

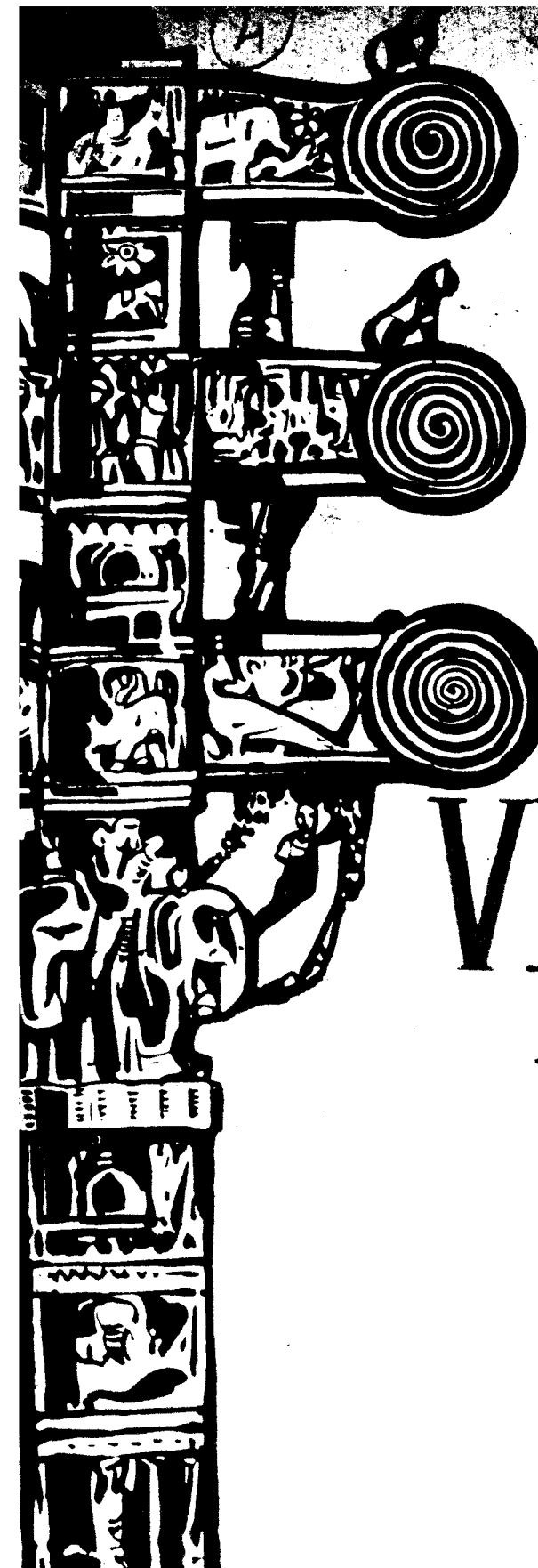
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THE VEDANTA KESARI

Vol. XLV
No. 9



January
1959

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE MADRAS-4
INDIA

MANU DHARMA SASTRA

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BY DR. KEWAL MOTWANI

WITH A FOREWORD BY

PROFESSOR ERNEST WOOD

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XLV

JANUARY 1939

No. 9

WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA FROM FORM TO FORM DIVINE

"God is One; His names and Forms are Many."

ON SITA

Hearing his father's message, the All merciful Rama tried in every way to persuade Sita to return. Replied Sita: "Hearken, most dear and loving Lord! Can a shadow exist apart from its substance? Where is the sunlight without the sun, or the radiance of the moon, when the moon is not?" Having uttered this affectionate prayer to her husband, she turned to the minister. 'Sire, take it not ill of me if in my grief I withstand you. Away from the lotus feet of my lord's son all my kindred are nought. I have seen my father's luxury and magnificence, yet though his palace be such a blissful abode, I have no pleasure there without my spouse. My Imperial father-in-law is of such glorious renown, yet though he be so great and his family be so dear to me, I could not find pleasure in a single thing, away from the lotuses of Rama's feet. Though the forest road be rough, and the country mountainous, full of elephants and tigers, boundless lakes and streams, wild beasts and birds, all this is delightful, if my dear Lord be with me." (Tulsi Das, 'Ramayana', p.265-6)

Sri Ramakrishna: "One day when I was sitting under the Panchavati—not meditating, simply sitting—an incomparable, effulgent female figure appeared before me and illumined the whole place. I saw that it was that of a woman, for there were in her no signs of a goddess. The extraordinary spiritual expression of that face bespeaking love, sorrow, compassion and endurance was generally not seen even in the faces of goddesses. Looking graciously at me she advanced towards me with a slow, grave gait. I wondered who she might be, when a black-faced monkey came suddenly, nobody knew whence, and sat at her feet and someone within my mind exclaimed: 'Sita! Sita! who was all sorrow all her life.' Saying 'Mother!' repeatedly, I was then hurriedly going to fall at her feet, when she came quickly towards me and entered this (pointing to his body). Overwhelmed with joy and wonder I lost all consciousness of the external world." (Great Master, p. 161)

HOLY MOTHER AND SIMPLE FAITH

Religion is a very natural thing in a man's life. It is in his very constitution. The primitive man had it. A child has this natural faith in everything around. But with the growth of his mind, with the acquiring of reason and knowledge he begins to doubt. The Biblical story of Adam's tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge and as a result his downfall is true in a sense. The high pedestal in which man was because of his intimate relations with the higher spirit is no more his, for his ego separates him. The function of religion is to regain that unity. So to develop in religion is to develop this natural faith. That is why all great teachers have advised man to return to the simplicity of a child. Says Sri Ramakrishna:

'Till one becomes simple like a child, one cannot get divine illumination. Forget all the worldly knowledge that you have acquired and become as ignorant of it as a child; then you will get the knowledge of the Truth.'

There is also the well-known saying of Christ:

'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'

The psychological benefit of cultivating the attitude of a child is immense. Modern man is beset with many difficulties over which he has no control. He can face them only if he has a simple faith in God. Dr Peale gives a fine illustration of this in one of his books.

Once a young lady phoned to him. As her husband had gone to war she was very nervous. 'What shall I do?' she kept repeating. 'It would kill me to

lose my husband.' 'How old are you, young lady?' he asked over the telephone. 'Twenty-six.' 'Have you a youngster there?' 'Yes, a two-year-old girl,' she replied. 'Is she upset and worried like yourself?' 'Why, of course not!' she answered. 'How do you explain her lack of nervousness?' he asked. She hesitated. 'Why, because she's a baby. Besides, she has me, her mother, with her. I suppose she just puts her trust in me and lets me do the worrying.' That gave Dr Peale an opening to suggest a remedy. 'Take your little girl on your lap. Now make a transference; try to think of yourself as a child in relationship to God. As your child puts her trust in you, her mother, so may you, by concentrating upon it, put your trust in your Heavenly Father. Put your husband—put all three of you in God's care. Practise this simple procedure until peace comes to your mind.' She practised it and had control of herself and said, 'I know I won't get panicky again.'

Now this is a very direct application of simple faith in a life's situation. What we learn when we read the life and talks of the Holy Mother is this very simplicity in religion. That is why she discouraged an anxious devotee about striving beyond his capacity saying that he ought to see that his brain did not go wrong! 'The simple way is the way of faith and surrender.' This is enough to lead the devotee gradually to the highest goal. So she said to a devotee:

'Why are you afraid, my son? Know that the Master is ever behind you. And I am there. Don't fear so long as I am your Mother.'

Religion consists of this natural relation with God and His Incarnations.

Religious life does not mean any artificiality or something vague or remote. It is not posing a thing we don't have. It is not creating conflict in the mind by consuming conflicting ideas of philosophical subtleties. The philosophers are there to fight for finding out the meaning or truth about them. Simple religious life does not require all these cogitations. Marguerite the mystic once reproved a nun who tried to assume what she regarded an appropriately grave exterior:

'There is no sin being thought silly, but there may easily be sin in trying to look so correct. Do let yourself be natural!'

Holy Mother too says even about a man of realization:

'What else does one obtain by the realization of God? Does he grow two horns? No, his mind becomes pure, and through a pure mind one attains knowledge and awakening.'

Holy Mother is a mother first and a teacher next. Or in a hackneyed but meaningful expression it can be said that she is the mother among teachers or the teacher among mothers. Who else than a mother could waive the injunctions of the scriptures and tell the spiritual child, 'My son, can a mother ever be step-motherly? You may, if you like, first eat and then begin japa and meditation.'

Holy Mother's religion is a religion of simple faith and surrender. Faith requires simplicity, guilelessness and openness of mind. It is more than enough if the devotee can develop the attitude of a kitten. The young one of a cat has absolute faith in its mother. It depends on her with total surrender. The only effort it makes is to cry 'mew, mew'. The mother too feels the responsibility and is all attention to it. What happens when a small boy crosses the thoroughfare? The entire street

feels concerned about him and tries to help him. Likewise, let us depend on God, then we shall have no more burden. Let us throw it off right now and surrender to Him. It is a great psychological barrier devotees often feel. They say they have surrendered all but they do not accept in their heart of hearts that God has taken their burden and is leading them. That means the ego is still active and total surrender has not yet taken place. Without raising too many doubts they must look to God and God alone. Then the path will be clear and smooth. As Francois de Sales wrote once to Jeanne de Chantal, the Mother Superior of the Order of the Visitation:

'Simplify your judgment. Do not have too many objections but walk simply and with confidence, do not look so much in this or that direction, but keep your eyes steadfastly focussed on God and on yourself.'

Holy Mother instructed her despondent spiritual children in the same manner. Details of why and how cannot all be solved. The devotee's part is only to depend on God. Once a devotee said to her that he was not able to meditate. Holy Mother replied, 'It does not matter. It will be enough if you look at the picture of the Master.' The devotee said, 'Mother, I do not succeed in regularly counting the beads three times a day.' Holy Mother's answer was, 'If you don't, then think of the Master, perform your japa whenever you can; at least you can salute him mentally, can't you?' This is spiritual discipline in its barest simplicity. Burdened with the samskaras of past lives or of the present, many devotees are not fit to enter into more rigorous discipline. So the mother in Sarada Devi guided them in the easiest way possible. It is not that these devotees will always remain in that stage. A time will come when they will

begin quicker march. Moreover, God does not see the amount of effort made, but the urge, the anxiety, the faith of the devotee. So she says:

'God is not like fish or vegetables that you can buy Him for a price.'

And again:

'You talk of having done so much of japa, or so much of work; but nothing will avail. Who can achieve anything unless Mahamaya opens the way? O creatures, surrender yourselves, just surrender yourselves. Then only will She be gracious and clear the way for you.'

Of course, that does not mean that she did not stress on spiritual practices. 'Don't relax practice,' she used to say, 'simply because you do not get His vision. Does an angler catch a big carp every day the moment he sits with the rod? He has to wait, and many a time he is disappointed.'

God is like a child, said Sri Ramakrishna. He does not like to part with a cloth saying, 'No, my father has given it.' But after some time when somebody gives a half anna worth of toy, he gladly exchanges the cloth. Similar is the nature of God. The Holy Mother used the same analogy and said:

'Do you know, my child, what it is like? It is just like a candy in the hand of a child. Some people beg the child to part with it. But he does not care to give it to them. Still he easily hands it over to another whom he likes. A man performs severe austerity throughout his whole life to realise God, but he does not succeed, whereas another man gets his realisation practically without any effort. It depends upon the grace of God. He bestows His grace upon anyone He likes. Grace is the important thing.'

Of course, that does not nullify the idea of karma. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* has an interesting story: Once a Mother-worshipper gathered together all the ingredients of worship. When he

sat for japa in the cremation ground a tiger came and took him away. Another man was sitting on the top of a tree nearby for fear of tigers. On finding everything ready he came down from the tree and sat for worship. No sooner had he begun the japa the Divine Mother appeared before him and wanted to grant him his wishes. The devotee said: 'Mother, you are too partial. This poor man took all the trouble and was devoured by the tiger. I have not done anything but got your darsan so easily.' The Divine Mother replied, 'My boy, you had been doing hard austerities for several lives. Now, as a result, you have attained success. It is not the effect of karma of this life only.'

Acharya Sankara too accepts this idea in a different context. Moreover, the avatara idea is that of redemption. It knows no barrier. Like God, the Divine Incarnations too can grant liberation to whomsoever they like. It is no question of merit on the part of the devotee. It is pure and simple grace of God. Like Sri Ramakrishna the Holy Mother too said:

'The grace of God is the one thing that is needful. One should pray for the grace of God. ... It is only if one takes shelter in God that one is saved.'

As for suffering and other effects of karma, the Holy Mother has finely said:

'The result of karma is inevitable. But by repeating the Name of God, you can lessen its intensity. If you were destined to have a wound as wide as a plough-share, you will get a pin-prick at least. The effect of karma can be counteracted to a great extent by japa and austerities.'

The Divine Incarnations descend to redeem man. They show the straight path of realisation. And is not realisation the be-all and end-all of religion? To be suffused with the Divine, that is the way and the goal. A simple faith in

God and a sincere effort to lead the life according to God's wishes, are all that is wanted. But alas! religious life is often so much mixed up with extraneous things, may be useful sometimes but often meaningless. The path is confused as the goal, the discipline to lead to a state is considered to be the proof of the achievement of the state itself. That is why when a sadhaka reaches a milestone in the upward journey, either he or his chelas claim that he has reached the summit. It is not that all are false prophets; they are often sincere souls with some attainment. But these are the days of advertisement. So in a short time much noise is made about a thing which must be kept well guarded and secret. As a result, even sincere people lose sight of the highest ideal. Many lesser people too imitate them only in externals and as a result bring infamy not only to themselves but also to the evolved sadhaka.

It may be questioned, how to recognize a man of realization? It must be admitted that it is very difficult. The Scriptures have given some descriptions here and there. The men of realization also have indicated the signs. But they are various, so diverse and including so much of individual peculiarities that an ordinary man gets perplexed. He then either loses faith in all or becomes too credulous. That is why Swami Vivekananda was particular that excellence of character must be the normal standard. Naturalness in religious life should not be lost sight of. For extreme type of mystics, full of the intense longing for God, no rule probably can be set. But

for the vast majority of the sadhakas commonsense and reason have immense value. Along with noble virtues if there are visions etc., they can be taken as genuine and beneficial. So Swami Vivekananda said, 'All religion is to be based upon morality, and external and internal purity is to be counted superior to Dharma.' But 'it is necessary always to remember that forms and ceremonials, though absolutely necessary for the progressive soul, have no other value than taking us on to that state in which we feel the most intense love to God.' He then concludes, 'Religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas, nor in talking, not even in reasoning. It is being and becoming.'

Holy Mother too spoke of the highest but the most difficult discipline. Thus we find her saying to a devotee once: 'God alone is true. Everything else is false.' 'If you can be free from desires, this moment itself will you be free.' And again, 'He who is able to renounce all for His sake is a living god. Even the decrees of fate are cancelled if one takes refuge in God.'

But she would speak very rarely in this vein and that too only to a few deserving people fit to receive a grim truth calmly. The general way shown by the Holy Mother, however, was more pleasant and smooth, yet spiritually potent enough to help the devotee to progress in slow but sure steps, or proceed in quicker pace if the intensity is more. This pleasant way is nothing but the way of simple faith and surrender.

God is one's very "own". It is the eternal relationship. One realizes Him in proportion to the intensity of one's feeling for Him. Don't be afraid. Always remember that somebody is protecting you.

—SRI SARADA DEVI

LAST MESSAGE OF THE HOLY MOTHER :

A Formula for Sane Living

'SARADA SARAN'

According to statistics collected for my personal use during last year, on one hundred different occasions I told my fellow-men to behave better and was tempted to tell the same a thousand and one times more. I was very charitable—very, very liberal—in administering this uncoveted advice. Simply, they do not know manners — they ought to know better. Indeed, I felt fine. I enjoyed my telling so had I not got as much if not more response in similar terms on all such occasions. And I was bewildered.

Garnering the above data I felt to interpret them, snatching a recent day out of eternity. This research led to a thorough heart-search in the first place and to the conclusion that in such matter, nothing could be too late. The premises took me straight to the conclusion that it was my love of folly — of all things in creation — that caused in me the definite failing of giving unsolicited, unwelcome counsel. This inference was startling, egregious in effect. I realized instantaneously that if I want to give a good account of myself in the world I must change tactics. To be most selfish, I must quit telling people that they are in the wrong, for it fairly dawned upon me not they but I that was in the wrong in telling them so. What does it avail a man to be told that he is wrong?

'Criticism is futile because it puts a man on the defensive and usually makes him strive to justify himself. Criticism is dangerous because it wounds a man's precious pride, hurts his sense of importance and arouses his resentment.'—Dale Carnegie.

The murderer, the thief and the whole parade of deliberate delinquents do not ever think that they deserve any punishment. They justify themselves and believe they are

justified in killing a man or breaking a safe. Lewis E. Lawes the famous Warden of Sing Sing, the most notorious penitentiary west of Devils Island, U.S.A. declares

'few of the criminals in Sing Sing regard themselves as bad men. They are just as human as you and I. So they rationalise, they explain. They can tell you why they had to crack a safe or be quick on the trigger finger. Most of them attempt by a form of reasoning, fallacious or logical to justify their anti-social acts even to themselves, consequently stoutly maintaining that they should never have been imprisoned at all.'

If such is the norm for desperate prisoners in Sing Sing — what about the people with whom you and I come in contact? Don't we place a high premium on what we have to say or do and discount at an equally high rate fault finders daring to judge our views or ways? They wish to keep their convictions as well as we. And

'A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still.'

More than 19 centuries ago Christ declared :

'Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.' Matt 7: 1, 2.

You will not have to wait for the judgment in Heaven. You will have it right here and now. Fault finding is like a homing pigeon. It always returns home. The person who is condemned or corrected will justify himself and condemn us in return.

When my brother is not bothered to take my counsel why should I ever take it into my head to ram it down his esophagus? Is it not a lot profitable and wise to leave him to his devices? Should I not seek my own

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'LAST MESSAGE OF THE HOLY MOTHER

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designs to rectify the defects in me which are as yet numberless. 'When a man's light begins within himself' said Browning 'he is worth something.' Christ preached :

'And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye but considerest not the beam that is thine own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother? Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye and behold a beam in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote of thy brother's eye. Matt 7: 3-5.

'Be ye not blind leaders of the blind...' Very much similar to our '*Andhenaiva niyamana yathandhah*'.

Let some drastic surgery be used to remove the beams in our eyes before we specialize in removing the motes in our neighbours' eyes. Let us have enlightenment ourselves before we enlighten others.

The Chinese philosopher Confucius taught his followers :

'Don't complain about the snow on your neighbour's roof, when your own door-step is unclean.'

The Lord who has created this universe knows best when and in what way to give knowledge to man, said Sri Ramakrishna.

One need not waste a missionary's zeal in silly criticism. 'Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain—and most fools do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving.'

While it is sheer waste of time and energy to criticize others, self criticism goes a long way in establishing peaceful relationship between man and man. One must pass through his ordeal to be able to advise others. How few have the moral courage to penitently confess to themselves their mistakes and act up to their confessions. Immortal Bapuji always tried self-criticism. Says K. M. Munshi :

'Gandhiji often turned the searchlight inwards. He was his harshest critic and he

taught us the need for self-criticism.'
Bhavan's Journal 19-10-58.

Why worry over your neighbour's faults? Why play the proxy and put your common-sense to ridicule? Surely, you will not be judged for his faults. You are not to answer for his mistakes. Why impose this onerous, unsolicited, unwelcome task on you for which you are none the better? Sri Ramakrishna sharply admonished aggressive M. that it was high time he cared for his own salvation before he undertook to emancipate others.

'That is the one hobby of you Calcutta people,' rebuked he, 'giving lectures and bringing others to the light! Nobody ever stops to consider how to get the light himself. Who are you to teach others?'

It is not for us to fret over the fact that God has not seen fit to distribute evenly the gift of intelligence. God knows our I. Q. ratings differ!

While handling human nature we ought to remember constantly that view-points differ. 'Stop a minute,' says Kenneth M. Goode in his book, *How to turn people into Gold*,

'to contrast your keen interest in your affairs with your mild concern about anything else. Realize then, that everybody else in the world feels exactly the same way ... Success in dealing with people depends on a sympathetic group of the other man's view-point.'

The sovereign remedy to the unwholesome habit of fault finding is the honest essay to get at the other person's view-point and to understand why he does what he does. 'By becoming interested in the cause, we are less likely to dislike the effect.'

Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi on her death-bed advised an old lady :

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

In all her life the Holy Mother was un-

able to find fault with anybody. As a certain lady complaining against a devotee once remarked, rather disgusted, 'Mother, you cannot see defects in anyone, but we are at a loss as to how we may handle her'.

The last message of the Holy Mother is the clear echo of the wisdom of the ages, a counsel of commonsense and sane living in this world abounding with conflict, confusion and chaos.

REMINISCENCES OF MAHAPURUSH MAHARAJ

AMULYA BANDHU MUKHERJEE

On the 19th March, 1927, I went to the Belur Math and paid my respects to the revered Mahapurush Maharaj. When he enquired about my health, I asked him: Maharaj, as long as I stay with you I forget all about my family affairs.

Maharaj: Good; do so. Come to us. Keep company with holimen; it will be good for you. For, it is not easy to believe in an Incarnation of God. Each of us has seen him and you will have belief in him if you hear of him from us, and your desire to see God will increase day by day.

I: Maharaj, we get much pleasure to read the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and we have much benefited by reading this book.

Maharaj: Why should it not be so? It deals with every problem.

Panchanan Babu: M. wrote this book with much difficulty. Once I went to him and found that he had opened his note book to write the book. After a while when he went out, I read the notes but to my surprise I could not make out anything.

Maharaj: Yes, he was gifted with keen intellect. He went to Sri Ramakrishna and noted everything. He had done all these things for himself, his idea then was to read them in future. After the departure of Sri Ramakrishna he used to go in meditation in a lonely place thinking of these things and then he could write. In this way he could recall the things that happened long ago. And how wonderful it has come out. Many people now get peace of mind through it.

Devotee: M. recited a line which runs like this, 'The life of the Master recalls that of Lord Krishna at Vraja'.

Maharaj: Yes, it is all in tune with Sri Ramakrishna. Ah! how emotional and devotional the Gopis were. No question of prestige, happiness, sorrow or shyness—only eager to see Him in secret. This happens in human mind too.

Another devotee: Maharaj, did Sri Ramakrishna preach the motto of renunciation as Jesus did?

Maharaj: How do you know that he had not done that? Of course, scarcely did he ask people to renounce, for he knew it was not possible for one and all to do so. Few people would be there when he advised us to renounce, but do you think this idea of renunciation will remain confined in us alone? Can't you see how many educated men come here to become monks? Scores of intelligent and scholarly people are coming. Do they come here for food? They have university degrees but they leave everything and come here. Does it not mean that it is because of him they come here? But then, all will not come out leaving everything. They will bear his ideal in their mind and mould their life accordingly. Of course, they will do so gradually. The ideal of renunciation shown by him must be the ideal of every man, is there any doubt about it?

Panchanan Babu, Mr Chakravarti, Narasimha Babu, Nirmal Babu and a devotee from East Bengal, who were present, kept silent. There was a peaceful atmosphere in

the room and every one was full of divine thoughts. Suddenly this peace broke at the appearance of Jagadbandhuda with a telegram from Bombay by Miss Macleod. Mahapurushji read it and said with joy, 'She is going. Victory to Thee, O Master!' A letter from Viswananda Maharaj came from Bombay. He read a few lines from it, how Miss Macleod conducted the meeting during Swamiji's birthday celebrations there.

A devotee: Maharaj, we are family men. Will we get salvation by chanting the name of Sri Ramakrishna for we are not able to pray and meditate for hours?

Maharaj: Certainly, is there any difference between his name and he? Try to keep his name in your mind; that will suffice. Name is everything, name is truth. Chant his name, what else!

Nanilal Babu was taking the dust of his feet to bid goodbye. He said to him: Go to the temple and take the consecrated food. Ah, Nanilal, you are quite fortunate. Lord has not kept any troubles for you. You are very free, you have not married. You have no impediments, why are you still in the world? Why not come away here? We know you are quite free. Why do you wait any more? Come away.

These words he uttered emphatically.

Nanilal Babu: Yes, Maharaj. I shall come away after making some arrangement. This is your blessing.

Maharaj: Yes, come away.

Gradually the evening came, the afore-said devotee brought a cloth, a mango, and a melon for Maharaj. He kept these at his feet and said, 'Do please use this cloth.'

Maharaj: Why have you brought this cloth? I have so many pieces of cloth. Of course, it will be good to use it in these summer days. Take these fruits to the temple.

Mosquitoes were plenty. So Sankar Maharaj put up the net and tried to drive them away.

Maharaj: Mosquitoes give much trouble.

A few remain inside and pester throughout the night.

Devotee: They bite much on the legs.

Maharaj: They are devotees, you see, so they bite on the legs! (laughter)

Devotee: Maharaj, why has God created them?

Maharaj: How can I say that? This is difficult to understand. You cannot answer why He has created them. His will; that's all.

A certain devotee bade farewell bowing to him.

Maharaj said: Goodbye, let your throat be cured and we shall hear Padavali one day.

Devotee: I shall sing to you one day.

It is evening. Having taken a little consecrated food Mahapurush began to chant the name of the gods. I bowed down to take leave.

Maharaj: Come, will you go now?

I: No, Maharaj, I shall go after evening worship.

On seeming the worship I came back to the room of Maharaj.

Maharaj: Will you go now?

I: No, we shall go together.

In the course of conversation Mahapurush Maharaj said, 'When we were at Kashi, we would feel very hungry during summer. What could we do? We would make a few extra rotis (bread) while cooking and take them in the evening. We had then very little income, so we had to do like this.'

As the conversation turned on Chandra Maharaj, he said: He is a very fine man. Such devotion and faith are rare. See, he is crippled, yet he has to make arrangements for feeding fifteen or sixteen people. A fine man, I am sometimes struck with wonder.

Devotee: Maharaj, when at Kashi, without revealing that we were devotees of the Math, we asked three patients, 'How is the treatment here? How do the sadhus treat you?' They replied, 'We never found

such treatment elsewhere. The monks look after us with loving care.'

Maharaj: Yes, they do not serve as it is done in the hospitals. They do all these with feeling and for their own welfare.

Devotee: We have heard that you had only four annas in hand, when at Kashi.

Maharaj: No, no. We did not have even four annas. Let me tell you the story. One day Charu Babu along with another went out for a walk near the Ganges in the evening. They found an old man lying down on the road. He was in a dying condition and asking for water to drink. But nobody paid any heed to it. At that time Charu, I think, went there and saw that the man kept his mouth open for water. Charu gave him water. He saw that the cloth also was spoiled. Then he begged an old cloth. A woman was going to the bathing ghat. He requested her, 'Will you give me your pitcher? I shall then bring water and clean the man'. The woman herself kindly brought water. They cleaned the sick man and brought him to the house of some known friend. A gentleman was going to the market at that time. They begged some

money telling him of that man. He brought out a four anna coin from his pocket and gave them. With it the diet was arranged. Kedar Baba and Charu Babu helped him in this way for fifteen days by begging. The patient was cured. Since then, they rented a house and whenever they found such sick people in the ghat they looked after them. See, there are a hundred and fifty beds in this Ashram now and it does not suffice.

We noticed the time. A very cool breeze was blowing though winter ended earlier. It was the day following the Dol purnima, the night was bathed in moonlight. We were about to get up when Mahapurushji asked me, 'Have you not brought a wrapper?'

I said: 'No Maharaj, I put away my clothes yesterday. It did not strike me that these would be needed even now.' Maharaj began to laugh. I said, 'When Saturday arrives I become restless to come here.'

Maharaj: Well, this restlessness is the important thing. Let it be with you always.

We took the dust of his feet and came to the Grand Trunk Road in the moonlit night at nine to get a bus.

TWO LETTERS OF MAHAPURUSH MAHARAJ

Sri Sri Ramakrishna Saranam

Sri Ramakrishna Math,
P.O. Belur, Howrah,
27-12-'19.

Srijut Ramesh Chandra Sarkar,

Received your letter. Thinking of the Lord, sincere prayer at His feet, studying with attention, serving the people according to capacity, avoiding bad company as far as possible and now and then contacting the devotees when convenient—by doing all these you will progress in religious life. At the root of everything is Lord's grace, without His grace, nothing happens. How and when His grace comes nobody can say, for

He is independent, not subservient to anything. As He pleases He bestows His grace. The duty of man is to call on Him and pray to Him, sincerely pray to Him. And then let Him keep wherever He likes, in the world or outside. Surrender, surrender, surrender. Like the kitten depend on Him, then let Lord do as He likes. Know my blessings. Let the Lord do good to you, that is my sincere prayer. Meet Sanat now and then; he is also a devotee; by his company you will be benefited.

Wishing your welfare,

Yours
SIVANANDA

Sri Sri Ramakrishna Saranam

Sri Ramakrishna Math,
Belur Math,
2-2-'20.

Srijut Ramesh Chandra,

Sometime ago I received a letter from you. I was glad to hear that you had very finely celebrated the birthday anniversary of the Master and are serving the God in the sick. By this service of yours not only will you be benefited but many youngmen also will be so by this example. They will follow at

your footsteps and be blessed and the Master's glory also will spread in the country. Slowly let lives be made through His grace. No fear, Lord is guiding you in the right path and will do so, don't worry. Mother will gradually bring you to Her holy feet. Know my heart-felt blessings.

Wishing your welfare,

Yours
SIVANANDA

P. S. Convey my blessings to Sanat.

REALISM IN SANKARA

SWAMI SRIDANANDA

Sankara is orthodox, but he is not a blind follower of authority. He resorts to scriptures for substantiating his views in the light of revelation. This he does because he accepts revelation as a right means of knowledge. You will find him in the true colour of a philosopher when he establishes his theories by the aid of pure reason. Reason is no dry speculation with him, but is the proper evaluation of observed facts—facts that are verifiable. As such it rests on a matter-of-fact solid foundation. Hence it has been possible for Sankara to evolve a dialectic, which is realistic and convincing, to prove his theories. It will be no exaggeration to say that Sankara's ideal is the meeting point of reason and realism. Truth or reality is his ideal. It is a matter-of-fact reality that is at once rational and realistic. In the Upanishads this truth is known as Brahman.

Sankara's realistic conception of truth brings it within the scope of experience. Sankara says: 'Knowledge of Brahman culminates in experience. The object of such an experience is an existing thing.'¹

¹ अनुभवावसानत्वात् भूतवस्तुविषयत्वाच्च ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य । (Brahmasutra Bhashya, I. 1. 2.)

Again the knowledge of an existing thing is not the flash of a speculative brain. It is the apprehension of an objective something. So it is independent of intellection, and is self-evident.² It is not affected by the different views that different persons may hold regarding the same thing. Contrary to this is the nature of doubt or misunderstanding. The object in question is not presented there in its true nature. The cognition of it is dependent upon the intellect of the subject. It ceases to be purely objective. It cannot be realistic either. The highest authority for an existent thing is itself and it is obstinately independent.

A thing is real because it is. So it is experientible. The realist that Sankara is gives the highest authority to experience. That truth and experience go hand in hand, is his contention. In other words, truth is experientible. In this respect you will find that Sankara's orthodoxy is not unqualified. He says boldly that even the Vedas cannot make fire cold, because it is not realistic. Experience will not support it. If the Vedas say that stones float on water, Sankara will

² न वस्तुयाथार्थं पुरुषबुद्धयपेक्षम् ।... वस्तु तन्मेव तत् । (Ibid.)

not believe it. Anything that goes against common sense must be either false or imaginary. Blindly following authority means certain ruination according to Sankara.³ From this it is clear that Sankara's regard for realism outweighs his orthodoxy.

According to Sankara, one criterion for truth is non-contradictability. What is real must be so at all time. Truth can cause untruth to be contradicted, but it can never suffer to be contradicted by itself or by others. It is independent and is ever the same truth. It is the Absolute.

How is absolute truth or reality experienced? It is intuited in the self of the enquirer. Truth about one's self is never contradicted or sublated. It is the eternal subject which defies all attempts at objectification. Is it possible to know such a self? 'It is possible,' says Sankara, for it is not wholly unknowable. It is the content of the concept 'I'. The presence of the inner self is an immediate experience.⁴ The irreducible minimum of the knowledge about oneself is the simple awareness that 'I am'. In this state it is pure consciousness. It is the truth about oneself. It is non-different from the Absolute Truth that is Brahman.⁵ For it is illogical to posit two entities as ultimate realities.

The objects of perception change, but the intelligent subject never changes. It is the eternal witness. It is intelligence, the invariable concomitant of all cognitions. It

³ तत्त्वाविचार्य यत्किञ्चित्प्रतिपद्यमानो निःश्रेयसात्प्रतिवृत्त्येतानर्थं वेद्यात् । (Ibid, I. 1.1.)

⁴ न तावदयं एकान्तेनाविषयः असत्प्रत्ययविषयत्वात् । अपरोक्षत्वाच्च प्रत्यगात्मप्रसिद्धेः । (Introduction to Brahmasutra Bhashya.)

⁵ आत्मा च ब्रह्म । (Brahmasutra Bhashya, I. 1.1.)

is an existing and changeless principle.⁶ What is real cannot be refuted. The accidental only is refuted. The doubter cannot doubt himself because he is the undisputed subject of the act of doubting and that is his real nature.⁷

Sankara has built his philosophical edifice on the firm rock of realism which could resist all the storm and fury of his opponents. His victory over the Buddhists was in no small measure due to his realistic stand.

The Buddhist school of Sunyavadins argued: There is no permanent spiritual entity. Individuation is the result of craving for life due to ignorance. Overcome the desire by ethical striving and right contemplation. You get the saving knowledge that will put an end to individuation. The self in the sense of an enduring spiritual entity is a myth.

Sankara's characteristically realistic approach made short work of them. He rejoined: Because in the dark objects are not visible, are the Sunyavadins justified in asserting the absence of the eye? Again when objects are not cognised, the absence of the knowing self also is asserted by the Sunyavadins in a similar manner. But let them tell, by whose light they comprehend the absence of the knowing self.⁸ (Advai-

⁶ स्वरूपव्यभिचारिषु पदार्थेषु चैतन्यस्याव्यभिचाराद्यथा यथा यो यः पदार्थो विज्ञायते तथा तथा ज्ञायमानत्वादेव तस्य तस्य चैतन्यस्याव्यभिचारित्वं वस्तुतत्त्वं भवति ।

(Bhashya on Prasna Up., VI. 2.)

⁷ आगन्तुकं हि वस्तु निराक्रियते न स्वरूपम् । य एव हि निराकृतो तदेव तस्य स्वरूपम् ।

(Brahmasutra Bhashya, II. 3.7.)

⁸ न ह्यन्धकारे बध्नुषा रूपानुपलब्धौ चक्षुषोऽभावः शक्यः कल्पयितुं वैनाशिकेन । वैनाशिको ज्ञेयमात्रे ज्ञानाभावे कल्पयत्येवेति चेत् येन तदभावं कल्पयेत्तस्याभावः केन कल्प्यते इति वक्तव्यं वैनाशिकेन । (Bhashya on Prasna Up., VI. 2.)

tins accept *anupalabdhi* or non-cognition as a means of right knowledge; that is according to this theory, the absence of an object is directly cognised.)

Sankara's realism is more marked in his refutation of the Buddhist school of Kshanika-vijnana-vadins. This school denies the existence of objects outside the mind. The entire field of objects is imaginary. They are produced by mental impressions—*vasanas*.

Sankara replies: The non-existence of external objects cannot be asserted. Because they are perceived. (Sankara's realistic position is that all perceptions must have their objective counterparts.) Objects like pillar, wall, pot, mat etc. are cognised. The very cognition proves their objectivity, that is, external existence. Objects perceived cannot be absent either (because it is contrary to experience).⁹ The argument that perceptions are created by *vasanas* is untenable. For how can *vasanas* or impressions come into being without their counterparts of objects?¹⁰

Another important point in Sankara's realism is the recognition of types of reality. The first reality is Brahman—the Absolute. It is One without a second. The second type of reality is the world of objects as perceived in the waking state. As a realist he does not overlook its objective value. It is real in a relative sense; but is a mere appearance from the absolute standpoint. The world is real as long as Brahman the Truth is not realised. This type of reality Sankara terms as *Vyavaharika sattā* — the practical objective reality. In the scale of

⁹ न खल्वभावो बाह्यार्थस्याध्यवसातुं शक्यते । कस्मादुपलब्धेः । उपलब्ध्यते हि प्रतिप्रत्ययं बाह्योऽर्थः—स्तम्भः कुड्यं घटः पट इति । नचोपलब्धमानस्यैवाभावो भवितुमर्हति ।

(Brahmasutra Bhashya, II. 2. 28.)

¹⁰ विनार्योपलब्ध्या वासानुपपत्तेः ।

(Brahmasutra Bhashya, II. 2. 30.)

reality the objects of illusion and dream form the third type. Sankara's partiality for realism grants some amount of reality to them also. 'They are not mental but objects of mind.'¹¹ As objects they must be real. Their reality lasts as long as the illusion or dream lasts.

By recognising types of reality Sankara bridges the gulf between metaphysical truth and the objective physical world. So when Sankara says 'Brahman alone is real and the world unreal', he does not mean that the world does not exist. What he means is that its reality is relative and is illusory from a higher standpoint. Conversely, Brahman is the basic reality for the world phenomenon. Brahman the One Truth appears to be many. Maya is the cause of this apparent duality.

The theory of Maya is the crux of Sankara's philosophy. It is an objective and realistic explanation of the world phenomenon. Maya cannot be defined but a study of the nature of illusion will throw some light on it. Shell-silveriness is one of the many illustrations for illusion cited in Vedanta. One mistakes the shell for silver. On taking it in the hand he realises his mistake. He finds that it is only a shell in reality. Silver was an illusion while its ground the shell is real. Evidently the silver-experience was unreal. But Sankara will not accept this, because the silver-illusion is a phenomenon that was experienced. So its objectivity is unchallengeable.

However the sublation of the silver also cannot be ignored. That too is real. Here Sankara appears to be contradicting himself. But, believe me, Sankara is wedded to truth. And truth cannot contradict itself. He is just making a matter of fact evaluation of the phenomenon called illusion. No undue eagerness is shown to prove this way or that. The realistic picture is pre-

¹¹ See Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* p. 251

sented in all nakedness. The position is precisely this. Commonsense cannot vouch for the reality of the object of illusion. Neither could a clearheaded person deny its objectivity. Therefore, Sankara says that illusion is indefinable. It cannot be determined whether it is or is not. It is superimposition. (*Adhyāsa*). Silver is superimposed on shell. Silver has got a relative value while shell has got a permanent value. The relative value of the silver lasts as long as the illusion lasts; neither more or less.

To explain: Superimposition presupposes ignorance—ignorance of the difference between the related, say, the shell and the silver in the example. Ignorance or *Avidyā* is no negation. It is no want of understanding—but a positive misunderstanding. The shell is not destroyed or negated and a void presented. The shell is veiled and silver is projected on it. In Vedanta terminology veiling is known as *Āvarana* and projecting as *Vikshepa*. Because of its positive nature superimposition is called *Bhāvarūpa*, crea-

tive. It is an existent phenomenon. This is Sankara's realistic attitude towards illusion.

The principle of illusion at the cosmic level is Maya. Maya causes the phenomenon of the world to be projected on Brahman the Reality. It is positive because it is creative. At the intellectual level it is inexplicable (*Anirvacanīya*). It cannot be understood in terms of 'is' or 'is not' or 'is and is not'. It is a fact that defies all determination. Maya is a riddle that is never solved at the intellectual level. Knowledge of Brahman—the one without a second is the spiritual wisdom that dispels Maya. Just as the silver of the shell disappears when the knowledge of the shell is gained, even so the world projected by Maya disappears on the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman. The phenomenon will no longer hide the noumenon. Brahman is not to be sought elsewhere. It is intuited in the self of the enquirer whose existence can never be doubted. This is how Sankara establishes his philosophy of non-dualism in the light of realistic evidence.

INFLUENCE OF THE RAMAYANA ON ORIYA LITERATURE

GOPAL CHANDRA MISRA

Ancient India, like ancient Greece, boasts of two great epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, the former based on the legends and traditions of a great historical war and the latter describing the wanderings and adventures of a prince banished from his country. The two great epics can very well be placed with *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. These two together comprise the whole of the epic literature of the ancient Hindus and the two inspiring pieces present us with the most graphic and life-like picture that exists of civilisation and culture, political and social life, religion and thought of ancient India.

The subject of the Ramayana, the great national epic of the Hindus, as the name

implies, is the life and adventures of Rama. The great exploit and the main theme of the epic is the war which Rama waged with the giant Ravana, the mighty king of Ceylon or Lanka and the fierce oppressor of gods and saints. The poet calls the people whom Rama attacked as *Rakshasas*. According to the popular Indian belief, *Rakshasas* are malignant beings, demons of many shapes, terrible and cruel, who disturb the sacrifices and religious rites.

The Ramayana like the Mahabharata is a growth of centuries but the main story is more distinctly the creation of one mind. Among the many races that flourished in Northern India about a thousand years before Christ, the Kosals and the Videhas

were perhaps the most cultured people. Their sacrifices and gifts, their researches into the mysteries of the soul and the nature of the universal soul are still preserved in ancient sastras. Reduced to its bare simplicity the story of the Ramayana is a war of two hostile races differing in origin and culture. The whole of India is full of such legends originated by the celebrity of the epic of Valmiki. To the imagination of the poet the age of Kosals and Videhas was associated with all that is great and glorious, all that is righteous and true. His description of ancient Ayodhya is a true description of an ideal seat of learning and culture. Dasaratha is the ideal king committed to the cause of his subjects. Rama, the eldest son of Dasaratha and the hero of the epic, is an ideal Prince. Sita, the daughter of Janaka and the heroine of the epic, is the ideal of a faithful woman and a devoted wife. A pious reverence pervades the whole epic.

This great national epic has appeared in all the regional languages of India. Ramayana with all its splendour and beauty has stirred the imaginations of many poets in all ages. Generation after generation, poets were never tired of adding to the description of scenes which the Indian listeners were never tired of hearing. The virtues of Rama and the faithfulness of Sita were described again and again in glorified lines. The grief of the old monarch at the banishment of the Prince and the sorrows of the mother at parting from her son were depicted by all succeeding writers in this country. The loving devotion of Rama's brothers, the sanctity of saints and the peacefulness of the hermitages visited by Rama were described with endless beauty and freshness.

The present paper is devoted to show the influence of Ramayana in the Oriya literature, to prove how through the streams of time the Ramayana has been responsible in shaping our culture and literature. Oriya as a distinct language had no doubt come into existence long before the 8th century.

From the time of Kapilendra Dev to the loss of Orissa's independence in 1568, the Oriya language became sufficiently developed and a crop of good literature sprang up to exercise an abiding influence.

Looking to the facts that Balaram Das, Jagannath Das and Sarala Das who are the early poets of Orissa are also the authors of the Ramayana, it may be asserted that the first period of Oriya literature was occupied in writing epic literatures. The literary activity of the time of solar kings of Orissa is marked by the composition of religious epics among which writings of Dandi Ramayan of Balaram Das and others are remarkable. These works are not the translations of Sanskrit originals. The authors have retold the Ramayana in their own way so that we may regard them as their original works.

Rambibha of Arjun Das, Bilanka Ramayan of Sarala Das, Jagamohan Ramayan of celebrated Balaram Das in the 16th century, Adhyatma Ramayan of Keshab, Bichitra Ramayan of Biswanath Khuntia, Baidisbilas of Upendra Bhanja, Rama Rasamruta Sindhu of Khanhu Das and Tika Ramayan are the most notable and permanent works on the ever enchanting theme of Ramayana. Among others Balaram Das's Dandi Ramayan, so called because of its popularity, has formed the nucleus of a very silent revolution in the Oriya literature. In all his compositions, the poet has maintained the tradition and interest of Ramayana to a great degree of satisfaction. The very fundamental idea is served in making the characters true to their position, faithful and sublime. As an epic poem Balaram Das' Dandi Ramayan stands on a higher level, a poem delineating the softer emotions of our everyday life. This Ramayan sends its roots deeper into the hearts and minds of the millions in our parts. The poets of Bilanka Ramayan and Baidis Bilash conjure up the memories of a Golden age,

construct lofty ideals of piety and faith and describe with infinite pathos domestic scenes and human affections which endear the work to all readers. The characters of Ramayan written by Arjun Das and Balaram Das are more often the ideals of manly devotion to truth and of womanly faithfulness and love in domestic life. In it the bridal life of Sita is rich and extraordinary. The rivalry between Rama and Ravana or between Lakshmana and Indrajit is life-like. In the whole of Ramayan each character is full with fiery determination. Ramayan of Balaram and Keshab is immeasurably superior in its delineation and teaching. These descriptions are essentially of Hindu life, and yet so true to nature that they apply to all races and nations of the world.

Modern authors of Oriya literature are never free from the ever-lasting influence of the Ramayana. Gangadhar Meher's Tapaswini is primarily meant to bring out the essence of a truly devoted Hindu lady. Sita Banabas of N. K. Bal is a rejoinder to Meher's work. There is something touching and tender in the description of love of Rama for his subjects and the loyalty of his people towards him, the loyalty that has been the part of the Hindu character in every age. The inner workings of the human heart and of human motives, the dark conspiracy of a scheming dependent, the awakening jealousy and alarm of a wife and mother, and the determination of a woman and imperious queen are very vividly described. The Ramayana bases its appeal to the hearts of millions of Oriya readers often in delineation of domestic affections and domestic jealousies. The devotion of Rama and the womanly love of Sita run like two threads of gold through the whole fabric of the epic in the Oriya literature.

To Balaram Das, Keshab, Biswanath Khuntia and Gangadhar Mehera, Rama and Sita are the Hindu ideals of a perfect man and a perfect woman. Their sticking to truth under trials and temptations, their en-

durance under privations, their devotion to duty under torture given in the Oriya Ramayan gives us a true picture of Hindu faith and sacred life. Keshab's Ramayan is a fine work, giving a picture of faith against misgivings and distrust, sorrow and suffering. All the Oriya poets saw in Rama's life the ideal of a true Hindu life. Sita holds a unique place in the heart of numerous readers in our country. There is not a Hindu woman whose earliest and tenderest recollections do not cling round the story of Sita's sufferings, endurance and faithfulness. The story of Rama and Sita is told, is sung, is recollected often in every Hindu family. Repeated trials bring out in Sita's character the loftiness of sacrifice. The literatures of the world has not produced a higher ideal of womanly love. Bichitra Ramayan abides today after hundred years because it is animated by some sparks of imperishable truth, human feeling and faith. The Ramayan in Oriya literature embodies the domestic and religious life of ancient India with all its tenderness and sweetness in devotion. It gives us a true and graphic picture of the Indian culture and civilisation. In fact in far off scattered villages of Orissa, Ramayan is still a living tradition and a living faith. It forms the very basis of our moral world.

Balaram Das's Ramayan can be placed with the works of Tulsi Das, Krutibas and Shridhar. The story has inspired all the religious masters of the world. Generations of Hindus in all parts of India have studied the ancient story of Rama with zeal and joy. We hear it recited in every house, rich or poor, we see it acted on the stage in the form of Rama Lila and religious festivals through the length and breadth of Orissa. Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman, Bharata, what a dream, what amount of ecstasy is there at the utterances of the very names. They appear like a magic in the world to-day thrown aside by moral conflicts. Rama, Lakshmana, Sita still hold

to purify the popular faith in our modern times. Radhanath's Dasaratha Biuage, Fakirmohan's translation and Madhusudan's Balaramayan are powerful works in the Modern Oriya literature.

For Oriya poets and story tellers the Ramayan has still the great influence in inspiring them to a better understanding of India's literary and cultural heritage and the value of life. People turn to the valuable pages of Ramayan only when they are

sick in the world of conspiracy and sorrow. The Hindu lady piously looks up to Sita for consolation and the young man sincerely longs for Ramachandra's devotion to duty and loyalty to one's actions.

Thus Ramayan has played important part in shaping the cultural and social life of Orissa and has substantially contributed to the growth of both ancient and modern literature and to the making of an organised social and religious life.

LOOKING BACK AT EIGHTY

M. S. KALYANASUNDARAM

They seemed to speak of changeless Truths; they struck
... And now, I feel I near a chapter's end —
A chapter writ in loose and friv'lous style;
My weakly eyes upon the pages browse
And sense the jumbled mass of planless words.
In sorrow, shame and utter helplessness,
My body quakes. ... Some eighty years ago,
I took the pen in hand. I spent no thought,
No, none, on what the earlier chapters dealt;
And now I see how hard and ill I worked
And scrawled a random tale in fits and starts
Without a form or central plan in mind —
Though, then, I doubted not its perfect shape.

And yet, to say that all this time, I worked
Without a knowledge of the gen'ral scheme
On which the Book is based is far from true.
In lonely moments, on star-lit nights,
As, freed from sleep and Past and Future states,
I lay a-musing till the cock crowed-in
Another day of hopes and smiles and tears,
And th' whistling engine in the station-yard
Stirred up my blood and made me deeply long
For soothing motion through th' storied plains
Of verdant Hindustan — at times like that,
But oh, how few, I thought I sensed a glimpse

Of what my past had been and also what
 The future held in store ; I felt I heard
 A kindly Master teach to me the lines
 On which to write my Book. But oh, how sad,
 The glimpse was faint ; the words were spoken low ;
 The picture was as if it ne'er was limned —
 Like words imprinted on a dream-mirage,
 Forgotten was the Great Editor's scheme.
 The sun arose. My pen commenced again
 The Endless Page across to glide. I read
 The clear-cut words — and glowed with Faith and Hope.
 They seemed to speak of changeless Truths ; they struck
 My eyes as sparks from th' fire of Life ; I thought
 At last I 'scaped from th' wood of paltry plans
 And reached the Endless Progress Road. Alas
 For cocksure youth, who e'er refuse to see
 Beyond the single word or phrase ! ... As now I stand
 Upon this distant hill in Time and note
 The utter lack of sequence in those heaps
 Of words, I'm deeply stirred to laugh a laugh,
 Genuine, pity-full. ... A playful cur,
 Now begging for a piece of teasing cake,
 Now barking at the crow upon the wall,
 And chasing now its elusive tail —
 It seems a grievous joke and planless waste.
 What, then, of men like us, who, blessed with brains,
 Yet live like pups, a frivolous, wasteful life ?
 Oh, say, do sages laugh at us or weep ?
 ... As now I write a chapter's closing lines,
 Grant me, Oh great Directing Mind, a boon,
 A simple boon ; no birth in royal homes,
 No, not at all, nor worldly power I seek.
 A single word, a common word describes
 My humble wish. My prayer is : leave me
 My basic memory ; nought more I ask.
 If I remember where I leave my tale,
 If further waste without I start aright,
 And 'scape more rambles and entanglements,
 I soon will tread the Road of Onward March.

VIVEKANANDA AND MARX AS SOCIOLOGISTS

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

Vivekananda was a profound student of Indian sociology. His keen and analytic intellect wanted to investigate the causes of the social decline of the country and with the master-vision of a born prophet he wanted to prescribe a formula to eradicate all kinds of social inequalities. The world knows him as a mighty Vedantist, India knows him as a dynamic intellectual and moral giant but his career as a student of world history and sociology has not been thoroughly understood. Marx has made a tremendous impact on international proletarian socialism, world politics and world political economy. Let us concern here with the problem as to whose teachings are better suited to provide a remedy for the present day world conditions.

The Russian Revolution and the Communist Revolution in China as mighty events in human history have given to the world an inspiration and have subconsciously generated enormous certitude in the finality of Marx's doctrines. The political weakness of India in comparison to the materialistic Western powers, psychologically makes the belief in the teachings of Vivekananda weak. It is essential as social scientists to be aware of this perspectival difference in the consideration of the doctrines of these thinkers.

Vivekananda did not claim to provide any original gospel. The ancient Advaitic teachings, as testified to by the transcendent experiences of his master, were taught by him. He, however, delivered his sermons to suit the conditions of the modern world. Vivekananda was at heart a *sannyasin* — a keen psychologist of mystical phenomena but, nevertheless as a patriot he felt intensely sorry at the plight of the suffering people. The miserable conditions of the western

proletariat drew forth all the volcanic energies of Marx for creating a proletarian philosophy and ideology of historical materialism and the economics of surplus value. Vivekananda was a philosophical idealist — a school to which Marx, Engles and Lenin were bitterly and fanatically opposed.

Marx thundered as the messiah of a proletarian social war.¹ Vivekananda's sociology followed from his Vedantic conception of the self — omnipotent and supreme. Hence he gave to the sufferers almost the same formula that Marx gave — a dynamic gospel of supreme fearlessness (*Abhayam*), cohesion and strength. He wanted to get rid of all ideas of obnoxious class and caste superiority and tyranny which have made the Hindu society loose, stratified and pulverised. Vivekananda's watchword was the country first. He was to a certain extent a social reformer but he did not want to make a complete break with the past. He rationalised the four *varna* divisions in the manner of Krishna. He said :

'As there are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* — one or other of these *gunas* more or less — in every man, so the qualities which make a Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya or a Shudra are inherent in every man, more or less. But at time one or other of these qualities predominates in him in varying degrees and is manifested accordingly. Take a man in his different pursuits, for example : when he is engaged in serving another for pay, he is in Sudra-hood ; when he is busy transacting some piece of business for profit, on his account, he is a Vaishya ; when he fights to right wrongs then the qualities of a Kshatriya come out in him ; and when he meditates on God, or passes his time in conversation about Him, then he is a Brahmana. Naturally, it is quite possible for one to be changed from one caste into another. Otherwise, how did Viswamitra become a Brahmana and Parashurama a

¹ K. Marx, Capital, Vol. I, Chapter XXXII. Also Marx and Engles, *The Communist Manifesto*.

MYSTICISM—EASTERN AND WESTERN

V. A. THIAGARAJAN

'Ex Orientae lux; ex occidentae lex', so says a Latin proverb. It means that out of the East came light and out of the West came law. The light that is meant here is not merely the light of the rising sun, but it also means the light of consciousness: for the sages of the East never subscribed to the spurious doctrine that nothing enters their minds except what comes through the gateway of the senses. They realized that the senses can give us only that much of reality which lies within a limited range of the spectrum. It was by transcending the region of the senses that they discovered the concept of universal consciousness. They also discovered that when the mind is calm and is in tune with the infinite, the individual becomes the articulate and concentrated expression of the universal consciousness, and he gives expression to that joy of life in which all beings find their beginning, middle and end. It is as though there should be two musical instruments perfectly tuned, so that when we strike the strings of the one, the strings of the other vibrate automatically. We may therefore say that the mystic vision gives us a supersensuous vision of reality. But it is not like a dream, when we wake up from a dream, the dream, appears unreal. But even when we come down from the mystic level of consciousness to the normal place, the heritage of the mystic vision remains as our abiding possession. Moreover although it has its origin in the individual, it can be felt and realized by all. There is therefore the possibility of universal appeal inherent in it. It is because of this that it forms part of our racial heritage. By means of the mystic consciousness we dive deep down into our collective personality. That is why the mystic consciousness has been compared to the test wells that one drives deep down the

desert soil, until one touches the petrol that gushes from below the soil. In as much as the mystic consciousness derives its source from human nature as revealed by the inspired seers of all ages, we ought to recognize it and derive benefit from it.

Although the mystic consciousness transcends all geographical barriers, we shall for the sake of convenience distinguish between Eastern mysticism which has its source in the Upanishads, and Western mysticism which has its origin in the philosophy of Plato. Those who study the life of Plato find a gap of twelve years in his life, during which time the philosopher is said to have wandered abroad in foreign countries. It may be that during that period of apprenticeship he came into contact with the philosophers of the East. Without entering into the region of speculation, let us turn to the known works of Plato, to his dialogues, notably the Symposium and Phaedrus. According to Plato ideals alone are real. Thus it is that truth, beauty and goodness, in their perfection, constitute aspects of the One and the Eternal. The same reality viewed intellectually is truth, viewed aesthetically is beauty, and viewed ethically is goodness. But as long as the soul is enmeshed in the flesh, the muddy vesture of decay, as Shakespeare calls it, we can comprehend but the shadow of it. In a famous passage in his Republic, the simile of the cave, Plato explains his point of view. If there should be a number of cave dwellers who see all the time only the shadow which their bodies cast upon the walls of the cave, they would naturally mistake the shadows to be real; and if by chance, a wise man should direct their attention to the light beyond, they would not believe him. That is why an English poet aptly sums up the Platonic

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point of view by saying, "The one remains, the many doth change and pass, and life like a dome of many coloured glass doth stain the white radiance of Eternity." This aspect of Plato was continued by Plotinus who pointed out that we can comprehend the One only by our intellectual love of it, and that all that we can say of the One is that it is.

The Platonic tradition continued to inspire thinkers of different ages, especially after the Renaissance, and it came to be felt specially by those thinkers who had rejected formal Christianity. We may therefore speak of Platonism as a kind of natural religion. We may even call it some kind of higher pantheism. The Sun, the Moon and the stars, are not these, O my mind, the vision of Him that reigns? Is not the vision He? Platonism thus recognized some kind of immanent reality, although it was aware that the immanent did not exhaust the possibilities of the transcendent. If we wish to study the development of later Platonic thought we cannot do better than turn to two English poets, Wordsworth and Shelley.

Although Wordsworth never rejected formal religion, we see how in his poetry he goes beyond its pale. To take an instance, formal Christianity regards each soul as a new comer, though it believes in the life eternal after death. It is this latter aspect of formal religion that Wordsworth emphasises in his 'We are Seven', but he also recognizes that if the soul lives after death, it must also have lived before birth. Platonism thus subscribes to the doctrine of pre-existence, and it is this aspect of Plato that Wordsworth brings out in his Immortality Ode, although it is based to some extent upon his own recollection of early childhood. That is why the poet says of the human soul, 'Trailing clouds of glory, we come from God who is our home', and he goes on to say, 'Nearer than hands and feet is He'. The poet sees how heaven lies about us in our infancy, and how as we grow elder

shades of the prison house grow in upon the growing child. Later on there comes a time when the world is too much with us. It was in order to counteract it that he developed his spiritual attitude to nature so that he might perceive in Nature, the signature of God. He bids us cultivate an attitude of quiet passivity, when we are laid asleep in body and become a living soul. It is in this way that he hopes to attain that blessed and serene mood in which the burden of life is laid aside and we look into the soul of things.

Let us now turn to the poet Shelley. He regards the cloud as the symbol of man's life. The cloud is the child of Earth and water. It changes its form, but it never dies. When it dies as a cloud it is born as rain, and when it dies as rain it is born as a river, and thus becomes one with the sea. He tells us that it is through birth and death that we reach a diviner day, and we should therefore regard death as no more than the thorns which God has strewed on the path to immortality. He says elsewhere that in this life of error, ignorance and strife, where all things seem, and nothing is, death itself may be a mockery; for there can be no death for truth, beauty and goodness, for they are aspects of the One and Eternal. That is why he says elsewhere that there is one road to peace and that is truth, and the way to comprehend this truth is to expand in spirit until we feel at one with the universal consciousness which sustains all life from below and kindles it from above. He sees in the transient phenomena of life the awful shadow of some unseen power that floats and works unseen among us. It is only in so far as we are conscious of it that we are redeemed from decay. Man would become a divine being, if he could always live conscious of this supreme presence, and in tune with it. But even as it is, whenever individuals and nations feel inspired by a lofty sentiment which calls upon them to war with evil, we see the latent possibilities of

Kshatriya? ... Caste should not go; but should only be readjusted occasionally. Within the old structure is to be found life enough for the building of two hundred thousand new ones. It is sheer nonsense to desire the abolition of caste. ... Caste is good. That is the only natural way of solving life. Men must form themselves into groups, and you cannot get rid of that. Wherever you go there will be caste. But that does not mean that there should be these privileges. They should be knocked on the head.²

But however deeply concerned about functional differentiation one may be, such a *varna* sociology is bound to have undesirable social effects. We find that from about the 10th century B.C. to the 6th century B.C. the Brahmins developed a baneful social superiority, which was attacked by the Buddha. Once more twenty-five hundred years afterwards another Kshatriya (i.e. Swami Vivekananda) had called the Brahmins of Madras pariahs of pariahs when the latter had the effrontery, to say that Vivekananda as a Sudra had no right to adopt the sannyasin's garb. It is difficult to destroy historical traditions and so long as the four terms of Vedic sociology — Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras,—are retained, they are bound to perpetuate painful historical memories of social exploitation and suppression. I believe that a profound social revolution is the need of India and this conviction of mine is strengthened when I find even a mighty personality like Gandhi believing in castes (or *varnas* as he called it in the old Vedic sense) from birth. Here Dayananda was a greater revolutionary than Gandhi. I recognize that the four divisions were based on a psychological view of social capabilities, elimination of competition, and the desire to serve society through specialization of labor but still the nomenclature which has sad historical memories must be changed. The caste system has proved to be the greatest citadel of

² Swami Vivekananda *On India And Her Problems*, Advaita Ashrama, Almora, 4th edition, 1946, pp. 77-78, 79 and 80.

conservative thought. Even Advaitists like Samkara, who had the courage to call the God of the theologians a category of *Maya*, respected the caste system. Marxian sociology did not have to face a time-honoured sanctified privileged caste system and its tone was more this-worldly. In sociological terms, however, it is clear that Vivekananda stood for social accommodation, co-operation and mutuality while Marx preached the gospels of social antagonism, tension, struggle, contradiction and even war.

Vivekananda's spiritually-oriented sociology may appear weak in one respect that it tries to impair the political sense of the Asian people by such statements as 'The voice of Asia is the voice of religion, the voice of Europe is the voice of politics.' But although a believer in the phenomenal character of the mundane sphere Vivekananda stood for resolute defiance against centres of oppression and tyranny. His was a heroic soul that could not tolerate any compromise with the exploiters. He was trying to differentiate the 'souls' of Asian and European culture. The great religions of Asia have stressed the sovereignty of God and His eternal law. Europe has championed the triumphs of science, technology, commerce, economics, civics and politics. Vivekananda said:

'Europe, the centre of the manifestation of material energy, will crumble into dust within fifty years, if she is not mindful to change her position, to shift her ground and make spirituality the basis of her life.'³

In the system of Marx, technology and economics, the substructure are more important than the superstructure of politics—in a sense, they are regarded the determinants of political conditions.⁴ Marx fully realised the importance of capital but Vivekananda the sannyasi, the conqueror of

³ Swami Vivekananda *On India And Her Problems*, p. 39.

⁴ V. P. Varma "Critique of Marxian Sociology", *The Calcutta Review*, March-June, 1955.

lust and gold, never understood the social and economic value of money and the economic causation of historical action. But after his return from the west he realized the value of social organisation and used to say that if he collected three hundred million rupees the salvation of Indian masses could be effected.

After the failure of the Revolution of 1848 Marx was primarily confined to his scholarly philosophical activities although he did work to consolidate the First International. Vivekananda remained always the titanic man of action. Marx stressed the need of an organised proletarian party in effecting the coming socialist revolution. Vivekananda wanted to train individual workers for effecting the task of social amelioration of India. Vivekananda's humanistic ethics and positivistic interests of the Comtean type, (interests greater than Comte because the latter was only theoretical but Vivekananda not only formulated theories but also practised them), were revealed in the fact he energised the solitary individualistic and meditative members of *sannyasa ashrama* into an active humanistic society.

The fundamental difference between the two social thinkers is that Vivekananda stressed the reformation of society but put greater stress on the supreme transformation of human consciousness into the divine. Marx was a great realist and a dialectical materialist and wanted even violent social revolution. But one point may be noted regarding the doctrines of Marx. They bear the character of a philosophy dominated by hate, contempt and envy. Marxism is not essentially a deeply philosophic doctrine in the sense Platonism, Vedantism, Buddhism or Hegelianism are philosophical systems. It is born as a reaction against the disturbing and maladjusted situation created by the Industrial Revolution. It has a temporary element in it and it makes no attempt to

solve the deeper problems of man. The spiritual sociological doctrines of Vivekananda with their stress on the cultivation of nobility, purity and fraternity have suffered the hard knocks of history and have survived. His mission has been the restatement of the perennial philosophy of justice, love and universal compassion. Time will decide as to how far socialism succeeds. In the modern historical periods Marxist economics oriented to social welfare and the expanded creation of opportunities have been unique historical experimentations but the technics and methods of Marxism in action are totalitarian, despotic and even barbaric.

The great horrors of the two great wars are convincing men of the futility of a materialistic sociology, naturalistic ethics and agnostic metaphysics. Vivekananda's social conclusions are linked up with the abiding and persistent spiritual experiences of the great number of saints and seers and they may prove to be more helpful to the tormented humanity. He stressed organic growth, national development, and physical, mental and spiritual freedom. The essence of his social philosophy was the acquisition of the powers of moral nobility and character.

We believe that a mere comprehensive philosophy of synthesis is the need of the hour.⁵ The materialistic universe cannot be neglected. Capitalist excesses must be destroyed and economic equality must be made the gospel of society. But after this economic security has been achieved, for the proper development of its culture and spirit and a proper establishment of human relationships and values, the world will have to find inspiration in the great Vedantic formulas, of which Vivekananda was the great expounder in modern times.

⁵ V. P. Varma, "Gandhi and Marx," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* June 1954, "Marxism and Vedanta", *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, Autumn 1954.

and that the feelings also have a place, and when they are sublimated, they form a legitimate path to the ultimate reality, then it is obvious that the mystic approach has a place in the Vedantic attitude to life. Mysticism does not seek to supplant metaphysics, it merely seeks to supplement it. As Swami Siddheswarananda has said :

Mysticism puts us in a position in which we can participate in the 'lila' of the world, and thereby play our part in the Divine drama; by capturing and directing the dynamism of our emotion, it becomes possible for us, without doing violence to our nature, to commune with the Divine.

What the Swami means by the term 'lila' is the apparent diversity which seems to be manifest at the heart of divine unity. By means of the sublimation of one's feelings, by approaching that ultimate unity by means of the various human sentiments, such as the feeling of comradeship, the devotion of a servant to a master, of parents towards their children, and of children towards their parents, it becomes possible for the human to approach the divine. That is why we draw upon the stock examples of Hanuman, of Arjuna, of Yasoda and of Radha, or

Sita. We find in the life of Sri Ramakrishna the plenitude of experience that may be attained by following the mystic path. Incidentally the mystic attitude gives us a criticism of life, for it tells us that the empirical attitude to life can never bring us that plenitude of life.

The mystic attitude of life is of value to us because it leads us through the 'lila' to the 'nitya'. That is why the life of Sri Ramakrishna is of special value to us, for he remained as it were upon the threshold of consciousness, and he could envisage simultaneously these complementary aspects of Reality. That is why it is, as Swami Siddheswarananda says, that all the human sentiments could be classified under five main heads, and that the spiritual sense is awakened by adopting any one of them towards God, and that each sentiment when pushed to the extreme leads to the experience of unity. In short the mystic vision is the adhyatma yoga that Yama taught Nachiketas. It is, to use the language of Indian philosophy, a combination of Bhavana and Nididhyasana. May we attain by means of it the peace that comes from union with the Supreme Being.

GITA

THE SCRIPTURE OF THE WORLD RELIGION

SRI VIDYA SANKARA BHARATI SWAMI

A man's mind has three faculties viz. willing, feeling, and knowing. Corresponding to these three faculties, Gita lays down the three methods of realisation viz., Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana. These are, in general parlance, the ethical, the religious, and the metaphysical ways of looking at creation. Gita takes note of all these three faculties of the mind, and the three corresponding methods, and presents a comprehensive religion, that excels all other religions in the world. Gita shows that there is no anta-

gonism among these paths, and further synthesises them into a harmonious whole.

The 18 chapters of the Gita are divided into three parts in two ways. One method of division is to show that the first six chapters deal with Karma, the middle six chapters deal with Bhakti, and the last six chapters deal with Jnana. Another kind of division is to say that the first six chapters explain the Jiva-tatvam, the middle six chapters explain the Iswara-tatvam, and the last six chapters explain the identity

between Jiva and Iswara. These two methods again are not water-tight compartments, one divorced from the other. They are interrelated thus: Jiva by following Karma becomes purified (Sanskrita) which process is indicated in the middle six chapters: then he does Bhakti to Iswara, which process is indicated in the middle six chapters: and finally, he realises his identity with Brahman, by following the Jnana-marga as explained in the last six chapters.

Further Bhakti is placed in the middle between Karma and Jnana, so that it may act as a lamp on the threshold, shedding its light on both sides. So Bhakti is needed for a person who does Karma, and also for one who follows the Jnana-marga. It is only when Karma and Bhakti are conjointly followed that Jnana dawns, and the lamp of self-knowledge is lit, as explained in the Gita, by the simile of Jnana-dipa. Just as a light cannot be produced without wick and oil, so Jnana cannot be acquired without Karma and Bhakti. Then only the light of knowledge of Self dawns, and the darkness of ignorance is dispelled. Gita has harmonised in a graded manner the various methods of Karma, Yoga, Bhakti, Vairagya, Prapatti, Sanyasa, and Jnana, as leading to Self-realisation or Mukti. It is only in the Gita that we find such a uniquely synthetic treatment of all the various methods into a harmonious whole, and not in any other scripture of any other religion.

The aim of all the religions in the world is to solve the problem of life, and to propound a method for salvation. Each religion has propounded its own method. Now, of all the various religious scriptures, we shall see, which deserves to be the scripture of the universal religion of humanity. The various other religions are Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Christianity preaches love of God, which comes under the Bhakti Yoga of Gita. Islam preaches self-surrender (as the word implies), which comes under Prapatti

of Gita. Judaism preaches righteousness which comes under the Karma-marga of Gita. The cult of Zarathustra is Bhakti-yoga only. Buddhism lays emphasis on the ethical aspect which is included in Karma-yoga and Vairagya of Gita. Vardhamana Jina, the founder of Jainism is the prophet of Jnana-marga, to some extent, which is more thoroughly dealt with in the Gita. Guru Govinda Simha of Sikhism in his 'gem of a book' says that he practically rendered into his own language the gist of the Gita, and as according to him, Gita is a Universal Gospel, he calls his book also by the name of 'Universal Song'. His ideal is to fight for the right, and so he exhorts people to follow such a principle, just like Krishna, who preached to Arjuna to fight for Dharma.

Faiths like Saivism, Vaishnavism, Gānapatya, Saura cult, and Śāktism, all preach only the Bhakti-marga which is treated in the Gita most comprehensively. Every one of the above religions lays emphasis on the one or the other only of the various methods propounded in the Gita, and thus presents only a partial truth, while the Gita harmonises all those methods without any antagonism, and presents the highest possible synthesis of all the methods of Self-realisation. Hence whatever is found in the scripture of any other religion is sure to be found in the Gita, and what is not found in the Gita is not found elsewhere. Hence it is par excellence the permanent gospel of life, and is the brightest gem in the ethical, religious or philosophical literature of the world, and is certainly the Bible of Humanity, or the scripture of the world religion.

In a way the Gita excels even the Upanishads and the Brahma-sutras (even though the Gita is born of the Upanishads), as we do not find such a harmonised and synthetic presentation of all the various methods of Self-realisation in either of the other two.

perfection which lie deep down in human nature. To the extent to which mankind approaches perfection, people would cease to be the slaves of their baser passions. It is only then that mankind may proceed from the closed society of the tribe and the nation to the open society of humanity. Science and art would become the lamps of life, and by the cultural conquest of life, we may transform life into the arena of realized freedom as we move from perfection to perfection, and comprehend Eternity through the moving hand of time. To live in this faith and to work for it is in itself hope, empire and victory.

Let us now turn to another aspect of mysticism as revealed religion sees it. In fact, formal Christianity is, according to Bergson, no more than the cooling and the crystallization of the mysticism of Christ. We see how the two main branches of Christianity, Roman Catholicism, as well as Protestantism have alike produced great mystics. Let us take by way of illustration, Blake as a typical instance of a Protestant mystic and Francis Thompson as illustrating Roman Catholic mysticism. In the poetry of Blake we see how the religious sentiment tends to crystallize round two aspects of the life of Christ, viz. that of the infant Jesus and of Christ upon the cross. In the first instance we have the songs of innocence, and in the latter case we have the songs of experience. In the one case the poet gives expression to the joy of life, and in the other case, he gives expression to the acquaintance with sorrow and suffering which is essential for the liberation of the spirit. The lamb is the symbol of innocence and the tiger is the symbol of experience. And He who made the lamb made the tiger also; in the one case we see the gentleness of the Maker and in the other case we see His strength. The tiger of wrath was ever powerful with Blake and he wished to make use of it to fight all that is debasing in life. It is in this way that he hopes to

see eternity in an hour and infinity in a grain of sand, and thus build a bridge between Heaven and Charing Cross.

In Francis Thompson's 'Hound of Heaven', a poem which was dear to the heart of Mahatma Gandhi, we see another aspect of mysticism. The poet here points out that there is no escape for us from the divine benevolence that pursues us relentlessly except by our surrender to it. That is because wherever we go in God's universe, God is already there. We may drown our uneasy consciousness in the pursuit of something that is finite, but it can never fully satisfy us, or fill the void in our heart. It is then that the poet realizes that just as an artist chars a piece of wood in order to paint with it, so also God, the infinite artist might char the human life, in order to make use of it for a richer purpose. Thus the poet turns to God and finds in God all that has been taken away. The idea of the poem is that we cannot rest, and God cannot rest until we find our rest in God.

With the turn of the century, we find how Hindu mysticism has influenced the poets and thinkers of Europe. As Clough has said, it is not by Eastern windows only that when daylight comes, comes in the light, for when we turn Westward we see that the land is bright. We see instances of such Eastern light shining through Western windows. We obtain an outlook through some of those Western windows in modern English and American poetry. In a poem by Emerson entitled *Brahma*, where it is said, 'I am the doubter and the doubt, and when Me they fly I am the wings. I am the hymn which the Brahmin sings.' We also see how Vedantic thought has influenced the poetry of T. S. Eliot. In his *Four quartets*, which is an autobiographical poem we see how he was influenced by the message of Krishna to Arjuna, the message that we should fare forward. In his *Waste Land* again he refers to the fire sermon of the Buddha and the message that is conveyed by the voice of

thunder in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. We may also mention in this connection the Irish mystics, notably W. B. Yeats who has written a poem entitled 'The Indian upon God', and AE who has written a sonnet on 'Thou art that' as well as 'A hymn to Krishna'.

We thus see that the mystic consciousness tends to overflow the bounds of geography, for it appeals to what is fundamental in human nature. We may thus go round the world, and finally arrive at our starting point, Eastern mysticism. Speaking of the characteristics of mysticism in India, Rabindranath Tagore says:

The infinite is not a mere matter of philosophical speculation in India. It is as real to her as the sunlight. She must see it, feel it and make use of it in her daily life.

We have here the message of India, of the eternal India of the seers of the *Upanishads*. We may regard it as part of the perennial philosophy of mankind. It posits that there is a ground or substratum called God, that it is possible to contact it, and that we do so by our love and devotion. To quote again from Rabindranath Tagore:

If man could only listen to the voice that rises from the heart of his own creation, he would hear the same message that came from the Indian sage of ancient time: 'Hearken to me, ye children of the immortal, dwellers of the heavenly worlds, I have known the supreme Person who comes as light from the dark beyond.'

We may therefore say that the mystic attitude to life is part of the main current of thought. It takes its source in the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, notably in the *Yoga Upanishads* such as the *Swetaswata*. It has its place in the philosophy of Sankara. It finds expression in the poetry of Tagore and in the religious experience of Sri Ramakrishna. To those who are interested in the practical aspect of the mystic technique and the spiritual realization that follows we would like to commend a work attributed to Acharya Sankara, the Sarva-

vedanta-siddhanta-sara-sangraha. He tells us there how an aspirant who is morally fit could by rightly understanding what the *Upanishads* teach, and by meditating upon that teaching finally arrive at that experience of the religious consciousness, which cannot be attained by mere discursive reasoning. He also deals with the various planes of yogic consciousness, the changed outlook that it brings, and what it is that constitutes liberation. Although Sankara has restated the values of the spirit in a way which was in conformity with the time spirit, it is not sufficient if we merely repeat what the Acharya has said. It is necessary to re-live that experience and to restate it in the terms of our experience. That is why we turn to the modern exponents of mysticism such as Tagore and Ramakrishna. In a work entitled 'Contemporary Indian Philosophy', we have an article by Tagore, the religion of an artist. Here, as well as in his 'Sadhana' we find the key to his philosophy, that there is an ideal which is real, and that we can contact this infinite reality by our surrender to it. We cannot attain the infinite by our adding one more rung to the ladder of the finite, for it transcends all the pairs of opposites that we know of. When we turn to the poetry of Tagore in the light of his philosophy we see how the poet takes us at the Sisu-vihar stage and leads us gently on until he makes us realize that what we took to be the Sisu-vihar is in reality the Brahma-vihar. 'In art', he tells us, "the person in us is sending its answers to the supreme Person who reveals himself to us in a world of endless beauty across the lightless world of facts."

At this stage the question may arise, Is Mysticism Vedanta? If by Vedanta we mean the disputation of the schools, it is obvious that there can be no place for a purely intellectual approach in mysticism. On the other hand, if we should recognize that that a purely intellectual approach might lead to a one sided vision of reality,

necessary to make the picture formation coincide with the intention behind the inner speaking.

Even when mind wandering takes place, the speaking force is used. But there is a vital difference. In controlled thought, the speaking effort is consciously employed. It is creative and masterful. It does not allow undisputed sway to the rush of old impressions. On the other hand a chosen value is made to occupy the field of awareness and, to that extent, change the trend of emotion and action. But when this initiative is lost, and the field is left to the vagaries of unwanted elements that creep in as picture forms, the speaking aspect is turned into an obedient shadow closely flitting behind their heels. Seeing and speaking will coincide, but as representatives of invading currents from uncontrolled level. By indulging in them, the personality becomes more and more their helpless slave, instead of their purifier or an open channel for the highest values available to man.

To take a simple example : We decide to fix our attention on the grace of the Lord and, as a preliminary step, revolve in our mind His features as depicted by a master painter. We close our physical eyes and visualize His noble forehead and tender eyes. We may say 'forehead, forehead, eyes, eyes', a number of times and try to make the pictures coincide with those found in the familiar painting. But not for long ; for in the first place monotony will creep in. Next, we have not yet tried to establish in a convincing manner the connecting links between the Lord's features and our own illumination. So subsequent repetitions of the word 'forehead' may cease to call up the Lord's face and its significance. Instead the word may rouse the picture of the forehead of our own child who got wounded by a fall recently ! From there the thought may, accompanied by appropriate emotions, jump on to pictures of the doctor or of the hospi-

tal, or to the boy's probable failure in his examinations and the consequent blasting of his prospects in the future ! The climax or the ending of the unit of concentration may thus be an ever deepening sense of frustration ! These possibilities are endless. It is not difficult to see that as such pictures emerge, the speaking function will accompany the seeing aspect,—not lead or control it.

The fact is that pictures evoke emotions which, in a number of ways, condense into actions, events and reactions. When divorced from the controlling inner speech, they can therefore lead to serious consequences. To avoid them we have first to learn to trace our failures and miseries in day to day activities to this tendency to allow mental pictures to stray away from our virtuous inner talks. We have also to learn to put our highest ideals systematically into our inward talk and see to it that the appropriate pictures,—and therefore emotions and actions—are raised up and made to enter the habit level. As practice continues, we shall be free from the compulsion to repeat earlier exercises. We can then confidently move on to higher ones. We shall be considerably helped by the welcome penetration, into the surface mind, of beneficent pictures and emotions from habit levels earlier mastered. Higher values, when controlled through suitable pictures coinciding with words, act like a permanent fund yielding units of interest that visit the surface mind unasked and play their unique parts in the attainment of final illumination.

Says the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha : Whatever the mind keeps steadily in view fructifies very soon. The mind materializes it and, of course, experiences the joy or sorrow attendant upon it. Yat-paśyati tad-ev'āśu phalibhūtam idam manah Saha harṣa-viśādābhyām bhungte tasmāt-tad-eva tat (Utpatti, lxxxii, 33).

भगवदेवेति

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

* Naturalness in religion is a rare phenomenon. Many extraneous things get clustered round the real religious spirit which consists of a childlike faith in God. Even those who approach the highest Reality through the path of knowledge become childlike and acquire a conviction about the Reality, which is very simple and natural. It is the Divine Incarnation who invariably lays stress on the core of religion. The Holy Mother was such an Incarnation, who guided the brilliant intellectuals as well as the simple village folk through the path of spirituality. This being the month of her birthday anniversary the Editorial discusses

the path of simple faith she prescribed for most of her devotees.

Swami Sridananda is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

Sri Gopal Chandra Misra, M.A., is a Lecturer in Oriya in the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack.

Dr V. P. Varma, M.A. (Patna), M.A. (Columbia), Ph.D. (Chicago) is Professor of Politics, Patna University.

Sri V. A. Thiagarajan is a retired Professor of English.

Sri Vidya Sankara Bharati Swami is the Sri Gayatri Pithadhipati, Masulipatam, Andhra.

LABOUR AND SOCIAL SERVICE FOR STUDENTS

Dr Shrimali, the Education Minister of India, announced again on November 21, about a scheme of compulsory labour and social service by college students between 19 and 22. It has been received by the people and the newspapers with a mixed feeling. Many people do not like the idea of compulsion, though of course it is admitted that physical work may give an outlet to youthful energies and may thereby lessen the chronic indiscipline. It may also be an antidote for aimlessness common among students by making them fit for or at least endow them with preparedness for various alternative jobs.

Inculcating in the youth a liking for physical work seems to be urgent in this country. Labour and discipline are matters of habit. Educated Indians, by and large, are innocent of physical work, specially the town folk. Even in middle class families mothers and sisters do all the household labour ; very little share is taken by boys and menfolk. This was all right when girls were not to study or earn their living ; but now they too require leisure as was given by the family members to the malefolk studying or earning outside. With the fragmentation of family becoming common in

this country, modern boys and girls will have to share their household duties in near future. Even now in poorer families they have to do that. But because they have not practised physical work in earlier days, they find it very tedious and exacting. Even those who go in for voluntary social work with great earnestness find it difficult to continue physical service for a long time. The maxim is literally true in their case that their spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. Because of this lack of practice, there is a general dislike for jobs that require physical strain. The idea of loss of prestige also came to be associated with certain types of work. Hence we find that educated youths are anxious to get white collar jobs, even though less remunerative. The plethora of Class IV employees in offices has its roots in this apathy of educated people towards physical work. So it is essential that the habit of physical work should be inculcated in the youth. When it should be done may be disputed. It is true that if inculcated early in life, the effect will be better as well as cause less mental strain. Physical work, moreover, will improve the physique. It will make their habits regular too.

In the Basic education Gandhiji had the

That is why we find the Gita translated in all the languages of the world, and very popular everywhere.

Further in our puranic literature, we come across scores of Gita like Rama Gita, Iswara Gita, Ganesha Gita, Kapila Gita, Sruti Gita, Devi Gita, Brahma Gita, Yama Gita, Siva Gita, Vyasa Gita etc. There is also Uttara Gita addressed by this very Krishna to this very Arjuna. But of all these, the Bhagavad-gita only has become most prominent and popular. Even simply the word 'Gita' is taken to mean only this Bhagavad-gita, and not any other. Why is this? It is because (1) there is in this, a harmonised and synthetic presentation of all the methods, unlike in others, and (2) while all the others derive their names from their propounders, who are but incarnations of Bhagavan, this Gita is propounded by Bhagavan Himself, and not by any incarnation of His, as the name itself shows. Though Krishna appears to preach the Gita to Arjuna at the time of the Great War between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, which took place 38 years before the beginning of Kaliyuga, i.e., 38 plus 5058 or 5096 years ago (equal to 3138 B.C.), in the fourth Chapter, Krishna, while tracing the origin of the Yoga that is contained in the Gita, says that he had first taught the Yoga to the Sun at the beginning of creation. According to our Hindu Calendar, the present creation began 195,58,85,058 years ago from now. This is corroborated by the re-

searches of world famous scientists also according to whom, it is nearly 200 crores of years ago. Prior to this creation, there was deluge or Pralaya, and prior to that again creation, and so on. Thus creation is beginningless, and co-exists with God who is unborn and eternal. Krishna says in the Gita that He is God Himself from whom creation emanates. Krishna that was born, in Dwapara Yuga, to Vasudeva was only an incarnation of that God; but, while preaching the Yoga of the Gita, He was preaching, not as the then born incarnation, but as God Himself; otherwise His words that He taught it at first to the Sun at the beginning of creation do not make sense. Thus the Gita doctrine is as old as creation, and is given by Bhagavan Himself, and hence eternal, and is meant for the whole of mankind. Such a doctrine was only repeated to Arjuna, at the time of the Great Mahabharata war. The Gita contains eternal truths for the salvation of mankind. All the other religions, which came into existence recently, i.e., a few thousand years ago, have emphasised on one or the other of the principles taught in the Gita, to suit the times and conditions, in which their propounders were ushered into existence, and are accordingly named after their propounders.

Hence the Bhagavad-gita is the Bible of Humanity, the only eternal scripture for the whole world.

Aye, if there is anything in the Gita that I like, it is the two verses, coming out strong as the very gist, the very essence, of Krishna's teaching — "He who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all beings, the Imperishable in things that perish, he sees indeed. For seeing the Lord as the same, everywhere present, he does not destroy the Self by the self and thus he goes to the highest goal."

The Bhagavad-Gita is the best authority on Vedanta.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

चरैवेति

EFFECTIVE VISUALIZATION

Among mental movements there are two that may be called 'basic'. They are a speaking and a seeing. Suppose we begin to 'think' of a rose flower. A portion of our mental energy goes on telling details about the petals,—their colour, number, the way they curve, hand down or spread themselves out, the angle of their presentation, their fragrance, the bees that fly about and so on. As each suggestive word is uttered mentally, another portion of mental energy tries to raise up appropriate pictures to match it. That energy, we may say, is actually converted into those pictures or forms. There is thus a mental naming and a mental picturing,—word and its meaning, *Nāma* and *Rūpa*.

In purposeful, controlled or guided thinking, we use internal speech or word in a chosen order or frequency. As we move our inward gaze from the colour of petals to their number of curves,—to take up only the physical side, as against our own 'intention' side — we may decide to dwell on each factor as long as we can with ease and enthusiasm. In that case the attribute, 'red' or 'pink', 'ten' or 'twelve', will have to be repeated many times in succession. It is good to realize what happens between the repetitions. Let us, for convenience, imagine the picturing or form-making principle to function like a wave, a *vrtti*, an induced movement. No movement, much less human effort can be perpetual. So the initiated mental movement, corresponding to the silent repetition of 'red' or 'ten', is bound to fade sooner or later. In other words, the relevant picture-formation will tend to stop, along with attendant values. What is to be done before there is a complete fading out of the forms? We have to behave like the football player who manages to keep the ball in the air as long

as he likes by hitting it with the foot, knees or head as often as it comes down. The choice of the method of hitting is left to the individual. In the mental field too it is to be left to the ability and skill of the individual 'thinker' to keep on suggesting, from within, the same word or other words which, to his satisfaction, raise up required pictures or forms as long as he desires or finds it useful. When the maximum point of efficiency has been reached, he must move on to the next item in his steering list,—fragrance or bees, or his own special value, namely, the idea of how he means to procure roses for himself or to increase his large-heartedness by distributing roses to others.

A question may be asked: It is not a simple fading out of the first wave that we usually experience, but its replacement by a series of other waves, mostly irrelevant and unexpected. From where do these arise? The reply is that they come from within. They start from our own stored-up memories, from our reactions, from sorrows, joys, frustrations and hopes. Though 'dormant', they are always awake in their own way, waiting for opportunities to come up to the surface. The needed gap is got when the force of a guided picture is exhausted and we fail to insert another right one in time. Then, even though we may be repeating the word as before, the meaning portion strays away from it, giving place to totally novel and disconcerting notions, fancies and values. Like a streak of lightning illuminating different patches of thickly spread out clouds, our thought current too makes a weird movement, each twist and bend of it showing up a strange combination of latent impressions. Our duty in such circumstances is to put forth the subtle and special effort

idea of imparting the dignity of labour through the curriculum from the primary school itself. However, it may not be possible in a short time to change the entire educational pattern. The home too is out of the reach of the educationists. The only way left for them is to give the students intensive training for a fixed period. And it will be quite beneficial. But from the standpoint of acclimatization and discipline with enduring effect, periodical physical work is less fruitful. It would give better results if some form of work was possible throughout the student career. But for that, work must be arranged in the campus or near their homes. Those who are in the field know how difficult it is to find suitable work for social welfare volunteers in colleges, for they require work which will be of short duration not to disturb their studies, less monotonous and more, should we say, tangible and spectacular, to prevent their enthusiasm from ebbing. It is a difficult task. But it is clear that if the work is to be continued throughout the year, it must be near their home or college and should not consume much of their time. Naturally, such work will not be very spectacular. So the enthusiasm too may flag. The camp life supplies an amount of excitement, enthusiasm etc. But they take away much time too. If they are to be voluntary, some extra credit should be given for taking part in them as is generally done in some fields. But to make it universal, it must be injected into the society. Is it possible unless some amount of compulsion in the sense of a rule is there? Moreover, when a thing becomes universal, the feeling of compulsion will not be so acute. After all, even in present studies there is compulsion. The voluntariness is only in the choosing of the career.

Some papers compared the compulsory camps as similar to the Communist labour camps. It is also feared by some that big camps will encourage political activities

among students. It will be too much of a temptation for some political groups not to take advantage of an assemblage of youths to convert them to their viewpoint. And from the present trends it must be admitted that there is chance of destructive and anti-social elements gaining the supremacy or well-meaning parties using them for other purposes. The critics are probably afraid of some parties taking advantage of the situation for furthering their political ends. The fear is not baseless. Hence the idea of spacing the work throughout the year seems to be better, for it will dispel that fear.

In some Western countries physical work is pretty common in student life. 'Earn while you learn' is their maxim. Physical work is attractive or unavoidable in advanced countries and it is unconsciously cultivated there. But in India such labour is not remunerative enough. Moreover, India is anything but short of labour. If students are taken in large numbers, employment opportunities for others will lessen. It is also true that there will be a great financial drain of resources for meagre financial return. This is really a weighty argument. But the main point here is training, education, preparing the youth for facing life more efficiently. And for that no amount of sacrifice is too much. So it is felt that the move is quite good even in the present form, but if it is possible to space it throughout the student life, it will be better still. In the latter case, earning by the poorer boys will not be delayed, duration of earning will not be lessened, and college lessons will not be forgotten before competitive examinations.

Another question may be raised, whether compulsion and social service can go together. But here the workers are the students who will not expect any remuneration. It is expected, moreover, that some imagination will be brought in the field to keep their enthusiasm and idealism intact.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MAHATMA GANDHI—THE LAST PHASE*

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Pyarelal, who is blessed with an entire vista of twenty-eight years of close, unbroken association with the Mahatma, naturally fills the second volume of his *Magnum Opus* with details of his own unforgettable impressions of Gandhiji, his personal and intimate reactions to many of the qualities of his hero in his own inimitable manner. We are thus, provided with an exhaustive and thorough analysis of Gandhiji's theories of Socialism, Satyagraha, Spinning-wheel, Industrialism, Cottage Industry, etc., in the course of the eight hundred odd pages. However long and arduous the reading may be, we profit immeasurably by the rare experience that we derive from the study of a sacred book like this.

In the first volume of *The Last Phase*, the author led us to the important events of 1946 at Noakhali and at Bihar. This volume starts with the over-hanging shadow of partition into Hindu and Muslim India, with our emergence into Independence. The arrival of Lord Mountbatten as viceroy of India and his significant role as a mediator between Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah, the important correspondence that passed between the viceroy and Gandhiji on one side and the viceroy and the British Government on the other, supply us greater intimacy with events of that momentous period.

To know something of what Gandhiji felt regarding the type of Socialism India should develop, we have interesting observations recorded here which will amply let us into the Mahatma's profound insight into Indian life. Gandhiji remarked: 'The ideal of Socialism is not a new discovery. It is to be found in the Gita. It means that we may not own anything beyond our strict requirement but should share equally with all God's creatures the means of subsistence.' Further a sketch of the basic course in practical Socialism, according to Gandhiji's conceptions, is as follows:— (1) Fold your bedding on getting up in the morning, (2) Give a helping hand in preparing and laying out the breakfast, (3) Help in dusting and cleaning up the house, (4) Wash your own clothes, (5)

Help your mothers and sisters in cleaning and scrubbing utensils, (6) Spin daily to provide yourself with the clothes you need, (7) Keep your books and papers neat and tidy, and (8) Use a two-anna steel nib in preference to a fifty-rupee-worth fountain-pen.'

Indeed a simpler and a more convincing tip to practise active socialism cannot be conceived of.

There is a chapter called '*A Satyagrahi Knows No Failure*' which comprehensively presenting to the reader what great force non-violence could assume, if only successfully employed by every one, true to the call of the country. There is a moving episode also referred to by the author regarding the death of a Harijan worker named Chakrayya who died suddenly. Gandhiji's sorrow was as genuine as it was made an occasion for a lesson to others. He said: 'Chakrayya was a hero in both. He had shed fear of death. He had given himself wholly to the service of humanity. A Harijan, he made no distinction between caste and outcaste, Hindu and Muslim. To him they were all men, and he was a man in the real sense of the word.' Commenting on what made Gandhiji so invulnerable, and drove also the British power seek his counsel, the author makes us pause and search our own hearts for the reply. And the reply is not far to seek. It is Gandhiji's self-effacement, his consuming desire to serve all human beings, his passion to seek God or Truth, his surrender of his whole being to truth to the exclusion of everything else, that made him a superior source of all counsel, comfort and inspiration to others.

In between similar deep and instructive pages, Pyarelal has also the keenness of observation to notice small yet revealing details of how the Mahatma himself attended to the minutest detail and in turn has proved how it can serve as a great eye-opener to many an ostentatious and fussy person obsessed with his own immensity in public life. The allusion is like this: 'He could go to bed only at 11-15 at night. Early

* Volume II by Pyarelal, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, Pages 887, Price Rs. 20.

next morning after prayer, he sat down, as usual, to clear his mail. But the nib of his pen broke. A new one was sent for. That took some time. But with Gandhiji every second counted. Instead of waiting for it, he, with a pen-knife had mended the thin end of his wooden pen holder into a point and had already begun writing with it when the nib arrived. 'What a commentary on a person's real business-like habits which alone could provide room for quickness and sharpness of observation and achievement! Similar anecdotes cannot but make a ponderous volume like this one gain in refreshing interludes.

The great riots of Calcutta and Delhi and the wonderful way in which Mahatma Gandhi brought about reconciliation between Hindus and Muslims and restored normal life to the two cities, have received very accurate and elaborate treatment in the chapters entitled 'Crumbling Heavens' and 'A City of The Dead'. Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy looms large in one of the two chapters and we are taken through all the labyrinthine talks, meditations and parleys which took place between leaders of the Hindus and Muslims, before Gandhiji, through his memorable fasts, sought peace and amity to prevail. The significant observation in one simple sentence of the author: 'As the train started, Suhrawardy's eyes were seen wet with tears—perhaps for the first time in his life in public,' adds more than an entire chapter devoted to describing his mood and personality.

'Towards New Horizons' is a very high-class chapter which along with the one called 'Setting Democracy On The March' furnishes this volume with a fine analysis explaining the significance of what filled the last days of Gandhiji's life. Regarding the Indian peasant whom Gandhiji always considered a true symbol of the Indian civilization, there is something more here which gives us an inlet into a great man's capacious head and heart. For instance, he says: 'In the case of the Indian villager an age-old culture is hidden under an encrustment of crudeness. . . . Behind the crude exterior, you will find a deep reservoir of spirituality. . . . You will not find such a thing in the West. Take away the encrustation, remove his chronic poverty and his illiteracy, and you have the finest specimen of what a cultured, cultivated, free citizen should be.'

It is illuminating to note how Gandhiji described the equipment of a satyagrahi soldier. He seems to have referred to Tulsi Ramayana where

Rama, in answer to the question from Vibhishana what exactly was the real equipment to an army, gave the following as its best equipment: The Chariot, my dear Vibhishana, that wins the victory for Rama is of a different sort from the usual one. Manliness and courage are its wheels; unflinching truth and character its banners and standards; strength, discrimination, self-restraint and benevolence its horses, with forgiveness, mercy, equanimity as their reins; prayer to God is that conqueror's unerring charioteer, dispassion his shield, contentment his sword, charity his axe, intellect his spear and perfect science his stout bow. . . . There is no other equipment for victory comparable to this; and, my dear friend, there is no enemy who can conquer the man who takes his stand on the chariot of Dharma. . . .

It is an instance also how beautifully the Mahatma could give appropriate citations from the classics and prove the value and practical application of the wisdom of old to humanity during all times!

When we come to the last but one chapter, 'One Perfect Act', we feel engulfed in the greatest sorrow over-hanging the finale to this volume. Graphic and moving are the details which the author has bestowed on the fatal shooting of Gandhiji by a fanatic. Let us now to Pyarelal himself: 'The crowd parted, making a lane for Gandhiji to pass through and reach the dais. As Gandhiji took his hands off the shoulders of the two girls to answer the greetings of the crowd, someone roughly elbowed his way through the crowd from the right. Manu tried to stop him by catching hold of his hand but he violently jerked her off and, bending before Gandhiji with his palms folded as if in the act of making an obeisance, fired point-blank three shots in quick succession from his seven-chambered automatic pistol at so close a range indeed that one of the ejected shells was afterwards found caught in the folds of Gandhiji's clothes. The first shot entered the abdomen on the right side two and a half inches above the naval and three and a half times to the right of the mid-line. The second penetrated the seventh intercostal space one inch to the right of the mid-line, and the third on the right side of the chest one inch above the nipple and four inches from the mid-line. The first and the second shots passed right through and came out at the back. The third remained embedded in the lung. At the first shot the foot that was in motion when Gandhiji was hit, came down. He

was still on his legs when the second and third shots rang out. Then he collapsed. The last words he uttered were 'Rama! Rama!!' It is an epitome of great self-restraint which Pyarelal has shown by narrating the scene without any emotion.

Gandhiji's conviction of the truly non-violent man and a believer in soul-force, that he must only rely upon *Ramanama* to the extent of not forgetting it even in his last moments, was exemplified in his own case. What greater tribute does he need from his countrymen than that this alone could prove that he was the Man of God?

The epilogue is a very effective culmination to one of the longest accounts of India's Saint in Politics. A more fitting paragraph cannot be thought of by the author than quoting from Gandhiji himself the words: 'We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence'.

Do we need then another Apostle of Ahimsa to be born amidst us to carry out any further discoveries and do we equally need another devoted Pyarelal to describe vividly, magnificently and completely his hero's claim to the greatest achievement of the age?

NAVAJIVAN PUBLICATIONS

Here are a few more books published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

A GANDHI ANTHOLOGY: Book II. By Valji Govindji Desai. Pages 95. Price Annas Eight.

WOMEN: By M. K. Gandhi. Pages 111. Price Re. 1.

EVIL WROUGHT BY THE ENGLISH MEDIUM: By M. K. Gandhi. Edited by R. K. Prabhu. Pages 51. Price Annas Four.

THE SANTINIKETAN PILGRIMAGE: By Pyarelal. Pages 27. Price 40 nP.

A PHILOSOPHY OF INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: By Richard B. Gregg. Pages 232. Price Rs. 2-50 nP.

THE TECHNIQUE OF CORRELATION IN BASIC EDUCATION: By A. B. Solanki. Pages 196. Price Rs. 2-50 nP.

THE LONG ROAD: By Arthur E. Morgan. Pages 130. Price Rs. 2.

SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA: Pages 104. Price As. 6.

THE SERPENT POWER: By Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe). Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras. 529 plus 184 pages. Rs. 25/-.

This is the sixth edition of an important Tantric work edited by Sir John Woodroffe, the great jurist and scholar, under the pen name of Arthur Avalon. Tantric studies had long been discredited in India as well as the West. It was mainly through his monumental labours that their prestige was restored and their value came to be recognised. He has laid India under a deep debt of gratitude by his fearless championing of one of the most misunderstood aspects of her religion and culture. For many, his writings have proved the harbingers of a revival of faith in the efficacy of *Sadhana* or experimental religion. Practically for the first time in English he has attempted to take spiritualism seriously and to provide its rationale which, although by no means the last word on the subject, is packed with fruitful suggestions. No one who enters this field can advance even a step without paying his tribute of admiration to this courageous pioneer who made himself something of an intellectual outcaste among his own people by venturing into a region which for long had been held to be intellectually 'untouchable'.

This book is a description and explanation of the *Kundalini Sakti*, and the *Sadhana* or practice connected with its development, which occupies a prominent place in the scheme of the *Tantra Sastra*. The process is technically described as *Shat-chakra-bhedha* or piercing of the six centres (*Chakras*) or lotuses (*Padmas*) by the agency of *Kundalini Sakti*. The Supreme Power residing in the human body is here symbolised as the Goddess (*Devi*), *Kundalini* envisaged as a tiny coiled serpent reposing in the lowest body-centre, the *Muladhara*, at the base of the spinal column, until she is aroused and made to traverse six centres or *Chakras* and ultimately reaches the *Sahasrara Chakra*, resulting in the consummation of ultimate bliss. Of course, it cannot be sufficiently emphasised here that actual practice of any form of *Sadhana* requires initiation and competent instruction from a Master at every step. All that books like this can do is to rouse and feed the initial interest, and to provide that background of comprehension without which all practice degenerates into mere mechanism.

The originals of two Sanskrit works with commentaries viz., *Shat-chakra Nirupanam* and the smaller *Paduka Panchakam* comprise one third of this book. An English translation of

these two works with the main verses transliterated in Roman script together with elaborate notes and explanatory material take up a similar part of this work. The Editor's principal contribution is an exhaustive and masterly Introduction covering over 300 pages which provides an ample perspective and background for the whole subject, and deals among other things with the nature of consciousness as bodiless and as embodied, *Mantra* or articulate power, and the centres or lotuses (*Chakra* or *Padma*), and the practical as well as with the theoretical bases of this *Yoga*. Valuable English and Sanskrit Indexes form a feature of this work, along with coloured plates depicting the several *Chakras*, as also photographic blocks illustrating the *Yogasanas*. The book is sumptuously got up and does credit to the enterprise of the Publishers who have done a great service to the country by bringing out a series of works dealing with esoteric aspects of Indian religion and philosophy, which would otherwise have remained in obscurity. The first edition of this book was published forty years ago by M/s. Luzac & Co., London, and had a more rapid sale than was expected. The second edition which was greatly revised and enlarged was brought out by the present Publishers. That the work has now run into the sixth edition is an augury of the increasing tempo of interest in the more recondite aspects of Indian religious philosophy and *Sadhana*.

It would be a mistake to think that this form of *Sadhana* is of comparatively recent origin. The *Nadi* symbolism which, as it were, provides the soil in which this form of *Yoga* is rooted goes back to the earliest Upanishads. There are several later *Yogic* Upanishads which exclusively deal with this topic. It is broached in some of the Puranas or other celebrated works like the *Saundarya Lahari* (attributed to Shri Shankaracharya) a splendid edition of which was recently brought out by the present Publishers. This theoretical background which forms the last section of the Introduction covers over 60 pages and treats the subject in all its aspects. It would not be possible within the compass of a short review to go into any of these matters. After all it has to be borne in mind, as the learned Editor has often stressed, that the value of any form of *Sadhana* does not lie in its antiquity, or in the greatness of the names associated with the tradition, or even the ethical accompaniments, but mainly in its practical efficacy. The crucial and only test is whether the *Sadhana* leads to *Siddhi* (fulfilment) or not. Or in com-

mon language 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating'. In general, it may be said that apart from those familiar aspects of religion and philosophy, which are commonly acknowledged, it is beyond doubt that there are occult or hidden regions and in which the investigations made by the ancients would stand us moderns in very good stead if only we would treat them with reverence as worthy of study, instead of discarding them as rank superstitious, following the lead of half-baked foreign scholars and their intellectual progeny in this country. Even in our own time, Masters like Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, have tested in their own experience the veracity and genuineness of such things. The spectacular advances made in the physical sciences should not blind us to the fact that the psychical experimental sciences had made very great progress in our land in the past, and that we possess an innate aptitude (*Samskara*) for their restoration and development if only we wish to do so. Towards such a desirable end, publications like the present help immensely.

K. GURU DUTT

WORLD TEACHERS ON EDUCATION: Edited by T. S. Avinashilingam and K. Swaminathan, Silver Jubilee Souvenir, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore District, Madras State, 1958. Pp. 195, Price Rs. 4, Selling Agents: B. G. Paul & Co., Madras-1.

If education were complete by being formative, confirmative, informative and even reformatory, perhaps publication of this book was unnecessary. But as good luck would have it, blows coming on the distracted head of man from the just and benign hands of destiny have brought in him a sort of a half-awakening as to the fact that education has also to be transformative and regenerative. When the tiger of his own *karmaphala* pursues man with a ferociousness — unknown to any royal Bengal species — which could come only from very high education, man looks up his schooling with an unbelieving, unworshipful and questioning eye. Even then he cannot reject education, for one who has tasted the fruit of knowledge cannot get going back to his days of uninformed innocence. The price of knowing has to be paid by knowing more. The redemption of knowing more is in knowing better. And the consummation of knowing better is in knowing the highest. And this highest is the ultimate simple, the inner sovereign principle of man himself. An awareness of this

factuality, — which is synonymous with the awakening of spiritual consciousness, the manhood of man — and translation of it in actuality in the multi-pattern necessities of life, is the highest possible gift of education. Who can be the giver of that education? Not all the frightening academic giants who keep on manfully kicking forward the frontiers of knowledge without knowing the core of it in their own hearts and souls.

Curiously enough, in our rush of furious thinking on education it is but seldom that we remember the possibility of the 'world teachers' having actually a role in our education. Therefore the book on hand is so precious and pleasing. 'This Souvenir, prepared and published to commemorate the Silver Jubilee — celebrated on the 17th November, 1955 — of the Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, presents the thoughts on Education expressed by some of the great teachers of the world. Besides the utterances of the masters, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammad, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, passages from great books like the Upanishads, the Gita and Tirukkural have been included.'

With graceful humility the Editors who are two experienced and eminent educationists of South India add, 'It will be too much to claim that this compilation is either exhaustive or is the best selection that could be made. All we dare to hope is that this effort will be found useful and inspiring to those interested in education.'

Notwithstanding the possibility of a better work in the line in future, this submission of humility should not mislead one to think that the selections have not been done with great care and by competent persons. The groupings of the teachings of the masters culled from various works by learned collaborators and the indices of references will convince anyone that the compilation of this work has not been as easy a task as the slenderness of the volume would casually suggest.

To be sure, the book comprises a good bulk of the concentrated wisdom of millenniums, wisdom which encompasses the totality of human aspirations, experiences and possibilities. There cannot be an educationist in the world, however great, who cannot find a newer inspiration, and profounder insight into heart of things everytime he dives in the book. It is only when educationists of the world would learn to become like little young learners at the knees of the

world teachers that education will become a saving power instead of staying a problematic necessity.

It is not as if the educationist alone will profit by having the book as a vade-mecum. The spiritual aspirant without any of the megrims of the educationist, not to speak of the students in general, will also find the book equally helpful, for 'religion is the core of education' and 'education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.'

More than congratulations, the Editors of the book deserve the gratitude of all who have the welfare of mankind at heart.

S. B.

ELEVEN YEARS OF BIBLE BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Edited by H. H. Rowley. Published by The Falcon's Wing Press, Indian Hills, Colorado. Pages 804. Price £ 7.50.

The Bibliography under review has been compiled by the Society for Old Testament Study and it covers all publications being on the Old Testament during the years 1946-56. It may be seen that this kind of comprehensive listing of books published bearing on some original text enhances the value of the original and the spirit with which it is being respected in all the corners of the world. This invaluable source work on the Old Testament remains in evidence for the active co-operation the scholars the world over extended in keeping the Society informed of any new addition on the subject, without which this nicely got-up compilation would not have seen the light of the day. The Society deserves all praise for this invaluable reference book.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

SWAMI RAMDAS AND MOTHER KRISHNA

BAI—A Devotee's diary—Volumes III & IV: Published by Anandashram, P.O. Anandashram, Via Kanhangad, S. India. Pages 207-422. Price Re. 1 each.

Readers may be aware of the publication of the earlier volumes of the books under review through these review columns. In these further volumes more about Swami Ramdas have been brought out. Saguna darshan won't do for destroying all vasanas and purifying the mind. For darshan one must go beyond all gunas and by Ram Nam alone one can get this higher darshan. Volume IV contains some useful information about evils of life and the guidance is certain and sure.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

YOUR JOURNEY: (A conversation): Author and Publisher: Sri T. M. Murugesam Pillai, B.A., B.L., 1-1-92, C. G. S. T. Road, Tirunagar, Madurai.

The author discusses in this book freely whether there is any transmigration of the individual soul. He has drawn out more or less thoroughly well all the connected references and the conversation herein reproduced justify the belief in rebirth.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

SAINTLY STEERERS OF THE SHIP OF BRAHMADVAITA OF UPANISHADS: By Anantanandendra Saraswati. Published by Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati. Pages 54.

The book under review brings out short account of prominent authors and acaryas of Advaita Vedanta. Beginning from Sri Brahmanandi, earliest known advaitin, all prominent thinkers and writers to the present day have been introduced. The subtleties in discussing certain philosophical problems have been brought out clearly.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

MARATHI

SANTA SANGATI (Tukaram Maharaj Yanche): By Shri W. S. Bendre; published by Mouj Prakashan Griha, Khataw Wadi, Bombay-4. Pages 256. Price Rs. 7-8-0.

Shri W. S. Bendre, the author of this book is wellknown for his research work in the field of History and Religious Literature. During the last 8-9 years he devoted himself to the important task of studying the records concerning the life of Saint Tukaram and also the lives of those persons who were intimately connected with him. The present volume is the outcome of his deep study of the old records which throw a flood of light on the lives of such persons as Rameshwar Bhat, Mambaji Gosawi, Shekh. Mahamad Baba, Bahinabai Seorkar, Chintamani Deo and others who were closely associated with the life of Tukaram.

It is a patent fact that there is a tendency among the devotees of Saints to believe blindly in the stories and events which have no historical basis but which have been made current by interested persons and parties on account of their own selfish motives. Especially it is found that those professional persons who perform Sankirtanas or sing devotional songs, ballads etc., add a number of imaginary stories and miraculous anecdotes to the lives of saints in order to impress their audience and thus to make their performances more lucrative and attractive. Such

persons have scant regard for historical facts and they attach more value to the mass appeal and the monetary gain. Hence it has become all the more necessary to investigate and sift the events and the stories that have been woven around the lives of Saints and their associates.

Tukaram is a very popular Saint, not only in Maharashtra but all over India and his life and teachings have a special appeal to the masses. In order to understand the real import of his life, it is absolutely necessary to have correct knowledge about the prevailing circumstances in those days when he lived and also about the persons who were intimately associated with him in various capacities and relationships. The present book places before the readers the picture of the historically evaluated lives of persons, closely associated with Tukaram and thus it contributes a great deal towards the removal of erroneous conceptions and beliefs regarding the lives of these persons. Shri Bendre has rendered valuable service to the Marathi-knowing public by placing before it the details of the lives of outstanding personalities that played an important part during the life-time of Saint Tukaram. This book can serve as a source of inspiration to research scholars for undertaking historical investigation into the lives of other Saints of Maharashtra.

The book contains a number of illustrations and also an exhaustive index for the guidance of readers, which has all the more increased its utility.

S. V.

PERIODICAL

THE MADRAS SEVA SADAN THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR. (Published by the Madras Seva Sadan, Harrington Road, Madras-31. Pp. 144. Price Rs. 1-26.)

This exceedingly well produced souvenir, appropriately starts with the blessings and advice of a mystic Sree Ramaa Devi, and takes the reader, through its pages, to a rare intellectual feast, wherein the elite of the country, distinguished statesmen, ambassadors, judges, lawyers, educationists, journalists and social workers, have contributed on diverse topics and on many a modern problem. Sri S. Radhakrishnan declaims against both atheism and blind faith and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer against vulgarization and low standards in music. Rajaji pleads for a rational attitude towards marriage which should rest on the consent of the partners therein than on any other consideration and Mr. P. V. Rajamannar for the revival of handicrafts, of 'things made

by hand and created by the mind'. Sri S. Doraiswamy Iyer plumps for an education which will induce 'self giving'. Prof. K. Swaminathan speaks against purism in Tamil Translation and Sri Manjeri Iswaran against provincialism and linguistic chauvinism in literature. Sri K. Ramakoteswara Rao's thesis to 'turn inward and commune with our deepest self', is thought-provoking. Sri P. Venkataramana Rao's 'Gita and Life', is an analytical restatement of the eternal teachings. Sir M. Venkatasubba Rao's 'values in life', admirably integrates the teachings of the Gita with those of Tolstoy, Carlyle and St. Paul.

There are besides peeps into foreign countries, Indonesia, Russia and America as well as stimulating articles from the pen of such well-known publicists as Sri B. Shiva Rao, J. Vijaya Tunga, Leela Jog, Indira Gandhi, Monica Felton, S. Rajagopalan and K. Chandrasekharan.

The publication is a tribute to the energy and resourcefulness of Sri V. Kalidas, who has truthfully executed his "sacred assignment" with "serenity and dedication", both of which mark off the activities of the Madras Seva Sadan as well as of its illustrious founders and staff members.

R.

NEWS AND REPORTS

HOLY MOTHER'S GHAT

Recently a bathing ghat on the Amodar river in Jayaramvati has been declared open by Swami Vishuddhanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Mission. The ghat has been constructed exactly on the spot where Holy Mother Sarada Devi used to take her bath. She considered this river as the Ganga. Hence to the devotees it has become a holy place. As the place was being eaten away by the river, the pucca ghat has been constructed now, the foundation for which was laid by Sri J. K. Gupta Ray, Magistrate of the Vishnupur Sub-division. There was also special worship of the Holy Mother and distribution of prasada during the opening ceremony.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYALAYA, COIMBATORE DISTRICT

REPORT FOR 1957-58

The report of the Vidyalaya with its various departments presents the picture of a great educational activity. During the year under report the multi-purpose high school had 173 students on its roll. The Gandhi Basic Training School had a strength of 75 students and 74 more were retrained in basic education. The Kalanilayam is a Senior Basic School serving as a model school; it had 14 classes consisting of 491 children, of whom 174 were girls. In the Teachers' College there were 50 students. The Extension Department organised a number of training camps and workshops, on various topics. A National Seminar of Principals of the Post-graduate Basic Training Colleges was held in the Vidyalaya under the auspices of the Central

Ministry of Education. The Research Department brought out several Standard Tests of Achievement. The Maruthi College of Physical Education trained 63 students during the year. The Rural Institute consists of three wings, namely, the School of Agriculture, the School of Engineering and the College of Rural Higher Education. For two classes they had 22, 82 and 88 students. The artisan course in General Mechanics had 57 students. There is a well-equipped workshop for the technical students. The Social Education Organisers Training Centre had 71 trainees in two batches. The Dispensary treated 32,371 patients. The rural service has been better recognised with the students of different institutions under the guidance of the Rural Service Officer. The annual celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was observed with great eclat as usual.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME

REPORT FOR 1957

This Students' Home, one of the earliest in the field in North India, had 85 students of whom 47 were free, 13 concession holders and 25 paying. Situated in an extensive area the centre has now 6 dormitory buildings, a kitchen block, a medical ward, two workers quarters, a library and office building, a modest temple with a prayer hall, two cow-sheds, a garage, a gymnasium and a work-shop, two play grounds, two big tanks, and a dairy. The Shilpapiitha, a polytechnic, is being started in 1958. The results of the Home were as usual brilliant. The management while thanking the sympathisers appeal for funds to maintain more free boys in the Home.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, VRINDABAN

REPORT FOR 1957

This Sevashrama, being situated just on the bank of the Jamuna, is threatened every year with flood. So the authorities have decided to shift it to a safe site. For this purpose Rs. 4,08,683 have received and Rs. 7,91,317 more are necessary. In the Indoor Hospital 2,809 patients were treated and 1,884 surgical operations were performed. The services of the Nandababa Eye Hospital were very much appreciated. The outdoor dispensary treated 49,230 new cases and 90,423 old cases. The Homoeopathy Department treated 8,687 new cases and 20,328 old cases. The X-ray Department examined 980 cases and the Electro-therapy Department treated 156 cases. The clinical laboratory investigated 4,670 samples. Occasional pecuniary help also was given to some needy people. The receipts for the year under the General Fund amounted to Rs. 1,51,473.85 and the total expenditure was Rs. 1,56,026.62, the deficit being Rs. 4,552.77. While thanking the supporters the management appeal for funds for various activities.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SHILLONG

REPORT FOR 1947-57

The Mission Branch at Shillong, which is situated in the Khasi Hills, has diversified activities.

The Charitable Dispensary with a Laboratory, an Electro-therapy unit, a Homoeopathy Section, an Eye Section and an X-ray Plant is catering to the needs of the local public, 50 per cent of the beneficiaries being the Khasi people. In 1957, 50,023 were served including 28,336 new patients. The free Primary School in the nearby Harijan Colony had a daily average of 16 students. The Vivekananda Library and Reading Room had 3,728 books and 26 periodicals. 6,082 books were issued in 1957. The Students' Home maintained 10 free tribal boys. The Sarada Samsad for the children conducts daily classes, weekly sittings of music, recitation, literary discourses etc. The Ashrama conducts annually more than a hundred religious and cultural classes. The special feature is that this Centre extends its

activities all over the Assam State through lecture tours. The Ashrama conducted several anniversaries and festivals. The Publication Department brought out a few books in Bengali, Assamese and Khasi languages. In 1954-56 the Mission conducted relief work in several districts. While thanking the public the management appeal for funds for continuing the different activities.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADAPITHA

REPORT FOR 1957

The Saradapitha has different branches. The Vidyamandira is a residential Intermediate College. It had during the year under report 208 students on its rolls and 26 qualified teachers including 6 monastic members of the Order. It has been decided to open a three-year Degree Course in 1960. As usual it had brilliant results in the University Examination. The first five places and the eighth in the University as also the first five positions in the Scholarship list were captured by the students of this college. The Shilpamandira has several sections. The Industrial School and Mahesh Chandra Mechanical Section had 235 students on its rolls. The Licentiate Engineering Department had 343 students. The Tattwamandira conducts a Chathuspathi as well as public classes and lectures. A Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya is under consideration. The Janashikshamandira conducted adult education centres as well as Library and Assembly Hall, Youth Camps, Audio-Visual shows and work for the improvement of health and hygiene in some selected areas. The Social Education Organizers' Training Centre trained 46 and 66 trainees hailing from different States. It publishes a monthly bulletin and a printed half-yearly magazine through which it keeps constant touch with the ex-trainees and help them to some extent in their difficulties. The Shikshanamandira or the Post-Graduate Teachers' Training College has been started this year. Besides the above, the Saradapitha maintained a Photography and Film Department, a Dairy and Agricultural Wing and also a Publication Section. The management thank the public and the Government and appeal for funds for further expansion.

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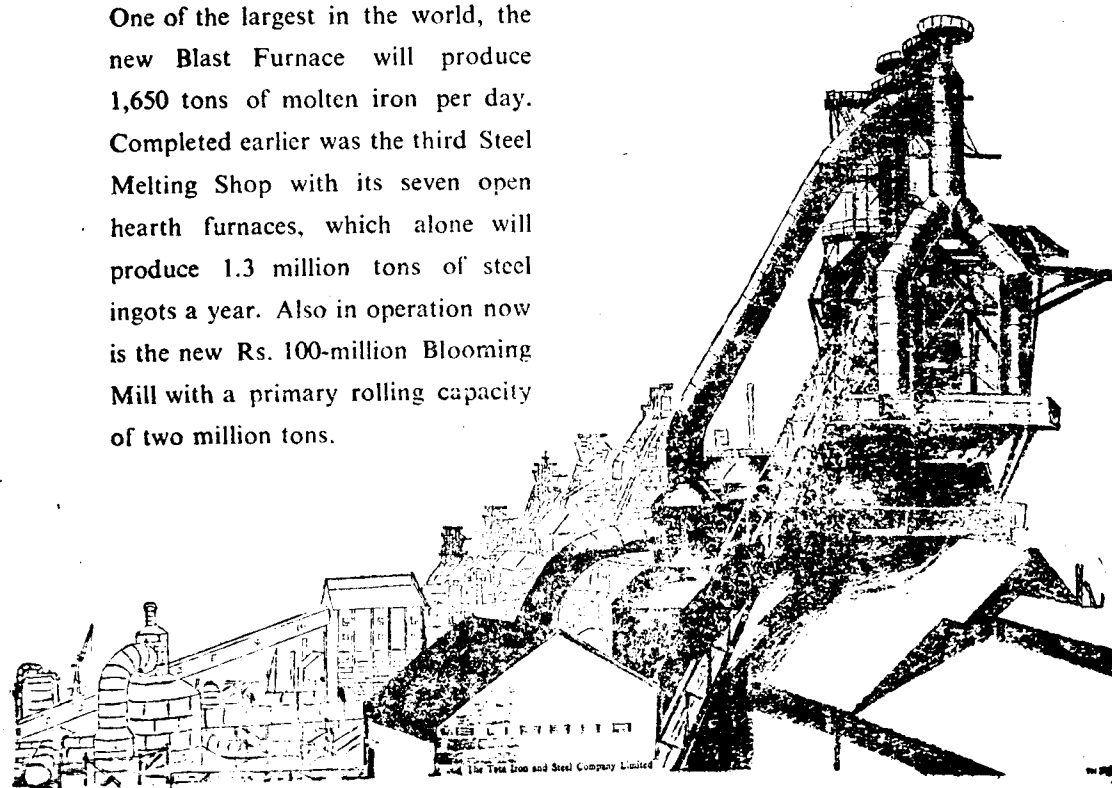
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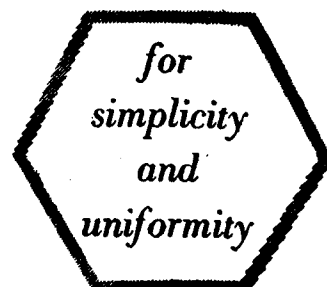
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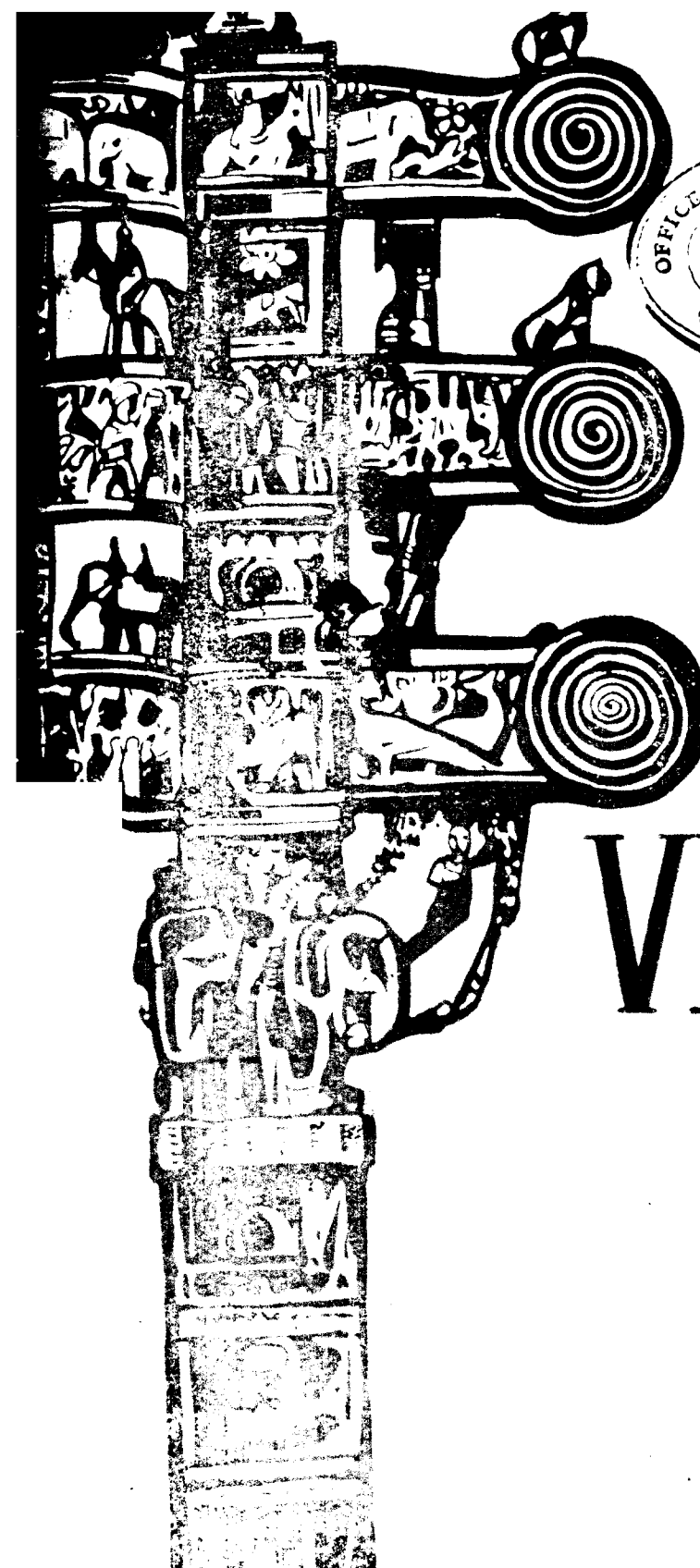
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ON HANUMAN

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The Lord smiled at these words and said: "Ask a boon of me, my son, today I will make you happy for ever." "Faith, my Lord, is the greatest of blessings! Of your favour grant me this else unattainable boon." On hearing the monkey's pious request, the Lord replied: "So be it."

(Tulsi Das's 'Ramayana', p. 478. Tr. by F. S. Growsw.)

Sri Ramakrishna was now assuming Hanuman's attitude to attain like him the vision of Sri Ramachandra through Dasya Bhava. He became so much absorbed in Hanuman, that he forgot altogether his separate existence and individuality. "At that time", the Master said, "I had to walk, take my food and do all other actions like Hanuman. I did not do so of my own accord, but they so happened of themselves. I tied my wearing cloth so that it might look like a tail and walked jumping. I ate nothing but fruits and roots, which again I did not like to eat when skinned. I spent much time on trees and always cried: 'Raghuvir! Raghuvir!' with a deep voice. Both my eyes assumed a restless expression like those of that animal, and it is marvellous that the lower end of the backbone lengthened at that time by nearly an inch. Afterwards, when that mood had ceased, it assumed slowly its previous natural size."

(Great Master, p. 160, 61.)

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THE NEW GOD

With the development of secularism, belief in God has been undermined. The agnostic attitude is now spreading throughout the world. But secularism and agnosticism began quite early in the West. The Western knowledge had to advance ignoring the overall influence of Christian theology. As a reaction, there was a tendency among philosophers to overthrow God and religion. But social philosophers noted that man required a faith to be animated to selfless action. So they wanted Humanity to replace God. Thus Positivism and Humanism were born.

The different branches of knowledge are compartmental. They intensively study a particular aspect of nature or society. Hence the conclusions they arrive at have often no reference to God or religion. These studies have nothing to say for or against religion, for it is outside their province. The scientists of the twentieth century realize the limitations of science. As W. N. Sullivan says :

Science deals with but a partial aspect of reality. There is no faintest reason for supposing that everything science ignores is less real than what it accepts. . . . We are no longer taught that the scientific method of approaching is the *only* valid method of acquiring knowledge about reality. Eminent men of science are insisting, with what seems a strange enthusiasm, on the fact that science gives us but a partial knowledge of reality, and we are no longer required to regard as illusory, everything that science finds itself able to ignore.

Prof. W. J. Sollas, the noted geologist, says :

In matters of philosophy and Religion, Science is not the arbiter : the final judgment on ultimate questions must always rest with philosophy and Religion themselves.

Prof. Lecomte, the noted botanist, goes farther saying :

Incompatibility between Science and Faith exists only in the minds of those who want such an incompatibility.

But still the confusion in thought that has been brought about by scientific philosophy based on partial truth continues to hold the field in some quarters. The modern political thought also claims to be scientific and either ignores God as in secularistic democracy or fanatically opposes Him as in totalitarian Communism. But being concerned about human beings, it knows the uses of belief in God and so tries to place Humanity itself on the pedestal.

The question naturally arises : Is it a better choice ? Should Humanity replace God ? It is true as Goethe contends, that 'the deepest, nay, the one theme of the world's history is the conflict of faith and unbelief'. The remarkable epochs of human history are the epochs of faith. Faith might have marched under different names and varying forms but it has always marched in the van of the noblest movements of humanity. The main spring of human activity in all the important epochs of history in which man has shown the highest powers of his spirit is the belief in the spiritual and moral order, as well as in the indestructibility of the human spirit and the imperishability of human virtue, both being grounded in the Supreme Power, unseen, eternal and omnipotent.

How do the positivists and humanists look at this great historical phenomenon ? They doubt its essential reality and consider it as the outcome of the desire to gratify certain wants of the human mind. They have installed Humanity in place of God and consider it to be real and efficacious. They con-

sider it sufficient to draw the affection and adoration of the people providing inspiration for all practical endeavours. These positivist thinkers tell us that God must be dethroned and thereby the world loses nothing, for Humanity supplants Him and does all His functions. The beauty and nobility of life engendered by belief in God will be retained and enhanced by being related to Humanity which is positively real and scientifically verifiable. Our sense of awe and sublimity can be awakened by this Supreme Being of Humanity in whom 'we live and move and have our being' and in whose bosom we rise and disappear like bubbles. The inheritance of ages is with us. It is more lovable because it is more accessible. So, they contend, Humanity reconciles the demands of reason with the longings of the heart and takes its stand on the unassailable basis of fact and experience. Thus they make Humanity the goal of religion.

But can Humanity really be the object of worship and can its worship help man to conquer his impulses to realize the ideal of duty ? If we study different religions we find that an invisible Being has always been the object of worship. It has been transcendental all the time. Even Fetishism does not worship mere objects of nature but all these are conceived as inhabited by some invisible, indwelling spirit. The idea in the higher religions is still more developed. The old Indian thinkers describe the eternal spirit, the only object of adoration, in such words as 'There eyes cannot penetrate, nor speech nor mind'. (Kena U. I.3.)

The mistake of the positivists lies in this that they confuse the two planes of devotional activity, for while God works in the invisible sphere, Humanity works in the scientific or phenomenal sphere. If the religion of the past is to be the basis, and it must be so if their theory

of evolution is universally applicable, the positivists' religion of Humanity is without a foundation. This is its logical irregularity. Practically too Humanity cannot be the object of worship. Worship means entering a mood of purity and holiness. But Humanity in its positivistic aspects is not ennobling at all but disgusting. As Prof. Huxley puts it, 'I know no study which is so utterly saddening as that of the evolution of humanity.' It is impossible to worship a Being whose record is as bad as ours and who cannot be proud of its sense of justice and righteousness.

Again, the Power that we can worship must not only be righteous, it must be eternal and self-existent too. But Humanity is not so, it is a mere ephemeral product of evolution. Humanity is only a bubble in the eternal stream of creative power unlimited in space or in time. It will be the height of folly to ignore the unlimited source and worship the transient thing.

It is possible to worship Humanity no doubt, but only as an expression of the Divine. It has been sanctioned by the greatest philosopher-saint of India. Acharya Sankara gave the gist of the Vedanta philosophy in the famous saying :

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या, जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।

'Brahman alone is real, the universe is unreal and the individual soul is no other than the Universal Soul.'

For all these years we gave more stress on the first part. Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of India, has exhorted us to give due recognition to the second part of the saying that jiva is really Siva and service to humanity with that idea is really service to God. To get rid of the soul behind the universe as the positivists do and then exhort us to worship the latter is to ask us to worship the corpse from which the soul has

departed. The concrete mass of men and women cannot evoke that love and respect but Humanity with a Divine ideal and Providence manifesting itself in mankind and its history can evoke reverence and adoration. But to men to whom the visible is all and grave the end of existence, there can be nothing sacred. And without sacredness the world will be full of death and corruption.

Thus Humanity is incapable of being an object of worship and veneration. Neither has it the power of inspiring by itself any lofty enthusiasm or heroic devotion giving rise to acts of self-immolation. Inculcation of a sense of duty and moral purpose has been recognised as the great contribution of religion. But will humanistic religion banishing belief in Providence and a future life be able to nourish the moral life of the community? Will it furnish the community with an adequate stimulus for moral aspiration? The religion of Humanity divorced from all belief in the supernatural has never yet been practised. It is contended that there are individuals leading an unselfish life without any religious faith. 'Morality without religion' is their slogan. But they forget that it is possible now only due to the prevailing religious atmosphere which influences them unconsciously. The general level of the time and the heritage have a strong influence on individuals.

Moreover, the arguments of the positivists are all directed to Personal God. They generally accept the Impersonal. And Swami Vivekananda points out:

A man who understands and believes in the Impersonal—John Stuart Mill, for example—may say that a Personal God is impossible, and cannot be proved. I admit with him that a Personal God cannot be demonstrated. But He is the highest

reading of the Impersonal that can be reached by the human intellect, and what else is the universe but various readings of the Absolute? It is like a book before us, and each one has brought his intellect to read it, and each one has to read it for himself.

Personal God rooted in the Impersonal can be satisfying to many rational minds. Hence it is better we hold on to our ancient, eternal God instead of taking a new, weaker one.

People respect things of permanent nature more than those of transient type. Their souls aspire to serve the universal and the abiding and feel more enthusiastic when they are sharing the works of God. But the enthusiasm of man believing with the positivists that Humanity is an infinitesimal bubble on an infinitesimal globe destined to pass away soon compared to the positivist's (i.e., scientist's, geologist's or astronomer's) time, suffers a total collapse. Without immortality and effects of the actions of man abiding, it will be the height of folly to practise self-sacrifice. And when this idea comes in, the devotion to duty will be undermined.

What makes us love our fellowmen and desist from the path of vice? It is the conviction that the same Divinity dwells in us. The principle of right living and right doing implies a supreme Intelligence pervading all and unifying all, to which we are 'strung together like pearls'. But for it the universe will be a chaos and moral life a delusion. The Religion of Humanity, not recognizing God and life after death and the divine spark in the individual, takes away the basis of morality. It withholds from man all his motive power for selfless action and makes him a solitary and loveless being with no consolation for the present and no hope for the future.

SPIRITUAL PRECEPTS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

P. SESHADRI

The first stage of a spiritual life is faith in God or the intense desire to know one's real nature. The primary step in Sadhana is to devote one's heart and soul to the task of finding out the basic principle underlying this universe. Whence came this universe? What is its cause? Human birth is for the purpose of solving this problem. Having got a human birth, he who does not strive for Self-knowledge, being immersed in transient pleasures, is born in vain. He alone has realised the purpose of human birth who knows his true nature, by conquering the animal tendencies.

The majority of mankind remains immersed in the mad pursuit of sensual pleasures. Only a very few care to know about God. It would be enough if there be at least one such in a million. Many indeed make a display of religion by conducting elaborate Pujas and going round to various places of pilgrimage. But there is hardly one among them who earnestly desires to know anything of true spirituality. Only that man who feels an inner urge to know the truths of religion and eagerly hankers after Self-knowledge has set his foot on the path of Sadhana. The rest only talk of religion. The real desire for spirituality has not yet dawned on their minds. Their religious observances are a mere show, an outward cloak.

It is very difficult to get true faith in God. How few are those who have such a faith! We cannot have true faith in God by hearing from others or reading the Scriptures. It is the pure heart that can get true faith in God. It is a matter of direct realisation and cannot come about by mere intellectual reasoning or discussion. We must at least feel in our soul the existence of God; then only can real

faith in God dawn. Faith and devotion are internal matters. No one can put faith into you unless your mind and heart are pure. Unless you are born with good Samskaras, you cannot get true faith and devotion.

What is the use of crying aloud, 'O Hari, O Hari, O God, O God' and making a fuss? You should feel God in your heart of hearts and then only you will get true faith in His existence. Unless the mind becomes pure, real faith in God will not dawn. Outward show and paraphernalia such as rosaries etc., are of no avail. Ego, vanity, desire for sensual pleasures and such dirt and refuse are piled up in the mind. Then, how can it turn Godward? You cannot realise God through hypocrisy. The observance of popular customs and manners is of no avail in the matter of the realisation of God. Try your utmost so that your mind may incessantly think of God. The essential thing in Sadhana is to be immersed in the love, thought and contemplation of God. Instead of doing so, if you merely confine yourself to the observance of certain meaningless customs, you can never realise God or advance in the path of spirituality.

Real faith and devotion will dawn only when man realises that God alone is true. Get the actual vision of God, and then only will you have the conviction that He is. Unless you have the direct experience, faith and devotion will not be lasting and permanent. To believe in God because sages and saints have said so is one thing, and to believe in Him after direct perception as a result of your Sadhana is quite another thing. There is the difference between the sky and the earth as regards these two beliefs. So many are performing Japa and Sandhya etc. But are they really serious? They have not the least sincerity to realise

God. Blind impulse or momentary emotion cannot make for self-restraint or faith in God.

In the beginning, the mind will not remain steady in the contemplation of the Ishta Devata (Chosen Deity). Various idle thoughts will make the mind stray from that contemplation. You need not be worried about it. However unsteady the mind may be, do not give up your meditation. Try to fix the mind in the Ishta Devata, force it to return and stay in that contemplation. By such continuous and repeated struggles, you will find at least that the mind has become steady. You have to continue the practice for days and months. If you are sincere and up and doing in your practice, it will not take long to make the mind steadfast in the contemplation of the Ishta Devata.

If in the early stages of Japa, the mind does not remain steady, open your eyes and do the Japa looking at the Ishta Devata in front of you. Fix your eyes on that picture and pour forth your prayers and hymns. In this way, your mind will slowly become steady. Then, begin your Japa. If you perform Japa in this manner, you will find that the mind does not remain so unsteady as before. After that you can try to practise Japa closing your eyes. In that case, you will not find it so difficult. If you continue thus for five or six months, you will realise that Japa has more or less become natural.

Do not perform Japa and Dhyana in the company of any and every man. If you do them along with those whose minds are impure and unsteady, your Sadhana will suffer, because the impure waves arising from their minds will stand in the way of your concentration. It is very difficult to get a real companion after your heart in the path of Sadhana. If you do Japa and Dhyana with persons who have only vain and idle thoughts, your mind will not get the least concentration; also, various kinds of evil

thoughts will force themselves on your mind. Hence, it is best to go to a retired place and do your Sadhana in solitude.

You should daily devote some time in the morning and in the evening for your Sadhana. Then only can you have any real progress. Regular practice will fructify in due time. If you get up two hours before daybreak and perform your Japa, there will be little difficulty in concentrating the mind. A pure breeze of purity is blowing at that time. Devote two hours both in the morning and in the evening for Japa. If you cannot do so at this period of your youth, when will you be able to do it? After the age of thirty, one's power to do Sadhana will decline. Do everything you want to accomplish before that. Otherwise, you will have to return empty-handed.

At the time of Japa, you have first to get a perfect mental picture of your Ishta Devata. If you are not able to get the image in your mind, look steadily and steadfastly at the external picture or representation of your Ishta Devata and pour forth your prayers, hymns and Stotras. It would not do to merely repeat the Mantra. You should meditate on the meaning and also fix your mind on the Ishta Devata. In the beginning, the mind would not remain steady in the contemplation of the Ishta Devata; so some easy means should be taken up to steady the mind. For example, you may think that the Ishta Devata, all-luminous, is graciously looking at you and hearing your prayers. Think that the Ishta Devata is very close to you. Always think that the Ishta Devata is with you at all times and is listening to all that you say. If such a thought is strongly cultivated, you will not find it very difficult to make the mind steady and concentrated. Whenever you get any spare time during the day, devote it to the thought of your Ishta Devata. It is quite essential to remember and think of the Ishta Devata constantly. That will

help very much to steady the mind during Japa and Dhyana.

You must meditate on the Ishta Devata in your heart. Think always that the all-luminous Ishta Devata is seated in the lotus of your heart. If it is difficult to think of the whole form, try at first to see the face. Those who find it difficult to do even this much can think of some divine Lila of the Lord and in time, their minds will become steady by this means. By thinking of the Lilas of one's Ishta Devata, the mind can be steadied at the time of Japa. For instance, if Sri Krishna is the Ishta Devata, you can think of His slaying of Kamsa or His imparting the Gita to Arjuna. If you do so, you will find that in a short time, the mind becomes steady and concentrated and quiet.

Be careful so that idle thoughts may not disturb the mind at any time and lead it away from the Ishta Devata. Whenever any such thought arises, think at once of the form of your Ishta Devata and remember Him. Thus drive out the bad thoughts then and there. By such regular practice, a good habit will be formed and established. Then, even a little effort will make the mind concentrated on the Ishta Devata. If one has real yearning and earnestness, such a good 'Samskara' (tendency) can be formed in the course of four or five years. If this tendency is made a little deeper, you will get 'Nishtha' (steadfastness) in the Ishta Devata.

If you wish to do regulated Sadhana, you must take to Yoga. How few, however, are those who are really competent to perform Yoga! The body and the mind of the man who is competent for that will be of a different mould altogether. To get such a body and mind is the effect of the merits done in many lives. Can all and sundry stand the strain of meditating in the same posture for eight or ten hours continuously? That will cause a tremendous strain to all the nerves and the brain. Is it a joke to steady the

mind perfectly? The person fit for Yoga practice should have no craving for sensual pleasures, must be able to bear heat and cold, must have his brain cool, clear and calm, should have a strong, wiry body, and must observe restraint in his food, sleep and talk. It is not proper for weak-nerved, emotional and unbalanced people to practise Raja Yoga. It is very dangerous for weaklings to take to the practice of Raja Yoga. They will become mad or they will fall victims to some fatal disease by which they may suffer a premature death. So, I do not ordinarily speak to any one about the practice of Raja Yoga. Generally I teach the process of Japa, prayers, and Dhyana.

First, let the mind be steadied; then, you can do Dhyana. Can the mind become steady by a few month's practice? Be up and doing for several years and then you will be able to control the mind. There should be strict restraint in eating, sleeping and talking. Without cultivating discrimination and restraint, the mind will not become pure. Without getting purity of mind, how can one meditate? The evil tendencies of many births are stored up in the mind. So, the mind is unsteady and restless. By being habituated to constant discrimination and patient reflection, the mind attains purity. If the whole day is spent in idle gossip and aimless roaming about, how can the mind become steady? At the time of meditation, the impressions of these idle thoughts will disturb the mind. The mind is restless, to start with. If you waste your time in idle gossip, the mind will become all the more restless and unsteady; unless you cultivate the practice of being in solitude, your meditation will be useless like pouring ghee in ashes.

It is not proper for any and every one to practise Prāṇāyāma. It can be practised only by one of strong body, controlled mind and very strong heart. Even though all these conditions be fulfilled, it is not good

to practise Pranayama by oneself. One should practise Raja Yoga after receiving initiation from a perfected Guru and under his guidance, following his injunctions strictly. It would be good to do Pranayama in the presence of the Guru, since he can set right if there be any mistake or defect. The meaning of Pranayama is to bring under one's control the prāna. Many come to grief by the practice of Pranayama by themselves without the proper Guru's instructions and guidance. They are very dangerous practices. Only those who are very advanced can practise Pranayama properly. Moreover, it should be practised in a place where the climate is very healthy. Also, one should take nutritious food like milk, butter, fruits etc. This is not practicable for many in this poverty-stricken country. To practise Raja Yoga living on rice and vegetables injures the lungs. One easily falls a prey to asthma and even phthisis. Do not practise in a stinking place. There is a spiritual atmosphere in Kashi, Hardwar, Puri, Bhuvaneshwar and other places. Also, there are many solitary spots there, fit for the practice of Sadhana. If you practise in such spots, the mind will become steady and you will feel greater joy in performing Sadhana.

The object is to steady the mind in any manner whatsoever. It is not necessary for that to practise Pranayama. If there be real yearning and the mind be pure, there is nothing else necessary to get to the state of meditation. Pranayama is not your goal; it is only one among the many means of Sadhana. The only thing needed is to fix the mind in the contemplation of the Ishta Devata. If you have sincerity and inner purity, the mind will become concentrated.

In the beginning of Sadhana, the mind will be restless. Why should you become disheartened on that account? What is there that cannot be accomplished by exertion? That mind which is now unsteady and rest-

less will by regular practice become eager to meditate. Why should you be afraid on account of the mind being restless now? Have faith in yourself. Open your heart to the Lord and pray to Him. Collect all the powers of your mind and exert your very best. If there be real desire to realise God, all those obstructions will disappear. The Lord himself will certainly provide a means for one who earnestly calls on Him. If you have real yearning for the Lord, all such obstructions will leave you for good. Merely exert yourself to place your whole mind in God.

Take care that there be no idle talk in the place where you practise your Sadhana. The atmosphere of that place where there is vain talk, idle criticism and abuse of others, becomes contaminated. All sorts of evil thoughts will float in that atmosphere. It is best to do Sadhana in solitude. It would be very good to have a room set apart for Sadhana. It is not proper to keep the bedding, clothes, furniture etc., in that room. Keep only the Asana, religious books, Prayer books etc., there. Fill the room with fragrance by lighting incense both in the morning and the evening. Whenever you enter the room, meditate on the Ishta Devata, repeat uplifting hymns etc. Have no other thoughts. Do not allow any one to enter that place. If you maintain like this for a year, the atmosphere of the place will be totally changed. Then, the thought of God will arise in your mind and you will have a natural tendency to meditate by merely entering that room. If worship, sacred recitations, meditation, singing of hymns etc., are continuously done in one and the same place for many years, holy thoughts will fill there. Such a sacred atmosphere will be all the more tangible and permanent in a spot where saints have spent their lives. Why is it that we naturally feel spiritual exaltation in places of pilgrimage? Because many holy saints, sages and yogis have

dwelt there. The power of their spiritual austerities will pervade the place and keep it pure.

Can anything be accomplished in a day? After practising for a few months, you want to know why you have not made any progress. Many impressions are lying in your mind. If good thoughts prevail, the pull of the evil impressions will decrease gradually. You are now in despair because the mind is so restless. After a time, good thoughts would grow so much that the mind would not like to hold to anything other than meditation. Be up and doing now. In time, you will find that everything becomes clear from the inside. If you exert properly for four or five years, you will get God-realisation. Everything depends on the intensity and sincerity of your spiritual feelings. The competent and worthy Adhikari will get Samadhi as soon as he is initiated by the Siddha Guru. This is no fancy. I speak from actual experience.

He who has really tasted the bliss of meditation will not hanker after name and fame. It is because they have not experienced the inner bliss that many Sadhus run after money, name and fame. One who has tasted the bliss of God will not desire anything else. Would anyone who has experienced Divine Bliss, getting which nothing else remains to be got, besides which all is vanity of vanities, find any pleasure in mere rubbish? If you once get to the state of meditation, you will not at all like to mix with all and sundry. Will the fish of the sea turn its attention to the slimy pool abounding in weeds?

At the time of meditation, all other thoughts except one will vanish from the mind. The thought that persists will be the thought of God, the thought of one's real nature. At the time of proper meditation, one would forget the external world. He will have no thought of himself. He will forget where his body is. Only the thought of God will prevail. Then there will be only the experience of infinite bliss. Even an infinitesimal part of that bliss cannot be found in this world. That state cannot be expressed in words. He alone can understand who has reached that state. Others cannot understand it. If you attain to it, the habit of God-intoxication would grow in you. You would desire to abide in that state at all times.

By being immersed in that state, the mind will go beyond the realm of the senses. Then this mind will no longer remain as it is now. All its normal functions will stop. It will become wholly pure. Only one single thought will prevail therein, the thought of God, one's real nature. Then the internal realm will reveal itself. In this state, there will be vision and when that becomes deep, God is seen face to face. The Jiva merges in the Ishwara and Samadhi is experienced. There is a state higher even than this. In that state, there is no seeing or knowing. There will then be no difference between the Jiva and Brahman. The Sadhaka realises the One without a second. Nothing else exists. That is the real Samadhi when the Jiva experiences unity with Brahman. This is called the Realisation of the Self.

The wind of God's grace is incessantly blowing. Lazy sailors on the sea of life do not take advantage of it. But the active and the strong always keep the sails of their minds unfurled to catch the favourable wind and thus reach their destination very soon.

— Sri Ramakrishna.

SRI LATU MAHARAJ

SWAMI NITYASATYANANDA

(Here is freely translated the description from *Latu Maharajer Smritikatha*, how Swami Adbhutanandaji became the attendant of Sri Ramakrishna.)

When Sri Ramakrishna went to his native village of Kamarpukur, Latu was spending his days (in his master's house) in great restlessness. This he described speaking to a devotee in later years in the following words: 'Do you know how intensely I felt for Sri Ramakrishna? I was so much agitated that I could not stay in Ram Babu's house. Secretly I would go to Dakshineswar, but there also no solace could I get. I could not go inside the room of Sri Ramakrishna for it all appeared empty. I would walk in the garden. Sitting on the bank of the Ganga I would weep. How can you understand my suffering then? I speak truly, you cannot understand the depth of my feeling through my words. Ram Babu could know my mind a little. Therefore, in how many ways did he console me! He had given me also a photo of Sri Ramakrishna.'

After eight months Sri Ramakrishna returned to Dakshineswar. That very day he visited Ram Babu's house. That was the auspicious Saptami day of the Durga puja (worship of the Divine Mother). The arrival of the Divine Mother's devotee (Sri Ramakrishna) also on the very day of the Divine Mother's arrival, had brought new life in the circle of devotees. The shrine in the house of Ram Babu was filled that day with the sweet and joyous voice of the devotees. At such a time, who could measure the joy of Latu? After seeing Sri Ramakrishna, he got new life like that of a tree giving forth new sprouts in the spring when the reinvigorating southern breeze blows.

After his return from Kamarpukur, Sri Ramakrishna was very busy for a few days—almost every day he would go to Calcutta

and return to Dakshineswar late at night. When he went to Calcutta, some days he stayed in Ram Babu's house and from there he visited the houses of other devotees in the City. After that time, Latu would generally accompany Sri Ramakrishna. After some time, Sri Ramakrishna began to go to Yadu Mallik's garden (adjacent to Dakshineswar temple) for listening to the reading of the Bhagavata. One day Latu had gone there in the afternoon to meet Sri Ramakrishna, taking with him fruits and sweets given by Ram Babu. That day Sri Ramakrishna told Latu affectionately, 'Oh, in this night do you go again to Calcutta! Stay here itself today.' Latu was very glad to hear the affectionate words. Latu too had desired this for a long time. Now that his desire was fulfilled unexpectedly in this manner, he considered himself very fortunate.

That night, after partaking of the sacred food, Latu engaged himself in massaging the feet of the Master. At that time he experienced a sort of ecstasy. Seeing that Sri Ramakrishna asked Latu: 'Do you get sleep?' Latu: 'No, I don't get asleep.' Sri Ramakrishna: 'Do you fear?' Latu: 'No fear.' Sri Ramakrishna: 'Why is your mind like that?' Latu: 'No, my mind is not like that.' Sri Ramakrishna: 'Then, do you feel drowsiness?' Latu: 'No drowsiness.' Sri Ramakrishna: 'Why are your eyes like that?' Latu: 'What do I know?' Sri Ramakrishna: 'Oh, what has happened to you? Why are you looking (with steady eyes) like that?' Latu did not speak a single word. But a little later a stream of tears flowed out from Latu's eyes. Sri Ramakrishna again asked Latu: 'Oh, my dear! Why do you weep? What has happened to you? I have not seen like

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this, my child. Why don't you tell?' Later Sri Ramakrishna addressed a devotee, Kedar Babu and told him: 'Just see, this boy simply weeps, and does not say anything.' Kedar Babu said: 'This is your own lila (Divine play). You have made the divine power enter into this boy; that is why his mind has risen to this ecstatic state.'

After many years, referring to this incident at Dakshineswar, Latu Maharaj told the devotees: 'Sri Ramakrishna could understand my mental state... He would shower his affection on me. It is he who showed me (about God).' A devotee asked: 'What did he show, Maharaj?' To that Latu Maharaj replied: 'Ah! Can it be spoken out? All this is a matter of experience. If a man cannot understand, see, or attain that oneself, none can make him understand this through mere words. Is God a matter of words? He is *Avangmanasogochara*, beyond speech and beyond mind. The only way to know Him is experience. Another devotee asked Latu Maharaj: 'What is the nature of that experience? Please do tell us, Maharaj!' In answer to this he said: 'Oh! you read so much about Him, hear so much, even then you are not awakened (to God-consciousness)! Sri Ramakrishna used to say that just as sugar cannot be made known to others by its mere description in words, so is the Truth of God; this also cannot be made known to others by mere words.' A little later, he said with a smile: 'What is the use of simply listening? Try to see Him. Earnestly seek for Him. He will surely reveal Himself to you.'

Even next day morning, Latu's steady eyes due to the ecstatic mood did not change. It continued up to noon. The bell for the food-offering in the temple rang. Sri Ramakrishna himself came to Latu, called him and said: 'It is past noon, won't you see the Divine Mother? Now the temple will be closed. Go, see the Mother. When you come here, prostrate to the Mother first and then come.' After hearing these

affectionate words of Sri Ramakrishna the boy's ecstatic mood broke. As if just got up from sleep, the boy went slowly to the door of the temple and prostrated to the Divine Mother. Then he went for ablutions.

This time Latu stayed at Dakshineswar three days and three nights at a stretch. During this period Sri Ramakrishna did not allow him to sit quiet; in many ways he got the boy do small items of work, such as bringing water, preparing tobacco, cleaning the room and also going with Sri Ramakrishna to Yadu Mallik's garden for listening to the reading of the Bhagavata.

After three days Sri Ramakrishna asked the boy to go home saying: 'My boy, Ram is troubled much thinking about you.' Latu answered: 'If I stay here, my master will not be angry. He has already employed another servant who will do all the work. I will stay here only. Sri Ramakrishna said: 'How is that? You receive the pay from Ram and sit here? My dear, this should not be. You should do the work of his whose money you receive, this much I know. You take the pay from somebody and do the work of somebody else, I never heard such a thing.'

When the conversation was going on thus, Ram Babu with his wife came to Dakshineswar. Seeing Ram, Sri Ramakrishna said with a smile: 'Oh Ram! See, what kind of boy is this! However much I ask him to go home saying how much you are thinking about him, he simpers and says: 'If I stay here my master does not become angry. I don't feel like going away from here. I won't go.' However much I persuade him to go to Calcutta, he doesn't stir from here in the least! What is this, my dear! Giving up all work, why should he stay here so long? If you can, try to persuade him.'

From the way Sri Ramakrishna talked, Ramachandra understood the import of his words and was sure that the boy had received his grace. Then showing anger in

pretence only he tried to convince Latu and said: 'Oh, boy! For what purpose are you staying here, tell me? Won't you go home?' Latu stood silently and did not answer the question. Next moment Ram Babu told Sri Ramakrishna: 'You yourself have spoiled the boy's mind by loving him too much and now why do you want me to undergo this trouble (of convincing him)?' Sri Ramakrishna smilingly said: 'Having drunk honey, does the boy want to remain here itself? Ram, you decide, I do not know anything!'

Anyhow, on that occasion Latu returned to his master's house at Simla with his mother (Latu used to address Ram Babu's wife as mother). Mother tried to convince Latu in many ways, but Latu had only one answer: 'Henceforward I won't do the job. I won't accept pay from you. Please tell the master that I like to stay there (at Dakshineswar).' Whenever Mother would say 'Why, what difficulty have you here?' Latu would answer in his sweet voice: 'I feel better if I stay there.' Then she asked: 'Who will give you food and clothing?' Latu answered: 'Why, I do his (Sri Ramakrishna's) service, and so I will get the offered food, and you will give me clothing.' She said: 'Why should your master agree to give you clothing?' Latu replied: 'He loves me so much! And will he not give me a piece of cloth?' Mother laughed at the simplicity of the boy.

Now, while staying in Ram Babu's house, Latu's work was only to go often to Dakshineswar, taking with him fruits and sweets

given by Ram Babu's wife, carrying the messages from several devotees of Calcutta to Sri Ramakrishna and bringing them news of his arrival at the devotees' houses. Whenever Sri Ramakrishna went to a devotee's house, a festival was invariably arranged there. Those devotees who consulted Ram Babu regarding the arrangement for the festival, to them he would send for help his beloved Latu. Latu alone would do ten persons' work. In this way spending the time, Latu had to stay (in his master's house) a few days more until the opportune moment of staying finally at Dakshineswar arrived.

For many years Hriday, Sri Ramakrishna's nephew, had served his uncle with great care, attention, and devotion. He was the attendant of Sri Ramakrishna at all times and in all places. But for certain reason, in the month of June 1881, he had to give up the service of his uncle and go away from Dakshineswar. In his place Trailokya Babu (Mathuranath's son and the managing trustee of the Temple) had employed a servant for looking after Sri Ramakrishna. But the latter did not like this new arrangement, as he could not bear the touch of impure persons. When, during this difficult period, Ram Babu had come one day to Dakshineswar, accompanied by Latu, Sri Ramakrishna told him: 'Just see, Ram, leave this boy with me. This boy is very pure, and he also wants to stay here.' Without a word of contradiction, Ram Babu left Latu there. Since then Latu was considered at Dakshineswar as the attendant of Sri Ramakrishna.

Do not fear if such a spiritually enlightened Guru does not seem to be learned as well up in scriptures and other books. Do not fear because he is not book-learned. No, he will never be found wanting in the wisdom of life. He has a never-failing supply of Divine wisdom—of truths directly revealed and superior to all knowledge contained in books.

— Sri Ramakrishna.

THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

I

Not the person who ties a turban Vivekananda fashion, pops up on a flood-lit stage to address a dream Parliament of Religions in a foreign country of his imagination and begins with 'Sisters and Brothers ...', wistfully waiting for the deafening applause which never comes, is a true follower of Swami Vivekananda.

Not the person who holds the staff of a wandering monk and poses before a camera, thereby becomes a true follower of Vivekananda.

Not the person who delights in quoting long passages from the works of Vivekananda, eloquently uses a series of epithets before uttering the name of the Swami and ecstatically shouts 'Victory to Swami Vivekananda' whenever occasion arises — but has not cared to put a single teaching of the Swami to practice—is a true follower of Vivekananda.

Who, then, is the true follower of Vivekananda?

One who arises from the slumber of ignorance, awakes from the stupor of world-hypnotism and does not stop till the goal of self-realization is reached, is the true follower of Vivekananda, belonging as he or she may to any nation, race, culture, religion or organization.

In his heart of hearts he is a moving musafir—a brave wayfarer—always footing out distances on the highway that leads one 'beyond the phenomenal'. 'Charaiyeti' is the song of his soul.

* Except the two words 'Charaiyeti' and 'paramaradhanam' all the quotations in the article are from Swami Vivekananda's works. At places his words have been dovetailed in sentences without quotation marks.

No dawdling about, no wavering, no equivocation, no goody-goodness, no whimpering, no slovenliness, no cynicism, no sloppiness and above all no learned confusion in the head. A believing man of clear perspective, Vivekananda's true follower walks his path with purposive strides, knowing well as he does that: 'Doing good to others is virtue (Dharma); injuring others is sin. Strength and manliness are virtue; weakness and cowardice are sin. Independence is virtue; dependence is sin. Loving others is virtue, hating others is sin. Faith in God and in one's own self is virtue; doubt is sin. Knowledge of oneness is virtue; seeing diversity is sin.' Whatever he does springs from this faith and results in strengthening this faith.

If he hates anything in the world, it is hypocrisy, cowardice, falsehood and selfishness.

He looks with horror at that flippancy which makes one ridicule all received ideals, detest every tested value, wince at wisdom, mock the meek, sniff the simple, satire the serious, deride discipline, cultivate crudity, inculcate indecency, animate aimlessness and boos all bizarrerie.

All low cunning, meanness, narrowness and smallness of human mind go against his very grain, for he knows almost instinctively that through such mentations no great work can ever be accomplished in the world. Adamantine is his faith in the powers of goodness.

His is the flaming conviction that 'each soul is potentially divine' and that 'the goal of life is to manifest the divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal'. And he knows that this can be done 'either by work or worship, psychic

control or philosophy—by one or more or all of these, and that this is the whole of religion; doctrines or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details'.

A votary of this religion, Vivekananda's true follower—who approaches life in a do-or-die manner—would rather perish in his struggle to be holy and a thousand times welcome death than go in for lower ideals of life. When nectar is not available, it is no reason why he should eat poison.

Rather frontal in his conduct, Vivekananda's true follower takes life by the forelock and follows 'truth wherever it may lead'. Strong, vigorous and sincere to the backbone, he is the very embodiment of *shraddha*, patience and perseverance. The veriest picture of energy he is with his head full of positive thoughts, creative ideas and sublime ideals. If he is devoted to the pursuit of *abhyudaya*, prosperous happiness in life, he goes about his business with unflinching determination and correct dexterity; if he is devoted to the pursuit of *nishréya*, liberating illumination, he just becomes an one-idea man.

He has little sympathy for any system of thought or philosophy which desecrates the divinity of man and decries his infinite possibilities. The proof of the pudding is in eating. He is avowedly against any form of society or for the matter of that any pattern of sanctimoniousness which in spite of all lofty theorization, in effect insectifies human beings. He will not sacrifice man on any altar, however high and hoary or modern and magnificent it may be, for there is nothing more precious than man, for in man is God. Being a creative humanist, however, he will have none of a negative approach. He, therefore, takes to preaching by practising such forms of education, theories and religion as are man-making, that is to say, physically, intellectually and spiritually strengthening. What is physically,

intellectually and spiritually weakening he shuns as poison.

Brave to suffer and bold to do, an inculcator of manliness and strength in every walk of life, the true follower of Vivekananda is a benign revolutionary, for to live the correct life of a man in the process of progressive actualization of divinity within, is itself a revolution, though with a difference. In the ceaseless process of regenerating himself he brings out the best in man which results in transformations desirable. In the wake of his silent one-man revolution prevails concord, sanity, goodness, peace and enlightenment.

Vivekananda's true follower is a person of convictions without being fanatic, straightforward without being self-righteous and catholic without being rootless. He is dynamic but not restless and progressive without ceasing to have a goal. He is moral with a *bonhomie*, austere with a song, philosophic with a smile. With his indomitable iron-will, he is never wilful. He is a devotee with a logic in his head which knows no softness, and a rationalist with a hymn in his heart which knows no hardness.

Open-minded to a flaw, Vivekananda's true follower does not believe that any religion of the world has a monopoly of truth or that future may not reveal newer glories of God. He, therefore, reverses all the religions and teachers of the world. He, however, knows that the religion in which he has been born has a special relation to him and is best suited to the requirements of his illumination.

Knowing fully well that 'it is only when purity and spirituality go leaving the soul dry that religious quarrel begins and not before' and that 'religious quarrels are always over the husk', Vivekananda's true follower never engages himself in quarrels over religion.

The true follower of Vivekananda combines in his life 'immense idealism with immense practicality', tremendous extensity, with tremendous intensity. Whatever pertains to man—his universe, aspirations, problems, attainments, possibilities, destiny—claims his studious attention. He cultivates equally well his head, heart and hands. He is equally interested in both science and religion, the former as the instrument for controlling the outer nature and the latter as the instrument for controlling the inner nature, for establishing the sovereignty of the human spirit. His life is a demonstration of scientific religion and spiritualized science.

When there is conflict between head and heart he follows the promptings of the heart, for through heart alone comes inspiration. When it is the question of choosing between the old spiritual orthodoxy and the modern sensate materialism, he votes for the former, for in it is the promise and provision for emancipation here and hereafter, whereas in the latter is the trick and trap of death here and hereafter. When the offer is between untruth and half-truth, he chooses none, for truth alone triumphs.

His is a musical conception of nationalism. If there is to be any grand symphony in the world, every nation must sing its own song well. To be able to sing its song well, every nation must take special care of 'the principal note round which every other note comes to form the harmony'. If the grand symphony of the world has to send forth an accordant vibration to the music of the spheres, one's nation must sing its song well and in harmony. In this sense alone, Vivekananda's true follower anywhere in the world is undoubtedly a patriot. For his passionate love for his country and his people he offers no apology. But no chauvinism anywhere near him. Never wavering to take a certain pride in the excellences of his civilization, he is equally earnest in criticizing its failings. He makes no effort to cover any

of its festering sores with rose-petals. He knows, what they require is not covering but uncovering and proper treatment.

To all the nations of the world he grants the right to live honourably under the sun. Hence he claims the same right for his nation too. But what for this living? For the realization of the destiny of the nation in a two-fold manner: to help serve the individuals constituting the nation towards the gradual fulfilment of their lives which consists in progressive manifestation of divinity within and to extend a beneficent hand of service to the world outside.

A fulfilment within can alone lead to an unfoldment without. And this fulfilment within can come only through self-help by way of working through the line of national genius and forte which vary from country to country. Vivekananda's true follower is absolutely convinced that without depending on any foreign help, every nation must try to raise itself by its own boot-straps so to say 'Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism'.

With him this self-help doctrine of patriotism does not mean any false sense of self-sufficiency, but a correct preparation for profitable and inevitable mutuality in the world. To live a nation must give as well as take, for 'give and take is the law.' What can a nation give unless it has something of its own? If and when a nation has to take, it should take only on the basis of equality and in exchange of something which it can give. Therefore the necessity of self-help in developing the nation's indigenous instrument of service.

The true follower of Vivekananda, if he is an occidental, does not only not give up, but takes greater care of his freedom, work, energy and sciences. And this is not for self-aggrandisement and horror-work the world over. But because he requires an indigenous instrument of service to be able to honour-

ably enter into inevitable mutuality among nations. He uses the sciences which he has mastered and institutions he has advanced for the conquest of outer nature and material welfare of humanity as a whole and all for help serving the cause of manifestation of divinity already in man. He stands up against any power that be and warns his nation in unequivocal terms as to the folly and criminality of using any of their acquired powers for oppressing, suppressing, tyrannizing or terrorizing human races, for Nemesis surely responds to invitations so bindingly extended and eventually the proud mansions of prosperity and civilization are reduced to dusts of ignominy and fables of futility. And this happens perhaps without giving any chance for beating breasts and shedding tears, scientifically, as a matter of course, like an effect following a cause, like the wheels following the hoofs of the horse drawing the carriage.

And he asks his nation to harken the voice of history when yet there is time: '... no civilization can long exist unless the idea of universal toleration enters into its heart and soul. No civilization can grow unless fanaticism, bloodshed and brutality stop. ... No civilization can begin to lift up its head until its people learn to look charitably upon one another, nay until and unless they are positively helpful to each other ...' Though a lover of his own nation he completely dissociates himself and opposes any possible national practices of brutalization of man and associates himself with all processes of humanization which might be practised by any other nation.

Vivekananda's true follower, if he is an Indian, believes with all his soul, but without any conceit, that India has a mission in the world and also a great moral obligation. The 'mission' is 'to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate, as it were into a dynamo, all the spiritual energy of the race, and

that concentrated energy is to pour forth in deluge on the world, whenever circumstances are propitious.' The great moral obligation which rests on the sons of India is to 'fully equip themselves for the work of enlightening the world on the problems of human existence'.

Obviously enough, the world to-day requires saving from utter destruction. The one thing that can save the world is light spiritual and its penetration in all affairs of humanity. By the supreme grace of God this light spiritual India has specially preserved down the millennia notwithstanding her physical prostration of centuries. In all humility Vivekananda's true follower feels this tremendous responsibility in his blood. How to share this light with the world becomes the one great absorption of his life. On the other hand India requires physical recuperation, material amelioration and social emancipation. These needs, he sees, can be simultaneously served by golden give and take policy. 'India must bring out her treasures and throw them broadcast among nations of the earth, and in return be ready to receive what other nations of the earth have to give her'. What is given goes with love and regard, what is taken is received with humility and gratitude. More and more he realizes that light spiritual is not anything like a tangible patrimony, which can be thrown about at will. But it is an intangible momentum of spirit through the life process. There is no other way to share the light spiritual except through life spiritual of the individual and the nation.

The true follower of Vivekananda therefore sees to it that in the process of receiving from the world, the recipient does not lose what he has to give to the world, for in that case the rationale of the national existence will have been lost. When the occidental follower receives spiritual knowledge from India, he does so without allowing his knowledge of science to be impaired

in any way. When the Indian follower receives knowledge of science from the West, he does so without allowing his spirituality to be impaired in any way. Paradoxically enough, Vivekananda's true follower holds that to be a fit recipient of light spiritual, the West should be more thoroughly scientific in its attitude to life, and to be a fit recipient of the knowledge of sciences, India should become more thoroughly spiritual in her attitude to life. Then alone the new knowledge received at both ends will be digested well in the thought process of the recipients and lead to wonderful results. One does not receive any of the hobgoblins and superstitions in the name of light spiritual and the other does not accept any of the inhumanities and brutalities associated with science.

In the ultimate analysis neither the occidental follower imports religion from India, nor the Indian follower imports science from the West. If there cannot be any thing like 'American science' there cannot be anything like 'Indian spirituality' also. The fact of the matter is, there is enough light spiritual in the West and enough science in the East, if only the techniques of discovery were known, for is not all knowledge already in man? Therefore the true follower of Vivekananda just imparts the other techniques of discovery at the other ends and apply them in their spheres of requirement in order to conquer nature inner and outer. This is how, whatever nation he may belong to, he is a civilizing power and a saving benediction to humanity, in his own humble way.

If he is devoted to any 'ism' with the greed of a tot for candy, with the emotion of a poet for the beautiful, it is transcendentalism. He is ready to welcome any suffering for always holding unto the highest, but would never lower his ideal. His is this struggle to go beyond, this daring to tear the veil off the face of nature and have at any risk, at any price, the glimpse of the

beyond'. Such is the true follower of Vivekananda.

II

One day or other, sooner than later, the true follower of Vivekananda—who remained all the time blissfully immersed in the grandeur, glory and sufficiency of the idol of his heart—comes to hear the sweetest and most agonizing song of his hero's heart: 'I am thine slave, life after life'. Stirred to his very depths, he watches tears sparkling in the shining eyes of Vivekananda. And a luminous face swims in across his consciousness like a clement sun that has arisen for an eternal day. This face is Sri Ramakrishna's. Not that he had not known of Sri Ramakrishna previously but this arising in his consciousness had not taken place before in this abiding manner. And therefore with a certain amazement he reads a new meaning in Vivekananda's unequivocal declaration: 'If there has been anything achieved by me, by thought, or words, or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped any one in the world, I lay no claim to it, it was his. But if there has been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine, and not his. All that has been weak has been mine, and all that has been life-giving, strengthening, pure and holy, has been his inspiration, his words, and he himself. Yes, my friends, the world has yet to know that man'.

Has he known 'that man'? The question rises within him like a mysterious supernal call, opening up a new extension of awareness, unknown and uncharted.

For the true follower, from Vivekananda to Sri Ramakrishna is the inevitable pilgrimage.

One who consciously makes this pilgrimage becomes the truer follower of Vivekananda.

He is a high-serious *tapasvin*, spotless, selfless and fearless. Being spotless, he is an

object lesson of holiness; being selfless, he is dedicated to the welfare of all; being fearless, he is the dispeller of fear in all situations of life and death.

Arisen and awakened in himself, earnestly feeling as though the future of humanity depended on him, the truer follower of Vivekananda is an arouser and awakener of souls, who steadily and tirelessly works not only for his own salvation but also for the good and the happiness of the many. *Vairagya* (renunciation) is the very breath of his life and *seva* (service) is the passion of his soul. 'The mother's heart, the hero's will, the sweetness of the southern breeze, the sacred charm and strength that dwell on Aryan altars, flaming, free—all these are his 'and many more'.

'To be and make' to be divine and divinize, is his ideal. 'Whatever exists in the world has to be covered with the Lord.' How? '...not by false sort of optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God in everything'—in the dual throng of the world, in good and evil, in prosperity and adversity, in happiness and misery, in the sinner and the saint, in life and death.

His life is a demonstration of how little man can take from the world and of how much infinitely more he can give it instead.

He looks upon 'objects of greed and lust as poison, name and fame as the vilest filth, worldly glory as a terrible hell, pride of birth and social position as sinful as drinking spirituous liquor.'

His life is specially consecrated for 'the protection of the treasury of religion.' And by 'religion' he understands not merely 'doctrines, or dogmas or intellectual argumentation' but 'being and becoming', realization, 'the manifestation of divinity already in man'. Every other concern of his life is subordinated to and inspired by this one grand theme of his life, for in this essential religion is the key to the solution

of all the problems of humanity. He stands for religion by living it. Whoever lives in religion, religion lives in him.

Standing as he does squarely for the fundamental values of eternal religion, knowing as 'he does the preciousness of those values, he is uncompromising in his opposition to any form of overt or covert exploitation in the name of religion.

Those ever-changing forms of social institutions which through association take in a colour of religion and appear as though they were the very part of fundamental religion, when by the decree of time, they have to give place to new forms, he is not one who is sorry for that. He has a genuine blessing for the passing old and a hearty welcome for the coming new.

In his life grandest philosophical facts have become practical spirituality and the imponderables, patterns of involuntary conduct. His only politics of life is God and truth. All-out pursuit of *moksha* in this very life is his ultimate economics. And the *Jiva-Siva* and means-end equations constitute his ever-progressive, self-fulfilling and world-redemptive planning of life. Flowers of eternity he would fain grow on the soil of here and now, and set the tune of timeless on the strings of time.

His worship is unbounded and free reaching all altars of the Divine and mingling in all streams of devotion. Even then Vivekananda's truer follower has a preference for worship of God in the living man. Somewhat unconventionally he believes that if God can be worshipped in images of metals, stone, clay, etc., he can surely be worshipped in the living man also. Affliction at the distress of the world has been called the highest worship,—'*paramaradhanam*'—in the scripture (*Srimad Bhagavatam* VIII. 7. 44). The truer follower of Vivekananda has experienced this in the agony of his heart. His prayer incessantly goes up for all who suffer in the world in ways so various.

Day in and out that inspired saving song of the Lion of Vedanta reverberates in his heart:

• 'These are His manifold forms before thee
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
Who loves all beings, without distinction,
He indeed is worshipping best his God.'

• 'To sacrifice his own life for others, to alleviate the misery of millions rending the air with their cries, to wipe away tears from the eyes of widows, to console the heart of bereaved mothers, to provide the ignorant and depressed masses with ways and means for the struggle for existence and make them stand on their own feet, to broadcast the teachings of the scriptures to one and all, without distinction, for their spiritual and material welfare, to rouse the sleeping lion of Brahman in the hearts of all beings by the knowledge of Vedanta—the truer follower of Vivekananda lives, moves and has his being.

He, however, is not a believer in that material prosperity and social progress which reject all imponderables and spiritual values, for that is building on sand. Neither has he any much faith in that religion which is opposed to all doctrines of equality, the strangler of social progress and despiser of material well-being.

The equality which he preaches is not the doctrinaire one of the materialist—though its good points he is ready to acknowledge—but that equality which is the corollary of the Atman-Brahman equation. If he wants social progress, it is to create conditions of liberty, for 'liberty is the only condition of growth'. And growth brings inequality. This regenerative inequality he accepts as propitious. If he wants material well-being for the people, it is because, 'the empty stomach is not conducive to spirituality.' Obviously, he does not want that surfeit of stomach which generates spiritual unwell-being.

In the Indian context, he believes in that nationhood which is the outcome of the

gathering up and integration of all the scattered spiritual forces in the country. Believing as he does in working at the roots, he avoids meddling in so-called social reforms for no reform which is not the outcome of spiritual regeneration of man is of any avail for any length of time. Therefore he is neither a missionary of denunciation nor a worshipper at the altar of *status quo*. He stands for man, every man, and the full manifestation of his divine potentialities. He works for the physical, intellectual moral and spiritual regeneration of man—giving each one a lift upwards from where he stands—through the line of least resistance and leaves society to adjust its patterns to the altered situation of man. If equality means bringing down all to the lowest level of existence, he has nothing to do with such equalizing operations. And there is nothing more hideous to him than that ideal of advancement which requires the smothering of millions for the prosperity of the few. He is of the view that while everyone should be free to observe his *svadharma*, one has always to carefully dissociate *svadharma* from *adharma*. Privileges and vested interests which militate against the provision for advancement of others have no sanction for perpetuation. And he is against any subtle or crude variety of hatred or tyranny coming either from below or above, for he knows that the reverse of hatred is degradation and obverse of tyranny is slavery.

In fine, he is a visionary of 'the great Vedantic truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the soul of the universe', and 'a preacher of love and love alone.' There is nothing of lurid reformationism about him. His 'ideal is growth, expansion and development in national lines'. By whatever he does in this regard he only aims to 'rouse up the divinity that is hidden within every soul', the ultimate end being 'raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realisation of that great ideal of the spiri-

tual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure and meditative'. In his struggle for the poor, the ignorant and the oppressed, he has kept before him the motto, 'Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion'.

If he feels pity for the oppressed, he feels a greater pity for the oppressor, for latter's is the greater malady, stronger bondage. He is incapable of hating any. By the side of 'my God the miserable', 'my God the poor of all races, of all species', 'my God the wicked' claims his equal worship, for he is not frightened or repelled by the grimaces of God made in whatever fashion.

If 'it is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing', then 'there is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved.' Hence the truer follower of Vivekananda is a whole-souled worker for the true regeneration of womanhood, believing fully well that he alone is the true Sakti-worshipper 'who knows that God is the Omnipresent Force in the universe and sees in women the manifestation of that Force.' For his own part he brings in the ingredients of this great worship in the form of providing for their right type of education and leave the rest of their problems to be solved by themselves.

To the truer follower of Vivekananda the world is only the extension of home. The *weltschmerz*, therefore, gets such full and ready response in his spacious heart. The result is, his work at home spontaneously gets expanded in the international spheres, where he works 'more and more to realize the Vedantic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature', for that victory of man which defeats none, but enlivens, ennobles and enlightens everybody. And his article of faith is: 'There is but one basis of well-being, social, political and spiritual, to know that I and my brother are one. This is true of all countries and of all peoples.'

Therefore he feels so miserable to witness how the grand symphony in the world is again and again smothered out by the clanging notes of brute and crude nationalism. He is horrified to notice the enormity of crimes committed against humanity in its name. Seeing how the peoples of different countries barbarize themselves in the name of patriotism, he feels scandalized when called a 'patriot' and sees more and more how absurd it is to try to solve any real problem of the world on narrow racial or national basis. He finds no hope for the world unless the spirit of self-sacrifice, love and charity for the whole human race became inalienable characteristics of at least a good section of humanity. Notwithstanding his patriotism, therefore, Vivekananda's truer follower is ready to sacrifice, everything, 'if necessary, for that one sentiment, universality'.

Coming to brass-tacks of universality, to his own agreeable surprise Vivekananda's truer follower discovers himself as an involuntary and spontaneous agency for its augmentation in the world. And this most tremendous and astounding work goes on in such a homely fashion! In reference to India, Vivekananda's occidental follower is a disciple-teacher, whereas in reference to occident his Indian counterpart is a teacher-disciple. And with all their disciple-teacher-ship and teacher-discipleship they are all children, brothers and sisters, at the knees of their wonderful master. [If the Indian follower of Vivekananda thinks that he has the best love for the master, he has not known the secret heart-throbs of many a heart in the occident. If the occidental follower of Vivekananda thinks that the master's love for him is unique, he has not known the secret of Vivekananda's heart. His love for everyone, from the meanest to highest, is unique, for is he not the *samadarsin* par excellence?] Little aware the world is, how growing as children in the same spiritual family according to their own

individual laws of growth, Vivekananda's truer followers are all the time effectively evolving a new universality across East and West. In this threshold which spreads over continents, East and West have not only met but got merged in each other. Here one does not quite know where exactly East ends and West begins. Here one comes from the other end of the world and finds a heart spread out in reception, a hearth burning for cooking things he would require, a soul aching to give its all and expecting nothing in return but perhaps a little love in its sublime informality.

When horror-weapons continue to be piled in secret arsenals and excelled in competitive perfection in the satanic laboratories of the world, intercontinental ballistic missiles fly across mountains and oceans in their fatal amateurishness and rockets plunge in the uncharted fathoms of the absolute space, when to be or not to be is really the question in the world as it never has been before, in the life of the truer follower of Vivekananda a haven of humanity continues to grow as silently as a soul breathes a prayer and a bud opens its petals in the stillness of the night.

Down below in the depths of the national life, the surface of which is ridden by bitter strifes of various sorts, the life of Vivekananda's truer follower is the gathering point of calm, blossoming-moment of understanding and maturation-momentum of integration. In the depths of the international life rendered so perilous and inglorious by the depth-charges of hatred-counter-hatred, the life of Vivekananda's truer follower is the sobering cradle of sanity, regenerating nursing home of love and saving harbour of universality. In the process of his life's actualization of man's dream-ideals is the nucleus of a possible superior human civilization.

That eternal grand idea of the spiritual oneness of the whole universe, which is the

sanction behind all codes of ethics in the world, is the very pabulum of his inner life. Is it wonder then that with his whole soul, he should stand for 'help and not fight', 'assimilation and not destruction', 'Harmony and peace and not dissension', in spheres communal, national and international?

III

Far away in a bleak residential school the little boy finds his lessons cruelly exacting and his teachers awfully dutiful. As he steals his own crystal tears by his soft palm, mother's that undefinable face in distant home again and again flashes before his mind's eye. A somewhat analagous pain gets gathering in the heart of Vivekananda's truer follower while incessantly growing in the hard searing way of travails and tribulation under the impacts of the leader's unsparing imperatives and in the blazing open of Sri Ramakrishna's shine. Even before he becomes aware of the intensity of the pain, one day there appears, more in motherliness than in majesty, on the horizon of his spiritual being a figure like that of Uma Haimavati of yore, gladdening all directions with the diaphanous light of her understanding, infinite munificence of her homeliness and unbounded indulgence of her forgiveness. A new spring of hope, courage, energy and joy goes open in the core of his being. Who is she coming as a focalization of the Divine's tenderness-power, so tremendous in its bounty, normalcy, consideration and courtesy? She is Sri Sarada, at whose redeeming feet Sri Ramakrishna offered his all and more as the supremest act of his life's stupendous *sadhana*.

It is not that he did not know of her before. But to-day in a moment of crucial inward urgency she comes to life in his life in a special way which fills him with a new strength so much required to cover the last lap of the journey.

'She is *janadayini*', 'She is my Sakti', said Sri Ramakrishna referring to her. 'To

me', said Vivekananda of her, 'Mother's grace is hundred thousand times more valuable than Father's. Mother's grace, Mother's blessings are paramount to me. Please pardon me, I am a little bigoted here, as regards Mother.' Today this 'bigotry' of Vivekananda gives him an insight as to why all his life Sri Ramakrishna taught us to cry, 'Mother, Mother'. If the Father guides, chides and lifts, the Mother swings, feeds, and saves. The tired child longs so much for a lullaby. And whose voice is sweeter than the Mother's? But Sri Sarada's lullaby does not put him to sleep of unconsciousness but puts to sleep the necessity of sleep by breathing in him a new initiation, as it were, and opening up a refreshing awareness of new depths of consciousness. As his perspective changes a process of depersonalization commences in his understanding. And he begins to see a new unity under the first impacts of which he sees Sri Ramakrishna as the Word, Sri Sarada as the Meaning, Vivekananda as the Sound, — the articulation of that meaning — the three in one and one in three.

For the true follower, from Vivekananda to Sri Ramakrishna is the inevitable pilgrimage. And for the truer follower, from Ramakrishna to Sri Sarada is the inevitable home-coming. *With this home-coming the truer follower becomes the truest.*

The truest follower of Vivekananda is surpassingly wonderful and wonderfully surpassing.

He is the dexterous man who has burnt his stuff pure through selfless action. He is the perfected one who has drunk deep divine bliss through *para-bhakti*. In him the Kundalini has gone up and opulent once for all never to fall asleep again. He sees Brahman with open eyes, pervading, permeating and transcending everything.

Though a *sthitaprajna*, a *Brahmajnani*, he has the go of a trained soldier of God. Obedient to the highest law of the universe

which is self-sacrifice and not self-assertion, he desires nothing for himself, but does everything for others out of compelling spontaneity of love oceanic. Every sigh in the world is heaved in his soul, every pang is felt in his heart and every smile blossoms on his lips. He is a moving symphony of the oneness of all beings.

Gradually all works, activities, doing good and so forth become so extraneous to him that they fall off like the last dry leaves of a tree. 'The world just is, but not beautiful nor ugly, but as sensations without exciting any emotion.' He looks behind and after and finds that all is right. He looks forward and before and finds that everything is equally same, for things have lost their relative veneer to him.

Of highest illumination though, he is as playful as a child taking immense delight in the play of, and in playing with the Mother. Life with him is a big fun. What go as the beautiful and the terrible, the good and evil in the world are like toys in his festive sport. Playway 'he dares misery love, hug the form of death and dance in Destruction's dance'. To him the Mother has come as the plenary experience and the plenary experience as the Mother.

And to his utter wonderment he discovers that this 'Mother' is none other than quintessential Sri Ramakrishna, whose meaning is Sarada and articulation is Vivekananda. Vivekananda's words have by now got released from the trammels of flaming letters and in his consciousness he feels them as rhythms of the cosmic dance of the Mother. In the womb of this tremendous amazement he is born anew in the finale of becoming.

From out of this experience comes the unique illumined plebian to stay in a state of divine naturalness, as an effervescence of the infinite on the edge of the finite. He is the truest non-pareil follower of Vivekananda. He is the prototype of the new man of the future.

SAMKHYA IN THE MAHABHARATA

ANIMA SEN-GUPTA

The Samkhya, one of the oldest philosophical enquiries of India, has been shaped and re-shaped in different ages. Materials available for the study of Samkhya are scattered in various works like the Mahabharat, the Gita, the Puranas etc. In this article I will particularly refer to the lucid analysis of Samkhya concepts as exposed in the Mahabharat. Of course, the ideas are scattered and diversely explained and the task of spinning out only one coherent system of thought is fraught with risks. Both theistic and atheistic versions of the Samkhya system can be gathered from Mahabharat without much strain and twist. The most common view of Samkhya that has been frankly and openly admitted in several chapters of the *Santi Parva* of the Mahabharat is, however, theistic and monistic; although an atheistic tendency, too, represented by the teachings of *Pancasikha* boldly hovers round this theistic conception.

THEISTIC ACCOUNT :

Purusa prakrti and the Purusottama

The existence of a *purusottama* (the highest spiritual being) as the ultimate reality is too apparent in the Mahabharat; and *purusa* (individual self) and *prakrti* — the spirituality and physico-mentality — are but phases of this highest Lord.

Prakrti is no doubt endowed with the dynamic power of evolving and dissolving this lovely universe: but she does not, of her own accord perform this wonderful function. She is fully under the influence of One Spiritual principle, who is her Lord or Master, (*trigunadhipa*): and it is this Lord who makes her play with her own creative powers and energy. This spiritual principle is, therefore, the highest reality that transcends and includes both *prakrti* and individual *purusa*. This is the principle of consciousness that illumines and supports

everything. This is the *bodha* and the *bodhaniya*: (*jiva* and *Isvara*) the thinker and the thought: the enjoyer and the enjoyed: the smeller and the smelt: one who touches and the touched: the seer and the seen: the hearer and the heard and the knower and the known. In other words, it is the supreme principle of the whole universe because *pradhana* which is known as the source of *mahat* etc. is included in this eternal being. (The Mahabharat: *Santi-Parva* 351. 17-18).

The highest principle has no rival or opponent. Whenever duality is spoken of, it refers in all contents to the duality between *sattva* and *ksetrajna* (perceiving self) and not between the *purusottama* and any other principle. Materiality and spirituality seem to become the lower and the higher phases of the highest being, and these two phases, though different in nature, are still in a beginningless association because such a union is necessary for the creation and maintenance of this world. Nature is the dynamic principle that brings into existence all things and beings of this world. The innumerable ripples and rhythms of worldly life, its rugged rocks and green valleys: its pleasures and pains: flowers and thorns — all are due to this moving and palpitating power often termed as Nature or *prakrti*. Pure individual consciousness that appears as the knower of this worldly existence is not an active principle. Thus we gather from the valuable teachings of the Mahabharat the idea that nature creates everything, but it does so only under the control of the highest spiritual existence. (Ibid 314-12). The distinction of spirit as inactive and Nature as active is recognised in the great epic of India: but this duality is transcended in the final state of release when *ksetrajna*, the 25th principle, becomes emancipated from the

clutches of the *gunas* by its becoming one with the absolutely supreme spirit or the 26th principle which is the final support of all. (The Mahabharat : Santi-parva : 308. 9-13).

THE KSETRA : THE KSETRAJNA AND THEIR DUALITY

Duality or distinction is to be maintained between the 24 categories of Nature and the 25th principle which is clearly and aptly spoken of as *ksetrajna* or the perceiving consciousness. The 24 categories including *avyakta* constitute the psychomental conglomeration known as the *ksetra* (field) and the individual soul that resides inside this whole is known as the *adhithata* or the knower of the field and this is the principle that has been numbered as the 25th one. *Avyakta* or *prakrti* is also called *sattva* or *isvara*. (The Mahabharat : Santi parva : 306-41) since this is the source of all originations and creation. The 25th principle is different from nature and its categories : but it is not the highest principle as it has been distinctly stated in the Mahabharat that this 25th principle or the *ksetrajna* becomes united with the 26th principle — its source at the time of release or *kaivalya*. The *ksetrajna* stands for the perceiving self or the living principle of self within the mind-body complex in the Mahabharat, as there are reasons in favour of this contention.

It has already been stated above that the 25th principle is called *ksetrajna* as it knows the *ksétra*. In other words, the 25th principle has been identified with the *ksetrajna*. It is in the state of bondage alone that the encased self i.e. the 25th one fails to realise its non-distinction from the 26th principle. It falsely boasts of its being the highest category through ignorance. But when it becomes the *kevali*, it perceives its unity with the 26th principle. Nilkantha, too, while explaining the passage *ksetrajnapi — yada tata tat ksetre samprali-*

yaté — has identified *ksetrajna* with the 25th principle. If this principle attains *kaivalya* and thereby becomes merged in the highest category, it cannot refer to any other being except the individual self within the mind-body system.

While discussing the points of distinction between *sattva* and *ksétrajna*, it has been stated that the latter is without any support or substratum : but that should not be accepted as a justifiable ground for interpreting *ksetrajna* as some divine personality other than so many witnessing selves possessing different mind-body complexes. *Ksétrajna*, being the principle consciousness, is identical with the pure, stainless, super-sensible consciousness which has been spoken of as the supreme *purusa*. It has been clearly stated in the Mahabharata that just as one fire becomes many, one sun is the source of all light and the same air blows in different directions ; in the same way one supreme self assumes the forms of so many selves, being focussed through different bodies. Now if this living principle of consciousness is nothing but a spark of the supreme self, getting entangled in the meshes, woven by *prakrti*, then there is no harm in characterising it as a self-reliant principle — which indeed it is — if viewed properly from a correct angle of vision. It is the universal consciousness — only limited by *antah-karanato* — a particular individual and this individualised by it.

This perceiving self is in fact different from the mind-body complex with which it gets identified through ignorance. The epic transfers all activities to *sattva* or nature and makes the self entirely inactive. *Prakrti* is unconscious, but *ksetrajna* is just the opposite. The self simply perceives whatever is produced by nature or *sattva*. Though radically distinct, yet these two principles are related together like fish and water or fly and fig-leaf. It is because of this relation and also under the spell of

ignorance that the spirit identifies itself with nature and considers itself as the active and creative principle. The wants, appetites, desires and passions which really belong to *antahkarana* are owned by the spirit as parts and parcels to itself. In other words, due to complete self-forgetfulness, the spirit becomes submerged in *prakrti* and enjoys and suffers worldly pleasures and pains, i.e. bondage. It may be mentioned here that in our discussion the word *sattva* is taken in the sense of *prakrti* and not in the sense of *buddhi*, whenever it has been contrasted with the *ksétrajna*. Of course, among the three *gunas*, it is *sattva* in the *buddhi* that catches the reflection of pure consciousness and thereby creates the false impression of identity. Still, *buddhi*, being itself the result of permutation and combination of the three *gunas* presupposes a previous existence of the three *gunas* or *prakrti* in contact with the spirit. It is not the ultimate category although it is the first evolute from which all other categories have evolved. So, while *ksetrajna* refers to the individual witnessing self, *sattva* refers to the psycho-physical substrate or *prakrti*. Moreover, in chapter 306 of *santi parva*, *prakrti* has actually been described as *sattva*.

THE GUNAS

Prakrti has been declared to consist of the three *gunas* — *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* — and all objects of this world are spoken of as their products. These are also the three factors that act like coverings in relation to *purusa*, and due to the existence of these *gunas*, the soul suffers delusion and misery. It is only by transcending all the *gunas* that one can attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death. But the Mahabharata does not give us any clear and definite idea regarding the nature of these three *gunas*. They are generally referred to as representing different mental states — good, bad and indifferent. Living beings are also divided on this ground into *sattvika*, *rajasika* and *tamasika*. Those who have predomi-

nance of *sattva* in them are born in a higher world : those who are under the influence of *rajas* are born as man and those who have a predominant element of *tamas* are born as animals.

BUDDHI OR INTELLIGENT STUFF

Buddhi has been given a very prominent place in the epic philosophy where it has been clearly stated that the whole universe is shot through and through with the *buddhi* and that all materials both merge and emerge from this very cosmic principle : (The Mahabharat : Shanti parva : 194-17-18).

The epic has often given us the doctrine of the development of the *Bhautika* elements of the universe from *bhutatman* and *bhutamakrt*. In our opinion there is justifiable ground for accepting the term *bhutatman*, as standing for *buddhi* — the great germ of the whole world. If *buddhi* is the main source from which the whole creation has sprung up, then it is only just and reasonable to hold that the five elements have also originated from this single principle. *Atma* in *bhutatma* does not seem to imply any spiritual entity like self or God. It refers to *buddhi* — the first category — without which the world could not have been brought into existence. Since it is the main principle of creation, it has been described as the *atma* of all *bhutas*. In chapter 285 of Santi Parva, we come across the word *bhutamakrt* which, too, may justifiably be regarded as meaning the intelligence-stuff i.e. the first born category of Nature. But *buddhi* is not treated as the only source of these *bhautika* elements in the Mahabharata. There are other suggestions, too, which trace the development of the elements from the Absolute Being or from the mind, although their commonly-held source is *ahamkara*.

THE CATEGORIES

In the epic philosophy, too, the various parts of the empirical world are derived

other than the mere physical and elemental combination. This, therefore, is the soul. The *lokayatas* do believe in the existence of deities who can be propitiated for the removal of cold and heat etc. Now, these deities cannot be mere elemental conglomerations, since in that case they will be mortal like all other worldly things. So, the permanent soul does exist as the undeniable principle of life and all living processes. Further, formless consciousness cannot spring forth from elements having forms, as this will contradict our experiences. Nor can we think of the self as a stream of passing mental states, as in that case the results of A's action will be enjoyed by B and not by A who has performed those actions. Hence, as the permanent upholder of consciousness, we are forced to believe in the existence of an abiding self, which truly constitutes the spiritual basis of life and experience. The state of release is, however, described as being identical with that when all rivers completely lose themselves in the ocean. (The Mahabharata : Santi Parva : 219-42) This is a state of pure neutrality which cannot be described in terms of the usual qualifying adjectives. For that reason *Pancasikha* says that there is neither ultimate destruction, nor ultimate reality of a determinate type. The *moksa*-state is indefinable. It cannot be described as a state of consciousness, since consciousness is not the essence of the soul.

The three *gunas* are also spoken of : but these *gunas* are as usual referred to signify the good and bad qualities of the mind. The elements become conglomerated naturally and there is no need for any prime mover or God. The various organs of sensation and action with their objects, are also elaborately discussed by *Pancasikha*. The elements of material bodies remain together in a collective whole by their nature and they are separated also in the same manner. One who confuses this conglomeration of body-

mind with the soul, suffers misfortunes and misery and is never released from bondage. Since this conglomeration is not the self, any attachment to this as 'I' and 'mine' is false.

A similar view is also given in the *Santi Parvan* (203) in which the self, apart from the body, is described as imperceptible on account of its non-manifesting character like the moon of the new moonday. In other words, the self in itself, is characterless and it acquires characteristics only when it becomes associated with the body. This is also the view of *Pancasikha* on the nature of the self. In the state of release the soul becomes *alinga* and unmanifest. *Pancasikha's* teaching may be regarded as a continuation of the idea of the *Brhad. Upanisad* where it is stated by *Yajna-valkya* that after death there is no consciousness. Just as a lump of salt dissolved into water, is completely lost in it and it is not possible to detect it : yet wheresoever you may take any part of it, it invariably tastes salty : so this great endless limitless being is solidified thought. Arising from those elements, it is destroyed after death and there is no consciousness after death. (*Brhad. Upanisad*—2. 4. 12). The passage is, indeed very obscure and even *Maitreyi*, his wife, took it in the sense that after death there could be no consciousness. *Pancasikha*, has also tried to establish his doctrine in the same manner. In his opinion salvation means complete destruction of all positive characteristics including consciousness.

Consciousness arises from the conglomeration of elements and is destroyed along with them. At death, there is no consciousness. This atheistic teaching of *Pancasikha* later on has found a more detailed and logical development in the *Samkhya* of *Caraka* : most probably this trend of thought, by gradually gathering strength, has ultimately developed into the traditional atheistic *samkhya* of *Isvarakrishna*.

GOD'S EXISTENCE

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

No problem has taxed the ingenuity of philosophers more than the question of the proofs for God's existence. The philosophical proofs are necessarily intellectual and we now know that no intellectual proof of God's existence is complete or final. But in the history of European and Indian Thought, eminent thinkers wrestled with this problem and formulated a series of arguments which they believed conclusively demonstrated His existence. We shall take the former type and see what validity they exactly possess.

The oldest of these arguments is that of *St. Anselm* (1033-1109) who may really be said to have evolved a rational proof. He has given really two arguments to prove God's existence, one in his *Monologium* and the other, the more familiar in his *Prosologium*. The former may be summarised as follows :

It is a truism that every thing that exists has a cause. This cause may be one or many. If the cause is one, then it is the unitary Being to whom every thing owes its origin. If we accept a multiplicity of causes, we have three possibilities. The multiplicity of causes may ultimately depend on only one cause. In this case, we may say that that one cause is God. Secondly it may be that each of these manifold of causes, may be self-caused. If so, there is a power or faculty of self-existence common to all these particular causes we have assumed. This common factor is the unitary cause — the First cause — viz. God. The third alternative is to regard everything as owing its existence to all the other things. This is meaningless for we cannot argue that everything in the world is dependent on all the things in the world. We thus prove that there is only one Being and this is the cause of every existing thing and is itself uncaused. *St. Anselm* says that for this very reason

God is the most real, (*ens realissimum*) most powerful and best Being. God exists in and through Himself.

The argument from *Prosologium* is generally called the ontological argument. This is a simple and direct statement. We all have an idea of God as the absolutely perfect Being. Anything to be perfect must also exist, for perfection implies existence. Hence God exists. The above arguments are not regarded as valid by philosophers. In the first argument the concept of causality which is operative only in the empirical world of our experience is applied to God. This vitiates the whole argument. In the ontological argument, as *Gannilo* and later *Kant* pointed out, the fundamental difference between thought and being is ignored. We may conceive a being intellectually but have no guarantee that that being actually exists. God's existence cannot be derived from His definition. That God exists is a synthetic judgment and does not depend on the analysis of the concept of God.

Another type of argument advanced in this direction is called the cosmological argument. Everything in this world is finite and contingent depending on something else. This very contingency and finiteness requires a First Cause which is infinite and self-sufficient. Cause-effect relationship of things in the world will go on infinitely unless at some stage we posit a God, a First Cause who is uncaused but causes everything.

Plausible as this argument is, it is not free from defects. According to this, the First Cause is God, the Absolute, the Infinite. All effects arising from this are relative and finite. There is a big gulf separating the finite and the Infinite and the most difficult question to answer is : How

from nature : but on this point there prevails a number of views with marked variations among themselves. Thus, in one version there are five senses, mind, intellect and spirit as *ksetrajna* : in another the spirit is admitted as the ninth element : as *chitta* a new element has been added to the group. In chapter 306 of Santi Parva, however, we find an enumeration of 8 *prakrtis* together with five organs of sensation—the five of action, mind and the five objects, (16 *vikaras*). These are almost similar to categories enumerated in the classical Samkhya : the important difference being the omission of the term *tanmatra* in the philosophy of this great epic. Again, in chapter 310 it is stated that according to the samkhya system, *mahat* first of all arises from nature : from *mahat* arises *ahamkara* : from *ahamkara* originates the mind and from the mind the five elements come into being.

EMPIRICAL PLURALITY AND TRANSCENDENTAL UNITY OF THE SOULS

The souls so long as they are in the union with nature, are many in number : but as soon as they realise their distinction from nature they abandon *prakrti*. They then enter into the Supreme Spirit—the final merging ground of all multiplicity and difference. It has been repeatedly stated in the Mahabharat that the individual *purusas* are many and that they can be relieved of their burden of sufferings by their abandonment of *prakrti* and its evolutes. This abandonment, of course, does not mean the annihilation of *prakrti*. It simply refers to the realisation of his own nature by an individual *purusa* and the consequent transcendence of *prakrti* by him. In this state, therefore, he sees his difference from the psycho-physical structure : and nature too fails to affect him in good or bad manner. In this respect there is similarity between the theistic view of the Mahabharata and the classical view.

THE CONCEPT OF TIME

Time occupies an important place in the epic. Individuals are born in different bodies due to their accumulated merits and demerits under the influence of time. Time as a category regulates and determines to a certain extent the destiny of living beings. In the dialogue between Asitadevala and Narada (Santi. Ch. 274) eight kinds of *bhutas* are mentioned such as *bhava*, *abhava*, *kala*, *prthivi*, *apas*, *vayu*, *akasa* and *tejas* : and *kala* is spoken of as that which being impelled by *bhava* brings into existence all *bhutas* out of the five elements : viz earth, air, water, wind and light. The senses themselves are not the knowers : but produce knowledge for the *ksetrajna*. Higher than the senses is *citta*, superior to this is *manas*, higher than *manas* is *buddhi* and the highest of all is the spiritual principle.

FINDINGS

From the above discussion it is clear that the Mahabharata gives us a more thorough exposition of the theistic samkhya than what we gather from the study of the upanisads. The epic explains in details the distinction between *ksetrajna* and nature : and this perceiving self is set over against the 24 categories of *prakrti* constituting the sphere of empirical knowledge. This perceiving self or the transcendental ego is not the real doer and enjoyer. It is simply the pure and spectator like consciousness that forms the background of our empirical existence. In the epic philosophy, this transcendental ego has no doubt been regarded as different from the psycho-physical organism : but in order to avoid dualism and atheism, both of them are made to hang on the 26th principle which is the final abode of the whole creation. Here the influence of the upanisadic doctrine is clearly visible as the upanisads also make *jivatman* (individual soul) independent of Nature only, while maintaining all through the view that

both of them are rooted in the Brahman. It is, therefore, understandable from the facts mentioned above, how through different handlings in diverse periods, this transcendental ego assumed the status of the transcendental *purusa* of the classical samkhya, without the patronage of the 26th principle namely the *purusottama*. (The ultimate reality which is all inclusive). Different categories of nature are also more fully analysed and the order of their development is also more clearly explained in the epic—although there is variation from the classical samkhya in this respect. The five elements are not always derived from *ahamkara* and different views are given regarding the development of the categories. The samkhya ideas are thus in the process of formation, side by side with the other orthodox systems. In this manner, a definite advance from the Upanisadic state so far as systematisation of materials is concerned is visible in the epic philosophy. The Mahabharata definitely says that all sufferings are due to the false identification of *prakrti* and *ksetrajna* and that the final liberation will be effected from a recognition of the distinction between spirit and matter. The samkhya in the epic recognises a plurality of souls only in the empirical sphere. The souls are many so long as they are in union with nature : but as soon as they become enlightened about their own distinction and difference from *prakrti*, they at once return to the 26th principle of *purusottama*. The epic philosophy is thus definitely theistic in its general outlook and the elements of samkhya are mostly pressed into the service of this trend of thought. The Mahabharata describes the philosophies of samkhya and Yoga as two eternal ancient systems taught by Kapila and Hiranyagarbha respectively and they were then not separated. The samkhya is the highest truth with a belief in God as the 26th principle of the universe.

TEACHINGS OF PANCASIKHA ON ATHEISTIC LINE

The view of *Pancasikha* (mentioned as the disciple of Asuri) is, however, different from this theistic conception which is so prominent in the Mahabharata. According to him, the highest reality is not the *purusottama* or God, transcending and absorbing both spirit and matter. It is rather a unified category of *avyakta* and *purusa* or in the words of the Indian philosopher Dr. S. N. Das Gupta : 'it is *avyakta* in the state of *purusa*. (History of Indian Philosophy : Vol. 1 : page 216). It is due in all cases to the conglomerated association of our body, mind and the element of *cetas* with the self. *Cetas* is the physical element which is to be combined with the physical elements to general consciousness in the self. ... Consciousness arises from the unification of these psycho-physical elements with the self, and these elements are the constituents of *avyakta*—the ultimate ground of this objective world. The collective whole of the elements is called the *ksetra* and the self that resides in the mind is called the *ksetrajna*. The existence of the self is admissible, as otherwise we shall have to believe that all ceases with death, which is not really true. Again in the absence of a postulate of self, it will be difficult for us to give a rational explanation of duties and the sense of moral responsibility. To prove his point of view, *Pancasikha* has introduced a critical discussion on the buddhistic and the *lokayata* views both of which deny the existence of a permanent self. Consciousness can never be produced from a combination of different physical elements only to perform the functions of life and its various processes. If consciousness is regarded as a quality of the body only, then we are in a fix to understand why it vanishes altogether from a dead body which is still a conglomeration of all *bhautika* elements. That which residing in the body, the body lives and departing from the body, it dies, must be different and

Indu's sons, described in the *Yoga Vāsishtha*. A certain Indu and his virtuous wife had no children. So they went up to Kailāsa and fervently prayed to Lord Śiva. Pleased with their devotion, the Lord appeared before them, like the full moon, bathing in soft light the entire interval between the heaven and the earth. Asked what boon was desired, Indu prayed that he might be blessed with ten sons, so intelligent and well behaved that life might be free from sorrow henceforth. In due course ten sons were born and they grew up well versed in all forms of learning. Indeed they shone like planets in the cloudless night sky.¹ When their parents passed away, they too repaired to the top of the Kailāsa mountain in search of mental peace. There they began to discuss among themselves what constituted real greatness, true riches and highest auspiciousness.² The eldest son then spoke to the rest thus: "Of all powers and glories, there is one alone that endures for an age, a Kalpa. That is the state of Brahmā. That and no other appeals to me." As a direct aid to the correct visualization and value, he continued: "Do you all sit in the 'Lotus pose' (Padmāsana) and think and feel yourselves to be Brahmā, — full of His effulgence and possessing the powers of creation and withdrawal in yourselves."³

They all obeyed and accordingly remained meditating, — still like figures in a painting. With his inward gaze each said, saw, and felt about himself as follows: "Here I sit on the pericarp of a full blown lotus. I am Brahmā, the creator, and sustainer of the universe. I find in me the whole ritual of Vedic sacrifices, nay the very Vedas and the great sages. Saraswati, Gāyatri, gods and men are all in me." Proceeding in this man-

ner, each saw in himself the regions of the universe, their protectors and their inhabitants. Among the various creatures, some were rising, some disappearing, others manifesting their beneficent aspects or falling into distress and decadence. Each saw Time itself, with its divisions of years and ages, to be a movement within himself. Not only Brahmā's day but night also passed before his mind's eye. At the same time each meditator felt the certainty: "I, however, am ever residing in the Supreme Self. I am full and perfect, the Divine Ruler Himself."⁴

The story says that their absorption was so complete that they looked like ten rocks or images hewn out of boulders on the hill side. Their human frames having fulfilled their legitimate purpose, their thought energies became regrouped into the forms of celestial rulers, and the eldest among them became transformed into the deity of the Sun during the next cycle of creation.

What is it that thoughts cannot condense into if properly roused and sustained?

भग चरैवेति ।

SUBANDHU

- १ ज्ञातवाङ्मयाः...नमसीवामलाः प्रहाः 22
 २ किं महत्त्वं, किमैश्वर्यं किं महाविभवं शुभम्? 27
 ३ पद्मासनगतो भास्वान् ब्रह्माहमिति तेजसा ।
 सृजामि संहरामीति ध्यानमस्तु चिराय वः ॥ 35
 ४ उन्मज्जन्ति निमज्जन्ति प्रस्फुरन्ति पतन्ति च ।
 तरंगा इव तोयानामिमाः प्रतिदिनं प्रजाः ॥ 46
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 अधिगतकमलासनक्रमास्ते
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 सततमतितरां कुशासनस्था-
 धिरमिति पंकजकल्पने विरेजुः ॥ 51

Y. V. Utpatti, LXXXVI.

All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves. Therefore make your own future.
 — Swami Vivekananda.

THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF TYAGARAJA *

K. BALASUBRAMANIA AIYAR

A delightful and elevating function was held at the Ramakrishna Students' Home, Mylapore on Saturday the 17th. The cool morning atmosphere was filled with the fragrance of the memory of our beloved C. Ramanujachariar. This precious book published under the auspices of the Home was then released to the public. The proceedings began quite appropriately with a song of Tyagaraja rendered by one of the greatest artistes of our time, Sri Ariyakudi Ramanuja Aiyengar. The modulated voice of the expert singer and the symphony of the piece, "Entaro Mahanubhavalu" instilled devotion in the minds of those assembled and filled their hearts with Santi. Two finest representatives of Indian culture took the leading part in the function. Warm and well-merited tributes were paid by them to the lifelong dedication of our beloved Ramanujacharya and to the versatile scholarship of Dr. Raghavan. Mr. Deshmukh who released the book to the public gave the audience a masterly review of it. The work is really the embodiment of the selfless devotion of Ramanujacharya fondly called 'Ramanju' by his friends in Mylapore and his ardent dedication to music, song and spirituality.

A sense of sorrow pervades our minds when we reflect that he is not alive to-day to see the fruition of his loving labours and to rejoice at the consummation of his self-imposed task. Truly, his all day-long toil at the Secretariat and hard quill-driving under exacting superiors did not sap his instinct and talent for music and the histrionic art nor did it prevent his developing passionate

* By C. Ramanujachari. Introduction by Dr. V. Raghavan. Foreword by Dr. Radhakrishnan. Published by the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras-4. Pages 631. Price Rs. 10.

second interests in life. Very early he was irresistably attracted by the wonderful dynamic and magnetic personality of Swami Vivekananda and by the loving heart and intense bhakti of Swami Ramakrishnananda. The bhajana during the month of Margashi round the streets was a well-known long-standing institution here and the presence during that time of the two direct disciples of Sri Tyagaraja, Krishna Bhagavathar and Sundara Bhagavathar enabled Ramanujacharya to become steeped in the music and songs of Tyagaraja and to imbibe the sampradaya rendering of the saint himself and Ramanju developed an intense love for the music, the poetry and spiritual experiences in Tyagaraja's Kritis. His sensitive soul responded quickly to the enthralling music and the intense piety of the saint. It was a familiar sight for all of us in Mylapore to see and hear Ramanujacharya singing every year Tyagaraja's Kritis in the morning Bhajana processions under the leadership and guidance of the two Bhagavathars. Hence, the idea of publishing a collection of the well-edited Kritis of Tyagaraja with English translation was conceived by him with the special object of making the songs and the rich spiritual experience of Tyagaraja known to the wider public in India and elsewhere. Day by day he toiled at the task with his usual industry and devotion and many times I have seen him at this work in his room at the Home with his friend, the late Krishna Rao, Retd. Telugu Translator to the Government of Madras. He announced his intention of publishing this book on the occasion of the Tyagarajaswami Centenary celebrated by the Music Academy in 1946. With foresight and judgment he selected, as his collaborator Dr. Raghavan and induced him to

did the Absolute become the relative and the finite? The cosmological argument breaks on this rock.

A variety of arguments all tending to prove that God exists, may be clubbed together as the teleological or argument by design. This takes many forms. If we observe the world we are struck with the many signs of order, design and purposiveness present. This is necessarily due to an intelligent creator, viz., God. The world is an effect and as all effects require a cause, we note that God is the cause. Hence God exists. Of all the arguments, this is the most impressive and deserves some respect. But when we examine this closely we see that it really does not prove God's existence but the existence of a finite being. If it is argued that just as a potter

makes a pot with clay (the clay he does not make or create) God fashioned and created this world, it merely implies an architect who constructs with given materials and that God did not create those materials. Secondly, when we apply the principle of the commensuration between cause and effect, we have to conclude that the above argument succeeds only in inferring an intelligent and powerful author of nature who need not necessarily be omniscient or omnipresent. Thirdly there is no guarantee that this author of nature is only one. A plurality of such beings might conceivably have fashioned this world.

These major arguments hence become incapable of proving His existence — a Being whose scope is beyond speech and mind.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

(SOME QUOTATIONS)

K. S. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

1. 'All that exists is evil, that anything exists is an evil, everything exists only to achieve evil, existence itself is an evil, and destined to evil. There is no other good than non-existence.'—Leo pardi.

2. 'We must regard all evil as a promise and potency of good, the good of evil is the preventing and overcoming of it.' 'Its meaning is what it can yield of future good.'—G. A. Wilson, *Reckoning With Life*, pp. 225, 235.

3. 'It is better to have a world in which one may fall into evil than a world in which one cannot attain to goodness.'—Clifford Barrett, *Ethics*, P. 112.

4. 'The loftiest reasons for sorrow must be on the eve of becoming reasons for gladness and joy.'—Maurice Maeterlink, *Wisdom and Destiny*, P. 154.

5. 'One does not know oneself without a struggle. In the mastery of whatsoever opponent one chooses one sees what one is good for.'—George Boas, *A Primer for Critics*, P. 93.

6. 'It is easier to explain evil in a God-dominated world than to explain good in a God-deserted world.'—Frank W. Collier, *Collier's Gems of Philosophy*, P. 47.

7. 'Under no circumstances can a person be called good whose will is not thwarted by the production of evil.'—J. M. E. Mc. Taggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, P. 231.

8. 'In the suffering of the mother man is born, and he is reborn in his own suffering.'—Max Dessoir, *Journal of Philosophy*, 1930, P. 460.

9. 'The way is hard to follow and is full of obstacles. He who would overcome difficulties would practice and rejoice in them. He who does not follow the way in daily events cannot meet the Crisis.'—Quoted from Saigo Nanshu by Victor Otake in *Hero Tales of Japan*. Pp. 115-116.

10. 'Cosmically pain is the plow that cultivates the neglected earth of consciousness. Pain opens the earth of consciousness that the divine seed may be fertilised by the water of life.'—Horace Holley, *The Spirit of the Age*, Pp. 49-50.

चरैवेति

CONDENSATION OF REACTIONS

A branch of a tree moves in the wind. We register the event through our eyes and the mind records it. Such records by themselves may be called neutral. Their value to the ego can be estimated only in the light of our reactions to them. In most cases the wavy motion of the branch produces no reaction worth the name. We simply ignore it or forget it. But the event recorded may be something serious. It may be a thief's attempt to break into our house. In this case we become deeply interested, may even upset. We have to safeguard our property. If possible, we shall call up our neighbours or the police and capture the offender. This is bare duty, something which we owe to ourselves, our family and society. By keeping quiet we shall be encouraging evil-doers. We shall also damage our own inside by yielding to fear and cowardice.

Let us now change the example and imagine the record to be one of money making by some of our companions. To earn money without resorting to fraud and to spend it wisely are not unhealthy reactions. Exertion in such directions neutralizes laziness. The element of selfishness inherent in it can be balanced by the desire to benefit others through proper distribution. The entire process can be given a spiritual turn by intimately associating God with every stage of it. That is to say: We visualize, as well as we can, that the Supreme Being in some suitable 'form', — or His grace — is present in us, in our desires, in the field where we work, in the persons whom we contact, and in the results of our activities on ourselves and others. To the extent that we become emotionally aware that He or His grace is ever true, full and auspicious,

we shall approach the highest felicity ourselves and bring its transforming touch to whatever we see, plan or handle.

What we record may not be events of the physical world at all. It may be a concept like that of the Lord as the creator of the universe. To put it in Hindu terms, it may be the idea of Brahmā, the four-faced deity seated on the lotus issuing from the navel of the Supreme Person. What are the possible healthy reactions to such a record?

One is what may be called the 'dualistic' approach, to start with. We may look upon the deity as distinct from others. This is what most devotees do. The relationship is naturally that of the worshipper and the worshipped. It is not necessary to make the attention rigid in any sense. It may legitimately be turned upon three items, one after another,—upon ourselves, the devotee, upon our attempt at self-surrender, and upon the Creator, the giver of unlimited grace. Seeker, the act of seeking, and the goal form an indivisible whole so far as the inner significance is concerned. It is only in the field of language and concepts, in the ordinary sense, that the three are distinct, and that the goal appears to be superior to the other two. When discipline matures into the fullness of 'meaning', all conceptual barriers tend to merge indistinguishably into the Divine Essence. The recipient, the act of receiving, and the thing received then become more or less interchangeable terms, covered by the Name and Form of the Spiritual Ideal adopted by us.

The second is what may be called a non-dualistic approach from the start. How that can be done is shown through the story of

devote his versatile talents to the study of Tyagaraja's songs, especially, the Sahitya and contents of the Kriti. He asked Dr. Raghavan to deliver a series of lectures during the Navaratri celebration of the Home in 1947 and these lectures were published serially in this magazine, *Vedanta Kesari*. Ramanujacharya was extremely anxious that the book should be published in his life-time and he should witness the release of the book to the public. But that was not to be. Naturally the work of this kind to be done well takes time. Indeed, Dr. Raghavan is very well equipped for the task. His versatile talents and prodigious industry were pressed into service and the public have now before them a very well edited collection of 565 Kriti of Tyagaraja with accurate English translation, the songs being printed in Devanagari script. The wrapper has the figure of the Tambura, which is the appropriate symbol of our saint-musician. The front pages of the book are adorned by a foreword by Dr. Radhakrishnan giving an authoritative pronouncement about the necessity 'for the supreme values of knowledge, discipline and devotion at the present time when we are faced with conflicting ideologies, national dissensions and international intrigues.' This is followed by a masterly introductory thesis of 200 pages by Dr. Raghavan. It is a veritable mine of information about Tyagaraja, his life and personality, the contents of the Kriti, the poetic excellence of the songs and the nature and value of the Bhakti inspired by them. It is worthy to be printed as a separate book giving the reader valuable knowledge which will enable him to appreciate Tyagaraja. Dr. Raghavan has approached in a critical and scientific manner the study of the incidents of his life as disclosed by the songs without drawing too much upon our credulity in regard to the many traditional accounts. Mahatmas like Tyagaraja while being unique, are largely the products of their time and are influenced

by the cultural trends of the period in which they live. They come to the fore, on the crest of the wave, as it were, of spiritual and cultural renaissance. Such peaks of humanity rise up just like the mountain peaks from a range of hills. Hence Dr. Raghavan has devoted a portion of his thesis to the cultural and spiritual renaissance of the 17th and 18th century and has also traced the influences of the great teachers like Upanishad Brahman, Narayana Tirtha and Melattur Venkatarama Bhagavathar and even of the sampradaya sanctified by Jayadeva. The pattern of his music and of his songs was largely set by his predecessors. But as Dr. Raghavan has pointed out "The age of the Chaturdandi of Gita, Prabandha and Thāya and Ālāpa have to give place to the age of the Pada, the Kirtana and the Kriti" and Tyagaraja stands foremost in the development of what he calls a musical vitamin tabloid of the Kriti. As Dr. Deshmukh very beautifully pointed out, Tyagaraja's Kriti are the Tri-veni Sangama of Sangeeta, Sahitya and spirituality. Dr. Raghavan has done full justice to Tyagaraja by making a critical and analytical study of all these three which have blended in the make-up of his songs. For, they are not artificial compositions but are the spontaneous outpourings of a soul in loving communion with its beloved Ista Devata, Rama taking shape in superb Raga, Rasa and Bhava.

The book contains a classification of the songs under various heads like Sadhana Sampat, Bhaktiyoga, Nadayoga and sub-heads of each of these three, then the text and translation and then an index of the songs in Devanagari and English.

After Independence there is a cultural and musical renaissance, Sangeeta Nataka and Sahitya Academies have been started both in the Centre and in the States and the Government of India and of the States are giving encouragement to musicians and

scholars by awards of merit and financial assistance in the shape of scholarships and prizes to deserving aspirants. Western savants of music have begun to take interest in the comparative study of music, western and eastern, Hindustani and Carnatic. In India itself Carnatic music is coming to be appreciated more and more in Northern India and Hindustani music is also sung and appreciated in the South. There are celebra-

tions of Annual Music Festivals in many places in India. At such a period this valuable book making known to the public, the spiritual heritage of Tyagaraja, is a great asset to all lovers and students of music and culture. We heartily welcome this precious book here, where the name of Ramanujacharya is fondly remembered and where the devotion to Tyagaraja is an inspiration for spiritual and moral elevation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

There is a tendency now to retain faith but reject God replacing the latter by Humanity. Humanity may mean the mass of human beings as well as their quality and benevolence. The religion of humanity similarly may mean the religion of man or the natural religion of humaneness. But it has acquired a special meaning. According to the Oxford Dictionary it means 'rejecting the supernatural and concerned chiefly or wholly with the advancement of man's welfare'. This has been philosophically put by Comte and other positivists and humanists. Here humanity i.e. the totality of the human beings is taken as 'the Great Being worthy of worship'. The Editorial uses it here in this sense and tries to point out the inadequacy of such worship replacing the traditional one.

Sri P. Seshadri, the famous linguist of Kerala, is a disciple of Brahmanandaji Maharaj.

Dr. (Miss) Anima Sen Gupta M.A., Ph.D., of Patna University is bringing out a comprehensive book, *The evolution of Samkhya school of thought*, of which the present article forms a part. In the book the authoress has made 'an attempt to trace and connect in detail the different lines of Samkhya thought which contributed finally to the present system of Samkhya philosophy'.

Swami Budhananda is the former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Sri S. Rajagopala Sastri is a Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras.

Sri K. S. Ramakrishna Rao, M.A., is a Lecturer in the Chikmagalur College in Mysore.

Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, B.A., B.L., M.L.C., is an Advocate of the Madras High Court and leader of several cultural institutions in Madras.

STUDY OF THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND

In India developmental activity is going on in a tremendous speed. New laws, new taxes, new professions, new environment are creating new values. Quick changes naturally create new and unthought of problems. Though it is easier to adjust with the physical changes, it is not so with the mental

ones. Often the mental background is not taken into account, partly because of the inscrutability and vastness of the problem and partly because of lack of vision and sympathy. Often the superiors depend on time to mend things. But if the background of the people concerned is studied and an

effort is made to make things easier for them, much of frustration, unrest and agitation can be prevented. It is precisely for this that the new study of sociology is valuable for India. But sociology as a science has its own value and there is every chance of the scientists forgetting the human element they deal with. Modern man is anxious to get the benefit of all sciences and therein, according to him, lies their importance. Utility is the only criterion which he is interested in. In the context of Indian society and the vast changes it faces overnight this consideration is fruitful and imperative. There are sociologists who consider the study of society as a mere 'science', implying thereby, that it should be free from any consideration of normally accepted values and their importance in man's life. The German phrase *wertfrei* 'value-free' is their slogan. It is true that as a science it must not allow human valuations or preconceived doctrines to impede, interfere or distort the impartiality and neutrality of the scientific method. But surely it cannot mean that it should not investigate values which are real facts in the life of a community: The human values are data of human experience and no true science can ignore them. 'The demand of science is simply that we avoid bias in our treatment of them. The facts of the physical sciences are inert, neutral, objective, whereas the facts of human experience, the valuations are dynamic, subjective and mixed up.'

To understand the impulses that control human behaviour the investigator cannot be indifferent to the relative importance of different values. He must enter into the moods of his subjects and try to throw light

as far as possible. As Maciver and Page say :

The patriot, the religious devotee, the ambitious leader, the lover, the man of affairs, would alike become no more than organisms curiously gesticulating in a social void. We are driven to the conclusion that the only clear and indubitable sense in which sociology can be value-free is that in dealing with value-acts the sociologist should never suffer his own valuations to intrude into or affect his presentation of the valuations which are registered in the facts themselves. (Society, P.617).

Often there is the danger of forgetting the importance of spiritual and emotional values of the people involved, which constitute their mental make-up. It should be the duty of the sociologists to remind the authorities about the danger of contemplated move and find out ways and means to lessen the bad effects of a measure already introduced. It is in this context that we consider Sri C. D. Deshmukh's remarks as very valuable, when he made a fervent plea for research in sociology and pointed out its important place in modern economics while addressing the social scientists attending an UNESCO Regional Seminar in Calcutta, and said :

Any improvement in the apparatus for advancing social welfare had to be related to the social background of the community, if it was to be measurable, to be of some significance, and if frustration was to be avoided.

(The Hindu, Dec. 15, 1958).

We hope the tendency to belittle age-old ideas as unscientific and violently to disturb them will be checked by the sociologists who are aware of the dangers and frustrations involved therein, and make the process, if it is unavoidable, smooth and pleasant.

Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness.
— Swami Vivekananda.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY: Volume II. By Krishnachandra Bhattacharyya. Edited by Gopinath Bhattacharyya, Jadavpur University. (Progressive Publishers, 37, College Street, Calcutta-12). Pages 360. Price Rs. 17.50.

The reviewer feels great difficulties in formulating a just appreciation of this work of studies. They emanate from one of the acutest and most earnest of the metaphysicians of modern India. They are austere in style and deal with issues mostly epistemological in character. There is undoubtedly a ground-plan of Speculative Idealism animating all the studies but that ground-plan is left to the reader's imaginative re-construction. What we have are independent papers which are somewhat abstruse in many places owing to the absence of a clear statement of the essential structure of the system of thought as a whole. One can only make tentative formulations of one's impressions and appraisals. There are however two relieving features in this publication. Sri Gopinath Bhattacharyya, the learned editor of the volume, has spared no pains to make the discussions intelligible. He has given a masterly introduction, a detailed analysis of the various essays and a careful summary of the principal arguments. His is a great labour of love and devotion, which he has performed with utmost competence. The philosophical reader of the volume cannot be too grateful to him. Another relieving feature is that all the Kantian subtlety and elaborate argumentation lead to conclusions which one recognizes as re-vindications of the doctrines of the ancient Vedanta of Sankara and this very recognition often invests the dialectic with significance and intelligibility. The several papers may be noticed briefly :

The first one on "The subject as freedom" is frankly an elucidation of the Vedantic theory of the Atman in its final form. The second essay on the "Concept of Philosophy" brings out the thesis that the ultimate metaphysical reality transcends intellectual apprehension and is at bottom self-evident. The third study presents the concept of the non-dual absolute in terms of feeling, will and thought. The studies "Knowledge and Truth, Fact and thought of fact, correction of error as a logical process, The false and the subjective, Some aspects of Negation, Place of the Indefinite in logic, Definition of relation as a

category of existence, Objective interpretation of percept and image" are all deeply concerned with the process of knowledge. The account of the correction of error is frankly an elucidation of the theory of "Anirvachaniya-Khyati". The "Indefinite" is really the "Nirvisesha" of the Vedanta. The discussion of negation leads to an Absolutist version of the theory of Epistemological relativism. The paper on "The reality of the future" brings out the significance of the future in relation to will, faith and aspiration. 'The Concept of Value' concludes with the striking assignment of valuation to the region of experience between knowing and willing. Then we have a group of essays devoted to a Vedantic elucidation and criticism of Kant.

The range of problems treated is vast, the method is analytical and intricate, and the conclusions invariably emerge as approaches to a modern theory of the Absolute of Vedanta. The editor is to be congratulated on his great success in this valuable but difficult undertaking. One cannot but feel that a mind of great metaphysical acumen is at work in the investigations embodied in this volume, utilizing masterfully Vedantic and Kantian traditions in Philosophy.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR.

THE IMMORTALS OF THE BHAGAVAT & SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S PARABLES: By Dilip Kumar Roy. (Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra). Pages 215. Price Rs. 5.

Dilip Kumar Roy, the well-known literature and musician, has added to his feathers one more in bringing out in English verse — from some of the enduring episodes chronicled in the Srimad Bhagavata — the book of devotion. Any story taken from that mine of devotion is bound to interest any reader, much more so when the deftness of an artiste's touch lends further charm to their metamorphosis into another language. Juicy as these stories are in themselves, they gain no little attraction when rendered by a master-artist in English. Many passages of beauty can be culled from the book under review for their resonance and imagery. Still beyond all these can be perceived the core of the author's heart itself experiencing rapture of a totally different kind from the normal translators and adapters. Markedly the story of Kuchela

'Sridam' is a complete epitome of all Dilip Kumar Roy's art can achieve in the realm of authentic poetry, combining the deepest of spiritual experiences with the richest of imagination.

Here are six of the best in the Bhagavata-Purana selected both for their exemplary lessons in devotion as well as their variety of approach to the Sublime. King Ambarisha's humility contrasted to Durvasa's arrogance makes a good beginning towards the chastening of our spirits. The story of Bali and Vamana, intrinsically beautiful, is told with enough frills of fancy and liveliness. The master-devotee Prahlada, then takes the stage. Then two episodes from the Dasama-skandha of the Srimad Bhagavata dealing with Sri Krishna's love-sports with the Gopis and his Kaliya-mardana are told with quite a delightful plenitude of word-wizardry and picturesqueness that the reader is often made to turn to them in order to linger on their beauties. Kuchela's inimitable simplicity and invincible title to immortality are captured to us with no less pathos and piquancy than of their original in the words of Suka.

The readers may be aware that some of these poems were first published in this magazine. The volume ends with the parables and similes of the Saint of Dakshineswar, only rendered in verse and thereby more compelling of memorisation.

'A book to preserve' will be the final award to this latest volume of poems from a renowned singer of many songs celestial.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

PARADOX AND POETRY IN 'THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE': By Bhikshu Sangharakshita. Published by the Indian Institute of World Culture, 6, North Public Square Road, Basavangudi, Bangalore-4. Pages 18. Price Re. 1.

The book under review is the revised edition of the fifth lecture delivered by the author under the auspices of the Indian Institute of World Culture. 'The Voice of Silence' has a universal message in saying 'Learn above all to separate Headlearning from soul-wisdom, the 'eye' from the 'heart' doctrine'. A paradox has been defined as a truth standing on its head to attract attention. Buddhist paradox, as a matter of fact, is an attempt to express in terms of logical contradiction that which transcends logic, based on the laws of Thought. Dealing about Compassion,

the author says 'Compassion possesses merely dependent or derivative reality which in turn implies the assertion that it is not fully real. A number of Mahayana texts make it clear that Sunyata is as much an aspect of Karuna as Karuna is of Sunyata'. Justifying the title of the book, the author says beautifully that 'whenever it has anything of special importance to impart, the text either explodes in paradox or erupts into the imagery and starts shaking with the mantra-like vibrations of poetry'. The subject discussed within such a short space rouses interest and curiosity in understanding the Buddhist paradox.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

FACE READING: By M. Jagadeesan. Published by M. Mangalam, 276, Sai's Peak, Puttur, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. Pages 91. Price Rs. 2.50.

The book under review deals with the reading of a person based on the marks or development of the various parts of the face.

People in the olden days have been accredited with having practised reading of personalities based on angasamudrika lakshanas. Some of their books too are extant, although much to prove the efficiency of such readings are lost to us. The author herein presents some hints with illustrative drawings towards the study of a human character as expressed in the face, because face is compared to a mirror (darpana) wherein is reflected the characteristics of the persons concerned. Eyes are supposed to speak the tale of woe, and the lips (especially the lower one) lisp and beat forth the emotions of the within. Vatsyana has gone even to the extent of studying the facial colour and disfigurings and smell the sweat to categorise the personalities appropriately. The Padmini, Chitrini, Langhini and other types are well known.

The contents of the book reveal a scientific treatment similar to that of Cheiro's Palmistry. Rudimentary principles alone have been brought out and they are not sufficient enough to infuse enthusiasm and interest in such a fascinating subject. It could have been well-borne, if certain standard works on the science were quoted, together with the views of modern physiognomists and psychologists, so as to provide enough scope for pioneers to take up the field of research with much vigour and interest. It is no doubt that the book will be popular amongst the public, if provided with a fairly exhaustive introduction on the science. A note of warning

is considered necessary here. If the science is to prove its real worth, it should not be exploited for commercial purposes, because at every sphere certain people play the quack.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

RELIGIONS OF THE TAMILS: Past and Present: By K. Ramachandra, Managing Editor, 'Religious Digest', Jayanthipura, Talangama, Ceylon. Pages 10.

This reprint of the Paper read by the author at the International Congress for the History of Religions held in Japan during August-September 1958 is an excellent synopsis of the religious heritage of the Tamils. More than anything else, author's presentation of the subject-matter retains its worth throughout.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

TAMIL

MELNATTU DARSANA VARALARTU CHURUKKAM: By Sri S. Kadirvelu Pillai, B.A., Advocate. [Ezhakesari Ponniah Memorial, Publication Society, Jaffna. P. 237. Price Rs. 3].

This is perhaps the first systematic attempt in Tamil to present in a nut-shell, a survey of Western Philosophy and Philosophers, as one connected organic whole, though consisting of diverse paths and faiths. Western Philosophy historically started with the eminent Grecians, Thales, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, some of

whose speculations remind us of those of our own mystics, and ran its full course till it was stampeded by the rise and growth of religion with its belief in the Son of God and insistence on a goodly life. Thereafter religion and philosophy unlike as in India, operated in parallel if not opposite directions; and then came the Renaissance and with it the German and Continental scholars like Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietze, not to mention the comparatively modern Mill, Spencer, James, Schiller, Dewey, Bergson, Herschell, Thomas Aquinas and many others in recent times. A feeble attempt was made in the interval to synthesise both religion and philosophy by the theosophists like Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Olcott and Leadbeater, who had drunk deep the principles of Hinduism and its Yoga content and by the successful experimenters in the realm of mental sciences like clairvoyance, hypnotism and spirit communication. But the position today however is that philosophy in the West has to be pragmatic and experimentative rather than speculative, if it is to withstand the onslaughts of science and scientific discoveries and of the still more daring possibilities of Atomic research and space travel. The author has given vital help in unravelling the theories of the various systems and Schools of Western Philosophy; and the book is a valuable contribution to the study of comparative philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

OBITUARY

We are sorry to announce the sudden passing away of Swami Prabodhananda (Sanat), aged 69, at the Belur Math on the 4th January at 3-30 p.m. from cerebral haemorrhage. He had been suffering from diabetes, dropsy and dilatation of the heart for many years, but on that day he was apparently in normal health, for he had gone out in the morning and returned in a taxi at 1-45 p.m. At about 3 p.m. he vomited. Seeing his condition worse, a doctor was sent for. But before he could arrive, the Swami passed away.

A disciple of the Holy Mother, he joined the Belur Math in 1911 and had his Sannyasa in

1921 from Sri Maharaj. He had the good fortune of serving Srimat Swami Turiyananda during the last few years of his life. He was entrusted with co-operating with the engineers in the construction of the Sri Ramakrishna Temple at the Belur Math as also with supervising allied constructions. He took an active part, among other things, in managing the Rangoon centres in 1931-2, and was Secretary of the Kankhal Sevashrama from 1942 to 1944. He was a trustee of the Math (and a member of the Governing Body of the Mission) since 1930 and was very regular in attending the meetings. His death has removed an old member of the Order. May his soul rest in peace!

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS *Christ Jayanti*

The Christmas Eve was observed in the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on the 24th evening. In the spacious hall the portrait of Christ was nicely decorated. At 7 O'clock the function started with worship and was followed by reading of selected passages from the Bible and talks by Swami Suddhasattwananda and Swami Paramatmananda in English and Tamil respectively. With the partaking of prasada the function came to a close.

At 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 28, 1958, Prof. M. Rathnaswami spoke in English on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ to the assembled devotees.

Birthday celebrations of the Holy Mother

The 106th Birthday Tithipuja of the Holy Mother Sarada Devi was observed in the Math on 1st January, 1959. The day started with Mangalarti in the shrine at 5 A.M. followed by devotional songs and chanting of select portions from Gita, Upanishads etc.

Worship in the shrine with all sanctity was started at 8-00 A.M. and came to a close at 12-30 P.M. after the Homa was performed. About 1,000 devotees and about an equal number of Daridranarayanans were served with food prasada. After the evening service in the shrine, some selected teachings of the Holy Mother were read and Swami Ajeyanandaji, an old monk of the Order and a disciple of the Holy Mother narrated his reminiscences for an hour.

The public function came off on 4th January, the succeeding Sunday. This being a ladies' function many lady devotees and students of Sarada Vidyalaya Girls' School and Teachers'

Training School assembled by 3-00 P.M. and sang devotional songs in praise of the Mother. The function started with Srimati K. Savitri Ammal in the chair. The President in course of her introductory remarks spoke on the necessity of observance of these functions in these days of Science and Technology which take us away from the time-honoured noble ideals of the Hindu Society. There were speeches in Telugu, English and Tamil on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother by Srimati Lalita Kumari, Mrs Gomati Srinivasan and Mrs Neelavati Ramasubramaniam respectively. There was also music recital in the middle.

With the distribution of prizes and vote of thanks the function came to a close.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, CEYLON REPORT FOR 1956 & 57

The Colombo Centre, which is the Headquarters of the Ceylon Branch of the Mission, carried on besides the administrative activities its varied cultural and religious activities. It conducted regular Sunday Classes in English and Tamil. It had a children's section having 366 boys on its roll. The birthday celebrations had been observed with meetings and festivals. The Sambuddha Jayanti was celebrated with meetings and lecture tours. The Kataragama Madam served the pilgrims as usual. The Mission provided for the education of 7,890 students with the assistance of 267 teachers in 25 schools. It maintained a Students' Home (Orphanage) for Boys and two Homes for Girls with a strength of 100 inmates, and two Students' Hostels with 120 boarders. While thanking the supporters the management appeal for funds for further extension.

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA FROM FORM TO FORM DIVINE

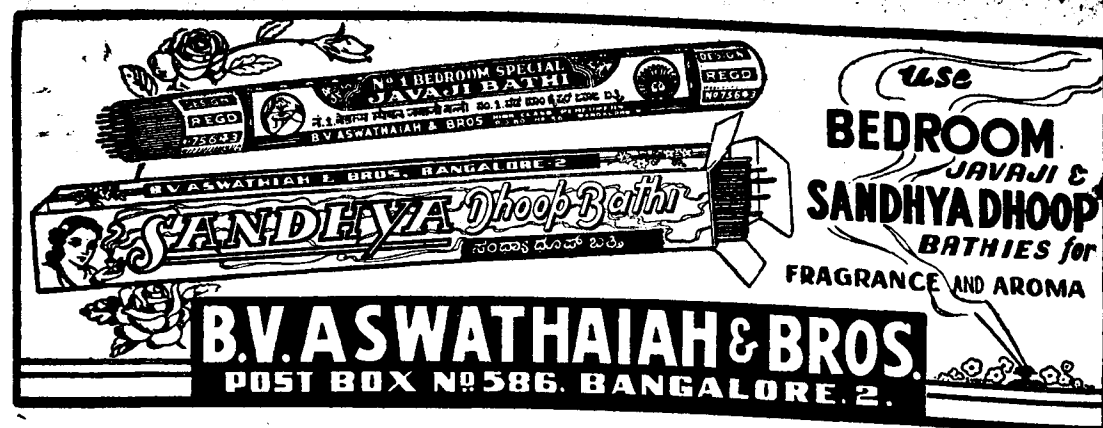
"GOD IS ONE ; HIS NAMES AND FORMS ARE MANY."

Oh Destroyer of the God of love, Oh Giver of great boons,
Thou sportest in cremation grounds with ghosts as Thy companions.
Besmeared with ashes of burnt bodies, Thy garland human skulls,
Thus all Thy conduct is of evil,
And yet, those who remember Thee, Thou conducest to sublime Bliss.
Oh Lover of deep forests, my salutation to Thee !
Oh Thou who art so very near as also far away, salutation to Thee !
To Thee as the minutest, as also the largest, salutation to Thee !
Oh Destroyer of the Love-God, to Thee the three-eyed One,
The Oldest as also the youngest, salutation to Thee !
To Thee who verily art all, as also transcending all, salutation to Thee !
Oh Lord, if the blue mountain be the ink, the ocean the inkstand,
The branch of the heavenly tree the pen, the earth the writing-leaf,
And if the Goddess of Wisdom having taken hold of these write Herself
through eternity,
Even then of Thy virtue the mere limit will not be reached.

(Siva-mahimnah-stotram, 24, 29, 32)

Reciting these verses Sri Ramakrishna was completely beside himself with the ecstatic feeling of the glory of Siva. He forgot the hymn and the recitation of it and cried out loudly again and again : " Oh great God, how can I express your glory ! " Tears flowed profusely down his cheeks, breast and cloth to the floor. Merged in the glory of Siva, his mind had gone up beyond the external world.....

A little afterwards having regained consciousness, and seeing Mathur Babu standing there with the officers of the temple, he was afraid like a boy and asked : " Did I happen to do anything wrong, when I had no control over myself ? " (Great Master, III, 6, 10.)



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THE NEW WORSHIP

Do you know how I see? Trees, plants, men, animals, grass—these and all other things I see as different coverings like pillow cases, some made of fine cotton and others of coarser stuff, some round in shape and others square. But within all these pillow cases there is one and the same substance, cotton. In the same way all the objects of the world are stuffed with the unconditioned Satchidananda. I feel as if the Mother has wrapped Herself in different clothes, and is peeping out from them.

Thus said Sri Ramakrishna about his realization of the Absolute in all created things. This is the cardinal message of Vedanta too. The unity of existence, the same Brahman permeating and manifesting as the entire universe is the foundation on which the basic doctrine of the divinity of man stands. It is from this standpoint that Swami Vivekananda said that it is a sin to call men sinners.

Ye are the Children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.

When Rabindranath Tagore read this, he remarked that this may really be called a 'message'. Now when we look upon humanity from this angle, it becomes an object of worship for us. It is not apotheosizing humanity but recognition of its real nature. In a different way the humanity has been raised to the pedestal of God by the humanists and positivists also. It has a natural appeal to modern man when the air is surcharged with the idea of the importance of the dignity of common man. But the positivistic conception of

humanity, though quite evident, does not draw the spontaneous adoration of a spiritual quality. But real devotion comes when we look upon man as the manifestation of God and while serving the former, look at his divine core. Hence Swami Vivekananda preached the gospel of service to man and said:

May I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls, — and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.

Such service is as much a part of spiritual discipline as the old methods are. It appeals to our common sense too. Flowers are plucked, garlands are made. This is done by the devotee as well as the garland-seller. The devotee's act is considered a devotional exercise while the garland-seller's is not. It is because of the difference of motives. As the devotee aims at serving God the garland-making does become a worship. It becomes a continuous worship if he is aware of God during the process and thereby the best results can be reaped. All the religious teachers draw our attention to this. Swami Brahmananda says:

Before you begin to work, remember the Lord and offer your salutations to Him. Do the same from time to time while you are working, and also after you have finished. Spend all your time thinking of the life, teachings and commandments of Sri Ramakrishna. Know in your heart of hearts that all the work you do is for His sake.

(*Spiritual Teachings* p. 156.)

Sri Ramakrishna too has the story of a farmer and Sage Narada. Once finding Narada a little conceited Lord Vishnu asked him to visit a great devotee.

1939

THE NEW WORSHIP

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Narada went there and found an agriculturist who rose early in the morning, pronounced the name of Hari (God) only once, and taking his plough, went out and tilled the ground all day long. At night, he went to bed after pronouncing the name of Hari once more. Narada said to himself, 'How can this rustic be a lover of God? I see him busily engaged in worldly duties and he has no signs of a pious man about him.' Then Narada was tested with a cup of oil. When he finished going round the city with the cup, the Lord asked him 'Well, Narada, how many times did you remember me in the course of your walk round the city?' 'Not once, my Lord,' said Narada, 'and how could I, when I had to watch this cup brimming over with oil?' The Lord then said, 'This one cup of oil did so divert your attention that even a great devotee like you did forget me altogether. But look at that rustic, who, though carrying the heavy burden of a family, still remembers me twice every day.'

This is a very important point to remember and cultivate, to think of God during the work and offer the salutations after the work is over. Even in the ceremonial worship, which the orthodox conception regards as real worship, it is practised. Hence we see that after performing the worship of a deity according to the scriptural directions, the sadhaka is enjoined to offer the fruits of his puja or japa to the deity. 'Krishnarpanam astu', let even its result be offered to the Lord. However, once he offers the result to God, it comes back hundredfold to him. It is true of both good and bad action. Hence Bhima of Mahabharata warns Yudhishthira not to offer bad actions to Sri Krishna.

This warning solves an important problem of ours, whether results of all

the actions can be offered to God or not. It is true that for an evolved soul every act is worship, but so long as we are conscious of the dual throng of this world, we must observe this rule of offering good things only. This attribute helps us not to forget in our ordinary stage the immense importance of the ethical values. Of course, as a sadhana, we may follow the behaviour of men of realization and consider all actions as prompted by God.

Spiritual discipline may be practised with different attitudes prescribed by different methods of sadhana. The attitudes may be broadly classified into three groups. They are the attitudes of the followers of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma yoga. Concentration, the main instrument of Raja-yoga, is the life of all the three sadhanas. When a devotee does a work to please God and remembers Him in the beginning, middle and end of the work and offers the fruit of it to Him, he has the attitude of Bhakti-yoga. His work is really a part of Bhakti-sadhana. When a man visualizes God in all created things and serves them seeing God in them, it may be described as a happy mixture of Bhakti and Jnana. A strict Jnanayogi, however, regards all actions to be performed by his body and mind from which he knows himself to be separate. He may work because of the behest of his Guru, but really he is not identified with anything at all. A man following strict Karmayoga practises detachment and unconcern about the success or failure. And it has been pointed out by Swami Vivekananda that in this way also the highest realization is attained.

Swamiji further showed that really these four yogas are interconnected. A spiritual aspirant following the path of Knowledge must have great love for the Ideal, deep concentration and suitable

action for attaining the goal. A devotee too must have a clear understanding of the nature of God, whole-souled meditation on Him and must work for His satisfaction. A Rajayogi must know of his goal and the wayside pitfalls, have intense liking for the Ideal and practise sadhana also. A Karmayogi must observe the pros and cons about his project, have deep devotion to it and full concentration to attain his objective. For all these years spiritual aspirants following a particular method of sadhana laid exclusive stress on it forgetting all the while that unknowingly he was practising the other disciplines too. Swamiji therefore pointed out that in each were ingrained the others but a quicker development will take place if all the four are consciously practised. The growth too will be more balanced and perfect.

Swamiji saw this ideal combination in Sri Ramakrishna and bowed down to him as a perfect incarnation of God.

Such a unique personality, such a synthesis of the utmost of philosophy, mysticism, emotion, and work, has never before appeared among mankind. The life of Sri Ramakrishna proves that the greatest breadth, the highest catholicity and the utmost intensity can exist side by side in the same individual, and that society also can be constructed like that, for society is nothing but an aggregate of individuals. The formation of such a perfect character is the ideal of this age.

This is an ideal which can be practised in other walks of life too. A businessman must have a clear understanding about his particular business, a genuine interest in the profession, and the capacities of deep concentration and sustained action. Then only he may be confident of success. This is an ideal type for modern times. Our worship too will be all-rounded like this. Then only a perfect character will be formed, and

vistas of spiritual visions will be opened up.

This all-round sadhana has a great social implication. The primary function of religious discipline is saint-making. But in the process it creates characters that are the prop of society. When such individual characters are formed, the different functions of social reconstruction may safely be handed over to them. As Mahatma Gandhi says:

I would feel that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself. I would be quite willing to trust the organization of society to individuals so developed.

(Gandhi Marg, January '59, p. 10.)

Society consists of individuals. And when individuals become better, society also automatically becomes better.

In modern times, however, there is more stress on social rather than individual betterment. The lot of common man is the concern of all. So a conscious striving is made in all fronts. But unless good individuals are available, all undertakings will meet with failure. Moreover, political workers are too conscious of their party consideration. Their concern for man even is toned down by their party interests and any means is considered acceptable, which augments the latter. As an effect, best results are not achieved. Hence for such results a combination of purity of individual character and passion for the service of the society must be achieved. This happy combination has been provided to us by the new method of worship of God in man. In this worship, self-interest is brought to the minimum, so result will be better. As it stresses on direct service to humanity, there will be clear material gain too. As a worship, it will bring out more devotion and greater attention and steadfastness. So

from the social standpoint it will always be welcome. From the religious standpoint too it will be equally fruitful.

Of course, because of our age-old habit and tradition we instinctively feel a sanctity and holiness when we visit a shrine or perform a worship. It may take some time for individuals, and even some generations for common man of the society, to develop such a feeling of sacredness. So it will be necessary to practise the orthodox, age-old method of worship too. In fact, new worship will require new rituals, new meditations, new offerings. They will not be really new ones, but only the application of the old ones in the new setting. Till such rituals acquire a sanctity the old practices must be continued. When all this is said and done, it must be admitted that there are different types of people. And so new worship will not completely replace the old but keep scope for different temperaments. Variety is the spice of life. A drab, dreary uniformity is against human nature. It will have no life and will not create the spontaneous enthusiasm of all, which

is the main spring of all religious action or worship. The history of mysticism makes it clear to us that diverse manifestations of devotion are seen in the lives of the mystics. A uniform code is apt to stifle the growth of that life and an afflorescence of devotion.

Hence worship will have two significant developments in modern times. While the ancient and well tried methods will remain in all their variety and richness, a new application of the same principles in the new set-up will be made, satisfying values held in high esteem by contemporary thinking and fulfilling the aspirations of modern man. The new worship will be the worship of God in man. It will embrace all the four different yogas in making that worship perfect and satisfying to diverse natures. Those who have lost their faith in the existing religions will thereby find a new religion satisfying their beliefs yet which is not a mere mental construction but supported by the philosophy of Vedanta and rooted in the realization of the ancient sages as well as the modern saint Sri Ramakrishna.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(By A DEVOTEE)

From the fastnesses of Earth's Darkness
Who has given out this glowing light
In which the whole Universe is bathed?

Who, rising from Earth, has gone
Beyond Heavens, and like a madman
Created a stir?

At whom are the stars looking with a fixed
gaze?

Who has squandered Beauty all around?
Who has warmed all hearts with love?
Who has blessed us with sorrow and pain?
Who has sung us soul-stirring songs?

At whom are the angels looking with curious
eyes?

Who has given a form to the formless?
Who has made the one appear as many?
Whose self-annihilating light has

encompassed man?
Who has taught the temple bells to sing of
the One?
At whose art are men looking with wonder
and awe?

Who has touched the strings of my broken
Veena?

Who has given light-life to my dying lamp?
Who has brought spring-tidings to my
autumn?

Who has taken His abode in the ruins of my
heart?

I look in wonderment at Him and then at
myself.

AT THE HOLY FEET OF M.

SWAMI DHARMESHANANDA

Shri Mahendra Nath Gupta, the writer of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and popularly known as M., was staying in 50, Amherst Street, Calcutta. I went to see him at 9 A.M. on Sunday, December 21, 1930. On coming near the staircase leading to the second floor, I found a discussion in progress on the subject of God and psychology between M.'s eldest son Prabash Babu, Jitendra Nath Gupta and a few others. A grey-bearded old gentleman was saying: "God inevitably awards the fruits of one's Karma. A devotee prayed, 'Please, Lord, spare me this grief over my son's death'. To which the Lord's reply was, 'If I have to accede to your prayer I have either to extend your son's span of life or else immediately take you over to the other world, either of which is impossible in as much as the time of death in the case of both of you is fixed and unalterable. Therefore to recover from this shock of your son's death the best way is not to make these impossible demands but to train your mind in the way of patience and forbearance.'"

M. was at the time busy in teaching logic to a few boys in a closed room on the eastern side. Jiten Babu went and knocked at the door and said (addressing the boys), 'Why should you only be enjoying his company? We also want a share of it.'

On the door being opened M. said, 'Please go and wait upstairs, all of you; I will be coming after I have finished with these boys.' We went to the top-floor and waited.

Very soon Mr. Bhowmick, Balai Babu and other gentlemen came in, to be followed by M. in about half an hour.

M. (To the Sadhu): I was teaching logic to these boys, the Chapter on Syllogism. There are two systems of logic, ancient and modern, the former being traceable to

Gautama and the latter to Navadvipa; Western logic shaves off the non-essentials and concentrates on the main principles. It is all to the good,—makes it less complex.

Jiten Babu: Just as in the company of holy men one gets the essence of religion to the exclusion of needless accretions.

M.: Yes, they of course stand in a class apart. This science of logic with its money value is for learned men and worldly minded people.

Jiten Babu: Quite so; learned men are treated as belonging to a special category of aristocrats and revered accordingly. Our gaze is always fixed on the unsubstantial. Even if through association with holy men we can fix our minds on higher things, they do not stay there long but very soon come down to the worldly plane. That is why constant companionship with holy men is so necessary for us.

M.: Association with holy men is the very first step towards spirituality.

Sadhu: One imbibes new ideas from them.

M.: A Sadhu is not an ordinary being. He has no use for learning, respect or worldly position, and whether you call him a Sadhu or not is absolutely immaterial to him. To a Sadhu learning is nothing but an empty bubble. You know, of course, that Chaitanya Deva wrote a treatise on logic and his fellow student Raghunath also did the same. When the latter told Chaitanya Deva 'No one will care to look at my book once your's comes out', the other simply took his book and threw it into the waters of the river Ganges. Look at the sacrifice! Learning was to him as valueless as a wisp of straw.

Jiten Babu: By persistent effort we can also attain the status of a Sadhu.

M.: It is not a gradual process. Once you get the right type of company you can attain that stage straightaway. It is a higher life. Your learning and scholarship will give you only your daily bread, but the bread of life is provided by the company of holy men. It was Jesus Christ who said, 'Drink my blood, eat my flesh, assimilate me, the real bread of life.' We are all the time thinking of worldly emoluments and position and are thus incapable of rising beyond our environments. We talk mouthfuls of high-sounding precepts but care little to follow them up in actual practice, like fowls of the air who soar on the skies but have their eyes fixed on the earth down below. The professor teaches philosophy to his class but in his own practical life he hardly cares to practise what he teaches, his mind being centred on the pleasure and allurements of the world. A wide gulf of difference lies between the scholar and the Sadhu. But worldly people find out some similarity between the scholars and themselves and therefore treat them with respect. They all come under the same category and it becomes a mutual admiration society. If I am addicted to worldly pleasures, a similar trait in your character will give me a sympathetic attraction towards you.

Sadhu: The same kind of defects in two people will engender a mutual attraction.

Jiten Babu: Just as birds of the same feather flock together.

M.: Quite so; that is of no value whatsoever. The company of Sadhus is a different thing altogether. I am not of course talking of Sadhus who are only called such by courtesy.

December 24, 1930. 7 P.M.

On the top-floor of the school building were present Chandra Mazumdar of Ultadanga, Sukhlal Babu of Beliaghata, Dr. Kha-

gen, Purnendu Babu, Balai Babu, Jatindra, Mr. Guha, Manoranjan Babu etc., about sixteen or seventeen people in all. M. was sitting on a chair with his face to the north.

As soon as I went in, M. said, 'Today is Christmas Eve, and that is the subject we are discussing. Just go in and see the red flags and decoration and fruits and Christmas baskets.' These had been sent by a devotee from Sindh and with great pleasure he was showing them to everyone present. On coming back after seeing all this I said, 'Is there no picture of Jesus Christ here?' One of those present said, 'In the absence of Jesus Christ's picture a study of the Bible is enough. He is there in His teachings, a study of which is therefore a good way of celebrating Christmas Eve.'

M.: Today is an auspicious day for remembering the precepts of Jesus Christ and the Master. The Master said, 'I am He'. Therefore for a proper understanding of Jesus Christ we have to think of the Master; it is only through him that we can cultivate a spirit of reverence for Jesus. He adopted twelve fishermen of Galilee as his disciples and he himself was uneducated, being the son of a carpenter. And the Master said, 'I am a thoroughly ignorant person'. So learning is of little account in this sphere. As the saying goes, a learned ignorance is the end of philosophy and the beginning of religion. Renunciation must be the watchword. When the Master started openly saying that spiritual disciplines would not be necessary for those who took refuge in him, that was just the time when the Mother removed him from the world. The Master said, 'It is the Mother's wish that the four stages of man's life and class distinctions should still continue. He churned the butter out of milk and held it up to people for them to eat, thereby saving them all preliminary troubles. Now he will get all to go through the stage of Karma (work) which is the starting point. What is needed is a love for God. Love is God and

PRANĀMANJALI ॥ प्रणामाञ्जलिः ॥

KRISHNAN

पूर्वं सत्ययुगे स्थितं खलु निराकारं परं ब्रह्म यत्
त्रेतायां किल कोसलेषु यदभूद्रामात्मना प्रोज्ज्वलम् ।
सौन्दर्यकरसं रराज रुचिरं कृष्णात्मना द्वापरे
तद्रूपं कलिकालकल्मषनुदं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ १ ॥

यो बाल्ये परिपावनीभिरखिलान् लीलाभिरामोदयत्
योऽध्यात्मस्फुटबोधमुग्रतपसा चासादयद्यौवने ।
पश्चात्सर्वजनाय सच्चिदमलानन्दं प्रदत्ते स यः
तं देवं विमलार्थचारुचरितं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ २ ॥

हा हा सम्यगशिक्षिताक्षरगणोऽप्येकः स्वयं यः परं
वेदान्तैरसुबोधमक्षरमजं वेदान्तसंकीर्तितम् ।
यथाहन्त ! विवाहितोऽपि महतां संन्यासिनामग्रणीः
तं देवं महिताद्भुतावहकथं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ३ ॥

यो विश्वेशगुणानुगानरसिक्श्मैतन्यवातात्मज-
प्रह्लादोद्धवशुद्धभक्तिविभवः श्रीराधिकाभाववान् ।
नानारूपमरूपमीशमनिशं प्रेम्णा समाराधयत्
तं देवं भवसिन्धुनाविकपदं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ४ ॥

मूलाधारतलाचमादिविमलः प्रोत्थाप्य यो योगिराट्
शक्तिं कुण्डलिनीं सहस्रकमलद्वारं समारोपयन् ।
दिव्यानन्दसुधां पौ श्रमतृषातापापहां पावनीं
तं पातञ्जलनिष्ठितं गुरुवरं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ५ ॥

1. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna, the remover of all the taints of kaliyuga, who, earlier in the satyayuga, remained as the formless Supreme Brahman, in treta-yuga assumed the resplendent form of Rama in Kosala, and in dwapara shone as the charming quintessence of beauty in the form of Sri Krishna.

2. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna of spotless, sublime and beautiful character, who in his childhood delighted one and all with his holy disports, in his adolescence attained the clear spiritual knowledge through severe austerity, and later bestowed on all eternal knowledge and pure bliss.

3. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna of great and wonderful life, who, though unlettered, realized by himself the unborn, Supreme Brahman, glorified in the Vedanta and not easily grasped by people, and, strange enough, who, though married, was the foremost of great sannyasins.

4. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna, whose feet ferry one across the ocean of samsara, who revelled in singing the glories of the Supreme Lord, whose splendour of pure devotion equalled that of Chaitanya, Mahavira, Prahlada and Uddhava, who possessed the mood of Radhika, and who worshipped the Lord day and night with ecstatic love in His multi-formed and formless aspects.

5. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna, the greatest teacher established in Patanjala Yoga, the King of yogis, who, being purified by the disciplines of yama etc., drank the nectar of pure divine bliss which destroys weariness, desire and misery of the world, by taking the Kundalini power to the sahasrara, after rousing it from muladhara.

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PRANĀMANJALI

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यत् ज्ञानं निगमान्तोचरमहो! अब्दै गुरुः पञ्च-
त्वारिंशद्विरवाप, तत् त्रिभिरहोरात्रैः समासादयन् ।
तोतापुर्यभिनन्दनास्पदमभूद्यः सर्वविद्यानिधिः
तं देवं परमात्मरूपममलं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ६ ॥

यो बाञ्छारहितोऽपि सद्गुरुवरो निष्कामसत्कर्मसु
व्यग्रः केवललोकासंग्रहपरो वेद्यं समस्तं स्वयम् ।
शिष्यान्भ्यशिक्षिष्यदाश्रुतिशिरःसिद्धान्तमालौकिक-
व्यापारं तमपारसत्कृपमहं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ७ ॥

प्रेमाभेदविवेकनिर्मलशिवानन्दप्रदो यो गुरुः
वैरामिक्षतल्लेकतर्पणकरः स्नेहप्रसेकेन यः ।
यः प्राकाशयदुत्तमं निजपुरात्मैक्यं जगन्मंगलं
तं प्रातःस्मरणीयपुण्यचरितं श्रीरामकृष्णं भजे ॥ ८ ॥

संसाराध्वनि मोहसन्तमससंरुद्धे चरन्तो जनाः
त्वां पूर्णामृतदीधितिं नत समेत्यार्तिं विमुञ्चन्त्यहो ।
बाल्ये मन्दमतिर्ब्रवीमि किमहं प्रीत्या प्रभो गृह्यतां
भक्तिप्रहसमर्पितोऽयमजितस्तोत्रप्रणामाञ्जलिः ॥ ९ ॥

6. I adore that immaculate Sri Rama-krishna, the embodiment of the Supreme Self, who, the depository of all knowledge, was admired by Totapuri on attain- ing in three days that knowledge deli- neated in the Vedanta, which the Guru (Totapuri) himself took forty-five years to earn.

7. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna of unbounded compassion, the best among the sadgurus, who, though desireless, engaged himself in selfless and beneficent actions only for the guidance of men and taught his disciples all the knowledge ranging from the highest spiritual down to ordinary secular matters.

8. I adore that Lord Sri Ramakrishna, whose holy life is to be remembered every dawn, who is the teacher giving the pure and auspicious bliss born of love, unity and discrimination (the words also denote the names of disciples—Premananda, Abhedananda, Vivekananda etc.), who assuaged the world marred by hatred with the shower of his love, and who revealed his identity with the Oversoul, which (act) is supreme and beneficial to the world.

9. People wending the highway of sam- sara, shrouded by the blinding darkness of infatuation, get rid of their suffering taking shelter in you, who are like the full moon. What can I of poor intelligence, after all, utter? O Lord please accept graciously this 'Pranamajali' of unique hymns dedicated to You with devotion and humility.

A PRAYER

(By A DEVOTEE)

Yours is the speed of lightning
But I shall not know it
Till you carry me too in your flights.

Your eyes perceive beyond all heavens,
Your feet traverse the regions of gods,
But would you care to hold
The hand of one that is of earth?

In your mighty heaven-ward flights,
You are free, not to cast your glance

On a snail that crawls below,
But would you not concede
That your power and glory
Something to crippled helplessness owe,
My tears of remorse and gratitude
Is all my bleeding heart sends to my eyes
To lay at your lotus feet;
Accept my humble offering
And holding out your hand
Raise me from my living death.

THE MESSAGE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

N. BHAKTAVATSALAM

Man is mortal. Man is also immortal. This may sound paradoxical, but a closer examination assures us that there is no contradiction whatever. The truth of the first statement—'Man is mortal'—is evident if any individual man, say an X or Y, is taken into consideration. He is born, he grows, lives for sometime, enjoys pleasures, suffers from pains, and passes away thereafter.

Princes and lords may flourish or may fade
A breath can make them as a breath has made.¹

Thus man is mortal.

The truth of the second statement—'Man is immortal'—is evident if the human race as a whole is taken into consideration, if man is taken not as an individual but as a representative of his race. Man has been treading on earth since the beginnings of time. His race is growing and spreading in the geometrical progression. Every generation is a continuation and an expansion of the previous one. Any worker, in any field, first of all consolidates the findings of his forerunners, has them as his bases, and then proceeds to add to them the fruits of his own efforts. There is continuity since the world began till the present day. Man is immortal in the sense that there is no break in the continuity of his race, of his work, of his quest.

This sort of immortality, this kind of eternity, is called in Sanskrit *Pravāha-nityatā*. In the Ganges, for instance, water is ever flowing into the sea, and at the same time water is ever full to the brim. Rivers and mountains are generally taken as things illustrating eternity. The author of the Ramayana sang:

As long as mountain ranges stand
And rivers flow on the face of the Earth

¹ Oliver Goldsmith's "Deserted Village".

So long shall Ramayana
Be sung on the lips of men.²

That Pravaha-nityata, that unbroken continuity, there is in the case of man.

Again if by man you mean the body, man is mortal, because the body perishes.

Just as a person gives up worn out clothes and puts on other new ones, even so does the embodied self give up decrepit bodies and enter other new ones.³

If by man you mean the soul, man is eternal.

Weapons do not cut it (the self), fire does not burn it, water also does not moisten it, and wind does not dry it. This self is indeed incapable of being cut, incombustible, incapable of being moistened and of being dried, it is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable, and primordial.⁴

Of man we have recorded history for some thousands of years. Of all the living beings, it is the unique privilege of man to be able to discriminate between the good and the evil, between the real and the illusory, between the eternal and the transitory and to exert himself to attain the good, the real and the eternal to the total exclusion of the evil, the illusory, and the transitory. Thus man's life, the history of humanity is a continuous journey towards that goal which is good, real and eternal. What is that goal? Some have said that pleasure is that goal. But pleasure is not permanent, it comes and goes. Says Kalidasa:

Who has unmixed happiness?
Who has unmixed misery?

² Macdonell's rendering of the Verse:

यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले।
तावद् रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति। R. I.

³ Srimad Bhagavad Gita II (Swami Vireswaranandaji's Translation).

⁴ Ibid.

Man has ups and downs like
the rim of a turning wheel.⁵

Pleasure is interrupted by pain, pain is succeeded by pleasure. Pleasure as well as pain is fleeting. It is unwise to have a momentary experience as the object of one's life. That object must be something permanent, eternal. Knowledge is eternal. Therefore man, knowingly or unknowingly, is proceeding towards knowledge.

What is knowledge? Knowing anything and everything is not knowledge. The author of the 'Gospel', until he came into contact with Sri Ramakrishna, had thought one got knowledge from books and schools. Later on he had to give up that false idea. The master taught him that to know God is knowledge, and not to know Him ignorance. Knowing God, realizing God is the only true knowledge.

There is no real contradiction between the belief of some that knowledge is the goal of life and the belief of some others that devotion is the goal of life. Knowledge of God and love of God are synonymous. Knowledge of the supreme takes the form of deep devotion to the supreme. Sri Ramanuja called it *semushi bhaktirupā*, 'Knowledge in the form of devotion'. Sri Ramanuja's great admirer Swami Ramakrishnananda, in his lecture at the Young Men's Hindu Association on 16-7-1897 concluded 'In becoming a perfect Bhakta one becomes a perfect Jnani'. Whether you call it knowledge or love for God, it is the only object of human life, of human quest, the destination of man's journey.

This journey, as well as any other journey, requires guides. In the different fields we find that predecessors are the guides for their successors, seniors are the guides for juniors, experts are the guides for novices, elders are the guides for youngsters, parents are the guides for children, teachers are the guides for pupils. So also in man's quest

⁵ Meghasandesa II.

for the highest truth, masters are the guides for disciples, realized souls are the guides for the aspiring ones. Vyasas are the guides for Jaiminis, Jesuses are the guides for Peters and Pauls, Gaurangas are the guides for Nityanandas. Ramakrishnas are the guides for Vivekanandas. 'Do as they do' is the Vedic injunction,⁶ 'The way of the great is the way for all' is Yudhishtira's declaration in the Mahābhārata,⁷ Bhagavan Sri Krishna reiterates:

Whatever a great man does others also copy;
that which he accepts as authority, people only follow.⁸

The lives, no less than the utterances, of great luminaries constitute their message to the world. The Vedic seers gave their message of truth and non-violence. Sri Ramachandra has his message of ideal king-ship, of selfless service to the people, implied in that famous word 'Rama-rajya'. Sri Krishna has his message of disinterested devotion to duty. He said:

To work alone you have the right but never
claim its results. Let not the results of actions
be your motive, nor be attached to inaction.⁹

Work for the sake of duty, not for the sake of fruits is His motto. Buddha has his message of non-injury to and love of all living beings. Jesus Christ has his message of a dedicated life. He said: 'O, sinner, I died for you, you shall live for me, that is the solution for the problem of your sin'. Mahammad delivered to the world his ennobling message of the oneness of God and the fraternity of man. In no other religion of the world is so much stress laid on human brotherhood as in Islam. Sankara has his message dispelling the illusion of separation between 'I' and 'You', between the individual soul and the Universal Soul. Ramanuja's message is devotion and surrender to God, Bhakti and Prapatti.

⁶ यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन् तथा तत्र वर्तेयाः।

⁷ महाजनो येन गतः स पन्थाः।

⁸ Bhagavad Gita, III, 21.

⁹ Ibid, II, 47.

what God-realization amounts to is the cultivation of an all-consuming love for Him. With only a few exceptions he has decreed that everyone will have to pass through the stage of Karma. The householder, the spiritual neophyte, the hermit,—they all have constantly to work. No one can live without doing work. And all that is to be done for developing love towards God. The Western world is now busy in pursuing material enjoyments. People of those countries are incapable of preaching the doctrine of Christ. It is the people of this country who can do it. And He was an Asiatic Himself. He used to call Himself 'God's little lamb' because like the sacrificial lamb He came to deliver people from their sins and offered Himself as a sacrifice. The Master by being good enough to give us a glimpse of his life has enabled us to understand him a little. Otherwise it is not easy for ordinary mortals, their minds being immersed in the vulgar pleasures of flesh, to approach the doings of those who descend on Earth as incarnations of God.

After some more talk in a similar strain a discussion of the Bible followed, giving us glimpses of Jerusalem, the Madona, and Christ, etc.

M. read some portions from the Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John and spoke about the birth of Jesus in a manger, his parents' flight into Egypt through fear of Herod, the visit of the wise men from the East, the advent of John the Baptist, and so on. I left at 9.30 P.M.

On the 27th December, 1930, I arrived at the balcony on the top floor of the school building at 7 P.M., after evening service. About seventeen or eighteen people were there including three monks and three devotees from Maldah. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* was being read and was being explained by M. to Credula, a Western devotee. The passage under discussion (in English and Bengali) was the one describing

the Master's visit to Vidyasagar in his Calcutta residence.

M.: What the Master is saying comes to this that Brahman (the absolute) is beyond the range of human comprehension. What in the sense-world leads one to God is knowledge (Vidya) and its opposite is ignorance (Avidya). The scriptures have failed to give any description of Brahman because He transcends the world of name and form, is unthinkable, unexpressible, inconceivable. The salt doll went to measure the depth of the sea but lost its individuality as soon as it touched it. An ant went to a mountain of sugar and while coming back with a grain of it thought to itself of carrying away the whole mountain next time it went there. The same kind of impossibility confronts us in our attempts at any appraisal of God. A father sent for his two sons and said, 'You have attained a knowledge of Brahman; just describe Him to me, will you?' One of them said, 'He is the concentrated form of knowledge, wisdom and bliss, inactive, faultless and of spotless purity etc.' The father said, 'Yes, I understand. That will do for you.' The other one kept his mouth shut and made no reply to his father's questions. The father said, 'You have understood Brahman completely well. Once you realize Him you have to be completely identified with Him, you become full of Him—like a pitcher filled with water.' You will constantly meditate on Him and derive pleasure out of it; that is the duty of a Sadhu. The scriptures describe Brahman as Bliss everlasting.

December 28, 1930. 6.30 P.M.

Sukhlal Babu, Jatin Babu, Balai Babu, a monk, Dr Khagen, Mr Credula, etc., were amongst those present at M.'s place.

M. (to the Sadhu): Did you go to the ceremonial function at Gouri Ma's place?

Sadhu: No. I read about it in the papers. I was at that time attending the class on Vedanta in the Udbodhan.

M.: And what was the subject under discussion there?

Sadhu: The mystery of creation. Vedanta disproves the Sankhya philosophy's contribution of Nature being the source of creation. The reason is that Nature is a combination of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and therefore circumscribed. It therefore cannot be the source of creation. And Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Creator) being both infinite cannot exist in combination.

For the benefit of Mr Credula-M. translated what the Sadhu had just said into English, to which Mr Credula said: 'Yes, A. Maharaj is a scholarly person and I have heard his explanation in his class.'

M.: The scriptures and all your systems of philosophy are incapable of knowing Him, because He transcends their doctrines. Scriptures are meant for pundits. Reason cannot find Him out. Rationality is nowhere a path to spirituality. Newton, failing to find any clue for the sense-world said, 'I am only gathering pebbles in the sea shore. The vast ocean of knowledge is before me.' And who can say anything of this unconditioned, supersensuous and unlimited world? Human intelligence has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. A salt doll attempts to measure the sea with its measuring plummet; as soon as it puts its foot on the sea, it dissolves, loses its existence. That is our position. Who can know Him with this feeble intellect of ours? Then, is there nothing to be done? Yes, to pray to Him with all your heart and soul. Renunciation first and then contemplation of Him always, without cessation. For this whole-time man is needed. Prayer all the time and full concentration. Otherwise a little hearing or discussion leads one nowhere. Constant meditation is necessary; even death has to be embraced if conditions are

favourable for realization of God. That is why this Order of monasticism and renunciation has been instituted, after entering which the real struggle begins. You have to surrender yourself to Him completely and unreservedly and pray to Him unceasingly.

The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna was then read. The passage related to the Master's discussion with Vidyasagar. God pervades everything but quality and strength of manifestation differ. Brahman and Sakti (Energy) are indistinguishable. The coiled-up snake is comparable to Brahman and when it moves it is His Prakriti (Energy). Fundamentally both are the same. And He, unlike ourselves, is unaffected by happiness and misery. The snake has poison in its fangs but that does him no harm.

In this way M. explained how our doubts and problems can be satisfactorily solved. Addressing the monk he said, 'God is revealed to babes and not to the so-called wise. Be babes and He will be revealed to you. After that the scriptures may be useful. But revelations come to the children only and so the Avatar comes to children and not to your pundits.'

A cat just then passed by with the kitten clinging fast to it.

M.: Just see there, he is not letting go the mother cat in spite of the other's frowns.

The monk: That is because the mother is everything to him.

M.: The means are,—love Him, depend on Him and pray always to Him. Constant communion with Him is essential. Wireless waves are passing all round us and we can get them only through a receiver. Mental concentration on Him is our receiver; our minds get intently fixed on Him through it and then we are in contact with Him.

(To be continued.)

Such a seer, such a realized soul, such a giver of nectarean message in quite recent times was Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna. He was born in 1836 at Kamarpukur, a village in West Bengal, and passed away in 1886 at Cossipur, a suburb of Calcutta. The fifty years of his life approximately correspond to the latter half of the previous century. Within fifty years after his passing away his name reached the corners of the world and the network of the centres of Sri Ramakrishna Mutt and Mission have spread throughout the globe.

The message of Sri Ramakrishna is the message of India, it is the message of every teacher that went before him, only retold so as to suit the modern age. Now I will not dwell on the message for any length of time. I will put it as briefly as possible. Whereas each of the above-mentioned leaders is hailed as the promulgator of a religion, Sri Ramakrishna is not the founder of any one religion in particular, but is the reviver of religion in general. He taught the world: 'All religions are true. All are the paths leading to one and the same God. Neither desert your faith nor offend men of other faiths. God is an object not of blind belief but of actual realization. I see God face to

face. If you try whole-heartedly you will also see God. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that he who longs for Him finds Him. Go and verify this in thine own life; try for three consecutive days with genuine earnestness, and thou art sure to succeed. He finds God quickest whose yearning and concentration are greatest. All the objects of the world are stuffed with the unconditioned Sachchidananda. Realize God in all that you see, so that service to the world becomes worship of God.' This message of the harmony of religions, this message of renunciation and service was delivered at the parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893 by Swami Vivekananda. He was the person best fitted to represent India at the Parliament of Religions, not only because India was ever the shelter of many religions, but also because the source of the Swamiji's inspiration, namely Sri Ramakrishna was himself a parliament of religions. The Hindu belief that all religions are true is as old as the Vedas, there it is said 'Truth is one, interpretations are many'. But with Sri Ramakrishna the truth of all religions was not a mere belief but actual realization. He pursued the many paths and arrived at the same goal: That realization is his message.

SANKARA AND MODERN THOUGHT

TENNETI VISWANATHAM

Shri Sankara is known throughout the world for what we generally call the philosophy of Māyāvāda. The question is what is Maya and what did Shri Sankara connote or imply when he used the term Maya? Actually the common saying attributed to him representing this idea is 'Brahmasatyam jaganmithya'. The word Mithya is used as opposed to the word Satyam. Satya is what is, what was and what will be, the changeless one and the abiding reality. The word Mithya can therefore be taken as mean-

ing what may appear real but is not abiding for ever as compared with Satyam.

Neither Mithya nor Maya need therefore be taken as meaning illusion or jugglery. There is no doubt in popular parlance, when a man makes his best efforts and faces frustration, or, all on a sudden death cuts off the one in whom he laid hopes, he would say in despair: 'This is Maya', meaning that man is helpless and whatever things he had laid his hopes upon, are all dashed to the ground and therefore are mere Maya.

But actually the word Maya should be understood, as opposed to Satyam; that is to say, it is not the ultimate and permanent, but is subject to change, which, compared with the permanent ultimate reality, is not permanent, not abiding, not the ultimate and not real in that sense. It cannot be suggested that by Maya one should understand that the phenomenal world is a mere mirage, although the word mirage is used by Sankara at places to show that certain changing Vikritis are like a mirage; they are not mirage.

In the Vedas, the oldest written record, the word Maya occurs in connection with Mitravaruna, Soma and Aswins with whom tradition has not associated anything like illusion or delusion. As for example:

1. 'Maya vam Mitra Varuna divi sritah' which means the Sakti of Mitravaruna is manifested in Heaven.

2. 'Mayabhih Aswina Yuvam Vriksham sum cha Vichachatah', where Aswins are prompted to use their strength and break up an enclosure.

3. 'Mayavino Mamire Asya Mayaya' meaning that they construct with the intelligence (strength) of the intelligent (or strong). In the Bhagawat Gita actually the word Maya is defined or described as Divine, essentially composed of the three Gunas; and that it is not easy for people to make a conquest of it; not that it is unconquerable, but that one seeking Moksha should cross over and be dissociated from the three Gunas altogether.

We should not first equate Maya with jugglery and illusion; and then say Sankara's philosophy is not understandable because he would say that what is concrete and tangible is an illusion. He has not said it; but all that he said is that it will be treated as an illusion by a person who is able to get over the effects of these three Gunas that form the core of Maya.

There are some words in the Vedic Literature, which are made up of the initials of longer words or the first and last letters are made to form a word, just as we use initials sometimes as a form of address. As for example, we have Sakra for Satakratu; Sama is comprehensive of the Sa, Ree, Ga, Ma, swaras; Arya, Achareshu Yasyanti. Maya is likewise Mati Yaya, that with which It creates or constructs. That is why the original commentators have taken the meaning of the word Maya as a Sakti that cannot be explained in mere words: for, the Paramatma with His Maya has been the material and efficient cause of all that was is and will be. This Maya has been explained to be something like an illusion when faced with the Ultimate Reality of which Maya is the inherent creative aspect of the energy or life. It is not necessary to explain in greater detail what is Sankara's conception of the World. It is enough to say that as the phenomenal world is changing, it cannot be the Sat which is the Permanent Principle and in that sense the world is Unreal. It consists of shapes and forms which change, develop, evolve, and then involute. As has been repeatedly said, Sankara did not deny the phenomenal reality of the world. In fact, taking for granted the hard fact of the phenomenal existence, he has only sought to inculcate in us the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality behind this Phenomenal world. Phenomenal Reality is only the material expression in name, shape and form of a part as it were, of Ultimate Reality. For, it is only by such explanation, that it would be possible for the ordinary people of the world to calm down their passions arising out of the ceaseless struggle for existence and the pressures produced by attachment, desire and anger. When once they know that the entire world is of It, all emotions would gradually resolve into the one emotion of Universal Love. Sankara did not propound this to take pleasure in obscurities. He did it with a purpose; Loka-sangrahārtham,

He has insisted that man shall do his part without attachment and hatred; such living leads to perfection.

The times in which he lived were showing signs of deterioration; understanding was confused; the various Darshanas including the Buddhistic were either overdone or misunderstood giving rise to fanaticism of belief and meaninglessness of action. He had to do something to clear the situation; he could not sit quiet when the country with the richest tradition of Truth and Dharma was unavailing itself of the Great Inheritance. Sankara's view was that worries and sorrows of this world can be ended or endured only when the nature of the Ultimate Reality is understood, when by cleaning the layer of the dust of Ignorance, one realises his Self as the Self of the world, as the Self of the universe. I agree that the other great philosophers in India or elsewhere did also propound their philosophies with the same purpose. But Sankara satisfies me most.

It is often said that in India there is no philosophy; all that exists is some theological talk about God. The real difficulty is not that India did not know philosophy as such, but that the modern critics do not exactly mean the same thing when they talk of the Western philosophy as when they talk of Hindu philosophy. If we look at the content of the Western philosophy, we will find that the Western philosophers have been trying to take unsuccessful or partially successful photographs of the mind, intellect, will, desire, reception, memory, etc., fighting shy, however, to know the original source of all these. The only ones perhaps that had the desire to know were Spinoza, Kant and Bergson. But even they stopped their enquiries at the Substance or the Thing in itself and *elan vital*. The more recent philosophers of the West like the pragmatists, pluralists and the behaviourists are proud in not making any attempt in that direction at

all; for they think that anything like metaphysics is not philosophy at all. They are more interested in examining results of an idea, looking away from first things, principles, and categories. They are more interested in looking towards the last things, fruits, consequences, facts. In their view, an enquiry into origins will lead you only to nebulousness. Therefore, they feel that the consequences are more important to guide them into action for future. This may be New Thought; but surely its claim to be the real philosophy has yet to be proved.

The real trouble lies in our thinking that an enquiry into the origin of things or the ultimate reality is to look to something in the past, into the remoteness of incalculable time. On the other hand, when Sankara or the Hindu philosophers say that the phenomenal world is only a changing "Reality" and the Ultimate Reality is the One though known by several names and that One is Yourself, they are telling us not something which happened in the remote past, but something which is nearest to you now in the present time—and for all time to come. It is only when we realise this Oneness that we can look forward to results, consequences or the relations of man and man or man and universe. It is only then that this apparent manifoldness of this world will cease to baffle us, will cease to create discord and hatred. It is only then that this duality and variety perceived directly by us has underneath it the one Universal existence and Oneness. The presentation of this variety to consciousness is only apparent which, when we realise the Oneness, will fade out into nothingness. Until one realises that in this world of reality, action without attachment or hatred is the only way of reconciling oneself to the contradictions of this life. That is why the Rishi in the *Īśāvāsya-panishad* says: *Isa vasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyam jagat, Tena tyaktena bhunjitha, ma gridhah kasyasvith dhanam.*

There are certain things which are supra-sensual. That is to say, which are not perceived by the untrained sense of the ordinary man but can only be perceived by those who specially trained their senses for the purpose. That is what the Hindu seers did and that is what the Western philosophers cannot simply understand although Kant looked in the direction of the truth a little in his Transcendental critiques. In the West all philosophical speculation confined itself to an intellectual appreciation of certain processes of thought, a sort of photographic description or analysis of some categories. Their discussions centre round deduction, induction, hypothesis, synthesis, emotions, mind, brain, determinism, free will, first cause, consciousness, knowledge, intuition, introspection, instinct, will to live and similar other things. What are these categories? Some of them belong to logic. Hindu philosophers have dealt with logic as a specialised branch. Some others belong to ethics. Ethics are primarily the code of life. The Hindu philosophers have dealt with it as a specialised branch in the Dharmasastras. Yet some others belong to psychology. The matters dealt with in psychology are dealt with by our writers as the canvass upon which further research into Existence and Ultimate Values are discussed and formulated. It is the background on which the four Purusharthas are developed. The Western philosophers once treated politics as part of philosophy. Our writers have specialised it as *Niti Sastra*. Western writers then again deal with metaphysics and the Hindu philosophers begin all their philosophical writings with metaphysics, all the previous stages having been taken for granted.

It is often also said that philosophy which has no relation to the daily facts of life and which does not help a man to face situations is of no use and from that view metaphysical speculations and obscurities of the Hindu philosophy are really of no value. This again is certainly a misunderstanding of the

position. In the West also the history of various philosophies show that no single philosophy has satisfied all the people for all times and new theories and new writings and new arguments have often come into being. The solutions of Plato and Aristotle did not satisfy everybody in every country for all time to come; nor has the induction of Bacon nor have the methodic doubt, the subjective and idealistic method of Descartes done so. Comte's Positivism and Spencer's Co-ordination of antagonistic opinions and First principles did not satisfy all people for all time. Spinoza's Substance, Mode and Attribute and Kant's Critiques did not satisfy all the mental needs of the human beings nor has the Superman of Nietzsche been able to do it. Bergson's *Elan Vital* has not done it. The fact is, new philosophies would not come into existence if any single philosophy had satisfied all mankind for all time to come. All that we can see and have to judge is whether persons like Spinoza or Kant in the West or persons like Buddha, Lao-tze, Confucius, Sankara, Ramanuja or Madhva in the East have been able to satisfy the soul of the thirsty for any good length of time over an extent of territory, the bar of language being removed by translations of quality. Now, he whose exposition of the mystery of this world, the *Achintya Mayasakti*, the relation of the individual and human life to this Universe and its Ultimate Source '*Yatova imani bhutani jayante . . .*' and whose exposition takes us nearer the Ultimate Truth and helps us to face the world that is and that is to be, and to be of use to it, is the person who will be enthroned as a philosopher. It is only he who can give us a reconciliation of the apparent contradictions of life. Therefore, there is no point in the Western critics or Indian critics who follow the Western critics simply hurling criticism that in the West there is philosophy and in the East there is none.

Actually when more physical laws are discovered and all matter is resolved into mind and all mind into That from which it pro-

ceeded, it will be realised that it is the explanation offered by the Hindu philosophers beginning with those who sang the Nasadiya and Purusha suktas and who talked the dialogues in the Upanishads and ending with Sankara, the uncompromising Advaita-vadin, that will be found as having given us the Explanation and Solace which are the nearest Nearness to the All Correct. It is the sage who has said: 'Isa vasyam idam sarvam' . . . that will be found correct and not the one who thinks that consciousness arises from neutral states or that life is a mere biological process that can be controlled.

Jean's Riddle of the Universe, the wisest among the recent expositions, perhaps, takes us, though in different language, in the same direction as that taken by Shri Sankaracharya. Modern philosophers of the West must make the conclusion of Jeans the starting point of their Inquiry in order to be on the right track.

The difference between Hindu philosophers like Sankara and the Western philosophers is fundamental in one sense. The Hindu philosophers before they gave a discourse or tried to solve questions had trained their body and mind to exploit to the fullest extent possible the faculties inherent in the human beings. A controlled mind, a controlled body, a controlled tongue and non-possession were the primary features which enabled them or qualified them to enter into philosophy. What persons with such a faculty can see, conceive or comprehend, is necessarily something different from what persons who are mere intellectuals, with perhaps self-control of a sort, but certainly not of the specialised type of the great Hindu philosophers, can see.

The results of actions are destroyed, the bondage of heart is broken, and all doubts which lead to births and deaths are removed, as soon as one realizes the supreme Lord, whose nature is Pure consciousness, which is devoid of the stain of qualities, who is realizable by such teachings as 'That Thou Art', the immutable inner Self, the Brahman, the Lord that is beyond all commandments, all thought.

—SRI SANKARA

I depend for a good deal of knowledge upon certain great men; for, my experience is not all-comprehensive. I have so many defects. I have not trained myself completely. Just as scientists with no proper apparatus cannot conduct an experiment, I, with my insufficient or inadequate apparatus, cannot be able to see into things or comprehend them correctly. Hence I depend, on those who have specialised in this. That is what a modern scientist also does. What then is wrong with me if I depend upon my specialists? And that is what the Hindu philosophers, some of them did when they depended upon the seers that left for us the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is not the dependence of an unstudied man or mere intellectual; it is the dependence of a sadhaka, a scientist who knows that his experience is limited; that his experiment is yet inadequate.

On the other hand, those who insist that nothing which is not within their experience or reason can be trusted or acted upon, would in effect say that their experience or reason alone is trustworthy and nobody else's. That is, a record which does not tally with their limited experience is wrong. They don't say it out. But that is what prompts them into that attitude and frame of mind which is unscientific. But what is it that satisfies the longings of men, enables them to face situations with courage and self-reliance, having regard to the changing circumstances, shapes and effects in this world in their relation to the One Unchanging that is without Beginning and End? It is only that that will endure—Sankara's philosophy will therefore endure.

MYTHICAL CONCEPTION AND DELINEATION OF MOUNT KAILAS

PROVASH CHANDRA KAR

(1)

"Again Narendra began to sing in sweet melody:

न है ये मो खाल रोममो न हाडि न मास मो।
न देवाल मो न मसूजे मो न काशी कैलास मो ॥¹

Now, whither is Mount Kailas? A long range of places of pilgrimage, hidden in the rugged Himalayas, knits together naturally into one composite whole to elicit admiration and innate devotion to the Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. Perhaps very much hazardous, if not most, of all in the range is Mount Kailas. Below an attempt in extenso will be made to present Kailas as depicted in the Epics and to present all episodes and the like, connected with it.

The location of Mount Kailas कैलास चरणीवरम्², stated to be six yojanas in height,³ is seen to be variously hinted at in the Epics. According to Vana Parva⁴ it lies beyond North Kuru and elsewhere⁵ it is written to be situated beyond Alakapuri and Himalayas. At all events it is one of the five far-famed peaks of Pandya⁶ tract and has been identified with the abode of Lord Shiva, who may be laconically epitomized as शिव मायाशक्तियुक्त तमोगुणावेश⁷ and Goddess Parvati, His divine playmate. It is reported that at Sringeri 'Sankara installed one of the five Lingams that he

¹ Sri M, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita, Part II, p. 304, 1311 B.S.

² Ramayanam, Uttara Kanda, Canto 11, Sloka 37

³ Mahabharata, Edited by Kali Prasanna Sinha, Vana Parva, Chap. 138, p. 277.

⁴ Ibid, Chap. 144, p. 280.

⁵ Ibid, Anushasana Parva, Chap. 19, p. 1207.

⁶ Ramayanam, Kiskindhya Kanda, Canto 37, sloka 2.

⁷ Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita, Madhya Leela, Chap. 20.

brought from Kailas with the benign grace of Lord Siva'.⁸

Supreme beauty and grandeur are attributed to Mount Kailas.⁹ It is the king of all mountains, full of festivities eternally,¹⁰ where trees and plantations are strewn with cuckoos, chirping and enchanting, and hornets¹¹ and the locality is replete with peacocks, deer, tigers and other ferocious animals. It is adorned and decked with blue and thousand- and hundred-petalled lotuses.¹²

Yonder lies the Mandakini, nobles of all rivers, the water of which is beautified and ornamented with golden lotuses. Gandhar-

⁸ 'Devan' Vedanta Kesari, vol. XLII, No. 1, p. 71, May, 1955.

⁹ cf. Here are not happy peaks the heaven-nymphs roam,
Or Coilas or Vaicountha's starry stair,
Abrupt jagged hills only the mighty climb
Are here where few dare even think to rise;
Far voices call down from the dizzy rocks,
Chill, slippery, precipitous are the paths.
(Sri Aurobindo: Savitri, Book Six, Canto One, p. 482).

¹⁰ cf. Asocas burned in crimson spots of flame,
Pure like the breath of an unstained desire
White jasmines haunted the enamoured air,
Pale mango-blossoms fed the liquid voice
Of the love-maddened toil, and the brown bee
Muttered in fragrance mid the honey-buds.
The sunlight was a great god's golden smile.
All Nature was at beauty's festival.
(Sri Aurobindo: Savitri, Book Four, Canto One, p. 401).

¹¹ cf. There was a carol of birds and murmur of bees,
And all that is common and natural and sweet,
Yet intimately divine to heart and soul.
(Sri Aurobindo: Savitri, Book Seven, Canto Four, p. 584).

¹² Shriman Mahabharatam, Edited by Pt. Ramachandra Shastri Kinjawadakar, Part. II, Vana Parva, Chap. 158, p. 246, 1933.

vas, 12. Apsaras and gods in frolic and fun with Kinnaras are roaming about the Mount.¹⁴

The following two Slokas too depict poignantly the vivid and ornamental surroundings and environments of Mount Kailas :

कर्णिकारवनेर्दिव्यैः कदम्बगहनेस्तथा
पद्मिनीभिः सरिद्रिभ्य मन्दाकिन्यादिभिर्युते । ४ ।
प्रवहो च सुहो वायुः पुष्पगन्धवहः शुचिः ।
तस्मिन् गिरिवरे रम्ये..... । ५ ।¹⁵

According to one episode Lord Shiva is encircled by *siddhas*, *charanas*, *pramathas* and *pisachas* besmeared divinely who are engaged in Lord's service amidst glee, gaiety and mirth and rhythmic dance¹⁶ recitals in

13 cf. Around him was a light of conscious suns
And a brooding gladness of great symbol things;
To meet him crowded plains of brilliant calm,
Mountains and violet valleys of the Blest,
Deep glens of joy and crooning water-falls,
And woods of quivering purple solitude;
Below him lay like gleaming jewelled thoughts
Rapt dreaming cities of Gandharva kings.

(Sri Aurobindo: *Savitri*, Book Two, Canto Nine, p. 265).

14 *Ramayanam*, Uttara Kanda, Canto 11, Sloka 38-39.

15 Ibid, Canto 34, Sloka 5.

16 cf. (a) A huge inertness is the world's defence,
Even in change is treasured changelessness;

Into inertia revolution sinks,
In a new dress the old resumes its role;
The energy acts, the stable is its seal:
On Shiva's breast is stayed the enormous dance.

(Sri Aurobindo: *Savitri*, Book Two, Canto Ten, p. 280).

(b) 'Placing the Mother of the Three Worlds upon a golden throne, studied with precious gems, Shulapani dances on the heights of Kailasa, and all the gods gather round Him :
'Sarasvati plays on the vina, Indra on the flute, Brahma holds the time-marking cymbals, Lakshmi begins a song, Vishnu plays on a drum, and all the gods stand round about :
'Gandharvas, Yakshas, Patagas, Uragas, Siddhas, Sadhyas, Vidyadharas,

Mount Kailas'. This particular spot of Kailas is superb and Lord Shiva with his retinue lives there at all times. Parvati, the damsel, engaged Herself there in deep abstruse and rigorous meditation to attain the Lord. Accordingly the venue is pleasant to both of them.¹⁷

In Bhishma Parva mention is made of *hemakut* which signifies a peak with golden crest and is ascribed to Mount Kailas as an epithet. The original Sloka reads—

हेमकूटस्तु सुमहान् कैलासो नाम पर्वतः ।
यत्र वैभ्रवणो राजन् गुह्यकैः सह मोदते । ४२ ।¹⁸

Although the Epics are profuse in describing Kailas a paragon, once in a blue moon could we find it to be fierce (उग्र).¹⁹

According to a fable of the *Mahabharata*²¹, Daksha solemnized horse sacrifice (*अश्वमेध*) at Haridwar, a place decorated naturally by trees and creepers and situated by the side of the Himalayas. On this occasion all were invited save Lord Shiva. Goddess Parvati felt abased at the non-invitation of Her husband, the Supreme One, at Kailas. Lord Shiva too was resentful at Her pent-up grief. Thereupon the sacrifice was about to be polluted by Bhadrakali and Birbhadra, born out of their respective fires of anger, to appease Parvati's resentment.

Amaras, Apsaras and all the beings dwelling in the three worlds assemble there to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of the divine choir at the hour of twilight.

(*Shiva Pradosha Stotra* as described by Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*, p. 84, 1948).

17 *Mahabharata*, Ed. by K. P. S., Vana Parva, Chap. 138, p. 277.

18 Ibid, *Anushasana Parva*, Chap. 19, p. 1207.

19 *Shriman Mahabharatam*, Ed. by B. C. S. K., Part III, p. 15.

20 *Ramayanam*, Yuddha Kanda, Canto 53, Sloka 56. A similar passage occurs in Michael Madhusudan Datta's *Meghnadbadh Kavya*, Canto Two.

21 *Mahabharata*, Ed. by K. P. S., Shanti Parva, Chap. 284, p. 1123-4.

Despite the fact that Kailas is the abode of Hara or Lord Shiva (हरः सङ्कीर्तमानस्य उमयासह), it is renowned for other reasons as well. For Alakapuri, occupied by Kuvera²², is situated adjacent to Kailas (वैभ्रवणो राजा सिद्धयमित विक्रमः). Krittibas Pandit's²³ graphic assertion is corroborative of same facts :

कैलास पर्वते यादृजो ताहार उत्तर ।
सेह दिक् बालो करे सहस्र शिखर ।
योजन सहस्र नय तार आयतन ।
उमेते पर्वत लक्ष गणित योजन ।
ताहाते अपूर्व पुरी जति सोमा पाय ।
सतत करेन छेला पार्वती तयाग्र ।
आर एक बद्धमृत बलका नामे पुरी ।
चनेखर कुवेर ताहार अधिकारी ।

Near Mount Kailas and residence of Kuvera, Kuvera's tank²⁴ takes its origin. Trees and creepers, grown at its bank, stretch a wide shadow and thus add to the beauty and grandeur of the place ; diverse lotuses are blossoming on it and various aquatic birds happily swim in the tank. Its water is clear, cold, light and tasteful as nectar, and places of pilgrimage are well-built and decorated. This tank is the place of games and pastime of Rajraj, worshipped by gods, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Rishis, Yakshas, Kinnaras and hundreds and thousands of Rakshasas are its protectors.

*Sabha Parva*²⁵ narrates an incident in which, it is stated, certain Kings made a gift of flawless diamonds to the noble-hearted Pandava. Many people awaited Yudhishthira at the latter's gate with presents and acquisitions which included among others herbs, productive of strength and vitality, acquired from northern Kailas.

22 cf. Ibid, *Sabha Parva*, Chap. 6, p. 149.
Ibid, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 41, p. 217.
Ibid, *Udyoga Parva*, Chap. 110, p. 499.
Ramayanam, Aranya Kanda, Canto 37, Sloka 13.

23 *Ramayan*, Krittibas Ojha, *Kishkindhya Kanda*, p. 186, 1332 B.S.

24 *Mahabharata*, Ed. by K. P. S., Chap. 152, p. 285.

25 Ibid, Chap. 51, p. 173.

It is perceived every minutest particle, as it were, of Kailas is endowed with an atmosphere emanating the spirit of Uma and Maheshwara. One is prone to visualize :

गिरिराज-सुतान्वित वामतनु
रनु-निन्दित-राजित-कोटिचिद्रम् ।

Apropos of the suitability, *sui generis*, of Mount Kailas and its vicinity for profound meditation there cannot be the least shred of doubt. It is a natural, and symbolic of *sanctum sanctorum*. Indeed in order to appease and satiate Lord Shiva or to get His boon and benediction Bhagiratha²⁶, Sagara²⁷, Nahusha²⁸, Maharaj Swetaki²⁹, Maharshi Bhrigu³⁰, Surabhi³¹ (Daughter of Daksha) and Sukadeva³², in a nutshell a galaxy of *sadhakas* and *sadhikas* at times spent and engaged themselves in deep meditation in Kailas. According to Vana Parva one Guhyaka procured water for Rama from Kailas as per instruction of Kuvera³³. Besides in ancient times demons intended to hold a sacrifice near Minak³⁴ at the northern part of Kailas. Hurt by Bhimasena³⁵ the Rakshasas were dispersed and they fled to Kailas and Pandavas³⁶ resided at Kailas with Brahmins in the sincere belief of return of Partha. In *Ashwamedhic Parva* there is mention of a miraculous phenomenon, amidst others, 'tremor of Mount Kailas'³⁷.

(2)

The celebrated immortal poet Kalidasa whose name has been emblazoned in golden letters, whose fame for his select uses of

26 *Mahabharata*, Ed. by K.P.S. Vana Parva, Chap. 107, p. 261.

27 Ibid, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 105, p. 259.

28 Ibid, *Udyoga Parva*, Chap. 10, p. 437.

29 Ibid, *Adi Parva*, Chap. 223, p. 137.

30 Ibid, *Shanti Parva*, Chap. 182, p. 1059.

31 Ibid, *Anushasana Parva*, Chap. 83, p. 1251.

32 Ibid, *Santi Parva*, Chap. 332 p. 1160.

33 Ibid, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 287, p. 370.

34 Ibid, *Sabha Parva*, Chap. 3, p. 146.

35 Ibid, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 153, p. 286.

36 Ibid, *Vana Parva*, Chap. 156, p. 287.

37 Ibid, *Ashwmedhic Parva*, Chap. 77, p. 1352.

VIVEKANANDA AS I SEE HIM

A. J. SRIVASTAVA

On the 31st of January the nation was celebrating the birthday anniversary of a noble son of Mother India, nay, the noblest of her sons. I was in the midst of a crowd gathered at the Shri Ramakrishna Math at Mylapore, when a number of questions arose within me: 'Had these men gone mad over a mere monk who lived no more? Surely, so many people could not have lost themselves over the birth of a monk!' Whilst I was still wrapped in these thoughts it dawned on me that I was not celebrating only a monk's birthday anniversary, but the birth of Hinduism itself—the birth of an institution, of a spirit, of a new awakening which has only now borne fruit in our independence.

Vivekananda astounded his American audience at Chicago when he said that he would speak to them about 'A religion of which Buddhism is but a rebel child, and Christianity, with all its idealisms, a far-fetched imitation'. The Americans listened to the revolutionary ideas of that handsome youth in his saffron robe and ochre turban, they saw his majestic figure, they were charmed by his magnetic personality (almost awed by it) and they would give all they had to go on listening to that 'Napoleon of Hinduism'. A whole nation had bent to his supreme will and had run mad with the new ideas which were certainly rational, if they could not yet be labelled as strictly scientific. A whole vista of hope was opened to the New World when he said "Rise, thou effulgent one, rise thou who art always pure, arise thou birthless and deathless, arise almighty and manifest thine own nature!" The Vedas and the Upanishads had been laid before the scrutinising eye of the West. Yogic societies sprang up and spread to the remotest corners of the conti-

nent. The great Swami's great work bore fruit almost immediately, and the great edifice of Hinduism grew up in the West on the solid foundations laid by that master builder.

Vivekananda said to his Western disciples, 'No religion for you, my children, but morality and bravery', and enunciated the sole needs of the world as character and a self-less love. He would arouse a whole nation saying 'Awake, awake, great souls! The world is burning in misery. Can you sleep?' In India, trying to demolish the barriers set up by the dogma of medieval 'Dharma', he gave to his own people the Magna Carta of Hinduism, the simple religion of morality and character; and denouncing the very name of asceticism or dogmatism, he preached the gospel of purity and honesty, and the religion of man-making and character-building. To the Swami bread came before God, for he always said that a hungry man cannot become God-conscious, and always piped the same tune saying that 'Spirituality and poverty go ill together'.

Sannyasin and Vedantin as he was, the great Swami was first a zealous patriot and an Indian to the core. To all his admirers, whenever they asked what they could do for him, he gave the same reply 'Love India and serve India'. To Vivekananda Freedom was 'The cry of life', to him Freedom was 'The song of the soul'. He was pained to see his India deluged in Western ideals and caught in the throes of transition—a transition which, in the words of Sister Nivedita, "Had turned all collective walks of life into a welter of confusion". But to the clairvoyant sage-philosopher, blessed with the vision of India's future, these were not only the signs of the times, but germs of denationalisation, and

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he sounded a grave warning, almost bewildering his hearers, when he said 'If India becomes English or Western she dies. India must remain Indian to uphold the highest torch of spirituality before the secular civilisation of the materialistic world'.

Monk though he was, Vivekananda, says Dr. Kalidas Nag, was a thorough realist, and renouncing all thought of 'Mukti' or 'Jnana'. 'He gave every hour of his fading life, nay every drop of his blood, to evolve a new technique of living in which could be harmonized the principles of self-realization of ancient and modern India'. In his lectures on 'Jnana' the Swami said 'Let us try to make things simpler and so bring about the golden days when every man will be a worshipper, and the reality in every man the object of worship'. Again, in his 'Letters' he repeats the same thought saying 'My idea is to bring to the door of the meanest and the poorest the noble ideals that the human race has developed, both in and out of India, and let them think for themselves'. This infinite dream of that 'infinite dreamer' is a challenge to modern society torn by the conflict raging between the various 'isms' which are the peculiar bane of every nation. This dream is the noblest heritage of mankind; seeing, as we do, that our 'isms' are pulling down before our very eyes the beautiful edifice created by our forefathers, one is prone to believe the great Swami's words coming true. Can we not, then, accept the Swami's remedy? Shall we not then, every one of us, make an effort to build the New Order on the surer foundations of spiritual unity rather than on the sandy soil of the

various 'isms' of which even the Occident cannot expect much now?

Swami Vivekananda not only brought about the renaissance of Indian Nationalism, not only the synthesis of an integrated personality steeped in the ideals of Indian thought, but through his gospel of freedom from fear he brought peace and succour to the common man. His leonine courage, his almost infectious faith in the ultimate goodness of human nature, his determined belief that to a true man all that happens is always for the best, his aggressive manliness, have all been my inspiration and our hope. In 'A Study of Religion' he gives us the one advice of a practical philosopher:

Face the terrible, face it boldly. Like the monkeys, the hardships of life fall back when we cease to flee from them. If we are even to gain freedom, it must be by conquering Nature, never by running away. Cowards never win victories. We have to fight fears and troubles and ignorance, if we expect them to flee from us.

In his discourses on 'Bhakti' he admonishes us to 'Look upon the world as a play-ground where we are having a game with God all the while! See how beautifully the Eternal Playmate is playing!' I can still hear his words (to Sister Nivedita) ringing in my ears — 'Go thou, and follow Him (i.e. Buddha) who was born and gave his life for others five hundred times before he attained Buddhahood'. I still feel the Swami's spirit moving about amongst us, saying to each one of us

'Be greater than myself, ... Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct; all moral perfection will be extinct; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct; all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest; fraud, force and competition its ceremonies; and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be. The power of suffering is infinitely greater than the power of doing; the power of love is infinitely of greater potency than the power of hatred.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

similes almost comes to be a household word, writes in Meghadootam :

मत्वा चोर्ध्वं दशमुखमुजोच्छवासितप्रस्थसन्धेः ।
केलासस्य त्रिदशवनितादर्पणस्यासिद्धिः स्याः ।
मृन्नोच्छ्रायेः कुमुदविशदयो वितत्य स्थितः ।
सराशीभूतः प्रतिदिनमिव त्र्यम्बकस्याट्टहासः । ६५ ।

The white peak of Kailas is compared with the loud laughter of Lord Shiva petrified for aeons.

The singular attempt to rock Mount Kailas by Ravana the ten-headed is narrated in the Ramayana. Ravana along with his ministers repaired to Mount Kailas when he had to face yakshas sent by Kuvera. In a sanguinary battle that followed, the latter were vanquished. As a direct outcome of it with his two ministers Kuvera in person came to face Ravana. The former too fell down and Ravana, elated and delighted, considering himself victorious of the three worlds, got down from the Mount. At the root of the Mount, he could not help laughter at the sight of Nandi, the monkey-faced. This enraged and exasperated the latter who cursed Ravana. Finally Ravana made an attempt of lifting Mount Kailas but in vain. Wounded and hurt in his arm due to *contretemps*, he began to sob and moan at the pitch of his voice³⁸.

Epics abound in many an instance of similes and metaphors centring Mount Kailas, some of which denote its altitude, some its white colour, while others its vastness. Mention may be made here of white colour³⁹ like that of Mount Kailas, white horse⁴⁰ identical with Mount Kailas and white wreath⁴¹ similar to Mount Kailas in the Mahabharata.

³⁸ The shaking of Mount Kailas by Ravana with Shiva and His divine consort Parvati and their attendants thereon is inscribed in Ellora caves C. 8th century A.D. (vide *Indo-Asian Culture*, New Delhi, vol. IV, No. 4, April 1956).

³⁹ Mahabharata, Ed. by K. P. S., Sabha Parva, Chap. 10, p. 150.

⁴⁰ Ibid, Bhishma Parva, Chap. 20, p. 558.

⁴¹ Ibid, Shalya Parva, Chap. 46, p. 901.

Elsewhere we come across metaphors of the heights of palaces and compare them with that of Mount Kailas that so high up in the air. The choice of appropriate words, their style of exposition a magnificent.⁴²

Vana Parva states that the city of Indraprastha⁴³ is unparalleled like Mount Kailas and at places a mammoth⁴⁴ (देरावर) has been likened to the Mount. Baladeva or Balarama respectively in Udyoga Parva or Drona Parva are compared with Mount Kailas.

City gateways have been imagined to be like Mount Kailas in the Ramayanam⁴⁵. We find there केलासशिखरोपमम् to be attributed to Lanka.⁴⁶

Like a perfumer culling the finest aromatics the gifted author of the Mahabharata puts Kailas in the forefront of similes other places too.⁴⁷

Mount Kailas, it is held, is the select congenial signal place suitable for deep meditation for great yogis during lifetime. After passing away only the noble ones are able, and may expect, to be in communion

⁴² cf. Ramayanam, Sundara Kanda, Canto Sloka 23.

Ibid, Ayodhya Kanda, Canto 2, Sloka 17.

Ibid, Ayodhya Kanda, Canto 4, Sloka 18.

Ibid, Kishkindhya Kanda, Canto 32, Sloka 1.

Ibid, Yuddha Kanda, Canto 15, Sloka 24.

Mahabharata, Ed. by K.P.S., Sabha Parva Chap. 33, p. 164.

⁴³ Ibid, Chap. 23, p. 204.

⁴⁴ Ibid, Vana Parva, Chap. 42, p. 218.

Ramayanam, Uttara Kanda, Canto 38, Sloka 88-89.

⁴⁵ Ibid, Yuddha Kanda, Canto 17, Sloka 11.

⁴⁶ Ibid, Yuddha Kanda, Canto 14, Sloka 19-20.

Some more instances are:

Ramayanam, Yuddha Kanda, Canto 1 Sloka 3.

Ibid, Kishkindhya Kanda, Canto 8, Sloka 15.

Ibid, Sundara Kanda, Canto 12, Sloka 27.

⁴⁷ cf. E.g.:

Mahabharata, Ed. by K.P.S., Bhishma Parva Chaps. 62 and 95.

Ibid, Shalya Parva, Chaps. 12, 34 & 57.

Ibid, Swargarohana Parva, Chap. 6.

with Shankara the Lord and Gauri, His divine playmate.

Mount Kailas is sacred to the Hindus and the Buddhists alike. The following excerpt will testify to this:

"My first thought is of icy Mount Kailas... It is the most sacred spot in all Asia to both the Hindus and the Buddhists of that continent... It is their mountain of salvation, the home of their gods and the habitation of their angels. Nirvana is enthroned upon its icicles... Moreover, it has been recommended by the Buddha himself to his disciples as a spot worthy of being chosen by those who want to meditate and attain Nirvana. Just as the cloud-capped top of Olympus hid the Hellenic gods from profane eyes, so the ice-strewn top of Kailas is believed to hide the spirits of departed Buddhas.

The Tibetans name it Kang-Rinpoche, 'the Ice-Jewel'. Their famous mediaeval Yogi, Milarepa, practised his meditations in a grotto on this mountain". (P. 24).

"I believe, from my varied researches, that Mount Kailas and its vicinity, including Lake Manasarovar, possesses a magnetic atmosphere of intense spiritual vibration, as does Mount Arunachala in South India. I am sure that any genuinely sensitive person would automatically find his thoughts being caught and held in reverence, at least, when he approached this mountain, which is Asia's spiritual centre and Tibet's spiritual pride". (P. 72).

(Paul Brunton, Ph.D.: A Hermit in the Himalayas, January 1951.)

How best can we end the matter than to hymn the Lord!

जय उमेश शङ्कर, सर्वगुणाकर,

त्रिताप-संहर, महेश्वर ।

हलहलकृत, कण्ठ सुशोभित,

मौलि-विराजित-सुधाकर ।

पिनाक-वादक, मृन्न-निनादक,

त्रिशूल-धारक भयङ्कर ।

विराजि-वाञ्छित सुरेन्द्र-सेवित-

पदाम्बुज, पूजित, परात्पर ।

(Michael Madhusudan Datta ;

Sharmistha Natak, Scene 5.)

To quote Sri Aurobindo :

A sealed indentivity within her woke ;

She knew herself the Beloved of the Supreme :

These Gods and Goddesses were he and she :

The Mother was she of Beauty and Delight,

The Word in Brahma's vast creating clasp,

The World-Puissance on almighty Shiva's lap,—

The Master and the Mother of all lives

Watching the worlds their twin regard had made,

And Krishna and Radha for ever entwined in bliss,

The Adorer and Adored self-lost and one,
(Savitri, Book Seven, Canto Five, p. 596.)

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THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK FOR WORLD PEACE

N. SESHADRINATHAN

There are scientists who mock at people because they attribute to the winds, the sea, the clouds, the lightning and everything that excites our wonder a personal factor, which is slightly called anthropomorphism. It is impossible for man unless he forgets himself entirely to get away from anthropomorphism. He may attribute everything to mechanical or physical phenomena. Such a person if pushed to the extreme may call himself an automatic machine that has a 'birth', a 'growth' and 'death'. The 'birth' and 'death' are accepted by him as apparent. He would call it a transformation of matter-energy system. This matter-energy system exhibits phenomena consistent with the laws men have formulated in the fields of mathematics, physics and chemistry and these laws are subject to frequent changes as man advances in knowledge regarding these sciences.

He rejoices in the discoveries made by the scientists. And he says, 'See what has been achieved! There! a planet is now moving round the earth, there, another is reaching the moon, and the man inside the planet is communicating what is taking place in the moon.'

With all these discoveries, he has not been able to extend the life of man beyond the hundred and odd years. He forgets that he himself is a helpless creature subject to the natural forces round him, including the cosmic forces. He is not able to explain his limitations and the origin of the tremendous forces good and bad that have been developed in him. He is not able to say what is the goal for which he is directing his forces, all the striving he exhibits.

Now that the threat of atomic bombs which can devastate whole continents is

there, what is going to be the gain by releasing these destructive forces? If there is no gain, why threaten the world with them? What has been the effect of the atom bomb thrown over Japan? Has it cowed the Japanese? How are we to know what is working in the minds of the Japanese? Granting that the Japanese have been cowed down by the bombing, has it brought about security to the rest of the world? These are serious questions which are puzzling the minds of men possessing high levels of culture.

It is fear that inflicts suffering. It is fear that makes us cowards unable to speak out the truth. It is national fear that accumulates defence weapons, that even may release these devastating weapons without paying an iota of thought about the consequences in a moment of emotional outburst.

It requires tremendous courage not to use these weapons, not to possess them, but to divert the stored energies in them for constructive work.

It requires unlimited courage which comes from wisdom and not from intellect to organise internationalism and work for the welfare of humanity at large, irrespective of racial or colour distinctions.

Democracy based on elections is losing ground, and has failed to bring relief for the sufferings of the common man. We have to devise some other system. Men who are destined to lead the people have to have vision, wisdom and sincerity. All these three qualities must be possessed by the leaders. A man of vision can only remain a philosopher, a man of wisdom can only turn out to be a Cassandra, merely sincere person may be absolutely useless to achieve anything. A man with

the three qualities is bound to be accepted by the public and can receive full co-operation. The attribute 'courage' has not been added, because it goes with sincerity. Such a man may not get elected by a democratic electorate.

The spiritually minded man alone can be sincere, possess vision and wisdom. Such a leader entirely forgets himself when he serves humanity within his sphere. The ego that remains in him is a mere fraction of himself. He can never allow himself be flattered, never remain at rest. His thoughts and actions will be as close to truth as is humanly possible. Such a hero is required at this moment to lead every state forward, to attain world peace.

World peace is not a chimera. It is a reality that can be achieved. It is a necessary reality. The differences, the contrary forces, the emotional outbursts, the idealistic distinctions, the selfishness of men and nations, the tendencies for aggression present in individuals and nations, the desire for hoarding, and so on that are present in humanity at large are not forgotten in talking about the achievement of world peace, they are accepted, but their exhibition can be so effectively reduced and diffused that they are not able to produce intolerable heat.

It is like what we do when we mix pure sulphuric acid and water, it is like the mitigating effects of enzymes in the living body where great chemical changes are constantly being effected which outside in

the laboratory may require excessive heat and very high voltage of electricity. Such enzymic action can be obtained from a spiritual outlook in every one of our thoughts and actions. The sages have from time immemorial been voicing the use of this remedy in our everyday life.

The individuals in a cultured society restrain their urges cutting each other's throats, or adapting other kinds of violent methods to achieve their ends. They give and take in an accepted fair bargain, they tolerate and try to understand the other man's point of view, they understand their own limitations in attempting to assert or express an opinion. These methods are born of wisdom. Wealth or power does not vitiate the nature of a cultured man.

The same controls can be adopted to prevent international outbursts and effect international toleration, and international understanding. We see already signs of this approach. Let us pray that the spiritual aspect of man be roused in the settlement of international affairs. Prayers sincerely offered will not be in vain.

'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.'

Let us hope that the memory of Swami Vivekananda whose birthday we have celebrated recently, and who stirred the souls of the Americans with the Vedantic lore will effect this spiritual change in the minds of the men that try to find solutions for international problems.

Be not afraid of anything. You will do marvellous work. The moment you fear, you are nobody. It is fear that is the great cause of misery in the world. It is fear that is the greatest of all superstitions. It is fear that is the cause of our woes, and it is fearlessness that brings heaven even in a moment.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A blow on the head can make a man unconscious. It may even damage his thinking faculty for life. To this extent an injury to the brain is an injury to the mind. There may still be some who think that thought is to the brain what bile is to the liver. It is futile to argue with them. They take 'matter' to be no more than what it appears to be to the sense organs. On the other hand there will be many who understand that what is grasped as 'matter' is really 'energy' in some 'form',—energy subject to certain pressures and capable of performing certain functions. When associated with the human personality, such 'matter' or 'energy' becomes useful for speeding up evolution. From this standpoint both 'body' and 'mind' have to be reckoned as highly specialized instruments representing, in a way, the level of evolution already attained. What is more, they ought to be gladly employed without delay for taking us to the greatest heights man can ever reach.

None can deny that aspiration is at the root of all evolution. And how can we think of evolution except in terms of a total heaving of the 'personality' of an individual, to begin with? In man, especially, we have to recognize it in the movement of ideas expressed in some form of inner speech. We know that when duly repeated, ideas penetrate into the habit level. They then go beyond the compulsion to carry on further repetitions. We may restate the principle thus: values stabilized through proper repetition remain creative in the subtlest realms of Nature even when the individual concerned is in dreamless sleep. Indian philosophers will add a few points more. They will say that when aspiration reaches that

pitch of intensity, it functions like a second body,—a very subtle one (*Sūkṣma śarīra*) as distinct from the familiar physical frame of waking experience. They will also say that this subtle body is so powerful that it operates even after physical death. In fact, except in the case of the 'liberated' sage, it brings about 'rebirth'. This is but another name for a fresh opportunity to become spiritually illumined and to shake off once for all every sense of 'limitation', including craving for enjoyment or fear of death.

We have seen a positive example of this creative power of aspiration in the story of Indu's sons. They had emotionally assimilated themselves with the status and experience of the multi-faced Lord of creation wedded to wisdom and art. The intensity of their visualization produced a two-fold result. First, it paved the way for their actual embodiment as rulers of different aspects of cosmic work in the next cycle. At the same time it weakened, in a corresponding measure, the set-up that had made them take birth as the offspring of Indu and his devoted wife.

The *Yoga Vāsistha* gives, side by side, a negative example too. That is through the story of the illegitimate but unwavering love of a queen named Ahalyā and an immoral Brahmin youth called Indra. On coming to know of their shameful conduct, the indignant king followed up his stern warnings with a series of severe punishments. He threw the offending pair into a freezing tank or into a tub of scalding water. Or he tied them to the legs of palace elephants. But all to no purpose; the fond couple only laughed at the

of the king to knock out their excessive mutual attachment. Society might view with concern the open defiance of moral codes by such reckless youths. But the fact remained that fire and cold left their bodies unharmed. Intensity of feeling,—irrespective of its moral content—had managed to enter an area which conferred a sort of immunity to the very elements emerging from there to mould their physical frames! Said the young man, with a keenness of view which we ordinarily admire only in persons of self-control: "All your attempts to torment the body can give no pain to the mind which is my true self and constitutes my real personality. Nobody can break down the firm mind with resolutely entrenched views. It may be possible to modify the condition of the body through boons or curses. But nothing can prevail against the heroic texture of a strong-willed man determined to win." The king in despair persuaded sage Bharata to inflict a heavy curse upon the unrepentant lovers. Sure, their bodies were reduced to their rudimentary elements. But their values remained unchanged. Before the fall of their bodies they made the significant retort: 'We are in the least affected by this curse of yours. What is lost if the body is gone? The inner principle can never be destroyed by anybody anywhere.

¹ (Tena-)anya-śāsanād-duḥkham kimcid-eva na vidyate
Mano-mātram aham Rājan! mano hi puruṣaḥ smṛtaḥ Utpatti, lxxxix, 36
Viram mano bhedayitum manāg-api na śakyate 38
Deho hi vara-śāpābhyām anyatvam-iva gacchati
Nanu dhīram mano Rājan! vijigīṣutayā sthitam 49

It is so subtle, so full of consciousness! It is not easy for any enemy to mark or hit it!

The story ends by stressing the fact that Bharata's curse was able to break down their physical bodies alone. It could not affect their minds or subtle bodies which continued in unshaken mutual attachment in many subsequent lives.

It is easy to shatter a thing done by the hand and other organs of action. But who can annul what is passionately held in the mind? Only he, the 'thinker' who has put it there, can remove it.³ And that too, of course, by repeated efforts surpassing those that went into its original installation.

मग चरैवेति।

SUBANDHU

² Anena śāpa-dānena kimcid-bhāvati nā'vayoḥ
Dehe naṣṭe na nau kimcin-naśyati svānta-rūpayoḥ
Svāntam hi nahi kenā'pi śakyate nāsitum kvacit
Sūkṣmatvāc-cinmayatvāc-ca durlakṣyatvāc-ca viddhi nau

Ibid, lxxxx, 7-8

³ Bhārato'pi tayoh śāpaḥ sa samartho babhūva ha
Śarīra-mātrākramaṇe, na mano-nigrahe prabho!
Karmendriyair-yat-kriyate tad-roddhum kila yujyate
Na mano-niścaya-kṛtam kaścid-rodhā-yitum kṣamaḥ
Yo baddha-padatām yāto jantor-manasi niścayaḥ
Sa tenaiva vinā Brahman! nā'nyena vinivāryate

Ibid, lxxxviii, 18-19.

I have experienced even in my insignificant life that good motives, sincerity and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of millions of hypocrites and brutes.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A SAVANT'S WORKS

M. HAFIZ SYED

Numerous friends and admirers of the late venerable Dr Bhagavan Das M.A., D.Litt. in and outside the Uttar Pradesh rejoiced only a few months ago to find that he had nearly completed his 90th year of great usefulness and service to the cause of Philosophy and to his beloved country. We in the Uttar Pradesh have reasons to be proud of him, because he belonged to us and was born on the 29th January 1869 in the holy city of Kashi. He showed signs of his brilliance at his early age. At the tender age of twelve years he passed his matriculation examination and obtained his Master of Arts Degree in Western Philosophy at a comparatively young age of eighteen. He did not take long to wait for a suitable job. The then United Provinces Government recognising his extra-ordinary merits straightaway appointed him as a Tahsildar and a year later he was promoted to the post of Deputy Collector, the duties of which he discharged with great distinction and served various districts of the Uttar Pradesh (the United Provinces).—In response to the call of some of his most esteemed friends, more especially of late Dr Annie Besant, he severed his connexion with the Government in 1898 and occupied himself whole-heartedly in the service of the Central Hindu College for quite a number of years. He served the Central Hindu College in various capacities and finally as a Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Later on he served the Municipal Board, Banaras, as its Chairman for three years and the Kashi Vidya-pith as its Kulpati from the time it was founded. He took keen and active interest in the struggle for freedom of India. For some years he identified himself with the Congress Politics and had to undergo incarceration perhaps for six months or more.

He was elected by the seven cities of the Uttar Pradesh (then called United Provinces) to the Central Legislative Assembly and remained in office for two or three years. Due to his advancing age and his deeper interest in the cultivation of higher purpose he resigned his membership of the Central Legislature and fully occupied himself to the pursuit of philosophic learning and interpretation of Indian Thought. In his own inimitable manner and original way of thinking he expounded ancient Indian wisdom according to modern method.

PUBLICATIONS

During all the days of Government service and later the service of his own people he quietly and devotedly pursued his studies of the deeper problems of life: It was in 1904 that he published the Science of Peace which was recognised by eminent thinkers of India and Western countries as a monumental work of original speculation based upon his deeper insight into Eastern and Western thought. It is a treatise on metaphysics which brings peace and certainty to every open-minded and genuine enquirer into the why and wherefore of many subtle and complex problems of life.

The second edition of this book in an enlarged and revised form was published in 1921. The second great work of his, was the Science of Emotions which has won the appreciation of modern psychologists who have acclaimed it as a solid contribution of Indian thought to human psychology. His another outstanding contribution has been the Science of Social Organisation, a wonderful interpretation of the ancient laws of Manu and their comparison with the modern development of social science.

Besides these original and by far the most thought-provoking philosophical works his

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three volumes of *Pranava-vada* deserve special mention. During his stay in Bara Banki as a Deputy Magistrate he came in contact with Pandit Dhanraj who possessed colossal memory and who remembered by heart quite a large number of Sanskrit books until that time unknown to the world. One of the books dictated by Pandit Dhanraj was *Pranava-vada* over which Dr Bhagavan Das took immense pains, wrote out most carefully all that Pandit Dhanraj dictated to him, corrected and revised it most meticulously and translated them into English and interpreted them in a most lucid manner. This service of his can never be forgotten, because but for him and his labour of love, all that has come to us as an exposition of the philosophy of Pranava, would have been lost to the world of learning. In his later days he published several other books such as Krishna, Mystic Experiences, Annie Besant and the Changing World, and World-war and its Only Cure—World Order and World Religion: Communalism and its Cure by Theosophy. The Philosophy of Non-co-operation, Ancient Solutions of Modern Problems: Social Reconstruction and the Science of Religion, besides numerous pamphlets and articles which have been very much appreciated in various parts of India.

FAITH IN UNITY OF RELIGIONS

There is another service to the cause of Unity of Religions of the world which Dr Bhagavan Das has rendered in a most scholarly and most convincing manner. His new-famous book on the Essential Unity of All Religions which has already gone several editions, is too well-known to need further mention. By publishing this book he has proved categorically that all the religions of the world have sprung from a common stock and bear unity of thought and aims in essential principles. This volume has done not a little in emphasizing the fact that the underlying principles of all the religions is one and the same. Coming as we do from a common Source, we all have a common des-

tiny and a fairly common method of spiritual realization.

ATMA-VIDYA, THE FOUNDATION OF HIS PHILOSOPHY

Dr Bhagavan Das's system of philosophical thought is perhaps all his own. He bases his philosophy on Atma-Vidya, or the Science of the Self. His point of view may be stated in his own words:

He is a believer in (1) infinitely countless individual selves or souls; (2) their rebirths, evolution and involution, in and through evolving and involving, integrating and dis-integrating, forming and dissolving, material bodies and surroundings; the passing of each self, through all possible experiences, in infinite time, space and motion; in (3) cycles and circles of time and space on all possible scales of duration and extent, in which the process of rhythmic evolution and involution manifest themselves; in (4) one all-including, all pervading, ever complete, timeless, spaceless, universal soul of self, whose eternally changeless, and yet also ever changing Ideation, the entire world-process of all souls and bodies is.

According to him, the science of self can help the orderly conduct of the individual life, within the social life and vouchsafe earthly and spiritual well-being within the reach of all.

PRACTICAL APPLICABILITY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

It is said in certain quarters that philosophy is merely speculative and theoretical; it cannot be applied in the scientific manner to the solution of social, political and economical problems. It has no use in everyday human life. Its intellectual advantages are admitted but it is wrongly supposed that it is of no use in ameliorating the condition of human society. This view of philosophy may be true in regard to Western system of philosophy; but the same cannot be asserted in regard to Indian system of philosophy.

According to the Indian Philosophical tradition the object of the study of philosophy is to put an end to pain and to ensure human happiness exempt from decay. From the Indian point of view Western philosophy is barren and does not lead us anywhere beyond helping us to develop the power of thought but Indian philosophy leads us somewhere and gives us some insight into the why and wherefore of life's questions. It also vouchsafes us certain amount of certainty in our search for truth.

During the last fifty years and more efforts have been made to study Indian philosophy critically and systematically. Several eminent scholars have worked zealously in this field and have produced work of great merit; but they have mostly confined themselves to interpretation of ancient Indian Philosophy in terms of Modern Thought. There they have stopped. They have made no serious attempt to apply the fundamental basic principle of India's ancient wisdom to the solution of current social, political and other human problems. It may be safely asserted that unlike other Indian philosophers of the present day Dr Bhagavan Das holds his own and has done his very best in expounding and solving some of the current Indian problems in the light of ancient wisdom.

WHAT IS TRUE DEMOCRACY

In his well-known book "Ancient Solutions of Modern Problems" page 48 he says:

'As things are, today, most of the so-called self-governments of the world are, not governments of the people, by the (higher self, the select and elect best, of the) people, for the (welfare of the) people', but 'of the people, by the (lower self, the pushful, cunning, scheming, self-seeking, intriguing, worst of

the) people, for the (aggrandisement of cliques of bureaucrats and handfuls of capitalists and militarists and against) people'.

Truly democratic spirit is revealed in the following statement (page 65):

'Aryan culture says that if a hundred men of the people complain against any public servant he shall be dismissed forthwith'.

In his wonderful treatise on the Science of Religion (page 127), we read "that no birth, not even learning, but conduct is the supreme test of the regeneracy".

ABIDING VALUE OF HIS WORKS

Some Hindu leaders have begun taking interest in the revival of what they call Hindu Culture without taking the least trouble to find out what it stands for and what is its spiritual basis. It was left to Dr Bhagavan Das alone to expound and prove what was and what should be the philosophic basis of Hindu culture and how it could be brought on the level of modern requirements in order to preserve its true spirit in the midst of conflicting ideologies existing in our country. In short Dr Bhagavan Das's services to the cause of Indian Thought, Indian Culture, Indian Religion, Indian Society and Indian Politics are too great and too all-embracing to be adequately expressed in a limited space of a short article. Sincere workers in various fields of human welfare, would do well to study his truly inspiring and constructive original suggestions conveyed in his variety of books in order to fit themselves for the acquisition of right understanding and right form of activity which may help them to re-organise their various institutions in the light of ancient wisdom, like of which the world has not yet seen and found.

Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life; think of it; dream of it; live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The Editorial discusses about applying the methods of worship in the service of man looking at his divine core, the service being the special need and fad of the modern age.

Pranamanjali by 'Krishnan' was first published in 1948 in *Amrita Vani* of Kaladi. Swami Mridananda has provided the English translation.

Swami Dharmeshananda, a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, had the rare privilege of sitting at the feet of M. for years together and hearing from his lips 'the nectar of the words of the Master'. His reminiscences of M. are translated from his diary written at that time in Bengali.

Sri N. Bhaktavatsalam, Head of the

Telugu Department, Vivekananda College, Madras, delivered his speech at a meeting of the Rotary Club, Nellore, on 4-6-'58.

Sri Tenneti Viswanatham read his paper on Sri Sankara at a Symposium in the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

Sri Provash Chandra Kar, B.Sc., Dip. S. Tech., is a chemist of Calcutta.

Sri A. J. Srivastava is Controller of Communication, Madras Region, Civil Aviation Dept., Govt. of India.

Captain N. Seshadrinathan, M.B., B.S., D.T.M., of Madras is a Tamil writer on popular science.

Dr M. Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., is a retired professor of Allahabad.

WORK AND PROGRESS

In the January issue we discussed in this column the necessity of inculcating the habit of physical work in the students. The occasion was the announcement by the Education Minister of introducing compulsory social service by students. We made a plea for phasing out the programme of service and labour throughout the period of study instead of intensive labour for a few months. The former method alone can remove the dislike for manual labour. Recently Sri Rajagopalachariar has forcefully pleaded for 'converting all our people into labouring individuals'. In the course of an article he says:

It may look like over-simplification, but I am convinced that the principal cause of all our backwardness is the distaste for manual labour prevailing among the classes. Not only has this age-long defect been kept up without counter-moves against it, but every scheme of widening the area of education spreads this evil among the sections of the population that lived by manual labour alone. . . .

Mercy shouting for work will not make any impression on the people. Educational and family lives must be shaped to convert all our people into labouring individuals. It is only

then that the social and economic evils of our society will begin to disappear.

(*Swarajya*, January 31, '59, p. 5.)

The modern fad is to make the unpleasant training and education as sugarcoated as possible. Even theoretical studies which require rigorous training of the mind and will are diluted for making them palatable. The same attitude plays its part in the field of physical work. Hence we try to train up the young people indirectly through sports and hobbies. Rajaji advocates direct facing of the problem.

I do not believe in the sham worship at the altar of manual work that is sometimes done in the present day schools. Nor is sport or scout activity equivalent to what is wanted. Class activities of that kind, although they involve some amount of physical work and strain, do not go to the root of the matter, viz, the distaste for doing hard manual work as a reality, that is, for eking out one's livelihood. Sport and hobbies yield pleasure, but the distaste for pain and labour is not tackled by them. We have to make the classes give up the dislike to use their muscles for work. The use of muscles for play or enjoyment or for exercise is wholly different.

The anxiety to sweeten the unpleasant experiences is understandable. But when they are unavoidable and the indirect process does not produce the desired result, it is better to face the problem squarely. 'Face the brute', said Swami Vivekananda, 'Face Nature. Face ignorance. Face illusion. Never fly!'

The dislike for work, not only physical but other types too, has become a national problem. Though the leaders speak of more and more work, the employees now-a-days lessen it more and more. Of course, in this, some other leaders are partly responsible. Somehow or other the notion is gaining currency among the employees, may be because of the propaganda of parties willing to make capital out of discontent and chaos, that hard work is not essential for the progress of the individual or groups. What is needed is union and organization which will force the employer to enhance the emulations. Organization of employees is now axiomatically recognized as necessary. But its bargaining chance is during distribution. We often forget that it is work and work alone that can increase wealth which can be shared by the employees. Production in big concerns is already affected. But this

mentality has given the greatest blow to employment in private homes. The scope of employment in families has alarmingly lessened in recent times because of this tendency. It may be argued that this is a good sign that people are being freed from servitude to individuals and thereby dignity of man is enhanced. Well, this may be true. But what about the vast number of people ill-equipped for facing life otherwise? They cannot learn a new profession, nor do they get easily any alternative employment. That is why we notice many of them getting reduced to beggars gradually. It is the duty of all those who do not believe in chaos as a necessary precondition for progress, to work against the development of this mentality that work is not so important, unity alone is necessary. It is work, hard work, that alone can take us to the haven of plenty. Swami Vivekananda felt its urgency and exhorted his countrymen saying:

Let us all work hard, my brethren, this is no time for sleep. On our work depends the coming of the India of the future. She is there ready waiting. She is only sleeping. Arise, and awake, and see her seated here, on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was — this motherland of ours.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE GREAT SAVIOURS OF THE WORLD:

By Swami Abhedananda. (Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta). Second Enlarged Edition 1957. Pp. 337. Price Rs. 8/-.

This book contains the lectures delivered by Swami Abhedananda to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and to the Vedanta Society, New York. 'The principal aim and object of these illuminative lectures', says the Publisher's Note, 'are to show that the fundamental teachings of the Founders of the great religions of the world have had the same spiritual keynote and that the stories connected with their divine lives and miraculous deeds are analogous'. 'Furthermore, it has been demonstrated in this volume that the universal religion of Vedanta embraces the

teachings of all the Saviours of the world and it harmonizes all sectarian religions'. It needs hardly be emphasised that this is exactly what the world needs today, namely to learn that Religion is one though religions are many, that every Saviour proclaims the same truth suiting it, however, to the climate of the minds to whom he speaks. No nation or people can claim the monopoly of God's voice, or say that they are the chosen race. As the revered Swami says in his Introduction: 'If we cannot recognise Divinity in the prophets and saviours of other peoples, then we have not realized Divinity in the prophet of our own'. Referring to the periodical advent of Saviours at different times and places, the author observes: 'By the law of

cyclic evolution, the powers which these saviours leave behind them rise from a small centre, and spread like a tidal wave, inundating the world and everywhere fertilizing the soil of human minds and sowing the seeds of divine ideals. Then, in course of time, when that wave subsides, another prophet, saviour or Divine incarnation appears in another place where such a manifestation is needed and where conditions are mature'.

The Saviours who are the subjects of study in this book are Krishna, Zoroaster, Lao-Tze, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed and Ramakrishna. The author refutes the contention that Krishna is a mythical figure and establishes that He was a 'historic personage' who lived centuries before Christ'. After narrating the incidents of Krishna's life and giving a resume of His teachings, it is shown how in His life there is 'a most wonderful combination of divine and human qualities'. The accounts of the other Saviours follow the same plan of a biographical sketch and a brief summary of their principal teachings in their own words. The Swami points out that 'Zoroastrianism is not a system of philosophy, but a revealed religion of faith and devotion'. When we come to Lao-Tze, we see Vedantic parallels in his teachings. 'Tao is prior to God' reminds us of the logical antecedence of Brahman to Isvara.

After showing that 'the religion of Buddha may be said to be an outgrowth of the Sankhya system', the learned author points out how 'even the minds of the most advanced disciples of Buddha were staggered and confounded many a time, in their attempts to get a clear conception of this state of Nirvana' and rival theories were the consequences of this lack of unanimity in interpreting the words (or shall we say, the silence) of the Master. No wonder therefore that India refused to harbour 'the God-less philosophy and the soulless psychology of Buddhism'. The author has beautifully brought out the contrast between pessimistic Buddhism and optimistic Vedanta.

There are four chapters devoted to Christ. The first gives an account of his life and ends with showing that the students of Vedanta regard him as 'an incarnation of the Logos, the eternal Word of God', 'as the Son of God, as the Saviour of the World'. In the next chapter, after discussing why the 25th of December was fixed as the day of Christ's nativity, the author shows how he is in the line of the great Saviours, that he 'lived in God-consciousness and realised the most intimate relation which the individual soul bears to the Father of the Universe'. In the chapter on 'Vedanta and the Teachings of Jesus', it is shown

how 'ethically and spiritually the teachings of Jesus are in complete harmony with those of Vedanta, and the steps towards the attainment of spirituality are identical, but Jesus spoke in parables, while Vedanta affords a rational foundation of ethics and religion'.

Speaking of Mohammed, the Swami remarks that 'no prophet had ever suffered so much persecution nor had shown so much firmness of faith and trust in the will of his Lord throughout his life and under all circumstances as was shown by the prophet of Arabia. His teachings were simple, but full of fire which suited the warlike temper of the Arab nation'.

Appropriately enough the book ends with 'Sri Ramakrishna and His teachings'. The Great Master was a visible vindication of Sri Krishna's promise: "Whosoever comes to Me through whatsoever path, I reach him. All men are struggling in different paths which ultimately lead to Me". He showed 'the underlying unity in the variety of religions and to establish that universal religion of which sectarian religions are each but partial expressions'. It is this thesis of a universal religion understood not as one religion for the entire world and for all time, but as one Religion variously proclaimed with distinct emphases that is the subject of these very thoughtful lectures whose trend is quite in keeping with the ideals and purpose of the Ramakrishna Mission. To students of comparative religion this book is a mine of information and a source of much enlightenment.

P. SANKARAN ARAYANAN

Here are two other books by Swami Abhedananda and published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta-6.

REINCARNATION: Pages 100. Price Rs. 2.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE: Pages 120. Price Rs. 4.

BAL GANGADHAR TILAK: By T. V. Parvate. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.) Pages 550. Price Rs. 7.

It is a noteworthy feature of the times that biography as a branch of literature has begun gaining recognition even in this country. Despite many handicaps that attempts at full-length biographies have to suffer yet on account of the ingrained habit of Indians in not keeping diaries and correspondence-files in any regular manner, still, of at least prominent politicians, the daily press and other publicity agencies supply ample materials and correct data, at any rate concerning their public life so as to enable biographers

perform their task with less strain and initial trouble.

The life of Lokamanya Tilak is certainly a very laudable object for any one to attempt. From a number of competitors who wrote biographies of the great man during the birth-centenary of the Lokamanya in 1956, was selected, by a committee, the present author as one of superior merit with two others. Indeed the volume under review is in no way meagre or unsubstantial. Nearly 545 pages have been packed with information and anecdotes that bear the stamp of authenticity and careful documentation. The writer has done full justice to the political career of the Lokamanya and has taken his willing readers from stage to stage from the beginning to the end of that mighty force Tilak developed into in the Indian national struggle.

Largely three main aspects of Tilak's life find adequate treatment here. Tilak as a journalist, as a great scholar and as a politician of the first rank, each has received quite a complete delineation here. The early days of his editorship of 'Kesari' and his collaboration with Agarkar of the *Mahratta* have received sufficient attention from the author. Tilak's dauntless courage in the cause of the country's advance towards Swaraj and his unabating zeal and persistency, in carrying on political controversies to a finish find amply illustrated with a number of extracts germane to the question.

As a scholar, Tilak's *Orion* and 'The Arctic Home of the Vedas', showing how prodigious were his labours in building up the theory of the original home of the Aryans near the north Pole, can in no way escape the reader's gripping attention. Again his *Geeta-Rahasya*, stressing the Lord's message as more of *Karma-yoga* (Action), is by no means an ordinary task. For he has exhibited both his dialectical powers and quality of argument, apart from discovering a great deal of inward knowledge of Sastraic lore and grasp of legalistic principles. Sanskrit and Law contributed a great deal to Tilak's forcefulness in debates generally. With him as a politician more, the entire book is taken up. Tilak's beginnings of public life supply interesting materials for the student of politics. Again his ardent faith in celebrations of Shivaji Anniversaries and Ganesh Pujas as part of our national education strikes the reader as remarkable regarding the immense power and imagination behind those ideas. His services to the Indian National Congress and the steady schism he brought about between extremists and moderates culminating in the Surat debacle, his strong articles in the

Kesari which landed him in more than once receiving sentence and jail life for sedition, his historic trial of 1907 and the unforgettable scenes in court with the ultimate internment at Mandalay for six years, his wonderful recovery of spirits after return to his post of duty and his redoubled vigour and devotion to winning Swaraj for India, his launching of a libel action in England against Sir Valentine Chirol for statements made in his book 'Indian Unrest' and his powerful standing of the cross-examination of Sir Edward Carson, one of the very ablest cross-examiners of the English courts—all have been narrated with the utmost precision and graphic description.

The almost last two chapters, *Attitude to the Cult of Violence and Tilak and Gandhi*, are really allowing the readers scope to probe deep into some of the vital issues that a later generation is likely to miss in evaluating the great hero's claim to permanent and solid achievements as a worker in the national struggle, which under Gandhiji's leadership alone reached the coveted finale. Really these two chapters are of such intrinsic value to bring about a balance of mind in any one who may otherwise arrive at any rashness of conclusion by the highly stirring incidents of Tilak's career as a politician.

The family of Tilak, his domestic atmosphere and his hours of relaxation from the fevers of a public life, have very little or nothing narrated here; nor do we get a glimpse into the lighter aspects or the human side of the man.

Further, however well and closely documented the narrative may be, we have hardly a feeling of exhilaration in the reading of a life which was out and out packed with exciting anecdotes and solid achievements. The improved technique of a modern biography is not anywhere visible, in spite of more than five hundred odd pages of very good material presented to the reader. Art-form that is so essential after the Strachey's, Guedallas and Mauroises have traversed the field of biography and led the way for others to emulate, is conspicuously absent in this otherwise eminently readable volume.

But none the less we acclaim the attempt as praiseworthy.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Here are three more books published by Navajivan Publishing House.

HOMAGE TO THE DEPARTED: By M. K. Gandhi. Compiled and edited by S. B. Kher. Pages 208. Price Rs. 2.50.

MOHAN-MALA: A Gandhian Rosary. Compiled by R. K. Prabhu. Price Re. 1.

Collection of a thought for each day of the year.

PANCHAYAT RAJ: By M. K. Gandhi. Compiled by R. K. Prabhu. Pages 41. Price 30 nP.

THE WORLD AS WILL AND REPRESENTATION: By Arthur Schopenhauer. Translated from the German by E. F. J. Payne. Volumes I & II. Published by the Falcon's Wing Press, Indian Hills, Colorado. Pages 687. Price \$ 17.50.

Arthur Schopenhauer needs no introduction to the scholars and students of Philosophy in the East and the West. As stated by him his philosophy is the natural continuation and completion of the Kantian, for he has taken as the foundation of his own system of thought the ideality of space and time and the Kantian thing-in-itself as expounded in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Under the lead that has been shown by Science in the recent years, the present edition has a voice, stronger than any other, towards the surging irrational will and misrepresentation that hover over the world situation. Though we may not accept that the world is misled completely, yet we may not disagree to accept that the world is infected. The progression of world events substantiate this basic truth. Volume I of the present work contains the basic idea of Schopenhauer's system of thought in four books dealing with the world as representation and as will. A masterly criticism of the Kantian philosophy forms a very useful appendix. The chapters of the second volume corroborate the discussion laid before in the First Volume.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (The patriot-saint of Modern India): By Dr. A. D. Pusalker, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D. Published by the President, Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Bombay-21. Pages 47. Price 0.62 nP.

The booklet under review is the paper read at the 95th Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at the Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Bombay on 27-1-57. The personality of the Swamiji has been portrayed as the rare combination of being a patriot and a saint, in whom patriotism was deified into the highest sainthood and loving service to fellowmen into true worship. As observed by Pandit Nehru, 'Rooted in the past and full of India's heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in

his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present.' In the interests of regeneration of India, Swamiji's works need a more intense and systematic study and consideration. Laying emphasis on Universal Religion, Swamiji said that we want a religion which will give faith in ourselves, a national self-respect and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around us. The author has taken great pains to present the Swamiji as one who was very much interested in the national struggle of India side by side preserving her age-old culture and heritage.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

EAST AND WEST SERIES

The following books are by Sri T. L. Vaswani, available at 10 Connaught Road, Poona-1.

1. *Sri Chaitanya, The Great Master*; 2. *Sri Chaitanya, Prophet of Love*; 3. *Sri Chaitanya, Krishna's Beloved*: These three booklets deal with Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who lived in Bengal nearly four and a half centuries back and exclaimed unto Lord Sri Krishna with intense devotion 'I am nothing, O Beloved, Thou art the All'. The life and message of the saint have been well presented.

4. *Little Flowers—An Anthology of Atmavidya or Life in the Spirit*: Golden words of the seers and saints of East and West have been preserved in the fourth book. It is humility to call them 'Little Flowers'. In fact these flowers culled from many places are priceless gems to be decked in the necklace of one's life. They speak in deep sublimity the underlying truth of Unity in all religions — a Universal religion of Love, Compassion and Truthfulness, the Religion in all religions, the Wisdom in all scriptures, and the Illumination in all saints and prophets.

5. *Little Talks On Great Subjects, Part I*: The three talks presented herein are based on the author's talks in the A.I.R. Poona and to the British troops of the Royal Air Force stationed at Karachi. The *Gita* and the new age speaks of *Gita* as an expression of life, as a gospel of duty and a scripture of dedicated life in this world of tragedy and tears. *Mahatma Gandhi* is described as a Bhakta of the *Gita*. The *Yoga for the layman* is a succinct exposition of *Yoga*—its meaning and message.

6. *Krishna Callech*: Pages 66. Price Re.1. Sadhu Vaswani has placed many devotees of the *Gita* under a deep sense of obligation to him in having brought out Krishna, the Gitacharya,

in a new light of preaching social philosophy, ethics, and morals for the upliftment of mankind, material and spiritual. The concepts of devotion and service have rightly claimed their respective positions. The book provides for enough time of meditative reading and self-examination.

7. *The Voice of a disciple*: An interpreter of the life of the spirit. Pages 32. Price 50 nP.

8. *Beloved Dadaji*: By J. P. Vaswani. Life of Sadhu Vaswani. Pages 32. Price 50 nP.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

PERIODICAL

KALYAN: Humanity Special Number. Vol. XXXIII, No. 1. Edited by Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar and Sri C. L. Goswami. Published at the Gita Press, Gorakhpur (India). Pages 704. Price Rs. 7.50 nP.

This special number of the Hindi monthly, *Kalyan* is timely and the articles herein presented are from matured minds. Sadhus belonging to the various orders, professors, politicians, famous public men, and noted writers have contributed their candid opinion in their usual style and have embellished the volume. The book provides the readers with enough counsel to solve many of the perplexing problems facing Humanity at large through these articles written from different angles of vision.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

KALYANA KALPATARU. Vol. XXII No. 12. December 1958. *Srimad Bhagavata* Number V. Book Ten. (latter half): Published by Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar, Gita Press, Gorakhpur (India). Pages 354-568. Price Rs. 2.50 nP.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The ninety-seventh birthday Tithipuja of Swami Vivekananda was observed in the Math on Saturday, January 31, 1959. The day started with group meditation followed by Mangalarati at 5 a.m. After devotional songs, chanting of select portions of the Gita and the Upanishads took place. The worship in the shrine started at 8 a.m. and came to a close at 12-30 p.m., after the homa was performed. The Chandi, Gita and Kathopanishad were also chanted in full. About 1500 devotees and 1200 Daridranarayanans were served with food prasada. After the evening service in the shrine some selected teachings of Swamiji were read by Swami Suddhasattwananda and then the gathering was addressed by Swami Budhananda and Swami Paramatmananda.

The public function came off the following day. A large picture of Swamiji was tastefully decorated by two students of the Arts School. The silent reading of the Life and Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda was started at 8 a.m. 120 devotees took part and read their respective portions. At 10-30 the gathering of devotees was addressed by some monks and devotees.

At 3, after songs and flute, the Harikatha on Satyavratasharitam by Sri Balakrishna Sasrigrigal began. The public meeting started at 5 p.m. with

Sri K. Santhanam, Ex-Lt.-Governor in the chair. Sri D. S. Sastri of Central Bank, Principal A. L. Krishnan of Jain College, Prof. T. K. Venkateswaran of Presidency College, Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, addressed the gathering in Telugu, English, Sanskrit and Tamil respectively. The President in course of his address commended the service of the Ramakrishna Mission and appreciated its unostentatiousness and purity. With the distribution of the prizes, followed by a vote of thanks by Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, the function came to a close.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAM, NAGPUR

THE OPENING OF THE NEW LIBRARY BUILDING WITH ITS FREE READING ROOM

The New Library Building with its Free Reading Room of Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Nagpur, was opened by Sri Y. B. Chavan, Chief Minister of Bombay State, on Monday, the 5th January 1959 — the Birthday of Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj. On this occasion Swami Sambuddhanandaji, President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay, also spoke on 'Sri Ramakrishna — the Unique Prophet of Harmony'. This function was held in the compound of the new Library Building which is just adjacent to the Ashram, and it was largely attended by the elite of the city. The new double-storied spacious building of the Library has been constructed at the cost of about 1½ lakhs of rupees.

Shri Y. B. Chavan in the course of his speech paid tributes to the great service rendered by the Ramakrishna Mission to India and other countries of the World, and declared that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were great personalities that were born to revive faith in religion, and in our own selves. Their great contribution is that they made us conscious of our spiritual and cultural heritage. According to Sri Chavan, the message of Indian culture is service to humanity and maintenance of the dignity of human values. In his speech he also highly appreciated the philanthropic activities of the local Ashram.

Swami Sambuddhanandaji while speaking declared, 'Sri Ramakrishna is really a unique Prophet of Harmony. He practised different religions of the World, and on the basis of his direct realisations, he pointed out that they all lead to the same goal. There is only one Eternal Religion, namely, the religion of God-realisation, and the various religions that we see in the World are but so many facets of this Eternal Religion. Other countries of the World are looking to India for spiritual guidance which has been her heritage since ancient times, and the flow of which no power on earth can stop. Sri Ramakrishna is the embodiment of ancient Indian culture, and in Swami Vivekananda he found an ideal disciple to propagate throughout the World his teachings of harmony of religions and service to humanity'. While concluding he said, 'The essence of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings is that humanity is one, that we all are one, and the realisation of this truth can alone ensure world peace'.

The Library contains a large number of selected volumes on various subjects, and in various languages; and the Reading Room provides a large number of newspapers and periodicals from all over India and also from abroad.

In this way this function was a great success owing to the spontaneous and appreciative response of the public of different communities.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, VARANASI

FIFTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

In 1957 the Indoor General Hospital admitted 3,398 cases. There were 646 surgical cases. The daily average number of beds occupied was 102. 31 men and women invalids were maintained. The total number of new patients treated at the

Out-patients' Department was 68,784 and that of repeated cases was 2,47,571. The daily average attendance was 870. The total number of surgical cases including injections was 43,591. 113 persons received monthly pecuniary help also. 32 students were given monthly help in the form of school fees, food, books and clothing. 442 persons were given occasional help. On an average 600 persons were given milk daily. The Pathological Laboratory, X-ray and Electro-Therapy Departments carried on their work efficiently. The income for the year under the General Fund was Rs. 1,38,598.15 nP, and the expenditure Rs. 1,51,103.32 nP, and the deficit under the General Fund was Rs. 12,505.17 nP. The authorities while thanking the public appeal for funds for endowment for beds in the Indoor Hospital, for a ward for male department, and for acquisition of land and other purposes.

STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1958

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home completed its fifty-four years of service. The total number of boys in the Home was 299, of whom 82 belonged to the backward classes and scheduled castes. The High School Section which was in Athur was brought back to the city. This residential school had 181 students on its roll. All the 35 pupils in the final year were sent up for public examination and 33 of them came out successful. The Collegiate Section had 37 students. All the 16 students who appeared in the different university examinations came out successful. The Technical Institute had 81 students. In the final diploma examination 14 out of 22 passed with two first classes. The Centenary Elementary School in Mylapore had 398 boys and girls. The Higher Elementary School, Malliankaranai had a strength of 190 boys and girls. Its attached hostel had 37 Harijan students. The total expenditure on all the sections put together amounted to Rs. 1,82,882, while the receipts were Rs. 1,68,618 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 14,264 which has been met from Revenue Reserve Account. As the Students' Home maintains the boys free the increase in the cost of living has thrown great strain on the management and hence they appeal for greater help while thanking the public.

SARADA VIDYALAYA, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1958

In the Girls' High School there are 43 sections with a strength of 1,810 girls. In the S.S.L.C. Examination, out of 248 pupils, 207 were declared

eligible, securing 84 per cent passes. The Basic Training School had 177 students during the year. There were special private classes for E.S.L.C. Examination. All the students passed out in the Basic Training Section, and 17 out of 22 in E.S.L.C. 176 students were getting stipends and 54 students were benefited by scholarships granted from endowments. The Higher Elementary School had 901 pupils. The Model Higher Elementary School (Senior Basic) had 673 pupils during the year. Three Hostels were also run by the Vidyalaya. The total expenditure of all the constituent institutions amounted to Rs. 2,65,948.96 nP. against a total receipt of Rs. 2,91,900.14 nP., leaving a balance of Rs. 25,951.18 nP. to be adjusted towards the deficit incurred in previous years.

OBITUARY

We are sorry to announce the passing away of Sri Kandukuru Mallikarjunam on February 4, 1959, at about 6 p.m. For some years past he was suffering from various ailments. He was a disciple of Srimat Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj, the third president of the Order. Since his retirement in 1935 as a Deputy Collector he lived in Madras and took active part in the activities of the Math, specially in translating the Ramakrishna—Vivekananda Literature. In all he has translated about two dozen books into Telugu. He was also the Editor for the *Ramakrishna Prabha*, our Telugu Monthly, for some time. He was 79 when he passed away. May his soul rest in peace!

VEDANTA KESARI

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I, Swami Suddhasatwananda, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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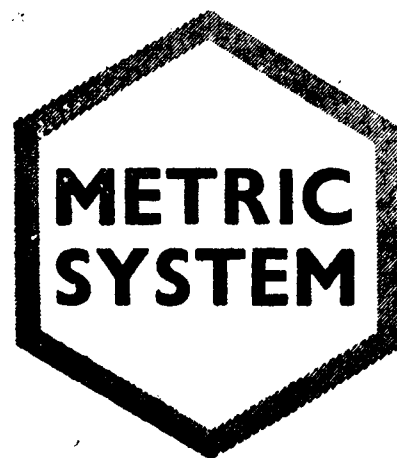
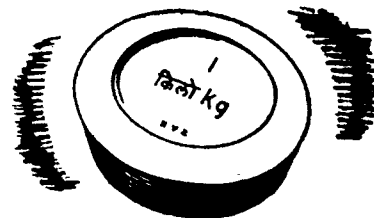
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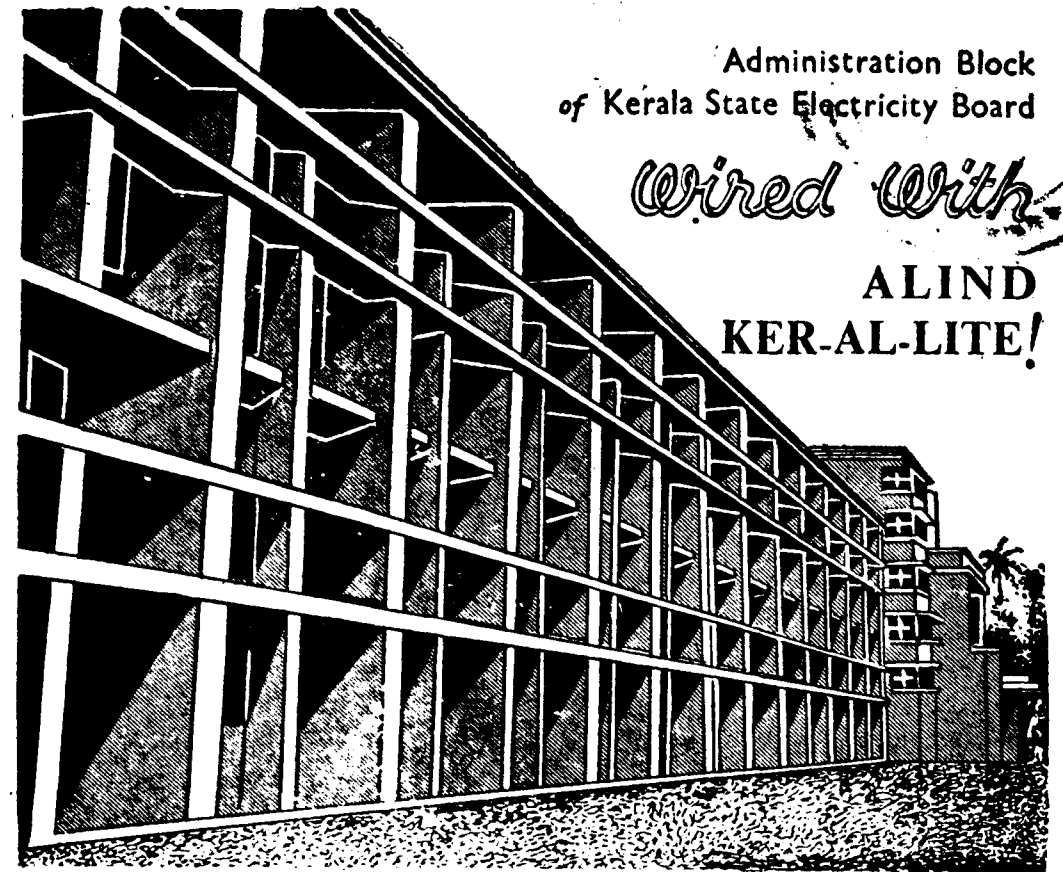
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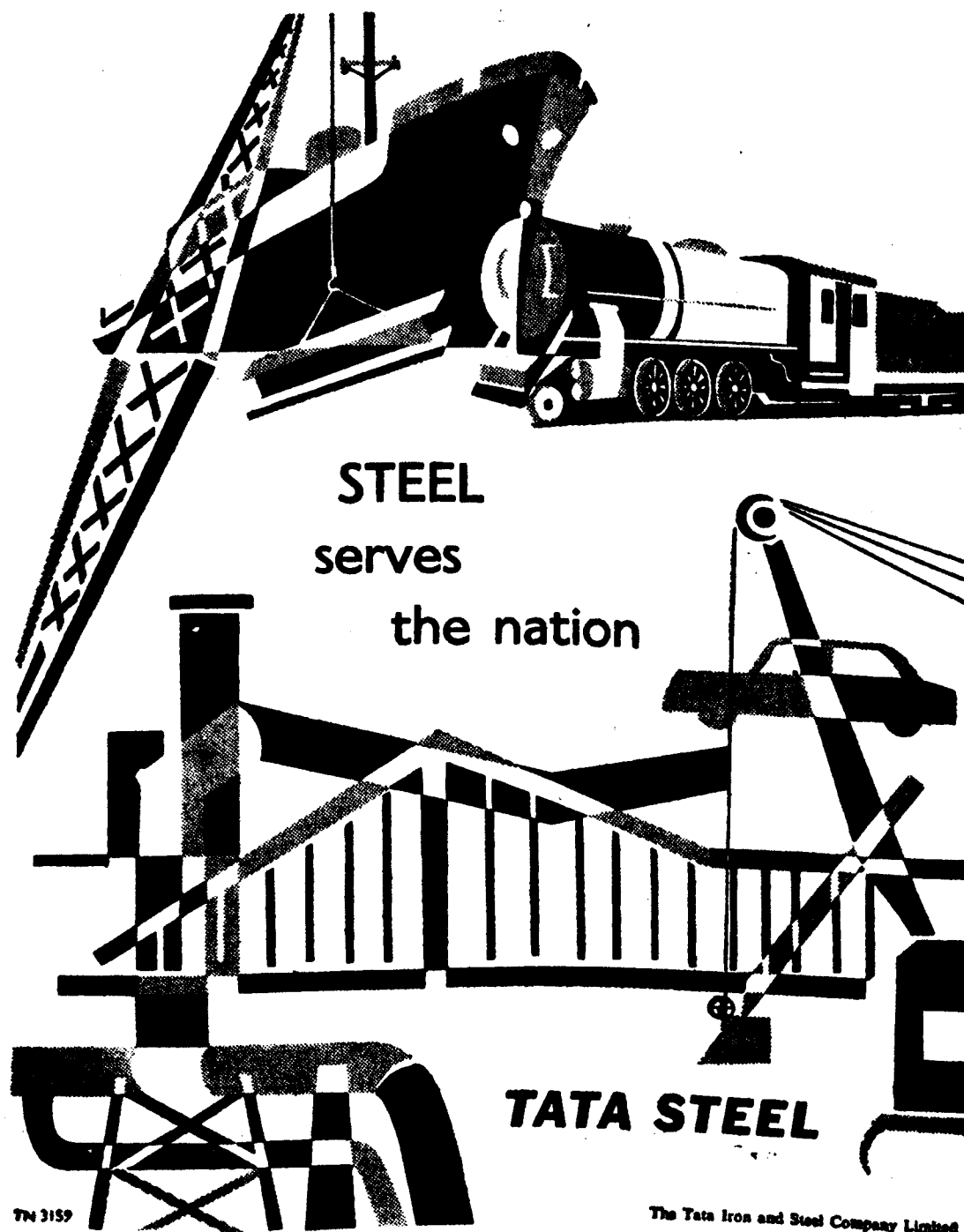
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KUNDALINI YOGA*

By
N. RAGHUNATHAN

Sir John Woodroffe's "Serpent Power" occupies a key position, along with his "Shakti and Shakta" and "Garland of Letters", in the brilliant exposition of Tantra Sastra to which he has devoted a whole cycle of works. That the book has gone into a sixth edition attests its popularity. This sumptuous volume is a feast to the eye and a pleasure to handle though it weighs a few pounds! The book is based on two famous Samskrit works on Kundalini Yoga, the Shat-Chakra-Nirupana and the Paduka Panchaka. These are given in an Appendix with the Samskrit commentary on them by Kalicharana; the text consists of Sir John's own translation and commentary in English as well as a long and invaluable Introduction of 300 pages. There are eight full-page illustrations of the 'chakras' and nine of the Yogasanas.

The Introduction not only describes the practice, as attested to by well-known adepts of Laya yoga in which the raising of the Kundalini is the crucial operation, but also expounds its theoretical basis and philosophical implications. The raising of the Kundalini Shakti through the Sushumna Nadi to the thousand-petalled lotus (Sahasrara), penetrating the six 'chakras' (described in detail in the first of the above-mentioned Samskrit works, while the other devotes itself entirely to one of them), there to achieve union with Siva in the bliss of Samadhi is posited as the purpose of this yoga.

Sir John disposes of many crude misconceptions about this yoga. He points out that the 'chakras' are not physical but subtle centres and are visible only to the yogi's eye; that though 'siddhis' or occult powers, some of an extraordinary character, are obtained when the sadhaka successfully raises the Kundalini, the true seeker does not make much of them, indeed that he regards them as an obstacle to the realisation of the goal, which is the union of the *jivatma* with the *paramatma*; that, while it is claimed for the Laya yoga, as its special virtue, that it neglects neither body nor intellect but makes full use of both and the adept can command both *bhukti* and *mukti*, it is a

libel to suggest that this yoga is indifferent to moral values or encourages a materialistic outlook. Sir John concedes that there are many traps for the unwary in treading this path and the result of a wrong step may be extremely dangerous; that one must be an *adhikari*, must go through the prescribed preliminary discipline and that in all cases complete detachment is insisted upon.

Sir John refers to the claim of the adepts of this school that Kundalini yoga is far superior to Raja yoga, for instance, because it assures both *bhukti* and *mukti*. But since it is explained that 'bhoga' includes suffering as well as enjoyment and the sadhaka who has cultivated the necessary detachment takes both calmly in his stride, the position does not seem to be very different from that of the Raja yogi; a *jivan-mukta* like Sadasiva Brahmendra no doubt underwent physical suffering but he was serenely unaffected. As for the claim (p. 294) that this yoga brings 'deathlessness' which it is pointed out is far more difficult of attainment than 'liberation', it is difficult to take this claim literally; what seems to be really meant by 'deathlessness' is that the Laya-yogi can postpone physical dissolution for long years or effect it at will (*svachchanda-mukti*). It seems hardly likely that the physical body, built of the five elements, can endure eternally or, if it can, that the man who can command this kind of immortality and values it, will voluntarily relinquish it. "Making the best of both worlds," as Sir John puts it with engaging brevity, does not seem to be easy to reconcile with the basic assumptions of the philosophy that there is only one Reality and the goal of endeavour is to realise one's identity with it by self-naughting. Unless the visible world is regarded as a manifestation of Power as yet incomplete and with infinite possibilities of evolution into higher forms expressing a new type of universal consciousness on the physical plane there seems to be no logical escape from the conclusion that man's search for perfection must end in his retracing the long and weary way of *samsara* to the state of undifferentiated bliss.

Swarajya — dated 28-2-1959.

* THE SERPENT POWER : By Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) : Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd. Pp. 530 (English) + 186 (Samskrit). Price Rs. 25.

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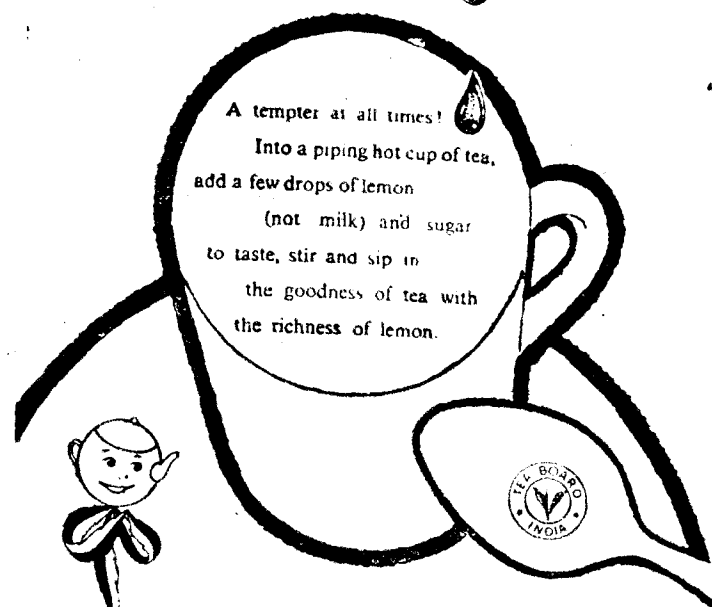
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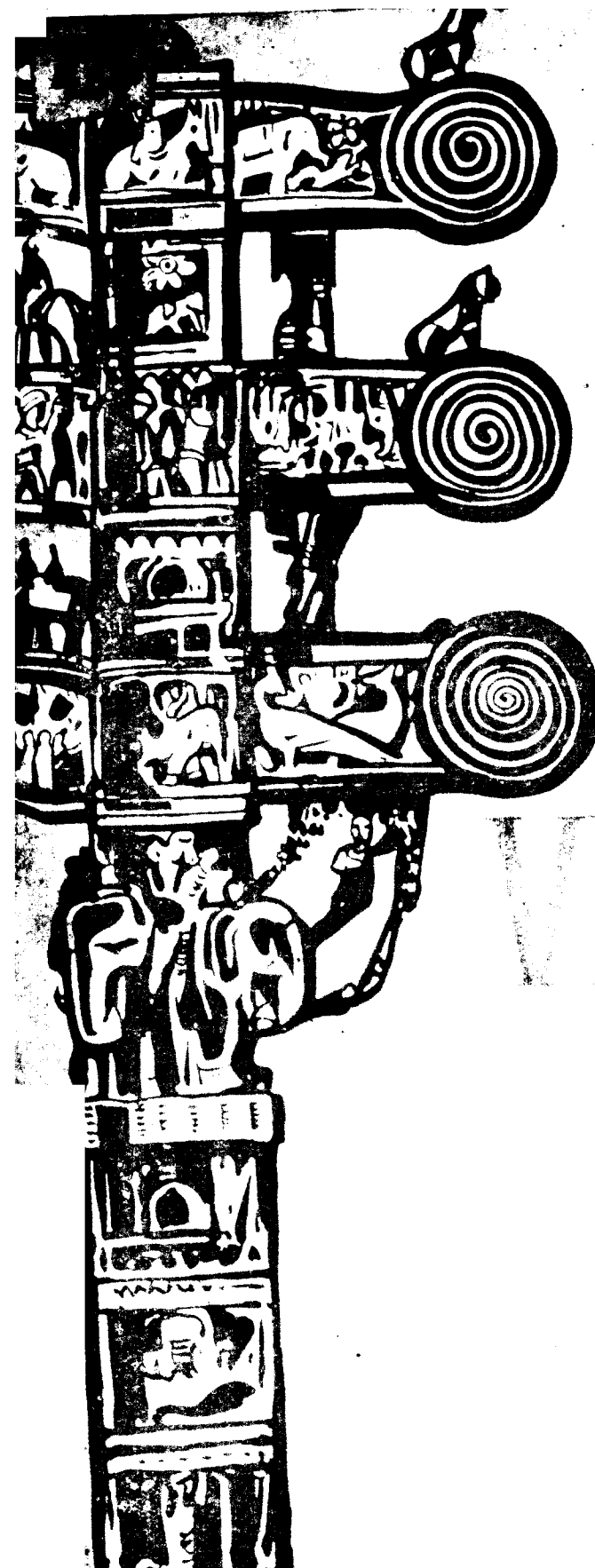
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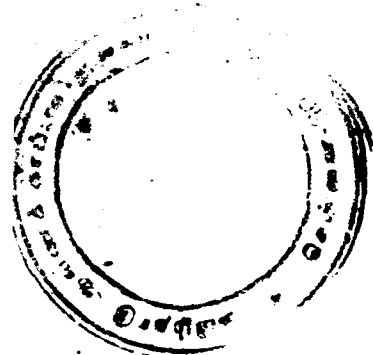


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..... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA FROM FORM TO FORM DIVINE

"GOD IS ONE ; HIS NAMES AND FORMS ARE MANY."

Sri Ramakrishna : "There is no doubt that God exists in all things. But the greatest manifestation of His Power is through an Incarnation. It is the Sakti, the Power of God, that is born as an Incarnation." . . .

"My parents knew who dwells inside this body. Father had a dream at Gaya. In that dream Raghuvir said to him : 'I shall be born as your son.'

"Nangta (Totapuri) introduced me into Vedanta. In three days I went into samadhi. At the sight of my samadhi, he was quite taken aback and exclaimed : 'Ah ! What is this ?' Then he came to know, who resides in this body.

"At the time of the evening worship I used to cry out from the roof of the kuthi, weeping : 'Oh, where are you all ? Come to me !' You see, they all are gathering here, one by one. God Himself dwells in this body. It is He, who, of His own accord, is working with these devotees."

(Gospel, p. 653, 761.)

Sri Ramakrishna at the festival at Panihati : In the twinkling of an eye the Master came down in one bound to the middle of the Kirtan-party and went into Bhavasamadhi. He sometimes gained partial consciousness and danced with the stride of a lion, sometimes lost outward awareness and stood still. He was now proceeding, now receding with a rapid step to the timing of the music. Overflowing with divine joy his body swayed to and fro, as if waves, mountain high, rose in an ocean of Bliss and, going forward, were carrying everything before them and would again melt this very moment. His tall figure looked still taller and as light as a body in a dream. Brightened by the divine mood and lit up by an incomparable smile of his slightly parted lips, his face beaming with glory, peace, bliss and compassion, spread a wonderful light, which illumined all sides. The bright ochre colour of the silk, he had put on, became one with the lustre of his body that he seemed to be surrounded by flames of fire.

(Great Master, V. 10. 14.)

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AND SRI CHAITANYA

Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitanya, born in the eighties of the Fifteenth Century, was the founder of Bengal Vaishnavism. Though a great scholar, he did not write any philosophical treatise. But in his eight instructing verses he had given his views. The later Acharyas developed those ideas and gave a philosophy of this school. Sri Chaitanya's life was a life of frequent ecstasies, especially the last part of his life he spent in Puri in rapturous joy of union with Sri Krishna or in excruciating pangs of separation from Him, as did Radha in Vrindavana. Among the devotional and philosophical writers of his school, Goswamis Rupa, Sanatana, Jiva, Gopala Bhatta, Krishnadasa Kaviraja and later Baladeva Vidyabhushana and Visvanatha Chakravarti are well known.

According to Sri Chaitanya, Hari or God is one without a second. He has infinite powers and is the ocean of relishable spiritual feelings. The individual souls who are His parts, may be under the spell of Prakriti or His illusory power and some are released from it through devotion which in the overflowing measure is the goal of life. Sri Chaitanya's philosophy is known as Achintyabhedābheda-vāda. According to it, the universe is a manifestation of God. It can neither be said to be different from, nor identical with Him. The Jiva is simultaneously distinct from and identical with God. Brahman is nothing but Sri Krishna who has the eternal, non-material human form. He attracts every individual soul by His charms and hence is called Krishna. Sri Krishna and His manifestations have their heavens or abodes wherein they perform their divine sports. The abode

of Sri Krishna is called Vrindavana, Vraja or Gokula. The abode of Narayana is known as Vaikuntha where devotees worshipping God with divine powers, go. According to the development of the love divine the devotees who identify themselves with the associates of Krishna are classed as the loving servants, comrades, parents and beloved youthful maids of Krishna.

The followers of Sri Chaitanya consider him as the aspect of Krishna in which all the attributes of the Krishna of Vrindavana as well as those of Radha co-exist. Hence the life and līlā of Sri Chaitanya are sung and meditated upon like those of Sri Krishna.

The goal of life is attainment of or service to Sri Krishna in His eternal abode, for the individual being in his true essence is an eternal companion of Sri Krishna. In this life itself the identification with the companions is to be realized through sādhanā. This can be done by constant remembrance of Krishna, which alone is the essence of all devotional exercises.

Sri Jiva Goswami points out in his *Shatsandarbhā* that abhidheya or the means is worship and service of Sri Krishna, the ultimate Reality. Its sign is constant thinking and worship of the Lord. Upāsana is of two types, direct and indirect. Indirect worship consists in surrendering the fruits of action to God. The direct upasana can be done in three ways. Through jñana or knowledge, Brahman without attributes is contemplated upon. In this view nirguna is a quality of the ultimate Reality. Through yoga or worship of particular deities also, worship or con-

templation may be done. The third method is that of Bhakti or devotion to Sri Krishna, the full manifestation of the supreme Reality. This Bhakti is threefold in nature. It may be merely external (āropa-siddhā) or due to association with other devotees (sanga-siddhā) or due to a sincere spirit of natural affection for God (swarupa-siddhā).¹ The first two are called fictitious and the last one is called real (akitava). This last form of Bhakti is of two kinds, vaidhi and rāgānugā. The vaidhi-bhakti leads a man to devote himself to God, and to worship without any ulterior motive. It is vaidhi because here the prompting to the course of Bhakti comes from scriptural sources (otherwise called vidhi, or scriptural injunctions). The vaidhi-bhakti is of various kinds, such as seeking of protection (saranāpatti), association with good teachers and devotees, to listen to God's name and to recite His name and glories. Of these saranapatti is the most important. In *Haribhaktivilasa* it has been defined as consisting of the following elements: (i) to work and think always in a manner agreeable to God, (ii) to desist from anything that may in any way displease God, (iii) strong faith that He will protect, (iv) clinging to Him for protection, (v) to throw oneself entirely into God's hands and to consider oneself entirely dependent on Him, and (vi) to consider oneself a very humble being waiting for the grace of God to descend on him.² With the development of a natural inclination for God through scriptural sadhana, a man

takes Sri Krishna as the object of his chief spiritual emotion through which he attains his highest realization. These emotions or chief attitudes towards Krishna are five in number. They are the emotions of the contemplative, servant, comrade, parent and lover.

The intimate feeling for Krishna is cultivated through nine aspects of Bhakti. They consist of whole-souled contemplation and service of God. These steps to Bhakti are narrated in the *Bhāgavata* thus:

(1) Hearing the names of God chanted or sung by others, or songs in praise of, or the narration of, Krishna's charms, pastimes, attributes, etc. (2) Chanting or singing His names, narrating or singing His charms, etc. (3) Remembering or thinking of His names, charms, etc. (4) Showing respect to Krishna by visiting the sacred places associated with His pastimes, looking at His images or pictures depicting His pastimes, serving, and keeping company with His devotees, showing respect to things connected with His memory, etc. (5) Worship of Krishna in images by offering flowers, sandal paste, food, etc. (6) Bowing down before Krishna or His images at the place of worship. (7) Serving Krishna in the attitude of a devoted servant. (8) Comradeship—to think that one is His loving and intimate friend and He too is such, and to behave towards Him accordingly, generally through His images. (9) Resignation to Krishna—devoting oneself entirely to His services.³

Sri Rupa Goswami recognizes sixty-four forms of devotional sadhana. Of these five main ones are—contacting devotees, singing the divine name, hearing the scripture, staying in holy places

¹ cf. Achintyabhedābheda-vāda by S. Vidyavinoda, p. 284.

² आनुकूल्यं संकल्पः प्रातिकूल्यं वर्जनम् ।
रक्षिष्यतीति विस्वासो गोचरत्वे वरणं तथा ।
आत्मनिक्षेपकार्पण्ये षड्विधा शरणागतिः ।

(c.f., Das Gupta's *A History of Indian Philosophy* IV, p. 245.)

³ c.f., *Cultural Heritage of India* IV, p. 194.

and serving the deity with devotion. Another saying speaks of three important sadhanas viz., kindness to beings, taste in name of God and service to devotees. The *Chaitanya Charitamrita* considers chanting of divine name as the best form of devotion. For best effect, God's name must be repeated with a passion of love. Name must be distinguished from its semblance. One must be ethically perfect and devotionally advanced to do so. Sri Rupa Goswami speaks of the best type of Bhakti as the one which is free from other desires as well as knowledge and action and which is concerned only with the thought and service of God. 'Bhakti consists in attaching oneself to Krishna for His satisfaction alone, without being in any way influenced by the desire for philosophic knowledge, karma or disinclination to worldly things, and without being associated with any desire for one's own interests.'⁴

Sri Rupa Goswami in his *Upadesāmṛita* speaks of helps and hindrances to the development of devotion. The six obstacles of Bhakti are over-eating, too much efforts, meaningless talks, and anxiety for too many rules, company of people and restlessness.⁵ The six helps for its development are enthusiasm, conviction, patience, suitable action, detachment and good conduct.⁶

The finer distinctions of the different types of devotion leading to love of the sweetheart for God have been made by Ray Ramananda in a discussion with

⁴ अन्याभिलाषिताश्च ज्ञानकर्माद्यनावृतम् ।

आनुकूल्येन कृष्णानुशीलनं भक्तिरुत्तमा ।

Bhaktirasamritasindhu 1.1.9.

⁵ अत्याहारः प्रयासश्च प्रजल्पो नियमायहः ।

जनसंगश्च लौल्यं च षडभिर्भक्तिर्विनश्यति ।

⁶ उत्साहाभिध्याद्वैर्यात् तत्तत् कर्मप्रवर्तनात् ।

संगत्यागात् सतोवृत्तेः षडभिर्भक्तिः प्रसिध्यति ।

Sri Chaitanya. First comes the general religious life according to varnāśrama dharma. Then come in succession devotion mixed with action, self-surrender, devotion with knowledge, devotion pure and simple, then devotion of love. Next comes love of the attendant, friend and parent. Last in intimacy comes the love of the sweetheart. According to Bengal Vaishnavism prema cannot be achieved through sadhana. The latter only prepares the devotee for the dawn of prema. The different steps of its dawning are enumerated thus: First is faith, then company of holy men, next bhajana, repeating and singing the name of God. As a result obstacles are destroyed. Then arise nishthā and ruci, one-pointed devotion and taste for divine name. Then comes attachment for God. Up to this is the domain of sadhana. Next comes bhāva, feeling for God. Last of all dawns prema.⁷ From the sprout of love issue forth addiction and emotion, rati and bhava for God. The outward indications of the development of rati are as follows:

- (1) Forbearance or perfect indifference to even irreparable loss or unexpected gain in worldly affairs. (2) The utilization of every second of time in religious practices and considering every moment spent otherwise as wasted. (3) Freedom from worldly attachment. (4) Want of desire for public esteem, and feeling oneself as the worst of all, though perhaps the best. (5) Firm belief that Krishna will be merciful. (6) Ardent longing for union with God. (7) Great taste for always chanting the name of Hari. (8) Hankering for narrating the attributes of God. (9) Great

⁷ आदौ श्रद्धा ततः साधुसंगोऽथ भजनक्रिया ।

ततोऽनर्थनिवृत्तिः स्यात् ततो निष्ठा रुचिस्ततः ।

अयासक्तिस्ततोभावस्ततः प्रेमाभ्युदयति ।

साधकानामयं प्रेम्णः प्रादुर्भावो भवेत् क्रमः ।

liking for His abode or temples, or for the places of His manifest lila.

Rati, however, ripens into what is technically called prema, which completely softens the heart and is marked with an attitude of 'mineness', i.e., with a feeling that Krishna belongs to the devotee, and to no one else. Chanting the favourite names of the beloved Lord, with a completely softened heart, one laughs, cries, sings, and dances, just like a mad man, quite indifferent to the presence of other persons. One possessing it will, after death, be born in a place where the lila of Krishna is going on.

Prema ripens into sneha. At the advent of sneha, so intense becomes the idea of 'mineness' that the devotee is not satisfied with mere sight, voice, etc. of Krishna. Sneha ripens into māna in which, by the peculiar nature of intense love, the subject, on account of a real or fancied grievance, conceals his or her own feelings and shows jealous anger or petulance to the object, Krishna. Mana deepens into pranaya which inspires confidence in, and dispels all sense of fear or reverence in respect of the object of love, and thus produces a sense of equality of the subject with the object. Pranaya ripens into rāga, which indicates excessive eagerness for union with Krishna. Rāga develops into anurāga in which the object of love, even though realized and relished always, appears to be clothed in fresh charms and attractiveness every mo-

ment. This indicates insatiable eagerness for relishing the charms of Krishna. Anurāga culminates in mahā-bhāva or supreme love.⁸ Mahābhāva, however, cannot be achieved by ordinary souls, it is the domain of divine incarnations. The perfect manifestation of this mahā-bhāva was Sri Radha of Vrindavana. Sri Chaitanya himself also had this ultimate state of realization. Sri Ramakrishna narrated this in the following way:

"Bhakti matured becomes bhava. Next is mahabhava, then prema, and last of all is the attainment of God. Gauranga experienced the states of mahabhava and prema. When prema is awakened, a devotee completely forgets the world; he also forgets his body, which is so dear to a man. Gauranga experienced prema. He jumped into the ocean, thinking it to be the Jamuna. The ordinary jiva does not experience mahabhava or prema. He goes only as far as bhava. But Gauranga experienced all three states. In the inmost state he would remain in samadhi, unconscious of the outer world. In the semi-conscious state he could only dance. In the conscious state he chanted the name of God."⁹

With this intimate realization Sri Chaitanya remained in Puri for many years and changed the lives of many. His method of sadhana is essentially one of love and service to God in the form of Sri Krishna often with His divine consort Radha.

⁸ cf. C. H. I, IV, p. 196-197.

⁹ The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, p. 179.

* Supreme glory be to the singing of Sri Krishna's name which cleanses the mirror of the heart and extinguishes the great forest-conflagration of worldly existence. ... The Lord's name is to be always sung by one who is humbler than even a blade of grass, with more endurance than that of a tree and who being himself devoid of conceit bestows honours on others. ... When, in taking Thy name, O Lord, with tears of joy my eyes will overflow, words (prayers) will be choked in my mouth, and all the hairs of my body will stand erect thrilled with joy.

AT THE HOLY FEET OF M.

(Continued from previous issue)

SWAMI DHARMESHANANDA

January 1, 1931.

M. with Mr Credula, C. Maharaj and a few devotees had gone to Dakshineswar this morning, visiting also on the way the Cossipore garden-house where the Master spent his last days. There was a slight drizzle in the morning and M. was not in the best of health, but his enthusiasm, once the desire gets hold of him, is unbounded. And today being Kalpataru day his memory of that glorious day impelled him to go there. At night surrounded by devotees on the roof of the school building he said, 'Today we had been to Dakshineswar. It is an inspiring experience. In Cossipore also my memory went back to those days, as if it all happened yesterday.' Then he asked the monk, 'How often have you been to Cossipore?'

Monk: I have a great mind to go there.

M.: You can go with Himangsu (pointing to the latter). Yes, you must go there.

He then asked Himangsu to read the portion of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* relating to Dakshineswar. As Himangsu was reading, M. went on making comments on certain passages. He then concluded, 'Dakshineswar is a centre of pilgrimage for us.'

January 4, 1931.

I arrived at M.'s place at 7.30 P.M. and found S. Maharaj, K. Maharaj, Ch. Maharaj, Amulya Babu, Mr Guha, Mr Credula, a London journalist, C. Maharaj and another 10 or 12 devotees. In the midst of this solemn gathering sat M. who was having a discussion with the journalist on the nature of Divinity.

M. (in reply to the journalist's question): God descends on Earth as an incarnation (Avatar).

Journalist: When one becomes one with God he becomes Avatar; does he?

M.: No; there is a belief in this country that God comes down as Avatar. We hear of ten, twenty-four and numberless Avatars in our scriptures. The Christians do not believe Christ as an Avatar, but we do.

Journalist: The God-men are chosen as Avatars?

M.: Who will choose?

Journalist: I have used wrong words, pardon.

M.: Christ is the same as Sri Krishna, Chaitanya and now Ramakrishna. He Himself says so; this is the proof.

Journalist: How do people know whether this or that Avatar is authentic?

M.: If they pray they will know. Some false prophets profess as Avatars, but the sincere devotee is informed of the genuine Avatar. You went to Dakshineswar. It is as sacred as Jerusalem.

M. (to S. Maharaj): Did any of us go there (to Jerusalem)?

S. Maharaj: Mrs Savier went there and wrote a book named 'In the Holy Land'.

M. (to the Journalist): Prayer is the essential thing. Pray, knock and it shall be opened; be eager.

Journalist: How shall we pray?

M.: 'Father, give us to know you, your love. Make us devoted, perfect. Give us eternal life, true life.'—in this way.

Journalist: In which way? Praying aloud?

M.: No need of it. You may or may not do so. If one is hungry and cannot give it out in proper expressions, is he not hungry

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all the same? The Father knows the inner yearning, hungry or not.

Journalist: How can we have this love for God that we can pray?

M.: Company of holy men who have renounced the world will make you feel it. This is the first step to religion and the alpha and omega of spiritual life. Intellect cannot understand all these. Scientists are engaged in sense-knowledge. Men's intellect is feeble, very weak. Only belief and prayer, these are all. Depend on His mercy. He will let us know in time. We are under Him and not He is under us. So His grace is needed. If you ask when one should renounce, the answer is given in Christ's words. Once he asked one to come and follow him. He answered, 'A relative of mine died. I have to bury him first and then I will join you.' Christ replied, 'Let the dead bury its dead, you follow me.' These people, the worldly-minded, are truly dead. The life of Sadhus is the real life. All others are dead. Those people will take care of the dead. Pray without cessation and mix with holy men.

The journalist wanted to take a photograph of M. to which, however, the latter objected. When the former strongly insisted, M. asked S. Maharaj, 'Well, what should I do?' S. Maharaj replied, 'It is not your practice to allow yourself to be photographed.'

M.: Then no photo, but I will present you with a copy of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* as a memento of your visit. Have you written any book?

Journalist: Yes, two; one on business and another on spirituality.

M.: Will you present them to me?

Journalist: Not the first one but the second. The first is only an inspiration for young men in business.

M.: But we want it. God is immanent in everything and why not in that book?

The journalist then took his leave.

M.: Whether we succeed or not, there

should be no relaxation in our efforts to understand the precepts of the Master. As the Gita says, 'It is through the constant practice of non-attachment that one reaches the goal.' I can very well recall the occasion when in Girish Babu's place there was a discussion as to the immanence of God and the Master said, 'I don't like all this talk. I can clearly see Him in every created being.' The Master came not to destroy but to fulfil. A man once came and said, 'Sound is Brahman.' The Master said, 'Sound, of course does demonstrate the existence of Brahman, but can I love you only by hearing your name? I have got to see you before I can know you thoroughly.' To this the other replied, 'But the scriptures mention sound as Brahman.' And the Master's reply was, 'Yes, yes, that's right.' Then to others he said, 'Let them stay where they now are; from there they will advance in gradual stages.'

Then M. distributed prasada (sanctified food) to all present with his own hands. While serving it to Benode Babu he said: He is always ministering to Sadhus. Baburam's mother said, 'One can never minister to a Sadhu without being a Sadhu himself.' And his name is Benode Behari (Vinodavihari), his brother being called Bepin Bihari (Vipinavihari)—all these are names of Sri Krishna, which have been running in the family for several generations. Giving up these names is not so easy.

After that we took our leave with folded hands, M. having very strong objection to allowing any one to touch his feet.

At 5.30 P.M. on the balcony of the top floor of the school building, M. was in conversation with B. Maharaj and some merchants from Bombay. The merchants left in about ten or twelve minutes and only B. Maharaj remained there. M. said to him, 'They cannot comprehend all this. They only understand social service, hospitals and dispensaries and the like. These belong

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS WORSHIP

SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA

In the spiritual history of the world, Sri Ramakrishna is the first God-man regarded as an Incarnation who has been photographed, and whose words, as embodied in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, have been taken down almost verbatim. For many generations to come, these two facts will remove from the minds of all any doubt about his personality and teachings.

Within seven years of Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, his message was first taken by his great disciple, Srimat Swami Vivekananda, across the seas, and the seeds sowed by him in the different parts of the world are now growing into vigorous trees. Both in India and abroad, Sri Ramakrishna is being gradually recognised as the Prophet of the modern age. In him the spiritual aspirations and achievements of countless men and women of diverse faiths, in different parts of the world, have found fulfilment.

Generally speaking, all scriptures emphasise three aspects of Reality. In its transcendental aspect called in the Upanishads the Nirguna Brahman, the Reality is unknown to and unknowable by the finite mind. One without a second, Brahman alone exists. And Sri Ramakrishna realised this supreme state of God-consciousness in only three days' time; it is a unique example in history.

In its relative aspect, the same Reality, called the Saguna Brahman, appears by an inscrutable power, as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe. Endowed with an infinite number of blessed qualities, He is immanent in the creation, and is the saviour of finite beings. That immanent form of the Lord was also visualised by Sri Ramakrishna.

In its third aspect, again, the same Reality appears as an Avatara for the easy compre-

hension of the average mind. The Divinity takes a human form so that man can contemplate and worship Him and thereby awaken his own inner divinity. God's incarnation is a fact of the spiritual world. You remember the celebrated verse of the Bhagavad-Gita which says that whenever virtue declines and wickedness prevails, God takes a human form for the protection of the good and the eradication of the evil. Ordinary men and women can easily attain to Liberation through prayer and devotion to an Incarnation. God does not exhaust Himself in one Avatara, nor is any particular religion the sole path to attain Him. Sri Ramakrishna has taught the modern world that different religions are so many paths that ultimately lead to the same goal, viz., God-realisation, provided they are pursued with sincerity and earnestness.

Born in a pious Brahmin family and loyal to its religious traditions, Sri Ramakrishna, from his boyhood, felt a natural yearning for communion with the Divine Spirit. Even in his teens he practised with fidelity the basic spiritual disciplines, and never deviated, even by a hair's breadth, from self-control as he concentrated himself on his Chosen Ideal. He soon went beyond the formal duties of a priest in the Kali temple of Dakshineswar, near Calcutta. An all-consuming restlessness for a direct vision of God, whom he worshipped as the Divine Mother of the Universe, turned his mind away from the world and made him spend day and night in uninterrupted prayer and meditation, oblivious of hunger, sleep and other demands of the body. As a result of this, Sri Ramakrishna was blessed with a vivid realisation of the Divine Mother in the image. As he said later on, 'God can be seen, and spoken to as well.'

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Sri Ramakrishna went through the various disciplines prescribed by Hinduism as also other religions, and in a short time had visions not only of other aspects of Reality as described in our Shastras, but also of Muhammad, and later, of Christ as well.

After realising these visions as manifold aspects of one and the same Truth, he remained a simple child of the Divine Mother at Dakshineswar. He did not retire into solitude to enjoy the fruit of his life-long effort, but longed to share it with one and all. To him came people of all kinds, men and women, young and old, philosophers and lovers of God, preachers and social reformers, householders and monks. He was indeed an amazing teacher. He used to say that God was like a chameleon which assumed different colours at different times—red, blue, yellow, or green—and sometimes appeared colourless. Without disturbing the inner feeling of people, he deepened their spiritual ardour and exhorted them to follow their respective paths with zeal and devotion. Everyone found Sri Ramakrishna the embodiment of his or her own spiritual Ideal. He was all things to all men.

Underlying the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna are the two great precepts of Hinduism: the non-duality of the Godhead and the harmony of religions. The former was the basis of the latter. God is both with form and without form. He is both immanent and transcendent. And there need not be any quarrel among the adherents of different faiths, since every one of these tries to express, according to its lights, some facet or other of the one Reality.

Self-realisation and service to men formed the key-note of his message. This service is to be adapted to people's peculiar needs: physical, intellectual, and spiritual. But under no condition, he warned, should it be impelled by the spirit of pity. Service is a form of worship of God dwelling in all creatures. The giver should deem it a privilege that he is allowed to worship God through service to the needy. This will uplift both the giver and the receiver. How well did Sri Ramakrishna know that behind many of men's social activities there often lurked the desire for name, fame, and power! This is why he exhorted all to serve the Jiva as the veritable Shiva, so that service, like worship in the temple, might become a discipline for the realisation of God.

Sri Ramakrishna left Swami Vivekananda as his worthy spokesman, who founded the Ramakrishna Math and Mission to give both monks and householders an opportunity to strive for Perfection through the twofold path of Renunciation and Service. In seven decades this spiritual organisation has, through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna, grown into a potent instrument for "the regeneration of man the brute into man the god", as Swami Vivekananda put it. The worship of Sri Ramakrishna is a potent method for bringing about this regeneration. May this temple deepen the love of God in the hearts of all who worship here, and give them refuge from the manifold sufferings of life which flesh is heir to. May it be a true memorial to Sri Ramakrishna, the embodiment of Universal Harmony, Peace and Blessedness!

Once more he has come to help His children, once more the opportunity to rise is given to fallen India. India can only rise by sitting at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. ... It took me six years to understand that Ramakrishna was not a holy man, but Holiness itself. He was the living embodiment of the Vedas, the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures. He lived in one single life what not only the Hindu but whole human race lived spiritually for ages.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

to a particular category. Philanthropy is surely good, if undertaken in a spirit of reverence, service of the Divinity which is in every created being. That is the real Karmayoga. But there is another crystalised class of people who want to establish direct communion with God; they need no use of public service. We of course were told by the Master that the aim of human life is to see God. We know it is possible because we saw him actually speaking to the Divine Mother. In the sphere of philanthropy the desire for name and fame overtakes you. And the Master had nothing but contempt for these which he expressed in somewhat spicy language. 'A fig for people's admiration and their respect!' he used to say. I deliver a few speeches for which I am lauded to the skies by a handful of people, what is all that worth for? That is why Sadhus hate fame like poison. A Sadhu running after fame is only paying too much for a whistle.

B. Maharaj: Yes, that is quite correct. It is not for these people to be able to grasp all this.

M.: Fame? You get it from people only so long as it serves their own self-interest. You are respected only if you can sing to their tune, and you have to take good care not to rub them the wrong way. Otherwise you will lose their donations; they will keep you at arms length. Their respect and regard is only that of a mutual admiration society, of absolutely no value whatsoever. The Master used to say that if you can earn the recognition of God, then only you get the real stuff. Otherwise the respect you get from worldly people is nothing but an empty bubble.

The lamps were lighted at 6 P.M. and M. went inside the room and offered his salutation to the portraits of the Master and the Holy Mother, Swamiji, with Rakhal Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj (all these photographed together in Baranagore Math)

and also the picture of Kumbha Mela. He then directed the attention of B. Maharaj to the big picture of Sri Krishna and pointing to another direction said, 'There you see Kumbha Mela, also Dakshineswar; offer your obeisance there.'

A lamp was then lighted near the Tulasi grove (usually Purnendu Babu did this). We bowed before it. M. sat in meditation for about ten minutes during which time we sat quietly. Then M. resumed the thread of the previous discussion.

M.: After one has been in active work for some time the Master would advise the undertaking of spiritual discipline in solitude.

Just then came Credula (Mangala Chaitanya) and C. Maharaj. The previous discourse ended. After B. Maharaj's analysis of the book 'Hinduism invades America', M. switched on to a different subject.

M.: That London Journalist came again today. For want of a photograph of mine he wished to have something from me in writing, so I presented him with a copy of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* with an inscription in my own hand. He seems to have a natural liking for spirituality. He saw Shivananda Maharaj and told me, 'I am blessed to see him. He blessed me with his hand on my head.'

B. Maharaj and others took their leave. M. told Himangsu to read from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* the portion describing Master's visit to Lily Cottage, Keshav Chandra Sen's residence in Calcutta. The reading went on, interspersed with M.'s personal reminiscences.

M.: The Master went to the drawing room on the upper storey and said, 'Let us go and see Keshav', to which Prasanna said, 'He will be here presently.' But the Master got impatient and said, 'But why wait? We have come to see Keshav, let us go and see him just now.' Just then Keshav,

who was very ill, came in with great difficulty, holding on to the wall for support, and prostrated himself at the Master's feet. Keshav looked like the skeleton in the Medical College showcase. That was what the Hero of the Platform had been reduced to, the glory of his day had gone! The Master went into a trance as soon as he saw him. When Keshav's mother came he said, 'Look here, Keshav, don't spend too much time in your inner apartments; you will get entangled in worldly attachments. You must be here with devotees and religious-minded people. The gardener digs up

the earth round the Basra rose plants right down to the roots so as to improve the quality of the flowers; and now God is following the same process with regard to Keshav.'

M.: The Master probably said all this with an eye to Keshav's future life. Keshav's mother bowed at his feet and said, 'Give him your blessings so that he may recover.' That is the mother's heart, praying for her son's life.

The Chapter came to an end after which we dispersed.

(To be continued.)

KALIDASA'S VISION OF INDIA

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

Kalidasa was a well-educated, widely-travelled and highly cultured person besides being a poet, a philosopher and a patriot. He was a supreme incarnation of the genius of independent India. He never rejected earth for paradise or paradise for the earth. He was neither the slave of beauty nor the enemy of beauty. He saw life steadily and saw it whole. Sri Aurobindo Ghose was never tired of pointing out that Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa were the supreme peaks of poetic and spiritual attainment in India. Dryden once referred thus to three supreme poets of the world: (Homer, Virgil and Milton):

Three poets in three distant ages born
Greece, Italy, England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The second in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go;
To make the third, he joined the former two.

We can well slightly alter this poem for India:

Three poets in three distant ages born:
India, India, India, did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The second in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go;
To make the third she joined the former two.

His vision of Physical India:

Kalidasa is never tired of eulogising the beauty and glory of physical India. To him the Himalaya which spans two oceans is the measuring rod of the earth.

अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा
हिमालयो नाम नगाधिराजः ।
पूर्वापरौ तोयनिधी वगाह्य
स्थितः पृथिव्या इव मानदंडः ।

(Kumara Sambhava I.1.)

Swami Vivekananda who stayed in our house at Trivandrum in 1893 explained this verse to me and said that the poet suggests that Himalaya which is divine of soul and spans the seas and is the measuring rod of the earth is symbolical of Mother India, Queen India, Goddess India who is divine of soul and whose civilisation and culture are the model civilisation and culture by which all civilisations and cultures should be measured and tested. To him Himalaya is worthy of supreme veneration as the abode of Siva and Uma (Kumara Sambhava, VII, 30; VIII, 24; Raghuvamsa, IV, 80). He describes the three mighty rivers of North India viz. Sindhu in *Malavikagnimitra*,

Ganga in Raghuvamsa (IV, 73; VI, 48; VII, 36; VIII, 95; XIII, 57; XIV, 3) and in Kumarasambhava (I, 30, 54; VI, 36, 70) and Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) in Raghuvamsa (IV, 81). It is the Ganga, however, which kindles his poetic ecstasy most: His description of the influence of Ganga and Yamuna in Raghuvamsa (XIII, 54 to 75) is wonderful. He describes the holy, if less mighty, rivers of South India. He refers also to the Vankshu (Oxus). (Vide Raghuvamsa, IV, 67.) The modern Afghanistan was originally a Hindu kingdom. He describes also the great lake Manasasarovara. In the Ritusamhara he idealises all the six seasons of India. He describes vividly the vegetable kingdom and specially the floral beauty of India.

His vision of Indian education and culture:

Kalidasa was a well-read man besides being a much-travelled man. The legends about his having been illiterate are baseless. He refers to the four vidyas (Raghuvamsa, III, 30) viz. (1) Anvikshaki or philosophy; (2) Trayi or scripture; (3) Varta or economics; and (4) Dandaniti or politics. In Raghuvamsa (XVIII, 50) he refers to three vidyas i.e. Trayi, Varta and Dandaniti. In Raghuvamsa (V, 21) he refers to 14 vidyas, viz. the four Vedas, the six angas of the Vedas, Mimamsa, Nyaya, Purana, and Dharmastra. Education was not commercialised and the teachers did not draw any monthly pay but got presents from the disciples at the conclusion of their educational course, as described in the Raghuvamsa in the case of Kautsa the disciple of Varatantu. In schools run by the state salary was paid. The word '*vetana-dānena*' (by the payment of a salary) occurs in Malavikagnimitra. Kalidasa was evidently a master of the entire knowledge of his time such as grammar, prosody, rhetoric, painting, music, dance, astronomy, medicine, ethics, economics, politics, philosophy, scripture etc. He knew not only dharma sastra and moksha sastra but also artha sastra and

kama sastra. I have shown this with many illustrations in my two volumes on Kalidasa.

His vision of family and society.

Kalidasa visualises Hindu family life and social life at their best. He visualises individual life in its four stages (asramas), family life as a unit of society, and social life based on service and inter-dependence. In Kumarasambhava and Raghuvamsa, he describes the sastraic marital ritual in full detail. In Shakuntala the departure of the bride to her husband's house is very feelingly described. The Gandharva marriage based on love and courtship is attractively described in Vikramorvasiya. The agony of love in separation is emotionally portrayed in it and in Meghasandesa. The charm of childhood is described lovingly and in a loveable manner when describing Parvati and Kumara in Kumarasambhava, and Bharata in Shakuntala. The charm of affectionate filial obedience and reverence is attractively described when describing Raghu and Rama in Raghuvamsa. The reverence due to yogis and sages is ingrained in Kalidasa and comes out in all his works. Kalidasa's works show that people took rich food including cereals and milk preparations and not excluding flesh and wine, though yogis and ascetics abstained from meat and intoxicants. In Shakuntala the Brahmin Vidushaka says:

अनियत वेले शूल्य मांसभूयिष्ठाहाणे भुज्यते ।

'At irregular times a meal consisting of flesh and roasted on spits is eaten'. The milk preparation Sikharini referred to in Vikramorvasiya is explained by the commentator as being prepared from curds mixed with spices like cardamoms, camphor etc. and cooked in milk and sugar. It was prepared also with milk and ripe plantains and spices. Honey was another item of food and was given when honouring a guest and was called *Madhuparka*. Among fruits mango was a favourite. The people wore charming and colourful garments. Kalidasa

refers to silken (*kshauma*, *kauseya*) and woollen (*oorna*) garments. He refers also to chinese silk (*cheenamsuka*) in Shakuntala. He refers to cloths of such superfine texture as can be blown away by breath (*niśvāsa-hāryāmsukam* Raghuvamsa, XVI, 43). Women wore also beautiful ornaments and lovely flowers. They used also cosmetics and were fond of mirrors, perfumes, collyrium, ointments, unguents, lip-beautifiers, kunkum mark or tilaka on the forehead, etc.

His vision of agricultural and industrial and economic prosperity.

Kalidasa integrated cultural and social ideals with industrial prosperity and political independence and greatness. He refers to adequate food production, suitable housing, co-ordinated industries and extensive trade and commerce. The traders by sea are called *Sārthavapas* in Kalidasa's Shakuntala. He refers to pastures for cattle, because if cattle are neglected, agriculture will suffer. He speaks about crores of cows. (Raghuvamsa, II, 49, *gāh kotisah.*)

India's mines of gold and precious stones are referred to by him, as also oceanic pearls and corals. The Tamraparni river in the Tirunelveli District is referred to by him as a source of pearls. ताम्रपर्णीसमेतस्य मुक्तसारं महोदधे: (Raghuvamsa, IV, 50). It is worthy of note, however, that when describing the prosperity of Alaka in the Meghasandesa, the poet suggests that the prosperity is due to the unawaking unwaning light from the crescent shining at the head of God Siva the prince of beggars and vairagis.

गन्तव्या ते वसतिरलका नाम यक्षेश्वराणां
बाह्योद्यानस्थितहरशिरश्चन्द्रिका धौतहर्म्या ।

His political vision.

But culture and social values and economic prosperity will be brittle unless there are political independence and strength. Though the poet refers to the seven limbs (*saptanga*) of the state (viz., king, ministers, allies, treasury, country, forts and armies),

the real source of political strength is power of the people. The king must work for the good of the people. (*Pravartatām-prakṛti hitāya pāṛthivah* in the last verse of the Shakuntala). He must please the people by his conduct and character and political measures. (*Rājā prakṛti-ranjanāt* — Raghuvamsa, IV, 12). Kalidasa felt that India would have prosperity if it became a united state under the rule of one overlord. He refers to *Sarvabhauma* and *Chakravarti*. In Shakuntala the hermits bless Dushyanta to have an emperor of India as his son.

पुत्रमेकं गुणोपेतं चक्रवर्तिनमाप्नुहि ।

His vision of art.

Kalidasa feels and says that social unity, economic prosperity and political freedom and power are but the roots of the tree of life — art being the flower and religion, being the fruit. In my two volumes on Kalidasa I have shown how he was a great master of Aesthetics and how he delighted in all the fine arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, drama, music, and dance). His drama *Malavikagnimitra* shows the keenness of his insight into the art of dance. The very first verse in Meghasandesa tells us about the combination of feminine beauty, paintings, music, polished floors and houses with many storeys and domes. The same poem describes the yaksha's wife as an expert singer and as an expert player on the Veena. The poem refers also to music halls (*sangeetashalas*) and painting halls (*Chitrashalas* — vide *Malavikagnimitra* which says *Citraśālām gatā devī*). He refers to portrait-painting as well as mural paintings.

His vision of religion.

Kalidasa was the greatest master of integral Hinduism in the post-Krishna age. The greatest weakness of Hinduism which is the sublimest of all religions is the tendency to philosophical divergence and religious sectarianism. Interminable and bitter controversies have raged and are raging as to

whether God has form and attributes or not, whether Siva or Vishnu is the supreme God, whether karma or dhyana or bhakti or prapatti or jnana will lead to paradise, whether the soul has or has not a body in its state of mukti or liberation, whether it merges in God or is separate from Him, and so on and so forth. But Kalidasa set his face sternly against all these puerile and sterile controversies. He shows the harmony of Sruti and Smriti and of all Agamas.

श्रुतेरिवार्थं स्मृतिरन्वगच्छत् । (Raghuvamsa II-2)

बहुधाप्यागमैर्मिज्ञाः पन्थानः सिद्धिहेतवः ।

तव्येव निपतन्त्योवा जाह्नवी या यथार्णवे । (50)

Hinduism teaches that God has become the world and is immanent in the world and transcends. In Malavikagnimitra out of his three plays the poet shows in the Nandi (benedictory verse) God Siva's asceticism and grace, his union with Parvati while being the greatest of anchorites, and his world-rulership and humility. In the Nandi verse in Vikramorvasiya he says that God Siva is revealed by the Vedanta and visualised by Yoga. In the Nandi verse in Shakuntala he refers to the eight aspects (ashta murtis) of God Siva in the visible universe. Kalidasa rises to the highest heights of integral and unified and dynamic Hinduism, when he shows the oneness of Brahman and Bhagavan, of the Trimurtis, and of Purusha and Prakriti.

If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed *punya bhumi* (holy land), to be the land to which all souls on this earth must come to account for *karma*, the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality,—it is India.

—SWAMI VIVARANANDA

त्वामामनन्ति प्रकृतिं पुरुषार्थप्रवर्तिनी ।

तद्वर्तिनमुदासीनं त्वामेव पुरुषं विदुः ।

नमस्त्विमूर्तये तुभ्यं प्राक्सृष्टेः केवलारम्भे ।

एकैवमूर्तिर्विभिदे त्रिधा सा

सामान्यमेवां प्रथमावरत्नं ।

(Kumara-sambhava)

In Kumarasambhava he gives us a sublime description of Siva as the supreme God. In Raghuvamsa he gives us a sublime description of Vishnu as the supreme God. In Syamala Dandaka he describes Devi (Shakti) as being supreme. He says that God takes incarnation to show the way to salvation and spiritual bliss.

लोकानुग्रह एवैको हेतुस्तु जन्मकर्मणोः ।

(Raghuvamsa)

He refers also to temples and idol worship and reverence for the cow as the pivots of Hinduism.

His final Gospel.

The Bharatavakya in Shakuntala sums up his integrated vision of Truth. He says in it that we must yearn and pray for the co-ordination and integration of culture and welfare State and spiritual salvation.

प्रवर्तितां प्रकृतिं हिताय पार्थिवः

सरस्वती श्रुतिमहती महीपताम् ।

ममापि च क्षपयतु नीललोहितः

पुनर्भवं परिगतशक्तिरात्मभूः ।

(Śakuntalam VII. 35.)

THE HOLY NAME OF GOD AND TULASIDASA

SWAMI MAITHILYANANDA

When Tulasidasa was living at Varanasi, a certain man came to him. He committed murder and such other great sins. After repentance the man began to turn over a new leaf. He used to repeat the holy name of Sri Rama. One day he, while begging from door to door, came to Tulasidasa. Tulasidasa asked him to bathe and then dine with him. This event went to the ears of orthodox Brahmanas of Varanasi and they criticised Tulasidasa vehemently. The orthodox Brahmanas called a meeting and insulted Tulasidasa. Tulasidasa said that this man had been purified by taking the holy name of Sri Rama. The orthodox Brahmanas were in favour of prescribing for the man penances according to scriptures. Tulasidasa believed that the holy name of Sri Rama is the greatest purifier. So he took the murderer to have been purified and that is the reason why he did not hesitate to dine with him. But the orthodox Brahmanas took exception to the behaviour. In this connection it is better to consult scriptures preaching the power of the holy name of God. In *Sandilya Bhaktisutra* we find:

स्मृतिकीर्त्योः कथादेशात् प्रायश्चित्तभावात् ।

i.e., To take the holy name of God and sing His glories is a penance by itself for those who are distressed. In another place of the same scripture we find:

भूयसामनुष्ठितिरिति चेदाप्रयाणमुपसंहारान् महत्तुष्यति ।

i.e., If you say that the distressed do not perform various deeds of merit, then in reply it must be said that they need not perform them. Because to take the holy name of God and sing His glories are regarded as penances for great sins.

लघ्वपि भक्ताधिकारे महत्तुष्यति ममपरमवदनात् ।

i.e., Although to take the holy name of God and sing His glories do not require much

effort, still they can destroy great sins. Because there is no other penance prescribed for devotees who are distressed.

When Tulasidasa told the orthodox Brahmanas that this man had been purified by taking the holy name of Sri Rama, they replied, 'What is the proof that this man has been purified?' Then one Brahmana said in the assembly that if this man could feed the stone image of the bull in the temple of Lord Viswanatha, then they could believe that he had really been purified. Tulasidasa instantly took that man to the temple of Lord Viswanatha and arranged some eatables which the man took in his hands. Tulasidasa asked him to hold the food before the mouth of the stone-made bull. The bull became living and began to take the eatables from the man's hands and it finished them. All the orthodox Brahmanas who used to scoff at Tulasidasa began to pray at the moment.

There is another incident. One hermit, who was hypocritical, came to Tulasidasa while shouting 'Alakha, Alakha'. The word 'Alakha' means One who is beyond the ken of our senses, mind and speech.

Tulasidasa, although disturbed, did not say a word to the hermit. But when the latter continued to shout very much, Tulasidasa began to say in a couplet:

हम लाखि लखहि हमार लखि हाम हमारके बीच ।

तुलसी अलखहि का लखहि राम नाम जपु नीच ।

i.e., O hermit! first know the nature of yourself. Then realize the nature of Brahman. Next, recognize Maya between Brahman and yourself. O wretch! how can you realise the 'Alakha' without first realizing these three. Repeat the holy name of Sri Rama and give up shouting 'Alakha, Alakha'.

Hearing this, the hermit came to senses and fell down at the feet of Tulasidasa, while asking for pardon.

Tulasidasa has expressed in the following couplet how he at last took refuge in the holy name of Sri Rama :

भरोसो जहि दूसरो सो करो ।

मोको तो रामको नाम कल्पतरु कलि कल्याण फरो ।

Vinaya Patrikā

i.e., Let a person do the thing for which he cherishes hope. So far as I am concerned, the holy name of Sri Rama is just like a wishing tree in this Kali age. Now I find that the tree has borne the fruit of ultimate good.

करम उपासन ग्यान वेदमत सो सब भाति खरो ।

मोहि ते 'सावनके अंधहि' ज्यों सुमत रंग हरो ।

Ibid

i.e., All the paths, namely, Vedic ceremonies, worship, and knowledge are good. But for myself the holy name of Sri Rama alone is found everywhere, just as a man who becomes blind in the month of Sravana sees in everything the green colour.

चाटत रह्यो खान पातरि ज्यों कवहु न पेट भरो ।

सो हौं सुमिरत नाम-सुधारस पेखत परसि धरो ।

Ibid

i.e., I roamed like a dog, licking the little remnants in the leaves rejected by people after having finished their food. But my hunger was never appeased. Then I took the holy name of Sri Rama, I found that the

nectar was ready for me and my hunger was fully satisfied.

स्वार्थ औ परमार्थहु को नहि कुंजर-नरो ।

सुनियत सेतु पयोधि पषाननि करि कपि-कटकतरो ।

Ibid

i.e., For me the holy name of Sri Rama has become the source of salvation and it has brought forth love of God as the ultimate end of life. There is no doubt about it, as we leave no doubt as to whether it is a man or an elephant. I have heard that by dint of the holy name, the Vanara soldiers built the bridge made of stone and crossed the ocean.

प्रीति-प्रतीति जहाँ जाकी, तहं ताको काज सरो ।

मेरे तो माय-वाप दोउ आखर ही, सिंसु-अरणि अरो ।

Ibid

i.e., The success of a man depends on the object in which he has faith and for which he has love. The letter 'Ra' and the letter 'Ma' are my mother and father, as it were. I grumble like a child before these parents of mine.

संकर सखित जो राखि कहीं कछु तो जरि जीह गरो ।
अपने भलो राम नामहि ते तुलसिहि समुझो परो ।

Ibid

i.e., May Lord Siva be my witness if I say something concealed in this matter. May my tongue be burnt or melt down! I firmly believe that one's ultimate good is possible only through the holy name of Sri Rama.

All these verses show how Tulasidasa was original in his expressions declaring the power of the holy name of God.

The best thing for people whose minds are attracted by sense-objects is to cultivate the dualistic attitude and chant loudly the Name of the Lord as mentioned in *Narada-Pancharatra*. ... Is the Name insignificant? He and His Name are not different. Satyabhama failed to balance the Lord with gold and jewels. But Rukmini succeeded when she placed a Tulasi leaf and the Name of Krishna in the other pan of the balance. ... Sing with devotion the hallowed Name of the Lord, and the mountain of your sins will vanish, just as a mountain of cotton will burn to ashes and disappear if but a spark of fire falls on it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, THE MYSTIC

'SATYAVRATA'

Swami Vivekananda! What does this name conjure up before our mind which is at least fairly imbued with the marvellous life and teaching of this great son of our motherland? An inspiring vision of a stalwart, handsome monk of over middle height, of flashing intelligent eyes and winsome lineaments, an eloquent declaimer, a flaming patriot and an untiring missionary of Hinduism! A rapid pageant of impressive and stirring events of his life marches past the mind: a brilliant student of the Calcutta University, a heroic disciple of the Saint of Dakshineswar, a penniless peripatetic traversing the length and breadth of India, an unknown representative to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, then the world-famous harbinger of harmony and peace. Well, this is the Vivekananda of popular mind, the patriot-monk who preached dynamic Hinduism and roused our national consciousness. To be sure, any one who has come in contact with the Swami or read his life and works cannot help holding such an idea. One among the fortunate many who met and served him at Madras summarised graphically and precisely the popular impression thus:

Before we met Swami Ramakrishnananda, we did not know much about Sri Ramakrishna's greatness. Of course, we did live and move with Vivekananda. But when with him, we were so much dazzled by his brilliance, we could not even conceive of any man greater than him in any respect.

So it was too natural for his biographers and admiring writers to be carried away by his external brilliance and lay less emphasis on his spiritual core. In this the writers have been enthusiastic to a fault. Day by day, for aeons, the sun is shining bright in the sky and man is fascinated by his brightness. The majority have never cared

to know the source of such inexhaustible and enormous light and heat of the sun. With Swami Vivekananda his mystic personality was the real source of his dazzling brilliance. In a recent publication of immense biographical importance relating to Swami Vivekananda's early part of the first visit to America, the author, Marie Louise Burke, an American devotee of Swamiji—blessed be Marie Burke—has rightly protested against this malaise in the Swami's biographies. She is one of the few who have raised their voices against this injustice done to Swamiji and to the public. She says:

But strangely enough this most important aspect of Swamiji's life has been given little importance in his biographies, and the chapters on his life in America have been so presented as to give the reader the impression that he was primarily a 'man of action', a lecturer and writer—spiritually inspired, it is true, but first and foremost an intellectual genius. We do not see him as he must have been, continually in a transcendental state of consciousness, possessed of innumerable spiritual experiences of the highest order and, while undertaking the most rigorous of active lives, performing on a deeper level a service of incalculable value to the world.¹

In this paper a humble attempt is made to unveil before the readers the deeper strata of Vivekananda's personality which are essentially mystic.

Defining mysticism precisely and satisfactorily is almost an impossible task. As Sir William James, in his monumental work, *Varieties of Religious Experience*,² has done it is better to understand it by studying its unmistakable hall-marks which he sets down as 'ineffability' and 'noetic quality'. By the first he means that the content of a mys-

¹ Swami Vivekananda in America, New Discoveries, p. 334.

² p. 380-381

tical experience defies expression in words, and even when an attempt is made it will only yield unsatisfactory results. By the second one he envisages that 'they are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations . . . and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for after-time'. The works of Swamiji, especially the four yogas, reveal such a characteristic mystical insight.

Another writer on mysticism, namely Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, gives a somewhat tangible definition in his famous book *Mystics and Mysticism* 3:

Mysticism is the attitude of mind which consists in the spiritual quest of man for union with God culminating in unitive experience . . . is the fruition or fulfilment of man's highest aspiration as an integral personality satisfying the eternal values of life, like truth, goodness, beauty and love.

Moreover, as any sincere spiritual aspirant has it as an intimate experience of his inner life, mysticism is a whole world of luminous and blissful contacts of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. The culmination of this spiritual liaison is the unitive experience when the dividing line between 'I' and 'You' is obliterated.

Judging from these criteria, we should concede to Swami Vivekananda a place among the world's foremost mystics, for we find in him this unitive consciousness realized in all its glory.

If we closely study the situation how Swamiji was not appraised as he should have been, we see that it was because the writers failed to keep their attention steadily on Sri Ramakrishna's estimate of him. As, to understand Sri Ramakrishna in the right light we have to see him through Vivekananda's eyes, so to know Vivekananda we have to seek the aid of Sri Ramakrishna's vision. Sri Ramakrishna had an uncanny

insight into the recesses of men's minds. In a trice he could unerringly plumb the past of a man and predict his future. 'I can see a man's inside', he said often, 'like articles kept in a glass case.'

Now one may ask, 'What did he say about Vivekananda?' Well, he said many exalted things about him, all of which cannot be reproduced here. However, we shall consider a few outstanding declarations which are very impressive and revealing.

Long before Narendranath Dutta—the name of Vivekananda in his pre-monastic days—met Sri Ramakrishna, the latter had had exalted visions regarding the identity of his dearest disciple. With Sri Ramakrishna the conviction born of these transcendental visions remained unshaken to the end. If anyone, even a well-meaning and intimate disciple, reported to him anything contrary to them, Sri Ramakrishna stubbornly refused to believe him. Once he even sternly rebuked one such disciple saying that if he uttered such blasphemy before him, he would not see his face at all! When Narendra once mistook the Master's love for a morbid gloating over him, he remonstrated with Ramakrishna that the fate of Jadabharata who died doting on a pet deer and was born a deer again, would befall him. The Master for once doubted the revelations because his Naren was warning him about an excess, citing the scriptures! He ran to the Mother in the temple and imploringly asked Her about the truth. The Mother gave him the benign assurance that he loved Narendra because he saw Narayana in him. Coming back from the temple, the Master jubilantly told Narendra: 'Mother told me, I love you because I see Narayana in you. The day I don't do so, I won't be able to look at your face.' Sure enough, that day never came!

Sri Ramakrishna narrated to his disciples one of those transcendental visions—which speaks for itself by its poetic sublimity and mystic sanctity—which he saw regarding Narendra:

One day I found my mind soaring high in samadhi along a luminous path. It soon transcended the stellar universe and entered the subtler region of ideas. As it ascended higher and higher I found on both sides of the way ideal forms of gods and goddesses. The mind then reached the outer limits of the region, where a luminous barrier separated the sphere of relative existence from that of the Absolute. Crossing that barrier, the mind entered the transcendental realm, where no corporeal being was visible. The next moment I found seven venerable sages seated in samadhi. It occurred to me that these sages must have surpassed not only men but even the gods in knowledge and holiness, in renunciation and love. Lost in admiration, I was reflecting on their greatness, when I saw a portion of that undifferentiated luminous region condense into the form of a divine child. The child came to one of the sages, tenderly clasped his neck with his lovely little arms, and addressing him in a sweet voice attempted to drag his mind down from the state of samadhi. The magic touch roused the sage from his superconscious state, and he fixed his unmoving, half-open gaze upon that wonderful child. His beaming countenance showed that the child must have been the treasure of his heart. In great joy the strange child said to him, 'I am going down. You too must go with me.' The sage remained mute but his tender look expressed his assent . . . I was surprised to find that a portion of his body and mind was descending on earth in the form of an effulgent light. No sooner had I seen Naren than I recognized him to be that sage.⁴

The child, of course, was none other than Ramakrishna.

In another vision he saw a streak of light flash across the sky from Banaras towards Calcutta. In great joy he exclaimed, 'My prayer has been granted and my man must come to me one day!' The Master was never tired of recounting the greatness of Narendra and it looked as though the more he praised him the more he became animated. He used to say that Narendra was an incarnation of Siva, the God who delights in meditation, and, in fact, Bhuvaneshwari

⁴ *Life of Swami Vivekananda*, by his Eastern and Western Disciples (1940) pp. 50-51.

Devi, Narendra's mother, had earnestly prayed to Vireswara Siva of Banaras to grant her a son and the prayer was answered in the birth of Narendranath. When Sri Ramakrishna came to know through his mystic power that Narendra was born, he prayed to the Divine Mother to bind him with Her Maya,—a strange thing for a Guru like Ramakrishna to pray for on behalf of his disciple—for, otherwise Narendra might give up his body in samadhi.

Then on the eve of his first meeting—that was really embarrassing to Narendra—Sri Ramakrishna took him privately and, standing before him with folded hands, addressed him: 'Lord, I know you are that ancient sage, Nara—the incarnation of Narayana—born on earth to remove the miseries of mankind . . . A Guru of Sri Ramakrishna's eminence adoring his own disciple! How uniquely great must he be!

During one of these early meetings, the Master, coming to know that Naren saw a light between his eyebrows before falling asleep, had remarked, 'Ah, it is true. This one is a Dhyanasiddha—an adept in meditation even from his very birth.' Often he used to say that Naren was a Nityasiddha—an eternally perfect sage—that spiritual striving on his part was only for others' guidance, that he had no bonds whatever and that he was a 'jitendriya', one with perfect sense-control.

Now, with this revealing perspective which Sri Ramakrishna affords us, we may safely proceed to study and understand Vivekananda as the mystic.

Here one may pertinently pose the question: 'Well, was Vivekananda himself aware of his divine nature?' Surely he was. If we read his life and utterances between the lines, we come to know this fact. Especially is this marked in that part of his life when, the storm of spiritual struggle being over, he was living and having his

being in God. Only a couple of passages from Vivekananda's epistles will suffice to prove our point:

He wrote in a letter to a Madras disciple in August 1895, from the U.S.A.:

...I sought praise neither from India nor America, nor do I seek such bubbles. I have a truth to teach, I, the child of God. And He that gave me the truth will send me fellow-workers from the earth's bravest and best.⁵

After his return from the West, in a reply to a Western disciple he wrote from Almora in July 1897:

...He is with me, the Beloved. He was when I was in America, in England, when I was roaming about unknown from place to place in India... What! I, who have realised the Spirit and the vanity of all earthly nonsense, to be swerved from my path. ...⁶

If ever morning showed the day or the child became the father of man, it surely happened in the case of Vivekananda. From his early boyhood Naren showed a rare trait of character in his fondness for meditation. This passion for inwardness completely possessed him with the advance of years, culminating in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the highest mystical state possible for man to experience. In fact, his whole life is one long spell of meditation and mystic experience, silent and profound.

As a little boy, one day he sat in meditation before a decorated image of Sita-Rama, bolting up the door of his room. After a long time, when the whole household was casting about for him, someone discovered a room with bolted doors. Knocking at it in vain, they forced their way into it and all to their utter amazement saw Naren sitting like a statue, undisturbed by the noise of intrusion! Again, there is another interesting incident which highlights his power of concentration even in that tender age. Once with his chums he was playing at meditation

in one quarter of his house. Suddenly a cobra crept in from where nobody knew, at which his comrades screamed out frightfully and fled the room. Naren remained all alone, blissfully oblivious of this venomous intruder. The cobra left the place. Later to the parents' inquiries he said candidly: 'I knew nothing of the snake or anything else. I was feeling ineffable bliss.' The intensity of meditative habit and power of concentration increased as he grew older, with the result that whole nights were passed in deep meditation. He was born with such mystical tendencies and purity of mind that even his dreams were different from those of others, for in them he saw divine realities and communed with them. Just before he fell asleep, he used to see a strange light between the eyebrows which gradually expanded and engulfed him in sleep. This phenomenon continued, it is said in the *Life of the Swami*, far into his manhood, when at times it spoke to him in a half-audible voice on intricate philosophical truths.

It is said that as a boy, sitting alone in his room studying a book, there appeared before him a luminous figure with a placid face and a shaven head which slowly moved towards him, as if to tell him something. But being seized by a paroxysm of fear, he ran out of the room. On returning after a while, he did not find anyone there. In later days, he musingly told his disciples that the vision must have been that of the Buddha, the prince among monks, and regretted his foolishness in running away. During his youth, when he would retire to bed at night, there would appear before him two very vivid pictures: one of a prosperous worldly man with success attending him in every department of life, wealthy and famous above all others; the other of a roaming mendicant sannyasin, bare of all possessions but a loin-cloth and a waterpot, living under trees, subsisting on chance-meals, but always communing with the Supreme Spirit. Naren could choose either and he knew his

exceptional fitness for both. But his innate inclinations of a monk made him choose the latter, and the world knows how wise the choice was.

At the time he came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, all the various qualifications of a spiritual aspirant according to Vedantic scriptures had full efflorescence in him. So Sri Ramakrishna said at first sight, '... I was surprised to find such a spiritual soul coming from the materialistic atmosphere of Calcutta...' In his raging spiritual hunger he had knocked in vain at every door bearing a signboard of a religious society. Nowhere his quest was fruitful. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, the great Brahmo leader, had told him on being questioned if he had seen God: 'My boy, you have the Yogi's eyes.' Be that as it may, at last he had come to the place where his all-consuming hunger for God was to encounter an inexhaustible store of spiritual manna. His contact with Sri Ramakrishna roused up the dormant spiritual potentialities. During his early meetings, he lost consciousness of the world twice at the touch of the Master, when the latter gathered all information about 'his antecedents and where he lived, his mission in this world and the duration of his mortal life'. Sri Ramakrishna, the wonderful teacher that he was, urged him to observe strict celibacy as an indispensable pre-condition of God-realization. Inspiring are the annals of the course of disciplines into which the Master initiated the disciple and the success which the latter had in all of them. Once Sri Ramakrishna imparted the knowledge of Advaita by a simple touch at which Swamiji's perception underwent an instantaneous revolution. In place of a variety of things he saw only the indivisible consciousness pervading everywhere.

Though at first Narendra was recalcitrant to the idea of a personal God, Sri Ramakrishna's words of wisdom and realization carried conviction to his heart,—where devo-

tion was, as it were, slumbering—and Narendra became a passionate lover of the personal God. He learnt to surrender to the all-powerful will of the Supreme. Once he was initiated by Sri Ramakrishna with Rama-mantra and the effect was marvellous. Narendra began to go round his house crying aloud, 'Rama, Rama' and after a few hours became composed. His meditations became so effective that he developed various yogic powers such as clairvoyance. Of course, his mind was not distracted by these powers, because the Master had condemned them as obstacles in the path of final illumination. Visions of gods and goddesses, the sacred mantras in shining letters and the uplifting presence of his Master—though actually away at Dakshineswar—attended his meditations. One night he dreamt of Sri Ramakrishna telling him, 'I shall show you Gopi Radha.' Naren followed him. Going some distance, the Master turned round and said, 'Where else will you go?' Saying this, he transformed himself into the beautiful form of Radha. This so touched the tender heart of the divine lover Narendra that thenceforth he began to sing songs depicting the love between Radha and Krishna. Thus Narendra, the sadhaka, was slowly and steadily led on to become Narendra, the siddha, the perfect one. One incident about this time that brings into striking relief Narendra's power of concentration and profundity of meditation, took place when one day he had gone to meditate under the Panchavati in Dakshineswar along with Girish Chandra Ghosh. We must remember that the place was badly infested with swarms of mosquitoes. Both sat down to meditate. Hardly a few minutes had glided when Girish felt uncomfortable because of mosquito-bites. He turned to see how Narendra was faring. Oh, what a sight! Narendra was sitting absolutely motionless like a statue draped in a dark blanket—myriad mosquitoes sucking his blood! Still, no body-consciousness! If we look at the photograph

⁵ *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, vol. V. p. 70

⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 105-106.

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of Vivekananda in meditation with this incident in our mental background, we can understand the real Vivekananda—the sage who had realized his oneness with the Supreme Spirit.

The consummation of this series of incessant and intense spiritual strivings was reached, when, with the grace of his Master, he entered into Nirvikalpa Samadhi in Cossipore Garden-house, where the Master was undergoing treatment for his throat-cancer. Narendra was meditating in a room on the groundfloor when suddenly he felt a light at the back of his head, as if a powerful torch-light had been placed there. Becoming infinitely enlarged, it engulfed his mind. Ineffable and incandescent though the experience was, we find its shimmering portrayal in the Swami's *Hymn of Samadhi*,¹ originally sung in Bengali:

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,
All light extinct; in the great void of space
Floats shadow-like the image-universe.

In the void of mind involute, there floats
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current "I".

Slowly, slowly, the shadow multitude
Entered the primal womb, and flowed
ceaseless,

The only current, the "I am", "I am".

Lo! 'tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no
more,

Void merged into void—beyond speech and
mind!

Whose heart understands, he verily does.

Till Sri Ramakrishna in burning words taught him that service of God in man based on this experience was a higher state, Vivekananda was thinking Nirvikalpa Samadhi to be the *summum bonum* of his life. In obedience to the command and example of his Master, Vivekananda became a dynamic teacher of humanity. This was not the unredeemed dynamism of a political or social reformer. It was the dynamism of a Buddha or a Christ, inspired and sustained by the

¹Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. IV, p. 431.

knowledge born of inward enlightenment, who walked the earth with bleeding hearts for the salvation of man.

During this period (1886), he, with two companions, had once quietly left Calcutta for Bodh-Gaya where the Buddha had attained enlightenment. There meditating under the Bo-tree a la Buddha, he had a profoundly moving mystic experience which stirred him so deeply that he burst into tears and embraced his brother-disciple Tarak (later Swami Sivananda) who was seated beside him. It is said that Vivekananda had the vision of the Enlightened One. The Swami was full of admiration and reverence for the Buddha, for his unparalleled renunciation and compassion to all creatures. In his *Karma-Yoga* he paid him the highest tribute when he said that he was the greatest Karma-yogi ever born on earth.

Before Sri Ramakrishna passed away, he transmitted all his spiritual power to Vivekananda during which act both the Master and the Disciple were lost in a super-conscious state. In a short time the Swami became a mighty power-house of spirituality by the strength of which he brought the Light Divine into the lives of men and women who came in contact with him, and by his powerfully luminous teaching is even today lighting up the path of thousands.

After the Master's passing began Swamiji's itineracy throughout the length and breadth of India. Practising dependence on the Divine Mercy, revelling only in the bliss of God, bringing light and peace to the rich and the poor alike and rendering holier the holy land of Bharata, Swamiji went about on foot, not caring to know wherefrom his next meal would come or how to get a place of shelter. This period of his life is crowded with many mystic experiences of great significance and only a few are set on record because the Swami himself was rigorously silent regarding them. For instance, once when he was sitting in meditation under a peepal tree, he had the revelation that the

microcosm and the macrocosm were built on the same plan. When the Swami moved from place to place, fearless like a rhinoceros, he was sometimes face to face with death itself. But the divine succour came to his rescue in unexpected ways. He also tested God's solicitude to protect him by deliberately trying to avoid such unexpected help and came to feel the Providence working in and through him. Thus he moved from North to South and ultimately to Madras where he decided on his plan for attending the Parliament of Religions in America.

To one of his trusted brother-disciples, Swamiji had confidently told before his departure for America that the 'Parliament of Religions' was to be held for his sake! This was no empty bragging of an intellectual sophist, but the plain-spoken words of a prophet who sees the events of the future as clear as a map laid bare before one's eyes. None who has read the thrilling accounts of the Swami's success and his great popularity in the Parliament at Chicago can doubt the truth of that prophecy. There are people who think the causes of his success and popularity were his pre-possessing appearance, inspiring eloquence, the ecumenical character of his message and his intellectual brilliance. But there was something more than all this. We have that reason given succinctly and forcefully in the words of the author of *Swami Vivekananda in America, New Discoveries* (p. 67) as follows:

And there was yet another reason for his phenomenal popularity. Never before had the people of America seen one in whom spiritual truths had been fully realized. Though the fact that Swamiji was such a one was not consciously known by the thousands who flocked to hear him speak, who waited interminable hours for even a few words and who applauded when he simply crossed the platform, the people through some inner knowledge unerringly recognized him for what he was and, from start to finish, instinctively sensed that his very presence conferred a blessing.

We find Vivekananda in that land moving from town to town and city to city, not merely as a whirlwind missionary of Hinduism but also as a prophet of peace and blessedness, transforming the lives of sincere men and women. He is reported to have said to an American audience:

I have a message to the West as the Buddha had a message to the East.

No doubt he was engrossed in lecturing and organizing, but at the same time he lived on a high spiritual plane, experiencing exalted mystical states. People saw him as 'one who lived and moved with God'. As one of the many reporters wrote about him:

... occasionally he cast his eye up to the roof and repeated softly 'Siva, Siva, Siva!' ... And a current of powerful feeling seemed to be flowing like molten lava beneath the silent surface of this strange being...

This manifestation of spiritual power was especially witnessed by those around him in two particular periods when he gathered round him a select band of disciples in the Thousand Island Park and at Greenacre. One of the disciples—and what she writes is representative of others' opinion—wrote in her memoirs of the Thousand Island days:

Of the wonderful weeks that followed, it is difficult to write. Only if one's mind were lifted to that high state of consciousness in which we lived for some time, could we hope to recapture the experience. We were filled with joy. We did not know at that time that we were living in his radiance. On the wings of inspiration, he carried us to the height which was his natural abode. At these intimate evening gatherings often he soared to the greatest height as night advanced. What if it was two O'clock in the morning? What if we had watched the moon rise and set? Time and space had vanished for us.

That is how one feels living in the vicinity of a blazing spiritual personality. Referring to these days Swamiji himself said that he was at his best in Thousand Islands. Further even in his public speeches and con-

tacts, he emanated a divine light and blessing which exerted a transforming influence on all. The moving accounts of many of his friends and disciples regarding their contacts with him and the consequent changes in their lives bear out the above statement. Enough cannot be written regarding Swamiji's 'Spiritual conquest' of the West. We humbly request the reader to peruse a little of the memoirs and reminiscences of the Western disciples to have a fair idea of what we mean in this brief article.

After setting in motion the mighty movement of Vedanta in the West, Vivekananda returned to his motherland where again he was sucked into the swirl of activity in uplifting his countrymen. From the southernmost part of India to the northern end he swept across the land like a huge tidal wave, rousing and activating the soul of India. He established a Math in Calcutta on the banks of Ganga, and began to train his workers, 'his sappers and miners', as he called them. People came in crowds, social leaders and political revolutionaries and all, to imbibe his ideas and inspiration. As he said to one of his brother-disciples, he 'was laying down his life inch by inch' in the service of his Master and Motherland. He visited several holy places after his return, and the visit to Amarnath, the snowy abode of Siva, is particularly germane to our theme, since it throws a flood of light on his real personality. He went there accompanied by Sister Nivedita, in a big party of pilgrims. He moved with all, honouring their customs, as if he was one of the many wandering monks, never letting others know that he was the world-renowned Vivekananda. On reaching Amarnath, he took a dip in the rivulet like many others, and was ready to enter the cave of Amarnath. We shall now quote from the biography the event as it took place:

Then, his body covered with ashes, his face aflame with supreme devotion to Siva, he

entered the shrine itself, nude, except for a loin-cloth; and kneeling in adoration he bowed low before the Lord. A song of praise from a hundred throats resounded in the cave, and the shining purity of the great Ice-Lingam overpowered him. He almost swooned with emotion. A great mystical experience came to him, of which he never spoke, beyond saying that Siva Himself had appeared before him and that he had been granted the grace of Amarnath, the Lord of Immortality, not to die until he himself should choose to throw off his mortal bonds, in corroboration of the words of his Divine Master regarding him, — 'When he realizes who and what he is, he will no longer remain in the body!' Indeed, so intense had been the shock of this mystical experience upon his physical frame that later on a doctor examining his heart, remarked, 'Swamiji, it was almost death! Your heart ought naturally to have stopped beating. It has undergone a permanent enlargement instead.'

In this eventful career of a great mystic, exalted experiences abound like the novae in the sky. Only a few are put on record and legions of them remain in the guarded chest of memory of the Saint, too intimate to be breathed to another soul. Whatever is put on record is enough for a careful student to give the real insight into Vivekananda's personality.

It is a commonly held view that the manner of death of a person bespeaks the life he lived. If this be true, the events that attended Swamiji's end tell us unequivocally that he was a mystic through and through. A few days before his passing, some one of his brother-monks casually enquired of him, if he had come to know who he really was. To this Swamiji gave the unexpected reply that he did know. This at once brought into their memory the words of Sri Ramakrishna, and cast the pale shadows of the approaching end in their apprehensive hearts. On the final day of his earthly life, his actions seemed very unusual and deliberate, especially his meditation for three hours in the monastery shrine with bolted doors. 'In his meditation', writes his

biographer, 'his own Master and the Divine Mother—to his realization one and the same personality—must have been present, for when he had finished he broke forth in a touching song in which the highest Jnana mingled with the highest Bhakti.' The Master, we may make a bold conjecture, must have handed back to him the 'key' which he had kept under his custody after he had experienced the Nirvikalpa Samadhi at the Cossipore Garden-house. Descending the stairs of the shrine, in an indrawn mood he was pacing the courtyard when his thoughts expressed themselves in a whisper loud enough to be heard by Swami Premananda who was hard by. Swamiji was muttering to himself:

If there were another Vivekananda, he would have understood what Vivekananda has done! And yet how may Vivekanandas shall be born in time!

In the evening when the temple bells chimed announcing the vesper service, he sat meditating on his cot for about an hour. Then he lay down on his bed, asking a disciple to fan him. About an hour later, his hand shivered. Then followed two deep breaths. First it was thought that he had fallen into samadhi. But, when a famous doctor was called in to examine him, he announced that life was extinct, at which news all were plunged in a sea of sorrow. The next morning it was found that the eyes

were bloodshot and that there was a little bleeding through the mouth and the nostrils. The doctors opined that the bleeding was caused by the rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain. This, according to Hindu Yoga system, is the way a real Yogi leaves his body. In the process of Japa and meditation, his Brahmrandhra must have been pierced when he left his body like a 'disused garment', as he used to say. What a wonderful death, if we can call it death at all! You leave your room without casting a 'longing lingering look behind' and enter the next, close the door after you and never return!

Away in Madras, Swami Ramakrishnananda (Sri Sasi Maharaj) was sitting immersed in his habitual evening meditation when a familiar voice rang out clear in his ears: 'Sasi, Sasi, I have spat out the body!' The next morning, a telegram from the Calcutta Math brought the heart-rending news of Swamiji's Mahasamadhi. A yogi he was born and a yogi he died!

One day, three or four years back, while he was restfully wandering in Kashmir vales with a group of intimate Western disciples, he took up a couple of pebbles in his hands and striking them against each other, said these highly significant words: 'When death comes, I shall be as hard as this, for I have touched the feet of God.'

Swamiji's mission was, in a sense, twofold. First, he was deeply concerned with finding a practical and unified answer to the many problems facing the modern world. Second, being the appointed messenger of Sri Ramakrishna, he was equally concerned with spreading his Master's teachings in their most pristine and also most complete form. As he so often said, he taught nothing that was not of Sri Ramakrishna. The combination of these two objectives into one mission had involved, on the one hand, a thorough and prescient knowledge of the interwoven and enormously complicated struggles of an age which at the end of the nineteenth century had only just begun, and, on the other hand, a thorough understanding of every aspect of a divine personality of infinite scope. Had Sri Ramakrishna been less than he was — a complete and universal being, combining within himself every mode of God and every ideal of man — it would have been more difficult, if not impossible, for Swamiji to equate his universal Vedanta with his Master's life and message. As it was, he saw the two as one and inseparable. Although it is not apparent that every aspect of Swamiji's Vedanta was derived from the recorded teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the Master was, in Swamiji's understanding, its complete living embodiment. And conversely, Vedanta, as Swamiji conceived it, was the systematic representation and exegesis of that great life. That which, as principle, was Vedanta, was, as living existence, Sri Ramakrishna. — From Swami Vivekananda in America

THE BUDDHA AVATARA

V. PATANJALI

Recognising Buddha as an *avatara* of Vishnu, acknowledging the greatness and sanctity of the great teacher but decrying the tenets attributed to him by the Brahmans seems somewhat peculiar. Lord Vishnu, according to them, assumed the form of the sceptical philosopher, in the fourth age of the world, that 'he might delude Daityas, demons, and wicked men and lead them to bring destruction on themselves' by repudiating the authority of the Vedas, neglecting the caste duties and denying the existence of God.

The acknowledged purpose of the avatars is to save Dharma when it is at stake. "Whenever the Law falters and chaos threatens, I send forth myself. I am born in succeeding ages to protect the good and destroy the evil" (Bhagavad Gita). The concept of *avatara* is fundamentally evolved, says Louis Renou, to safeguard monism while at the same time acknowledging the plurality of divine manifestations and the very principle of divine intervention in the human sphere.

Through the *avatara* one sees vividly the ideal one has to reach. The teachings of the incarnate God dispell the doubts and 'His life furnishes humanity with a fresh, living and luminous model' which can be copied for their upward growth. This gives a new impetus to 'the ascent of man towards godhood'. *Avatara* is a descent of the Universal Spirit into man and not a man into Him. *Ava* is below and the Sanskrit root *Tri* to cross, i.e., to cross 'the border dividing His Divine Essence from His physical manifestation, the material universe'.

In Mahabharata only six avatars are first mentioned, namely, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Rama, Parasurama and Krishna, but

added four more—Hamsa, Kurma, Matsya and Kalki. In the *Bhagavata Purana*, a slight change is made and the Buddha is included. In all, about 24 avatars are described therein. Even in some other *Puranas* like the *Varaha*, *Agni*, *Matsya*, *Kurma*, etc., we find references to Buddha as an *avatara* of Lord Vishnu. The *Matsya Purana* mentions Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu:

*Kartri dharma vyavasthanam suranam
pranasanam
Buddho navamako jagne tapasa
pushkarekshanah*

In the *Kurma Purana* he is worshipped as 'Idol of Knowledge':

*Namo Buddhaya suddhaya namaste jnana
roopine.*

Buddha was born when the orthodox priests remained plunged in their ritualism and sacrifices and their narrow codes of law. He did not descend from heaven to establish a new order but to restore an older form. The two closely related and concordant bodies of doctrine, Hinduism and Buddhism, both of forest origin are not opposed to each other. Buddha only tried to reform the existing state of affairs where Brahmans had become *Brahmabandhus* (Brahmins by birth) and not *Brahmavits* (knowers of Brahman). It is truly said that when the salt of the established church has lost its savour, it is rather from without than from within that its life will be renewed. Rama and Krishna were of royal blood and yet became spiritual teachers. Similarly, Buddha, a member of the royal caste, preached the true doctrine in his times.

In Mahayana, Gautama is not the only Buddha and his occurrence is one of the innumerable acts of divine dispensation. Gautama was the latest of a line of Buddhas, the fourth in the series 'which guides and

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guards the cycle of evolution of mankind'. He was 'the successor to his predecessors in office'. Buddha himself once said:

I am one of a long series of Buddhas. Many were born before and many will be born in future. When the wickedness and violence rule over the earth, Buddha takes his birth to establish the kingdom of righteousness on earth.

The *Saddharma Pundarika* depicts Buddha 'a god above gods, an immeasurably exalted being who has lived for countless ages and will live for ever'. After the death of their Master, the Buddhists began to worship the image of Buddha for the same reasons as the Hindus, 'to stimulate feeling and meditation'.

Even the Hinayana developed a similar conception, with a view to meeting the need for an object of reverence, as it is an essential stage of discipline, and allowed worship of Buddha but denied the existence of God. They believed in one supreme Creator who is neither omnipotent nor omniscient. The Lokottaravadins, a Hinayanist sect, believe Buddha to be Lokottara, 'a superhuman being who comes down to the world to save mankind for a short time'.

While speaking of the concept of incarnation, Sir Monier Williams makes these observations: Probably the definite shape given by the Brahmans to the doctrine of human incarnation was due to their perception of the fact that the success of Buddhism was in great part due to the reverence the Buddha inspired by his own personal character. He practised honestly what he preached enthusiastically. When he died, his memory was worshipped earnestly as his person had been revered. By that time the Brahmans realised that the religious cravings of the great mass of Hindus could not long be satisfied with mere rites and ceremonies.

'In all probability', Sir William adds, 'soon after the death of the Buddha, they elaborated their scheme for supplying the people with real objects of faith and adoration out of their own epic poems, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*'.

The origins of Rama and Krishna were traced back to the Sun god and the Moon god and were declared not *Kshatriyas* or even human beings but incarnations of God Vishnu. And then the Indian imagination continued to invent stories and develop new conceptions of gods till the idea is 'subtilised, distorted and exaggerated'.

The imagination of the Buddhists did not suffer from any account to keep pace with its Hindu counterpart. Some found parallel with Iswara and Buddha

'as both of them act as mediators to reveal the Absolute. The Tathagata, however, descends from his divine plane and takes birth amongst men, conforms to their modes of life, gains their sympathy and reveals the truth through the ordinary methods of communication whereas Iswara does not incarnate Himself as man for the purpose.'

Gautama, according to the Tibetans, was an ancestor of Buddha, 'is the early dawn or perhaps the planet Jupiter'. Buddha's title *Adityabandhu* (kinsman of the sun, or a sort of sun) and all the legends that are attributed to Buddha are descriptions of the sun and other heavenly bodies.

'Buddha's meditation on the twelvefold chain of causation represents the rising of the sun at the Spring equinox and the twelve months.'

Buddha's two former teachers, who had died before him, mean 'two stars that disappear in the light of the sun'.

The belief of the Ceylonese Buddhists is similar. They hold that Buddha (sun) visited their land every year in his southern course. They show as proof the footprint of Buddha on the Adam's Peak.

Bodhisattva Avalokiteswara has been described as omniscient and omnipotent and it is said that any one uttering the words:

Namo Namas Tasmai Abhayamdada Avalokiteswaraya Bodhisattvaya Mahasattvaya

would be able to free himself from all moral impurities.

Here in the case of Avalokiteswara we find how Buddhists returned the gesture of the Brahmans and called him an incarnation of Lord Vishnu or Padmanabha. Not contented with this, they called the Sapta Tathagatas the Sapta Rishis. For Buddhists, Ajita, Sakyamuni and Avalokiteswara have become the Trinity.

The Buddha has been absorbed into the

Ten Avatars of Vishnu and alongside the Buddhist philosophy also has been appropriated into Hinduism. The personality and philosophy of Buddha continued to command charm and following in India till today whether he was heterodox from the Brahminical Hindu point of view or he 'bad'st our altars be no more imbrued, with blood of victims!'

FREEDOM AND VALUE

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

The problem of values, ever-old yet ever-new for the metaphysics of all countries, became the center of interest in the west in the 20th century due to the orientation of thought given by Kant and Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Husserl and the phenomenologists and the existentialist philosophy. It is evident that as soon as Kant pointed out the limits of reason and the illusion of the objectivity of truth, it created a revolution in European philosophy which was followed up by others like Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and the existentialists.

In India, interiority of thought has been the main characteristic of its metaphysics. The question which has been asked from the Vedic times is: "What is that which being known everything is known?" which has a wonderful western parallel in Goethe: "To search and find that which unites or sustains the whole world in its innermost being". In India man searched the meaning and value of his existence and found the answer only in the depths of his Being. For the Indian sages Being became the value of values or supreme value and the whole history of Indian metaphysics grew round this discovery or revelation.

The problem of freedom and value is a problem posed by man's being and existence and so the notion of being and existence

must be made clear first. According to Vedantic metaphysics the notion of Being and that of existence are not opposed to each other; they coincide each other and melt themselves in the notion of felicity. Reality or Being in Vedanta is Sat-chit-ananda, Existence-absolute, Knowledge absolute, Felicity-absolute. These three are not complementary to each other, but each of them contains the other. The notion of Sat-chit-ananda may be said to be 'le point de rencontre' of being, existence, knowledge and felicity and so Sat-chit-ananda is the totality of Being.

When Vedantic ontology expresses Reality in threefold positiveness, it is not trying to create an ontology of concepts. Reality according to Vedanta can never become a concept or an object. It escapes our grasp as soon as we try to conceptualise it or determine it. If Reality is expressed in affirmative terms, it is only to indicate the value of Being and not the emptiness of being, to indicate a positive neant and not a negative one. When Reality is not conceptualised it reveals itself as Truth, as Life. Jesus said: "I am Truth and Life". In this totality Being and value are inwardised or interiorised and man feels them as the heart and center of his being, even as Christ did. It is at this stage that the Hindu sages affirm

that Sat-chit-ananda is the innermost Self of man, that man in reality is the value of values, the heart of the creative universe, the source and sustenance of all objective values but yet enshrining the supreme value which refuses to be evaluated.

In the life of man value springs from the same source of universal desire for creation and coincides with man's desire to exteriorise the absolute Reality. This desire penetrates his existence and at the same time the value-creations. When man discovers this coincidence or union in the depths of his own existence then reason and love, action and knowledge, good and bad, as well as all pairs of opposites lose their contradictory character. They are seen as the means or the possibility for transcendence or freedom. So then we can say that when man is seen as the value of values it is due to his quality of self-transcendence.

The word Sat-chit-ananda we have used already, signifies this quality of transcendence. This quality is absolute and to indicate the absolute character of Reality Vedanta calls it Brahman. A question may be posed: 'If absolute Reality is above determinations and all wants, why should it enter into the realm of creativity?' The answer is that it enters through its free choice. This choice which is always dynamic is called Iswara. Iswara is freedom as a means of realising values. Vedanta brings in the notion of Iswara to remind man of his own self-transcendence.

Man has a tendency to forget this value of self-transcendence. He has a strong tendency to conceive his values in terms of what he is. But in fact he should conceive them in terms of what he can become or what he ought to be. The distance between these two points, between what we are and what we want to become is the whole gamut of human aspiration and value. That is also the field of philosophy.

An epoch or country which conceived these points of human aspiration as nearest or identical became the spiritual leader of the world. When Christ said that "I and my father are one", He had the vision of unity of human aspiration and this vision of unity led to great spiritual and cultural upheaval, to great creations of value. In this sense Christ and Buddha must be said to be the real makers of history. We are reminded of the words of Nicolas Berdiaeff that history is walking Christ, that history is the path traced out by the divine spirit through time and the testimony of values left behind by the Spirit. Here Berdiaeff was taking a spiritual view of history and thus realising itself and realising the increasing purpose in human history.

Nearly 3,000 years before Christ's vision of unity of human aspiration the Vedic Indians had it expressed in the formula 'Thou art That, Tattvamasi'. This is the affirmation of the highest value in man, man as the *summum bonum* of all values. The Hindus not simply identified the two values of "is" and "ought to be", but they affirmed the ideal of what man should be in the heart and center of what man is. "I am what I am because of the Reality found in me".

The Indian formula "Thou art That" (That meaning Reality) points out a way of affirming eternity in time, the universal in the particular and the absolute in the relative. "Thou art That" is the overcoming of all antinomies or obstacles between subject and object. It is the annulment of the notion of time and opposition. The spiritual identity indicated by the formula "Thou art That", conceives value as if producing by itself the obstacle or antinomy in order to resolve it in itself. In other words, it envisages value as taking the whole of the object and realising it in the subject. In this vision of value all opposition and time are liquidated. This realisation can be had only in a state of absolute freedom of the

subject. All that is real about the subject is this freedom.

Freedom must not be confused with the notion of liberty. Liberty is of something. We say we are liberated of somebody or of something. But freedom is a state of Being. So, Reality or Being is the subject and it is not as freedom which creates all objective values but which refuses to be evaluated.

The Sanskrit words used in Indian philosophical texts to signify the subject as freedom are "Moksha" or "Kaivalya" which means the spiritual autonomy of the Self or the Self felt in spiritual isolation. Ramana Maharshi, the most recent of Indian sages has popularised the word "Sahajasthiti" to signify the real Self. It means the primordial state of freedom and felicity, which is the inalienable state of man and to which all other states are secondary.

Freedom naturally poses the problem of responsibility. When freedom is well conceived as the natural and creative state of the autonomous Self, then man's responsibility consists in the discovery of this Self and nothing else. We cannot separate freedom and responsibility even as we cannot separate freedom and value. In the same way as freedom is the highest means for actualising value, so also freedom aids us to conceive responsibility in its true fulness and actualise it in its true vigour. To separate or oppose freedom and responsibility will be to lose sight of the transcendent nature of the Self where both are realised at the same time. In the thought of existentialists like Kierkegaard and Sartre there is an opposition between freedom and responsibility and this opposition gives place to anguish. Says Kierkegaard: "The possibility of the misuse of freedom produces anguish in man". When Kierkegaard speaks of the possibility of the misuse of freedom producing anguish, he shows the disrelationship of the Self to its own self. This anguish can be allayed only

by reintegration. "The responsibility of my freedom rests squarely on my shoulders", says Sartre, "and this cannot but make me sad". The existentialists sometimes deny the reality of the transcendent to preserve human freedom. If man's responsibility consists only in the discovery of the innermost Self in man and nothing else, then this realisation puts a stop to all anguish automatically. The Self which is free cannot be anguished. And there are not two selves, one conceiving freedom and the other conceiving responsibility. This conception destroys all autonomy of the Self, which is its essential nature.

When we throw a glance at the study of value in modern European thinkers, we are struck by the similarity of approach between them and the Indian approach. In the most eminent writers there is no more any opposition between the notion of Being and existence. The word "participation" (between existence and being) which has become very popular, bridges the gulf.

Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheller refuse to subordinate being to value or value to being. They establish their position that there is a being of values. In opposition to Kant they say that it is not duty which engenders value, but it is value that engenders duty. Value determines the consciousness of man instead of being determined by it. Value is conceived as an *a priori* intuition. It has not an intellectual character, but an emotive one. The originality of Scheller consists in the role given by him to feeling in its discovery of value.

Louis Lavelle talks about value as the intimacy and secret of Being, as that which can be known only if it is lived. He says freedom and value are inseparable, that value is immanent and transcendent. He affirms that value is indivisible like being and that the whole of value is present in the interior of each particular value. N. Berdiaeff defends the position that truth can

be discovered only in the interiority of being, but then one must not be astonished that this discovery coincides with that of value.

Mr. le Senne is of opinion that value is existence and the obstacle is posed in order that value reveals itself and its freedom. He cannot determine value as a pure *neant*, for value exists even in dream.

Vedantic metaphysics gives a special importance to the presence of value in dream. According to Vedanta, in dream the Self reveals in all glory both as freedom and value. It divides itself into subject and object and enjoys in its own right, without any external aid. The values in dream are not the memory of the values in waking. They are specially created by the Self when it is free in dream from the conventions and morality of the waking. There is a greater vividness of perception in dream and this is caused by the absence of material objects which are replaced by mentalised ones. Direct or immediate perception which means perception without intermediary or external aid happens in dream. This immediacy of perception is the only means by which Self can be realised according to Vedanta and so Vedanta gives great metaphysical importance and spiritual value to dream as the field of freedom and value. Still profound is the interiority revealed in deep sleep where the Self attains pure subjectivity. All that we know of the Self in that state is by a negation of experience. The study of the three states led the Indian sages to the study of the witness of the three states. This witness is present in and through all experience and is self evident. I say "I slept", "I had a dream" and "I am awake". By virtue of the Self acting as witness in deep sleep and dream, I can have these experiences which otherwise would be impossible for me. There is a continuity of experience in spite of the discontinuity of states. And this continuity of experience

becomes possible because of the continuity of Being. Thus the study of the witness of the three states reveals to us the presence of the Self as the inalienable Being and Reality of man, both as the unchanging value behind states and as freedom expressing as the principle of continuity unaffected even by the negation in deep sleep. The Self cannot be proved, as it is the basis of all proofs and affirmations. We assume the Self as rational life is impossible without that assumption. The Real as witness is not the actual, though we make it actual for purposes of everyday-life.

In Self as witness of the three states we get the Self as immanent and transcendent. If Self is conceived as immanent and transcendent then man's freedom and creativity are affirmed at the same time. In the Self as witness we have the Self as subject creating the object out of its free will and choice. The object is not a necessity to the subject, as it is only a free exteriorisation of the subject. The subject can be by itself. In that state even the idea of transcendence becomes an abstraction. Even to talk of the subject becomes a concession. Man as witness, as pure subject, yields to metaphysics two important results, namely: the self-evident and self-conscious character of the Self. Man as pure subject reveals to us the most powerful aspect of man which is most fruitful for life—man as the maker of all values and yet always free.

Although we traced some opposing characteristics between Indian and European thought at the beginning, we have to accept that spirit being universal, the European thinkers have more or less touched and pictured the landmarks of Indian thought along the history of western philosophy. If there is a domain which can particularly be called original in Indian metaphysics, it is the study of the three states and the witness. In fact Indian philosophy maintains that philosophy is not complete if one state only of human life is considered and not the three states

into which the life of man expresses and by which it evolves—the three states namely the waking, dream and deep sleep. All the three attract our attention and study.

Before I conclude I should like to mention how Indian thought works up the doctrine of the gradation of values and shows its influence in the moral evolution of man. They maintain that life is comprised of the three values of righteousness, material means and desire and if man pursues these values justly and properly, man achieves "moksha" or ultimate freedom. Artha is the ensemble of material means and Kama

is desire. If desire and material means are pursued by man along the lines of righteousness or Dharma, then it leads him to moksha or ultimate freedom. That is to say, the values of life like wealth and desire have no absolute value in themselves, but only a relative value as aids to achieve liberation. Wealth and desire are not to be deprecated, but respected as aids to the final goal. This is a teaching special to Indian thought and a teaching this age of ours stands much in need of. We say we are very materialistic. The way out is not to condemn matter or try to abolish it but to view it as a value pointing to Reality and Realisation.

चरैवेति

FIGURES FROM POETS' STORE

What do fine looks mean? That depends upon what we consider fine. Take a tree, for example. When spring commences, tender shoots burst forth from every twig. In a few days the top and spread-out branches become clothed in charming green. No doubt this season has to give way to others. But beauty continues in other forms. For flowers appear, and then fruit,—juicy fruit relished by bird, beast and man alike. Next, as is well known, comes the time when mature leaves are pensioned off. That is marked by a glorious display of brilliant colours,—red, orange and polished gold. Do we really call it Death when puffs of gentle breeze give periodic parting thrills and those erstwhile transformers of sunshine into multipurpose nutriment go down in scores and hundreds,—each individual and group executing unique curves and turns before it fits itself into an attractive carpet for the ground below? We don't. For in this case at least we have learned to see beauty not

merely in active service but also in 'retirement'!

It is not in vain that scriptures now and then picture the entire universe as a tree of immense proportions and inexhaustible potentialities. If we can learn to look at it in that light, our mental horizon will be considerably widened. It is impossible for petty barriers or egocentric values to survive such an alteration in our outlook. They have to disappear helplessly,—usefully, rather—into the soft, mellowed and haunting tints and halo natural to distant views and increasingly unified perspectives. From that point of vantage, to what can we compare the phenomenon ordinarily called the 'birth' of creatures? That is the name we give to the appearance at the level of sense perception of what was fit for it but was remaining unmanifest till then. Surely the development of the various physical 'forms' or 'limbs' or structural divisions would cor-

respond to the bursting forth of fresh twigs, leaves and so on in the case of a tree at the appropriate times. And we know that what happens is only a rearrangement of the materials already available to the tree, in its sap and in the rest of the 'environment'. What is 'creation' but a fresh combination of existing elements? ¹

We can, if we like, modify the figure and say that the emergence of creatures resembles the growth and movements of filaments and of the 'dust from the core of beautiful flowers like the Mandāra.' ²

If we can see through poets' eyes, we can also regard visible 'formations' to the cooling rays issuing from the body of the silvery moon. That is possible, of course, only if we are glancing at the heavens above. We can as well look at the Mother Earth below. And then even our little thatched hut can supply an equally suggestive example through the light shed by the tiny oil lamp we place in it at nightfall. ³ We can learn the same type of 'relationship' from the sparks emitted by the fire we raise for our evening oblations. ⁴

Probably, in some respects, we get a better understanding if we employ the illustration of gold and the diverse ornaments that can be fashioned out of it. ⁵ For the ornament is nothing but gold. Time, space, and basic quality of both gold and ornament remain the same throughout. On the

contrary in the case of sap and leaves, or of flower and its fragrant dust, or of the moon or of fire and connected light at the reception end, time, space and other factors present 'gaps', intervals and other important divergences.

Instances can be multiplied. The lesson to be learned can be cut up into two stages for the sake of convenience. First: to show the relationship of the subtle and the gross, or of cause and result, or of part and whole. This serves as a half-way house to the teaching of unity. All examples tend to show that names, forms and utilities may differ, but the stuff remains the same. Secondly: to teach absolute unity itself. This is achieved through examples where 'name and form' or Upādhi is shown to have no independent reality of its own but yet can cause great fear and pain till the truth is grasped. And quite fittingly, the best example, capable of appealing to one and all equally, is generally that of the familiar mirage, where the sole existent reality behind the experience is the blazing sun as the source light. ⁶

The Almighty is the only Reality, full and perfect. From Him all things of our experience rise. To Him they return in their time. They come and go, rise and fall, and shine in their transitory 'forms', like sparks of fire fluttering and sparkling and then merge in Him for ever. ⁷

When this Truth is 'known' in its entirety, we come face to face with a Beauty that is Imperishable,—not subject to the limitations of sense perception.

भग चरैवेति।

SUBANDHU

¹ यथा वितपिनखितस्तदपा वितपश्रियः ।

सर्वा एव समुत्पन्ना ब्रह्मणो जीवपक्षयः ।
Utpatti, LXXXXIV, 24.

² मन्दारमञ्जरीरूपाश्चन्द्रविवादिवाञ्छवः ।

³ सर्वा एव समुत्पन्ना ब्रह्मणो दृश्यदृष्टयः । 23.

⁴ क्षतेजः स्पन्दितामोगादीपादिव मरीचयः । सर्वा एव
etc. 21.

⁵ क्षमरीचिनेलोद्भूता ज्वलितान्नेः कणा इव । 22.

⁶ कटकाङ्गदकेयूरयुक्तयः कनकादिव । 25.

⁷ मृगतृष्णातरङ्गिण्यो यथा भास्करतेजसः ।

सर्वा दृश्यदृशो द्रष्टव्यव्यतिरिक्ता न रूपतः । 29.

⁸ यस्मादेव समायान्ति, तस्मिन्नेव विशन्ति च । 31.

आयान्ति यान्ति निपतन्ति तथोत्पतन्ति ।
रूपश्रियः कणघटा इव पावकोत्थाः । 32.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The *Editorial* discusses the method of *sadhana* according to Sri Chaitanya who is the founder of what is known as the Bengal School of Vaishnavism.

Sri Ramakrishna and his worship has been adapted from the presidential address by the Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, while laying the foundation stone of the Sri Ramakrishna temple at Bombay on 15th March, 1959.

Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Retired District and Sessions Judge, is a veteran writer

THE END OF THE YEAR OF VEDANTA KESARI

With this issue we complete the forty-fifth year of the *Vedanta Kesari*. We take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt thanks to all the subscribers, advertisers, writers and others connected with the magazine, for the kind support they have given it during the year. We hope they will continue their help in the following year also.

The serial 'With Sri Ramakrishna from form to form divine' was continued throughout this year. It helped us to meditate on the different forms of God and His incarnations as viewed in the standard books as well as in the visions of Sri Ramakrishna. In the coming year this serial will be replaced by a new one, 'How even the great ones surrender'. It will narrate the suitable anecdotes connected with the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Sister Savitri (a German devotee), who prepared the earlier series, has prepared this one also.

'Subandhu' continued his serial 'Charaveti' giving us varieties of life and society building ideas. With his deep acquaintance with the scriptures he has pointed out quoting from them how all our aspirations and

on religious and philosophical subjects.

Swami Maithilyananda is an ex-editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata*.

Sri V. Patanjali is from New Delhi.

On being specially invited to contribute his views to the discussion from the Vedantic point of view, Swami Nityabodhananda, an ex-editor of *Vedanta Kesari* now at Geneva, read his paper at the Plenary session (on 16th September) of the International Congress of Philosophy held at Venice from 14th to 20th September, 1958.

endeavours could have their inspiration from scriptural books like *Yoga-vasistha*. He has been continuously writing for several years in spite of his other pre-occupations even while in different countries. We hope he will be able to continue the same in the coming year also along with his itinerary.

During the year we have published varieties of religious and philosophical articles. There is always a demand for the lives and talks of saints. We occasionally present a few such articles every year. In the coming issue, however, we are going to give a large number of such articles. The May issue is generally brought out as a special number. In the passing year the special issue was devoted to 'Religious and devotional lyrics' in Indian literature. The coming May issue will be devoted to the Saints of India. We have selected one saint each from different areas. Accredited devotee scholars from those areas will write on the saint of their choice, though for obvious reasons we will not present the contemporary saints. One or two lives from other

countries also will be included. Lives of saints are always fascinating. They show that mysticism is no monopoly of any country or religion. In every age such noble souls are born who lead a God-intoxicated life and sustain the spiritual emotion in man. There is a wide variety in their approach

to God. The writers also will preserve that variety. And it is all for good, for devotees of different temperaments will thereby get suitable food for spiritual enjoyment and growth. We hope the ensuing special issue on saints will be relished by all devotees and readers.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IDEALISM: A NEW DEFENCE AND A NEW APPLICATION *

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

Time was when Idealism was the prevailing temper of philosophy in the West till Realism which has been a consistent and continuous opponent of that philosophy down the centuries found an accretion of strength from Pragmatic thinkers and the modern Positivists and Existentialists. In fact Idealism as a philosophy had always a Patrician air about it while Realism and its derivatives have been looked upon as more or less Plebeian till advancing scientific knowledge gave it a measure of respectability. But, the higher reaches of Science border on the Idealistic view of Reality in such measure that it may not be far wrong to say that the understanding and interpretation of Reality seems to have a Realistic origin, but an Idealistic consummation. The reaction against Idealism in the close of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century has been rather strong and violent. In this situation it is refreshing and heartening too to read a book like the one before us which provides 'a new defence' of Idealism and vindicates its validity by suggesting spheres of its practical application in the context of modern times.

The author Dr Dev exhibits a thorough knowledge of the course of philosophical speculation in the West and the East and is able to marshal his ideas with force and facility. Dr Dev presents a synthetic mind to the problems of philosophy and strongly believes that a partisan and exclusive view will not discover truth. Deploing the common hostility to philosophy, he pleads for 'overhauling of very notion of philosophy' and affirms that 'a synthesis of philosophy and

science' is without doubt 'the imperative need of the hour' and he 'firmly believes that the merger of science and philosophy can best be effected 'in the durable interest of mankind'. He finds encouraging evidence of such synthesis in Socrates and Plato and regrets that 'Aristotle unwillingly put the clock back'. But the instinct for synthesis was manifest in Shankara, Ghassali, Aquinas, Spinoza, Kant and Hegel. Emphasising the need of a fresh synthesis in the Philosophy of the future, he recommends 'the merger of intellect and intuition and, through that of science and religion, the merger of matter and spirit, i.e., of what is ordinarily called materialism and spiritualism in a more fundamental scheme of reality and last but not least, the merger of materialist and spiritual attitudes of life which are, often enough, at loggerheads with each other'.

Dr Dev is not blind to the many sins of commission and omission in Idealistic philosophy. He regrets that it belittles material values, that it is too other-worldly and so it has no wide appeal in the scientific age. The Idealistic theory of knowledge exalts reason and excludes sense while it fights shy of intuition in which it is in danger of being lost. Too much wedded to the concept of self-consistency and identity, it relegates change to the realm of the unreal. The author stresses the need of a happy merger of Hegelian Heart and Kantian Intellect and would give equal validity to Sense, Reason and Intuition. A broad-based theory of knowledge which on the one hand will not over-estimate sense and under-estimate reason and on the other hand will

* By Govinda Chandra Dev, M.A., Ph.D., Dacca University (Pakistan Co-operative Book Society, Dacca). Pp. 196. Price Rs. 4. Cloth Bound Rs. 5.

Sri Aurobindo's terminology with the Super-consciousness which is transcendent above all and is yet immanent in everything. In the Chapter on Sri Pandit expounds Her universality, points out that the concept of Mother-hood was associated with Her and disproves 'the view advanced by some of the modern scholars that Mother-worship was unknown among the Vedic Aryans and came to be borrowed from alien civilisations like the Dravidian'.

Likewise Surya is the embodiment of a great spiritual truth and not merely a deified natural phenomenon. As in the case of other Gods, Surya too has a double aspect, the eternal and the psychological signifying supra-physical power. The super physical Sun that we see in the firmament is indicative of the spiritual Sun who 'is the inevitable goal towards which all the movements of life converge'. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, He 'is the Sun of the super-conscious Truth; the day he brings is the day of the true life in the true knowledge, the night he dispels is the night of the ignorance which yet conceals the dawn in its bosom'.

Writing about the Maruts, Sri Pandit pursues his symbolic interpretation and shows how they represent the seven fundamental principles in the creation. In this connection, the author remarks how even such great scholars like Max Muller construct curious histories and geographies by their inadequate understanding of Vedic rites. He recommends that in studying the Vedic Gods, we should 'not stop short with their external physiognomy and activities, but look deeper and awaken to the truth of their role in the life of every seeker of the Ideal of Immortality'.

The last chapter of this book deals with the institution of Sacrifice and calls attention to the fact that is 'a basic principle of existence establishing and maintaining relation between man and man, man and God. He points out with great truth that 'the outer ritual is the garb, the symbol of an inner yajna, a self-consecration by which the Vedic worshipper offers all that he is and has to the highest Powers, the divinities and lays himself in their benevolent hands which lift him up to their Beatitude'.

In his delineation of the Vedic Gods that he has taken up for study, Sri Pandit has effectively rescued them from the perverse characterisation of them as 'symbolic of animism and nature-worship and has successfully sketched the parallel between discovering the secrets of Nature and

delving into the depths of the Soul that marks the Rg Vedic hymns. This book deserves to be carefully read for the light that it throws on the Vedic Deities who have been mis-handled by orientalists of doubtful understanding. The Aurobindo Study Circle in Madras which is doing good work in popularising the thought of the Sage in the city is to be congratulated on this first venture in the publication of Manuals of his teachings.

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

THE TEACHING OF SRI AUROBINDO: By M. P. Pandit. Published by Sri Aurobindo Study Circle. Pages 75. Price Rs. 4.

A fine presentation of the teachings, though the book is rather costly.

DIARY: With quotations from the Veda translated by Sri Aurobindo. Available at Sri Aurobindo Study Circle, 119, Big Street, Madras-5.

SERMONS AND SAYINGS OF THE BUDDHA: By Sudhakar Dikshit. (Published by Chetana, 34, Rampart Row, Bombay-1. Pp. 104. Price Rs. 3.50.)

This exquisitely produced publication presents in simple language, the essence of the teachings of the Buddha and is specially designed to help the common people to imbibe them. It is conceived on the model of the 'Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa', and like them the selected pieces bring out profound philosophical truths in homely parables and metaphors. To the student of comparative religion, the remarkable identity between the sayings of the Lord and the principal text-books of Hinduism, is all too apparent. Altogether, a delightful book to read and possess, and it speaks well of the generosity of the publishers that no copyright is claimed for the publication.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE NUMBER MANIA AND ITS EVILS: By T. K. J. Published by The Dharmic Hindu Mission, Madras-15. Pages 16. Price 25 nP.

This small book, which is a reprint of its first edition in 1939, pleads that people should not be carried away by the numerical strength of the followers of any particular religion but must consider their individual worth and develop faith and sincerity.

T. S. RAGHAVAN

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The hundred-and-twenty-fourth birthday Tithi-puja of Sri Ramakrishna was observed in the Math on Wednesday, the 11th March, 1959. The day started with group meditation followed by Mangalarati at 5 a.m. After devotional songs, chanting of select portions of the Gita and the Upanishads took place. The worship in the shrine started at 8 a.m. and came to a close at 12-30 p.m., after the homa was performed. The Chandi was ceremonially chanted in full. About 1,500 devotees and 700 Daridranarayanans were served with food prasad. After the evening service in the shrine some selected teachings of the Master were read by Swami Suddhasattwananda and then the gathering was addressed by Sardar Vedaratnam, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachariar and Swami Kriyananda, a western disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda.

The public function came off on Sunday. A large picture of Sri Ramakrishna was tastefully decorated by two students of the Arts School. The silent reading of the Life and Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna was started at 8 a.m. About 100 devotees took part and read their respective portions. At 10-30 the gathering of devotees was addressed by some monks and devotees.

At 3, the Harikatha on Vamana Avataram by Sri Anantarama Dikshitar began. The public meeting started at 5 p.m., with Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Minister for Home and Religious Endowments, in the chair. Sri N. Bhaktavatsalam and Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan of Vivekananda College, Sri S. Satchidanandam Pillai, Retd. District Educational Officer, addressed the gathering in Telugu, English and Tamil respectively. The President spoke in Tamil and English. With the distribution of the prizes, followed by a vote of thanks by Prof. A. L. Krishnan, the function came to a close.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

The 103rd Birthday Anniversary of Mahapurush Maharaj Srimat Swami Shivananda was celebrated by the Ramakrishna-Shivananda Ashrama, as in previous years, at his birthplace in Baraset (24 Parganas, West Bengal) with a non-stop programme of devotional features from

January 5 to January 11 in which the following individuals and associations participated: Swami Sangsuddhananda, Swami Kshamananda, Swami Punyananda with boys of the Ramakrishna Boys' Home, Sri Ramani Kumar Dutta Gupta, Sri Surendra Nath Chakrabarti, Dr. Jatindra Bimal Chowdhury, Dr. Roma Chowdhury, Sri Pankaj Mullick, Sri Meghnad Basak, Sri Gaurikedar Bhattacharya, Sri Bimal Bhusan with his brothers, Srimati Kalpana De, Sri Surendra Nath Das, Prof. Panchugopal Banerjee, Sri Gourgopal Dutta, Narendrapur R. K. Mission, Sri Kamodeswar Bhattacharya, Srimati Archana Chatterjee, Sri Tarapada Lahiri, Srimati Archana Chatterjee with party, Sri Haridas Brajabasi, Sri Purna Das Baul, Sri Dinabandhu Das Baul, Makardaha R. K. Sadhanalaya, Ramakrishna Anandashrama, Baraset Evening Club, and Srimati Sushila Ghosh.

On the morning of January 11, a mammoth procession with music went round the town carrying portraits of Paramhansadeva, Sri Ma Sarada Devi, and Swami Shivananda. On the same afternoon, a public meeting was held under the chairmanship of Swami Tejasananda, Principal, Belur Vidyamandir at which Swami Punyananda, Sri Tamas Ranjan Roy, and the Chairman spoke on the life and teachings of Swami Shivananda. Prasad was served to about 16,000 visitors who attended the festival from distant places by train, bus, and on foot. Great enthusiasm prevailed throughout the celebrations.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF MAHARAJ

At Bhubaneswar: The 96th Birthday Anniversary of Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and the Founder-President of the Bhubaneswar Centre, was celebrated with great rejoicings on Monday, the 9th February, 1959, at the Ramakrishna Math, Bhubaneswar. The function began with Mangalarati at 4-30 a.m. followed by Chandipath and special Puja and Homa, continuing till 12 noon. While Puja, etc., were going on in the Temple upstairs, selected passages from the Dharma prasange Swami Brahmananda were being read and elucidated by Swami Asangananda, downstairs in the Math Hall. This was followed by devotional music. The feeding of a very large number of devotees, students of the Mission School and Daridra-narayanans started at noon and continued till 10 p.m.

not be guilty of an opposite error in respect of these sources of knowledge is what a Synthetic philosophy calls for.

In the chapters on 'Matter and Spirit' and 'Appearance and Reality', the author dwells at length on these concepts and brings to light the dangers of exaggerated materialism and spiritualism. He is opposed to the Hegelian dialectic of absorbing thesis and antithesis in a higher synthesis, but advances the view that they can co-exist in a synthetic relation in their plane itself. He says: 'In short, viewed rightly, appearance itself is reality and reality itself is appearance. To say appearance is of reality is a half-truth, but to equate it with reality is the full-truth so far as it lies within the grasp of human intellect in its fullest dimensions and possibilities. This is perhaps the last word of metaphysics: from two different angles, at last we stumble upon the same basic stuff of reality which is a mysterious meeting ground of an ever-changing plurality and an ever-stable identity. The real in its fullest sense lies hidden in this kindred point of sense, reason and intuition, of which we can take only two side-glances through two distinct approaches to it, one through sense, the other through reason matured into intuition.' Taking the illusion of the rope-snake, he recommends a 'total view of error', he presumes that 'the apparent snake plus the real rope will together constitute an adequate picture of reality' and says that 'reality is neither snake nor rope, but the rope appearing as the snake'. He pleads 'for the ultimate identity of appearance and reality with, as it were, the zeal of a fanatic'. He is led to this view by his desire not to keep sense and reason cum intuition in opposite camps, but to synthesise them together.

The second part of Dr Dev's book deals with the practical application of Idealism. Dealing with the concept of progress, he is definitely of the view that 'if matter is spirit and spirit is matter, a spiritual understanding of the right type cannot hamper progress'. In the Jivanmukta, we have, says he, 'the best available beacon light that unmask as best it could the face of reality in all its brilliance, in its dual magnitude and, above all, in its intimate contact with the world of appearances'. He observes that 'the best impetus for the salvation of suffering humanity lies in a genuine yearning and willingness to give the lofty principles of idealism concrete shape in our social and political structures, national and international ideals'. He goes on to explain in the later pages of the book that there is a vein of activism and the 'sublime idealism of the

upanishads' which finds emphasis in the teachings of the Gita. He seeks to bring to the fore the 'hidden elements of activism in Shankara', whose theory is 'Jnana-Karma-Krama Samuchaya'. The author's treatment of Sri Aurobindo in the context of idealism and perception of resemblances in the Gita and the Quran in regard to Activism are instructive.

Writing about 'Our Future' in the last chapter, the author emphasises the need for 'peaceful co-existence and co-merger' in social, national and international spheres and concludes that a one-world mentality is not merely necessary, but that it is a practical possibility. He pleads for the role of love in human society which he envisages more 'as a Park than as a Factory'. What is needed is 'broad human sympathy, and a humanistic approach to the basic problems of life'.

Reviewing as a whole the central thesis of the learned author, one cannot keep remarking on his pronounced slant towards Idealism notwithstanding his insistence on equal importance to be given to sense vis-a-vis reason-cum-intuition. It would appear that in the process of synthesis that he recommends sensibility suffers a sea-change and is changed beyond recognition. The equal validity that is sought to be given to the real rope and the apparent snake in the solution—or should we merely say the 'understanding'—of error seems to be too great a strain on our reason. Reality and appearance cannot keep house together first or last, in the empirical or transcendental realms. Appearance and reality have each a status which is incompatible with the other and any attempt to 'synthesise' the two after the manner recommended by the author will be to reduce reality to an appearance and to exalt appearance to a status which reality refuses to it. The optimistic note with which Dr Dev ends his book is to be welcomed if only the world will harken to his counsels. The one-world ideal is a piece of wishful thinking that has been the pastime of certain intellectuals. It is the offspring of an idealism which is attractive without being possible. The danger of 'One-worldism', if we may coin that expression is that it will open the door for like ambitions in religious and economic spheres forgetful of differences in racial genius.

Dr Dev is a powerful writer and the pages of the book are enlivened by his sparkling humour. The book is to be heartily recommended both to students of philosophy and to the lay readers. The former will learn to look at Idealism from a

refreshingly new angle and the latter will learn to look at life steadily and whole inspired by the spirit of Idealism which the author has detailed alike as a philosophical theory and in its practical applications.

THE INDIAN HERITAGE: By Dr V. Raghavan. Published by The Indian Institute of World Culture, 6 North Public Square Road, Bangalore-4. Second Edition, 1958. Pages 494. Price Rs. 13.

The Indian Institute of World Culture, in sponsoring this very valuable addition to the extant books on Indian literature and thought, has done a commendable service to the cultural uplift of mankind. In the first place, the choice of an author like Dr V. Raghavan, whose capacity for immense industry and compilation of anthology of the kind, leaves little to be desired in the matter of an enterprise of this magnitude. Dr Raghavan, as now for some time engaged in the preparation of a huge work like the *Catalogus Catalogorum*, has ample facilities for accuracy and verification of the materials gathered.

Though we have here translations in English of selections of passages from our ancient treasures, starting from the Vedas, and proceeding to Upanishads, Puranas, Epics, the Bhagavad-Gita, and Stotra literature, there is every reason for us to be struck by the perspective of vision evinced in the selection as well as the sense of completion aimed at in the comprehension of a wide range and variety of matter translated.

Thus the Vedas, the basis for all Indian thought-development in all human endeavours, has been given the primacy of place. The Brahmanas follow in succession. The Upanishads, Dharma-Sastras of Manu and Jainyavalkya have taken their legitimate place next. The Itihasas and Puranas which are practically the fountain-sources of elucidation of Vedic thought and culture are naturally in sequence taken up. The translations from the epics are really ably done with the single aim of retaining their integrated objective of righteous conduct exemplified in life. The darsanas or systems of philosophy follow without tiring out the lay reader by too much of technical phrasing and abstruse terms of philosophy. Agama, Tantra and Mantra take their share next in the further developments of Indian inheritance. Grammar, Poetry and Art, resulting from the same fundamental outlook of a rounded-off life for man as conceived by our ancients, make the reader conscious of a distinctness in the rich traditions handed down. The

regional languages having not much of an original separate literature or development of their own in the past as distinct from what Sanskrit contained, have received due recognition here, and the movements in the various parts of India towards devotional literature have all found necessary elaboration to prove the permeation and extension of higher values of life among even the illiterate peoples of India.

The Introduction is a valuable one from the point of view of unravelling the main objective of this particular publication as also its main distinguishable characteristics. The Bibliography too cannot be dispensed with in a prodigious work of this kind. The world of scholars also will feel grateful to the scientific method adopted here in the arrangement of subjects as well as the main trends of cultural thought selected.

One wonders how at all it was possible for a single person to accomplish so much in the midst of his many other equally valuable pro-occupations. The lay man too has his priceless sources of pleasure and profit in traversing the entire gamut of literary thought embedded in the entire compilation.

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

ADITI AND OTHER DEITIES IN THE VEDA:

By M. P. Pandit (Sri Aurobindo Study Circle, 119, Big Street, Madras-5). Pp 185. Price Rs. 3. Calico Rs. 4.

Two fundamental errors in understanding the nature of Vedic Deities that have been started by Orientalists of the West and adopted by their Indian counterparts are that the Vedic Gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni and others are personifications of natural phenomena and that therefore the Vedic seers were Nature worshippers and the theory of what is called henotheism according to which now one God and now another was exalted to the subordination of others. Both these views are counter to the Vedic declaration, *Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*: That which exists is One; Sages speak of it variously. It was left to Sri Aurobindo among the moderns to correct the aforesaid errors. Following the Sage's lead, Sri M. P. Pandit, a knowledgeable interpreter of Sri Aurobindo takes for special consideration Aditi, Surya and the Maruts as 'Powers and Personalities of a Supreme manifesting Godhead'. Incapable of inclusion among the Nature-gods, Aditi has baffled Western scholars. Aditi is the Mother God who is addressed as Varuna, as Agni etc. and is to be equated in

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4

At 5-30 p.m. a Public Meeting was held in the Math compound under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Sri Dinabandhu Sahu, Minister of Orissa. The gathering was addressed by Sri Nityananda Das, Sri Ramprasad Singh and Pandit Rishi Ram who spoke on the Swami as well as on Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and the Mission. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Swami Asangananda.

At his birthplace: The ninety-sixth Birthday celebration of Swami Brahmananda Maharaj, the spiritual child of Sri Ramakrishna Dev was performed with solemn grandeur on Monday, the 9th February at his birthplace Shikra-Kulingram.

In this connection various religious ceremonies and functions, bhajans, meetings and other celebrations were performed which continued for a week.

On the opening day, 'Prasad' had been distributed to about 600 devotees. And on the last day, the 15th February, a procession carrying portraits of Sri Sri Thakur, Sri Ma and Swami Brahmanandaji, singing kirtans and blowing conch shells, went round the village in the morning. 'Prasad' had been distributed throughout the day to about 6,000 people including devotees.

Monks from the Belur Math graced the functions from day to day and their presence increased the sanctity of the place, once sanctified by the holy birth of Swami Brahmanandaji.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAM, AJMER

REPORT FOR 1956-58

The above Ashram was established in 1944 and registered under the Society of Registration Act, of 1860 on 7-3-1955. There is a charitable dispensary and the number of patients that were treated during 1956-57 is 2101 and in 1957-58, 2507. Daily about 59 children are supplied with milk. There are also two free libraries and a reading room in this Ashram and a branch of it is situated at Ajmer town. On 22-1-1957, Sri Kamtaprasad Gupta, Commissioner, Ajmer Division, opened the new block of the Library. There are nearly 3739 books on various subjects in this library and 7 dailies, 15 monthlies and 5 weeklies are purchased. Two students reside in the hostel attached and help is also rendered to poor students and widows. On 27-12-1957 the Governor of Rajasthan, Sri Gurmukh Nihal Singh, unveiled a portrait of Swami Vivekananda. Regular prayer is conducted and Jayanti celebrations of Sri Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus Christ, Ramakrishna,

Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda are observed in the Ashram as well as in different parts of Rajasthan. The management of this Ashram thank the donors and subscribers and appeal for funds to expand their services to the people.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1958

The actual receipts in 1958 were Rs. 23,356.11 and expenses Rs. 23,702.88 and so there was a deficit of Rs. 346.77.

The Dispensary treated 1,42,586 cases in 1958 as against 1,33,351 cases in 1957 in both Allopathic and Homeopathic Depts. Several Doctors rendered their free services treating 17,039 (including 71 operations and 93 refractions) eye cases, 11,770 E.N.T. cases and 5,666 Dental cases. 602 specimens were examined in the Laboratory. A course of special treatment was given to 9,000 children. 303 cases were X-rayed and 83 screened. Milk was distributed among under-nourished women and children totalling 85,839 during the year.

The Management thank the donors and appeal for a permanent endowment fund procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 1,000 for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

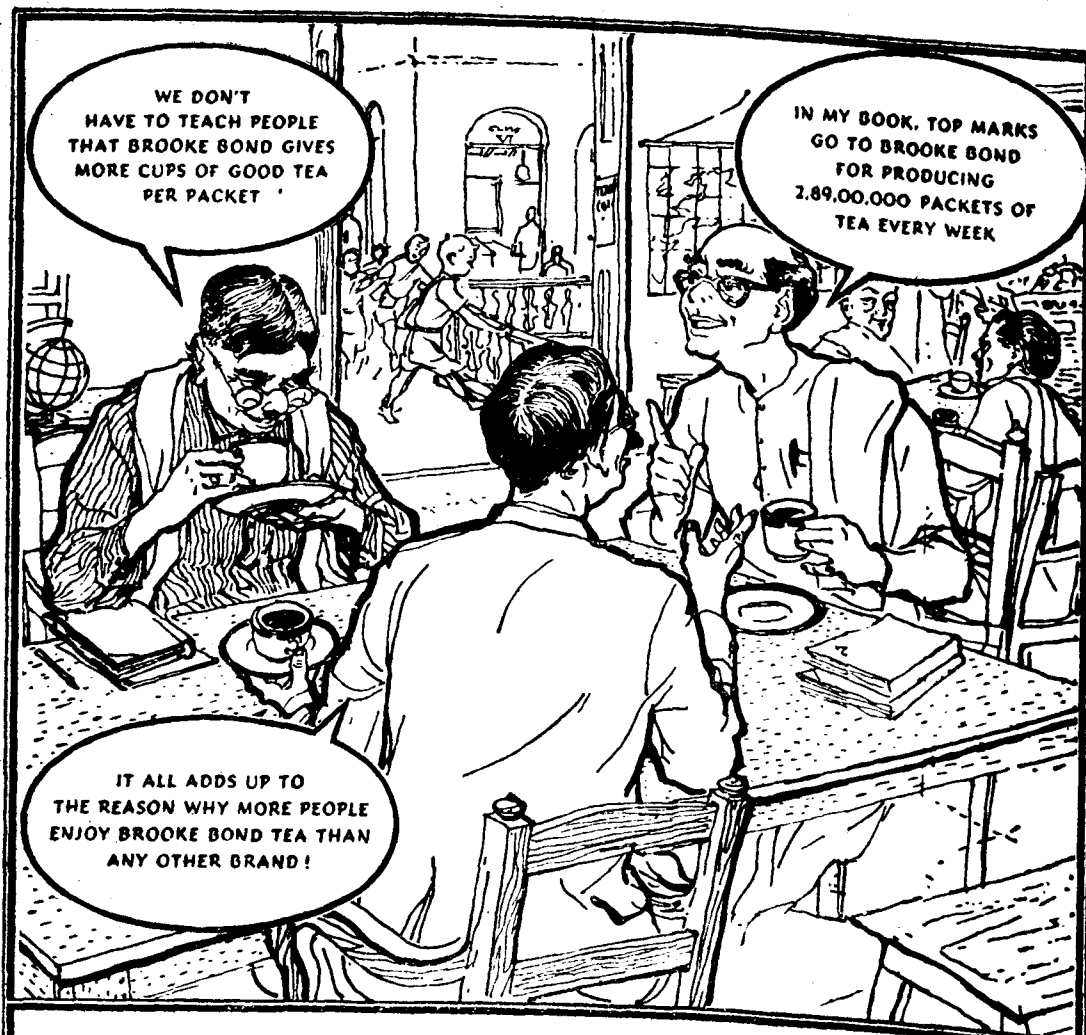
VIVEKANANDA HIGH SCHOOL, FIJI

The new buildings of Shri Vivekananda High School, Nadi, Fiji, were officially opened by His Excellency Sir Kenneth Maddocks, Governor of Fiji, on Monday, 16th February, 1959.

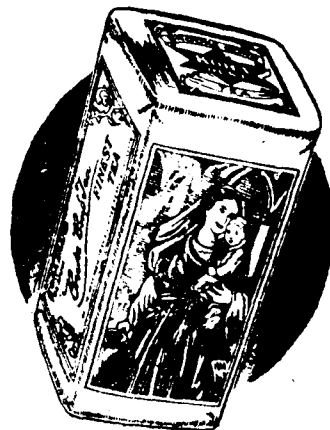
A group of Children sang the National Anthem and then a sextet of boys sang an invocation. The Governor and Lady Maddocks were garlanded by the School Prefect, Aziz, and the Girl Prefect, Sarojini.

Swami Rudranandaji welcomed the Governor and the guests. The Principal, Mr. P. N. D. Moodad, requested the Governor to declare the school buildings officially open. In declaring the buildings open, the Governor said, 'The Ramakrishna Mission, which has been operating to good purpose for 80 years, is noted for its schools, its orphanages, its hospitals and its libraries. These new buildings at Malolo are the Mission's latest contribution to the Colony's well-being.'

Mr. Y. Bhaskaran thanked the Governor for opening the school, the C. S. R. Co., Ltd., for its generous help with the site, Mr. A. D. Patel and all others who had helped with donations of work.



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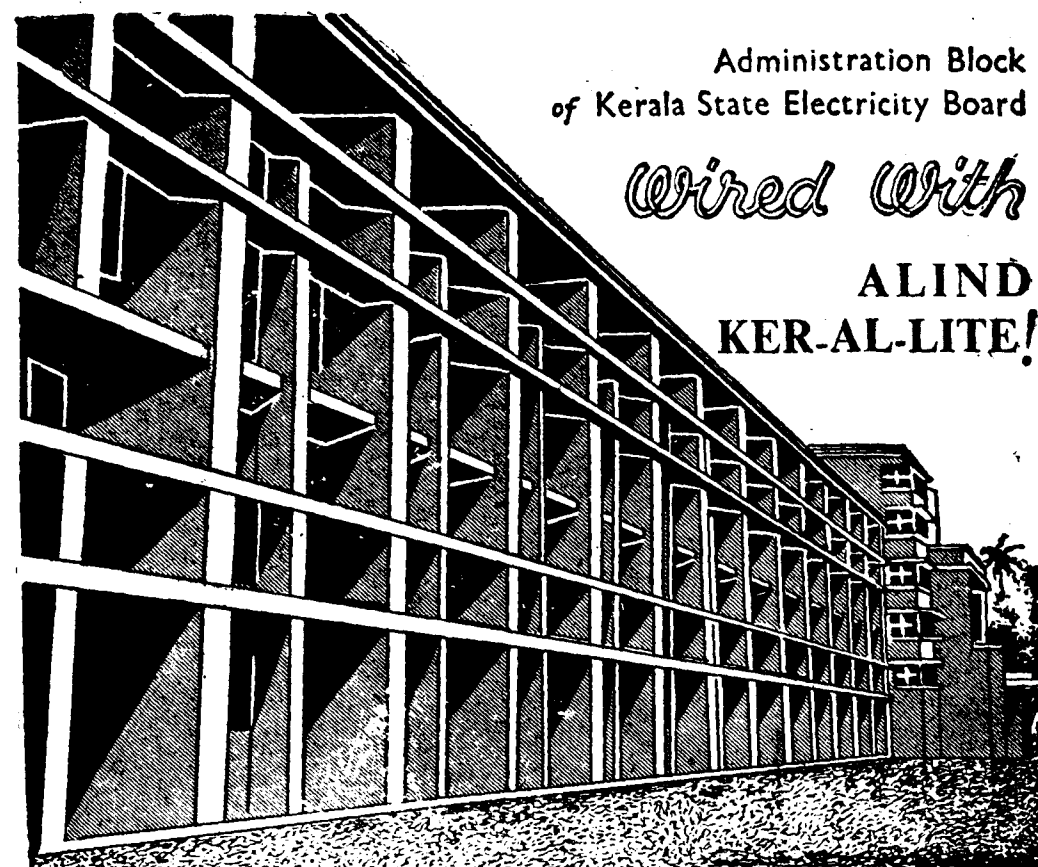
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