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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE SONG OF PEACE*

BY GURU ARJUN

Let Beauty self-enchanted be not vain ;
As it is the light of God in all that charms.
Why should the possession of wealth make one proud,
When all the riches come from God as gifts ?
If a man plumes himself as a doughty warrior,
Let him know that it is God's power that nerves his arm.
If he sets up for a man of charity,
The real Giver will look upon him as a fool.
But when—thanks to the Guru—a man is cured of his egoism,
The bloom of health appears upon all his actions.

A SYNTHETIC VISION

BY THE EDITOR

I

It is an oft-repeated phenomenon in the great economy of Nature that when this world of ours, on account of growth and added circumstances, requires a new adjustment on the spiritual and material planes, mighty spiritual figures are ushered into existence for the fulfilment of this divine purpose. The consecrated lives of such gigantic personalities enrich the soul of humanity and serve to carry it forward to its ultimate destination. A Sri Krishna or a Buddha, a Lao-Tze or a Zoroaster, a Jesus or a Mahomet, a Sankara or a Ramanuja, a Nanaka or a Chaitanya does not come merely as an accident but as a natural sequence in the course of the gradual fulfilment of the spiritual needs of mankind. Similar indeed is the case with Sri Ramakrishna whose advent into the arena of Indian life in this age of materialistic upheaval is instinct with deep spiritual significance. His life has its national as well as international bearing, and its importance can hardly be realized unless it is studied with an eye to the spirit of the times and the effect it has produced on the trend of human thought and action. The nation in which he was born has been quickened into a self-conscious organism with the gradual unfoldment of its hidden treasures before it, and it is seeking today a reformulation of its creative forces in the light of the spiritual contribution of this shining genius. The rest of humanity also has not escaped the overmastering influence of his synthetic personality; consciously or unconsciously it has begun to absorb into its systems of thought the explo-

sive ideas of such a unique soul for a further enrichment of its life and culture. A Christ or a Buddha, a Mahomet or a Ramakrishna comes verily as a response to the throbbing aspirations of the age—bringing in his train a fund of creative ideas needed to shape the destiny of mankind, and imparts a new orientation to its outlook on life. In fact such a mighty soul is an invaluable asset to the whole human race, and the glory and beauty of such a life of intense spirituality is revealed only with the roll of years.

But very often the vision of man is dazzled by the external beauty and grandeur of such a magnetic personality and fails to go beyond the outer crust and discover the perennial fount that suffuses the whole texture of his being. The silent and unostentatious life which this unlettered saint of Dakshineswar lived amidst the whiz and whirr of this materialistic age, presents before the world a genius that has flowered into a sparkling variety of spiritual realizations to fulfil the manifold demands of humanity. In the words of Romain Rolland, one of the greatest savants of modern times, Sri Ramakrishna was the “consummation of two thousand years of spiritual life of three hundred million people”—a great symphony “composed of the thousand voices and the thousand faiths of mankind.” In other words, he lived in his own person the entire life of the human race and gave out, in the fulness of his spiritual ecstasy, the whole of his being unto the world. His is indeed a life that reveals an uncompromising quest of Truth—a life that unfolds

various grades of spiritual experiences. For over twelve long years his God-intoxicated mind remained completely dead to the outside world. The pathos of the wails that issued from the inmost depths of his soul for the vision of the Mother Divine filled even the stoniest of hearts with compassion and pity. "His whole soul melted, as it were, into one flood of tears, and he appealed to the Goddess to have mercy on him and reveal Herself unto him. No Mother ever shed such burning tears over the death-bed of her only child." Nothing is more eloquent and touching than this struggle of his soul for God-realization. A great religious tornado raged within him during this long period of *sâdhanâ*. His mind and body knew no rest till his mad spiritual quest was crowned with the vision of the Supreme Reality which silenced once for all the doubts that pricked his soul. He reached a plane of spiritual consciousness from where he could view with sympathy and love all forms of religious beliefs extant in the world; for, with the realization of Unity, a *synthetic vision* is attained wherein all apparent contradictions stand harmonized, all diversities of forms become instinct with life and meaning, religion becomes a living reality, and truths the common heritage of mankind. Rightly has Romain Rolland remarked, "When a Ramakrishna has known the grasp of such truths, they do not remain with him as ideas. They quicken into life, into the seeds of life, and fertilized by his credo, they flourish and come to fruition in an orchard of realizations, no longer abstract and isolated, but clearly defined, with a practical bearing on daily life, for they nourish the hunger of men. The Divine flesh, the substance of the universe, once tasted, is to be found, again, the same, at all tables and all religions. In it he par-

takes of the food of immortality in a Lord's supper, not of twelve disciples but of all starving souls of the universe itself."

II

The life of Sri Ramakrishna illustrates the variety of processes open to individuals for the realization of their spiritual aspirations. He explored for humanity all the approaches to the realm of eternal wisdom, and there was no religious faith that he did not practise and no truth that he did not realize in his own life. Every form of religious belief revealed unto his penetrating vision a world of spiritual significance. In fact his life is a bold and triumphant ascent from the level of dualistic worship to the terraced heights of Absolutism through a myriad rungs of spiritual experiences. He has verified in his life that "the three great orders of metaphysical thought—dualism, modified monism and absolute monism,—are stages on the way to the Supreme Truth. They are not contradictory, but rather when added the one to the other are complementary." Thus the validity of all stages that are harmoniously knit together in a graded series of spiritual experiences culminating in the realization of the Formless Absolute—the One without a second, remained no longer a metaphysical speculation but became a living reality with him. He proclaimed unto humanity, with all the force of his spiritual conviction, the grand Upanishadic truth that all, from the highest to the lowest, are but the embodiment of the same Reality—the difference being only in the degrees of manifestation of the Divinity already in all, and that this Supreme Knowledge is attainable by whatsoever paths, countenanced in the scriptures of the different communities, men may strive for it. The various paths—Jñana,

Karma, Bhakti, and Yoga—all lead to the same goal, if followed with steady zeal and application, and no colour, caste, or creed is any the least bar to the sacred temple of Self-realization.

Thus the fundamental unity of all faiths and the validity of all paths in the realization of the Supreme Truth became revealed to his spiritual vision. Humanity needed such a message and he came upon the earth for the proclamation of this universal truth to mankind. Religious conflicts are more often the result of an incorrect understanding of the basic principles of one's own religion. A Hindu and a Muslim, a Christian and a Buddhist, a Jaina and a Parsi—all were to Sri Ramakrishna but pilgrims to the same Holy Land; the paths only were different. The varieties of religious forms, like the diversities of streams, lead eventually to the Ocean of one Eternal Religion—the Highest Reality—where all contradictions meet. For, says Sri Ramakrishna, "God is one—He differs only in names and forms. He reveals Himself unto a devotee in whatever form he wishes to see Him." "Various indeed are the paths leading to the Ocean of Immortality. Life is blessed, no matter by whatsoever means you get into it." "Different creeds are but different paths to reach the one God. Various are the ways that lead to the temple of Mother Kali at Kalighat. Similarly, various are the ways that lead to the house of the Lord. Every religion is nothing but one of such paths that lead to God." "As one can ascend to the top of a house by means of a ladder or a bamboo, or a staircase or a rope, so diverse are the ways and means of approaching God. Every religion in the world shows one of these ways." "To realize God," he further says, "an aspirant must stick to his own faith (with zeal and devotion) and look upon all other faiths as

so many paths, but shall never entertain the idea that his is the only true faith and all else is wrong. It is only the narrow-minded bigots that form sects and cast aspersions on the faiths of others; but a sincere devotee of God will never form sects." "*Dal* (sedge) does not grow in large pure-water tanks, but in small stagnant and miasmatic pools. Similarly, *dala* (clique) does not form in a party whose adherents are guided by pure, broad and unselfish motives, but takes firm root in a party whose members are given to selfishness, insincerity and bigotry." "Be not like the frog in the well. It knows nothing bigger and grander than its well. So are all bigots; they do not see anything better than their own creeds." "A common man through ignorance considers his own religion to be the best and makes much useless clamour, but when his mind is illumined by true Knowledge, all sectarian quarrel disappears." "A truly religious man should think that other religions are also paths leading to Truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions." Indeed no nobler and more pregnant words have ever been so beautifully uttered. Sri Ramakrishna's synthetic vision comprehended within its widest purview all the scintillating forms of one eternal Religion and found them as but so many avenues of approach to the Highest Truth. This splendid realization of the Master has in fact added a unique grace and beauty to all his teachings and as such stands as a great harmonizing force in a medley of wrangling faiths of the world.

III

It must be borne in mind that religion is not a mere bundle of usages; to identify it with a number of customs and revolting practices of a set of people

buried in rank ignorance and crass superstition is nothing short of an insult to the intelligence of humanity. Religion, to justify itself as a formative force, must stand the crucial test of rational discrimination and be broad-based on the scriptural utterances and the living spiritual realizations of the mighty seers of all ages and climes. Sri Ramakrishna emphasizes that by steadfastly following the orbit of a rational religious belief an aspirant after truth would ultimately come face to face with the Highest Reality. To think that a deep-seated love for one's own religious conviction spells a corresponding hatred and ill-feeling towards the faiths of other communities is an unwarranted assumption that stands self-condemned when analysed in the light of the life and practices of Sri Ramakrishna, whose realizations constitute an eloquent vindication of the truth that *the deepest spirituality and the broadest catholicity are not contradictory but stand synthesized in one and the same personality*. In matters religious, the more one's mind is chastened through spiritual practices, the more sympathetic and comprehensive becomes his outlook on life and his fellow-beings. The blind forces of bigotry and fanaticism, the offspring of Ignorance that makes for division and hatred, jealousy and quarrel, get attenuated according as the aspirant evolves into a highly spiritual being, and yield ultimately to the compelling and dynamic spirit of sympathy and toleration, self-abnegation and love for all, irrespective of caste, creed or nationality. It is but a truism that the manifestation of such *sâttvika* qualities as purity and sympathy, kindness and tolerance, self-denial and truthfulness, broadness of vision and love for all—is the inevitable outcome of a spiritual life and is an unmistakable indica-

tion of the progressive realization of the Supreme Truth at the altar of which a sincere aspirant dedicates his whole being, and without which a religious life is but a sham and a stagnation that breeds nothing but rank fanaticism and narrowness of outlook. Where is the scope for the play of any debasing thoughts in the sanctuary of a person's heart when, with the growth and development of his soul, his whole being is saturated with the thought of the Divine, or when his quest of truth is crowned with a vision of the Eternal Reality that stands as a Substratum behind the scintillating variety of diverse faiths and forms in this world of ours? For "Toleration is to Advaita Vedanta a religion in itself; no one who realizes what any religion is to its votary can himself be indifferent to it. The claim of a religion on its votary is nothing outside the religion and is itself as sacred to others as the religion is sacred to him. While then an individual owes special allegiance to his own religion or *svadharma*, which chooses him rather than is chosen by him, he feels that the religion of others is not only sacred to them but to himself also. This in fact is the practical aspect of the Advaitic view of all individual selves being the one self . . . The brotherhood that is practically recognized in this religion is the brotherhood of spirits realizing their *svadharma*, the *dharma* of each being sacred to all. If then in this view it is irreligious to change one's faith, it is only natural to revere faiths other than one's own. To tolerate them merely in a non-committal or patronizing spirit would be an impiety, and to revile them would be diabolical. The form in which the truth is intuited by an individual is cosmically determined and not constructed by him, and the relativity of truth to the spiritual status of the knower is itself absolute" (*The Cul-*

tural Heritage of India, vol. I, p. 500). This lofty idealism which Sri Ramakrishna has set before the world must be actualized in the life of every individual, to whatever church he may belong, if he wishes to eliminate religious fanaticism and sectarian hatred altogether from the arena of spiritual life. Sri Ramakrishna, standing at the centre of Reality where all the diverse radii of faiths proceeding from the different points of the circumference meet, was able to see the self-sufficiency and validity of every religious persuasion in the gradual ascent of the human soul to the highest pinnacle of Illumination. His life, as such, is a living synthesis of all faiths and creeds, for, as far as the records of history show, it is he alone who has boldly fingered the various strings of the instrument of harmony with the consummate skill of a master-player and produced a rhythm that has engulfed in it all the different notes of the world's multifarious creeds and beliefs. A spiritual democrat, Sri Ramakrishna has thus extended his love to all faiths and thrown open the gate of knowledge to all, and that is one of the most eloquent reasons why his message has already transcended geographical limitations and is finding spontaneous acceptance all over the world from India to the distant shores of the Atlantic.

IV

Sri Ramakrishna's is a life that silences critics and puzzles even the profoundest of philosophers. He has demonstrated that purity and sincerity are the primary requisites for the attainment of a life divine, and that the highest knowledge is not the monopoly of a particular caste or creed. This is one of the most precious of all the legacies he has bequeathed to mankind. It has been further illustrated in the life of

this untutored child of Nature that intellectual knowledge is not an indispensable factor in the attainment of the Highest Truth, for oftener than not it drags an aspirant into the morass of an unprofitable life from which none but the blessed few can disentangle themselves. To crown all, it is a sight for the gods to see how the lofty ideals of a householder and a *sannyâsin* have been so beautifully blended in his charming personality. His worship of his own consort as the Mother Divine is a historic landmark in the corporate life not merely of the Indian people but of the entire human race. It is a bold vindication of the sublime idealism for which womanhood stands. The sacred relation of Sri Ramakrishna to Sarada Devi is a luminous instance of how the conjugal relation can be spiritualized for the realization of the noblest ends of human existence. Thus the life of this Prophet of the modern age, who was projected into the nineteenth century world by the throes of Nature herself, has solved in more ways than one the intricate problems of the day as well as of the future. Indeed he stands as a beacon-light in the vast wilderness of the world and illumines the forgotten trails that lead to the land of peace and blessedness.

The condition of the modern world reveals one of the most tragic chapters in the history of the human race. The noble instincts of love and fraternity have been sacrificed at the altar of Mammon. And there is no knowing when this mad competition for wealth and power would make room for a higher striving for common good among mankind. History has sounded the tocsin of alarm many a time before, but it has failed to produce the desired effect on the deaf ears of warring and self-forgetful humanity. The universal gospel of Sri Ramakrishna has therefore come not

a day too soon. His voice is the same eternal voice of Truth that has been calling the erring world from age to age to the path of life divine—of peace and harmony, of renunciation and love. His life of artless simplicity, austere penance and renunciation in this age when materialistic tendencies have wrought havoc in the world and robbed human nature of much of its sweetness and charm, is verily a clarion-call to rise to the radiance of spirit and shows with unfailing directness the noble path which India, nay the whole of humanity, should follow in the interest of goodwill and harmony. Sri Ramakrishna stands at the confluence of the two mighty thought-streams of the East and the

West with a message of universal peace and, bringing back from the womb of the forgotten past the living truths of the Eternal Vedas, holds before the world a life of wonderful synthesis of all creeds and religions. Some of the master-minds have already responded to the call and there are unmistakable signs of a sincere craving in the East and the West for an evolution of a higher culture and a better understanding between the two. And it is not premature to emphasize that it is the universal teachings of Sri Ramakrishna which will furnish the real foundation for any constructive scheme to evolve lasting peace and harmony in the world.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Sri Ramakrishna was seated in his own room at Dakshineswar with Rakhal, master and a few other devotees. It was Friday morning, the 9th of March, 1883, the new moon of the month of Magha.

On the new moon day the Master was always filled with the inspiration of the Divine Mother of the universe. He was saying, "God alone is real, all the rest is unreal. The Mother has enchanted all with Her great spell (*mahâ-mâyâ*). You shall find most of the souls among men bound. They suffer so much pain and misery, yet they cling to that very lust and gold. The camel bleeds profusely in the mouth by eating thorny shrubs, yet it eats them again... Look here, nobody seeks Him. Men discard the fruit of the pine-apple plant and take only its leaves."

A devotee : Sir, why does He keep men bound to the world?

Sri Ramakrishna : The world is the field of work. The knowledge dawns

only in the course of work. The Guru (teacher) has declared, "Do these works, and don't do those". He further counsels desireless action. The dirt of the mind is washed away by doing works just as the sick person who is looked after by a good doctor is cured of the disease by taking medicines.

Why does He not set men free from the ties of the world? He will set them at liberty when the disease will be cured. He will set them free when their desire for enjoying lust and gold will die. If you once get yourself admitted into a hospital, you can't manage to come away. The doctor won't let you go until the disease is cured...

Adhar (to Sri Ramakrishna): Sir, I have a question to ask. Is it good to sacrifice animals? It involves injury to life.

Sri Ramakrishna : The scriptures permit animal sacrifices on special occasions. There is no harm in sacrifices which are enjoined, as for instance, the

sacrifice of a goat on the *Ashtami* day. But it is not possible in all states. Such is my own state now that I cannot look at sacrifice. In this condition I cannot partake of the meat which has been offered to the Mother. So I touch it lightly with a finger and put a mark with it on my forehead, lest the Mother should get angry.

Again, I have moods when I find God in all beings, even in ants. In that state if I find any animal dying I have the consolation that its body alone has perished. The Atman has no birth or death.

It is not good to argue too much. It is enough if one has devotion to the lotus feet of the Mother. One gets confounded by too much argumentation. In this part of the country if you drink the water from the surface of ponds, you shall find it quite clear. If, however,

you put your hand a little deeper under water and move the water, it will get muddy. So pray to Him for devotion. Dhruva's devotion sprang out of desire. He practised austerities for gaining a kingdom. But Prahlad's devotion is desireless; it is spontaneous and unaccountable.

A devotee: How can God be realised?

Sri Ramakrishna: By this devotion. But then, one must enforce one's prayer to Him with a demand. "If Thou dost not reveal Thyself unto me I shall cut my throat"—this is the *tamas* of Bhakti.

The devotee: Can God be seen?

Sri Ramakrishna: Yes, most certainly. He can be seen with or without form. He is seen with luminous form. He is further seen in the form of a man. To see an *avatâra* is the same thing as seeing God. God Himself appears on earth as man from age to age.

THE HINDU CONCEPTION OF THE MOTHERLAND

BY PROF. RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

COUNTRY VALUED FOR ITS CULTURE

The Hindu conception of the mother-country is more cultural than territorial. The spiritual enters more into that conception than the material. One may say that the Hindu's country is his culture and his culture his country, believing, as he does, more in the kingdom of the spirit than in that resting on matter, which is perishable and earthy.

ITS DEIFICATION IN SANSKRIT TEXTS

Such a peculiar conception of the country naturally passes on to that of the country as the giver of all good, ultimately culminating in its deification,

Alone among all the peoples of the world, it is the Hindu who can claim the credit of elevating patriotism into a religion. The spirit of patriotism in the West finds a typical utterance in the following famous lines of Walter Scott :

"Breathes there the man, with soul
so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own native land!"

But the Hindu raises his patriotic utterance to a much higher level. A typical and most wide-spread utterance influencing the mass-mind in India is the following :

जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी—

“The mother and the mother-country are greater than Heaven itself.” But this utterance which comes from later Sanskrit literature owes its inspiration to the Vedas, the eternal fountain-head of Hindu thought through the ages. For instance, the Prithivi-sukta of the *Atharva-Veda* contains the Hindu’s earliest hymns to the mother-land, each of whose features receives its due share of recognition for its contribution in the making of the country: “The seas protecting the land, the fertilizing rivers, hills and snows, forests and herbs, its agriculture, flora and fauna, and, lastly, its people of different speech, of diverse customs according to their regions, its roads, villages and even assemblies (*sabhâ* and *samiti*).”

The following prayer again is worth quoting :

“Let the country make for us wide room; let the country be spread out for us, be prosperous for us;

“On whom our forefathers formerly spread themselves and the inhabitants of whose brown, black, red, all-formed, fixed soil, stand unharrassed, unsmitten and unwounded.”

In a similar strain was uttered the following Rig-Vedic prayer in the yet earlier, the earliest recorded times :

“O Ye Gangâ, Yamunâ, Saraswati, Satadru, and Parushni! receive Ye my prayers; O Ye Marutbridha, joined by Asikini, Vitastâ and Arijikiya joined by the Sushoma! hear Ye my prayers.”

MAHABHARATA

This Rig-Vedic prayer culminated with necessary geographical modifications in the following Epic prayer which ranks as the national prayer of Hindu India to this day :

गङ्गे च यमुने चैव गोदावरि सरस्वति ।
नमदे सिन्धु कावेरि जलेऽस्मिन् सन्निधिं कुरु ॥

This prayer of the Epic invoking the presence of the different rivers in the water is necessarily given in its local geographical setting, showing how the geographical horizon of Epic India was far more extensive than that of Rig-Vedic India which did not comprise the country south of the Saraswati and Satadru (Sutlej).

MANU AND PURANAS

The spirit of these early prayers to the Mother-Goddess of the country receives even a fuller expression in later Sanskrit literature. The *Manusmriti* finally describes the country as created by the gods—*देवनिर्मितं देशम्* । And then the two most popular religious works, the *Vishnu-purâna* and the *Bhâgavat-purâna* give themselves more fully to the development of the same theme. The former frankly states that birth in the sacred Bhârata-bhumi is earned by the spiritual merit of a thousand lives, as it leads to salvation, “that greater blessing of final liberation” which is not attained even by the gods. Accordingly the gods themselves desire to leave Heaven for purposes of birth in Bhârata-varsha, with its promise of infinite good. Similarly, the other Purâna also extols the place of birth as the supreme factor in man’s emancipation.

COUNTRY EXTENDING WITH CULTURE

Such a spiritual conception of the country cannot consistently confine it to fixed and narrow geographical limits. It is chiefly the country of the spirit, open to expansion. It is measured by its cultural expanse. Accordingly, we find that the home of the Hindu had been growing in size through the ages as reflected in the literary works of different periods.

EXTENSION OF ORIGINAL HINDU HOME

The Hindu’s original home is singled out as (1) *Brahmavarta*, the holy land

between the Saraswati and the Drishadvati (*Manu* II, 17). It soon extends and expands into a wider country called (2) Brahmarshi-desa, comprising (a) Kurukshetra, (b) the country of the Matsyas, (c) Panchalas, and (d) Surasenakas. Then, as Hindu civilization spreads farther, the country also follows the civilization which determines its limits. Thus very soon the home of the Hindus evolves into a larger aggregate known as (3) Madhyadesa of which the limits are defined to be the Himalayas in the north, the Vindhya in the south, Prayâga in the east, and Vinasana in the west (the region where the Saraswati disappears in the sands). But the process of this evolution does not stop here. Madhyadesa expands later into what is called (4) Âryâvarta defined as lying between those two mountains and extending as far as the eastern and western oceans (*Manu* II, 19, 21, 22).

But in all these stages of the physical expansion of the country, the cultural element in its conception is not lost sight of, but is always insisted on and emphasized. Each of these stages yields to the succeeding only in physical extent, in area, or size, but not in cultural importance or spiritual progress. As Sumanta reminds us: "Brahmavarta is the holy land proper; next to it is Rishi-desa (Brahmarshi-desa); inferior to that is Madhyadesa; and last is Âryâvarta."

The purity of the nucleus, the ideal country, is always singled out in all its process of the physical expansion of the country.

CULTURAL MARKS OF THE COUNTRY

But the limits of the Hindu's country were always the limits of his culture. Hindu civilization was arrested in its course by the Vindhya and remained

confined within Âryâvarta for a long time. And so Âryâvarta and Hindu civilization are treated for long as synonymous terms in the Sanskrit texts. Âryâvarta is now distinguished as a cultural entity from the world of the non-Aryans lying beyond it. The distinction is sought to be emphasized by an intense love of the country as the home of all that is best and highest in humanity. Patriotism fondly defines the country in romantic ways. One definition singles out Âryâvarta as 'the land where the black antelope finds its natural habitat', the black antelope being looked upon as the embodiment of beauty, innocence and energy. Another definition adds the growth of Kusa grass as the second requisite of the holy land. A third frankly defines Âryâvarta as Yajniya-desa and a fourth as Dharmadesa, i.e., the country favouring the performance of sacrifices and practice of religion. A fifth definition distinguishes Âryâvarta as the land where life is regulated by the rules of the four castes and the four *âsramas* as aids to self-realization or salvation.

Thus the Hindu's holy land is marked by five features, viz., (1) the black antelope (2) the Kusa grass (3) *yajna* (4) *dharma* and (5) the four castes and *âsramas*. The exact significance of (1) is not clear, but all texts are at one in insisting on it. Yajnavalkya, a hard-headed law-giver, lends himself to the romantic outburst: "That country is fit for the religious life where the antelope is black." And another text adds that the black antelope must not be an imported and acclimatized animal in the holy land, but must be a growth of its soil, native to it from eternity. It is difficult to understand what inspiration comes to religious life from the sight of the roaming black buck.

COUNTRIES LACKING THOSE MARKS ARE CONDEMNED

We also arrive at a corresponding conception of the country that is outside the holy land and is called the land of the non-Aryans. The conception is more cultural than territorial. Their lands are defined as those lacking the five features of the holy land as enumerated above, and a list of the lands is given in detail in the *Dharma-sutra* of Bodhâyana, the *Vyâsa-smṛiti*, the *Âdi-purâna* and the *Skanda-purâna*.

DIVISION OF COUNTRIES BY CUSTOMS

It is also interesting to note that, as a consequence of the cultural conception of the country, countries are marked in the Sanskrit texts more for their manners and customs than by their mere geographical boundaries or physical features. Thus there is a broad division recognized in the *Dharmasutras* between Northern and Southern India on the basis of these manners and customs.

NORTH INDIAN CUSTOMS ACCORDING TO BODHAYANA

The customs peculiar to the North are stated by Bodhâyana to be the following: (1) *urna-vikraya* (trade in wool connected with cattle-rearing and pasture not recommended for a *dviija*); (2) *sidhupâna* (drinking of spirits); (3) *ubhayatodadbhir-vyavahâra* (trade in animals possessing a double row of teeth, i.e., trade in horses, asses and mules); (4) *âyudhiyaka* (profession of arms); (5) *samudrâyanam* (sea-voyages).

SOUTH INDIAN CUSTOMS

The customs peculiar to the South are stated to be: (1) taking meals with wife or with those who are not initiated (*anupanita*); (2) taking food cooked overnight; (3) marrying the daughter

of the maternal uncle or of father's sister.

STATEMENT OF BRIHASPATI

Brihaspati also characterizes the different regions and quarters on the basis of manners and customs as stated below: 1. In the Dâkshinâtya (Deccan), the members of the twice-born classes (*dviija*) marry the daughter of their maternal uncle. 2. In Madhyadesa, the people are artisans, industrialists and given to eating beef (*gavasinah*). 3. In the East, the people eat fish. 4. In the North, brothers marry the widows of their brothers.

RECOGNITION OF LOCAL CUSTOMS IN HINDU LAW

It will be seen from the above that there is a considerable diversity of customs and manners marking the different parts of India and presenting a wide range of tastes or ideas of culture and refinement; so much so, that certain customs which are repugnant to the South are quite approved in the North and *vice versa*. Yet this divergence of cultural ideals did not prove any bar to the growth of a catholicity and breadth of outlook making for the conception of an extended country for the Hindu, corresponding to every extension of his civilization. Thus all these regional differences in manners and customs were reconciled in a wider conception of the country, calling for appropriate principles of law in which these differences might find their place and recognition.

OPINION OF MANU AND OTHER LAW-GIVERS

Therefore Manu has laid down the following comprehensive legal principle: "The State or sovereign must ascertain the particular laws governing the *kula* (family), *jâti* (caste), regions (*janapada*)

and *sreni* (guilds) as principal factors in legislation.”

This position has been repeated by the other law-givers like Gautama, Bodhâyana, Apastamba and Vasishtha.

VIEWS OF DEVALA

Devala records a fuller statement: “Every region has its own *devas* (deities for popular worship), its own *dvijas* (twice-born classes), its own waters, its peculiar soil—its own *saucha* (ideas of purity), its own *dharma* and *âchâra* (customs and manners). These vary from village to village, city to city and province to province, nay, even with centres of Vedic learning. That which is established as the *dharma* of the locality should not be disturbed by the State.”

LIMITATIONS TO AUTHORITY OF LOCAL CUSTOMS

The scope that is thus given to local manners and customs and regional laws is no doubt in accord with sound principles of legislation and jurisprudence. It is the only method by which different communities can come together and be welded into a national state. But this method has its limits. It is easy to make too much of local laws and customs. This was known to the ancient law-givers who have, accordingly, given their warnings in the matter. They will not allow local customs to take precedence over the clearest injunctions of the Sâstras which are independent of localities and give expression to the established moral opinion of the community. Thus Gautama states that the laws obtaining in localities, castes or communities, cannot have any force against the Vedas. In a word, the position is that such local laws, manners and customs as offend against morality, conscience or justice cannot be upheld.

EXAMPLES FROM AN OLD TEXT

It is interesting to note that an old text preserves a list of such objectionable manners and customs as given below: (1) Marrying maternal uncle's daughter, which is considered objectionable on the ground of 'relationship of mother'; (2) Marrying the brother's widow; (3) Marriage between persons of the same Gotra; (4) Marriage between brother and sister, as seen in Persia; (5) Usury as illustrated in lending one maund of paddy in spring to be returned as two maunds in autumn (involving interest at the rate of 200% per annum); (6) Transactions of mortgages whereby the creditor enters into the possession of the mortgaged property when the principal lent is doubled in amount, or even before it is doubled. This shows that the ancient texts did not approve of money-lenders dispossessing the indebted agriculturists of the lands they cultivated, as a means of redeeming the debt.

RESPECT FOR LOCAL CUSTOMS MAKES FOR A WIDER COUNTRY AND ITS SOCIAL DIVERSITY

It was, however, this comprehensive principle of legislation, with its respect for local customs and usages, which had paved the way for a continuous expansion of the Hindu's mother-country, through the ages, from its smallest nucleus in Brahmavarta, in extending circles, until it embraced the whole of India, and even countries outside its limits, making up a Greater India beyond the seas. Where the country is more a cultural than a material possession, it appeals less to the instinct of appropriation. It has a tendency towards expansion, resulting in a lack of homogeneity in its social composition. There is no narrowness, or a spirit of exclusiveness, but more of disinterested

sharing, more of community of life and enjoyment. India, thus early in her history, attracted migrations, and became the home of many races, cults and cultures, co-existing in concord, without seeking overlordship or mutual extermination. She became the chosen home of diversity and different social systems. Other national systems founded on different principles exclude the possibility of such radical diversities. That is why India has been aptly called 'the epitome of the world'. It is a League of Nations in miniature. The problem of India is, indeed, the problem of the world.

THE COUNTRY WIDENS INTO WHOLE
INDIA CONCEIVED IN DIFFERENT
WAYS

With the passage of time and the gradual extension of Hindu civilization, the sacred land of the Hindu came to comprehend the whole of India or Bhâratavarsha. The country followed the movement of culture, just as 'trade follows the flag' in Western civilization. The whole of Bhâratavarsha 'from Badarikâ to Setu, Dwârakâ to Purushottama (Puri)' came to be defined as the land of (1) seven 'great' mountains—Raivataka, Vindhya, Sahya, Kumâra, Malaya, Sri-Parvata and Pariyatra; (2) seven 'great' rivers—Gangâ, Saraswati, Kâlindi, Godâvari, Kâveri, Tâmrarni and Ghritamala (Narmada and Sindhu in other texts); (3) seven 'sacred' cities—Ayodhyâ, Mathurâ, Maya (Hardwar), Kâsi, Kânchi, Avanti and Dvârâvati (Dwârakâ); (4) eighteen 'great' countries (*mahâvishayah*)—northern Lata, eastern Lata, Kâsi, Panchâla, Kekaya, Srinjaya, Matsya, Magadha, Mâlava, Sakunta (unknown), Kosala, Avanti, Saihya, Vidarbha, Videha, Kuru, Kamboja and Dasarna; (5) eighteen 'minor' countries (*upavishayah*)—Aratta and Bahlika; Saka

and Surâshtra; Anga, Vanga and Kalinga; Kashmira, Huna, Ambashtha and Sindh; Kirâta, Sauvira, Chola and Pandya; Yadava and Kânchi (*Bârhaspatya Arthasâstra*).

PATRIOTISM EXPRESSED IN PILGRIMAGE

Indeed, in the heyday of Hinduism, in the spacious times of the Gupta emperors, a fervent patriotism transformed into a profound religious sentiment found its own means of expression in its own way. It invented its appropriate symbols and ceremonies, its own mode of worshipping the country. It conceived of the system of pilgrimage which is peculiar to Hinduism, and is a most potent instrument of instruction in geography by field-work. It educates the Indian popular mind, or mass consciousness, in the realization of what constitutes the mother country through the religious necessity imposed on the people to visit its different parts for the sacred places and shrines placed in them. The country as an abstraction is thus transformed into a vivid and visible reality, an ideal is realized in terms of blood. The romance of patriotism has fondly woven a net-work of holy spots covering the whole country, so that all parts of it are equally sacred and the equal concern of religious devotees. Thus the number of places of pilgrimage in India is legion. It only shows the waking of a religious imagination in its attempt at visualizing and worshipping the physical form of the mother Goddess. This religious imagination of the nation has, indeed, impressed in its service every spot of beauty in the vast country, which it has at once declared as holy and has endowed with a temple, shrine, or some religious symbol like a piece of hallowed stone, or even a tree. Here is patriotism run riot! It finds its food even in the natural beauties of the country.

Hence the Hindu's pilgrimage is to the eternal snows of the Himalayas, the depths of forests, the palm-clad seashores, the hidden sources of rivers, or their mouths and confluences. His treatment of natural beauty is also unique. His love of nature is a religious emotion. A place of natural beauty in the West is associated with holiday-making, pleasure trips, picnics, hotels, and cinemas. In India, it is marked by temples and pilgrims, hermitages and ascetics, so as to lead the mind from Nature up to Nature's God. The beauty of Nature in the one case is a stimulus to objectivity, to outgoing activities. In the other case, it is an incentive to subjectivity, meditation and renunciation.

HOLY PLACES GENERAL AND FOR SECTS

The various sects of Hinduism are at one in thus multiplying places of pilgrimage in the country as a mode of worshipping it. Each sect has its own list of the places of pilgrimage, which its devotee should visit as a means of salvation. Sankara placed his principal holy places at the far extreme points of India so as to cover between them its entire territory. These are Sringerimatha in the south, Sâradâ-matha in the west (at Dvârakâ), Govardhanamatha in the east (at Puri), and Jyoshimatha in the north (at Badri-kedar). Similarly, there are singled out four sacred places like Sveta-gangâ, Dhanustirtha, Gomati-kunda and Tapta-kunda, and four sacred tanks (*sarovara*), Vindu, Pampâ, Nârâyana and Mânasa, in the east, south, west and north respectively. The principle of fixing these is the same : to lead the masses out of their homes, their villages and provinces on all-India tours of pilgrimage, so that they may know their country in all its parts and peoples. A spirit of nationalism will naturally spring from this root

of a necessary geographical knowledge of the country.

Besides these general places of pilgrimage, there are special ones fixed for different sects. Thus the chief sacred places for a Saiva are eight : Avimuktaka (Benares), Gangâdvâra, Siva-kshetra, Rama-yamuna (?), Siva-saraswati, Mavya, Saradula, Gajakshetras. Those for a Vaishnava are the following eight : Badarikâ, Sâlagrâma (on the Gandak), Purushottama (Puri), Dvârakâ, Bilvachala, Ananta, Simha, Sriranga. The eight sacred places for a Sâkta are : Ogghina (Ujjain), Jala, Purna, Kama, Kolla, Sri-saila, Kânci, Mahendra (*Bârhaspatya Arthasâstra*). Lists of such holy places are differently given in other texts. One text mentions the Saiva centres as the following : Somanâtha (in Kathiawad), Sri-saila (Palni hills near Madura) for worship of Mallikarjuna, Mahâkâla at Ujjayini, Omkâra at Amaresvara (Mahismati), Kedar (Himalayas), Bhimasankara (at Dakini ?), Visvesa (at Benares), Tryambaka (on Gautami Godavari), Baidyanâth (also called Chitabhumi), Nagesa (at Dvârakâ), Râmesa (at Setubandha), and Ghumesa (at Sivalaya ?). Similarly, there is another text giving a long list of places dedicated to Vishnu, covering the whole country from Badri in the north through Ayodhya and Mathura to Dvârakâ, Jagannath and Sri Ranga. And as regards the Sâkta the story of Sati tells how 52 *pithasthânas* arose at the places where fell the 52 fragments of Her smitten body, places like Kalighat, Jvalamukhi, or Benares (with Annapurna's temple). List of such holy places are best given in the Vanaparva of the *Mahabharata*, Bhisma-parva (IV. 317-318), *Vishnu-purâna* (II. 3), *Garuda-purâna* (ch. 66) and the like.

PILGRIMAGE INCULCATES LOVE OF
COUNTRY IN THE MASSES

A comparative consideration of the various lists of *tirthas* in different texts will show how fondly the Indian mind clings to the mother-country and considers every inch of its territory as sacred soil. It worships the Virât-deha, the great body of the country of which every part it holds to be holy. As a consequence, the Hindu has no holy place outside India, like a far off, Palestine or Mecca or Medina. As has been explained, his culture is synonymous with his country.

The later texts locating the holy places on a generous scale all over India indicate how far they have travelled from the early days of Vedic civilization when the country or the holy land was confined to Āryāvarta. Now the country embraces the whole of India, as its civilization has penetrated into all its parts.

A final expression of this evolution of the idea of the mother-country is embodied in certain texts prescribing the places where one should seek his last resting-place to lay his bones, or have his funeral ceremonies performed. These places are, accordingly, to be considered as the most sacred of places by all Hindus in common, irrespective of provincial or religious differences, of sect or creed. In the contemplation of death they must sink these differences and realize the unity of their common mother-land. Death completes what life leaves incomplete.

A list of places which Hindus of all

sects and castes prefer in common for death and funeral ceremonies (*srâddha*) is thus given in the *Vishnu-smṛiti*: (1) Pushkara, (2) Gaya, (3) Akshaya-vata, (4) Amara-kantaka (Vindhya), (5) Varâha hill (Sambalpur), (6) Banks of the Narmada, (7) of the Yamuna, and (8) of the Ganga, (9) Kusavarta (at the source of Godavari), (10) Binduka (Deccan), (11) Nila-parvata, (12) Kanakhala, (13) Kubjâmra (Orissa), (14) Bhrigu-tunga (Himalaya), (15) Kedâra (Himalaya), (16) Mahâlaya mountain, (17) Nadantika River, (18) Sugadha River, (19) Sâkambhari (Sambhar in Rajaputana), (20) Sacred places on the Phalgu, (21) Mahâgângâ (Alakananda), (22) Trihalikagrâma (Sala-grama), (23) Kumâradhara (a lake in Kashmir), (24) Prabhâsa, (25) Banks of the Saraswati, (26) Hardwar, (27) Prayâga, (28) Mouth of Ganga, (29) Naimisâranya and (30) Benares.

Under the peculiar religious system, the Southerner will feel as much longing for Benares as a Northerner for Setu-bandha (Rameswaram), and both will have a common longing for Dvârakâ and Jagannath. North and South East and West meet in the embrace of a religious life that transcends the narrow boundaries of place, sect, caste or creed. It is in this way that Hinduism has always fostered a sense of an all-India patriotism or nationalism by strengthening its foundations in a lively sense of the mother-country which can grasp the whole of it as a unit despite the vastness of its size and its continental variety.

THE DOGMA OF FINALITY

BY DR. M. H. SYED, M.A., PH. D., D. LITT.

While fully recognising the immense amount of good that some of the world religions have done to the moral advancement of humanity, one cannot altogether blink at the fact that by imposing hard and fast rules and dogmatizing in so many other ways they have narrowed down the human outlook on life and instead of broadening the human mind and freeing it from the thralldom of conventional thoughts and customs, they have not failed to choke and stifle human intelligence to a certain extent.

Religious teachers who appeared on the scene of the world from time to time with a view to reform and elevate the erring and suffering human beings of a particular period, did not, for obvious reasons, legislate, so to say, for all time to come and for all types and grades of humanity that is being evolved to a higher and much loftier destiny than what it was or is to-day. They would have forgotten their claim to deep spiritual insight and clear-sighted vision if they had done so.

Their chief mission in life or the real object of their advent on earth in the midst of degraded human beings of an age was not to leave a code of law that might hold good for all times and all types of men to come till eternity, but, to quote the precious words of the Blessed Lord Sri Krishna, "for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness." That is why they are born from 'age to age'. Out of pure compassion for us who tread the path of unrighteousness and take delight in evil doing, they come in response to recurring spiritual need of humanity,

giving fresh impetus to our lagging spirits and lifting us up from the mire of delusion, at least for the time being.

As they stand on a very high pedestal of spirituality and speak from a grand moral height, they cannot possibly, in the nature of things, bring themselves to the level of every type of humanity which is so very complex, heterogeneous and multifarious. So they speak in a general way dwelling on the common and eternal verities of life, specially emphasizing such points as need eradication or deepening. Later on, their enthusiastic disciples and blind followers, in their religious zeal, put astounding interpretations on their sayings and teachings that savour of nothing short of dogmatism and finality which perhaps they never meant.

The spirit of exclusiveness and the claim of uniqueness of one's own revealed books are introduced with no little fervour into the various faiths in the course of time. That is why at the present age the leading divines of various religions lay claim to the exclusive possession of truth and assert in no uncertain terms that all that their particular faith contains and teaches is the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Salvation through their faith alone is possible. One must unreservedly adhere to every tenet of their faith before one can attain one's salvation. To doubt the veracity or question the validity of any statement is an abomination of a high order.

Some religions claim that their prophets and saviours were the last of the line and their revealed books the most perfect and comprehensive ones that

need no addition or alteration, whose teachings will hold good and suffice for the people of every type and description for all time to come. Nothing could be farther from fact and truth. It requires no argument to prove that humanity is not yet perfect. It is slowly and gradually evolving. In one age or in one race people develop one special characteristic, in another, another.

If the history of the world shows anything conclusively and demonstrates anything unmistakably, it is this fact that, at every period of a world-crisis, a highly developed spiritual teacher comes forward to take humanity a step forward.

Human nature does remain for a long time the same but is not completely wooden and stationary. It is subject to the law of growth and development. Mentally, morally and spiritually humanity is not where it was a million of years ago. The world was not created only a few thousand years from now. It has been in existence for years, and will continue to exist for an unknown number of years hence.

Thus in this changing, growing and evolving world every thing has to be and is, as a matter of fact, adjusted and readjusted from time to time to suit the exigency of the age. An adult cannot be fed on baby's food.

Unless we become 'perfect as our heavenly Father is', reach the Absolute and become one with It, every aspect of our life, from cradle to the grave, from one life to many lives yet to come, will continue to be relative; mental, moral and spiritual ideals meant to evolve, guide and inspire us, must necessarily be relative and therefore free from the devitalizing force of finality.

To believe in finality is to come to an end of our evolution. In this universe which manifests only a tiny fraction of His infinite, limitless, inexhaustible,

fathomless and truly unimaginable glory and magnificence, every thing and every being without an exception, must be relative and must need fresher and newer ideals of life and truth to suit his growing moral and spiritual stature. We have to go forward and not backward. The Spirit, the Self, the Supreme Being, has yet higher and ever loftier glory and more fascinating beauty to reveal to us. He is so illimitable that no religion however perfect (only relatively) can express His infinite perfection. Thus every religion, truly speaking, speaks only one letter of the word of God the almighty. Divine knowledge and wisdom is so deep and fathomless that it cannot be confined to one set of revealed books alone. Not only through the religious scriptures of the world but through science, philosophy, art and literature also the beauty and sublimity of a portion of the same Reality are being revealed to us day after day in ever newer and finer expressions and forms. Bacon says, "Knowledge is not a couch for the curious spirit, nor a terrace for the wandering, nor a tower of state for the proud mind, nor a vantage ground for the haughty nor a shop for profit and sale, but a store-house for the glory of God and the endowment of mankind."

There are some scientists and philosophers in the modern time who, also, in some form or other, worship the idol of finality and say that their line of thought or discovery is probably the last word on the subject. Some of them appear to me as dogmatic, intolerant and narrow-minded as the followers of some faiths. Luckily the number of such votaries of science and philosophy, is very much reduced and some of them have begun to feel that they alone are not the exclusive explorers of the range of human knowledge, nor is their method infallible. Not long ago some of the Western thinkers used to pooh-pooh the

very idea of spirit and used to assert that beyond reason there was no possibility of the existence of any such thing as intuition. But the philosophical speculations of eminent thinkers like Bradley, Bergson and Sir Oliver Lodge, have given the lie to these reckless assumptions and assertions. A truly broadminded and deep thinker, who is alive to the present limitations of human knowledge and who does not ignore its endless depth, possibilities and limitless boundary, surely would say things with caution and reservation and would not arrogate to his line of thought the exclusive merit of supremacy.

Once Herbert Spencer remarked, "It is easy to assert and hard to prove," and so it is. What right has a student of physical science to assert that his methods and results are superior to those of a philosopher or a devotee of spiritual knowledge? He should make ample allowance for the fact that he is discovering only a fringe of human knowledge and that he has absolutely no right, in the absence of any direct experience, to say one way or the other against any system of thought that is being pursued contrary to his own. One has no right to pass verdict against any rival system of thought unless and until one knows it

fairly well. Of all people, scientists and philosophers should be the very last to believe in the finality of anything, when they have abundant proof that evolution is the law of our being and that whatever was considered beyond the region of possibility a century ago and was altogether unknown to our forbears, is now a matter of common knowledge. Would it be, therefore, inconsistent to suppose that in the course of time things we are puzzling over might come within the purview of our knowledge?

Sir Radhakrishnan, in one of his latest utterances in Nagpur, says, "Relativity is not confined to science; it has invaded every other region. We have a complete distrust of all finalities, of all absolutisms, and every one comes forward and tells us, 'Here we have a final ready-made revelation.' We tell him there is no such thing like that."

When once the process of growth and evolution in every thing is acknowledged to be a general law of our life, we cannot reasonably stop at any conclusion and say it is final. In the moving, changing and evolving world nothing is or can possibly be regarded as final. It is time that we should get over this error of our thought.

UNION OF SIVA AND SAKTI AS INTERPRETED BY NATHA-YOGIS

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

In the authoritative treatises of the *Nâtha-yogi sampradâya*, which was organised by the illustrious religious teacher Gorakhnath and developed by his followers, but which traces its origin and continuity from the earliest times, a *yogi* who has established himself permanently in the highest state of per-

fection is known as *avadhuta*. The term *avadhuta* means a person, who rises above all the *vikâras* or transformations of *prakriti*, who is absolutely untouched by all impurities, all limitations, all changes, all bondages and sufferings. He is said to become a *Nâtha* (Lord) in the true sense of the

term, inasmuch as he attains perfect mastery over *prakriti*,—absolute control over his thoughts, feelings and desires, over his intellect, mind, senses and body, as well as over time and space, inertia and gravity, the laws of nature and the characters of the physical elements. In his bodily life he is described as taking *bhoga* or enjoyment in one hand and *tyâga* or renunciation in the other, and as living and moving in this world without being in the least affected by *bhoga* and *tyâga*. Every word he speaks becomes Veda or self-revelation of truth, every spot he steps in becomes a *tirtha* or holy place, every glance of his eyes brings out the message of *kaivalya* or transcendental absolute consciousness. He is above all distinctions of caste, creed and sex, above the limitations of nationality and community.

The internal nature of such an *avadhuta* is described as the perfect union of Siva and Sakti. He is said to attain a plane of consciousness in which Siva and Sakti are realized as identical with and in eternal embrace with each other. The conceptions of Siva and Sakti exhaust the entire universe of actual and possible thought, and they appear to be mutually exclusive. Siva is conceived as the Principle of absolute unity, and Sakti as the Principle of multiplicity. Siva is regarded as the eternally changeless Being, above time and space, and Sakti as the eternally moving and acting Power, manifesting Herself in time and space. Siva implies pure, differenceless, unmodified consciousness, which is identical with pure Being or Existence, and Sakti implies phenomenal consciousness,—intellectual, emotional and volitional processes. Siva implies Absolute Good, above the distinctions of good and evil, ought and ought not, the ideal and the actual, while Sakti is manifested in the relati-

vity of good and evil, the ideal and the actual, and movement from the one to the other. Siva implies perfect rest, calmness and silence, while Sakti implies action, agitation and self-uttering. Siva is eternally static, and Sakti is eternally dynamic. So far as our logical consciousness goes, the two concepts are opposed to each other,—it is in contradistinction from the one that the other is understood.

In what we regard as the normal states of our existence, our consciousness passes from unity to multiplicity and from multiplicity to unity, from changelessness to change and from change to changelessness, from rest to activity and from activity to rest, from the static condition to the dynamic condition and from the dynamic to the static. It cannot think of perfect unity without discarding multiplicity nor can it think of multiplicity without veiling unity. It cannot conceive of the absolutely changeless Being without driving out the idea of change from the mind, nor can it conceive of phenomena and changes and relations without removing the notion of the changeless Being to the background. Thus if the idea of Siva gets hold of the consciousness, the idea of Sakti cannot be prominently present before it; on the other hand so long as the idea of Sakti is predominant in the consciousness, the idea of Siva is veiled. Siva and Sakti cannot reveal themselves fully in their perfect characters to the normal consciousness of any individual. The experience of absolute unity with countless multiplicity, of absolute changelessness with beginningless and endless changes, of perfect rest with constant action, of pure differenceless self-luminous consciousness with varieties of knowledge and emotion and will, of eternally realized good with the distinctions of good and evil, ought and ought not, does not appear to be pos-

sible to the human mind as we know it to be constituted.

In our mundane existence we are in the domain of Sakti. Every man experiences himself as one of the innumerable individuals in this bewilderingly diversified world. He experiences constant changes and activities round about himself as well as within himself. He is constantly moved by diverse kinds of feelings and desires, passions and inclinations, ideals and aspirations. He meets with divergences of interests, leading to mutual rivalries and conflicts, struggles for self-preservation and self-development, survival of the fittest and destruction of the unfit. He experiences a vast world, boundless in time and space, consisting of multiplicity of forces and objects, which affect him in various ways. All these are the expressions of Sakti. In the midst of these, every man feels himself under bondage and limitation, suffers sorrows and troubles and is moved by an inner craving for emancipation. The very consciousness of bondage and limitation and imperfection becomes painful. In order to get rid of this painful state of existence, a man seeks for perfect unity, changelessness, differencelessness, calmness and rest. The dynamic state of consciousness being experienced as full of miseries, a perfectly static state of consciousness is thought of as highly desirable and as the only refuge for peace.

Proceeding in this line of thought and undergoing a systematic course of spiritual discipline conducive to the realization of this ideal, a man ascends to higher and higher planes of unity, changelessness, differencelessness, calmness and rest. The higher he rises, the more indifferent he becomes to multiplicity, changes, actions and relations, and these become more and more unreal to him. Ultimately when he rises

to the highest state of trance (*samâdhi*) through the practice of deep meditation, he realizes absolute unity, changelessness, differencelessness, calmness and rest in his consciousness. His consciousness then becomes, or more properly, is realized as one without a second, without any process or activity, without any change or modification, without any differentiation or multiplication. It is no longer an individual consciousness, related to other consciousnesses and other objects. It is experienced as the one universal absolute consciousness identical with Pure Being. In it the ideals of Good, Beauty and Truth are absolutely identified. These are merged in the differenceless attributeless nature of Pure Being-consciousness. This consciousness is realized as Siva Himself, otherwise called Brahman or Paramâtman or the Absolute. Thus when Siva in His perfect nature occupies the entire consciousness of the individual, or rather, when the consciousness realizes itself as Siva, Sakti is found to be altogether absent; she has vanished in the same way as an illusion vanishes at the appearance of Truth.

When the consciousness attains this state of changeless, differenceless, attributeless, self-luminous, absolute unity, a man gets rid of all senses of limitations and imperfections, all feelings of bondages and sufferings; he feels that he has nothing else to know, nothing else to gain, nothing else to do, nothing else to enjoy. He realizes that this perfectly static state of consciousness is the end of the journey of his mundane life, which might have passed through numerous births and deaths. Thus so long as the consciousness is within the domain of Sakti, it suffers from bondage and imperfection and misery, and when it ascends to and establishes itself in the plane of Siva,

it attains perfect peace, perfect bliss, absolute liberation.

Some religious sects, taking their stand on this trance-experience of the absolutely static, differenceless, non-dualistic state of consciousness and the absolute emancipation from bondage and limitation and sorrow at this state, recognize this experience as the perfect criterion of Absolute Truth and conceive this changeless, differenceless, non-dualistic Being-consciousness or Siva as the Absolute Reality. Accordingly they regard Sakti and Her diversified self-manifestations as unreal or illusory. Sakti exhibits Herself as real only so long as the true nature of the Absolute Reality is not revealed in consciousness. But this dancing Sakti, who appears to be creating and sustaining and destroying the multiplicity of the world, is in truth nothing but a shadowy illusory appearance on the substratum of Siva, who alone is absolutely real. As soon as the true character of Siva reveals itself to the consciousness, the cosmic dance of Sakti immediately disappears once for all. This disappearance of Sakti from the scene of consciousness at the appearance of Siva can be accounted for only by regarding Her as unreal and illusory. Hence so long as Sakti plays Her part in the consciousness of a man, he is to be regarded as suffering from an illusion or seeing a vision in dream, as it were; and the origin of this illusion must be his ignorance of the true nature of the Reality. When this ignorance is got rid of, Sakti no longer exists. Sakti, so long as Her illusory appearance continues, seems to put a veil upon the true character of Siva and to perform the operations of apparently cutting Him to pieces and showing Him as diverse realities. When as the result of the spiritual discipline of the human consciousness, Siva finds opportunity to

assert Himself, He appears as the Destroyer of Sakti, the Destroyer of the world of multiplicity and change. Siva and Sakti cannot be realized as equally true, they cannot embrace each other in the highest plane of consciousness,—in the plane of Truth.

Logically also, it is held, the concepts of Siva and Sakti, as explained before, are opposed to each other and they cannot be equally real. Further, as the diversified manifestations of Sakti are essentially and substantially non-different from Sakti, so Sakti also is essentially and substantially non-different from Siva. It is Siva, who really exists by, in and for Himself, and who appears to manifest Himself through Sakti in diverse names and forms. The differences among the phenomenal realities lie only in names and forms, and not in substance. If these unsubstantial names and forms are eliminated, nothing but Siva remains. These diversified manifestations, these names and forms, cannot be realities of the same order as Siva. Thus the only relation, which can be rationally regarded as subsisting between Siva and the world of multiplicity, is that between reality and appearance, substratum and illusion. Hence when Siva, the Reality or Substratum, shines in His true self-luminous character, the multiplicity, which is mere appearance or illusion, cannot at the same time exist as real, and accordingly Sakti can have no place by His side.

According to this school of thought, the highest ideal of spiritual life is to realize that Siva alone is real and Sakti is false, that the differenceless, changeless, self-existent, self-luminous One is the Absolute Reality, and the plurality of experiencing subjects and experienced objects is only an illusory appearance. When this highest truth is realized, the saint becomes naturally indifferent to

all worldly affairs, and these cannot produce any disturbance in his consciousness. It is to be expected that after this realization the consciousness of the saint, having been once freed from the experience of the illusory changes and diversities and established in its real Siva-hood, should no more fall a victim to the illusion and should not again come down within the illusory dominion of Sakti. But it is actually found that even after this self-realization life, mind, senses and body are retained; these are apparently affected by the variety of subjective and objective experiences; the forces of the world of *mâyâ* operate on them and produce hunger and thirst, strength and weakness, disease and cure, pleasure and pain, and so on. How can illusion continue even after the reality is directly experienced?

This is explained by an appeal to the theory of *prârabdha*, which implies that the illusory *karma* (action), as the result of which the illusory appearance of this body with life, mind and senses was produced or which may be said to have been solidified into this bodily existence, continues to run its course even after the realization of the Absolute Reality and to bear its illusory fruits, such as the diversities of experiences, pleasure and pain, etc. When this *prârabdha karma* exhausts itself through *bhoga* (enjoyment and suffering), the course of bodily existence comes to its natural end, and there is no more the possibility of the production of any further illusion. Having thus attained perfect freedom from the illusory connection with the illusory body, the individual consciousness gets rid of its apparent individuality and the concomitant experiences of plurality, and fully realizes its identity with or non-difference from Siva or Brahman.

Now it is obvious that according to

this view, the *prârabdha karma*, with its fruits, viz., the body, the mind, the variety of experiences, etc., though illusory and born of Ignorance, is not destroyed by or does not vanish in the presence of true Knowledge. That is to say, Ignorance goes on producing illusory appearances on the substratum of the Absolute Reality at least in some respects, even though the Reality is shining in its true character by its own self-luminosity. This seems to involve a palpable self-contradiction. True Knowledge and illusion cannot be conceived as co-existent. Hence either it should be confessed that so long as the bodily existence with its experiences continues, perfect truth-realization is not possible, or the bodily existence with its concomitants should not be regarded as illusory and born of pure Ignorance. If the former alternative be accepted, then truth-realization becomes altogether impossible, because in the disembodied state the practice of contemplation, meditation and trance is not possible, and no new realization, other than what has been attained in the bodily state, can be supposed to be attainable. In the absence of the spiritual practices, perfect truth-realization cannot be regarded as the natural result of the exhaustion of *prârabdha* and the end of the present bodily life. It is also not quite reasonable to hold that the Absolute Truth is realized in this bodily life only in the state of trance, when there is no experience of the body, the individuality and the diversity, but that the illusion reappears when the trance-state is gone and there is descent of the consciousness to the lower planes. Why should there be any fall from the trance-state and descent into the illusion, after the Truth is perfectly realized? If truth-realization can be followed by ignorance in this life, it should have the possibility of being followed by ignor-

ance in all cases and *mukti* cannot be expected to be permanent.

Moreover, if the experience of the changeless, differenceless unity be a special form of experience attainable only in the trance-state, whereas in the other states of consciousness diversities are experienced within and without, then consciousness should be reasonably conceived as *really* admitting of changes of states, and no rational ground would be found for holding that the experience of one particular state gives true Knowledge of the Absolute Reality and the experiences of other states are illusions. True Knowledge directly attained ought to drive out illusion once for all and it should not be the special property of consciousness in any particular state, allowing ignorance and illusion to vitiate it in all other states. Further, if this trance-experience cannot destroy the illusory fruits of the illusory *prârabdha*, what is the guarantee that it destroys the possibility of the fructification of *sanchita* (stored-up) and *kriyamâna* (current) *karma*?

These and such other difficulties arise, if Sakti and Her transformations into multiplicity be regarded as illusory and false, if the reality of Sakti be regarded as ultimately incompatible with the reality of Siva. Philosophically also, if the Absolute Reality be conceived as a perfectly static non-dual Being, it becomes difficult to account for the illusory appearance of the Dynamic Power—Sakti—and Her creative and destructive activities. The upholders of this conception also try to explain Sakti and Her operations and the cosmic Ignorance at their root as *Inexplicable* in terms of Being or Non-Being or Becoming.

The Siddha-yogis of Gorakhnath's school, however, do not regard Sakti as altogether illusory and born of Ignorance, and the ultimate ideal of their spiritual culture is not mere

emancipation from Sakti, but complete mastery over Her through self-identification with Siva. They assert that the apparent antagonism between Siva and Sakti—between unity and multiplicity, changelessness and change, whole and part, rest and action, pure consciousness and the conscious states and processes—is no doubt true in the lower planes of experience and thought, so long as the individual consciousness is under the limitations of time and space and is under the necessity of viewing itself and its experiences in terms of temporal and spatial relations. Sakti, though standing and playing her role on the breast of Siva, though existing and moving eternally as the inseparable consort of Siva, though having no existence apart from and independent of Siva, acts in these planes of our consciousness as a veil upon the true character of Siva and thereby puts a veil upon Her own true nature as well. A complete experience and even thought about Reality is then unavailable. In the highest spiritual plane, the consciousness transcends the limitations of time and space, the veil upon its view disappears, and it experiences the complete nature of Reality in Its true character.

When this *yogaja drishti* (vision born of *yoga*) is attained, no incompatibility between the perfect self-shining of Siva and the phenomenal manifestation of Sakti is experienced. Siva and Sakti are experienced as eternally wedded to each other, both shining together, each illuminating, and not veiling or distorting, the true character of the other. They are realized as the static and the dynamic aspects of the same non-dual self-luminous Absolute Reality, and as such are not only inalienable from, but also non-different from, each other. It is realized that unity, that changeless Being is the self

multiplicity is the self-manifestation of unity, that Changeless Being is the self of change and action, and changes and activities are the expression of changeless Being, that self-luminosity is the soul of the states and processes of consciousness and the latter are the special forms in which the former exhibits itself. So long as Siva does not reveal Himself in His true transcendent character to the consciousness of the individual, it is the play of His own Sakti that veils this character and exhibits Him as a system of diversities, and these diverse manifestations of Siva through His Sakti appear as separate realities to that individual consciousness, which also is one of these manifestations. It is in accordance with the law of the self-determined nature of the Sakti of Siva that among these manifestations the rational consciousness of man gradually evolves out of the lower forms of consciousness, the higher forms of psycho-physical organism are developed out of the lower forms, and so on. It is in accordance with the same law that the human consciousness rises to higher and higher planes of experience and thought through appropriate discipline and culture and ultimately ascends to the highest plane through the systematic practice of *yoga* (in which *karma*, *jnâna* and *bhakti* are synthesized, harmonized and fulfilled). In this highest plane Sakti with Her diversified manifestations does not vanish or prove to be illusory, but She no longer veils the transcendent, self-luminous, non-dual character of Siva and no longer makes the diversities appear as separate realities. The entire nature of Sakti with all Her manifestations is then experienced as illumined by the self-luminosity of Her self and Lord, Siva,—all plurality, changes and actions are experienced as the expressions

of and non-different from unity, changelessness and rest. The static and the dynamic aspects of Reality are experienced as one undivided Whole.

Thus Siva and Sakti in eternal union represent, according to this view, the nature of the Absolute Reality. This is the ultimate nature of Brahman or Paramâtman or Bhagavân. The *yogi* realizes this Truth and is identified with It at the stage of the highest perfection of his *yoga-sâdhanâ*. He then becomes *avadhuta* or Sri Nâtha. This view is distinguished from Absolute Non-Dualism (*Visuddha-advaita-vâda*), inasmuch as Sakti is not here regarded as false or illusory and as not ultimately pertaining to the true nature of Brahman or Siva, and Siva or Brahman, i.e., the Absolute Reality, is not regarded as an altogether differenceless, attributeless, manifestationless, enjoymentless existence. It is also distinguished from Dualism (*Dvaita-vâda*), inasmuch as it does not regard Sakti as distinct from, though related to and under the control of, Siva. It is distinguishable from Qualified Non-Dualism (*Visishta-advaita-vâda*) as well, because it does not hold that Sakti is in reality different from Siva, though eternally and inseparably pertaining to Siva as His attribute or embodiment. The *yogis* accordingly proclaim that the Absolute Truth, as realized at the highest stage of spiritual experience, is above Dualism and Non-dualism and all other 'isms', that It is incapable of being adequately expressed or understood in terms of any of these metaphysical theories and convincingly established by the methods of Formal Logic. All these theories assume in the very beginning the distinction and the antagonism as well as the relation between substance and attribute, cause and effect, unity and diversity, rest

and action, changelessness and change, i.e., between Siva and Sakti, on the basis of normal, mental and sensuous experience. Then they move upward to bring about a logical reconciliation of these distinct and related concepts in the plane of the Absolute Truth. But the supersensuous and supermental spiritual experience of this plane can never be adequately explained in terms of the logical categories of the sensuous and mental planes. Hence every religio-metaphysical view is found to be challenged and refuted by other views, and no view becomes logically unassail-

able. The Siddha-yogis take their stand on the supra-spatial and supra-temporal experience of the super-sensuous and supermental plane and assert that in that plane of experience such logical difficulties do not arise at all. All the problems arising from reflection upon the experiences of the lower planes are most satisfactorily solved by the actual experience of the highest spiritual plane. The *yogis* who become in this life fully established in this plane of experience are known as *avadhutas* or *Nâthas* in the true sense.

THE AGE OF WOMAN

BY PROF. E. P. HORRWITZ

All things pass away, but their essence is everlasting, and the spiritual fragrance remains. The golden age realized this eternal truth and meditated on the Uncreate out of which this fugitive existence has sprung. The Unseen floats like a magic veil worn by our lady of joys and sorrows. The golden age worshipped the Lord of light and life, and ignored his manifestation, the mundane display of phenomena. All of us are numbers in the cosmic masquerade; we dance, sing, act in the play of life until the hour of unmasking. What is meant by "unmasking"? The word does not necessarily mean death or rebirth of the physical body; unmasking rather signifies the rebirth of the soul, spiritual regeneration, and awakening of the spirit from social and economic bondage; shaking off the fetters of fear, passion and prejudice which we have forged, recovering our true and higher self, regaining the golden equilibrium! But we no longer live in the golden past when all was

bliss and unconcern; ours is the strenuous life, a restless age of complicated machinery, mass production and overproduction, elaborate technique. In the Kali era, to use the Hindu term, every human interest is directed toward tangible results and profits. Our Father in heaven, the guide of the golden age, co-operates with Kâli, our Mother on earth; She is the motive power of electricity and industrial collaboration. Science, busy as a bee, investigates nature in every nook and corner. Never in human history has there been an era, so crowded with mechanical inventions and geographical discoveries as our age of electric appliances, X-rays, radium and rapid air voyages across the top of the world, from hemisphere to hemisphere. The Divine Mother manages and manipulates all this inexhaustible energy in the rhythmic cosmos; Her reproductive and recuperative force supplies our personal dynamo of strength, joy, thrill and skill. The self-complete age of transcendental

truth has gone forever. Each organism in the golden gone-by combined male and female, united positive and negative electricity, was a complete unity in itself. No divine incarnations were needed; each unit of humanity was a godman. But in the Kali age all is hustle and bustle and scheming; the divided sexes have to make a concord, and choose affinities in order to restore the forfeited oneness of life, and regain paradise lost. Mother Kâli dictates and directs the Kali era or age of woman. Woman acts as a cultural go-between; through her intermediary, teachers of spiritual culture, literary lore and artistic accomplishments appeal to their students. She was ignored in the vanished past of self-completion and golden truth, but the whole cultural edifice of our machine age would crumble and collapse without the co-operative aid of womanhood.

And indeed there is no valid reason why the two sexes should not join forces for the betterment of the community. Neither sex has an inferiority complex. It is absurd to call woman either inferior or superior to man. Both have their fixed and immutable functions on the physical, social and cultural plane. They supplement rather than antagonize one another. Man is the creative and productive part in the scheme of things; woman, physically as well as mentally, is receptive and responsive. No human law or theory can ever reverse this original design of nature which Mother Kâli planned and ordained. Shakespeares, Murillos and Mozarts have all been men, and not women. On the other hand, these masculine merchants of light, and carriers of pregnant culture, have never been without the vital inspiration of noble women. The genius of Dante was set afire by Beatrice, of Michel Angelo by Vittoria Colonna, and so on.

Woman's place in creation is co-equal to the position taken by man. As a rule, he is opinionated, argumentative, rational, but lacks the finer fancy and daintier tact with which Mother Kâli has abundantly endowed the feminine sex. Women unravel many a domestic and social tangle because they can discern behind hard facts basic causes to which men are blind, despite keen logic and fierce argument. Reason and intuition, both being tributaries to supersensuous vision, dovetail and fulfil each other; it is desirable that the two sexes should harmoniously and conjointly work out the furtherance of civilization and the welfare of humanity.

The age of electricity, agitated and excited as it necessarily is, embraces international co-operation and world-citizenship. Colonial exploitation and aggressive nationalism, it seems to me, experience their last historic flicker in this present decade. Fraternalization of the world's workers and constructive collectivism are near at hand—in fact have already begun. Even in capitalistic America we are right in the midst of a social and industrial revolution. This gigantic upheaval in economics (to which politics is assigned as a submissive handmaid) also means a cultural revolt against outworn conventions and petrified traditions. In this cultural protest (which is still in the making) woman is bound to play a prominent part. Ladies of the Vedanta League, prepare yourselves for the New Protestantism! In your folder I notice among the primary objects of the League "The spread of universal brotherhood and cultural enlightenment." Remember that modern culture is international and chiefly rests on world literature. The dynamic ideas and ideals presented by titans of thought in past ages and far-off lands cannot but fortify your

growing minds for the cultural battle in which we are engaged.

The better educated you are, the more fitly you can instruct others. Be enthused about whatever is noble, lofty and sublime in world literature, and you are sure to enthuse your men-folks; they will readily follow your blazing trail. The world's poetry is full of Vedantic wisdom, cognizing the One in the many, perceiving abiding unity in passing multiplicity. Vanity Fair is a butterfly and daydream, but the spring of life is everlasting.

Endless is life, but to an end

comes all;

Light laughter, merry snatches

sung at ease.

Gay peacocks walk the crumbling

garden wall,

And hoopoes flash their gilt among

green trees.

They are dream-generated, we

ourselves are dreams.

Life is unreal; nothing is, but

seems.

But whatever subject you take up do not forget the preamble in your folder—to evolve American culture on a positive and vital foundation! And bear in mind that man depends for guidance on feminine intuition and affection. Go ahead then and be of good cheer.

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE UPANISHADIC AGE

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

The spiritual thoughts of India that have sustained the life of its people for ages through many a vicissitude have been conveyed to us in a vast collection of literature called the Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindus. They represent the entire culture of a very ancient people belonging to an epoch that extends over more than a millennium and have been handed down from generation to generation through verbal transmission from which they have acquired the name *Sruti* (from the root *sru*, to hear). They wield supreme authority in all matters religious, and the least infringement of them is regarded by the Hindus as a great sacrilege.

A close study of the Vedas as a whole reveals to us the fact that the religious life of the ancient Indians flowed through two distinct channels. Those who, with a materialistic outlook on life, desired to enjoy it fully here on earth as well as in the world beyond

where enjoyment would be only thousandfold magnified, being uncontaminated by sorrows and griefs, were the followers of the path of *preyas* (pleasure or prosperity). To achieve their end they took to action which they considered to be a sure means of attaining happiness on earth and a fit vehicle for carrying them after death to *svarga* the abode of eternal bliss. But there were others who probed deeper into the mysteries of life and finding the earthly existence to be evanescent in its very nature turned their thoughts towards the abiding Reality that is behind this ever-changing phenomenon. They were the followers of the path of *sreyas* (the everlasting good); and eschewing all action they resorted to the quiet life of contemplation and meditation whereby they wanted to reach their supreme goal. The ritualistic religion as detailed in the *Samhitas* and *Brahmanas* marks the path of *preyas*, whereas the philoso-

phical religion as revealed in the Upanishads shows the way to *sreyas*. As a matter of fact there existed a sort of antagonism between these two diametrically opposite ideals, and oftener than not the votaries of the respective creeds came in conflict with one another. But the spirit of toleration characteristic of the Indians, triumphed in the end and brought about a happy reconciliation between the two schools of thought.

It is indeed interesting to find how a successful attempt was made in the Upanishads to weave the old ritualism into the very texture of their religious thoughts. This has, however, been done through the slow process of sublimation and substitution, which is evident even in the dim but glorious days of yore. The *Brihadâraṇyaka*, one of the oldest Upanishads, opens with the following stanzas that show how the process was at work: "The head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn, its eyes the sun, its vital breath (*prâna*) the air, its open mouth the fire called *vaisvânara*, and the body of the sacrificial horse the year,"¹ etc. The horse-sacrifice, one of the principal rites of the *Yajur-Veda*, has been thus sublimated to the meditation of the cosmic being (*Hiranyagarva*). Again the Sruti says, "Purusha is verily the sacrifice;"² "Atman is the sacrificer, intellect is the wife, the Vedas are the great priests."³ Here the entire outlook of sacrifice is changed, and it is substituted by a higher form of meditation which can hardly be called a sacrifice in its original ritualistic connotation.

Thus the Upanishads without antagonizing ritualism have conceded a place to it and by a slow and steady method have turned the minds of those

who were already engrossed in it, towards some higher ideal of life.

But the lofty spiritual idealism embodied in the Upanishads transcended all these rituals in whatever form it may be viewed or interpreted. The Sruti, therefore, unequivocally declares: "Neither through rituals (*karma*) nor through progeny or wealth, but through renunciation alone, persons attain to immortality."⁴ The religion of the Upanishads does not consist in the mechanical observance of any such rituals; neither does it consist in a passive acquiescence in any set dogmas or doctrines. It is a process of being and becoming and is, as such, concerned mostly with life and experience. It is a growth from within, an ascent from one's lower nature to the higher. Its appeal is to the most universal aspect of human nature, urging everybody, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, to rise to the radiance of spirit. It is, in short, our very being and fulfils itself in and through the multifarious duties of our daily life.

The Upanishadic religion presents itself in two forms, social and spiritual. In its social aspect it is concerned with *niti* (ethics) governing the various social institutions, and in its spiritual aspect it consists of *upâsanâ* (worship) and *yoga* (psychic control) culminating in *anubhûti* (apperception) and *moksha* (final liberation).

ETHICS

Religion is broad-based on ethics. To live a religious life one must first lead a life of strict moral discipline without which no progress in spirituality is ever possible. The Upanishads have rightly declared that the secret of religion should only be imparted to that pupil "who has approached him (*guru*)

¹ *Brih. Up.* I. 1. 1.

² *Chhând. Up.* III. 16. 1.

³ *Prânâgñihotra Up.*

⁴ *Kaiv. Up.* 2.

with due respect, whose thoughts are free from any desire and are perfectly composed.”⁵ This fact has been very beautifully portrayed in the dialogue between Nachiketas and Yama. The latter tempted the boy with all pleasures of heaven and earth and tried to dissuade him from enquiring about the nature of the Soul. But the boy Nachiketas declined all offers with disdain on account of their evanescent nature and remained firm and steadfast in his resolve to know the truth. Needless to say such an undaunted spirit and sincerity of purpose that characterized this noble personality, were but the *natural outcome* of a life that was well grounded in discipline.

It may, however, be argued that ethics which is essentially concerned with social relationships, and works only in a world of plurality, in a society of many individuals, is totally divorced from a philosophy that proclaims the absolute unity of all beings and admits of no second. The teachings of the Upanishads that are preeminently of non-dual character must, therefore, be diametrically opposed to all moral code and as such, should be discarded as utterly useless for society.

But this charge is entirely baseless and only betrays a woeful lack of understanding of the true significance of the Upanishadic teachings. The Upanishads do not take ethics for its own sake. It is taken, however, as a means for realizing the supreme end of life. In fact a strictly moral life is the *sine qua non* of spiritual progress, and a life is not worth having unless it is based on the *terra firma* of moral virtues. But the outlook of an individual undergoes a complete metamorphosis when the ultimate reality is visualized. For, with the dawn of knowledge his personality becomes fully transfigured and

all ideas of relativity dissolve into an abiding consciousness of the spirit that pervades the entire creation from the highest to the lowest. To such a realized soul “a father is (then) no father, mother is no mother, the worlds no worlds, the gods no gods, the Vedas no Vedas.”⁶ Thus in fact he transcends the limitations of moral codes or social conventions; but it must not be forgotten that such a dynamic personality imbued with divine consciousness becomes an unfailing source of inspiration to his fellow-beings, and of positive good to society which is all the more advanced on the path of moral progress through his sterling spiritual contribution.

But as the world stands, to a vast majority of people, the realization of the Atman is not an accomplished fact,—it is a mere possibility. They are to strive towards the attainment of this ultimate unity in a world of plurality. To these struggling souls ethics is full of meaning and is an indispensable help for their spiritual advancement. It is out of a sheer confusion between the end and the means that some people brand the Upanishadic teachings as non-ethical and declare them to be utterly useless for human society. But their usefulness in this practical world of ours can hardly be over-emphasized.

Moreover, it is the Upanishads that have furnished a real criterion of morality in human society. Ethics to be worthy of its name must be based on the principle of ultimate unity. All the best moral injunctions, such as, “Love thy neighbours as thyself,” “Do not hurt any being,” have their sanction only in the unity of all beings. If one is fundamentally different from another, why should one love him and not hate or kill him if one can thereby only gain one’s own end? The Upa-

⁵ *Mund. Up.* 1. 2. 13.

⁶ *Brih. Up.* IV. 3. 22.

nishads emphatically declare: "It is not for the sake of others that they are dear to us, but for our own sake they are loved."⁷ We love most our own self and it is because that very self resides in all that we also love them all. Thus it is in these Upanishadic teachings alone that we find a rational explanation for all moral acts and dealings, and it is upon such a philosophy of universal unity that any decent ethical code can be built.

The ethics of the Upanishad has also its support in its doctrine of *karma*, which makes everybody responsible for his own deeds. We reap what we sow. "One becomes good through good work and evil through evil work," so says the *Sruti*,⁸ and there is hardly any escape therefrom. We ourselves are the makers of our own destiny and it behoves us that we should act in such a way that we may not repent for our own actions in the long run but become great and noble thereby. None have any reason to complain against their fate, as the power to make and unmake it is already vested in them. This idea of responsibility mitigates, to a large extent, the innumerable sufferings in the world and serves as a great incentive to a moral and virtuous life.

The Upanishads have viewed the life of a man as a whole and adumbrated such rules and regulations as may suit persons in different stations of life for the realization of the ultimate Reality. They have divided the life of a person into four *âsramas* or stages and enjoined duties pertaining thereto. Besides, they have referred to four *varnas* or castes also in accordance with different social occupations and formulated duties for each of them. Thus, ethics which governs the whole society concerns itself mainly with *âsramadharma* and *varnadharma*; but

at the same time great emphasis has been laid on some of the most fundamental moral qualifications such as *sraddhâ* (faith), *satyam* (truthfulness), *dama* (self-control), *dâna* (charity) and *dayâ* (compassion), which are to be acquired by all irrespective of caste or creed. These are the most potent factors in moulding one's character and are indispensable under all circumstances.

Sraddhâ brings about the requisite concentration of the mind and makes it penetrate deep into the mysteries of life and realize the ultimate verity of existence. *Âruni* asked his son *Svetaketu* to have faith in his words when the former found the boy unable to grasp the truth even though he had repeatedly explained the same to him. True *sraddhâ* or unflinching faith in one's own self which is instinct with immense possibility emboldens one to do wonders in this world. To such a man of faith nothing human is impossible. Armoured with an impregnable faith in himself, *Nachiketas*, the hero of the *Kathopanishad*, went to the very abode of *Yama*, the Lord of death, at the bidding of his father and wrung out from him the secret of life which was not vouchsafed even unto the gods themselves.

Satyam or truthfulness also ranked very high in the estimation of the *rishis* of yore. Adherence to truth was a natural qualification with them⁹ and they unhesitatingly prescribed the same for all. They would make a *brahmachârin* begin his day's work with the promise that he would speak the truth. The same instruction is imparted to one who after his study is about to enter into the world: he should throughout his life "stick to truth and never swerve from it,"¹⁰ for "it is truth alone that triumphs

⁷ *Brih. Up.* II. 4. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.* III. 2. 13.

⁹ *Prasna Up.* VI. 1.

¹⁰ *Tait. Up.* I. 10.

and not falsehood."¹¹ It is "through truth that the path to the world of gods lies wide open."¹² Adherence to truth leads one even to the realization of the Atman, the acme of all human aspirations. "The Atman is attainable," says the Sruti, "through the practice of truthfulness."¹³

The Upanishads have also laid great stress upon the three other outstanding virtues, *dama*, *dāna* and *dayā*, which are expressed through the mysterious terms *da, da, da* (द, द, द) resembling the sound of the thunder. To show their universality and usefulness at all times the Upanishads declare: "That very thing is repeated by the heavenly voice, the cloud, 'da', 'da', 'da',—control thyself, make gift and have compassion; therefore one should learn these three—self-control, charity and compassion."¹⁴

Thus on the bed-rock of these few moral virtues is built the edifice of our spiritual life. Referring to their universal character, Patañjali in later days says: "These are the most universal moral practices which are not confined to any particular people, country, time or age."¹⁵

ASRAMAS

The division of life into different stages was a great achievement with the Upanishadic thinkers. Gifted with a rare insight into human nature they found that to realize life's highest ideal the majority of people should pass through the different stages of study, action, meditation and renunciation. With this end in view they divided life into four stages of *brahmacharya* (the stage of a student), *gārhasthya* (the stage of a householder), *vānaprastha*

(the stage of a recluse) and *sannyāsa* (the stage of a monk) through which one must pass in succession. "After finishing *brahmacharya*, one should become a householder, and after that, he should become a recluse, and after he has become a recluse, he should renounce and become a monk."¹⁶ But one may renounce from any stage if he has a genuine dispassion for the world. "Let one renounce from the stage of *brahmacharya* or from that of *gārhasthya* or *vānaprastha*: let him renounce the day he feels dispassion."¹⁷ Thus Yājñavalkya renounced from the stage of a householder¹⁸ and Upa-kosala was retained at the house of his teacher even after the completion of his study and was not sent home to embrace the life of a householder.¹⁹ This only points to the fact that there are different persons with different temperaments and if one is found fit for renunciation, he should not be perforce made to wait till the evening of his life. But barring these rare individuals, it is incumbent on all to pass through the four stages which constitute a complete scheme of life.

BRAHMACHARYA

Brahmacharya is the first *āsrāma* or stage. This is also sometimes understood merely as a course of discipline preliminary to *Brahmajñāna* or the knowledge of Brahman, and can be followed at any stage in life. Thus when six students approached Pippalāda for instruction on Brahman, the latter asked them to "live again in *brahmacharya*—for another year."²⁰ Prajāpati enjoined Indra, after every instruction, to practise *brahmacharya* for several consecutive years.²¹ In fact

¹¹ *Mund. Up.* III. 1. 6.

¹² *Ibid.* III. 1. 5.

¹³ *Ibid.* III. 5.

¹⁴ *Brih.* V. 2. 3.

¹⁵ *Yoga Aphor.* II. 36.

¹⁶ *Jābāla Up.* 4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Brih. Up.* IV. 5. 15.

¹⁹ *Chhând. Up.* IV. 10. 1.

²⁰ *Prasna Up.* I. 2.

²¹ *Chhând. Up.* VIII 7. 3.

brahmacharya, in whatever form it may be practised, means only a period of strict discipline. During this stage one is to pass through many an arduous test which is meant for the control of one's mind leading to deep concentration. To a man of concentration nature unreservedly discloses her secrets and the task of learning becomes easy for him. To train up students on this line the teacher sometimes used to impose on them manifold duties. Thus Satyākāma after being initiated into *brahmacharya* was sent to the forest to tend cattle for a few years. But when he returned after fulfilling his duty, he was found beaming with the knowledge of Brahman. These few years of strict discipline earned for him such a concentration of mind that he was able to read nature as an open book and know the profound truths lying hidden therein. Continence, faith, austerity and concentration—the inestimable acquisitions of this period of *brahmacharya*, hold the key that unlocks the mystery of nature.

Brahmachârins generally lived for twelve years in the family of their teachers for the study of the Vedas and rendered every kind of service unto the *guru* during this period of discipline. Attention was paid more to the formation of their character than to book-learning. There existed a very cordial relation between the teacher and the pupils. The former used to pray to the fire-god for more students to come to him and offered oblations wishing their safety and good. "May the *brahmachârins* come to me, svâhâh! May they practise restraint! May they enjoy peace! As water runs downwards, as the months go to the year, so, O Preserver of this world, may *brahmachârins* come to me, svâhâh!"²² The students also in their turn prayed to

God to protect the teacher, to make them both powerful, to make their study vigorous and to save them from quarrelling with each other.

Teaching was imparted to all gratis. It was the duty of a teacher to provide for the maintenance of the students for which he used to receive voluntary gifts from the kings. The house of every teacher resembled a university in miniature where the students without being cut off from home life got ample opportunity for high thinking in a congenial atmosphere of peace and holiness. They sometimes accompanied their preceptor to some philosophical conferences which afforded them much scope for widening their outlook. There were also wandering students who used to go out far and wide in quest of knowledge.²³ Besides the study of the Vedas, they were also taught such secular branches of knowledge as history, mathematics, the science of times, logic, ethics, politics, etymology, the science of war, astronomy, fine arts,²⁴ etc.

Brahmachârins were taught, above all, to abstain from sense-pleasure and observe continence. For once the mind is contaminated by sense-enjoyment, it will lose all its balance and run along the orbit of moral turpitude. Much emphasis has, therefore, been laid on continence in thought, word and deed, which is the indispensable condition of all spiritual progress. In eulogizing it, the Upanishads have rightly declared: "What they call sacrifice is only continence, as it is by means of continence that one attains to the realm of Brahman. And what they call worship (*ishtam*) is only continence, because it is by continence that, having worshipped the Lord, one reaches the Self."²⁵

²² *Tait. Up.* I. 4. 2-3.

²³ *Brih.* III. 7. 1.

²⁴ *Chhând. Up.* VII. 1. 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.* VIII. 5. 1.

GARHASTHYA

After the completion of the study of the Vedas as well as of the training in the manifold duties of life, a *brahmachârin*, with the kind permission of his teacher, returns home (*samâvartanam*), embraces married life and takes up the duties of a householder. It cannot be gainsaid that the responsibility of a householder's life is very great; for unless it is properly discharged there is every likelihood of the whole social fabric being shattered to pieces. The instruction imparted by the preceptor to a student on the eve of his entering into the life of a householder is, therefore, very significant: "Say what is true, do thy duty; do not neglect the study of the Vedas. Bring thy teacher a present that pleases him. Do not cut off the line of children. Swerve not from truth. Swerve not from duty. Do not neglect the learning and teaching of the Vedas. Neglect not the sacrificial works due unto the gods and fathers. Be thy mother to thee like unto a god. Be thy father to thee like unto a god. Be thy teacher to thee like unto a god. Be thy guest to thee like unto a god. . . . Whatever is given should be given with respect and not without respect . . . with joy, with modesty, with friendliness. . . . Thus conduct thyself. This is the commandment. This is the instruction. This is the import of the Vedas. This is the ordinance. Thus shalt thou act with worshipful regard. . . Thus should this be observed."²⁶

The life of a householder is not one of enjoyment and pleasure but of arduous duty and heavy responsibility. He is called upon to discharge a twofold duty of preserving the past culture entrusted to him and of rearing up a new generation that will be the custodian of the same in

the future. He has got his duty towards his parents and the teacher whom he is to serve to the best of his ability. He is to look after the proper education of his children, to whom he is himself to play very often the role of a teacher. The wife is also adequately trained in matters spiritual.²⁷ Moreover, the society demands of him help and guidance in times of scarcity and distress. Charity, therefore, forms a very important part of his duty. Amidst the crowded routine of his life he is, however, reminded to keep the flame of spirituality ever burning in his heart so that he may do everything in a spirit of self-sacrifice and thus acquire the purification of heart necessary for the realization of the life's highest ideal.

VANAPRASTHA

The life of a householder though laudable in many respects is not complete in itself. In the din and bustle of worldly life one is likely to miss the call of the Eternal that is ever beckoning him to the fulfilment of a higher duty in life. It, therefore, becomes one to bid adieu to all worldly duties at a certain stage and retire into a lonely retreat where one can devote one's whole time and energy to self-culture through meditation and austerity and thus qualify oneself for the knowledge of the Atman, the supreme goal of human life. In response to the call of the Divine the king Brihad-ratha obtained freedom from all desires and, after having established his son in his sovereignty, journeyed into the forest. Burning with the fire of renunciation and desiring nothing but the knowledge of the Atman, he practised hard austerities (*tapas*) for several years until he realized in his heart of hearts the ephemeral nature of the world. In a spirit of dispassion he uttered: "In such a world as this, what is the use of

²⁶ *Tait.* 1. 2. 1-7.

²⁷ *Brih.* II. 4. 1 ff.

enjoyment of pleasures if he who has fed on them is found to return (to this world) again and again”?

Thus it is seen that a *vânaprasthin*, through hard spiritual practices and rigorous discipline, gets his desires immensely attenuated in the solitary atmosphere of forest life and eventually becomes awakened to the consciousness of the eternal verity behind this changing phenomenon. He now devotes himself entirely to the task of rooting out even the last vestige of desire which may be still lingering in him. *Vânaprastha* is thus an intermediary stage between *samsâra* and *sannyâsa* affording facilities to prepare oneself for the last stage of renunciation that naturally comes to a man whose mind has been purged of all worldly taints.

SANNYASA

The fourth *âsrama* or *sannyâsa* is the natural culmination of the ethical life of the Upanishads. It is declared that the Atman which is bereft of all relations is the sole Reality, the realization of which constitutes the *summum bonum*. By fulfilling the various moral obligations incident to the different stages of life, one is only aspiring after the attainment of this supreme end. But until and unless one can completely disentangle oneself from the meshes of the world and thus make the mind free of all taints, there is not the least hope of one's realizing the same. The thinkers of the Upanishads being practical philosophers who wanted to live their philosophy in life, did not hesitate to put into practice what they theoretically understood to be true. Thus Yâjnavalkya, true to the philosophy he preached, left his hearth and home and wandered as a *sannyâsin*.²⁸ For did he not declare that “knowing this very Atman the Brâhmanas renounce the desires for son,

²⁸ *Brih. Up.* IV. 5. 15.

wealth and the worlds and lead a mendicants' life”²⁹?

Here *sannyâsa* is not to be understood as a means but as an end in itself. It is the very state of a man of realization whose shackles of the world have fallen off from him of their own accord and who has felt his identity with the entire cosmos. What home, therefore, can hold such a man and what relation can bind him to the world? *Sannyâsa* comes to him as a spontaneous result of his realization. This is what is called *vidvat sannyâsa* attained by such illustrious sages as Yâjnavalkya, Dattâtreyâ and the like.³⁰

There are, however, others who have felt within themselves the vanity of the world and have realized that “it is neither by work, nor by progeny or wealth, but by renunciation alone that one can attain to immortality.”³¹

Prompted by a spirit of dispassion, they embrace the life of a *sannyâsin* as a means to the realization of the Self. “Desiring this world (the Self) alone”, says the Sruti, “the monks renounce their home.”³² This is called *vividishâ sannyâsa*.

A further concession is, however, made in the case of those who have a genuine dispassion for the world but are not in a position to embrace *sannyâsa* on account of their physical disabilities. For such individuals it is declared: “If he is crippled, let him renounce in mind or speech.”³³

A *sannyâsin* being an *atyâsramin* (transcending the *âsramas*) is beyond all social conventions. Free as a bird he roams from place to place, living on what chance may bring. Having no fixed abode he passes the night either in a mountain cave, under a tree or on the

²⁹ *Ibid.* III. 5. 1.

³⁰ *Jâbâla* 6.

³¹ *Kaiv. Up.* 2.

³² *Brih. Up.* IV. 4. 22.

³³ *Jâbâla. Up.* 5.

river bank³⁴ away from the human habitations. Eschewing all luxuries and clad in soiled cloth he courts poverty as a safeguard against temptations. Free from all desires and coveting only the knowledge of the Atman he lives the life of an ideal man whose only concern in life is the liberation of the soul and the service of the humanity at large. His whole life is thus a constant sacrifice at

the altar of God and humanity. His very presence in a place breathes an atmosphere of peace and holiness. Preaching and teaching as he goes from place to place, he renders the greatest service to mankind by setting an example of simple living and high thinking.

Thus the four *âsramas* present a complete scheme of life following which one can reasonably aspire after the realization of the supreme Truth.

³⁴ *Jâbâla Up.* 6.

(To be continued)

GLEANINGS OF AN ECONOMIST

BY SHIB CHANDRA DUTTA, M.A., B.L.

ELECTRICITY FOR THE VILLAGES

Good roads, supply of pure drinking water and supply of cheap electricity are some of the crying needs of our villages to-day. It is pleasing therefore to find that the Ganges Canal Hydro-electric Scheme has been practically completed. That scheme includes the setting up of seven power stations. The total electricity to be supplied from these power stations is 28,000 kilowatts, of which 12,000 is meant for the pumping of 1500 state tube-wells. Water supplied from those tube-wells will be sold to agriculturists at rates approximately equal to those charged for canal water. In connection with the opening of the Chitaura power station included in the scheme, His Excellency Sir Harry Haig, Governor of the United Provinces, observed *inter alia*, "But the more significant fact to my mind about the Ganges Canal Hydro-electric Scheme is precisely this, that it has electrified the countryside, has made electricity available in hundreds of villages and small towns at a price which should be fully remunerative to small industries and has

thus provided a foundation on which I greatly hope it may be possible to build extensively for the rural industrialization of this great tract of country in the west of the province."

INDIA'S TRADE, 1936-37

In 1936-37 the value of India's export trade was Rs. 196 crores. This was Rs. 134 crores less than in 1928-29 but was Rs. 36 crores more than in 1935-36.

The value of India's import trade in 1936-37 was Rs. 125 crores. The corresponding figures for 1935-36 and 1928-29 were Rs. 134 crores and Rs. 253 crores respectively.

There has been a recovery in the demand for India's primary commodities. This has caused their prices to look up in varying proportions and has also brought about an increase in the volume of their exports.

Although 1936-37 showed some increase in India's export trade, both the export and import trades of India in that year were *much below* the figures for the pre-depression year, 1928-29.

The total balance of trade in favour

of India in 1936-37 was Rs. 92 crores. The figure for 1928-29 was Rs. 52 crores and for 1935-36 was Rs. 67 crores.

Export of gold from India began in 1932-33. The value of gold export in 1932-33 was Rs. 66 crores. In 1936-37 it amounted to Rs. 28 crores.

In 1936-37 India imported silver of the value of Rs. 14 crores.

The area under sugarcane showed a 75 per cent. increase in 1936-37 as compared with 1929-30. This was caused by the growth of the sugar industry.

The area under linseed also showed increase. This was due to a larger demand from the United Kingdom caused by the preference it received in that market.

1936-37 witnessed *considerable increase* in all industries except coal. As compared with 1932, the production of sugar more than trebled itself and of cotton piece-goods doubled itself. As compared with 1928-29, cement showed an 80 per cent. increase, steel 70 per cent. and paper 25 per cent. As compared with 1932-33, jute manufactures showed a 38 per cent. increase.

These figures clearly show that the industrialization of India has been proceeding apace.

CATTLE IN INDIA

Mr. E. A. Smythies, Chairman, Fodder and Grazing Committee, U. P., writes an excellent article on India's cattle problem in the *Statesman* for the 4th November, 1937. The writer points out that the total number of cattle in India is 220 million. The enormity of this number is well brought out when compared with the total for Germany, France, Britain, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Canada, the U. S. A., the Union of South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Argentine together, which is 182 million.

It appears from the detailed arguments

in the said article that the services obtained from the 220 million of India's cattle may well be obtained from a less number of more efficient cattle. India's cattle are pitifully under-fed, and hence to achieve that efficiency it is necessary first of all to increase the production of fodder for cattle. This can be done by growing grass on uncultivated lands. It is also pointed out that the increase in the yield per acre of human food crops is likely to release more lands for the cultivation of fodder crops. To improve the quality of the cattle effort in another direction is also necessary. Promiscuous breeding by scrub bulls running with the village herds must be stopped and along with the campaign for breeding by pedigree bulls a propaganda must be carried on for the castration of unpedigreed bulls.

A GLIMPSE OF ECONOMIC CHINA

80 per cent. of the Chinese are farmers.

The efforts of the Chinese Government are being directed towards a resuscitation of what are called the 'farmer villages.' In order to lighten the burden of taxation on the farmers the Government has abolished as many as 5000 kinds of taxes involving a sum of 50 million yuan a year. To encourage co-operative society business a new Bureau called the Co-operative Society Bureau has been established. The present number of co-operative societies is 26,224. An Agricultural Association has been established with a capital of 60 million yuan to provide farmers with loans and also for the sale and transportation of farm products. The Government has been paying due attention to the erection of embankments and the extension of roads and railways. The length of the railways is at present 13,000 kilometres. The length of the completed roads is 96,145 kilometres

and of roads under construction 16,000 kilometres. Aviation has not been neglected. Shanghai has been connected with Hankow, Chengtu, Peiping, Canton and some other cities by air services.

A scheme of currency reform was put through in 1935 with the help of Great Britain and the U. S. A.

The most important foreign countries in the order of their importance in the foreign trade of China are Great Britain, the U. S. A., Japan, Germany and France.

In 1936 Japan invested as much as 12 million yuan in various enterprises in China.

A Five-year Plan for the economic development of China has been adopted by the Kuomintang. Almost all phases of China's economic life have been covered by the Plan which is likely to involve an expenditure of 41 million yuan. The money is proposed to be raised by means of domestic as well as foreign loans. The assistance of foreign capital is considered absolutely necessary.

[Facts and figures stated here are taken from the *Contemporary Japan* for June, 1937].

THE WORLD'S TEXTILES, 1936-37

The production of rayon increased to 1,300 million lb. in 1936-37 as compared with 550 million lb. five years earlier. In spite of this increase, the production

and consumption of cotton reached a record figure in 1936-37 and the same year the productions of wool reached the highest figure since 1929-30. These figures can only mean that the demand for the world's clothing fabrics has grown very much in volume.

'One-half of the world output of raw cotton, wool, and jute and the bulk of the production of raw silk and hemp fibres enter the channels of international trade.'

The Soviet Union, Germany and Italy have reduced their import of wool and cotton because of the increasing reliance of their national industries on synthetic and natural fibres.

In the year under review Japan supplanted the U. S. A. as the chief producer of rayon and maintained its position as the principal market for cotton exports.

'The U. S. A., the Soviet Union and India are the largest producers and consumers of cotton, flax and jute respectively. In each case consumption in 1936 showed a large increase.'

In the U. S. A. and Great Britain the expansion of rayon and staple fibre output does not appear to have affected the consumption of other fibres. In Japan rayon and staple fibre are being used in place of cotton for the manufacture of native garment.

[Facts and figures taken from the *Industrial Fibres* for 1937.]

VEDANTA WORK IN CENTRAL EUROPE

BY SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

SPIRITUAL YEARNING IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Spiritual yearning cannot be limited to any particular country or people. It is a cosmic phenomenon and is manifest more or less in all parts of the world in some form or other. In the midst of great economic and political unsettlement in the European continent, a large number of souls are longing for a new spiritual order and are eager to get the proper nourishment for appeasing their spiritual hunger.

More than four years back the sincere yearning of a section of such hungry souls found expression in a remarkable letter addressed to the Head of the Ramakrishna Order, as may be seen from the following extracts given below :

“It is with the greatest hesitation that I am addressing myself to you . . . requesting you to send us one of the Swamis of the Order to work with us and instruct us. I really cannot tell you how thankful we should be for personal spiritual instructions, as life seems terribly worthless under the present circumstances . . . We are getting older every day and never getting ever nearer the real Goal of life, that is, never growing to the full stature of a real human being.

“I do not know whether any one of us would be worthy to be blessed with the company of one of your Swamis, but I cannot tell your Holiness how thankful we should be for it. Theoretical knowledge can never bring the realisation of the Truth, and it is extremely difficult for ordinary people to find the right way alone without the help of a living guide.

“I hope you will forgive me for this letter. It might so very easily seem arrogant, and I am afraid the only excuse I can offer you is the great admiration and love we have for your Holy Order and its Master.

“Besides, we see no other way of getting direct spiritual instruction as we cannot go to India for lack of funds.”

The ring of sincerity, expressed in this letter, made a direct appeal to the hearts of the elders of the Order. And they deputed me to Europe in November 1933 and this led to the inauguration of regular Vedanta work on the Continent.

VEDANTA BRINGING LIGHT AND SOLACE TO MANY

During the last four years and more I have been in Europe, I have come in close touch with many a liberal-minded and sincere seeker after Truth in Germany and Switzerland where I have spent most of my time, in Poland and France which too I visited on invitation and also in Holland where I have come at the earnest request of some students of Vedanta.

In all the countries I have visited there is an ever increasing number of persons, both inside and outside the institutional religions, who have become tired of religious dogmatism and have even revolted against the anthropomorphic conceptions of God and worship of personality. Many of these who have been looking for a new light, are responding to the universal message of Vedanta. With their appeal both to reason and feeling at the same time, the teachings of Vedanta are satisfying

the hopes and aspirations of many and are giving them a definite path of spiritual culture, which they are trying to follow in a systematic way. Some of these earnest souls are being strengthened in their faith in Vedanta as they are witnessing its transforming power and are even getting a clearer and clearer expression of the teachings in their practical life.

The following extracts from a few of the many letters received from highly educated and cultured devotees—both ladies and gentlemen—of different countries of Europe speak for themselves :

“We all want to express our thankfulness that we had the privilege of receiving the teachings of Vedanta.”

“I know what a great blessing it is to come in touch with these highest ideas. I am so thankful to have now got a definite path to follow.”

“I am so deeply grateful to have come in living touch with the spiritual movement of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, to have the opportunity of following the high ideas of Vedanta in a clear definite way . . . Before, I was in such a nervous state full of restlessness and despair. I hated to live. Now, having known that the Divine Being dwells in me, I am coming to attain peace.”

“There is for the moment a feeling of infinite peace, but I fear it will not be everlasting, and sooner or later there will be again a turmoil of feelings and ideas, and the equilibrium will be lost. But I feel that there must be a sort of “trick” that would enable one to come consciously in contact with the “Real I”, so that the reality of that may never escape the mind. Then only will real peace be attained and I can laugh at all difficulties and illusions of ordinary life.”

“During and after meditation I sometimes feel a great calmness, but then

again I become so much conscious of my inefficiency that meditation in most cases ends in tears.”

“Words are not enough to speak of the boon I received. I got a new, deeper, purer conception of life. I can see how poor I was without this message. I now know what I have got to do in life.”

“I try to do some meditation. I do not believe that I succeed, but I try to do it nevertheless. Then I pray to God to help me in getting better and to show me how I can do my every day work as perfectly as possible . . . The teachings have changed my whole outlook on life and I can never express how grateful I am . . . Nothing can take me onward if it is not the teachings. They are the clearest and the most direct I ever heard of.”

ABSTRACT OF THE FIRST TWO YEARS' REPORT

In my previous reports covering a little over two years beginning from November, 1933, up to the end of 1935, I spoke of my work at Wiesbaden (Germany) with different individuals and groups, of my visit to some of the university towns in Germany, and later on to Switzerland and Poland, where I was able to establish points of contact with some of the prominent Indologists and many other spiritually minded persons. I also mentioned therein my lectures and regular classes at St. Moritz and Geneva in Switzerland and also my visit to Zürich in Switzerland, where I did some pioneering work, met some intellectuals and also came in contact with some seekers after Truth in different walks of life.

WORK IN 1936 AND 1937

At Wiesbaden (Germany): During the year 1936 I spent nearly three months—partly in winter and partly in

summer—at Wiesbaden where I first came on invitation in November, 1933. I conducted intensive studies as before with new people and also with the devotees who joined the study circle on my arrival there. From that time up to the summer of 1936, with different groups I studied Swami Brahmananda's *Spiritual Teachings, Narada Bhakti Sutras, Bhagavad-Gitâ, Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* and the major portion of *Sri Krishna and Uddhava*, also gave various readings from the Upanishads, Raja-Yoga and other religious works. I also held special classes for individual aspirants and gave interviews to many who came for personal instructions. All the class-notes, taken down by one of the most prominent devotees, helped to take the message also to persons outside the groups and would form the materials for books on practical spiritual life in future.

Up to the summer of 1936, I had my headquarters practically at Wiesbaden. After this I made Switzerland the base of the Vedanta work in the countries of Central Europe.

At Geneva (Switzerland): At the beginning of February, 1936, I went to Geneva for the second time and stayed there for nearly four months at the request of a kind friend, who was some years back drawn towards the message of the Vedanta and came to be intimately known to me during my last visit in the spring of 1935.

At Geneva I held regular meetings four times a week at two places in different parts of the town. I also spoke there under the auspices of the International Theosophical Society on the "Synthesis of the Eastern and Western cultures." In the course of the lecture I pointed out the necessity for both the East and the West to preserve the best in the culture of each, and assimilate what is best in the other, thus main-

taining their respective individuality and special characteristics, without attempting at any thoughtless uniformity which would mean the cultural death to both.

During my stay at Geneva I spoke in connection with Ramakrishna Centenary on "The Message of Ramakrishna" and also gave illustrated lecture on "The Ramakrishna Movement" both at Geneva and the Institut Monnier at Versoix. I also held several religious classes at the school for the benefit of the students.

I paid a short visit to Geneva both in the summer and autumn of 1937 and also met the members of the group who have been continuing their readings with remarkable steadiness. I was greatly delighted to see how the various translations of Swami Vivekananda's works and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna so enthusiastically published by Monsieur Jean Herbert and his friends, as well as his radio talks on "The Great Teachers of Modern India" are creating a remarkable interest amongst many, some of whom I had the pleasure of meeting there.

At Lausanne (Switzerland): In March, 1936, I went to Lausanne at the invitation of the local Theosophical Society and spoke there on "The Message of Vedanta" and "The Ideal of Spiritual Evolution and Self-realisation." In connection with the Ramakrishna Centenary I also gave an illustrated lecture on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Movement" under the auspices of the Société Vaudoise d'Etudes Psychiques. Dr. Ed. Bertholet, the President of the Society, spoke in French on "The Life and Teachings of the Master", beautifully introducing the subject and referring to the celebrations that were being held in connection with the Birth Centenary in different parts of the world.

At Lausanne I conducted several group meetings in the home of a promi-

ment devotee in which I spoke on the spiritual ideal and practice and also held many discussions with those who came.

I visited Lausanne both in the summer and autumn of 1937. Besides holding many group meetings, I spoke twice on the theory and practice of meditation at the request of the Société Vaudoise d'Etudes Psychiques. All my previous lectures as well as the present ones, which I gave in English, were translated into French, and created an amount of interest amongst those who listened.

At St. Moritz (Switzerland): Ever since the group was started in January, 1935, at this small town famous as a summer and winter sport resort in the heart of the Alps, the members of the group have been conducting regular classes with a wonderfully sustained enthusiasm. I visited St. Moritz in 1936 and 1937 both during summer and autumn, and had readings twice or more every week. The universal message of Vedanta and the inspiring teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda have given a new meaning to the life of some of the aspirants.

A quarterly magazine, *The Vedanta*, was issued both in English and German during the year 1937 and reached many readers in different countries in Europe. It is the product of the labour of love of some of the devoted students of Vedanta who are working in a spirit of co-operation with a view to share the spiritual ideas with their fellow truth-seekers. *The Vedanta* with its universal tone is bringing light to many and is being highly appreciated. At present the copies are made with the help of a duplicator. If sufficient support be forthcoming, it may some-day appear in a more dignified form in print.

In Paris (France): At the very end of March, 1936, I visited Paris in connection with the Ramakrishna Centenary

meetings organised there. Prof. Masson-Cursel who holds the chair of Indian Philosophy at the University, delivered a lecture on "Sri Ramakrishna" at Musée Guimet, and another on "Swami Vivekananda, the Disciple of Ramakrishna" at the Institute of Indian Civilisation at the Sorbonne, the great University of Paris. I went from Geneva for taking part in the second meeting and spoke at the end, pointing out the relationship between the Master and the Disciple, which was in a certain sense like that between the silent and the thundering clouds—both being two-fold manifestations of the same Power. In Ramakrishna the ancient ideals of Vedanta were realised in a silent and quiet way, while in Vivekananda they became very dynamic and thundering. It was through the Disciple that the message spread all over India and even to Western lands, bringing a new awakening and inspiration, stimulating the life of spiritual aspirants and urging them not only to live a life of silent worship and meditation, but also to serve their fellow beings through different forms of creative service.

In the course of my stay for more than two weeks in Paris, I spoke at the Society of Friends, met also the Friends of Buddhism, conducted several group meetings and also gave interviews to many. In my talks I tried to point out the universal aspect of Vedanta and the practical illustrations as given in the wonderful lives of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, who held before all the great ideal that *religion is realisation*.

The French translations of the teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, brought out by Mr. Herbert and others, mainly with the help of Miss MacLeod, the great American friend of Swami Vivekananda and the Movement bearing his Master's name, are fast disseminating the message which was first brought

to the French-speaking people through Romain Rolland's epoch-making works on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. A field for future activity is thus being prepared, and the time is not far off when a French-speaking Swami of the Order will be in great demand for working amongst those drawn towards the teachings. Being informed of the growing interest in France by Monsieur Herbert and others, the authorities of the Order anticipated the future needs. With the financial support, given by Miss MacLeod, they sent Swami Siddheswarananda, a well tried and fully qualified worker of the Order, to Paris for getting himself prepared for the work.

My second visit to Paris took place at the end of July, 1937, when the Swami arrived there in the company of Mr. V. Subramanya Iyer of Mysore, the esteemed friend of our Movement, who came on invitation for taking part in the Philosophical Congress, held this year in Paris. Both the Swami and myself attended the Congress and also came in close touch with Professor Monsieur Foucher, who is in charge of the Institute of Indian Civilisation at the Sorbonne, and other professors and scholars.

During the short period of my third visit to Paris in November, 1937, I was delighted to see how the Swami is fast progressing in his study of the French language and culture and is also establishing points of contact with some of the spiritual movements and aspirants there.

At Zürich (Switzerland): During my visit to Zürich towards the end of 1935, I came to know a number of spiritually minded persons and found the possibility of starting Vedanta work there in future. In 1936 I went there towards the end of November and stayed on till the end of June, 1937. During those months I came to have

close contact with many highly cultured persons including professors, clergymen, university students and business people, etc. With the invaluable help of Herr Rudolf Müller of Reformhaus Müller, a sincere friend and admirer of the Ramakrishna Movement, I began my activities at Zürich. In the lecture hall generously placed at my disposal by Herr Müller, I first gave a few public lectures on "The Spiritual Message of Vedanta," "Soul's Evolution and the Yogic Paths," "Yoga and Self-realisation," "Ramakrishna, the Modern Indian Prophet," and then started regular classes twice a week. I gave general talks on spiritual topics and also numerous readings from the Upanishads, the *Bhagavad-Gitâ*, *Raja-Yoga* and the *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*. Illustrated lectures on the Ramakrishna Movement were also given to select audience. As the result of all these some earnest souls—both ladies and gentlemen—came to form a study circle, which may develop into a society in future.

A small Vedanta library has also been started for the benefit of those interested in spiritual matters, and both books and periodicals are being freely circulated amongst them. Persons greatly drawn towards the message are holding group meetings regularly and are thus keeping ablaze a little Homa-fire, which is expected to grow with the flow of time.

I visited Zürich again in October, 1937, for two weeks, gave regular talks, held discussions and had interviews with a number of devotees and friends.

Somehow or other Zürich, the most important business centre in Switzerland, has become the central place for the publication of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature in German language. The German translation of the Life and Message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda by Romain Rolland was brought out by a publishing firm located

near Zürich. The same publishers also issued an admirable edition of the *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, translated into German by Mrs. Emma von Pelet. This noble lady along with Mrs. Alwine von Keller has taken up the translation of our publications as a labour of love and that in a spirit of wholehearted consecration.

December, 1937, saw the appearance of Swami Vivekananda's *Karma and Bhakti Yogas* and *Raja-Yoga*, the first two translated by another devotee, but edited by Mrs. von Pelet and the third one translated by Mrs. von Pelet herself. The books have been beautifully published by a well-known publishing firm at Zürich through the generosity of Miss MacLeod already referred to, who also financed the publication of these and other works, translated by Monsieur Herbert into French. There is no doubt that all these publications are bringing the Message within the reach of many and are sure to have far-reaching effects in future.

At the Hague (Holland): I am writing this report from the Hague, where I came in the middle of November, 1937. Here too, I have been instrumental in just starting the Vedanta work. The original move was made by Mrs. Agatha Liefrinck, who was previously one of the most devoted members of the Vedanta Society in San Francisco, California, U.S.A. Eager to share with others the teachings which have brought a new light and peace to her soul, she came in touch with some spiritual seekers and has been lending them books from her private library which she has freely placed at the disposal of others. Immediately on my arrival here I came in contact with these aspirants. Later on I spoke publicly and also to select audiences on "The Message of Vedanta" and "The Ideals Lived and Preached by Ramakrishna-

Vivekananda." I am now giving regular readings to those, drawn towards the teachings, and as its result a good study circle is in the process of formation. After having consolidated the little work already started, I propose to give some public lectures in the near future at the Hague, to establish cultural contact with many spiritual persons and societies, and also extend the work to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and other neighbouring towns in Holland.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

During the past four years and more many individuals and groups have been closely drawn towards the rational and universal message of Vedanta and the practical and inspiring teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda at Wiesbaden in Germany, and also at St. Moritz, Geneva, Lausanne and Zürich in Switzerland, in Paris, the great capital of France, at Warsaw, the chief city of Poland and at many other places in different countries. As already mentioned, the beginnings of the Vedanta works have been made at the Hague and is also expected to be made in other towns of the country.

There are many persons who previously came to know of the message from books. In the course of the last four years and more, many of them and also many new people have come in closer contact with the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Movement through lectures, talks, classes, interviews, correspondence, circulation of class-notes and through our literature and journals in English and other languages. The small libraries started at different places have been slowly and steadily helping the quick spread of the message. The number of persons, coming within the sphere of influence of the movement, is fast increasing through all those.

The pioneering work was begun and is still being conducted in the midst of many and great difficulties. Economic uncertainties, cultural exclusiveness, political unsettlement and psychical restlessness have hampered the work. But still through the Divine grace and support of friends the Movement is growing steadily, though slowly, and its circle of devotees and admirers is fast increasing. The teachings of Vedanta are bringing new hopes and solace to many a depressed and weary heart.

The pioneering work is still to be conducted by us without being burdened and hampered by the immediate starting of any formal centre. Voluntary offerings for maintaining such a centre have not been forthcoming yet. Even the expenses for carrying on the present work are being borne mainly by two or three self-sacrificing friends of the cause in the West. The generous contribution of H. H. The Maharaja of

Mysore—a great lover of Vedanta—have twice enabled us to tide over the difficulties. For this we express our grateful thanks to His Highness, who takes a personal interest in the Movement both in India and Europe. We offer our sincere thanks also to the other friends of the cause, who have helped the work and contributed towards its success in different ways.

Our immediate task is this. The Message is to be propagated far and wide. The circle of devotees and supporters must be made to increase. Then alone will arise the question of starting a regular centre. The future lies in the hands of Him who is the Divine Inspirer and Guide of all.

“May He, the Indwelling Spirit, the Remover of all evils, the Presiding Deity of all sacred undertakings, be pleased. For, He being pleased, the whole universe is pleased ; He being satisfied, the whole universe is satisfied.”

SRI-BHASHYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

THE GREAT SIDDHANTA

Advaitin's Position Refuted

BRAHMAN CANNOT BE NON-DIFFERENTIATED FOR THE EXISTENCE OF NON-DIFFERENTIATED OBJECTS CANNOT BE PROVED*

Brahman cannot be, as the Advaitins say, non-differentiated Pure Consciousness, for no proof can be adduced to establish non-differentiated objects. All

* Refutation of section 1 of the Purvapaksha. *Vide* February issue p. 93.

sources of knowledge prove the existence only of objects qualified by difference. Non-differentiated objects cannot be established by one's experience, for such experience is only of objects as qualified by some characteristic difference as is shown by statements like 'I saw this' where 'I' and 'this' are both differentiated objects. In spite of this fact if we intend proving a non-differentiated object, we have to do so only by having

recourse to some special characteristic of it, that is, a characteristic which is *invariably* found in it *alone*, besides its pure being, which would distinguish it from other objects. Pure substance, as in the case of Brahman which, according to Advaitins, though experienced is mistaken for the world, does not help us to so distinguish it. This peculiar characteristic by which it is distinguished from others would itself make the object qualified by it. It is some qualities of the object that keep out other attributes from it and thus help us to distinguish it from other objects, and so a non-differentiated thing cannot be established. Consciousness or knowledge is by nature such that it reveals an object to a knower. It is connected with the Self and the objects distinct from it, and on this depends the existence of knowledge and its self-luminous character. Therefore, consciousness always involves the cognition of difference. Moreover, when consciousness is said to be eternal, self-luminous, etc., what is meant is that these are its qualities, for it is not possible to prove that these form its substance or being. The existence of a being or substance is recognized by all philosophers, but they differ only with respect to the views they hold about it. So if 'eternal', 'self-luminous', etc., mean the substance itself, no proof is required for it and all the Advaitins' argument is useless. But if they are not so and are different from it, then they become its attributes. When the Advaitins refute the views of others and establish their view of the Being by saying that Brahman is eternal, is Knowledge, Bliss, etc., they differentiate their view of the Being (Brahman) from others' by these characteristics of Brahman, which therefore are nothing but Its attributes.

Scriptures too cannot prove a non-differentiated entity. A word consists of a root and a termination which differ,

and so all words denote only difference. Different words again have different meanings. A sentence, therefore, which connects the meanings of words in it can denote only objects qualified by difference. Scriptures, therefore, which consist of words and sentences cannot denote a non-differentiated entity.

Direct perception too cannot denote non-differentiated things in both its determinate (*savikalpa*) and non-determinate (*nirvikalpa*) aspects. There is no difference of opinion with respect to determinate perceptions, for all agree that in such perceptions we experience objects qualified by attributes like generic character etc., as for example, when we see a cow we see the object as qualified by the generic character of a cow. With respect to non-determinate perceptions there is difference of opinion, for, some hold that in such perceptions the determining attributes are not experienced and the subject and object are merged into each other. Such knowledge, they say, is beyond sense-perception. Others again hold that in such perceptions we have the experience of qualified objects and their attributes unrelated to each other, as for example, merely the cow or the generic character of a cow and not the two as related to each other. Both the views are denied by experience and are impossible too. All our experience is of the kind—'This is such and such', that is, as qualified by difference. So non-determinate perception is not the apprehension of an object as devoid of *all* attributes but the experience of an object as devoid of *some* attributes. It is the experience of the first object of a class. When we see a cow for the first time we see the object as also its generic character, for both are objects of perception, but the fact that the generic character exists in all cows is not apprehended at the time and it is only when a second and a third

cow is seen that we get this knowledge. In determinate perception this quality experienced in the non-determinate perception is remembered and recognized. Due to the absence of this experience in the first one it is called non-determinate perception. So direct perception of non-differentiated things is impossible.

The above argument refutes also the *bhedâbheda* (difference and non-difference) view held by some as between objects and their attributes. They say that when we experience an object we do not experience the attribute and when we experience the attribute we do not experience the object and therefore they are not identical; yet each is not experienced in the absence of the other and so they are not also absolutely different. They are different and non-different. This view is not sound, for our cognitions are of the kind—'This is such and such', which has two elements, viz., 'this' and 'such and such' and the view stated above denies this latter element in perception. When we apprehend an object we experience also its difference from others which is made known by the 'such and such' element in our perception, its generic form, and what differentiates must be different from what is differentiated and can never be identical. The two, the object and its generic character or attributes, are quite separate. When we say 'a man with a stick', the stick distinguishes him from other men but is also different from the person holding it. Similar is the relation between an individual of a class and its generic character, or an object and its qualities, though between the two examples there is a difference; for while the stick can exist independent of the man, the generic character or qualities cannot exist or be experienced independently of the object in which they inhere; otherwise the relation of the thing qualified and that which qualifies

is the same in both cases. They are quite different from each other.

Inference also denotes only objects qualified by difference, for inference depends upon the invariable relation between two things which are objects of perception and perception deals only with objects qualified by difference. Similarly other sources of knowledge also have objects qualified by difference.

Therefore, no proof—scriptures, direct perception or inference, etc.—can be adduced to establish a non-differentiated object and so it does not exist.

PERCEPTION DOES NOT REVEAL MERELY EXISTENCE (SAT)*

It is not true as the Advaitins say that Being (Sat) alone is experienced through perception, for, as shown already, perception has for its objects only things qualified by difference like generic character and so on. This generic character is nothing but the particular form or configuration that is experienced as common to all things of a class, for we do not see anything else that can be called *jâti* (genus). Now this common feature or generic character (*jâti*) separates things possessing it and itself also from other objects. This generic character itself is 'difference', since by knowing genus we know that things of that genus differ from others and there is no other entity besides this genus which can be called 'difference'. And when we experience genus and talk of, say, cows as possessing a genus, the 'difference' also becomes an object of thought and speech, for the idea that cows form a class by themselves means that all talk of their non-difference from buffaloes etc., ceases and this non-difference does not cease till we experience difference. Since genus is experienced, 'difference' also is expe-

* Refutation of section 7 of the Purvapaksha. Vide March issue p.

rienced simultaneously and becomes also an object of thought and speech as shown. So when we experience an object as possessing genus, we experience 'difference' also and hence even if perception should last for one moment only, it does not matter, for there is nothing to be perceived the next moment, and so the arguments put forward by the Advaitins to show that 'difference' is not perceived falls to the ground.

Again, since 'genus' and 'difference' are one, there can be no objection to 'difference' being an attribute of the substance of the object of perception and there can be no argument in a circle as pointed out by the Advaitins, viz., to know difference we must know the object as qualified by genus, and to know the object as qualified by the genus we must know the 'difference'—an argument based on the view that 'genus' and 'difference' are two different things. So also there is no argument *ad infinitum*, for 'difference' which is genus, differentiates objects possessing it and itself from other objects even as the consciousness of the Advaitins manifests objects and itself.

So it is not correct to say that Existence alone is experienced and that difference is not perceived and cannot be defined.

Further, if we experience only Existence (Sat) in all perceptions and difference is not perceived, the statements like 'a pot is', 'a cloth is' will be meaningless. Moreover, why does one who goes to buy a horse return seeing a buffalo? Again, if we do not experience difference, why do we not use the word 'elephant or 'cow' when we see a horse, since all words have the same object, viz., Existence, and therefore these words are synonymous inasmuch as they refer to the same object? Moreover, when we see in sequence a horse

and an elephant, the latter knowledge (i.e., about the elephant) would only be a remembrance, for when we see the elephant there will be no difference in this knowledge from the previous one inasmuch as the same Existence (Sat) is experienced. If, however, an element of difference is accepted in each knowledge, it would mean that perception has for its objects only differentiated objects. And finally if Existence alone is perceived in all perceptions, then blindness, deafness, etc., will not be handicaps, for a single perception by anyone sense alone will help to experience everything, since there is no difference among objects. The fact, however, is that the different senses perceive objects as possessing different attributes like colour, smell, touch, taste and sound. Therefore, perception does not reveal only Existence (Sat). If perception should reveal only Sat, then the scriptures would be useless, for they will be teaching a thing already known through perception, and Brahman would also be an object of perception and consequently be subject to all defects like other objects.

Therefore, perception has for its objects things possessing difference like genus (*jāti*) which is nothing but a particular form or configuration, and never undifferentiated objects. The argument of the Advaitins that what persists, i.e., Existence, is real and that those which have no continuous existence such as pot, cloth, etc., are unreal, because they are sublated by each other, shows only confusion of thought with respect to the nature of sublation. The snake is sublated by the knowledge of the rope, because the snake did not exist at the time and place; we imagined it and so it is unreal. There is conflict between the two experiences. Such conflict does not exist between the experience of a jar seen at a particular place and time

and its absence at some other place and time where and when the cloth is. The former is not therefore sublated and cannot therefore be said to be unreal. To be sublated, non-continuity of the object must be proved at the time and place. Its non-continuity at another place and time does not by itself make the object unreal.

Moreover, if Existence (Sat) is mere

substance fit to be cognized, then it is already proved by such means of knowledge, and inference of the kind "Existence is real because it persists" is not necessary to establish it. If, however, particular substances like pot, cloth, etc., are meant, it is not true that Sat alone is experienced, for that which appears as cloth is not what appears as pot. So Existence (Sat) is not the only reality that is experienced.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The *Editorial* deals with the synthetic vision attained by Sri Ramakrishna by means of a graded series of spiritual experiences, as also with his harmonisation of all religions. Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., Professor of Indian History, Lucknow University, has shown, in his article on *The Hindu Conception of the Motherland*, that this conception of the Hindus is more cultural than territorial. In *The Dogma of Finality* Dr. M. H. Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., Professor of the Allahabad University, has pointed out the baneful effects of narrow-minded dogmatism born of an erroneous idea about the nature of ultimate Reality which cannot be exhausted of its infinite possibilities. Professor Akshoy Kumar Banerjea, M.A., of the Ananda Mohan College, Mymensing, in his article on *The Union of Siva and Sakti as interpreted by Natha-Yogis*, has dwelt on the philosophical implications of the perfect union of Siva and Sakti—the Principle of absolute unity and the Principle of multiplicity respectively—as attained by a Natha-Yogi in his transcendent consciousness. *The Age of Woman* is an interesting address delivered by

Prof. E. P. Horowitz of the Hunter College, U.S.A., before the Women's League of the Vedanta Society, Portland, Oregon. A pen-picture of the social and religious ideals of the Hindus in the Upanishadic age has been given by Swami Vimuktananda of the R. K. Mission in his article on *Socio-religious life in the Upanishadic Age*. Mr. Shib Chandra Dutta, M.A., B.L., in his *Gleanings of an Economist*, furnishes some specific instances of India's economic progress. Swami Yatiswarananda of the R. K. Mission, who is now working in Europe, has given, in his article on *Vedanta work in Central Europe*, an account of how the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, started in Europe about six years ago, have been preparing the ground for a happy synthesis of the cultures of the East and the West.

VIVEKANANDA AND WORLD PEACE

It is an encouraging sign that some of the pacifist thinkers of to-day are coming to realize that a lasting peace can be founded only on a deep sense of spiritual values. Empty and arid phrases are powerless to triumph over the brute forces of the world. The reali-

zation of the spiritual nature of existence alone can make pacifism and other humanitarian ideals dynamic and powerful. Man must believe in the reality of a set of facts which are not disclosed by the senses, but which can be known by developing an entirely different organ of knowledge whose germ exists in everybody. Vivekananda emphasized this point more than forty years ago; and it is interesting to learn in this connection from Edith Hunter, a pacifist writer of England, the special import of this aspect of his teachings in the cause of universal peace.

In a recent issue of the *Marhatta*, the writer regretted that so little was known in England of so great personalities like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, "whose contributions to world-thought are simply incalculable. It is such as these who set in motion the currents from which is welling up the Renaissance of India to-day." Believing that no real and lasting peace can be developed between nations unless it is founded on a deep sense of spiritual values, the writer finds "in Vivekananda a modern Prophet who stresses these fundamental issues."

Vivekananda's "predominating theme" she continues, "was the essential spiritual nature of all life, the divine nature of all men and an all-comprehensive conception of unity." Though the conception of the divine nature of man is inherent in and fundamental to the Christian religion, yet "this faith has certainly not been stressed in the historic unfolding of Western religion as it has been stressed by successive teachers through the ages in India. It is this

tremendous emphasis on the divine and spiritual nature of humankind that becomes of such inestimable value in any materialistic age, and this faith in the spiritual nature of man is the very foundation-stone of all building for peace."

"This emphasis which is in the Vedântic teaching is an absolutely essential factor in the growth of peace, namely, the insistence on the essential spirituality of life." The influence of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and others "made this thought so living that to-day its strong vitality has reached the West and indeed the whole world." And aptly does the writer remark: "There may be other landing places for pacifists but no other rock on which to build."

Finally she draws attention to "another aspect of Vivekananda's life and teaching which brings out an essential element in the development of peace, namely, his attitude to service. This practical side which recognizes in all its fulness the meaning of Brotherhood is part of the very nature of the growth of peace."

"So it is that this great soul's energy," the writer concludes, "will live on in a persistent urge towards unity and peace in world development, for such words as these are as true to-day as when he spoke them: 'The other great idea that the world wants from us to-day. . . is the grand idea of the spiritual oneness of the whole universe . . . the only Infinite Reality, that exists in you and me and in all, in the self, in the soul.' "

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRIMAD BHAGAVATA, CONDENSED IN THE POET'S OWN WORDS. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 447. Price Re. 1-4 as.

Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras, have already brought out two similar condensations of the epics, the *Râmâyana* and the *Mahâbhârata*. The present one forms a companion volume to these on the same lines. It presents in a condensed form the whole *Purâna* of 18,000 verses without destroying the interest of the stories and the discourses. The book contains an account of all the Avatâras of Krishna, the stories of various saints like Dhruva, Jadabharata and others and also the principal episodes in the Krishna Avatâra including the famous discourse to Uddhava. An easy English translation accompanies the original text in Devanagari. The *Bhâgavata* is regarded as a paragon among all the Bhakti scriptures, and it is commonly recognized to have made a profound study of the psychology of Bhakti. We hope the present work will serve to popularize this valuable *Purâna*.

IN SECRET TIBET. BY THEODORE ILLION. Rider & Co., Paternoster House, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. 4. Pp. 190.

Here is one more book which seeks to lift a little the veil of mystery from the face of that strange country, Tibet, which is still regarded as the world's most mysterious and elusive land. The author walked unaccompanied and disguised into Tibet. In the course of his travels he met with strange landscapes and stranger men and customs. He met wise Lâmâs, roving bandits and nomads who infest Tibet. His experience sometimes sound as incredible as fiction. The book will no doubt be relished by those who love mystery and adventure.

THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF ZOROASTER. BY DIWAN BAHADUR T. BHUJANGA RAO. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore. Pp. 32. Price As. 4.

This is an exceedingly readable summary of the salient points of the religion founded by Zoroaster. The author has taken particular care to point out the close affinities

between Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. It is a most suitable short introduction to the religion of the Parsis for general readers. The sale proceeds of the book go to the maintenance of the Poor Boys' Home run by the Ramakrishna Samaj, Basavangudi.

BENGALI

SIVANANDA-BANI. COMPILED BY SWAMI APURVANANDA. Published by Swami Abhayananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math, Howrah. Pp. 200. Price Re. 1.

This is a book of rare spiritual counsels compiled from the diaries of devotees and disciples who had the good fortune of hearing them from the lips of one who belonged to the small group of the Sannyasin disciples of Ramakrishna. Swami Sivananda, who was the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission for about 12 years, came to be designated as a "Mahâpurusha" by Swami Vivekananda. Spiritual aspirants and selfless workers, who want to advance spiritually and morally, will find light from these counsels on various matters connected with spiritual practices, devotion, work, service to the country and the like. Apart from these the book contains many incidental informations regarding the lives of many of his brother-disciples. Srimat Swami Vijnananandaji, the present President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, writes in the foreword: "The invaluable counsels of Mahâpurush Mahârâj which have been collected in this work will be a source of infinite benefit, like the holy blessing of God, to all devotees and spiritual aspirants." The conversational nature of the contents of the book, which recaptures much of the original flavour of the utterances, is bound to make a great appeal to all.

HINDI

(1) AITAREYOPANISHAD. Pp. 93. Price 6 as. (2) TAITTIRIYOPANISHAD. Pp. 236. Price 13 as. (3) MANDUKYOPANISHAD. Pp. 272. Price Re. 1. All published by the Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur.

The *Aitareya*, the *Taittiriya*, and the *Mândukya* belong to the group of the ten principal Upanishads commented upon by Sankara. Of these the *Taittiriya* and the

Mândukya are of special importance as being the earliest authorities which deal with the famous Vedântic doctrine of *koshas* and its celebrated analysis of the four states of waking, dreaming, sleeping, and *turiya* (the super-conscious) for the purpose of arriving at truth. By bringing out a translation of the texts of these important Upanishads, the Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur, has done a valuable service to the Hindi readers whose knowledge of Sanskrit is not ample enough. The *Mândukya Upanishad* contains as well the translation of the *Kârikâs* of Gaudapâda and Sankara's commentary on them. The translation is lucid, while the objections and the answers, the arguments and the counter-arguments, have been separately shown for the convenience of readers.

NARADHA BHAKTI. BY JAYDAYAL GOYENKA. *Published by Ghanshyamdas Jalan, Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 65. Price 2 as.*

This booklet beautifully delineates with numerous quotations from the scriptures the nine different ways of worshipping God according to the religion of love.

SRI UDIA SWAMIJIKE UPADESH. *Published by Ghanshyamdas Jalan, Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 210. Price 6 as.*

These counsels on religious subjects were originally published serially in the *Kalyan*. They have now been offered to the public in a book form after a careful revision. The sayings fall into two distinct groups, namely, those relating to knowledge and to devotion.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SANNYASINI GOURI MATA

Sannyasini Gouri Mata, who passed away on the 28th of February last at the advanced age of 92 was one among the few women disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

She came of a respectable Brahmin family of Shibpur near Calcutta, and from her early childhood she held out promises of a richly devotional character. She had the rare good fortune of meeting Sri Ramakrishna and receiving his blessings while she was a mere slip of a girl of 9 summers or so. At the age of fifteen she left home and betook herself to a life of renunciation. She travelled widely in different parts of India, visiting the principal places of pilgrimage between the Himalayas and the Cape Comorin on foot as a wandering Sannyasini.

During her travels she came into intimate contact with Balaram Bose, one of the great householder devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. Through his influence she again met Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar under strange circumstances. She felt at once drawn to the Master and came to look upon him as an incarnation of Sri Geuranga. From that time she began to visit Dakshineswar frequently and to spend a few days there now and then with the Holy Mother helping the latter in preparing the food of the Master. The Master loved her greatly and used to speak highly of her spiritual endowments.

Though a woman by birth, she was firm, fearless and resolute like a monk. The Master also spurred her on in her independent life and activities. She founded the Saradeswari Ashram in 1895 for the education and the training of Hindu girls in accordance with the best traditions of the Hindu spiritual culture. To the last of her days she was associated with the Institution and exerted herself in the cause which was so dear to her heart.

Om Santi! Santi! Santi!

THE RAMAKRISHNA INSTITUTE OF CULTURE, ALBERT HALL, 15, COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

In fulfilment of one of the projects of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee to commemorate the first Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, the Ramakrishna Institute of Culture was formally inaugurated on Saturday morning of January 29, 1938, by Swami Virajananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, at the Albert Hall, Calcutta. After Swami Omkarananda and Swami Akhilananda had offered prayers, Dr. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, M.A., Professor of the Calcutta University, dwelt at length upon the aims and objects of this Institute. He said *inter alia*: "It will have for its object the carrying out and realization of the teachings of that great

seer of modern India through the study and promotion of the creative achievements and spiritual experiences of the diverse races, castes, classes and communities of mankind on a scientific, comparative and cosmopolitan basis.

“The importance of such a cultural Institute can hardly be over-emphasized in an age when the materialistic outlook on life has blinded human vision to the inner harmony and beauty of our collective existence and has thereby created an atmosphere of mutual distrust, hatred and discord throughout the world. The significant advent of Sri Ramakrishna into the arena of Indian life at this psychological moment and his unique spiritual contribution to the sum total of human thought cannot therefore be better symbolized than by the inauguration of such a cultural Institute where the representatives of the East and the West can meet on terms of equality and mutual respect, and work with a consecrated soul to bring about a complete change in the outlook of men. The philosophies, religions, moralities, arts and crafts, science, literatures, industries, economic developments, measures for the control of poverty, health and educational organizations, etc., of the four quarters of the globe will form the theme of appreciative and rational discussion under the auspices of this Institute.

“In the light of the spiritual realization of the fundamental unity of mankind and of all faiths—the eternal theme of Indian life as embodied in the living gospel of Sri Ramakrishna—the Institute will attempt in its humble way to supply the cultural and spiritual foundations of a new personality among the men and women of the world, and equip them as proper and adequate instruments for the establishment of world-peace, genuine internationalism and a really humane culture on earth.”

Swami Virajananda, Swami Madhavananda and Prof. Mahendranath Sarkar, M.A., Ph.D., also spoke urging the importance of such an Institute.

The prospectus issued on behalf of this Institute of culture shows that its activities will comprise (1) lectures, (2) classes, (3) a journal, (4) research work, (5) the publication of books, (6) the foundation of exchange professorships, lectureships, research and travelling fellowships, etc., ten-

able in Indian and foreign culture centres, and (7) the establishment of cultural relations with different countries of the world.

To materialize the scheme it is proposed to erect an edifice in the heart of the city of Calcutta such as may contain—

- I. A spacious Hall for lectures, reunions, conferences, exhibitions, etc.
- II. A Library.
- III. A Reading Room.
- IV. Rooms for research work and study circles.
- V. Rooms for the accommodation of guests both foreign and Indian.
- VI. Rooms for office, publication department, social service centres, etc.
- VII. A Prayer Hall.

Alongside of the main section consisting of these departments, the Institute intends to run another section devoted exclusively to the younger generation. Proper arrangements will be made to provide facilities for the youths to get an all-round training of their body, mind and spirit under the able guidance of efficient instructors, thus laying the foundation for a healthy growth and development of our social organism.

The first discourse organized under the auspices of this newly started Institute of culture was given by Swami Pavitrananda, President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, on “The Future of Religion” on Saturday the 12th February at 5-30 p.m. at the Albert Hall (2nd floor). At the outset Swami Nityaswarupananda, the Secretary of the Institute, while introducing the speaker, in a neat little speech placed before the gathering the aims and objects of the Institute. At his request the speaker, then, made a rational treatment of the subject in an interesting manner. The discussion was followed by questions and answers.

It is hoped that the leaders of cultural life in all nations, as well as their industrial and commercial magnates, educational benefactors, publicists, scholars, scientists, poets, philosophers, religious heads, social workers, exponents of internationalism and others interested in the progress of humanity will try their best to help forward the realization of this noble scheme by financial and other contributions.