a human mind here. By the word beauty we must not understand the beauty of form only. Beauty is sensed and perceived by each one of our six senses; eyes perceive the beauty of forms; ears, the beauty of sounds, such as melodious and musical voice; tongue senses the beauty of taste; nose, the beauty of smell, such as the fragrance of flowers; the skin, the beauty of touch, such as the soft breath of a cool and mild breeze, the sweet embrace of loving friends; and the mind perceives the beauty of thought, such as a thoughtful dissertation by a profound and skilful writer. Any one of these beauties has full power in it to attract a perceiving man. . . . Sri Krishna was the most beautiful man, the best musician—the player of the enchanting flute—the greatest thinker and orator—as we know him from his Gita—the mightiest of all, and giver of all comforts. Our Puranas, as well as the great historical epic, the Mahabharata, reveal to us all these characteristics about him. Is it then a wonder that he commanded the love and respect of almost all the people of the time with the exception of a few vain and wretched individuals who had no eye to see any beauty anywhere save in themselves? By his victory over his senses, he attracted the minds of the all-renouncing sages who, on that account, loved to call him Hrishikesha. He won the hearts of his parents by his obedience, dutifulness and sweetness of appearance and manners, which enhanced their natural affection towards him a thousandfold. He won the hearts of his friends by his unbounded love towards them, as well as by constantly protecting them from all dangers. He won the most intense love of all the young shepherd girls by his unparalleled personal beauty. His all-protecting power won for him the regard of all his neighbours, nay, of the whole humanity. It was therefore natural for him to be regarded as God incarnate, even if we do not take into account the signs and miracles that accompanied his birth. Some people, even up to this time, regard him not as a part and parcel of God, or as a means to reach the highest God, but as God Himself!

On reading these lines of Swami Ramakrishnananda in his Sri Krishna—Pastoral and Kingmaker, one is naturally reminded of a remarkable passage of the Srimad-Bhagavatam. When Sri Krishna entered the wrestling arena of King Kamsa, he appeared differently to different people—a thunderbolt to the wrestlers who wanted to fight him, a king to men, a cupid in visible form

to women, a kinsman to the cowherds, a chastiser to the wicked princes, a child to his parents and death to Kamsa, the evil-minded king. Further, he appeared a simpleton to the ignorant, the highest Truth to the Yogis and the Supreme Deity to the members of the Vrishni clan.

The most sublime ideal of love—Comprehended only by the purest:

It is surprising to find that while Sri Krishna is the most adored of all the divine incarnations, he is, at the same time, the most misunderstood and criticised of all. We must remember it is impossible for ordinary mortals like ourselves to appreciate Sri Krishna's tender relations with the Gopis, who loved him as their dearest lover and companion. It must be noted that this was no ordinary love both on the side of the Gopis and on the side of Sri Krishna. Through the contact with him, who was the embodiment of divine love, the Gopis attained not only divine love but also the supreme knowledge. That is why we find in the Gopi Gitā, the song that welled up from their hearts, the Gopis saying:

Na khalu gopika-nandano bhavan, akhila-dehinam antaratma drik. —O Lord, you are not just the son of the Gopi Yasoda; You are the soul of all beings. You are the indwelling Spirit, the eternal witness, dwelling in the hearts of all. God of gods, You have been born for the protection and welfare of the world.

That was the divine consciousness they attained through their love of this great personality.

Speaking of those who ignorantly criticise Sri Krishna, Swami Vivekananda has remarked:

People, with ideas of sex, ideas of money, desiring for name and fame, they dare to criticise and misunderstand the love of the Gopis!

But the question arises: How can we understand and appreciate this divine love? The Swami answers:

Forget first the love for sex and gold, for name and fame, for this little trumpery world of ours. Then and then only you will be able to understand, you would be able to appreciate the love of the Gopis, too holy to be attempted without giving up everything, too sacred to be understood until the soul has become perfectly pure.

Two great souls, one belonging to the 15th century, and another to the 19th century, worshipped Lord Sri Krishna through the Madhura Bhāva, as the eternal bridegroom of the soul. They were Sri Krishna Chaitanya and Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Krishna Chaitanya renounced the world and lived the life of an ideal monk, dedicating himself to the realisation and propagation of ecstatic divine love. In our modern world, Sri Ramakrishna completely renounced lust and greed, and it was then that he would lose himself in divine love and ecstasy.

Let us go to the very origin of the Purana called Bhagavatam. King Parikshit, being sure of his death, had freed his mind from all worldly attachments. He had lost all body-consciousness. Besides that, he possessed an unbounded love for the Lord; and it was he who, with his pure mind, heard the Bhagavatam recited by Sukadeva. The Upanishad says: Āścārya Vaktā kuśalo sya labdhā. The Vaktā, the teacher, must be wonderful; so also should be the student. Here, we have a wonderful student. What of the teacher? Sukadeva, in his turn, was the very embodiment of purity, absolutely free from the body idea and its urges, and he was established in the consciousness of the Supreme Reality.

In the Bhagavatam, we find an anecdote which speaks of Sukadeva's super-human purity and spiritual state: Youthful Suka was walking in the forest, and was passing by a lake in which, as the story tells us, heavenly nymphs were bathing and swimming. They saw Suka coming towards them but took no notice of him. Suka, too, quietly

passed on, unconscious of their presence. Now, Vyasa, the father of Suka, was following his son, asking him to go back home. As the heavenly nymphs observed Vyasa coming at a distance, they at once left the lake and clothed themselves properly, and proceeded to offer their salutations to him. Vyasa deva was surprised at their behaviour and asked: 'I don't understand you: you act so strangely. My youthful son passed this way and you never took any notice of him; but you feel shy in the presence of an old man like me!' The nymphs gave a nice reply: 'Revered Sir, you still have your body-consciousness, the idea of sex. But your son has none of it. He is absorbed in divine consciousness. He did not see us as different from his Ātmā; and, we too did not feel shy in his presence'. Āścārya Vaktā indeed!

So, a great stress is laid in our practical spiritual life on the Adhikāri. One must be competent to receive the teaching; the teaching also is to be received from a competent teacher. Poor mortals, as we are, we should not dabble in what is called Madhura Bhāva. That is beyond our comprehension.

THE MULTI-SIDED IDEAL

But, Sri Krishna has other aspects. In him, we find the divine child, the divine friend, the destroyer of evil; and again, as we see in the Bhagavad-Gita, the divine Guru, one who instructed Uddhava even as he did Arjuna.

He exerted his divine charm on the young and old, on men, women, boys and girls, on the uneducated as well as the learned. Born in prison, of Kshatriya parents, raised by cowherd foster-parents, loving intensely one and all, dynamically active in promoting the welfare of all, but ever completely non-attached. He refused to become a king and yet, as Swami Ramakrishnananda puts it, he was the king-maker. He is again the unfailing guide to those who sought light and

guidance. He is the great Ācārya of the Bhagavad-Gita, who declared himself as the incarnation of the Supreme Spirit, who, for the good of mankind, propounded the various Yogas—Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Dhyāna Yoga—and taught man how all these paths lead to the realisation of the one, indivisible, Supreme Deity.

SRI KRISHNA OF THE VEDAS

There is a reference to Devakīputra Krishna in the *Chāndogya*—one of the most ancient of the Upanishads. He was instructed by a great sage Ghora Āngirasa. This sage, the guru, was one of those who rejected the purely ritualistic interpretation of Yajna or sacrifice. He taught that man verily is the sacrifice. The first years of man's life are the morning oblation; the succeeding years are the mid-day oblation; and the last years are the third oblation. The entire life of man should be one of sacrifice, of consecration. The offerings to be made to the priest, at the end of the Yajna, are to be the practice of moral virtues;—penance or Tapas, charity or Dana, uprightness or Ārjava, non-injury or Ahimsā, are to be the gifts. And the guru taught Devakīputra Krishna:

At the time of death, one should think of the infinite Spirit; one should take refuge in Him saying, 'O Lord, Thou art imperishable. Thou art unchangeable. Thou art the very essence of life.'

This is no death. The soul passes into the life eternal. Here we find a turning point from ritualism to moral practice and devotion to the God of gods.

This Devakīputra Krishna, later on, came to be called also Vāsudeva, to be regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu or Nārāyaṇa. These three names—Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Vishnu came to be identified with the same Deity, as we find in the great Mantra of the Bhagavata School: *Nārāyaṇāya vidmahe, Vāsudevāya dhīmahi, tanno Viṣṇuḥ pracodayāt*. This ancient Mantra occurring in the Āraṇyaka portion means: We contemplate on Nārāyaṇa, we meditate

on Vāsudeva; may the all-pervading Vishnu guide our understanding.

THE INSPIRER OF THE BHAGAVATA SCHOOL

In the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahabharata*, we find some thing of this worship of the God of gods. So, the *Nārāyaṇīya* section, the *Bhagavad-Gita*—which also forms part of the *Mahabharata*—and the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, are the three most important scriptures of the Bhagavata school. The central theme of the Bhagavata Dharma is that through worship, through contemplation on the divine glories, the devotee attains to communion with the Lord. It is an intensely personal relationship with Vishnu, with Nārāyaṇa, who is also the Parama Puruṣa, the Super-personal Deity, and who is the same as Sri Krishna. Many of the later Bhakti schools, like those of Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and Chaitanya, made the worship of Sri Krishna their main feature. The Alwars, the mystics of the Sri Vaishnava School, worshipped the Supreme Spirit as Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, and sang His glory. They specially sang the glory of the divine incarnations, and particularly of Sri Krishna. They had tremendous devotion which expressed itself in various ways.

RELATIONSHIP OF DIVINE LOVE—VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS

We, the people of the modern world, need the key to the understanding of the various attitudes with which these great devotees approached the Lord, the Supreme Spirit. Our superficial intellectualism is drying up our hearts and making us incapable of appreciating the fine feelings, the spiritual sentiments, without which spiritual life becomes something dry and meaningless. Great teachers of the Bhakti School speak to us of the various types of devotion. It is not enough if we only try to approach the Supreme Spirit; we must know how to do it, having the right attitude. There must be a certain definiteness in the approach; hazy ideas and emotions take us nowhere. It is

because of this that the ancient teachers speak of the various Bhāvas or attitudes, with which the spiritual seeker should try to approach the Divine Being, the Puruṣottama, to establish a relationship of love with Him.

And so, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna declares:

In order to realise God, one must assume, take up, one of these attitudes—Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya, Madhura.

The devotee thinks of his own insignificance at the beginning of his spiritual life, and he is overwhelmed by the glory of the Lord. He worships the Supreme Spirit with a quiet devotion. This is *Sānta Bhāva*. It is the theory of the Vaishnava that, as he advances along the spiritual path, the divine reality becomes to him more and more a fact of consciousness, and he wishes to establish a deep relationship of love; he thinks of himself as the servant, and God as the eternal, grand Master. There are others who want to love the Lord as a friend. Then again, there are some more—men and women—who may have a tremendous love and approach God as the Divine Child, with the heart of a mother or father.

Then again, as the devotee proceeds along the spiritual path, as the mind and heart are purified more and more, he yearns to be in eternal communion with the Supreme Spirit. He then comes to regard Him, in a metaphorical way, as the bridegroom of the soul. This implies infinite purity. The soul must be divested of all its weaknesses. It is then that one can feel the Divine Presence and can succeed in establishing the deep relationship of the lover and the beloved. With the awakening of this type of devotion, all worldly ties are torn asunder. Transcending all obstacles, the soul tries to effect its union with the Oversoul, who is called the Parama-puruṣa or Puruṣottama.

THE SUPREME ATTRACTION

As compared to the eternal relation between the eternal soul and the eternal God,

all human relations become insignificant. This is amply illustrated in the *Krishna-Līlā*.

Let us consider the grand phenomenon of sleep. When the time for sleep comes, does the husband care for the wife, or the wife for the husband? Does the mother care for the children or the children for the mother? The answer is, surprisingly may be, in the negative. At the end of the day, the soul is tired. It wants to go back home; it wants to contact the infinite Spirit. And the infinite Spirit is the soul of the father, the soul of the mother, the soul of the son and the daughter, the soul of all. We all wish to reach Him; He is attracting us. But, our misfortune is that, as we try to move towards Him, drawing ourselves away from all distractions, we fall asleep. We fall asleep, as it were, in the lap of the Divine Mother of the universe. We fall asleep, unconscious, in the lap of the Divine Lover, the Soul of our soul.

Very truly, the sage of the Upanishad declares:

This Ātma—meaning the Paramatma—is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else.

This Ātmā is the indwelling Spirit, the inmost soul of all, the Soul of all souls. Therefore, when the devotee tries to move towards Him, all other relations become insignificant. And, when the Lord incarnates on earth, He exerts the same divine attraction, and that is the reason why all souls are attracted towards Him, and He too draws every one towards Himself. That is the mystic experience.

From the spiritual point of view, it is perfectly all right that the soul feels drawn more towards the Soul of all souls, than any one else. In fact, all are drawn—father, mother, son or daughter. That is why Jesus Christ says:

Any one who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and any one who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Because the infinite Spirit is the soul of all, it is but natural for the husband to love the Lord more than the wife, and for the wife to love the Lord more than the husband; for the parent to love the Lord more than the child, and for the child to love the Lord more than the parent. The significance of this fact is to be fully understood and appreciated.

THE ECSTATIC LOVE OF THE ALWARS

The Alwars held the Supreme Spirit as dearer than their dearest. That is why we find in them such an ecstatic love.

We moderners are losing our sense of poetry, our capacity to understand the highest emotions that filled the hearts of our saints and sages, who were eager to share their divine love and bliss with all. Without these feelings, man is a mere nothing. When the head and heart are empty, what is left of us? The heart is to be filled with divine love and the head with divine ideas; and these in turn should find expression through holy action in our life. This is the central theme of spirituality, a point which we should never forget.

Very touching indeed is the attitude with which these great saints of Sri Vaishnavism approached the Lord, with different Bhāvas or attitudes. The saint Periya Alwar has sung of the Lord with the attitude of Yasodā, the foster-mother of Sri Krishna. He is thinking of the Divine Child, calling the moon.

My little one, precious to me as nectar, my blessing, is calling thee (moon), pointing with his little hands. O big moon! if thou wishest to play with this black one, hide not thyself in the clouds but come rejoicing.

It is, however, necessary to note that these devotees do not look upon the divine incarnation just as human; they are conscious of the divine glory. So, in another stanza, we find this great Alwar singing:

He who in his great hand wields club and discus and bow, is calling you. He, the Vishnu with Santha, Cakra, Gada and Padma, He, the Rama with the bow, He is calling you. So, big moon, dwelling in the sky, make haste and come.

ANDAL'S ADORATION

Periya Alwar's daughter, Andal too was a great devotee. She describes how, dwelling on the Lord's glory and meditating on Him, all evils cease:

When thus all pure we come, strewing fair flowers,
Adoring, and with songs upon our lips,
And meditating in our hearts on Him—
Mayan, the child of Northern Mathura;
The Ruler of great Jamuna's sacred stream;
The shining lamp which in the shepherd
caste appeared
Damodaran, who brightly in His mother's
womb;
Faults past and faults to come cease,
Like to cotton that within the fire flames
into dust.
Ah, Elorembavay!

In another remarkable stanza, she has described how, by singing the glory of the Lord and meditating on it, all troubles disappear, yielding place to great joy and happiness. Very touchingly she describes the Krishna-līlā:

Thou born one woman's son, and in one night
Concealed and reared as another's child.
Thou mighty man who wast very fire
In Kamsa's heart stirred unendurably;
Thwarting the evil purpose that he planned:
With longing after Thee we have come
And if the drum Thou but bestow,
Then we will sing Thy bounty
That is worthy Lakshmi's self.
Sing too Thy might.
And all our trouble gone we will rejoice.
Ah, Elorembavay!

She wants a little response. Is it wrong? To go on praying to the Lord and not get any response? Do we pray to a God who is deaf and dumb, who is cold? None would do that. The devotee wants a sign that the Lord is pleased.

There is an interesting story—a Western one. The boy refused to go to Church. His mother remonstrated, 'You wish to go to your friends; you feel happy there. You wish to go to see the play; you feel happy there. Why don't you go to God's house?' The child thought for a while and said, 'Mummy, you go to somebody's house, and every time you go there, you find him missing. Would you care to go to such a place?' Nobody would care to! What a significant remark the child has made!

We wish to pray to Him, meditate on Him, to sing His glory so that we may thereby come into close touch with Him.

'If you to us but once respond,' says the devotee, 'then we will sing Thy bounty.' He would be filled with enthusiasm, if he only gets the slightest response from the Lord, when there is some sign of the Lord's love. One naturally wishes to come in living touch with the Deity, who is living, who is the Soul of all souls, the very source of our life. 'Then we will sing Thy bounty: sing too Thy might. And, all our trouble gone, we will rejoice, we will feel happy.' This is the Sādhana.

NAMMALWAR'S MADHURA BHAVA

Another great Vaishnava saint, Nammalwar, practised what we call Madhura-Bhāva. With deep love and purity in his heart, he sang:

When shall I join my Lord, who poison is
For evil deeds, and nectar for the good?
Husband of her who haunts the lotus-bloom,
Cowherd who thought no scorn to graze
the cows,
Who overpowered the world in his two
strides!

The Lord filled heaven and earth with His two feet while claiming the gift of 'three feet of land' promised by Bali. Where then was the place for the third foot? King Bali received it on his own head.

Such is the glory of the Lord that He did not think it undignified to take up the role of a cowherd and graze cattle. The Divine Being comes down to the plane of the devotee to take him by the hand and enable him to realise His supreme glory.

Nammalwar sang further:

None my heart longs for, save the thief who
touched
And ate the butter in the closepacked hoops:
Him with the belly huge, who at a gulp
Swallowed the world: the trickster who as
dwarf
Gained the three steps great Bali granted
Him.

THE COMPLETE SELF-SURRENDER OF KULASEKHARA

Another great Alwar was Kulasekhara, a king of Travancore. He composed hymns in Sanskrit as well as in Tamil. Overpowered by Divine love, he left his kingdom to become exclusively a devotee of the Lord, and passed his days in singing the Lord's glory and meditating on Him. In one of his hymns he says:

No kinship have I with the men who choose
The evil when the good unmixed is there,
Mad am I for the Lord, the cowherd groom...

Then he says very touchingly:

They the worldly-wise are but mad men to
me, and I am mad too, they think. I call you
Krishna, Ranganatha. I am mad with
longing for you.

That is the heart of the devotee, longing for union with the Supreme Spirit.

In his *Mukundamālā*, Kulasekhara embodies fully the spirit of self-surrender. He sings:

Lord, I do not care for the so-called meritorious acts, which people perform for attaining prosperity either in this world or in the next. I do not care for wealth or for the fulfilment of desires. I do not mind what happens to me; let Karma bring things as it may. But this much is my cherished desire that I should be endowed with unshaken love for Thy lotus feet, not only in this life but in lives to come.

Somehow, the real devotee does not seek *Apunarbhava* or freedom from rebirth. For him, escape from the trammels of the world is not a goal in itself to be aspired for. In our modern days, we find Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna speaking in the same strain. The greatest objective to be achieved is love for the Lord, love for Him who is also manifest in countless forms. That is the great ambition of the devotee; that should be the ambition which should sway the hearts of all spiritual seekers.

Kulasekhara gives expression to the attitude of complete self-surrender in one of his verses:

O Lord, whatever I have done through the body, speech, mind, senses, intellect or through natural impulses—all I dedicate as an offering to Thee, the Supreme Narayana, the All-pervading Spirit.

SELF-SURRENDER—THE LAST SADHANA

As Bhagavan Sri Krishna declares in the Bhāgavatam, this whole-hearted surrender leads the devotee to Divine Love and the highest good.

Let all thy work be done as service unto Me. Free thy mind from all selfish desires and offer it unto Me. Renounce all enjoyments and pleasures; make sacrifices, offer gifts, chant My name, undertake vows, and practise austerities. Do all these things for My sake... Thus by surrendering thyself unto Me through all thy actions, and remembering Me constantly, thou shalt come to love Me. When thou hast come to love Me, there will be nothing more for thee to achieve.

When through the practice of intense spiritual discipline, the aspirant succeeds in purifying his mind, he attains to the mood of complete resignation. True self-surrender becomes the last step in the ladder leading to the highest spiritual experience which

brings about the union of the soul with the Soul of all souls. It is the experience that enabled the Gopis to declare to Sri Krishna, 'You are not just the son of the Gopi Yaśodā. You are the Self of all beings and the Eternal Witness dwelling in their heart of hearts.' As a result of such an experience, Arjuna realised that his friend and charioteer was no other than the Supreme Being, and he burst forth into the prayer:

Salutations to Thee before and to Thee behind. Salutations to Thee on every side. O Lord, Thou art everything. Infinite in power and infinite in glory, Thou pervadest all. Thou art all.

May we realise the real Krishna, who dwells in the hearts of us all and pray that He may guide our understanding and enlighten our consciousness. May He fill our heart with His Divine Bliss and Peace and enable us to share it with our fellow beings.

IN THE LIGHT OF VEDANTA IN THIS NUCLEAR DARKNESS

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

THIS LONG LEAP FROM HONEY TO POISON

In those dim distant sylvan days of the divine dawning of spiritual illumination of man, the Rishis of the Upanishad declared in stentorian voice with the floral flair of contagious eternal joy:

'He is verily *Rasa*. By grasping this One, one becomes blessed; who indeed would breathe, who would remain alive, if this bliss were not in the ether!' *Taittiriya Upanishad II. 7.*

This earth is (like) honey for all creatures, and all creatures are like honey for this earth.....

'This space is (like) honey for all beings, and all beings are (like) honey for this space.... The Self is (like) honey for all beings, and all beings are like honey for this Self.

This Self, verily, is the Lord of all beings, the king of all beings. As all the spokes are held together in the hub and felly of a wheel, just

so, in this Self, all beings, all gods, all worlds, all breathing creatures, all these selves are held together.'

—*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad II. 5.*

Down the ages man built his most exalted things on the ground of this essential and fundamental revelation, this undecaying sanctity, this ultimate security. If there have been poetry in this world and song, if there have been love in this world and joy, if there have been sparkling smiles and limpid tears, if there have been lofty renunciation and utter sacrifice, well, all we owe to that revelation, know we it or not. Culture's finest reaches, philosophy's highest intuitions, religion's profoundest realizations have all flowed from there, from that sky so spontaneously suffused with bliss, this honeyed space, within and without.

But then where actually are we today?

In the man-made complexities of affairs of the day, we seem to be in a very different sort of a world altogether where 'Rasa' is not to be seen, 'honey' seems to have turned into poison and 'bliss' into insufferable tension. It has been declared in no uncertain terms by the Rishis of this nuclear age:

- that man has released in this world 'a new "fire", a cold and invisible fire which has grown up with the scientific research in the present decade imperilling not only the well-being of those who live today but also endangering the health of our children and our unborn children's children';
- that as a result of nuclear explosions, which have been going on, by now the sky is filled with floating poison which will continue to fall and fall and fall for year to years, and will contaminate this earth, its air, water, vegetation and living beings;
- that as a result of intake of this poison fall-out by various ways our bones will become hollow with cancer and our heads hollower; our blood streams will become unbearable with leukemia.
- that the very seed and matrix of life will be contaminated making men sterile or women bear cripples, cranks, idiots or monsters;
- that one does not yet fully know all the possible details 'of the deadly immediate and remote perils of radiation, the strange cold invisible fire which has grown up with the twentieth century'.

Well, then, it is a long leap from the Rishi of the Upanishad to the Rishi of the nuclear science, from honey to poison. And for all that we are just here, this infernal here.

MERE HARVEST OF KARMA-PHALA

'O God, how could we bring ourselves to this impossible pass', one frets, fumes and founders in excruciating agony.

The straight answer can be given: as the fulfilment of a truth.

The predicament in which man finds himself today has been really worked for and earned by man as the *karma-phala* for his toils of ages. And it was not that nobody knew where man was going that way. There have been clear warnings in our books as to

what we might reap in history if we sowed as we did in time. In the world-pass of today we can clearly see the vindication of the truths contained in such teaching of the *Isa Upanishad* as:

Into blinding darkness they enter who worship Avidya but they go into still greater darkness who worship Vidya.

Into blinding darkness they enter who worship the unmanifest but greater is the darkness into which they go who are absorbed in the manifest.

This tremendous worship of nature which has been going on in this world in the form of cultivation of science, this almost exclusive devotion to *avidya* could not possibly land us anywhere else than where we are found today. Unenlightened brute power has almost destroyed the faculty of vision in man, by inflating his ego and exciting his passions beyond measure. He had the go but he did not know where to go.

The worshipper of the Deity on the other hand had remained self-sufficient and thus callously allowed the darkness around to grow and grow until it became so aggressive as to effectively disturb his worship and equanimity and thus threw him in the resultant greater darkness. He knew where to go but he had not the go.

Fecundative darkness and sterile light by acting and reacting on each other has brought about this terrific situation in the world, the like of which was never faced by man. Today nothing is safe of what man has made. Little man, foolish man has been assiduously perfecting his *means* without caring to know the *end*. And now 'progress' has come galling down his sore throat!

Imagine the unmitigated absurdity of the human situation of today to be able to have an idea of the appalling state of mind of some of the rulers of the world:

- It has been said that with the present stockpile of nuclear weapons the whole world can be destroyed several times over. Yet the stock-pile is added to everyday and at what an astronomical waste of the world's wealth! To what purpose?

- (b) It has been claimed that nuclear weapons are so deadly that they cannot be used for gaining victory in war. And peace has obviously no use for them. Yet the manufacture of these weapons continues. To what purpose?
- (c) Suppose an agreement in total disarmament is reached, what then do they do with these weapons? Where do they throw them away? They do not yet know how to throw this demoniac debris somewhere in absolute space beyond the gravitational pull of this earth. And if they explode them anywhere on the earth's surface they only worse-poison the already poisoned elements for all that it may mean to the future of man. Even then production of these weapons goes on. To what purpose?
- (d) This diabolic race in competitive insanity was dangerously going on between two powerfully misguided nations. The contagion spread. Of late, a third nation has joined in the race and contributed to the world atmosphere its share of poison. Now a fourth nation appears to be making ready its eventual contribution. To what purpose?
- (e) In the sweep of this dynamics of human affairs, to what purpose is anything else?

EMERGENCIES AND URGENCIES OF THE SITUATION

There is no way of pretending that it is not a very serious affair adversely involving everyone, everything, everywhere in the world, we cherish and value. One does not see any easy escape from this hopeless situation.

That, however, definitely does not mean that the peoples of the world all should be non-protestant, lambish, fatalist spectators of this march of precision determinism in human affairs. Urgencies do arise on wings of fire out of this maddening situation. Our sensibilities must catch those leaping flames. At this very late moment at least, the common man in the world must stand up, declare his revolt and thunder his protest. At this point of time when the stake is so total, he must make the last great attempt to snatch away this world from the grip of a group of incomprehensible people who are about to smash it to pieces for their egos' sake. The world must be saved for the purposive evolution of man.

Two hyper-urgencies confront us in this regard. And we have to work on these two fronts simultaneously.

- (a) the external urgency of bringing about the cessation of explosion and production of nuclear weapons and eventual disposal of them in a manner least harmful to humanity.
- (b) the internal urgency of saving the minds of men and their cherished values from the nuclear blast, so that even if the worst came, people could face the fire heroically; or if the worst did not come, peoples in the world could develop the new ethics required for the new age.

THE HYPER-URGENCY—EXTERNAL

While on urgency we know that efforts have been afoot in the world. There has been the Disarmament Commission of UN talking endlessly, sometimes even throwing out hopes elating the despondent humanity. About this date of writing (June 25, '57) the London Conference on Disarmament has indeed been flashing hope. One should not take cynical views of these efforts. But one is not also in a position to have abiding faith in the sincerity of politicians who are in the habit of carrying on the game of power politics and cold war in the world.

We have also noted the good work done in this regard by some organisations and individuals. But appeals from peoples of the world, counsels from humanists, savants and religious leaders have had little effect upto now on the minds of those who can stop the explosion and production of nuclear weapons. We have also seen Japan's—the worst sufferer to date from nuclear radiation—pathetic cries for pity falling on the deaf nuclear ears.

Alongside all these efforts, which would be naturally going on, two very high-pressure potent measures yet remain to be whole-heartedly applied. They are:

- (a) Energetic and sustained efforts to awaken the conscience of the people of nuclear nations as distinguished from their governments and make them demand the stoppage of nuclear race of their respective governments.
- (b) Organising a world-saving Satyagraha by the scientists the world over.

It was Dr Albert Schweitzer who was recently reported to have said that until and unless the demand came right from the peoples of the nuclear nations, the cessation of explosion and production of these weapons would not come about. In other words, the real work remains to be done in the heads, hearts and souls of the common men and women of the nuclear nations. Politicians can sometimes ignore the world opinion, but they cannot afford to ignore an unanimous demand of their own peoples from whom they derive their power. Determined and sustained invasion of ideas, therefore, have to be launched on the heads and hearts of common men and women of those nations. By volatilizing the stupor regularly dozed into their sensibilities by powerful governmental propaganda, they have to be brought to demand the stoppage of this business.

Now, while the conscience-awakened common men and women of the nuclear nations can definitely play a creative role, it is the awakened scientists who can really technically determine the situation, not by doing a lot, but by not doing the thing. The responsibility of the scientists in bringing the world to this pass is only next to that of politicians. They owe it to their high intelligence to see even now how much of the future of humanity depends upon their non-co-operation with politicians in this grotesque game. What is wanted in the world today is a world-saving *satyagraha* of the scientists of the world.* Already a move is there in the world in that direction. Only the contagion must be made to spread more quickly until it catches every scientist everywhere in the world.

* In an editorial captioned 'Wanted a world-saving Satyagraha of the Scientists world over', in the April 1955 issue of the *Vedanta Kesari*, the idea of the world-scientists' *satyagraha* was mooted. After two years, with the famous declaration of the scientists of West Germany, the idea no longer seems to be Utopian. Scientists of the nuclear nations also are now stumbling on their conscience.

THE HYPER-URGENCY—INTERNAL

The damage already done by nuclear race to the physical aspect of human existence is not perhaps so frightening as the one done to the mental aspect of it. It requires the explosion of nuclear bombs to spread radiation harmful to human bodies. But even while quietly and mischievously lying in stockpile the unexploded bombs have their own way of all the time blasting minds of men, specially of the nationals of nuclear powers.

Symbolically, the nuclear weapon is only a highly specialized scientific systematization of incalculable violence-potential, a prodigious capsuling of agonising insanity, and a wildly irrational, crude and savage sanction to the indiscriminate devastation of men and things in the world. When the nuclear power stabs the mind of its own nation with this fiendish symbology,—which is an unexploded nuclear weapon lying in stockpile,—it does also great harm to the minds of other nations but certainly not to the extent it does to the minds of its own nationals. It is amazing that powers concerned do not seem to be aware of this sabotage of their national mind at their own hands.

As helpless participants in this terrible 'crime against men and sin against God' the thinking among the people gradually lose grip on their minds and moorings in their lives. Whatever they lay hands upon give way—truth, justice, reason, fairplay, goodness, humanity—everything gives way. They discover in the nuclear weapon the grinning epitaph on the grave of all the cherished values of man down the millenia. And worse, they find that they also have had a hand in writing this epitaph. Alas, they realize that all the perfumes of all the worlds will not 'sweeten' those hands!

From this situation exactly arises the hyper-urgency of saving the minds of men from the nuclear blast.

DOES THE NUCLEAR MENACE IMPERIL THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF LIFE ?

Some severe questions are thrown out in volcanic agony by the good people of the world from the acute breaking point of their minds : 'What nonsense all your *dharma* and *darshana*, saints and prophets and avatars make in the world when bad men could bring humanity to this pass ? What use a God makes when men can make us so miserable, so futile ?'

One can straightway say that nothing has happened in this nuclear times which may be considered to have shaken the spiritual foundation of life. In fact there can just never come a time when this foundation will be in peril. The peril is always in the periphery. The more we live in the periphery, the more we are in peril. To be out of peril we have to live right on the foundation.

The more or less exact position in regard to nuclear menace of today vis-a-vis the spiritual foundation of life can be put this way :

- (a) Atman, which, Sri Krishna said in the *Gita*, is all-pervading, unmoving, immovably, ever changeless, birthless, illimitable, immutable, unthinkable, could not be cut with weapon, burnt with fire, soaked with water, dried with wind, that Atman is intact and will ever remain so. Atman stands as resplendent as ever beyond the pale of radioactivity.
- (b) If Atman remains intact through all eternity, what peril can there be in time which man cannot face victoriously provided he wisely and fearlessly takes his stand on Atman and regulates his affair accordingly ?
- (c) The law of Karma and transmigration cannot be obviated by nuclear explosions but will continue to prevail and operate. The rationale of holding unto the good and true through this nuclear confusion is here. We all shall reap in history what we shall sow in time.
- (d) Though Atman cannot be affected by the nuclear peril, those modifications of matter which so to say encase Atman, can be to a varying degree affected by it. Specially the so called grosser sheaths (*Kosas*) can indeed be severely affected by it. In other words, the peril is material.

(e) Only the unqualified materialist, therefore, need be totally upset over the problem. Others have enough rationale to save their minds and maintain their equipoise.

(f) As to the way of facing the nuclear peril itself in so far as it affects us no better way perhaps can be found than in the following imperative of Sri Krishna :

'Notions of heat and cold, pain and pleasure, are born, O Son of Kunti, only of the contact of the senses with their objects. They are impermanent in their nature. Bear them patiently O descendant of Bharata.'

—*Gita* II. 14.

(g) That 'Rasa', or 'Madhu' or 'Ananda' about which the Rishi of the Upanishad spoke so confidently is not in anyway negated by the poison about which the Rishi of nuclear science speaks warningly. That eternal ineffable honey has not turned into this stupid poison of the day. One thing is sure, it is beyond human capacity to affect that 'honey' any way. That honey is abidingly there, as the very root of the universe as it were, and will be always there. Only our vision is obscured by the poison-spray of our own making.

THIS GREAT HOUR OF GOD

Paradoxically enough, if only we have the required courage to see through things and 'face the brute', we are bound to be convinced that we are living through a great hour of God, as it were, that what is being established in the world today is not *adharma* but *Dharma*. Maybe the grim profile and the blazing eyes of *Dharma* may frighten us. But it is *Dharma* for all that.

Dharma is not necessarily a soft-cushion somnolism. It can be the hard-hitting awakener also.

Dharma is as much in the power of the atom as in the poison which comes out of the wrong use of that power. Death is not out of the pale of *Dharma* as life is not. *Dharma* takes in its mighty embrace the good and the bad, the beautiful and the terrible, creation and annihilation, light and darkness and beyond. *Dharma* is that ultimate law which integrates and interweaves this diversified-unified universe.

If the robbers of history could not destroy *Dharma* by breaking down the houses of

God, vandals of science and politics cannot destroy *Dharma* by exploding bombs. They can only in effect emphasise the truth of *Dharma* either way.

If this is the case with *Dharma*, that is to say, if *Dharma* comes through the fire not only unscathed but ever more effulgent, such is the case with saints, prophets and Avatars who embody the principles of *Dharma* in their lives. If *Dharma* is needed, they too are needed. If *Dharma* stands how does God fail ?

Be it clearly understood that whatever happens in the world, as the resultant of our collective Karma,—pleasant or unpleasant, desirable or undesirable,—*Dharma* can never be disproved, it only gets more firmly established, as it were. Even the mighty resurgences of irreligion (*abhyutthānam adharma-sya*) eventually get turned into fresh efflorescence of *Dharma*. The terrific war of Kurukshetra was only a prelude, nay a means as it were, to the affirmation of religion (*dharma samsthāpana*). Even if the whole world is destroyed through a nuclear war, *Dharma* will only be more proved that way ! Those who have quaint notions about *Dharma* and consider it to be the handmaiden of their wilful worldliness may be shocked to hear this, but such is the strange way of *Dharma*. *Dharma* can be really dangerous and dangerously real.

Egotism is what binds man, blinds him too. As egotism gets the better of man, he is finished up : he dies a spiritual death. That is the opposite of spiritual illumination. Collective egotism is what binds a nation to the slaughter-post of self-destruction. The operation of this law is *Dharma*. Now, if through cultivation of national egotism, nations go the path of destruction, the law of *Dharma* only operates there, just as it operates the other way about too. In other words *Dharma* is not contingent to history. History only works out and demonstrates the laws of *Dharma*. *Dharma* does not stand or fall on account of anything in the world ; rather everything in

the world stands or falls in *Dharma*. Here exactly is the hope of the good (*sādhunām*).

It was the egotism of Duryodhana that brought ruin to his dynasty and also to those who joined him in the expansionism of his egotism. The insufferable world-pass of today is only the resultant of the assiduous cultivation on national dimensions of the same egotism which brought about the ruin of Duryodhana. 'My national system', however adroitly window-dressed, cleverly streamlined and capably advertised is nothing but this egotism nationally sanctioned. When you launch your national egotism like a steam-roller over the world, you come in clash with other steam-rollers seeking to make their systems prevail in the world. If the persistent cultivation of national egotisms has brought the world well-nigh destruction, it is no negation of *Dharma* but the process of the operation of the law of *Dharma*.

NUCLEAR AGE—NOT AN UNMIXED CURSE

Ironically enough, this nuclear age is not here without its own blessings, spiritually speaking, if only we would open our eyes to see them. In a variety of ways the nuclear peril has brought on man a very very high pressure for the release of his spiritual potential. We can no longer live in this world with our hopelessly back-dated minds and hearts. For his very survival man will have to grow fast from within, shed the false and demeaning identifications of various sorts and catch up the cosmic expanse of his being in the world and beyond. There is just no other way !

This is no small gain by itself.

Thanks to the bad scientists and the mad politicians, the nuclear age has already given the world, what may be called, a new unity in negativity. By 'unity in negativity' we do not mean that unity in insanity which the nuclear powers share among themselves, but the sense of companionship in the common doom in the face of equal peril for all.

Scientists have said, wherever nuclear bombs are exploded you will sooner or later get your share of the poison released. Geneticists have unequivocally declared that 'in the science of genetics there is no "safe dose" of radiation and nuclear tests have already ensured that millions of people will be born grossly deformed and diseased....'. Defying all man-made divisions, barriers, reservations and affiliations this calamity equally belongs to entire humanity. You cannot run away with your skin however clever you are. You will have to take it with all.

This is the first time in history we have to take a thing like that. And it has a profound lesson for humanity. This unity is negativity which has been scientifically given to the world by the exploded nuclear weapons, has this spiritual possibility that we should today on the basis of these proven facts better understand the basic and the ultimate spiritual solidarity of humanity.

The foundation of all ethics is today palpably visible in the implications of this unity in negativity. Today it is scientifically proved beyond a doubt—to some people things always require a lot of proving and that 'scientifically'—that I cannot harm my enemy without harming myself. That is to say 'I' that harms my enemy harms myself. In other words, my enemy is myself. To put it differently: myself and my enemy are one and the same. That is how we come to the comprehension of a Vedantic truth through fire in a topsy-turvy clumsy manner: 'There is nothing of multiplicity here' (*Katha Upanishad* II.1.11).

'Whatever is here, that (is) there. Whatever is there, that, too, is here. Whoever perceives anything like many-ness here goes from death to death.'

—*Katha Upanishad* II.1. 10.

If we do not want to go from death to death, if we seek to thrive from life to greater life, there is only one way open to us, to realise that there is nothing of multiplicity here, to see the One that spreads out as many, and to build upon that fundamental oneness.

Through fire though, we do ultimately come to this great hour of the imponderables, the vindication of Vedanta in history.

RELIGION MUST TAKE THIS ADVANTAGE—CHALLENGE—HOW?

But practically speaking, the full spiritual advantage of this situation can never be taken unless at least the leaders of different religions find their own ways to acknowledge and cultivate the truth of fundamental and essential unity of all religions. Only by accepting and working on this legacy—experimentally so well authenticated in our times in the life-laboratory of no less a spiritual scientist than Sri Ramakrishna—religions of the world can have any positive, creative and effective role in the world in this perilous age.

To that end religions of the world must deliberately strive to become more and more spiritual. Frankly, there go on a tremendous amount of shop-keeping and humbugism in almost every religion of the world. But religions unspiritually pre-occupied can have no answer to the exacting requirements of the world situation. It is only the spiritual religion, which teaches men and women in the ways of establishing relation with the Divine,—the all-fulfilment, the ultimate security,—or bring them to discover and manifest their potential divinity, that can squarely face this situation or any other more frightening situation that may arise in any point of time. But such a religion cannot thrive in the thinness of a vacuum. It has of necessity to be cultivated in the ancient setting of diversified spiritual approach and experience.

As in the sphere of economics the cry today is for more and more production of wealth, in the sphere of religion also the demand should be for more and more production of spirituality. Spirituality can be produced in the world as electricity can be generated. Whatever flows in an individual's life from the correct, devoted and sustained

practice of *tyaga* and *yoga*, renunciation and godmindedness, is spirituality.

Both the concepts and ideals of *tyaga* and *yoga* suffer from various misconceptions. Shorn of misconceptions, they are the only means for the production of spirituality, adapted in diverse manners in different religions. *Tyaga* and *yoga* are not meant only for monks. They can very well be integrated in the graduated fashion with the ways, of everyone's life whether one follows the path of *pravritti* or *nivritti* (desire or desirelessness) for the attainment of *abhyudaya* or *nishreyasa* (prosperity or illumination). This is why, in this nuclear age the ideals of *tyaga* and *yoga* have to be guarded and cultivated with the greatest possible care. Therefore, genuine *tyagis* and *yogis* have a vital role to play here and now.

As in the sphere of economics, production of wealth, is meaningless unless it is for distribution, so too in the sphere of religion, distribution of spirituality—if such an expression could be used—is of paramount importance today as it has been ever and for ever. Sri Krishna's injunction to the enlightened to work for *loka-sangraha* (*Gita* III. 25.), Sri Ramakrishna's imperative to Vivekananda to do the 'Mother's work', Vivekananda's own message of service to humanity—all emphasise this point. Today we do not so much require in the world that high-brow religiosity which wrecks itself in callous self-sufficiency, as that ardent verdant, throbbing and passionate spirituality which anxiously employs itself to the service of humanity as the manifestation of the Divine, in order to raise a spiritual harvest in the world as an offering unto God. That ideal of energetic *loka-sangraha* which our Masters place before the well-meaning men cries for an urgent world-wide application for the unwise having been too powerfully active for too long have well-nigh brought the world on the brinks of an explosive futility.

THE SAVING LIGHT

Late Professor Albert Einstein spoke with great insight into essential spirituality when he said:

'The release of atomic energy has not created a new problem. It has merely made more urgent the necessity of solving an existing one. One could say that it has affected us quantitatively but not qualitatively.'*

In other words the nuclear age does not press before humanity any new spiritual problem but only clenches the existing ones in the frame of an oppressive ultimatum as it were. Strontium 90 knocks men sharp to the awakening of certain fundamental ends and valuations of life, which though not unknown, were seldom put in operation in human affairs, on any large scale. But today they desperately cry for application for otherwise there is no future for men.

Look at the correct diagnosis of our ultra-modern maladies in such an ancient book as the *Kena Upanishad*:

'If a man knows It here, then there is Truth: if he does not know this here, then there is great destruction for him. The wise having realized the Atman in all beings becomes immortal on departing from this world.' II-5.

There has been going on much knowing and preparation for ever much more knowing in this world except of that 'It' what constituted truth of things, and held all things together. If we individually and collectively do not know what holds us together, if we do not know how to hold unto what holds us together, we fall apart and eventually destroy one another. What wonder then that continuous massive non-knowing of this all-important 'It' which gives significance and order to everything in the universe, nay the very arrogant and wilful rejection of it from the scheme of life in this world, should push humanity along to that 'great destruction', which does not seem very improbable today? Einstein is

* *Vida: Out of my Later years*, Philosophical Library, New York, P. 185.

just right when he says that it is merely that ancient pain of the old colic, only unbearably intensified, nothing new!

We have it in the *Katha Upanishad* :

Children pursue external pleasures (and so) they fall into the snare of widespread death. But the wise do not desire (anything) in this world having known what is eternally immortal in the midst of non-eternals. IV-2.

If the snare of death seems to be too widespread all over today, if the very atmosphere of the earth seems to be instinct with secret murder, it is all the outcome of man's much and over too much seeking and pursuing of external pleasure at the cost of internal illumination.

In the world the cultivation of the knowledge of science, commands a great respectability. And one does not normally dare question that respectability. In fact, that respectability is not perhaps undeserved as far as the pursuit of objective knowledge is concerned. But factually, science can not only not provide men with any idea of goal, it moreover fatally reduces itself to the culture and resultant augmentation of the powers of the senses for the indiscriminate enjoyment of external pleasures, which according to the *Upanishad* quoted above, make of people the catches in the snare of death. If this truth required proving, has it not been sufficiently proved today?

Even then the illusions of science continue to beguile the minds of even the best of men!

Too true, science has also provided men with happiness. Nobody denies that. But

what type of happiness. Only that happiness which is contact-born. And all contact-born happiness are sources of misery in the ultimate analysis of things. (*Gita V-22*). Otherwise, how could so much of poison come out at the end of so much of science?

To say all this is not to dogmatically denounce whatever contribution science has made to human civilization but only to emphasise the fact that with all those contributions we are just here in this terrible darkness. But obviously we do not like to be here. And science itself has no light by which it can obviate the darkness of its own creation. The light must come from elsewhere.

We must therefore turn to another source from where comes that unfailing light which man today requires for his very survival and will be requiring to the end of times.

'When the sun has set, Yajnavalkya, and the moon has set, and the fire has gone out and the speech has stopped, what light does a person here have?' 'The self, indeed, is his light,' said he, 'for with self indeed, as the light, one sits, moves about, does one's work and return.'

—*Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* IV-3. 6.

If man wants today to return to that heaven of sanity where alone any purposive life is conceivable on this earth, he can do so only with the light of the Self, for there is no other light which does not go out when winds blow, storms sweep and catastrophes overtake.

And this light comes to us through Vedanta.

Vedanta declares that religion is here and now, because the question of this life and that life, of life and death, this world and that world, is merely one of superstition and prejudice. There is no break in time beyond what we make. What difference is there between ten and twelve o'clock except what we make by certain changes in nature? Time flows on the same. So what is meant by this life and that life? It is only a question of time, and what is lost in time may be made up by speed in work. So, says the Vedanta, religion is to be realised now.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION IN MADRAS

SWAMI SHUDDHASATTWANANDA

When Swami Vivekananda came back to India in 1897 after his triumphal success in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, he was accorded an unprecedented reception by the citizens of Madras. A host of Swamiji's devotees and friends who were watching with admiring interest his unrivalled success in the West, requested him to open a centre in the city of Madras. Swamiji replied saying, 'Yes, I will send you one who is more orthodox than your most orthodox Brahmins and more learned than your Pandits.' Swamiji left for Calcutta and the next steamer brought Swami Ramakrishnanandaji, a direct and most devoted disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, in the beginning of 1897. The seed that was sown by Swami Vivekananda by his lectures and talks was watered and nurtured with meticulous care and affection by his erstwhile brother-disciple Swami Ramakrishnananda who worked like a giant and spared no pains to translate the teachings of his beloved Master into practice through his interviews, classes, lectures and by establishing a number of centres throughout South India. He started taking as many as eleven classes a week in different parts of the City. So, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission which is today so well-known throughout South India, was

started sixty years ago in the Castle Kernan (Ice House), a majestic building overlooking the sea on the Triplicane beach where Swami Ramakrishnananda was accommodated for long ten years. It was at this Ice House that the great Swami Vivekananda also stayed.

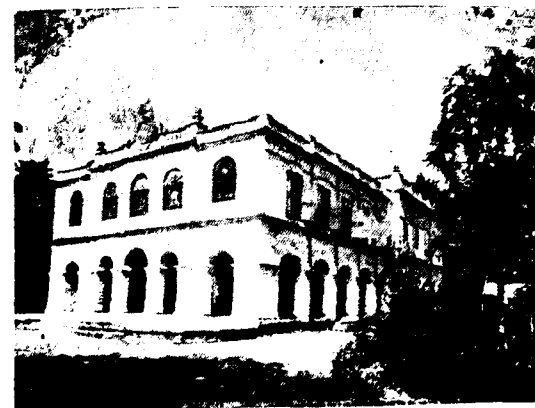
In this short article we shall try to give a brief account of the present activities in the city of Madras of the Ramakrishna Order which is divided into two categories, the Math and the Mission.

THE MATH

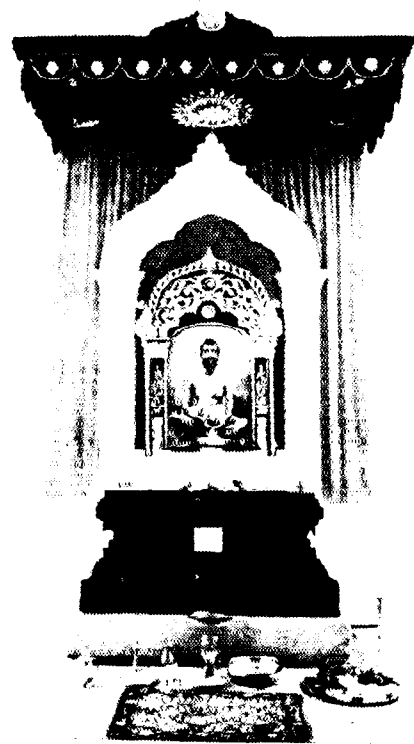
The Math is known as Sri Ramakrishna Math and is situated at 11, Sri Ramakrishna Math Road (formerly Brodies Road), Mylapore. It is managed by the President who is appointed by the Trustees of the Ramakrishna Order. The President of the Math is the ex-officio President of all the Math and Mission institutions in the City. The Math so to say is the mother institution. The activities of the Math are mainly divided into: (a) Spiritual, (b) Publication, (c) Medical and (d) Educational.

(a) Spiritual

There is a beautiful shrine dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna where regular worship, Arati, Prayer and Bhajana are conducted. In the Prayer Hall, the monks and devotees meditate and do the parayana (reading and chanting the scriptures). The spacious lecture Hall is utilised for holding regular weekly religious classes and occasional public meetings in connection with the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and other saints and Avatars. The President and senior Swamis grant personal interviews to the devotees and discuss spiritual matters and thereby help them to progress spiritually. Weekly, fortnightly and occasional religious classes



The Math



Math Shrine

and lectures are conducted at Triplicane, Penitentiary and other parts of the City.

The Math gives regular training also to Brahmacharis who are eligible to join the Order.

The Birth Centenaries of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother were celebrated with great pomp and grandeur in 1937 and 1953 respectively in all parts of the City. Feeding of the poor, processions, meetings, publication of Centenary memorial volumes etc., formed part of the celebration. A library which at present contains 9,044 books was started during the Centenary celebration of Sri Ramakrishna and an annexe each was added to the publication department and charitable dispensary to commemorate the Centenary celebration of the Holy Mother.

Durga Puja in image which was specially brought from Calcutta, was celebrated with

due solemnity and eclat in 1952, 1953 and 1954 which was attended by innumerable devotees.

(b) Publication Department

The publication department of the Math was started by Swami Ramakrishnanandaji in the year 1908 when his own book *Universe and Man* was published. Then he wrote *Sri Krishna, the Pastoral and King Maker, Soul of Man* and many other books. Today the publication department is the biggest of its kind of all the Math and Mission publication centres. An English monthly *The Vedanta Kesari* was started in 1914, a Tamil monthly *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam* in 1921 and a Telugu monthly *Sri Ramakrishna Prabha* in 1944. All these three magazines are read with interest by thousands of persons not only in India but abroad also and thereby they go a long way to disseminate the ideals of the Math and Mission and the age-old culture and religion of our motherland. All the principal Upanishads, Gita and some of Sri Sankara's and Sri Ramanuja's works over and above the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature have been published by the Math, the most outstanding of them being *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master*. Each of these has undergone more than one edition and these two volumes give the reader a more or less comprehensive idea about the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. This department has also published a number of books in Tamil and Telugu, mostly translations of Swami Vivekananda's works and the total number of books published so far is 174 — 61 in English, 56 in Tamil and 57 in Telugu.

Every year new books are being added and demand is growing more and more for the Math publications. The Math publications go to all parts of the globe.

The department has a building of its own and a spacious godown and is managed mostly by the monastic members.

(c) Medical

A charitable dispensary was started to render service to poor and helpless patients in and around the locality. It came into being in 1925 when late Dr B. Raghavendra Rao, retired Civil Surgeon, placed his voluntary services at the disposal of the Institution and undertook to meet the recurring expenses. Since then this dispensary has gradually grown to be one of the most popular centres to cater to the medical needs to the sick. The popularity of the dispensary will be evident from the fact that the total number of patients treated in 1956 came to the high figure of 1,21,291 as against 970 patients in 1925, the year when it was started. The accommodation was found to be too insufficient for such a large number of patients.

So, it was decided to have another building to lessen congestion and provide special departments such as Dental, Eye, Ear-Nose-Throat, Laboratory, etc. To commemorate the Holy Mother Birth Centenary, it was resolved to name the new building as Holy

Mother Centenary Annexe. Land measuring one and a half acres contiguous to the eastern and southern sides of the Math was purchased from the Kapaleeswarar Devasthanam and the new Dispensary Building was declared open on 29th December, 1956 by Srimat Swami Vishuddhanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission before a large and distinguished gathering.

The cost of construction and equipment came to about a lakh of rupees. The new building accommodates the special departments which are manned by Specialists.

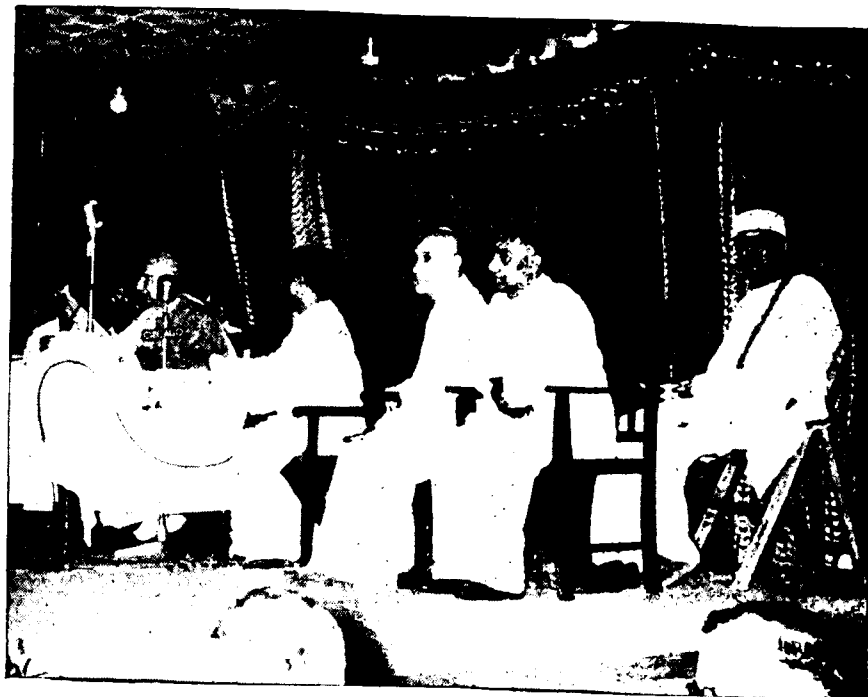
A most up-to-date X-ray plant has recently been installed and will start functioning soon. Free treatment is meted out to the patients that attend this dispensary.

(d) Educational

Though almost all the educational institutions are run by the Ramakrishna Mission, a higher elementary school is run by the Math in a very congested area of George Town, the number of students being 587,



Dispensary



Opening of the Dispensary Building

mostly girls. The school is accommodated in a rented house and is known as the Sri Ramakrishna Math National Girls' School.

THE MISSION

The Ramakrishna Mission has four affiliated branches in the city of Madras: (1) The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, (2) Vivekananda College, (3) Sarada Vidyalaya and (4) Boys' High School.

STUDENTS' HOME

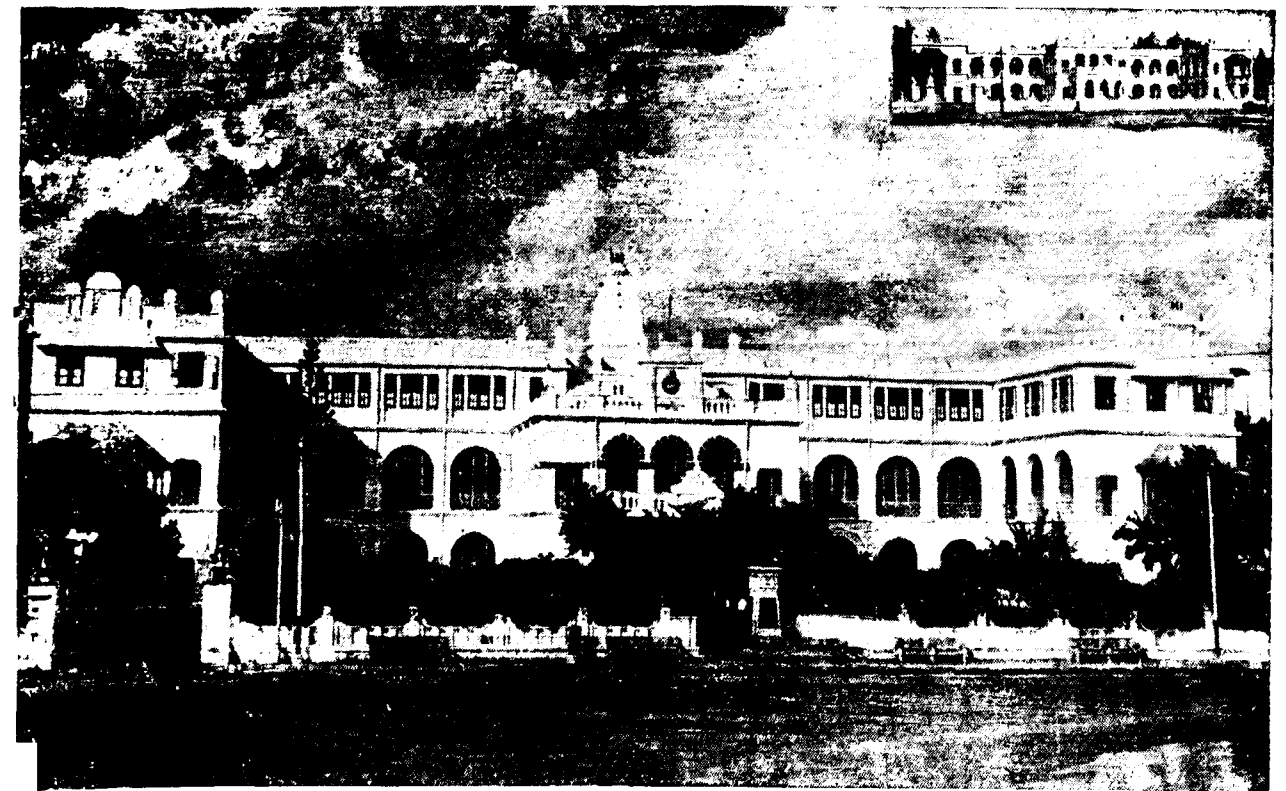
This is the oldest centre of the Mission in Madras started in 1905 by the late Ramaswamy Iyengar and Ramanujachariar, the two stalwarts of the Ramakrishna movement in Madras. They were ardent devotees of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji and served the Mission with all love and care till the last day of their life.

The object in starting the Home was to help the poor and deserving students with boarding and lodging, to educate them in the Gurukula system of ancient India and

to make them live a life of Brahmacharya, train their character and inspire them with high ideals of self-sacrifice and service. From a humble beginning with only five boys the Home progressed steadily and now it is the biggest institution of its kind in the whole State imparting different kinds of education to more than 300 students providing them with free board and lodging.

In 1921, the Home constructed a magnificent building in Mylapore not as a charity asylum but in grand form of a temple of learning. Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission performed the dedication ceremony on May 10th, 1921.

The activities of the Home are mainly fourfold—Collegiate, Technical, Secondary and Elementary. So far as the first is concerned, the Institution provides only a hostel, but the Technical and the High School sections are run as self-contained units providing both instructional and residential facilities. The Home also runs a



Students' Home

Harijan Hostel and another elementary school at Malliankaranai, 54 miles away from Madras. The Technical section is at present confined to imparting training in L.A.E. Course; and L.M.E. Course is going to be opened next year.

VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE

The spectacle of hundreds of deserving young boys being refused admission into Colleges caused widespread grief and gave rise to a strong desire that a first grade college should be established in Madras. From the very inception of the idea it was felt that the Institution should be open to all who had the qualification of merit. It was also felt by the promoters that the management of the college should be entrusted to the Ramakrishna Mission whose labours in the field of education as well as of religion and social service are well-known and whose name is a guarantee for enlightenment, magnanimity of purpose and the

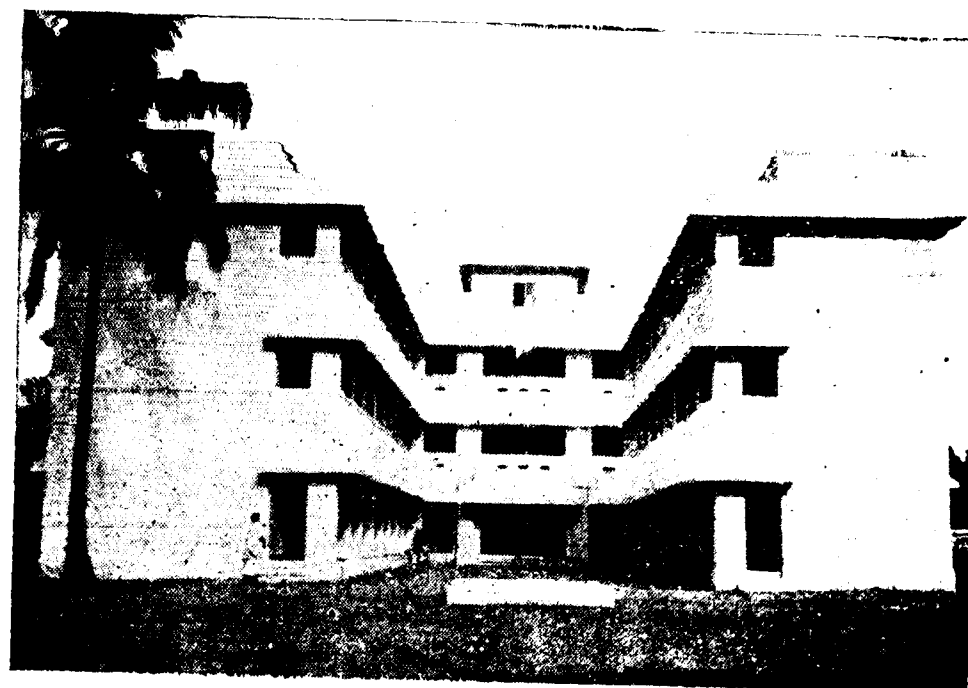
widest catholicity of beneficence and this temple of learning should be called Vivekananda College after the name of the great patriot-saint, the founder of the Mission.

The College was formally declared open by Swami Kailashanandaji, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Madras, on the 21st June, 1946. The College is situated in Mylapore adjacent to the Students' Home.

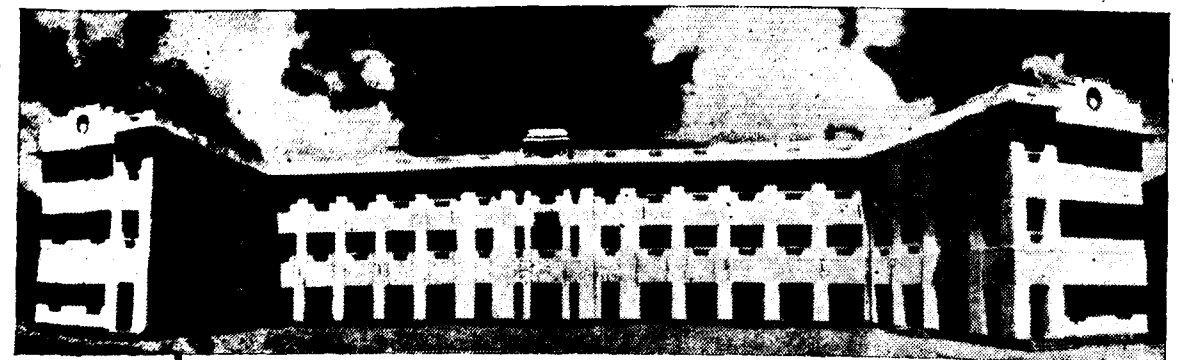
Within this short period the College has been known as one of the best institutions in the South for imparting higher education. It offers instruction up to the Post-graduate and Honours standards. The efficient staff and the brilliant results of the College attract students from various places and hundreds are to be refused admission for want of accommodation. There is a hostel attached to the College and about 200 students are accommodated there. The present strength of the College is about 1,550.



Vivekananda College



Vivekananda College Hostel



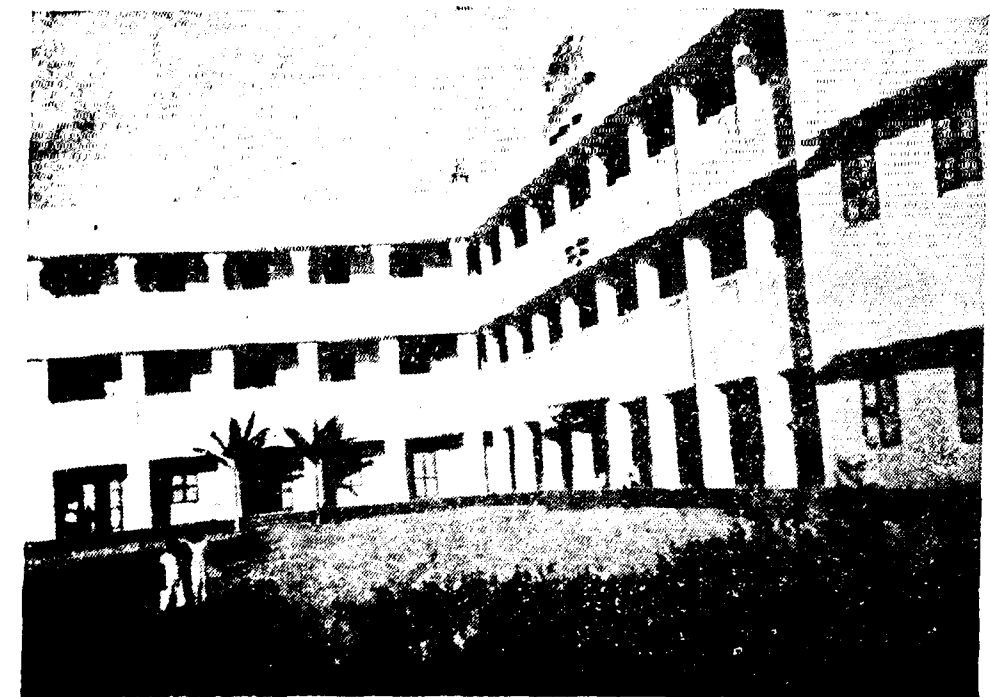
Sarada Vidyalaya High School

SARADA VIDYALAYA

The Sarada Vidyalaya, Thyagarayanagar (Madras) which was started in 1921 by some ladies imbued with the ideal of service, was amalgamated with the Mission in 1938 when the girls' sections which formed part of the Boys' High School in Forms 4, 5 and 6 were constituted into a separate Girls' High School, and incorporated with the Sarada Vidyalaya. The school was first housed in thatched sheds and in 1953 a mag-

nificent three-storeyed building was constructed. The number of students started increasing every year and in 1956, it rose to 1,711.

Thus from a humble beginning, the institution has risen to be a self-contained centre for women's educational work consisting of a High School, a Training School (Secondary as well as Elementary grade), a Model Elementary School and a Higher Elementary School, all situated in the same locality.



Sarada Vidyalaya Training School

The Training School admits women, most of whom are widows, some left destitute by their husbands and a few unmarried adult girls with no facilities to get married. They are helped, educated and trained to become teachers. The strength of the Training School is 194. The Model Elementary School attached to the Training School has 593 girls on the role.

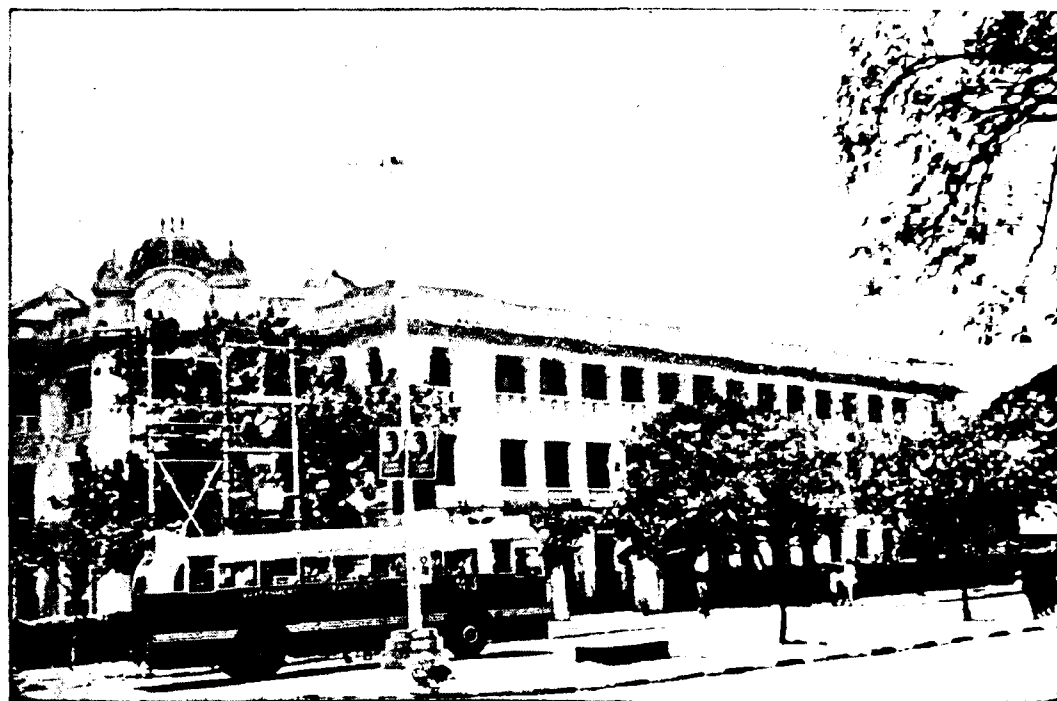
In the Higher Elementary School free education is imparted to 835 children. There are three hostels for girls which accommodate 150 boarders, 130 of whom are free. The total number of students under the management of the Sarada Vidyalaya thus comes to 3,333.

Boys' High School

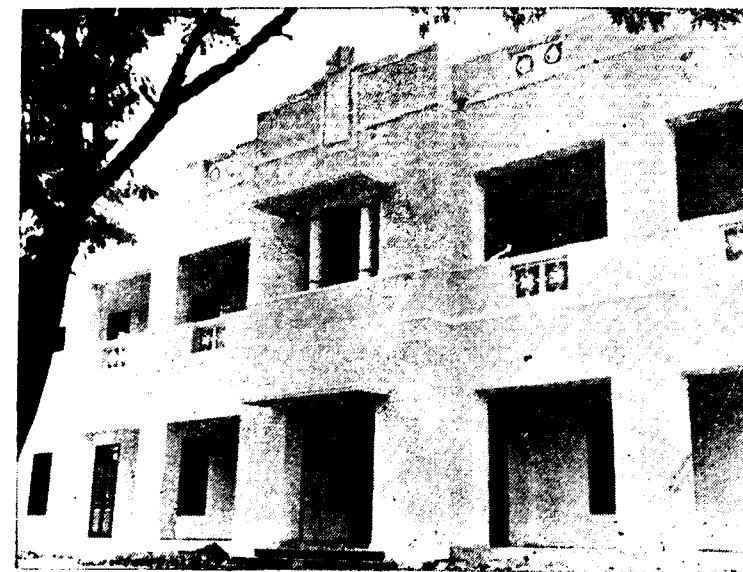
At the earnest request of the residents of the new suburb of Thyagarayanagar, the School was started in 1932 with a strength of 180 boys. It was first located in a rented house and as the strength increased, temporary thatched sheds were added. In 1937

another branch school was started in the northern part of Thyagarayanagar as the total strength had increased to 1,608 by that time. The occasion of the celebration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was taken advantage of to get the foundation stone laid for a pucca building on a site north-east of Panagal Park. Lord Erskine, the then Governor of Madras paid high tributes to the Mission activities while laying the foundation stone. In June 1940, the School came into its new habitation constructed at a cost of over a lakh and a half.

The following schools were started under the same management to meet the growing demand for admission: (a) South Branch School, (b) Griffith Road Elementary School, (c) Rajabadar Mudaliar Road Ele. School and (d) Bazlullah Road Ele. School. A boys' hostel was also started and a Swami was put in charge of it. The North Branch School was converted into a full-fledged High School in order to lessen the congestion of the Main High School.



Boys' High School (Main)



Boys' High School (North Branch)

The total number of students reading in the above schools is 4,440.

It is evident from the above short account that the Ramakrishna Mission is playing a very important part in moulding the life of the younger generation of Madras who are the future citizens of the country as more than 10,500 students are given education in the institutions of the Mission.

The Mission is imbued with the noble ideal to impart 'Man-making education' laid down by Swami Vivekananda. The Mission is confident that with the wholehearted co-operation of the Government, the public and above all the band of ideal teaching staff, it will stride forth to serve the country to the best of its ability.

TO NIVEDITA

(A free rendering by S. Prema of a Tamil poem by Subramania Bharati)

Nivedita, Mother,
Thou, Temple consecrated to Love,
Thou, Sun dispelling my soul's darkness,
Thou, Rain to the parched land of our lives,
Thou, Helper of the helpless and lost,
Thou, Offering to Grace,
Thou, Divine spark of Truth,
My salutations to Thee!

चरैवेति

THANKS TO ALL IDOLS

'What has happened since You and I met?' The poet himself has given us an answer that can stand the test of time. He has said: 'All I thought I was, has vanished!' Each one of us can look into the past and see the accuracy of this brief summing up of his personal experiences by the poet. To cover individual variations, what is needed is to bring out the potentialities of the expression, 'I was.'

We can take the example of our own early days at school. The sight of the teachers and higher class students marching solemnly into their separate halls was surely an inspiration. Often we peeped from a distance at the seniors arguing with each other in their Debating Societies, or rehearsing dramas as a preparation for their annual functions. As juniors, we waited in eager expectation, year by year, to get into the privileged circle. Glancing at the official world as it appeared to our limited vision then, we admired the men who occupied the top line in our own town or district. Many of them were old students of the very Universities which we were planning to enter in due course. Educated unemployment was unknown in those days,—half a century ago. Still those who shone well in public service were not necessarily those who scored high rank in examinations. Our immature minds could not clearly see at the time that success in actual life depends upon many qualities of head and heart, of which academic eminence is 'just one'. Determination to do one's best, passion for truth, resourcefulness, spirit of service,—these are virtues that lead to genuine greatness, especially in the sense of the capacity to do solid work

for the benefit of the community. These could be cultivated, no doubt, by a proper utilization of the facilities supplied by the Universities. But, if owing to certain reasons like the absence of competent guides, educational institutions are unable to create helpful conditions, it is of the greatest importance to seek the necessary aid from other agencies. All these are realized by us now. But in those days the University Examinations and Diplomas were our main idols. We worshipped them with all our heart, and now feel thankful to them not only for the sort of mental clarity that resulted from our devotion to them, but also for the general cultural background it gave us,—against which we could later view them, and which showed us what steps to take to improve ourselves in other directions.

It has been a source of pleasure and profit to take a mental stroll from the school front to the old ancestral home. There, how often we ran delightedly into the arms of grandparents whose mellowed smile contained the distilled essence of life's joys and sorrows, defeats and victories, perplexities and solutions, resistances and surrenders! As years passed we grew into adult age and began to understand and shoulder the duties and responsibilities attendant upon it. New idols soon appeared,—an ideal home, a well-knit family, an adequate income, wise spending, education of children and the task of fixing them in proper places. Into this new worship we poured our best energies. We plunged whole-heartedly into the work of procuring the requisite materials and learning its rituals. All that involved prolonged vigils and hard

disciplines. But did we get the sweetness and peace that we hoped for in the first flush of enthusiasm? Rather, did external phenomena or internal reactions correspond very much with the 'forms' in which we invoked them at the commencement? No; the 'forms' changed. But we did gain. In a sense the idols, as originally 'moulded', got 'broken' or 'dissolved' as the worship proceeded. But their subtle spirit in the 'form' of wider sympathies and greater goodwill entered our heart, became permanently installed there, and began to shed their benign influence on all later plans, thoughts, words, and deeds. Each idol takes us some distance along the road, and when its limit is reached, it shows us the way to what lies beyond.

Everyone is ambitious. Most of us want wealth, social influence, power, and, in howsoever subtle a 'form', that intangible acquisition, Fame. Our programmes of philanthropic work, our efforts in the political field, our patriotism, our self-sacrifice, our religious enterprises have invariably at their back some selfish impulse to start with. Let us restrict the example to the pursuit of fame and imagine we get it for a time, and lose it, as we are bound to in the natural course. Most probably we shall review our evolution in the following way: 'I thought that fame would last, and would yield me unbroken satisfaction. But I find now that I was wrong. Things are not exactly as they appear at first sight.' If our power of observation is sharp, we shall take some more steps in analysis. We shall see that we were not trying for fame of our own free will, after making 'independent' decisions. We were really running behind it as slaves, lured by the charms we saw in it from a distance. We could not see the simple truth that everything acquired is the result of a number of forces operating from different directions. Our own struggle constitutes only one of those forces. Even if we manage to exert it as before, there is no guarantee

that other forces would continue unchanged. Sooner or later, therefore, the state imagined to be desirable at one time must give place to another less satisfactory, corresponding to the variations arising during succeeding moments. We can dig into the mind further and see the motto that was all along guiding our plans. We saw the world spread out before us and made a twofold assumption: that there were a number of blanks within us, and that the external world was a kind of 'Universal Stores' from which we could take the things needed to fill those blanks!

It is futile to ask why we made,—or have to make—such assumptions. To tackle an unknown thing, we have to proceed on some assumption or other. Without action we cannot make any test or verification; and every action must start from somewhere, from some base line which can be left off after checking results from outside and inside. We can frame the series thus: assumption, experiment, checking, modified process, elimination of errors, and lastly, truth and knowledge. We may, if we like, ask why nature should have kept the path to wisdom strewn with doubts, anxieties, and pain. The only reply possible is a counter-question: 'What harm, especially when we see later that it is the same nature that has fashioned the equipment for our work, for applying tests, for registering pain, as also for learning the skill to avoid the pains or to face them? She also has arrangements to preserve 'our' insight, when 'got', and to release, by way of interest, as it were, and without the need for our conscious intervention, a regular supply of creative forces for the benefit of the less advanced people remaining in the struggling stage yet. If 'we' who march to illumination, wish to put any question at all, it ought to be only why nature should take all the trouble to go through such tremendous modifications, leaving consciousness free and perfect on 'our' side of the demarcation line at the end. Its reply is just similar to what the

Young India and *Harijan* during the last twenty years. Needless to say, it will not be easy for Christian Mission to get a better adviser in this regard than Gandhiji, who has been even called the best Christian since Christ.

Though mainly dealing with Christian Missions and the problems they habitually raise, many other

connected general issues discussed by Gandhiji also find their place in this book.

Christians and Hindus alike will stand to gain by making a thorough study of the book containing Gandhiji's well-considered views on a controversial theme so fundamental to religious harmony in this country.

S. B.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

The ninety-fifth tithipuja of Swami Ramakrishnananda was observed on the 25th July '57 in the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore. The day started with Arati in the Shrine followed by singing. Boys from Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, chanted selected portions from the Gita and the Upanishads between 7 and 8 a.m. In the Shrine, elaborate worship was then performed along with Arati and Homa. Nearly 500 devotees attended all the functions and were served with prasada. With the feeding of 1000 Daridra-narayanans the morning function came to a close.

In the evening after service in the Shrine there was a gathering of devotees. Following singing and reading of the life of Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Chidbhavananda spoke on him. Swami Ojasananda and Sri K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar gave their reminiscences of the Swami.

The public celebration on 28th July '57, started with Harikatha on Kannappa Nayanar at 3 p.m. by Vidwan Sri Rajagopala Sarma.

The meeting started at 5-30 p.m. with Swami Chidbhavananda in the chair. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the distinguished president and speakers of the evening. Two boys of the Mission School at Mambalam (North branch), delivered short speeches on Swami Ramakrishnananda. Sri N. Subrahmanyan (Anna) spoke in Tamil. He mentioned how the life of the Swami had profoundly inspired him, and pointed out by quoting several passages how the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples are

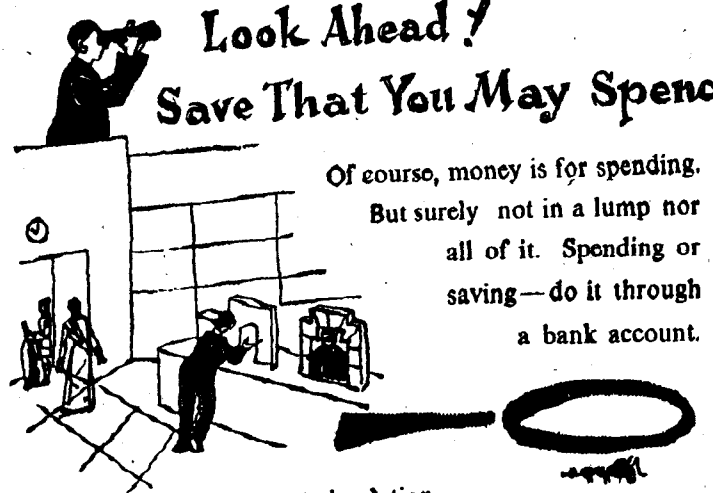
explanations of the teachings of the Gita and the Upanishads.

Prof. A. L. Krishnan, Principal, Jain College in the course of his talk in English spoke with emotion and eloquence about the significance of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the Gurubhakti of Swami Ramakrishnananda. He quoted profusely from English writers to substantiate his points or to give parallel ideas.

Swami Chidbhavananda addressed the gathering in Tamil. In the course of his speech he observed that in every field history repeats itself. The Divine lila which was played by Sri Ramakrishna and his band of apostles is in line with what we see in the spiritual history of India from time immemorial. The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna are like the chosen flowers of a bouquet. Sri Ramakrishna can be understood well only if the lives of his disciples are closely studied. All the disciples are Ramakrishnanandas (having bliss in Ramakrishna) in their own ways. Swami Ramakrishnananda, who was the very incarnation of devotion to the Guru, is the key to spiritual life, while Swami Vivekananda is the spiritual representative, of the presiding deity of the temple, viz. Sri Ramakrishna. We see in their lives how true devotion, faith and one-pointed love can transform the life of an aspirant. The lives of these great personalities are the living examples for us to spiritualise our lives. We should become the masters of our own minds and aim for the highest life. Then only we are worthy to call ourselves, the sons and daughters of this noble land.

The well-attended meeting came to a close with the vote of thanks by Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan. The celebration ended with Arati and distribution of prasada.

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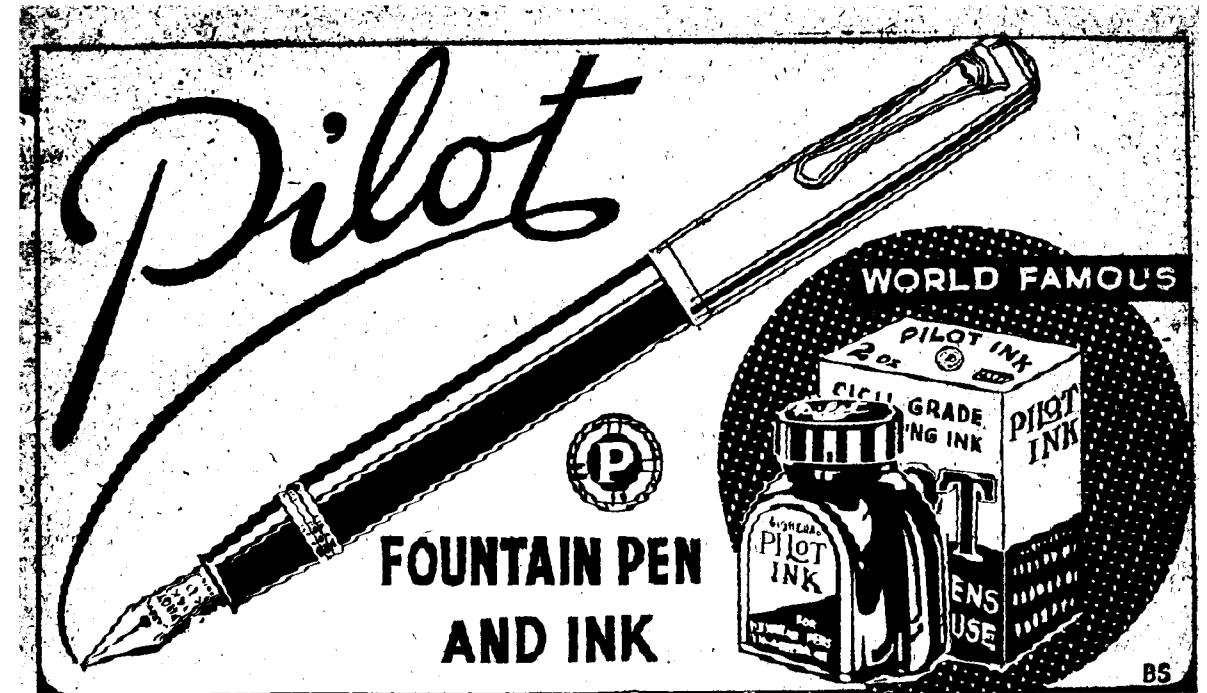
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