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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

*Chicago,
September, 1894.*

DEAR DIWANJI SAHEB,

Your kind letter reached long ago, but as I had not anything to write I was late in answering.

Your kind note to G. W. Hale has been very gratifying as I owed them that much. I have been travelling all over this country all this time and seeing everything. I have come to this conclusion that there is only one country in the world which understands religion—it is India;—that with all their faults the Hindus are head and shoulders above all other nations in morality and spirituality and that with proper care and attempt and struggle of all her disinterested sons, by combining some of the active and heroic elements of the West with calm virtues of the Hindus, there will come a type of men far superior to any that have ever been in this world.

I do not know when I come back but I have seen enough of this country, I think, and so soon will go over to Europe and then to India.

With my best love, gratitude to you and all your brothers,

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
VIVEKANANDA.

DEAR DIWANJI SAHEB,

Very kind of you to send up a man inquiring about my health and comfort. But that's quite of a piece to your fatherly character. I am all right here. Your kindness has left nothing more to be desired here. I hope soon to see you in a few days. I don't require any conveyance while going down. Descent is very bad and the ascent is the worst part of the job, that's the same in everything in the world. My heartfelt gratitude to you.

Yours faithfully,
VIVEKANANDA.

MAN'S PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

BY THE EDITOR

John William Navin Sullivan has been writing for about twenty years on various phases of the sciences. He has written several books on the philosophical aspects of science. He is the author of a history of mathematics, a volume about Beethoven, one on astronomy, and another dealing with atoms and electrons. He wrote an article in June last on "What and Where are We?" and it was published in the *Harper's Magazine*. Since Mr. Sullivan is both a scientist and a philosopher, it is interesting to make a critical study of his reflections on man's place in the universe. His observations throw a flood of light on some of the deepest problems of modern life. He has scientifically and at the same time with a clear vision, studied the causes and remedies of the modern absence of a belief in any great and comprehensive purpose in life. He feels the pulse of the modern life and observes at the very outset: "The growing feeling, extending to all classes of the community, that life is purposeless is perhaps the most significant feature of our time. That a certain section of rich pleasure-seekers should have arrived at this decision is perhaps not very surprising nor very distressing. The same sort of

people have made the same discovery in all ages. But speeches by educationists, sociologists, and religious teachers inform us that this feeling is creeping into all classes.

"It is usual to attribute this feeling to the disillusionment following the War, and the War has undoubtedly been an important contributory cause. But the disillusionment in question is not wholly due to the War. The disillusionment has been brought about by the collapse of some of our most cherished beliefs, and this collapse has been brought about as much by modern science as by the War. Science has influenced us by making clear the distinction between what we must believe and what we would like to believe."

Mr. Sullivan deplors the enthusiasm with which great masses of people, particularly in Europe, have welcomed some form or another of the totalitarian state doctrine and observes that it is, at bottom, surely an expression of the fundamental lack of belief in any great purpose in life. Some of the racial theories in spite of their scientific baselessness and some of the most fervently accepted doctrines in spite of their apparent inconsistency are now being vigorously preached in Europe. They

are having their successful promulgation because these theories inspire their believers with a sense of purpose, presenting them with an object to serve something greater than themselves. So Mr. Sullivan points out that for most men even a pseudo-purpose is greatly to be preferred to no purpose at all and that only a very exceptional man can consciously live a fundamentally purposeless life. Because life takes on an aim and a direction, and for the sake of so great a gift rational, and even ethical, objections can be readily overcome. "Even in the Great War," says he, "for instance, many men found that the sense of comradeship, based on a common aim, did more than anything else to redeem their experience. And the complaint of those who survived was, too often, that this new-found feeling was merely frittered away in the conditions of the post-war world. The feeling that life is purposeful satisfies a very deep need in man, and its absence creates a vacuum which he is pathetically eager to fill. And, as always when the 'will to believe' is so powerfully engaged, he is not meticulously careful in his examination of what professes to fill it."

Mr. Sullivan partially ascribes the modern absence of a belief to our increased knowledge. This increased knowledge has affected our beliefs both about the nature of the universe and about the nature of man himself. The new knowledge is profoundly unsettling because of the light it throws on the fundamental question of man's place in the universe. The unsettled state of the modern mind is due to the fact that neither any cosmogony nor any belief in a purposeful life can satisfy it. The answers to the fundamental question of man's place in the universe have, according to the writer, been of two kinds, namely, the theological and the

humanitarian. Primarily, our knowledge of the universe has, according to him, made us doubtful of the theological solutions and our knowledge of man has made us doubtful of the humanitarian answers.

II

According to Mr. Sullivan, although the physical part of the theological cosmogony of the Middle Ages is most obviously incredible, yet the spiritual outlook of the same has by no means vanished. The belief that man's existence on this planet is but one stage of his eternal destiny, that his good and evil have a superhuman meaning, and that his whole life on earth is to be seen in relation to a God-created scheme, is still a persistent and a widely disseminated belief. The doubts that now exist regarding the old theological conception of man's place in the physical universe owe their origin to the revelations made by modern science. The implications of modern science do nothing to support the old theological cosmogony. So far as the belief that life is purposeful rests on such a cosmogony, therefore, it receives no support from the things we must believe. "But, in fact, a belief in a purposeful life", says the writer, "can exist without such superhuman sanctions. Indeed, in many cases the belief is independent of such sanctions, and its decline in the modern world has, for the most part, come about quite independently of them. The belief in human progress for example, can exist, and often does exist, in entire independence of any particular set of theological beliefs. It is not too much to say that the majority of people would agree that the purpose of life is, or should be, to aid human progress, spiritual, intellectual, and physical. The children are to have better opportunities in a better world than their parents ever had. And

in this way the children, or still more distant descendants, will become better human beings than their progenitors. Man will give rise to the superman, in accordance with the 'law of human perfectibility' as the old writers used to call it.

"It is this belief in Progress which has so catastrophically declined at the present day. The War, and the threat of future wars, have been the chief agents in rousing doubts about the nature of man himself. Added to these there have been a number of subsidiary causes working toward the same end. For many people the Church, for instance, has failed in spiritual leadership. It has shown itself, they think, as little immune from patriotic and social prejudices as is the State itself. Again, the revelations made so abundantly since the War of the stupidity of generals, the insincerity of politicians, the corruption in high places have induced a general indifference and skepticism. There is hardly any group of men whose integrity is generally accepted, and integrity allied with intelligence, such as was attributed to the heroes of the past, would be considered rare. Indeed, we now doubt whether such a combination was ever anything but rare. 'Debunking' is a favourite modern pursuit."

Not only the War and the threat of future wars, but the existing social and economic organizations have profoundly unsettled the modern mind. Today men are governed by certain qualities, namely, possessiveness, self-assertiveness, indifference to the sufferings of others; and the circumstances of our time have made us exceptionally aware of these characteristics, and for that reason the notion of progress has become a dim and distant ideal. According to Mr. Sullivan, the ideal of progress is relatively unsatisfying, if

compared with the old theological outlook. Of the two cosmogonies, the theological and the humanitarian, the theological stresses much more the individuality of man, since according to it each man has an eternal destiny and his life here is of eternal significance. According to the purely humanitarian ideal, a man is a means, not an end—he is a step on a very long path which culminates in a glorious goal, but a goal that he will never see. If human perfectibility be infinite, the goal will forever recede and so it does not represent a permanent state. All life throughout the universe will, according to science, ultimately become impossible. So the goal, if ever reached, will never be a permanent one. In such a case, no man would have any significance, he would have no value in himself save and except as a link in a chain between one generation and the next. Hence the old theological outlook seems to Mr. Sullivan to be more encouraging than the notion of progress.

III

Both the theological and the humanitarian outlooks assume that man is completely conditioned by space and time. The humanitarian outlook generally supposes that the whole of a man's life belongs to the time period that elapses between his physical birth and his physical death. Man's past, present, and future are terms which apply only to events within that period. The theological outlook assumes that man is freed from the domination of physical death but not from the domination of time. The position of space and time in modern science is till obscure. Certain development of Relativity Theory the latest theories of a finite and expanding space have not yet been able to explain clearly the position of time and space. The Quantum Theory is introducing yet

stranger modifications into our space-and-time concepts. Mr. Sullivan observes in this connection: "No one can say what theories of space and time will finally emerge from the present scientific reconstruction, but it is certain that they will differ very greatly from what we have hitherto believed. And since there are no ideas more fundamental than our ideas of space and time, a great many other things will alter when they alter. The ideas we have been discussing, our ideas both of man and of the universe, acquire entirely new aspects when placed in this new setting. If it be true, for instance, that man has created time and space, then we must revise our conception of man as a being subject to space and time—to the space and time, that is to say, that have hitherto been assumed in our thinking about these matters."

Regarding the question which has become acute of recent times—the question as to whether man is a being who is, by his nature, confined within a space-and-time framework, the writer refers to mystics and observes that although they have always maintained that space and time can be transcended, yet they do not seem to have been able to communicate their experiences to those who have not already experienced them. This is, as he says, not surprising since their instrument was language, and language is saturated with space-and-time implications. Perhaps music can suggest such experiences, but only in the hands of a mystic who is also a great artist.

Mr. Sullivan refers to certain modern researches which may fairly be called scientific although they do not belong to the mature and developed science of physics. Mr. Dunne's famous experiments on time and Professor Rhine's experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance present to him ample evidences of

the fact that there is something in man which is independent of space and time. Mr. Dunne's experiments show that the mind, in certain circumstances, can have experiences of future events and his own experiences of the kind have been confirmed by others. Professor Rhine's experiments were concerned with card reading by extra-sensory means, and the highly interesting fact emerged that the results are unaffected by distance. On the basis of these experiments the writer concludes: "If man's independence of space and time be indeed a genuine discovery, then the question of a purpose in life, together with many other questions, acquires a profoundly different significance. Although subject to space and time, he is not wholly conditioned by them. Even if all his activities and aims have reference to his spatial and temporal existence, these things are not exhaustive of the nature of man. The humanitarian cosmogony may still be accepted, but it wears an entirely different aspect when it is no longer regarded as exhaustive. It may still be held, for instance, that man's function, within this space-time framework, is to manure the soil of the future harmony. The service of human progress may be the best purpose that he can propose to himself—within the given set of conditions. But this purpose does not account for what existence he may have independent of those conditions. The description of man as an instrument to serve the ideal of progress is not sufficient, even if it be a correct description of his purpose within the space-time framework. What we have called the theological outlook denies, as we know, that the true purpose of man, even within this space-time framework, is to serve merely humanitarian ideals. His purpose, on this outlook, should have reference to his eternal destiny.

But although the speculations we have been discussing do something to make the idea of man's immortality more plausible, they reveal nothing of an immortal destiny. The intuitions on which the theological cosmogony is founded receive no support from these modern speculations. The importance of these speculations lies in the basic outlook they make possible. If they should be confirmed, the questions of man's place in the universe, of the purpose of life, of the status of our religious intuitions will all be fundamentally affected."

IV

We shall now consider what a Vedântist has to say about the modern speculations on time, space, and man's place in the universe. He affirms that every attempt to solve the laws of time and space would be futile, because the very attempt would have to be made by taking for granted the existence of the two. The human mind is limited and so cannot go beyond the limits of time and space. As no man can jump out of his own self, so no man can get beyond the limits imposed by the laws of time and space. With a Vedântist time and space are dependent existences, they change with every change of the human mind. The ideas of time and space sometimes vanish altogether. This universe of time and space has no absolute existence. It exists only in relation to our minds. Man sees the universe with his five senses, but if he had another sense, he would see in it something more. The universe has no real existence in the sense that it has no unchangeable existence. Nor can a Vedântist say that it is a non-existence, inasmuch as our mind has to work in and through it. So the universe is a sort of something in which there is a

mixture of existence and non-existence. In the superconscious state alone a man can get beyond the limits of time and space and the state can be attained by him through intuition. When a man reaches the state, he gets the vision of the soul which is beyond all time and space. Then he finds that time and space are in the soul and not the soul in time and space, and that the soul alone has the absolute existence and is therefore omnipresent. A Vedântist says further that no amount of knowledge of the physical universe can ever solve the riddles of time and space. Science must, according to him, have the necessity of recognizing metaphysics. The hypotheses that are necessary in all physical sciences are apt to meet with contradictions in terms. Because they are nothing but metaphysical conceptions and therefore a scientist has to come to metaphysics in his ultimate conclusions. Then the questions of man's place in the universe and his purpose in life can be adequately answered.

To a Vedântist, this universe is a misreading of the soul. Says Swami Vivekananda: "There is a screen here, and some beautiful scenery outside. There is a small hole in the screen through which we can only catch a glimpse of it. Suppose this hole begins to increase; as it grows larger and larger, more and more of the scenery comes into view, and when the screen has vanished, we come face to face with the whole of scenery. This scene outside is the Soul, and the screen between us and the scenery is *Mâyâ*,—time, space, and causation. There is a little hole somewhere, through which I can catch only a glimpse of the Soul. When the hole is bigger, I see more and more, and when the screen has vanished, I know that I am the Soul. So changes in the universe are not in the Absolute;

they are in nature. Nature evolves more and more, until the Absolute manifests Itself." The purpose of our life is, therefore, to get rid of the bondages between the Soul and the

universe. Since the Soul exists in all beings, it behoves us to love and serve all beings and to see the Soul equally well as in our own selves and in the rest of the universe.

THE HOLY MOTHER'S CONVERSATIONS

BY A DISCIPLE

Mother was peeling fruits for worship in the morning. I was reading out to her a letter from a devotee. The letter was written in a vein of complaint against God. Mother said in reply: "Master used to say, Sukadeva, Vyâsa were only big ants. He is infinite. If you don't call on God—and there are many who never remember Him—what's that to Him? It's all your misfortune. Such is the Lord's Mâyâ that He has been hypnotizing all in this way, 'They are content, let them remain so.'"

I: Mother, it is not that they (the writer of the letter) don't want Him. If they don't want why should such queries ever arise in them? But then, it hurts us much if He whom we want to realize as our own, does not show Himself. Buddha, Chaitanya, and Christ used to do a lot for the good of their devotees.

Mother: Our Master too did so. But, I can't always remember all the devotees. I pray to Master, "Master, do good to them all, wherever they may be, I can't remember them all." And see He is doing everything. Why else are so many coming?

I: That's true. At best man can believe Kâli, Durgâ, and others to be God. Is it so very easy to believe a human being to be God?

Mother: That's His grace.

Later on when the devotee came

another day I said to Mother, "Mother. It is he who wrote that letter." "Did he?" Mother replied: "Why, he seems to be a good soul!" She then said to the devotee: "Even water whose tendency is ever to flow downwards is drawn up into the sky by the sun. Similarly, the nature of the mind is to run downwards—towards enjoyment. The Lord's grace makes even that to soar upwards."

It was about 10-30 a.m. A householder devotee had come to pay respects to Mother. After bowing to Mother he began to complain: "Mother, why don't we have the vision of Master?" and so on. Mother replied: "Go on calling Him, and you will see Him in time. How many sages and rishis practised austerities for Him for ages and yet failed to realize Him! And you want to succeed in a trice! If you fail in this birth, you may succeed in the next, and if you fail still in that, you may still succeed in the birth next to that. Is it so easy to realize God? But then, Master has shown an easy way this time."

When the devotee went outside, Mother said, "They come here after wallowing in all sorts of worldly enjoyments and complain, 'Why don't we see Master?'"

"Women in numbers used to go to Master. They would also complain; 'Why don't our minds turn towards

God? Why don't our minds become tranquil?' and so on. Master would reply, 'What do you say? You still smell of worldly enjoyments. Let the smell go first. How can you talk of it now. You will have it in due time. We have met in this life, we shall meet again in the next, and then you will have it.'

"It is easy to meet when the body endures. I am here now—anybody can come and see. How many have now the fortune to see Master with this eye? Vijay Goswami saw Him at Dacca and felt His body. Master said afterwards. 'It is not a good omen that the fine body is going out. It seems that this body will not last long.'

"Who has had the fortune to see Him? He did it for Naren (Swami Vivekananda). Sukadeva, Vyâsa, and Siva are only big ants. One can possibly have vision in dreams and other similar states. Else, one must be very fortunate indeed to see Him with a body.

"(Animatedly) If the mind be pure, why should one find it difficult to practise concentration or to meditate. Then, if one begins to repeat the Lord's name, the name will rise forcefully of itself from within. It will need no effort. One should meditate and repeat the Lord's name at a fixed time, casting off all indolence. One day at Dakshineswar I felt somewhat out of sorts and rose a little later than the usual time, under the influence of indolence. At that time I used to get up at three in the morning. Next day, I got up still later. Later I found that I felt a disinclination to rise at all in the morning. Then I realized that I had become a prey to indolence. Afterwards I began to force myself to get up at the right time. And then I got back the former habit. In

such matters one should keep up one's habit with a resolute determination.

"One should get done everything early in life—whether spiritual practices, devotions, pilgrimages, or accumulation of wealth. Formerly even I used to go on foot to holy places like Benares, Brindaban, and others. And now if I want to go a few feet, I need a palanquin to carry me. In old age the body becomes a constant prey to cough and cold and other ailments; it loses all vigour. The mind too becomes weak. Can anything be achieved then? These boys here who are now devoting their minds to God in early life are doing the right thing at the right moment. (To me) My child, get done everything now, religious practices, devotional singings etc., at this time. Can anything be done late in life? Achieve whatever you can now.

I: Those who are now receiving your grace are fortunate. How will they who will be coming next achieve anything?

Mother: What do you say? Why should not they achieve anything? God is present everywhere always. Master is present. They will achieve everything through His grace. Are they not who live in distant lands finding Him?

I: The heart yearns only when it is drawn by love. Do you love us at all?

Mother: Don't I? I feel even for him who does me the slightest service, and you have done so much for me. Whenever I lay hold of anything in the house I remember you. I love you intensely. But, I can't be too free with you. Is that desirable? I often remember those of you who are here. For those who are away I pray to Master, "Master, do look after them. I can't remember them all."

SOCIOLOGY IN BENGAL

BY PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

Academic or professional sociology has in India as in Eur-America and Japan been chronologically preceded as well as supplemented by extra-University sociological output. Sociology, as cultivated in Bengal today, has a number of extra-academic and pre-academic sources to thank for its background and development.

The *Bangiya Sahitya Parishat* (Bengali Academy of Literature), established during the last decade of the nineteenth century (1893) is to be regarded as one of the most influential pre-academic institutions of sociological along with other research. The *Patrika* (Journal) of this Parishat has been functioning for over forty years as the organ of first hand investigations in folk-lore, social mores, cultural institutions, historical developments etc. The work of Hara Prasad Sastri, Ramendra Sundar Trivedi, Rakhal Das Banerji, Nagendra Nath Vasu, Dines Chandra Sen, Amulya Charan Vidyabhusan, Haridas Palit and others has contributed much to the awakening of sociological sense among the Bengali intellectuals. Trivedi's (1864-1922) researches in Vedic socio-religious institutions as well as in characterology, personality, activism and so forth deserve a special mention. For the first two decades of the twentieth century Trivedi's work may be appraised as of the same value in extra-academic sociology as that of Bhudev Mookerji, founder of the *Siksa-Darpana* (Mirror of Education, 1864) and editor of the *Education Gazette* (1868) and author of works on family, society, customs and so forth during

the last generation of the nineteenth century. Trivedi's importance as a pioneer sociologist bids fair to grow during the next generation.

Another pre-academic and extra-University source of sociological research in Bengal was the *Dawn* (1897), the monthly, edited by Satis Chandra Mukerjee.* Among other topics of socio-cultural and philosophical interest the problem of relations between the East and the West as engendered by culture-contacts used to arrest Mukerjee's special attention. The journal became the nucleus of the Dawn Society established by Mukerjee in 1903 and functioned as the *Dawn Society's Magazine* for three years. When as a result of Mukerjee's activities in collaboration with those of others the National Council of Education was established in 1906 during the epoch of the *Swadeshi* Movement, the Magazine became the organ of the national education institutions and ideals until it ceased to exist in 1913.

Investigations based on statistical reports, especially of the Government of India Census Department, constituted a chief feature of the Dawn Society's publications. Much attention was bestowed on the rural society, the arts and crafts, the professional groups,

* S. C. Dutt: *Conflicting Tendencies in Indian Economic Thought* (Calcutta, 1934), pp. 3, 8, 9, 10, 11; the present author's *Badtir Pathe Bangali* (Bengalis in Progress), 1934, pp. xvi, xlvii-xlix, and *Ekaler Dhara—Dault O Arthashstra* (The Wealth and Economics of Our Own Times), Vol. II (1935), pp. 604-606; P. K. Sarkar: "Satis Mukerjee, the Economist and Sociologist of the Swadeshi Period" (*Arthik Unnati*, November, 1936).

the races and the castes. The papers directed the eyes of the *intelligentsia* to the anthropological topics of cultural, social and economic character as well as to the historical developments of institutions and ideas.

It is as pupils and colleagues of Mukerjee that Haran Chandra Chakladar (Calcutta University), Radha Kumud Mookerji (Lucknow University), Rabindra Narayan Ghosh (Calcutta), the present author and others made their *début* in sociological, economic and historical investigations. Because of family and friendly relationships Radha Kamal Mukerjee (Lucknow) also has to be linked up with the Dawn Society group.

Under the influence of the "ideas of 1905" the National Council of Education and the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishat* became the nuclei of several research societies in the districts of Bengal. The *Sahitya Parishats* at Rangpur, Dacca, Gauhati, etc. and the Varendra Research Society of Rajshahi may be mentioned in this connection. The Literary Conferences held under the auspices of these *Parishats*, central or local, were instrumental in evoking some firsthand and field-work socio-cultural and anthropological studies in the rural centres. One of such societies, the *Maldaha Jatiya Siksa Samiti* (Malda District Council of National Education), established by the present author in 1907 used to maintain a special research department for investigations into folklore, folk-arts, folk-festivals and the like. Radhes Chandra Seth, Bipin Bihari Ghosh, Haridas Palit, Kumud Nath Lahiri, Vidhu Sekhara Sastri, Krishna Charan Sarkar, Nagendra Nath Chaudhury and others made some valuable contributions. Palit's *Adyer Gambhira* (1911) formed the basis of the present author's *Folk-Element in Hindu Culture* (London

1917). Palit and Chaudhury have been associated with the *Arthik Unnâti* (Economic Progress) group since 1926 and the *Antarjatik Banga Parishat* since 1932.

The third prominent extra-academic and pre-academic centre of sociological research is to be seen in the Ramakrishna Mission which has been in existence in one shape or other since Vivekananda's return from Eur-America in 1897 but was formally established in its present form in 1909. The monthly journal of this movement, *Prabuddha Bharata* (Awakened India), was started in 1895. This journal, philosophical as it is, addresses itself not only to the topics of Vedânta, the *Upanishads*, the *Gîtâ* and so forth as well as to professional religion and morality of all types but to every item of social relations and reconstructions. Topics of psychological, pedagogic, economic, socio-culture and inter-racial interest have always been studied with attention by the editors and contributors, among whom are to be counted writers representing the most diverse sciences and arts. The impact of this journal on the social thinking and practice of the intellectuals and the middle classes is immense. The Mission has also been conducting a monthly journal in Bengali entitled *Udbodhana* (Awakening) since 1898.

A short statement about the work of Indian sociologists is to be seen in L. von Wiese's paper "Der gegenwaertige internationale Entwicklungsstand der Allgemeinen Soziologie" in *Reine und Angewandte Soziologie*, eine Festgabe fuer Ferdinand Toennies (Leipzig 1936, p. 14). The author invites attention to *Prabuddha Bharata* and Vivekananda's philosophy and observes that the Indian sociologists of today are attempting to establish a bridge between the Brahma-

nical culture of the old *Vedas* and modern sociology.

It is worth while to observe also that the first anthropological journal established by the Bengalis commenced under extra-academic auspices. In 1920 *Man in India* was brought into being at Ranchi (Bihar) by Sarat Chandra Roy, then known chiefly as author of investigations relating to the Oreons and Mundas. In recent years, thanks to the investigations of Panchanan Mitra and other Calcutta University researchers, it has grown into an organ of the academicians as well.

From the Calcutta University's side patronage for sociological research is to be seen in the establishment of the *Indian Journal of Psychology* in 1926. The Department of Experimental Psychology is responsible for the initiation of this enterprise. The work of researchers from all University centres in India finds place in this journal. The contributions of Narendra Nath Sengupta, Girindra Sekhar Bose, Manindra Nath Banerji, Suhrit Chandra Mitra, Gopes Pal and others have direct bearings on educational, industrial and other sociological research, both qualitative and quantitative.

Sociology is one of the topics of investigation and research at the "*Antarjatic Banga*" *Parishat* ("International Bengal" Institute) established by the present author in 1932. Bengali is used as the medium for these studies and investigations, and the monthly *Arthik Unnati* (Economic Progress), est. 1926, as the organ, which otherwise, publishes chiefly the contributions of the *Bangiya Dhana-Vijnan Parishat* (Bengali Institute of Economics) conducted along the same lines and under the same auspices as the "*Antarjatic Banga*" *Parishat*.

The expansion of Japan, social life in Gujarat, the prisons of today, the

economic and social aspects of Fascist Italy, the aboriginal tribes of West Bengal, social conditions in Persia and Spain, Indians in South East Asia, industrial education in Dewey's social philosophy, the anthropology of animal sacrifice, social ideals in British education, the castes of Bengal, municipal administration at home and abroad, fraud, crimes and punishments, etc. are some of the items which have engaged the discussions of the Sociological Division of the "*Antarjatic Banga*" *Parishat*. Haridas Palit, Bhupendra Nath Datta, Pankaj Kumar Mukherjee, Shib Chandra Dutt, Debendra Chandra Das Gupta, Sarasi Lal Sarkar and others have contributed to the research output of this Institute.

Likewise does sociology come in for treatment among the themes discussed at the *Bangiya German-Vidya Samsad* (Bengali Society of German Culture), established by the present author in 1933. The work of Toennies, von Wiese and Freyer, the *Gestalt* theory, *Winterhilfswerk* (winter relief) as a form of social service may be mentioned as some of the topics investigated.

Some sociological material is to be found, it may be mentioned in this connection, in the *Teacher's Journal* published by the All-Bengal Teachers' Association. This monthly journal has in recent years been improving in the form and matter of its output.

The *Mahabodhi* (est. 1892), conducted by the Mahabodhi Society as a journal of international Buddhism, and the *Hindu Review*, the organ of the Hindu Mission (est. 1925), furnish valuable data for sociological research. Antiquarian journals like the *Indian Historical Quarterly* edited by Narendra Nath Law (1926) and *Indian Culture* established by Bimala Charan Law (1934) deserve likewise to be men-

tioned in the sociological inventory of contemporary Bengal.

The castes began to be self-conscious towards the beginning of the twentieth century. The Census publications of 1901 served to give a fillip to this caste consciousness. The lead was taken by the Brâhmanas and Kâyasthas, each group equipping itself with an association and a journal of its own. The movement acquired strength as a result of the Government of India Act 1921 and the social reform ideology and legislation of the last decade and a half. Today, the Mâhisyas, the Sadgops, the Tilis, the Suvarnavaniks, the Kaivarttas, the Vaisya-Sâhâs and many other caste-groups are fortified each with its own organ. Social mobility of the vertical type and of course of the horizontal type is the chief feature of the ideology pervading these caste-journals. The contents of these journals furnish valuable indices to the economic and political as well as cultural dynamics associated with the *groupements professionnels* such as cannot fail to be of tremendous importance to scientific sociology.

The sociology of socialism and feminism is to be watched, in the first instance, in the journals run by or for the working men as well as by women. In the second place the general dailies, weeklies and monthlies are rich in the sociological topics bearing on these classes. The special *Pujah* numbers of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, the *Panchajanya* (Chittagong), *Sonar Bangla* (Dacca), the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Advance*, *Forward*, etc. can also be counted among the organs calculated to promote sociology, theoretical and applied.

Statistics and statistical methods have to be requisitioned by sociology as by many other sciences. The establishment of the Indian Statistical

Society at Calcutta as well as its quarterly organ, *Sankhya* (Number) by Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis has to be listed in the *milieu* of sociological investigations.

Sociological theories, both Indian and Eur-American, constitute a substantial part of the contents of the *Calcutta Review*, the monthly organ of the Calcutta University. Short, introductory and bibliographical reports about modern Eur-American sociologists from Herder to Sorokin have been a feature of this *Review* since 1926. Among the exponents of recent sociology Toennies, Gumplowicz, Ratzenhofer, Tarde, Lombroso, Sumner, Max Weber, Durkheim, Pareto, Small, Freud, Wallas, Ross, Aschaffenburg, Hobhouse, Richard, Wundt, Duprat, Lévy-Bruhl, Niceforo, Gini, Bonger and others have been admitted thereby into the domain of sociological knowledge in India. From the Indian side the contributions of the *Aitareya Brahmana*, Kautalya, Kavikankan, Manu, Sukra, Chandesvara, Mitra-Misra, Nilakantha, Abul Fazl, Ramdas, Rammohun, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda among the ancients and medievals have been the themes of some of the papers in the *Calcutta Review*. It addresses itself likewise to the anthropological, demographic, eugenic, psychological, criminological and pedagogic topics of analytical or formal sociology.

It would have been clear that in Bengal, as indeed in entire India, there are no journals specially for sociology whether in Bengali or English. Nor are there any societies anywhere in India for the cultivation of sociology as a distinct science.

The time has come when Bengali scholars should establish an exclusive but comprehensive Institute of Sociology

(*Bangiya Samaj-Vijnan Parishat*) on the lines, say, of the American Sociological Society. A journal in Bengali given over, again, exclusively to sociology in all its phases and branches is also a necessity for the Bengali world

of culture. It is only under such conditions that sociology like the other branches of scientific discipline may be enabled to enjoy a *swaraj* or independent status among the Bengali *intelligentsia*.

WHAT VEDANTISM IS

BY PROF. SHEO NARAYANA LAL SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

The stupendous system of Vedântic thought in India has an enormous scope having its own theories in ethics, psychology, metaphysics and epistemology, and also embracing different schools under its appellation with subtle doctrinal differences. There is a massive literature on the subject both in Sanskrit as well as in English and other modern languages. But an adequate appreciation of the Vedântic idealism by foreign thinkers and philosophers, is a thing, I believe, yet to be achieved. There is no denying the fact that much commendable work has been done in this direction by Professors Radhakrishnan, Ranade, Das Gupta, M. N. Sircar and others; but a genuine academic interest in and the acceptance of, the essentials of Vedântism by Western savants of philosophy, is hardly yet a fact. We find them still complaining that certain things in Indian thought are quite mystifying to them. I do not intend giving here a lengthy and exhaustive dissertation on Vedântism, nor do I pretend that this short article will remove the above-mentioned want. All that I shall do here is to elucidate some broad essentials of Vedântism along the lines of modern idealistic thinking and attempt to clarify the so-called mystifying tenets of Vedânta.

I

VEDANTA, A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE AND A QUEST OF ULTIMATE TRUTH

'Vedânta' literally means 'the *terminus ad quem* of all knowledge'. The Vedântic* lore is claimed to be the Supreme Wisdom which gives the *parama purusârtha* or the Highest Goal of man's life. As a system of philosophy, it claims to give an explanation of reality which, so far as possible by the human intellect, should be treated as *final*. Vedânta however is not merely a system of intellectual philosophy but also a disciplinary and spiritual culture. Reflective philosophical analysis can give us an idea of what the ultimate truth of reality is, but the living experience of truth is an acquisition of the Illumined. Spiritual illumination is the final *proof*; while philosophical reflection combined with ethical discipline is an aid and stimulus to it. For yet another reason is the Vedântic metaphysics valued by the teachers of Vedânta viz., for vindicating the untenability of other rival philosophical theories. A firm grasp of the fundamentals of Vedânta is deemed necessary to keep the mind steadfast on the realization of the Goal and not

* The view elaborated in this essay is that of *Advaita Vedânta* only.

be distracted by theories which may be only seemingly plausible. Intellectual confusion which constantly begets doubts and perplexities is a serious stumbling block in the path of the aspirant. To many it may not appear commendable that there should be such a rigid insistence on accepting a particular metaphysics as the only right one, but Vedânta emphatically insists on our having the correct *Weltanschauung* (world-view). A fumbling man without an inkling of the Goal can be anything but a steadfast man. It is a widely prevalent view that Vedânta disparages intellectual construction and seeks refuge in the revelation of the *Sruti* and therefore does not evince a strictly philosophical attitude. Now, what the authority of the *Sruti* precisely means deserves to be carefully borne in mind. The Indian mind, as is now well known, never depended on reason merely for the exploration of ultimate Truth, but also employed intuition which was found to be a higher and more veridical mode of apprehension. The *Sruti* (by which is meant the *Upanishads*) is a record of the intuitive explorations of the mystic seekers of India and is therefore held to be indisputable. The *Sruti* embodying the results of mystic penetration is accorded a certitude superior to that obtainable by speculative theorizing—not that speculation is entirely absent in the *Upanishads*, but that the cardinal principles are based on mystic realizations. The Upanishadic age was essentially an age of mystic searching in India, characterized, on the one hand, by a breakaway from the externalism of Vedic ritualism and, on the other, by an emphatic insistence on introspection and meditative endeavour to realise the Divine *within* man as the only real way. So the authoritarianism of Vedânta means at bottom an appeal to intuition as a higher oracle of truth than reason,

and the recognition of the principle that where reason conflicts with intuition, it is the latter which should be accepted and not the former. That only those texts of the *Sruti* are authoritative above all our perceptual and conceptual knowledge which lay down the *basic* conclusions is fully evidenced by the remark of *Vâchaspati*: “तात्पर्यवती हि श्रुतिः बलवती प्रत्यक्षाद्, न श्रुतिमात्रम्” But this important consideration has been set aside by the commentators and they have tried to torture texts at every point to suit their own doctrinal conclusions.

Nor is it true to say that the Vedântic teachers have disparaged metaphysical construction. They have employed the subtlest of dialectics in combating rival systems, and the Vedântic literature does embody a *definite* metaphysic for which it claims the added authority of intuition. Samkara, the foremost of Vedântic teachers, as is well known to his students, employs the subtlest of dialectics to combat the rival materialistic, mentalistic, and nihilistic principles of the Sâmkhyan and the Buddhistic systems. From this it is clear that he is not averse to ratiocination about fundamental principles. Nor does he believe that the *Sruti* itself gives no room to reasoning. “Inference, too,” writes Samkara “as does not conflict with the Vedânta texts, and as such becomes a means of valid knowledge, is not avoided; for even scripture accepts argumentation as an auxiliary.”¹ But the warning that Samkara sounded about argumentation was that an argument, if it proceeded rightly *could not be inconsistent with* the intuitions of the *Sruti* texts. So the *Sruti* is there,

¹ अनुमानमपि वेदान्तवाक्याविरोधि प्रमाणं भवन् न निवार्यते, श्रुत्यैव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याप्यभ्युपेतत्वात् ।

not because we may not reason but because we may rectify and confirm our reasoning by the results of intuitive perception. Intuition is more authoritative than reason because its deliverances are immediately veridical and leave no room for doubting or questioning. When Samkara says that *tarkam* is *apratisthitam*, he means that a conclusion (right or wrong) arrived at by reasoning, does not carry an unquestionable certainty with it, but *allows* doubting about it; intuition does not. So Vedânta is not anti-rational, but *rational and more*. Even when we go to the fountain-head of Vedântic thought—the *Upanishads*, we find a distinct insistence on *manana* or rational rejection as a necessary propædæutic to or a generative condition of *darsana* or spiritual perception, “आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यः निदिध्यासितव्यः” says Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka* Upanishad. The truths embodied in the *Sruti* texts have first to be made familiar with, then rationally reflected and meditated upon to be transformed eventually into living perceptions. That is the way and the spirit of Vedântic culture. With the teachers of Vedânta, philosophy is essentially a pathway to spiritual redemption, and not merely “a ballet of bloodless categories”. The Vedânta is not merely a philosophy but also “a way of life.” So Vedânta is not anti-philosophical as is usually supposed; but taking it as a spiritual culture its attitude may be expressed by the words: “mere philosophy is not enough”. Philosophical reflection, unless it stirs one’s being spiritually, is from the Hindu point of view, a barren waste of logical legerdemain. We must fly on the wings of thought to the domain of the Effulgent Spirit. *Vichâra* in Vedânta is meant both to give us an intellectual insight as well as to set the soul flying. A chastening of life and a deepening of

intuitive receptivity must go hand in hand with an intellectual analysis of experience. Insistence on *Vichara* or philosophical reflection is often urged by the critics of the Vedântic system to be of no moment to spiritual fruition; but, reflection passing or tending to pass into spiritual communion is by no means an uncommon experience with those who take to it with an absorbing passion. Bradley testifies to it. “All of us, I presume,” he writes, “more or less, are led beyond the region of ordinary facts. Some in one way and some in others, we seem to touch and have communion with what is beyond the visible world. In various manners we find something higher, which both supports and humbles, both chastens and transports us. And, with certain persons, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is a principal way of thus experiencing the Deity.”² (*Italics mine*). So the Vedântic scheme of philosophical analysis is significant for spiritual consummation, provided it is taken up by one who is not altogether devoid of receptivity. The Vedântin *par excellence* must combine critical acumen with soaring receptivity. *With such*, philosophy cannot be merely an intellectual pastime, but a spur to spiritual communion and vision. It is for this double purpose that the word for philosophy in India is *darsana*. It is rather difficult for a foreigner to grasp how in India philosophy is one with religion. The founders of the Indian systems of philosophy were not simply great intellectuals, but as Sir Radhakrishnan says “types of personality”.

The Vedânta insists on a disciplinary moulding of life *even for an intellectual grasp of its fundamental principles*. For a man to have an adequate intellectual insight, especially of the reflective

² *Appearance and Reality*, p. 5.

kind, it is necessary to have a settled and introvert disposition of mind, which cannot be reared up without an utmost purity of heart and abstinence from sense enjoyments. The Vedântin thinks that the intellectual strand in the personality of man is not altogether unrelated to the *moral* strands of his personality. The intellectual predilections of any one depend very much on the type of person that he is. Fichte has rightly observed that "what kind of philosophy a man chooses, depends ultimately upon what kind of man he is". So Vedânta insists on a Four-fold Discipline as the *sine qua non* of developing a right type of personality by engendering in man the right attitude towards, and the right aptitude for, philosophic quest. The Four-fold Discipline of Vedânta or the *Sâdhana-chatushtaya* aims at inculcating in man such habits of mind as may deepen his philosophic insight and facilitate his understanding of the fundamentals of Vedânta. The *Sâdhana-chatushtaya* as enunciated by Sri Samkaracharya consists of four cardinal principles—(i) शमदमादिसाधनसंपत् (ii) नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक (iii) इहामुत्रफलभोगविराग and (iv) मुमुक्षुत्व. It is worth-while elucidating these principles here a little and noting their significance for inculcating the proper outlook in a seeker of Truth. To begin with, the Sama-Damâdi-Sâdhana-Sam-pat includes six disciplinary principles, viz., Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titikshâ, Samâdhâna and Sradhhâ. Now what is Sama?³ Govindananda defines it: "लौकिकव्यापारात् मनसः उपरतिः शमः" It is taking a dispassionate or detached view of the mundane affairs of life. We do not often realize how imperceptibly and silently our attachment

towards the objects of life creates in the mind an unduly strong bias for them and disables it for discerning higher values and higher realities. To see things from a proper perspective, it is necessary to take a dispassionate stand. The philosophic demand is to go beyond appearances and seeming realities; and the mind that can do this must be trained to evaluate things at their proper worth.

What is Dama? 'बाह्यकरणानां उपरम दमः'। It is the habit of restraining the out-going activities of the senses. Besides the moral value of such a habit, its value even for an intellectual grasp of the theory of Vedânta cannot be over-estimated. The habit of inwardness gives the mind the peace and poise requisite for a sustained philosophical contemplation and deepens its capacity for subtle introspective observation. Every serious student of Vedânta knows full well that its cardinal principles are arrived at by deep and subtle introspective analysis of experience and are not likely to be grasped by those who have no facility in such methods. The Vedânta philosophers were fortunate in realizing that theorizing on the surface facts of experience was but a very ineffectual way of coming to the ultimate truth. They chose, by introspection, to penetrate to the deeper and basic facts of existence—the true data for metaphysical construction. Introspection helped them to penetrate to those deeper recesses of existence, which are hidden to our naïve sense-experience. In the development of Vedântic thought, intellectual construction always proceeded in closest collaboration with the introspective observation of basic facts. The psychological ever went hand in hand with the logical; hence the giddy heights reached by Vedânta. For instance, it is the introspective genius of our Vedântic thinkers which

³ This, and the following definitions are taken from the *Ratna-Prabhâ* of Govindananda.

discerned that the entire range of experience could be classified into four primary and basic states—Jâgrat (waking), Swapna (dream), Sushupti (deep sleep) and Turiya (transcendent)—a classification which is of such immense value in the system of the Vedânta. Now, the aptitude for subtle introspective observation can only belong to a mind which is calm and composed, more inward than outward. Hence the necessity of Dama.

Then comes Uprati which is defined as “ज्ञानार्थं विहितनित्यादि कमसन्यासः” । Its is to emancipate the mind from an inflexible routine of ritual duties which have not for their end the supreme goal of life—the realization of the highest Truth. When thus emancipated, it can go on a free and unchequered pursuit of Truth. The spirit of Vedântic thought and culture ill fits in with a ritualistic scheme of life.

In addition to these, has been included Titikshâ or an ungrudging endurance of the dual correlatives of pleasure and pain, heat and cold, etc. Samâdhâna means keeping the mind steady, not allowing it to lapse into sleepiness, laziness, and inattention. Sraddhâ is a respectful trust in all higher things.

A second cardinal principle of discipline is नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक or the constant habit of discrimination between the Eternal and the transient. Truth is, *ex hypothesi*, eternally immutable and abiding. All that passes away, is negated or sublated in *any state of experience*, cannot claim to be real from an ultimate or metaphysical standpoint. This habit of discrimination cannot too strongly be emphasized for a seeker of Truth. The soul of man is stirred from its very depths to seek the Eternal, only when it has perceived the extreme evanescence of all earthly objects.

The third principle of discipline is इहामुत्रफलभोगविराग or relinquishing the desire for the enjoyment of the fruits of actions here or hereafter. To the genuine seeker nothing is higher and more desirable than the attainment of the highest Truth. Enjoyment, earthly or heavenly, is but a trifle as compared to it. His one supreme desire is Illumination.

Lastly, we have what is known as Mumukshutva or the desire for emancipation from the all-enveloping Nescience, a consuming passion for the living presence of Truth where every trace of ignorance has disappeared.

This Four-fold discipline is held to be the stepping-stone to the temple of Vedântic Truth. With a proper training in these qualities, obstacles to the perception of Truth, like restlessness, hankering after pleasures and the consequent raging of the passions of love and hatred, are rooted out from the mind which acquires in addition the positive virtues of steadiness and subtlety in the very process of purification. One's penetration into, or assimilation of, the Vedânta truths is directly proportionate to one's mastery of these items of discipline. But it is time now that I should pass from the consideration of these preliminaries—very important though indeed they are—to an exposition of the Vedântic metaphysics.

THE CRITERION OF REALITY IN VEDANTISM

The starting point and the cornerstone of Vedântic metaphysics is the primal, eternal, and immutable fact-hood of the Self, Âtman or Brahman (for these, in the end, are but different names of the same thing) as the base and support of all this changeful pageant of the objective universe. The

criterion of ultimate reality in the Vedânta philosophy is *abâdhitavishayatvam* or non-sublatable fact-hood. The real, the absolutely real, (*satyasya satyam*) must in the very nature of it, be self-same everlastingly. The Ultimate Real is characterized by non-negativity : what can be negated or sublated is but appearance. The dictum that the real is non-negative or immutably persistent requires no proof, for it is one which we are constantly employing in appraising truth in every sphere of our life. We are wont to pronounce dreams unreal, for they do not endure ; they are sublated in the waking experience. A fancy or hallucination is dismissed as unreal, for it *ceases to be* in an after-experience. The principle, therefore, that the real is abiding, is an unquestionable deliverance of our deepest rational nature. Permanent persistence is the mark of the ultimately real.

The determination of a criterion of the ultimate reality is of paramount importance in any scheme of philosophy, without which it is impossible to proceed for a speculative explorer in his pilgrim's progress. It would be instructive in this connection to compare the Vedântic criterion of ultimate reality with that advanced by the rationalistic thinkers of the West. Dr. Bosanquet, to mention one of them, takes individuality or wholeness as the criterion of the real. Every finite item of experience, argues Bosanquet, points to a "system", "a whole of parts", "a world" or "a cosmos" ("individuality" is his central name for all this) in which it is implicated and from which it derives its meaning and significance and apart from which it is unintelligible. Thought, in its attempt to understand, exhibits an inherent *nisus* towards wholeness. The implication of a whole is visible in every sphere of our experi-

ence. "You cannot anywhere", says Bosanquet, "whether in life or in logic, find rest and salvation by withdrawing from the intercourse and implications of life ; no more in the world of individual property and self-maintenance than in the world of international politics and economics ; no more in the world of logical apprehension than in that of moral service and religious devotion."⁴ This implication of a 'whole' or 'a world' is very clear in the case of a logical judgment. The content of every judgment that we make derives its meaning and significance from being one with the entire system of ideas affirmed by us of the whole world of our knowledge. The affirmation of any one thing in the world, implies at the same time the affirmation of the entire world known to me ; so that, as Bosanquet says, in affirming the reality of the room I am sitting in, I am also affirming the reality of the Antipodes, for "they are an element, necessary to educated thought, in the same system with which I am in contact at this moment by sight, touch, and hearing, the system of reality. And though I may not have explicitly thought of them since entering the room till now, yet, if they were no part of my affirmed system of ideas, my perception of anything in space would be quite different from what it is."⁵ Thus, the implication of a "world" is what reality points to at every point of its being. In the end, the fullest reality, the most real, is the all-inclusive whole, the Absolute, which is the unique Individual in the sense that there is no other individual beside it. We are not here concerned with the nature of the Absolute of Bosanquet, but with the criterion

⁴ *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 7.

⁵ Bosanquet : *Essentials of Logic*, p. 35.

of reality that he indicates. It is a whole or a world.

But even when this is taken as the criterion of reality, the criterion of permanence, is already implicated in it, nay, is presupposed by it. We say a thing is real when it *endures* or *has an enduring place* in the whole we call the world of our waking consciousness; and the whole is said to be more real than the parts within it, *for its general structure in its wholeness endures immutably*, while the parts within it act and interact upon one another and are comparatively changeful. The whole is real, because it is abiding in its wholeness or general plan. Permanence or non-sublation, then, is a more basic criterion of reality than wholeness. The ultimately real is that which abides without interruption or change. It is the ever-lasting "yea", the Immutable Fact, the One which remains while the many change and pass.

This Supreme Fact or bed-rock reality, according to the Vedantic thinkers, is the principle of our own Self, the *Âtman*. The *Âtman* is the ruling conception in the Vedânta philosophy and the entire principles of Vedântic metaphysics, psychology, epistemology, ethics, religion and eschatology, are influenced by its conception of *Âtman*. We, therefore, now pass on to elucidate the conception of *Âtman* in the philosophy of Vedânta.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ÂTMAN

Philosophy is an attempt to gain an insight into the general structure of reality as a whole by a consideration of its broad and pervasive features, leaving the details of facts to be studied by the special sciences. The most general and pervasive feature of reality, as it will be readily admitted, is that it is *experience*. All existence is *intelligi-*

ble or experiential existence, implying an intelligence or consciousness *for* which it is. That the experiential character of reality requires as its prime presupposition an experiencing consciousness is a truism which admits of no doubting or denial were it not for such an ultimate unwitting consciousness, all experience would be *blind* which is the same thing as saying that there would be no experience. So the most indubitable fact, the initial reality, is the ultimate Witness Consciousness which being there, every thing is.⁶ But for an abiding intelligent *percipere*, all experience would be dark. This ultimate perceiving consciousness is the inexpugnable postulate of experience, whatever be in reality the final truth of the universe *as experienced* or *the objective* of our experience. Whether the objective world in its ultimate essence be a continuous modification of one fundamental stuff such as the Prakriti of Sâmkhya or the Space-Time of Prof. Alexander, or an unending and unforeseeable evolution of an original creative principle like the *elân vital* of Bergson or a complicated maze of whirling electrons and protons, the fact remains that it is objective *for* a subject and gains meaning and articulation only as experienced by a subject. The Alpha of Vedântic philosophy, then, is the postulation of the indisputable fact-hood of this Percipere-Consciousness, the Universe-Witness, the Light of all lights, in whom *we* and all else live and move. This is the initial FACT in experience, the presupposition of presuppositions, which cannot be doubted or thought away. All else may be a sheer illusion, a baseless fabric of a vision and a dream, but even as such it must be *for* a witness, a *percipere*. Without the

⁶ तमेव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा
सबमिदं विभाति ।

postulation of a fundamental perceiving Consciousness, even a complete phantasmagoria is unthinkable. But the reality of this Consciousness is not merely a matter of *inference* or deduction from experience, or of a *postulate* demanded by experience; but a self-manifest and self-revealed (*swaprakâsha*, *swatah-siddha*) verity of DIRECT experience. It is not a 'transcendent' principle in the Kantian phraseology, though, as we shall see, it is 'transcendental' in its negative signification of non-empirical. Herein is a great strength of Vedânta as a system of philosophy. What is taken as the first and foundational principle in Vedântism is not a problematical something, an inaccessible noumenon, but the deepest and most undeniable verity of our experience. At the very start Vedântism steers clear of any kind of acosmism or transcendentalism. Consciousness, which is the stay and foundation of all reality, has not *to be established* by theoretical reasoning, but is *self-established*. It is self-luminous and self-evidencing as well as

it illumines all objects in the universe. It is the all-illuminating Spirit, the in-extinguishable Light which endures, even when all other lights blow out: "When the light of the sun, the moon and the fire is put off, the light of Âtman illumines all." (*Brih. Up. 4, 3, 6.*)

It is a matter of gratification that even the scientific thinkers of today have become aware of the simple but profound truth that consciousness is the most indubitable certainty in experience. "Mind", says Arthur Stanley Eddington, "is the first and most direct thing in our experience; all else is remote inference." Vedântism gives the challenging truth that the Consciousness which illumines all, and which being everything is, is our very 'self', the inmost core of our being. *Thou art That*. Consequently the problem of Self acquires the foremost place in the system of Vedânta philosophy. The Self is the Ultimate Reality. To this problem we now turn our attention.

' Science and the Unseen World, p. 24.

(To be continued)

HOW A PRINCE BECAME A SAINT

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

Not quite a thousand years ago there lived in Khorasan a young prince known far and wide for his bounty and piety. Ready to appreciate excellence of any type, the king gave freely to all who would appreciate his royalty for a display of their skill and achievements. During his tours through the distant parts of his dominion with a view to witness the condition of his people, incognito, he evinced as much zeal to see persons of eminence as places of importance. Off and on one might

see him threading the intricacies of a lowly village with an attendant or two on his way to a humble cottage, the indweller of which was known to be an artist, a scholar, or a sage. A magnificent princely figure squatted on the floor of a poor hovel listening with rapt attention to the words of wisdom and experiences of a shrivelled hoary frame with piercing looks and a conspicuous forehead, was indeed a rare sight to see. His court was a regular haunt of many a man of

extraordinary gifts and attainments. Himself a lover of learning and culture, he would not only converse long hours with them, but used to devote what time he could secure out of his kingly engagements to the study of religion and philosophy for which he had special aptitude. It was his daily programme to listen to the holy texts, expounded and interpreted by the court scholar.

Thus matters went on smoothly, till fortune took it into her head to give a new turn to his life. His kingdom, vast as it was, was invaded by a neighbouring king, who succeeded in wresting a considerable portion out of his hands. The prince had not sufficient treasures in his coffers, already drained by his lavish gifts, for a mighty effort for the restoration of the lost territory. Deeply mortified he retired to the inner apartments of his palace and was not in a mood to appear before the court. The grey-haired minstrel was advised to approach the king in his affliction. In vain did he try to assuage his feelings. "It does not behove thee, O my lord," said the old bard with modest tenderness, as he was going to take leave of the prince, "to grieve for what is lost beyond recovery, inasmuch as thou art interested in ancient lore which extols perfect equanimity under all storm and stress of circumstances." The words touched him to the quick and no sooner was the musician gone than the king fell into the following train of thoughts: "Truly, I have discussed the religious texts with full alacrity and have marvelled with felicity at the excellence of virtues related therein. How is it then that in practice I fall far behind and seem to have acquired nothing in actual life? Do not the scriptures serve to make us pure and upright? Have they not sufficient motive power to direct our lives to truth and virtue? Or do they give

only a momentary stimulus to the mind?"

Thus embarrassed, the prince was brooding over the question and could not come to a decision. He called for the scholar, who presented himself in no time. The king related to him the difficulty he was in and wanted a solution. "You are not versed, O scholar," continued the king, "in all the scriptures. Day after day you have explained to me the golden truths and the beautiful tenets they propound, but how is it that you have failed to implant these ideas in me; my mind is not above troubles and tribulations." The scholar, unable to form a conclusive opinion all at once, begged for a day's time. "All right," said the prince in his vexation, "but if you fail to-morrow you need not appear before me any more." The next day, the king was on the tip-toe of expectation at the appointed hour; but the scholar was not in sight. The morning hours of king's audience had passed, the afternoon period of interview was also going to be over. The king called his other courtiers one by one and demanded from each a solution of the problem. Everyone offered an explanation as best as he could, but none was convincing and cogent enough to satisfy the king's intellect.

Meanwhile, let us watch what happened to the court scholar. He had been at home pondering on the question over and over again, without any inclination to take his usual food and drink. Now, he had a daughter, advanced in years, possessed of rare gifts and much devoted to study and meditation. She had taken a vow of life-long celibacy and acquired through the help of her father a complete knowledge of religious books. Understanding her father to be in a fix, she wanted to know the reason of it. The father, who had no small faith in her talents and attainments, recounted

to her all that had passed between him and the king. "I will solve the difficulty, O father," cried out the maiden, "just finish your meal and then take me to his royal presence."

With the last glimmer of the setting sun, when the courtiers had just taken leave of the prince, the father and the daughter entered the palace and presented themselves before him. "What conclusion have you come to?" exclaimed the prince, as soon as his eyes fell upon the scholar. "If it so pleases, your lord, my daughter will offer a solution," answered the scholar meekly, while both were making obeisance to the king. The prince who had heard much about the exceptional nature and conduct of the youthful virgin and had some confidence in her merits and abilities turned to her and said, "Speak out, O maiden, your decision." "With your lord's permission, I shall solve the problem by action and not by words," replied the maiden. "You may do as you choose", granted the king. Then she begged for two pieces of string, which were forthwith brought to her. Her next prayer was that none but her father and herself would be with the prince in his chamber, while she answered the question. This granted, even the personal attendant of the prince having left the hall, she implored, "Do not take amiss, O king, O my father, what I am going to do now, till you have seen the end of it." Then with much grace and modesty she proceeded to her father and tied him hand and foot to a pillar of the hall. Similarly, she bound the king to another pillar just facing the former. Then she asked her father to go and set the king free. "How can that be," cried her father, "I am bound myself, how can I release another?" Then she loosened the bands of her father and wanted him to untie those of the king. Up he flew to the king and res-

cued him in a moment. "You understand me, O king, O my father." "Certainly, you have taught us a good lesson," the king observed, "a sinking man cannot save another who is drowning. Your father and I are both caught up in the meshes of the world, how can we rescue the other?" "But the question does not lie wholly with your father," continued the prince, "it is as well with the scriptures. Can they not make men spiritual and honest?" At this the maiden spoke as follows: "They help us to a considerable extent by presenting before us a correct view of life and things, but they do not go a great way in building our character. It is the living personalities in whom the religious truths and virtues are embodied—that can ignite our lives with true spirituality, just as a lamp can be lighted from another lamp. In books we come across mere words and names describing abstract ideas and truths, but the things themselves are not there. These are to be found in such personages as have reached them, as have materialized them into ruling principles of life. So if you want to secure greatness and virtues, you must not seek them in books but in persons, who are the living examples of all that is good and great."

The king's eyes were opened. He amply rewarded the scholar and his daughter before they took leave of him. All night long the idea was revolving in his mind and did not allow him a wink of sleep. Where and how to find a sage who could really make a man of him, who could kindle in him the light of spirituality, was the burning question with the prince. At last he recollected to have heard in his early days of a great saint who lived in the remote province of Ajmer in India. "I must find him out or die," resolved the king. At dead of night, long before the cock's crow, he slipped out of the royal man-

sion unknown and unnoticed, with no other accessory but a drinking pot, a pillow and a small ruby. The vessel was, of course, made of gold and the pillow of velvet as these were the articles of his ordinary use. The ruby he tied up in a corner of his robe for future provision.

The resplendent Hesper was gleaming in the orient sky, when the prince passed out of his capital into the meadow beyond. For a time there was a hush all over nature. Gradually the eastern horizon was blazed up with the splendours of the rising sun. Gentle breeze was blowing, wafting the sweet odours of wild flowers and the rich melody of chirping birds. With the glorious birth of a new day, there loomed before his mind's eye a realm of celestial light and beauty. Buoyed up with hope and joy, he journeyed on and on through woods, fields and habitations of men, till at noon he came to a rivulet where he stopped for rest. As he was going to draw water from the sparkling brook with his vessel of gold, he noticed on the side a poor old man scorched with midday sun drinking his fill with joined palms. "What is the use of this bowl then? I can do without it. I need not, therefore, carry it and guard it." With these words, he threw the golden pot down into the stream. Then he allayed his thirst with palmfuls of water and laid his head on the velvet pillow for a siesta. Not long after he had got up from a nap, he found another man lying asleep under a yonder tree with his head placed on his arms and snoring loudly from time to time. "This is not only unnecessary but burdensome," said the prince to himself and cast off the pillow.

Soon the western sky was aglow with the rays of the parting sun. But the prince was too tired to resume his journey. He must, however, proceed to the next village, where he could find a rest-

ing-place for the night. His path lay through a wood. Happily the moon shone bright overhead. As he was passing under a grove of trees, something like a ruby seemed to glitter on the ground, in the chequered moonbeam. Attracted with its lustre, the prince stooped to lay his hand on it, when lo, a roar of merry laughter came through the hissing wind mockingly into his ears from a squire who was riding by, and, to the prince's extreme shame and sorrow, the little ruddy thing proved to be nothing but filthy saliva just spat out by the horseman while chewing betel-leaf. "I have given up my kingdom. I have renounced all worldly possessions. I have even cast aside the last things I had with me thought essential for life. Still my mind turns to trivial stones. How is it?" The king was not long in such a reverie, when the ruby tied up in a part of his cloth flashed into his memory. "This is the last little thing that still binds my heart to what people call treasures," said the prince with a sigh of relief as he threw the ruby away.

Next morning he felt as fresh and light as a horse relieved of its burden and commenced journey with renewed energy. Days in and days out, he travelled through hills and dales, plains and deserts, with no other possession but an all-absorbing yearning for his object. Towns, villages, and people of different types filled his mind with new experiences and relieved the fatigue of the journey. He went on and on depending entirely on such food and shelter as chance would bring. His hardships and privations knew no bounds, but fortified with strong determination he came victorious through them all.

At last, the much-desired city of Ajmer came into view. His heart throbbed with joy. His long-cherished hope was going to be realized. He enquired about the abode of the saint and hastened on

and on till he reached the gate. "What brings you here, sir?" said an aged disciple of the saint, as he entered the house. "I want an interview with the sage," was the prince's reply. "He lives as a recluse and never appears before newcomers." "Kindly bear him the word that the prince of Khorasan is waiting at his doors seeking the vow of monasticism." "Two swords cannot be put up in a single scabbard" was the saint's reply forthwith conveyed to the prince, who could hardly make out the meaning of the words. He, however, insisted on knowing the significance at which the disciple stated: "You profess yourself to be the king of Khorasan and at the same time you assume to be an ascetic. How can that be? Two distinct forms of self-consciousness cannot exist simultaneously. You must give up all worldly pretensions before you can feel or realize yourself as a humble devotee of the Lord—as a seeker of truth and truth alone. It is this feeling—this inner consciousness which is the mainspring of spiritual life."

The prince acknowledged his fault and begged permission to stay in the monastery rendering such services as might be required of him, till he was considered fit for initiation. With the saint's consent, he was allowed to reside as a cowherd. Day after day he had to tend cattle in a neighbouring pasture-ground. Five long years glided by. He had not even had the privilege of seeing the saint. One day he sent word to the saint, that his case might be taken into consideration. "Not yet," was the reply borne to the prince.

Now it was his regular practice to read books and make some notes at night after the day's toil. It happened in the same evening that on his return to the monastery from the fields, he found to his entire grief that the book containing his valuable notes had been

taken possession of and spoiled during his absence by the charity-boy of the monastery. The culprit was rightly punished for his misdeed. "The time is not yet come: he cannot forgive and forget the wrong done to him?" the saint noticed, when the news of the incident reached him. It was also decided that the prince should henceforth live on one meal a day as a penalty.

Three more years passed. At the close of the eighth year he was much emaciated. The rigours of new life had told on his magnificent health. But he bore all its severities calmly and quietly. The disciples of the saint took pity on him and represented his case before the saint; but the only answer they could elicit from him was "Wait and see." A few days after, it so happened, one of the cows in the care of the prince was missing and could not be found after careful search. The prince was held responsible and had to go without food as a punishment. The prince, although he had stood proof against all humiliations, was so distressed with hunger as to mutter in agony, "Ah Khorasan, little dost thou know that thy king is starving to death." When the matter was brought to the notice of the saint, "The time is not yet ripe, you see. He still thinks of his former position," was the opinion expressed by him. He also enjoined that the prince should henceforth carry on his head a load of grass every evening when returning from the field.

Years rolled on; the prince had to go through the same round of duty day after day. His body and mind were thoroughly disciplined. His power of endurance increased to the full. He seemed to be perfectly accommodated to his mode of life. There was a peaceful serenity about him and a graceful demeanour marked all his movements.

It was now the twelfth year of his life in the monastery. One morning the saint enquired about him of his own accord and was fully satisfied with the report he got on his conduct and character. "Let him pass through an ordeal, however," remarked the saint. "As he will be coming down the precipice at dusk with the load of grass on his head, let one of you try to give him a fall and watch what happens." The saint's order was enacted the same evening. One of his disciples approached the prince under the cover of darkness and purposely stumbled on his stick unawares. The prince had, however, a narrow escape, but instead of being provoked, he entreated the offender to excuse him for hurting him with his stick.

When the saint was informed of this he was so happy as to ordain that no task should henceforth be imposed on the prince; on the other hand, he should be given all the relief and comfort the monastery could afford. The new situation, far from making him indolent and ease-loving, gave him fresh opportunities for self-restraint and self-culture. His active life was followed by a vigorous life of contemplation. He used to sit

long hours morning and evening in the open air absorbed in his own thoughts.

One evening he was returning to the monastery from the meadow as usual, when he found that the cow-boy of the monastery was being severely belaboured by the owners of an adjacent corn-field, which the boy's cow had entered and seriously damaged. He at once hurried to the spot, but blows went on notwithstanding his remonstrances. In his attempt to protect the boy he was struck on the nose and was bleeding profusely. As soon as the news reached the monastery, some of the members ran up to the place of occurrence and caught hold of the assaulters. When they were brought before the prince tied hand and foot, he grievously cried out that he should be the unfortunate cause of their sad plight and implored his brother-monks to let them go at once. "Are we not children of the same Lord? What right have we to offend our brothers then?" uttered the prince.

As soon as the saint heard of this, he ran up to the prince and hugged him to his bosom, saying, "Thou art already a monk, a monk by very nature, not a mere ascetic by vow. What need is there for you of formal initiation."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

BY SWAMI AKHILANANDA

Today there is a wave of psychological interest. Everyone in America, at least every thinking person, puts tremendous value upon the study of psychology. Why? Because we all realize that psychology works. Psychology gives something to our everyday life. Psychology regulates the use of the mind that we may influence other minds. We can influence others in

various ways. Consequently, particularly in America, people are placing great store upon the study of psychology. It is true that modern psychology which has been developed very much in Europe and in America, is giving us something which we did not have before. The concrete use of mind was not achieved until a few years ago. Modern psychology, in spite of its de-

fects, narrowness, and incompleteness, has done a great deal so far as our practical life is concerned. You go to a department store. All salesmen and women use psychology so that they can play with the minds of others. Wherever you go, you find the effects of the study of psychology. You go to a doctor, and he will tell you that without the understanding of psychology he cannot cure most ailments. You go to a psycho-analyst, and he will try to discover your complexes and help you accordingly.

What do the psychologists say about the spiritual experiences and life of Sri Ramakrishna? Suppose we present his experiences to the modern psychologists. I am sure that in Europe and America, perhaps with the exception of one or two, they will declare that this man had hallucinations, that the experiences he used to have about God were nothing but self-hypnosis, delusion, epilepsy or some other form of mental disturbance. Most modern psychologists assume that the "idea of God" is due to childhood dependence on the father. God is nothing but "Father-transference" to overcome fear and other weaknesses. The Behaviourists go a step further and want to eliminate the idea of God from human life. Some psycho-analysts dogmatically give even obnoxious and shocking theories regarding the idea of God. A few years ago, one of my best friends in America had occasion to talk to one of the greatest psychiatrists of New England. He is usually consulted in serious cases. When my friend spoke of religious problems, the psychologist suggested that these were just foolish ideas of man, that at times man adopts these religious ideas either to console his mind or to get a little encouragement and strength from the fictitious idea of God. Many psychologists will actually look down upon you

if you talk of religion or of God, and will think you peculiar. I know what my friend thought when, with so many things to discuss, she met the psychologist who asked, "Do you have any visions or experiences?" He wanted to establish another pathological case based on one of his pet theories.

Let us evaluate the experiences of the great mystics and also the experiences of the great psychologists, and let us find which are scientific in the religious field and which are not. All the great spiritual leaders and spiritual personalities, such as Sri Ramakrishna, were sometime or other regarded by the common run of folk as men of hallucination or as insane persons. Why? Because they were unusual; because their experiences were not the experiences of psychologists and other ordinary people living on the sense plane. After all, what does the psychologist study? Until a few years ago, psychologists were limited to the conscious activities of the mind, to just the surface of the mind, and nothing more than that. Only of late, just for twenty-five or thirty years, a few psychologists have been talking of the subconscious mind and describing something as subconscious, and even here their general conclusions are very vague, insufficient, and incomplete. The methods of their study are not yet thorough and convincing.

One of the greatest psychologists of the modern world, Dr. Jung in his "Modern Man in Search of a Soul", tells us, without the least shade of doubt, after so many years of study and of experimentation, after many years of medical and pathological practice, that Western psychology is a beginner's attempt in comparison with the Oriental system of Yoga, particularly of the Hindu system of Yoga. He understands the validity of spiritual

realization and experiences. Similar statements are made by other profound thinkers, such as Dr. William Brown of London, who does not discard religion and studies the subject thoroughly and not from a narrow point of view. Of late, fortunately, Dr. Alexis Carrell is shedding new light for the West on spiritual experiences. He tells us emphatically, in his "Man the Unknown", that spiritual experiences are valid; moreover that man's life and experience are incomplete without them. It was here, right here in America, that one of the greatest psychologists of the West did not decry spiritual experiences, mystic realizations as mere facts of pathology and hallucination. It was in Boston, that Professor William James in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," did not discard these experiences as pathological, although he did not have a final understanding because, as he admitted, he did not have a complete understanding of the mind nor had he followed spiritual practices. But he was not a narrow person, and he presented to us without any prejudice certain facts for psychologists and scientific thinkers to judge and evaluate. He discussed and presented not only the experiences and methods of the Christian mystics, but also those of the Hindu, Moham-medan and other mystics.

I do not deny that there are many pathological cases that assume religious ideas. Many insane persons are in the business world, in banking or commercial fields. Others are conducting factories, or rather conduct factories and then become insane. They may be obsessed by some particular idea and lose balance. Does that mean that your banking or commercial ways of living make people insane? Would you discard your banking system because such and such a person became insane while being a bank president? You might

meet some persons who have an extreme form of hallucination regarding money, friendship or something else. There are persons who actually think so many foolish things and do so many destructive acts in the name of friendship, in the name of love and in the name of so many other beautiful tendencies of man. Would you say that friendship is the cause of insanity or that love is the root of insanity? If any scientist or any psychologist concludes that religion produces insanity, he is certainly narrow and unscientific. He is concluding more than is warranted by the partial facts. He is not following the proper methods of investigation and generalization.

Psychologists try to measure spiritual experiences by methods applicable to other sciences. Different scientific studies are to be followed through various methods. For instance, you do not apply the same method of study to psychology as to physics. Similarly, mystic realization or spiritual experience has its own individual method. If by following these prescribed methods systematically and exactly you fail to realize the truth, then, and only then, can you legitimately conclude that God is meaningless, that He is a mere Father-transference, a fictitious idea created by weak persons to have a feeling of shelter and solace in their troubles. Many modern psychologists are committing this great blunder when they generalize and actually look down upon all spiritual experiences or ignore the higher mental and spiritual states.

Now, how will the experiences of Sri Ramakrishna be regarded by Western psychologists? They only study a few conscious activities or perhaps get a glimpse of some of the subconscious tendencies. Sri Ramakrishna's life and experiences, as they belong to the super-conscious, open up a new realm of

psychology. Modern psychologists have not even the slightest idea of that realm. Consequently, they will conclude that these experiences of Sri Ramakrishna are hallucinations. Spiritual experiences illumine the whole mind, and lead us to a state where we transcend the limitations of time, space, and causation. We transcend the limitations of name and form. We transcend the limitations of the phenomenal world. It is true that very few persons have these unusual and extraordinary experiences, but, nevertheless, those who have them find them to be more valid than ordinary phenomenal experiences. You will all agree with me that today you think about certain things in one way, and the next day you change your ideas. Your emotional reactions constantly vary. Today you think that certain persons are wonderful, and tomorrow your mind changes and you discard that idea about them. This is because you have not the deeper understanding of them. We have only superficial understanding from external expressions, which may have different inner causes. For instance, a gift may be made to another by reason of different inner urges : love, feeling of service, greed, expectation, spite. You may love the person, so you give, or you may feel that the person is in need, or you may give to the person in service or worship of God. You may again give something in expectation of receiving something in return. You may give to make another jealous, or because of being angry with another, or in spite and so on. When modern psychologists try to study the unconscious mind, they really grope in the dark. Although they may sometimes hit upon the right unconscious motive or urge, yet their understanding of the unconscious is often very unsatisfactory, incomplete and vague. Their research is based purely on the objec-

tive study of the mind and is often coloured by preconceived notions of the nature of urges and contents of the unconscious. But a man of higher unfoldment or of mystic realization has complete understanding of every fact, of every person. He sees through your body and mind the reality behind you. He deals with the inner region, the inner man ! None but a man of spiritual realization can give us the total experience of man's existence. By virtue of his own inner illumination, he has the penetrating understanding of the inner nature of others.

The life and experiences of Sri Ramakrishna take us very far away from modern psychology, psycho-analysis or experimental psychology. A new study is required. If we want to develop a complete psychology, we have to discipline ourselves first. We have first to have super-conscious realization and experiences. Then alone shall we be in a position to give the world a complete psychology. Until you can discipline your mind, and train yourself wholly and completely, you have no access to the mystic experiences of the super-conscious realm. Until you take up the methods that will lead you to mystic realization, you have not the slightest idea of the existence of super-conscious realization nor of its effect.

The Yoga systems of India give us a deeper understanding of the complete mind, subconscious, conscious and super-conscious. It is true the Yogis present the life of Sri Ramakrishna as an actual demonstration of the highest form of psychology. If you want to study the complete and total field of man's mind, you have to interpret and study in the light of the experiences of the type of this great man. I am not asking you to accept him or any one else, nor am I asking you to present him to the world without verifying his

experiences. Sri Ramakrishna himself tells us, "Come along, have the experiences." You all know that when Swami Vivekananda, his great disciple who was the lion of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, challenged him with the question, "Have you seen God?" Sri Ramakrishna answered, "Yes. I have seen Him and I can show Him to you." That was the declaration made not only to Swami Vivekananda, but to the whole world, to you and to me. Yes, a man can experience God, and that man can also show you God. Sri Ramakrishna not only had super-conscious experiences but also knew the methods and taught them to his disciples. This knowledge can be given to others. There is no exclusive idea about this. I saw many of the disciples of this great Master who had had super-conscious experiences. Their love, unselfishness, purity and other wonderful qualities proved to me without the least shade of doubt that super-conscious realizations were valid, practical, dynamic and they can also be demonstrated.

I have presented to you the one personality who lived the life of a Hindu, a Christian, a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, and a Jew and realized the truth by following different methods. Consequently, we are totally convinced that even today God can be experienced and realized by any person, regardless of his church affiliation or religious creed. The only thing that is required is intense love for that realization and the strong urge to realize God. Since we are all born in this age and have consciously or unconsciously imbibed scientific tendencies, let us be thoroughly scientific and make a worthwhile experiment on the realization of God or on spiritual experiences. Let us also find that God is true, in our own inner consciousness, in our own everyday life,

in our own actions and thoughts. We shall then find that God-consciousness will unite us, will make us serve the veritable expressions of God as so many human forms.

Sri Ramakrishna's realizations were not static but dynamic. He went out with his intense love to serve the veritable expressions of God in human and other forms, because he realized that the Infinite was not only present in a few persons but also was present in all beings, even in plants and in inanimate objects. This is a very significant fact and is the practical solution of our modern problems.

The mystic experiences of Sri Ramakrishna did not make him lose what he possessed before, but made him more efficient, practical, methodical, systematic, and intelligent. A new vista was moreover opened to him. He gained an immediate and direct knowledge of a new realm previously unknown to him or to others. His joy and peace knew no bounds. Above all, mystic experiences made him love his disciples and all persons with whom he came in contact, nay, all beings.

Let me present a few instances and facts to modern psychologists and to others for their consideration. One day, hard stones were thrown down on green blades of grass. Sri Ramakrishna, without knowing what was going on, called out, "Oh me! they are beating me, they are pressing my heart, they are crushing my chest!" On inquiry it was found that some people were treating the tender blades of growing grass ruthlessly. When they desisted, his pain stopped. Once, at a distance, out of sight of Sri Ramakrishna and unknown to him, a bullock was severely beaten. Scars of assault appeared on the back of Sri Ramakrishna without his knowing the cause. Another time two boatmen were quarreling and came to blows.

Sri Ramakrishna felt those blows on his own person.

Would the psychologists believe these facts? I ask the psychologists this question : How did these things happen? You could not say that they were hallucinations. You could not say that this man's mind was wrong. You could not say that this was a case of auto-suggestion or of self-hypnosis. It was that this mystic had identified himself completely with the whole of existence, with the whole realm of reality. Consequently, he felt the fighting of the men, the beating of the bullock and the maltreating of the grass keenly within himself. This is possible only when a man unites himself with the source of existence, with the source of life.

When a man realizes the oneness of life and existence, then alone does he feel thus. Is not this love wonderful? If the mystic experiences of Sri Ramakrishna can make him love even blades of grass, effectively not sentimentally, I would certainly not only worship him, but I would also crave to become as close as possible to that life. Is not this experience worth while? Would you call a man of that experience a pathological case? I wish we were all of that type. I wish we could all attain even one hundredth part of that oneness. Then our maladies, our sufferings, our hateful and destructive tendencies would vanish in no time. This world would be a place of joy and peace, of harmony and synthesis.

Mystic realizations make you the source of love, the source of peace. Real spiritual realizations will unite you with the whole of existence, with the whole of reality. In fact, super-conscious realizations are really the background and dynamic forces of unselfish work and social justice. This is the real basis of Sri Ramakrishna's humanism. Modern humanists forget the real place

of man and isolate him from God — the Real Existence, the background. Some are atheistical and the rest are agnostic and find no need for God. Their incentives and motives are not deep enough to convince the minds of men and to induce them to carry on humanitarian activities. Sri Ramakrishna's experiences furnish the real background of social work. He shows that the work should be done in the spirit of service and worship. Then the work performed by the aspirant will lead him to the highest realization of Truth. Of course a man of spiritual unfoldment himself does humanitarian work, being already established in the knowledge of the oneness of life, while the aspirant works to gain that realization. The Great Master one day emphasized to his disciples in the course of conversation, "not compassion for man, but service to man". He emphasized that we are to regard man as the veritable embodiment of God, *Nârâyana*.

Man has greed, injustice, and selfishness because he feels he must look after his own interest and the interest of his own family. Selfishness is the basis of all troubles in the family, among nations, and in internal affairs. All claims of exclusive rights and privileges are also due to selfishness. A man of super-conscious realization removes all barriers of selfishness from his life because he feels in all the presence of God, the All-loving Being. As a result, such a man serves every one as the veritable expression of God. A man of such spiritual unfoldment is an object-lesson to all. His very life and actions make others unselfish and inspire them to give love and service to God and man. Such a life is, therefore, of great pragmatic value to the world apart from the personal joy and happiness afforded to the mystic himself.

If you want to verify these experi-

ences, you must identify yourself with the oneness of existence. Then alone, are you in a position to evaluate, and then alone can you effectively help and serve others. You will then be a source of power, inspiration, and love. Your human relations will be enjoyable and uplifting.

So, I implore you to assimilate that life. Then you will understand the experiences of Jesus, Buddha, Saint Francis, Saint Paul, Swami Vivekananda, and of many others. You will also understand that the different

religious methods are true and are leading different types of men to God. Finally, you will realize the inner divinity of all, and thereby you will change your attitude and behaviour to others and influence them effectively to do the same. Let us do it right now. We have heard the clarion call that you and I can have that realization which Sri Ramakrishna had. Let us make our lives blessed by realizing the Truth, by realizing God, by identifying ourselves with the oneness of life and existence.

CHILD KRISHNA

BY PROF. E. E. SPEIGHT

Child Krishna of the beatific smile,
Holding a world of wonder in thy hand,
Thou bringest back to memory the lost years
Of baby Christ, the laughter of Mary's heart
At his dear antics, all his wistful thoughts
Of boyhood none hath saved for us, for none
Divined our need of them who long have tired
Of that unbroken silence.

Far-off lands

That face the sunrise throb with the rolling drums
Thy story rouses; wrinkled faces lose
Solemnity, and for a moment's spell
Are radiant with youth, when light and nimble
Thou steppest forth gazelle-wise, with thy hands
Enjoining understanding, fingers grouped
With mystic meaning, eyes all eloquent
With waking rapture in a heart that beats
In concord with the music of creation.

O Golden Child, thou livest as the foe
Of seriousness where seriousness is death.
Thy ample nobly arching brows annul
All thoughtlessness; thou, too, couldst hold debate
With learning-laden elders, but thy lips,
Thy sunlit youth, would lighten every heart

Of their grave company, and they would go
 For ever after as pilgrims who have passed
 The last of dangers. Childhood's power is thine
 So near the source of life, to melt all wrath,
 All stubbornness, to dance away all sorrow,
 Dissolve all futile doubt.

Wide are the realms thy happy legend gladdens,
 Many the peoples pliant to thy call;
 Nanda knows thee, towering to Orion,
 Kumâri hears thy flute-play in the storm.
 The planets and the depths of ocean hear
 What thou art saying in thy mystic silence
 That is the music of eternal joy.

RELIGION Vs. SCIENCE*

BY SUGATA

Thirty years ago a man of science would have lost caste with his comrades if he dared to dispute openly the mechanistic conception about the universe. Today a good number of them have lunged back to an assertion of the wholly or dominantly spiritual character of the world. Some of them have begun to talk of the laws of nature as 'put up' jobs fabricated by the human mind for methodological convenience and not as principles intrinsic to an objective order. In the faltering voice of modern science they seem to have discovered the message of redemption, and in their eagerness they have jumped at conclusions which are hardly warranted by facts and which are supported at best by specious arguments. The divagations of the physical scientists into the realm of metaphysics present an extremely interesting study. At the least suggestion of the crumbling down of the old, rigid scientific notions, many have

hurried back from their scientific studies and rocketted off into idealistic and absolutistic pyrotechnics, hardly testing with care the links of their reasoning and little realizing that they have been anticipated centuries ago by philosophers who, starting from an altogether different set of considerations, arrived at similar conclusions with more logic and consistency.

There is, however, another way of approaching speculative philosophy from the standpoint of science, namely, the approach from a study of the phenomena of life and mind, which at first sight appears to be more fruitful. Mr. A. Eagle who is both a mathematician and a physicist has not followed the path of his *confrères*, but has taken to the latter way. He does not rear his philosophy upon a disproof of some of the traditional conceptions of physics. On the contrary he dubs some of the new notions as sheer nonsense. But

* *The Philosophy of Religion versus The Philosophy of Science*. By Albert Eagle, Lecturer in Mathematics in the Victoria University of Manchester. Obtainable from Simpkin Marshall Ltd., London. Pp. 352. Price 5s.

from a study of the phenomena of biology and psychology, he is convinced that they compel us to believe in a spiritual world side by side with the material world of ours. And such a situation, he attempts to show, is perfectly compatible with the findings of the physical sciences. A religious philosophy, he contends, can be harmonized with a scientific knowledge which does not discard the principles of the conservation of mass and energy and determinism. The book is an interesting one from more than one standpoint. Below I shall endeavour to point out a few of its salient features and remark how far it is advisable and profitable to derive inspiration for religion from the facts of science.

The author gives at the outset a brief *résumé* of the researches into the constitution of matter. Modern physics has played havoc with the old ideas about matter which actually 'occupies' less than a billionth part of the space it appears to occupy. It is moreover doubtful if it 'occupies' any space at all, for the author, as he points out later on, finds it impossible "to hold any philosophical idea of matter except that it is of the nature of pattern-manifestation on the surface of the Being of God." This new conception of matter, which modern physics has formulated, has opened up possibilities of a most intriguing character. Apart from the fact that charges of electricity have ceased to be material in the older sense of the word matter, the new conception makes it easy to imagine the existence of a million distinct interpenetrating worlds, each made out of electrons of different frequencies of pulsation. The writer does not, however, pretend to think that there are a million, or even a dozen, different worlds all interpenetrating the space in which we are placed. But he believes that there is at least one more

world besides our own which "differs much more fundamentally from our world, in the nature of the materials of which it is composed, than it would do if it was composed of electrons only differing from ours in the rate of pulsation." Such a world he calls non-material, only in the sense that it is not composed of what we understand by the term 'physical matter'.

The existence of such a non-material world is postulated in the light of the knowledge derived from biology and psychology. What biological phenomenon is there which points to a non-material entity? It is the fact of the growth of organisms. The beginnings of life have been tracked down from cells to nuclei, from nuclei to chromosomes, and from chromosomes—though the author makes no mention of it in his book—to genes, and from genes to some kind of enzyme associated with protein metabolism. But try as we may and turn where we can, the mystery of growth eludes us. Nowhere in the atoms and molecules of the minute speck of matter from which growth starts can we detect the slightest indication of the complex and elaborate structure of the individual it is destined to develop into. This difficulty in explaining the mystery of growth in terms of atoms and molecules, their movements and environment can be obviated only on the assumption of a non-material entity. The germ cell is no more than "the material-to-start-on with which some non-material entity begins the work of clothing itself with a physical duplicate of its non-material nature. . ."

In psychology the author is to a great extent the follower of McDougall and Sherrington. With them he regards conation as the fundamental factor in the history of life. Yet, he does not go all the way with them. He splits up mind, under which commodious

term all facts of consciousness are usually lumped together, into the dualism of an 'inner-ego' and a mental substance which wraps it round, as it were. Says he: "Everything belonging to our sensing, perceiving, conceptioning, idea-izing and thinking apparatus, with the whole of its stored past memories, is what I use the word 'mind' exclusively to describe. All the rest I call the 'inner-ego', and I attribute to it the whole of our individualities in the narrow and proper meaning of the word." To this 'inner-ego' is attributed the 'faculty' of consciousness with all the colourations of feelings and emotions which this can take on. In addition it is supposed to contain "all the constituents of temperament and disposition which make up our complete characters." This 'inner-ego' is composed of a substance or substances which differ from both physical matter and the non-physical duplicate of the physical body. He thus arrives at four kinds of entities, namely, an 'inner-ego', a mental substance surrounding it, a non-material body and a physical duplicate of the non-material body. By the way, we are told that the 'inner-ego' apart from being conscious of its own states and moods, can be directly conscious of the contents of the surrounding mental stuff only. Here apparently are latent all the possibilities of a first-class muddle. If what we are directly aware of are only the states of our ego or the contents of the mental substance, it is difficult to see how we can pierce the shell of solipsism.

A chapter in the book is devoted to the propounding of the ultimate philosophy as the author conceives it to be. The only real substance in the universe is the Being of God, and the created universe is of the nature of a "surface manifestation of pattern

figures in the Being which underlies all patterns." Apparently, it is not Spinozism. Above all he is anxious to guard against any suspicion of pantheism. The process of creation is conceived as an involution rather than an evolution. The lower planes of creation, he says, can only be explained in terms of the higher. Between the apex of the Being of God and the base of the physical world "there is a small hierarchy of substances." Here he evidently leaves the familiar waters and straightway plunges into the uncharted deep. It is clear he has already left behind the guidance of science and is in the realm of pure speculation.

The above summary gives a very brief account of the positive assertions of the writer. There are a few more chapters which cover the major portion of the work and which are critical rather than constructive in character. He has some very trenchant criticisms to offer of the current conceptions of relativity physics and of the principle of indeterminacy. He also finds fault with some of the views which biologists of today hold with regard to life and mind. These arguments are evidently addressed to experts and are not meant for the plain man for whom the book is primarily written. Upon such matters a lay man cannot talk with assurance, far less venture an opinion. It is not the purpose here to pick holes in the speculative portion of the work. It manifestly abound in them, some of which have already been hinted at. I am, however, disposed to make one very general criticism of the kind of endeavour of which the present work is an instance. I shall pass by even the very necessary observation that all attempts at a speculative philosophy from the facts of science must be preceded by an adequate epistemological

discussion which shall begin by questioning the very assumptions of science and commonsense. Whether science can do such a task with any success and positive result, I am not sure of.

The general criticism I am disposed to offer is shortly as follows. Thanks to the powers over external nature, which science has placed in the hands of men, it has acquired in the eyes of nearly all a prestige which is quite disproportionate to its achievements. For this reason there is a common tendency today among ministers and preachers to fly into her arms in order to secure safety to their convictions whenever her attitude appears to be devoid of hostile feeling, though her assurances are only negative and uncertain. Science knows no finality; it is always tentative and hypothetical. To yoke a final, spiritual philosophy to the fashionable

views of the hour is fraught with ugly consequences. Those who build cosmologies and ontologies upon the findings of science today are perhaps no wiser than the crude cosmologists of the *Genesis*. Only men of anæmic faith lean upon the reed of science. If religion cannot stand upon its own legs, upon experience and realization, the sooner it is got rid of as a dark superstition, the better. Speculation which rests upon mere negative results and which does not relate to positive experience land us in the realm of spooks and ghosts, mahatmas and devils. Religious experience refers to a different order of reality, rather it gives a truer view of the real. It is a futile endeavour to bore in the sandy deserts of the material sciences for the waters of the Spirit. At best science can only be conscious of its limitations and cease to speak from the heights of Olympus.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

BY V. SUBRAMANYA IYER

I make here an attempt to answer the question if a parliament of religions is also a parliament of philosophers.

In the minds of the immense majority of men philosophy is invariably associated with religion. They speak of Christian Philosophy, Muslim Philosophy, Hindu Philosophy, Jain or Buddhist Philosophy and so forth. Even competent and cultured scholars generally put religion and philosophy together. There is undoubtedly a justification for it. Every religion has its own interpretation of life or existence, which is philosophy. But if enquiry should proceed a little further, it would be found truer to say that every man has his own view of life as a whole, and has there-

fore a philosophy of his own. But does this indicate all that is meant by philosophy?

In the history of religion no event is more remarkable than the recent volcanic eruption in Russia which has nearly levelled to the ground the edifice of religion. No doubt, at all times, there have been individuals more or less indifferent to one or more aspects of religious life. But a wholesale rejection of it by an entire society has been witnessed only in this age. Posterity will perhaps see its significance better than we do. For, it is a phenomenon that has already influenced and is bound to influence further the social, political and economic life, not only of the Russians but of civilized

nations generally. This event will perhaps be characterized as the most outstanding feature of the history of the twentieth century. The question is often asked by thoughtful men nowadays, "Are we still in a fool's paradise? Even if we have been in it in the past, is it desirable that we should do so any longer, after seeing the revolution in Russia?" So, the time evidently appears to have come for a re-valuation of the religious factor in human life.

USE OF RELIGION

Generally people believe that religion implies a God or Gods on whom man's life, present and future, depends. But we actually find that there are religions without any belief in God or Gods; not even in an "other" to which some of the latest thinkers attach much importance. Whatever may be the implications of religion, for it has been defined variously, no one seriously doubts that in the past it has guided and shaped the entire life not only of individuals but also of communities. It has been the greatest source of consolation to millions of sorrowing and suffering people. It has brought peace and prosperity to communities by effectively binding together myriads of separate individuals for beneficial purposes. It has to a remarkable degree developed fine arts. It has often promoted social good of the highest value. And for that reason self-sacrifice, voluntary or forced, made in the cause of religion has won the greatest admiration everywhere. Further the most effective of sanctions for moral life among the great majority is religion. Even from a political point of view it is religion that has served as one of the best means of wielding the mass mind.

Nevertheless history equally truly points to the dark side of religion. There is no crime or vice known to man that has not been committed in the name

of religion. The bloodiest of wars, cruelest of murders, the most inhuman of tortures, by methods infinitely worse than those invented by science, are traceable to religion. Let alone the past: think for a moment of what happened and is happening particularly in this land of ours. What has transpired all the world over in this respect is too well known. This is not all. There is no kind of vice or immorality that has not been perpetrated and perpetuated in the name of religion. And for such practices the most elaborate justifications have been invented. Even those religions that are said to possess the highest ethical codes are not exempt. Such undesirable aspects of religion furnish incontestable evidence for the theories of those psychologists that trace the religious sense in man to sex-complexes. Further, in some countries it has tended to the disruption of society and social solidarity, of which political intriguers have taken considerable advantage. Would we then be not nearer the truth if we substituted "religion" for "liberty" in that famous utterance of Madame Roland who exclaimed, "O Religion! what horrors have been committed in thy name?"

THEOLOGY AND SCHOLASTICISM

Those looking at the bright side praise religion, whereas those that see more of the dark side condemn it outright. But now when we could get glimpses of both the sides, does it not behove us to make an unbiassed enquiry, though we be devotedly attached to our own religious beliefs? There is a South Indian proverb; "Even ambrosia when indulged in beyond measure acts as poison." Could not the same be said of religion? Even 'Good customs' are believed by Tennyson 'to corrupt the world'.

Whether there exists God; whether He is the creator of the world; whether He

is still creating; whether He is the Governor and the Judge that punishes the wicked and rewards the virtuous; whether there are heaven and hell; what they are like; what God's nature is; what attitudes of man please Him; what forms of worship are welcomed by Him; what connection there is between Him and the *Bible*, the *Koran*, the *Vedas* and other scriptures; whether they are eternal and superhuman; above all, how evil came into this world; whether God could be good when He has created a hell: these and others, such as: if God should be absolved from evil and the Karma doctrine should be adopted, what are the proofs of its validity?—a thousand such questions form the subject-matter of theology. And the answers given vary with men's inclinations, tastes, and culture.

Taking for granted that such dogmas, as above of traditional beliefs and scriptures are true, men set out to interpret them finding arguments for and against with the help of science, logic, and grammar. Since these dogmas have been viewed from a variety of stand-points, the literature that has grown up is enormous. The great majority of men usually mistake these discussions for philosophy, though in truth they form the subject of scholasticism.

The upshot of theology and scholasticism is that there is no unanimity of views on any point. Every topic has its *pros* and *cons*. Conflict and contradiction characterize them all, and are and will be *endless* as some Indian philosophers have pointed out, on perfectly rational grounds. Lest such natural differences should produce doubts in men's minds, zealous religionists have not hesitated to suppress them by declaring that the doubter is doomed to perdition.

Most men, either because they are too absorbed in earning their livelihood to think of such matters, or because they are too lazy to exercise their minds, or because they have only a slave mentality, meekly submit to the judgment of the theological or scholastic heroes in their midst. Even atheistic religions have their dogmas and scholastic literature. But with the march of human civilization, we find that the thoughtful set to enquire before they judge. Neither the dogmas of the theists, nor those of the atheists, can be accepted as truth without enquiry which is the province of science and philosophy. These conflicting aspects were noticed thousands of years ago.

MYSTICISM

Those that fail, however, to derive any satisfaction from theological or scholastic disputations reject them wholesale and seek refuge in what are known as mystic "experiences", "ecstasies", "visions", and above all, what they term as "intuitions". They believe they have found here the bed-rock on which religion stands and consider it impregnable. For, it is seen that even some of the acutest scientists fear to approach this domain of the mystic. They hold religious experience or intuition to be beyond the reach of science. But this hesitancy or weakness of the scientist is no proof of the strength of mysticism. Whatever the opinion of the scientist, the fact remains, as has been observed for thousands of years in India, that the views of the greatest mystics regarding their own experiences and their knowledge of the world are contradictory and in conflict with one other.

Again, as an effect of it on society, we find that for every immaculate and irreproachable Ramana Maharshi, there are hundreds of frauds and fakes whose

spiritual haven is the company of such women and men as have met with great sexual or other disappointments in life, not to say anything about the free use of wine offered, as in some of their cults, to the deity in themselves. Nay, mysticism also lends itself easily, as an Indian philosopher says, to be used for attaining worldly comforts of other kinds.

This is not all. When mystics seek their satisfaction in this manner and they or their activities in life do not interfere with those of the others, they are most welcome to rejoice in their 'intuitions'. But when their lives or actions influence the societies in which they move, and when we find harm resulting therefrom, we are compelled to enquire into the truth-value of mysticism. If the 'divine' intuitions of the historical murders, or of the famous parents that roasted their praying children alive, or of the perverts that seduced innocent women by the score had only confined themselves to their cells or chambers rejoicing in their divine intuitions, or ecstasies, we should have had nothing but praise for them.

This essential weakness of mysticism was noticed by thinkers of the days of the *Brihadâranyaka Upanishad* thousands of years ago, and by Shankara, the critic, who says that even a "fool" says, "I know, I experience, I have an intuition of the highest reality". Where is the proof that what he sees or knows is Truth? This is the question of questions, that has exercised the minds of the thoughtful men of India.

When seriously asked, the believers in mysticism betake to flouting reason and declare to the world that religious experience is above reason, and that "truth values" are inferior to what they call the *values* of *satisfaction*, which are "*spiritual*" as they term it. Now it does not need much argument to show

that such defences have unfortunately fallen flat on enquiring minds because of the patent contradictions which have shaken the confidence of many observers. In a word, even mysticism, like the rest of religion, has its good as well as bad features.

Few are the men that care to weigh both sides; few is the number of those that can detach themselves from their religious bias which has been flowing in their veins for ages and fewer are they that are able to subject their own experiences and thoughts to dispassionate scrutiny. Emotion often gets the upper hand in the generality of mankind and subordinates reason.

NATURE OF RELIGION

In life men invariably seek enjoyment, peace or satisfaction of some kind. They pursue religion, with God or without God, to attain this object. And men are of different tastes. So are religions of different kinds, from the most virtuous to the most vicious of patterns, suited to their temperament, culture, and capacity. On the other hand such as have found religion to be an obstacle to seeking their pleasures have rejected it, or modified it so as to keep religion out of their way. Hence though numberless are the religions already in existence, new varieties spring up every day. And each one of them is backed up by the most elaborate arguments with their various theories of intuitions, sublimations, sub-cerebrations, cataleptic states and the like. Religion is the manifestation of a craving. It is thus a universal as well as natural phenomenon. Continuous differentiation is one of its most essential characteristics. Like every thing else in nature, it is seen to obey the law "from unity or uniformity to multiplicity and variety", in spite of

all that men do to the contrary to suppress or check its growth.

TRUTH AND RELIGION

Every follower of a religion thinks that what he believes is truth. What does truth then signify? If what we understand by truth be something like the meaning given to it in mathematics, i.e. as two plus two are equal to four, we see that such is and must be its most universal import. It is only such truth that holds good for a Christian or a Mohammedan, a Hindu or a Hebrew, an Asiatic or a European, an American or an African, a man or a woman, the aged or the young. Its chief characteristic is non-contradictability.

But like every thing else religion also is changing. Change implies difference. What was believed to be true a hundred years ago is modified considerably today. Can truth be subject to such changes? Again, no persons, however much they may differ in all other respects, are seen to fight in respect of the truth that two plus two are four. But endless disputes, quarrels, nay, wars of religion are proofs positive that religion is not based on truth. And consistently do the mystics reject truth or reason as a test of the worth of their experience. Whatever they perceive, feel or think, or imagine, is of supreme value to them, provided it brings them 'satisfaction'.

Now, if the highest stage of religion, that of the mystic, in which he declares that he is above 'reason', and 'truth', satisfies one there is nothing more for such an one to do. But if the feeling be that this matter demands or justifies investigation, one should proceed a few more steps. "The easiest person to deceive," says Lord Chesterfield, "is one's own self." Shall we not rely upon our own intuitions only after we make sure that what we know is truth?

Now, to attain the truth by removing all contradictions, could we prevent these growing differences among men of religion, could we check the wars of the disputants? Could we, in a word, check Nature's process of multiplication? Since the last great Parliament was held in Chicago, some forty-three years ago, religions have increased without number. Multiplication brings with it differences, and differences we cannot do away with. The primitive way of making religion true by means of conversions, or by wiping out of existence the weaker follower of other religions is still prevalent. But this aboriginal method has proved futile; for, the converts have only developed new variants. Differences, conflicts, and contradictions are again seen to spring forth endlessly.

The problem, How to prove any religion to be "true" or how to make it true? has yet to be solved. For, religionists want satisfaction before truth.

THE VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGIONS

It is not, however, to be thought that religion has, at the present time, whatever it may have been in the past, no useful purpose to serve. It is still of the highest value as a means, though very slow, of leading men step by step to think of the value of truth. The very multiplicity and variety and the necessary conflicts often bloody, sometimes verbal, goad and force men to think of the need for knowing the truth in religion.

Religions in the plural are a necessity that each may see the defects of the other and expose the fact that religion as such is not based on truth but on mere satisfaction, varying with imaginations, which is the cause of a great deal of the human suffering. But adversity yields the sweet milk of

philosophy. Next, proselytization and propagandism for a universal religion are mere attempts of childlike mind, for they run directly counter to the natural craving that can never be eradicated by any means, do what we will.

The common feature of all cravings is to possess something found or believed to be outside of it, and that as permanently as possible. But what is specially characteristic of the religious craving is its stronger emphasis on the Permanent. In this world of continuous changes and of joys of a most fleeting character the human heart thirsts for Permanence. Religion seeks to attain it by certain acts of propitiation or of renunciation or by both. But it does not worry itself as to whether the Permanent has been actually attained or not. Religious men only imagine that Permanence is realizable after they are dead, and while alive can only believe in it. But where is the proof that any kind of permanence is attained and secured after death? Again, the aim of art and science also is the attainment of the "Permanent." All anti-religionists may ignore or even try to suppress religion; but they can never suppress the craving for the Permanent. If diverted from the channels called religions, this urge flows into other channels such as those of science and art. For the same reason, if some forms of religion be suppressed, other forms spring up. Wisdom, therefore, consists in working with nature and taking advantage of religion to attain the object of life or existence.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

We now see that the real worth of religion lies in its being an effort at seeking the Permanent. But what is the Permanent? Religion cannot answer because of the contradictions in

men's views of it. If it were based on truth, there could be no contradiction or conflict, and no religion would have attempted to make converts. For no mathematician proselytizes another to bring home to others the truth that two plus two are equal to four. Truth is the objective of philosophy, not of religion. The Permanent is sought by every one in existence, individually or collectively, in all actions and thoughts. Whether what is Permanent is manifold or single is ascertainable only when man possesses all knowledge comprehending arts and sciences, not merely religion. What points this out is truth. The artist seeks it, the scientist also seeks it. It is philosophy that co-ordinates all efforts and seeks to get at the Permanent as it actually is. Religion by itself cannot attain the truth. Here let me quote a few words from a philosopher of India.

(i) "The realization of truth is brought about by enquiry and not in the least by the observance of ten millions of religious rituals."

(ii) "Knowledge of truth is seen to proceed from reasoning and not by pilgrimages to sacred rivers etc."

(iii) "Let men quote scriptures and make sacrifices to the Gods and let them perform religious acts and worship the Gods. There is no attainment of truth . . . not even in the life of a hundred Brahmâs. . . ."

(iv) "Neither by Yoga (mystic's practices) nor by Sâṅkhya, nor by religious acts nor by erudition (scholarship) is the attainment of truth possible."

(v) "Loud talks consisting of showers of words, the skill in expounding scriptures and likewise great learning bring on a little personal enjoyment to the scholar but are no good for realizing truth."

(vi) "The scriptures consisting of many words are dense forests which only make one ramble and get lost."

(vii) "For one who has been bitten by the serpent of ignorance, the only remedy is the knowledge of the ultimate truth (Brahman). Of what avail are the *Vedas*, scriptures, mantras and medicines to such an one?"

We learn from philosophical enquiry that all urges, all cravings, all processes in life are but efforts at attaining the Permanent. From eating and drinking, playing and enjoying up to governing and ruling and acquiring knowledge, all endeavours to attain self-preservation are but the pathways to the Permanent. Neither Russia, nor any other power on earth, can root out this urge towards self-preservation. Religion is but an aspect of this urge. Till from a knowledge of the changes, general conflicts and contradictions of faiths there arises in one's mind the doubt as to whether what gives satisfaction is the Permanent, one remains in the stage of religion and art. When one feels the need for devising other tests of Permanence than satisfaction, to ascertain whether what is conceived as such is the Permanent one rises to the stage of science. But one remains in the scientific stage till one realizes that all that is known is fleeting and that all knowledge of the world is coloured by imagination or conception, and above all, till a doubt again arises as to whether the Permanent has been reached. When, however, the urge to see the Permanent that is beyond all changes and all contradictions, is felt, one enters the gates of philosophy, with a view to get beyond the reach of even possible doubts, which alone characterizes truth. Thus the seeking for the Permanent proceeds from religion to philosophy through art and science. Religion interests the largest numbers; for, it is the simplest and the easiest thing to find satisfaction by imagining whatever pleases one to be the Per-

manent. Whereas philosophy interests the fewest; for there it is not imagination or conception that counts, but truth that is independent of them and that is unchanging. So, what can be 'universal' is only truth, i.e. the world of philosophy but not that of religion. And philosophy is, as already indicated, impossible without a knowledge of science also.

The urge towards the Permanent being universal knows no distinctions of creed, colour, caste, age, race or sex though the *form* it takes, called religion, varies with men's minds. It is a knowledge of the nature of the urge, and its goal called truth, that takes one beyond religion to the enquiry known as philosophy (*Paramarthatattva Vichara*).

What is characterized as sectarian such as Christian, Hindu, Muslim or Jain philosophy, is, till it reaches the goal of truth, no philosophy proper but theology or scholasticism or mysticism. Truth is one and the same for all. There is no secrecy about it, no cell or screen is needed for it; no exceptional intuitive experience, no vision, no individual or scriptural superiority monopolizes it. Truth is as wide as the world, and open to all alike, as the knowledge that one added to one make more than one.

TRUTH AND THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

Religionists most undoubtedly feel the urge to seek Truth, but feel at the same time that they are not called upon to ascertain the nature of 'truth' which is the province of philosophy. The foremost question for consideration for a parliament of religions therefore appears to be this multiplicity and conflict? The primitive and aboriginal effort at unifying all religious views and of seeking a universal religion, which is in itself

a contradiction in thought, is found to be puerile and futile, because it seeks to run directly counter to nature. And variety which nature produces with its contradictions is the best means of directing men's thoughts to the fact that religion is but a preparation for attaining the Permanent, which is reached only through a knowledge of Truth. And let it be remembered that philosophical knowledge which leads to Truth is based as much on science and art as upon religion, nay on the whole of life. Religion with the knowledge of science and art is beneficial in that it makes for Truth. The common term philosophy used by all faiths and sciences, shows that the common factor truth indicates that in itself it has no distinction.

Lastly, the highest authority on religion, may tell us that he is in God or is in touch with God or that he is himself God. Let alone the question how he knows that his God is the same as what all others understand by God. If we ask him how he knows that what he refers to as God is the Permanent, the everlasting in the *future* and without a beginning in the *past*, he must play the well-known trick of saying, "You will know it when you become like me capable of having intuitions like mine." This trick, as has been pointed out already, any one can play. A parliament of religious thinkers will therefore be as much as parliament of philosophic thinkers, if the former will only see the proper place to give to the objective of 'satisfaction' as compared with that of 'truth'. The urge towards the goal of

the Permanent is inexorable; it will not cease till truth is attained. Hence the pure philosophers of old said, "ARISE, AWAKE, AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED."

CONCLUSION

A parliament of religions has therefore not only to take stock of the differences and contradictions of faiths but also to inculcate the best course of making the way easy for attaining the Permanent, which depends upon a knowledge of truth, the goal of philosophy, that is truth uncontradictable. A parliament of religions accepts variety in religious experience as a necessity and will discountenance the vanity of proselytization, exposing the absurdity of the idea of a single universal religion. Though as a social feature, religion has been at times most harmful, its value as a factor in individual life is unquestionable. Let every individual, man or woman, seek his or her own religious satisfaction, without being induced or forced by another and without our inducing or forcing another to the same course. To fulfil the object of the religious craving, nothing is more necessary than the acquisition of knowledge not confined to religion alone, though it is within the reach of the largest number, but of knowledge of all fields of life or existence, knowledge as deep and as wide as is possible for man, for such knowledge alone is the path to the attainment not in the next world—but in this world and 'in this life', the Permanent.

SIVA MAHIMNAH STOTRAM

THE HYMN ON THE GREATNESS OF SIVA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

कृशपरिणति चेतः क्लेशवश्यं क चेदं
क च तव गुणसीमोल्लङ्घिनी शश्वद्भक्तिः ।
इति चकितममन्दीकृत्य मां भक्तिराधाद्
वरद चरणयोस्ते वाक्यपुष्पोपहारम् ॥ ३१ ॥

वरद Oh Giver of boons कृशपरिणति ill-developed क्लेशवश्यं subject to misery इदं this चेतः mind क च where गुणसीमोल्लङ्घिनी of infinite virtues शश्वत् eternal भक्तिः power क च where इति because of this चकितं seized with fear मां me अमन्दीकृत्य making fearless भक्तिः devotion ते चरणयोः to Thy feet वाक्यपुष्पोपहारं (मां) me— Who has this hymn as an offering अगधात् has thrown

31. Oh Giver of boons, where is my ill-developed mind subject to misery¹ and where is Thy Divinity—eternal and possessing infinite virtues? Though terror-stricken because of this, I am forced² by my devotion to offer this hymn at Thy feet.

¹ *Misery*—According to Patanjali there are five kinds of misery—namely, Ignorance, Egoism, Attachment, Aversion and Clinging to life.

² *Forced etc.*—Love for God forces a devotee to think that God will overlook all his littleness.

असितगिरिसमं स्यात् कज्जलं सिन्धुपात्रं
सुरतरुवरशाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी ।
लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा सारदा सर्वकालं
तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥ ३२ ॥

ईश Oh Lord (यदि if) असितगिरिसमं like the blue mountain कज्जलं ink सिन्धुः sea पात्रं inkstand सुरतरुवरशाखा the branch of the heavenly tree लेखनी pen उर्वी the earth पत्रं leaf स्यात् be, सारदा the Goddess of Learning (एतानि these) गृहीत्वा taking यदि if सर्वकालं through eternity लिखति writes तदपि even then तव Thy गुणानाम् of virtues पारं in limit न not याति reaches.

32. Oh Lord, if the blue mountain be ink, the ocean the inkstand, the branches of the heavenly¹ tree the pen, the earth the writing leaf, and by taking these if the Goodess of Learning

writes for eternity, even² then the limit of Thy virtues will not be reached.

¹ *Heavenly tree*—named Pârijâta.

² *Even etc.*—This indicates my audacity, justified only by my devotion, to praise Thee.

असुरसुरमुनीन्द्रैरर्चितस्येन्दु मौले-
ग्रथित गुणमहिम्नो निर्गुणस्येश्वरस्य ।
सकलगणवरिष्ठः पुष्पदन्ताभिधानो
रुचिरमलघुवृत्तैः स्तोत्रमेतच्चकारः ॥ ३३ ॥

सकलगणवरिष्ठः the best of the demi-gods पुष्पदन्ताभिधानः Pushpadanta by name असुरसुरमुनीन्द्रैः by Asuras, gods and the best of sages अर्चितस्य worshipped इन्दु मौलेः of one having the moon on his forehead ग्रथितगुण महिम्नः whose praises have been sung निर्गुणस्य without attributes ईश्वरस्य of God एतत् this रुचिरम् beautiful स्तोत्रं hymn अलघुवृत्तैः in all seriousness चकार composed.

33. The best of demi-gods,¹ Pushpadanta by name, composed in great devotion this beautiful hymn of the Lord, who is worshipped by demons, gods and the best of sages, whose² praises have been sung, who has got the moon on His forehead and who is attributeless.

¹ *Demi-gods*—Gandharvas or heavenly musicians.

² *Whose praises . . . sung*—i.e. previously.

अहरहरेनवद्यं धूर्जटेः स्तोत्रमेतत्
पठति परमभक्त्या शुद्धचित्तः पुमान् यः ।
स भवति शिवलोके रत्नतुल्यस्तथात्र
प्रचुरतरधनायुःपुत्रवान् कीर्त्तिमांश्च ॥ ३४ ॥

यः which पुमान् person शुद्धचित्तः with purified heart परमभक्त्या in great devotion अनवद्यं beautiful एतत् this धूर्जटेः स्तोत्रं the hymn to Siva अहरहः always पठति reads, सः he रत्नतुल्यः like Siva भवति becomes तथा and अत्र in this world प्रचुरतरधनायुः पुत्रवान् possessed of much wealth, long life and many children कीर्त्तिमान् famous च also (भवति becomes).

34. The person who with purified heart and in great devotion always reads this beautiful Hymn to Siva, becomes¹ like Siva (after death) in the abode of Siva, and while in this world gets much wealth, long life, many children as also fame.

¹ *Becomes like Siva*—i.e. becomes one with Him.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In *Man's Place in the Universe* we have put forward what a Vedântist has to say about the speculations of modern science on time, space, and man's function within the space-time framework. . . . Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar shows in *Sociology in Bengal* that sociology, as cultivated in Bengal today, has a number of extra-academic and pre-academic sources to thank for its background and development. . . . In *What Vedantism is* contributed by Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava is discussed the Vedântic doctrines as they stand in singular contrast to the theories advanced by some of the eminent Western thinkers. . . . *How a Prince became a Saint* is an interesting story based on folklore and is contributed by Swami Satprakashananda who belongs to the Ramakrishna Order. . . . *Sri Ramakrishna and Modern Psychology* is adapted from a lecture delivered by Swami Akhilananda at the Plantations Auditorium Providence, U.S.A., on the occasion of the Centenary Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna. . . . *Religion vs. Science* by Sugata gives a critical review of Prof. Albert Eagle's book on the philosophy of religion versus the philosophy of science. . . . Mr. V. Subramanya Iyer wrote the article on *Religion and Philosophy* for the Parliament of Religions, held in Calcutta last March. He discusses in it the question if a parliament of religions is also a parliament of philosophers.

MODERNISM IN LITERATURE

The distant parts of the globe are more closely knit today than were the different sections of a province before

the discovery of steam or electricity. Ideas travel swiftly and the various tendencies in art and literature, society and politics are quickly communicated from one country to another. There is hardly any doubt that the facilities of exchange and communication are driving humanity towards a common standard in a number of ways. It is not surprising, for this reason, to discover the reflection of the modern literary tendencies in Europe and America in the present-day vernaculars in India. Any general observation on the modern tendencies of the Continental or English literature is, therefore, as well applicable to the recent trends in some of the Indian vernacular literatures.

Barring just a few exceptions, it is doubtful if our age has reason to be proud of its literature. The unwholesome and decadent outlook of many modern writers was denounced sometime ago by Dr. Inge in his presidential address before the English Association at Eedford College, Regent Park. His indictment against modern literature as a whole, not excluding the productions of the most famous and popular writers was that it was morbidly erotic in tone and that it "painted human character as a drab, dull, ignoble thing." Passing in review the works of all the major and minor lights in the English literary hall he asked, "Could one recall a single really noble character in any of them? Most of them wrote as if there was no such thing as religion or high-minded idealism." Their view of the human nature seemed to him ignoble. The recent tendencies in some of the Indian vernacular literatures fully deserve this denunciation. Not long ago Ganehiji

brought an exactly similar charge in the pages of the *Harijan*. Literature is not only the reflex of the mentality of an epoch but also a profoundly influential moulder of that mentality. If we want to build up a virile and vigorous society we need a healthy wind to brush away all the cobwebs of morbidness and sickness in our literature and art. In this matter our educationists can profit by the example of Hitler who has ruthlessly banned all softening and weakening influences in art and literature.

FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Some time ago the *Indian Social Reformer* wrote somewhat approvingly of the recent movement in Germany towards an 'ethnic' religion and tried to point out the analogy between it and Hinduism. It is of course bold to suggest that Hinduism is an ethnic religion. Whatever it might have been in its early and incipient stages, it today denotes a multiplicity of faiths and philosophies held by a people composed of a multiplicity of races and racial intermixtures. The *Reformer's* approbation, however, arose from a consideration of the twists and turns which Christianity has undergone in the various nation-states of modern Europe and from its attitude towards the condemnable endeavours of certain of the Christian missions for mass conversions. It has made its position clear in reply to a letter from Professor Pratt of the U.S.A., who desired to know if the emphasis upon a national religion would not be setting limits to the universality of a great religion. It wrote in the issue of July 24: "Our objection is not (referring to the Christian missions in India) to their proclaiming the universal truths of Christianity. This we welcome. But many missionaries are not content with doing this.

In fact the universal truths of Christianity figure less in missionary propaganda than certain things which Professor Pratt deprecates." These are mass conversions and the attitude of intense intolerance and vilification displayed by the missionaries. It next cited some instances to show how the movement for a national religion is a widespread tendency and how the universality of Christianity has become submerged under the tide of nationalism. Though it does not dogmatize it is disposed to look with favour upon the tendency towards a national religion.

The *Reformer's* attitude towards the Christian mission and mass conversion is sound. But, we feel that we cannot quite agree to what it has to say about the question of 'ethnic' religions. The early religions were no doubt ethnic in the sense that they were confined to particular tribes and groups of people confined to a certain region. Thus when David said in the *Bible* that by going into foreign lands he would have to worship alien deities, he affirmed the territorial limitation of Jehovah. The students of comparative religion have, however, held that the movement of religion has always been from the tribal to the national, and from the national to the individual and universal religion. Christ taught in Aramic, but very few of his modern Teutonic and Latin followers ever understand it. Mahomet was a Semite, but the bulk of his present followers are composed of peoples who stem out from different racial stocks. The religion of Buddha has travelled to all the points of the compass and embraced a multiplicity of races. Similar has also been the case with the Vedic religion in India. As religion has grown more and more ethical and less ritualistic and ceremonial it has cut across all racial and national limitations. The Protestant Reform movements in

modern Europe are not instances of sliding back to a primitive tribalism. They were inspired and sustained more by political and economic motives than by any realization of a genuine need for a national religion suited to the peoples concerned. Of the Anglican Reformation it has been humorously remarked by an historian that "it was religious only in the sense that it was sacrilegious." Similarly, the new paganism in Germany is inspired by political motives. We dare not even call it religious.

What should then be the modern view on the question of religious conversion? To have this it is necessary to acquire a right insight into religion. The self-assertive attitude of the missions which seek to impose their civilization and culture upon alien peoples is the fascist attitude in disguise. The world has to learn, though belatedly, the principles which Hinduism has been following from remote antiquity. Religion is a concern of the individual and is a far different affair from social convention. Religious conversion of individuals can never mean the alteration of the social content of their lives. Too often it has been the case that missionaries have uprooted a convert from all his ancestral tradition and culture and transplanted him into an alien and uncongenial social soil. Strange religions rarely thrive in strange soils. All preachings of particular dogmas, creeds and rituals should be avoided. This does not mean that the universal truths of religion should not be propagated among other peoples or that other peoples should be prevented from spontaneously taking to, and developing, new modes of worship. Everything is a blend of the particular and the universal. The different people of the world have to assimilate the same truths according to their needs, tem-

perament and culture. Religion is an inner attitude of living. Hinduism offers an infinite scope for the variation of creeds and symbols, rituals and observances for the development of the individual while insisting upon the right spirit of inward living. The future lies with those who will live and preach Religion without any uncalled-for reference to creeds, dogmas, observances and even personalities.

WHY ARE MEN TURNING AWAY FROM CHURCHES?

Of late there has been a loud complaint from diverse quarters that an apathy has come upon the followers of certain Churches. Church-membership is falling away fast, and the Churches are either closing down or presenting more and more a desolate appearance. Some have wondered if a materialistic creed has not taken possession of the hearts of their erstwhile adherents. Others have guessed that the long, dolorous, and old-fashioned services might be responsible for the predicament. These, it has been argued, tax too much the patience of the modern man who has very little time to spare, and who is frightened away by the prospect of boredom. Consequently, many have suggested the cutting down of the length of the sermons and the enlivening of the Church-services by the incorporation of gleeful elements in order to angle the affections of the religiously minded. A few left-wingers with ultra-modern views on the vocation of ministers recommend the dropping altogether of the traditional religious appeal and propose to substitute in its place sermons which will be mere homilies on humanitarianism and social service. These diagnoses and recommendations betray an extreme lack of the understanding of the realities. For this reason the remedial measures advised

and often applied fail to produce the desired results and leave their authors to lament in bewilderment the perversities of their generation.

Is the world really growing religion-weary? There is no reason to think so. On the contrary signs are in evidence which show that the humanity today is groping for a religious faith which can steady the reeling steps of the present civilization swiftly heading for a disaster. Why then are people turning away from what are reputed to be the centres of religious inspiration? It is because the preachers appear to have mostly fallen from their high vocations and because the houses of worship have become transformed into mere social centres. The supreme qualification of a preacher of religion is life. If he lacks it, no amount of eloquence, winning manners and suave conversation,

can compensate it. Recently Bishop Alma White of America delivered in London some very outspoken observations on the degeneration of the present-day society and Churches. Among other things she remarked: "The Churches themselves have fallen. Instead of teaching the fundamental Bible truths, ministers of the Gospel have introduced the dance, the card party and the atmosphere of the theater in their Churches. The places of worship are ceasing to be the Churches of God and becoming mere social centres." The criticism has been very well deserved. A truly religious person sheds his aroma all around like a fragrant rose and draws the religiously minded to him without any beat of trumpet. A truly religious centre does not need to put up gaudy appearances like show-houses to attract souls which thirst for the waters of the spirit.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

OUR TRIP TO AMERICA. By K. Natarajan. *The Indian Social Reformer Ltd., Kamakshi House, Bandra, Bombay 20.* Pp. 150. Price Rs. 3/-, 5 sh., or \$2 only.

This little book reveals a keen eye, a broad mind and a patriotic heart. The author came in contact, and had intimate talks, with a good number of noted scholars, thinkers, and social workers of America, which stood him in good stead in studying the country so truly and sympathetically in such a short visit. What struck him in America are the perfect equality of men and women, the number of international institutes, the catholicity of the people, their capacity for keeping themselves well informed of the happenings in the remotest corners of the world, their admiration for Mahatma Gandhi, and their courtesy to foreigners. He found in this country the solution of one tangled problem of India, the communal problem. He found there Muslim and Christian Indians who were just Indians and had sufficient regards for the pre-

Muslim glory of India, as of India of later days. His study, however, of the American problem of fusing Germans, Italians, Irish and other European peoples into one American nation is not so optimistic. Up till now it cannot be said to be a problem, thanks to the attitude of the American press, the government, and non-official agencies. But the author has noticed that some Americans of European extraction, specially the Italian and German-Americans, are more proud of these countries than of the land of their adoption. Mr. Natarajan's robust optimism about Hindu-Muslim unity, which is almost the very last word of his book, was perhaps stung to the quick as his mind went over to the Pakistanis and their ilk. We are, however, not pessimistic about it. But the real solution lies elsewhere. The Hindu-Muslim problem is in reality the problem of the inferiority complex of the so-called Muslim leaders, who think that unless they keep on fanning the fire of discord they will be nowhere. And it is difficult

to conceive of a time when they will be cured of this disease and let two peace-loving peoples live side by side in mutual love and admiration. However that may be, the patriotic heart of Natarajan is revealed at every turn throughout the trip. One could almost feel his surge of emotion when he was asked, "Britain owns India, does she not?" While enjoying the well-earned pride of Italy at "General Balbo's flight", the thought comes to him spontaneously: "When will India be able to share in such triumphs of the human spirit over matter?" When he learned that Greenwich House (an institution that works with older children and their parents with a view to fusing "the heterogeneous elements of the population" into one nation) was affiliated to Columbia University he at once thinks that such "interlinking of University education with active social service to the advantage of both is well worth being adopted in India." On the whole the book is as interesting as it is illuminating.

CROSS-ROADS. By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. *The Shama's Publishing House, Aghore Mandir, Mount Road, Madras.* 43 pp.

This is a little book of poems. Each poem is a celestial song that bears one high above even the noble and the sublime to a region where truth speaks in a strange tongue. The poet has put in the language of intuition, at once simple and stirring, the revelations to his deepest heart. Any analysis or elucidation is sure to spoil the extremely delicate beauty of the poems. One is to read and to feel. The get-up of the book is equally nice.

FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FAR EAST. By Taraknath Das. *Longmans, Green & Co., New York, Toronto.* Pp. 272.

The book consists of eight lectures, five of which, the nucleus of the present work, were delivered by the author before the Politics Department of the Catholic University of America in 1935 in the capacity of a Special Lecturer in Far Eastern Affairs. Three others were delivered at other places. In bringing out the lectures in book form the material has been revised and documented so that the whole presents a unified treatment of the subject-matter. At the outset the author has tried to dispel the crude notions that are still held about the Orientals by the West. "It may be safely asserted that until the latter part of the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century the

peoples of the Orient in many ways were superior to the peoples of the Occident." The position of the Orient begins to decline from the 19th century; and "a form of modified slavery became the lot of a large section of the people of the Orient" from that time. This is a vital thing to grasp in order to understand the political situation in the East. A change has come over the East in the twentieth century. There is a growing and insistent demand everywhere for equality and the establishment of nation-states. What is in store in future? The author believes that a conflict is not inevitable if only the West recognizes that there should be co-operation between the Orientals and the Occidentals on a basis of equality.

The Far Eastern politics of today is but the struggle between the two conflicting forces of nationalism and imperialism. Revolutionary movements in the different countries in the last "are fed with the ideal of the supremacy of a national state which will be brought into existence by the efforts of the masses led by the intelligentsia." The national sentiment of these peoples has come into hostile conflict with the imperialism of the Western powers. Broadly, there are two clear-cut issues but in practice several complications have arisen due to the interplay of antagonistic aims and motives of the different powers and peoples. Thus Japan is at once nationalistic and imperialistic, and the key to her imperialism is to be found in her concern to maintain her position as a great power among the powers of the West. National prestige has demanded the maintenance of an efficient army in Japan, and to obviate the pressure on her masses she is seeking colonies abroad. All the various complications introduced by the rivalry of interests of powers are clearly set forth.

For the sake of convenience the history of Western expansion has been divided into several periods. The author draws attention to the fact that though the influence of India on British foreign policy in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean region has been recognized, "owing to some mysterious reason, experts on Far Eastern affairs fail to recognize the importance of India in determining the future of the Far East." Perhaps this has been too obvious to be mentioned. Separate chapters set forth in some detail the foreign policies of France, Japan, and Britain. Careful attention is also paid upon the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902

which led to so many far-reaching repercussions in unexpected quarters. The last chapter reviews the foreign policies of the President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Far East occupies too prominent a position in the imagination of the statesmen of the world. It is not too much to say that the centre of world politics has shifted to the Pacific. The book has removed a real need of the students of world politics for a reliable guide-post to the recent trends in the Far Eastern politics.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

THE MANDUKYOPANISHAD WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY. TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA. *Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore. Pp. 361. Price Rs. 2-8-0.*

The brief *Māndukyopaniṣad* with Gaudapāda's *Kārikās* on it forms a most authoritative and important treatise on Advaita Vedānta. The important character of this *Upaniṣad* was early realized, and it came to form the theme of two hundred and fifteen *Kārikās* or explanatory verses by Gaudapāda who is reputed to have been the great preceptor of Sankara. These verses have marked out Gaudapāda as the solitary Indian philosopher known to us, who, before Sankara, gave a rational explanation of the Advaita Vedānta taught in the *Upaniṣads*. The purpose of these *Kārikās* is to establish the final conclusion not merely by appealing to authority but with the help of *a priori* reasoning. The logical character of this exposition came to command so much respect in the orthodox circle that Sankara who commented only upon the authoritative and original texts of the *prasthānatrayas* deemed it necessary to write a commentary upon these *Kārikās*. Any student of Indian philosophy, who wants to become thoroughly familiar with the rationalistic approach of the Advaita philosophy to the problem of Reality, must, therefore, cultivate some acquaintance with the *Kārikās* with their commentary. The translator has, for this reason, rendered a signal service to the English-knowing public interested in Indian philosophy by bringing out a lucid and scholarly translation of the *Upaniṣad*, the *Kārikās* and the *Bhāṣya*. The translation is accompanied with elaborate and exhaustive notes and annotation which clear up the technical words and obscure references. In the face the translator criticizes at

some length some of the views of a few modern writers on Indian philosophy, who suspect that Gaudapāda was possibly a Buddhist and that his philosophy was just a version of the Buddhist metaphysics and who would make out certain discrepancies between the views of Gaudapāda and those of Sankara. We feel sure that this publication will form a valuable addition to the modern literature devoted to the exposition of the Indian philosophical doctrines.

SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD. TRANSLATED BY SWAMI THYAGISANANDA. *Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 131. Price 12 as.*

Though tradition does not place the *Svetasvatara Upaniṣad* among the major treatises of that name, which form the basis of discussion in the *Brahma Sūtras*, it nevertheless came very early to occupy an important position by reason of the various precious metaphysical and religious ideas embedded in it. Its verses are often quoted by the reputed commentators to lend authority to their interpretations. Apart from these, this *Upaniṣad* is a very valuable work from the standpoint of historical interest also, especially from the standpoint of the development of the great devotional religions. The translator has, therefore, rendered a service to the public by bringing out a lucid translation of the work in English. The original text is accompanied by paraphrase, word-for-word literal translation, a free rendering and copious notes.

SANSKRIT

THE MAHĀBHĀRATA (SOUTHERN RECENSION) VOLS. XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, AND XVII. EDITED BY PROF. P. P. S. SASTRI, B.A. (OXON.), M.A. PUBLISHED BY V. RAMASWAMY SASTRULU & SONS, 292 ESPLANADE, MADRAS.

These volumes have been edited and printed as carefully as the previous ones reviewed by us in our June issue, 1935. The volumes XIII, XIV, XV contain the *Sānti Parvan*. The first volume deals with chapters 1—120, comprising the whole of *Rājadharmā* proper; the second volume deals with chapters 121—148 comprising the whole of the *Āpaddharmā* proper and also chapters 149—260 of the *Mokṣadharmā*. The third volume contains chapters 261—339, completing the *Mokṣadharmā* which is the last sub-parvan of the *Sānti Parvan*. The

volumes XVI and XVII deal with the Anusāsana Parvan. The former contains chapters 1—78, while the latter completes the Anusāsana Parvan. All these volumes have suitable introductions, the names of manuscripts consulted in preparing them,

and the concordance of the chapters in the different editions.

The paper, printing, and get-up of these volumes as the previous ones deserve all praise. We wish the editor all success in completing the whole of the *Mahābhārata*.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BARISAL

REPORT FOR 1936

The activities of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Barisal, are threefold, (1) educational, (2) propagandistic, and (3) the rendering of various other services.

Educational: It maintains a Students' Home mainly for poor and meritorious college students, which is run on the principles of the Brahmacharya Ashramas of old. A suitable environment is created for the boys in order to help them grow up physically, mentally, and spiritually. At the end of the year under review there were 18 students in the Home, of which 7 were free, 4 half-free and 5 concession-holders and 2 paying.

Many poor and helpless persons were given help in cash and in kind during the year under review. The workers of the Ashrama also nursed many patients suffering from various diseases and performed the cremation ceremonies of some.

Apart from holding many scriptural classes in the Ashrama for the benefit of the public, the monks and workers of the Ashrama held religious discussions and gave discourses on various religious topics outside at the invitation of the people of different localities. The centenary birth celebration of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great success.

THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTER, NEW YORK

The Hundredth Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna which commenced a year ago, came to a fitting close during the last week of March last, at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center. A special celebration was held at the Chapel, Swami Nikhilananda speaking on "The God-Man of Modern India" before a large gathering of devotees, eager to

hear about the Master's blessed life, in which the great truths of Vedānta had found their perfect expression. After the service Hindu sweets were distributed to all. An abundance of flowers had been placed on and around the altars of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda, and their pictures hung with garlands.

On the 27th of March last, a dinner in celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday was held under the auspices of the Center, with the Swamis Akhilananda and Satprakashananda of Providence, R.I., and Dr. Joshi as guest speakers. Swami Akhilananda spoke about the profound influence of an illumined life like that of Sri Ramakrishna on the whole of human society. Swami Satprakashananda pointed out that the Master is being accepted as an international hero because of the spiritual treasure which he bestowed on the world, in the thought of which lies the only security of human aspirations. Dr. Joshi remarked that the saint actually possesses that wisdom which the philosopher pursues.

On Sunday, March 28, Swami Akhilananda addressed the congregation in the Chapel of the Center, speaking on "The Path of Divine Love." He was followed by Swami Satprakashananda, the subject of whose discourse was "The Cultural Heritage of India." At the close of the service, Swami Nikhilananda expressed the joy he and the members of the Center felt at the participation of the Swamis in the celebration, and particularly welcomed Swami Satprakashananda who had just arrived in that country from India.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA- SHRAMA, LUCKNOW

REPORT FOR 1935 AND 1936

Since its establishment in 1914 the work of the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Shrama has been steadily advancing. Its activities

during the period under report were as follows:—

Medical Relief: The outdoor dispensary treated altogether 1,65,866 patients, of whom 42,753 were new cases and the rest repeated ones.

Regular Monetary Relief: Eight widows of respectable families with none to support them received help in the form of monthly allowances in cash; six old and invalid persons also received similar help.

Temporary Relief was given in cash or in kind to eighty-four persons for various kinds of expenses.

Accommodation: Two hundred and twenty-four persons, mainly strangers in the city, were accommodated in the Ashrama free of charge.

Free Night School: At the end of the period the number of boys on the roll in this night school, which offers free primary education to poor boys who are also supplied with books and other requisites free, was 63.

The Library and the Free Reading Room maintained by Ashrama were well utilized by the public.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF, ORISSA

APPEAL FOR FUNDS

As mentioned in our last report our workers are carrying on the relief work from the two Centres at Pipli and Delang. For the 4th and 5th week, 37 mds. 2 srs. and 26 mds. 30 srs. of rice respectively were distributed amongst 944 and 838 recipients

of 26 villages from Delang Centre. From the Pipli Centre 40 mds. 38 srs. and 41 mds. 33 srs. of rice were given for the weeks amongst 1,141 and 1,153 recipients of 20 villages.

Hut building work is also going on and it is much extended. It is apprehended that the crops will fail which means the scarcity of food to the poor unfortunate victims. The funds at our hands are running short, but with the hope of getting response from the generous public we intend to carry on the relief work at least till the end of October. We once again appeal on behalf of the helpless brethren to the kind hearted public to contribute their mite to relieve the distress of the needy for the remaining period.

In this connection we have great pleasure in acknowledging with thanks the receipt of 100 pairs of new cloths from Dakeswari Cotton Mills for distribution. The demand is greater and we need more cloths.

Any contribution in cash or in kind (new cloths) will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

1. The President, The Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
2. The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

(SD.) SANKARANANDA,

Acting Secretary,

Ramakrishna Mission.

22nd Sept., 1937.