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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT DISCONTENT

BY E. E. SPEIGHT

Far on high, like a starlit sanctuary
Among the frozen mountains, sung around
By winds denied to mortals, lies that vision,
That sundered realm of poetry that once
We dwelt in for a while. Now where are we,
Who were the adventurers of destiny,
Nor feared the unknown, in days none dreamed of this
Our barren sanity? Yet none the less
We are not lost who feel within our blood
That olden gentleness, that ancient pride
That made our warriors poets, made our song
Outlast all other offering we laid
On love's eternal altar. Turbulence
Of Heaven's wrath is our inheritance
These darkened years, for that we do not see
How, loving peace, we may not lay aside
Our trusty armour, we who know the price
Of righteousness achieved. Nor may we leave
The tumult of endeavour, the recall
That summons all our energy, the cry
Of souls enslaved to terror.

It is the infinite of thought that we
Dream of vast worlds of worlds, which this our world

Is lost among, even as the smallest grain
Among the sands of ocean.

We are afraid of all immensity,
But being human we shall yet transcend
This last of all our fears, no longer deem
The out-of-reach a slight upon our worth,
But make our trust, what all our song has shown,
Part of that joy the mystic union
Of earth and heaven is shaping through the ages
Through labouring tides of agony, to reveal
Nobler confederation of high zeal,
Of heart's endeavour, with the world of beauty
About our lives each night and day brings forth
As though persuasively, in all profusion,
With so intense a meaning in each flower,
Each infant smile, each radiance of love,
That sharing them our hearts are sharing more
That all the chaos of immensity
Can ever mean.

A PEEP INTO HINDU CIVILIZATION

BY THE EDITOR

I

Nothing has been so much misunderstood and adversely commented upon as the civilization of the Hindus. The servitude of India for centuries under alien rule as also the inaccessibility of adequate historical materials were no less responsible for this regrettable state of affairs than the lack of genuine enthusiasm on the part of the students of Indian history to discover the hidden treasures of her culture. It is only in the recent past that a spirit of historical research has been stimulated with the dawn of national consciousness and has brought into the field a group of individuals whose labours have placed before us infallible proofs of the richness and antiquity of Hindu civilization. Indeed our thanks are due unto those distinguished antiquarians of the East and

the West, who, by their unflagging zeal, patience and perseverance, have been able to throw a flood of light upon some of the forgotten chapters of India's cultural history and furnished materials of great historical value to build a comprehensive record of her past creative achievements. The constructive genius of some of the illustrious savants of India has already woven these invaluable materials into works of exquisite art and beauty and has thereby created landmarks in the realm of historical study. Among these scholars may be mentioned the name of Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, Professor of Indian History at the University of Lucknow, to whom we are indebted for his masterly presentation of the varied aspects of Indian thought and culture from the days of Mahenjo-daro and Harappa up to the establishment of the Maurya Empire, in

his magnificent historical work, entitled *Hindu Civilization*.* The book which is the result of patient research and specialized study of the different aspects of Indian civilization is remarkable for its richness of details and clearness of exposition of the baffling variety of historical phenomena. Even a cursory glance at the scintillating pages of this volume will reveal unto the students of history how the learned author has skilfully marshalled all facts, knit them together and maintained balance and proportion as also an organic unity in the treatment of this vast subject in the light of the literary, epigraphic, numismatic, monumental and artistic sources available at the present day. It redounds to the credit of the author that all along 'the Indian point of view has received its due scope in the work',—a fact that constitutes its chief justification.

It is not possible to do justice to the variety of topics brought under the purview of this book within the short compass of a review. Only a bird's-eye view of some of the important sections of this volume may be given here to enable our readers to have glimpses of the intrinsic worth of Hindu civilization that has travelled down the ages since antiquity, fertilizing in its long and meandering course the varied fields of human thought in and outside India. At the very outset it must be borne in mind that the line of cultural development in India fundamentally differs from that in the Occidental world. Mons. Romain Rolland in his *Life of Ramakrishna* has significantly remarked, "The age-long history of the spirit of India is the history of a count-

less throng marching ever to the conquest of Supreme Reality. All the great peoples of the world, willingly or unwillingly, have the same fundamental aim; they belong to the conquerors who age by age go up to assault the Reality of which they form a part, and which lures them on to strive and climb. But each one does not see the same face of Reality. It is like a great fortified city, beleaguered on different sides by different armies, who are not in alliance. Each army has its tactics and weapons to solve its own problems of attack and assault. Our Western races storm the bastions, the outer works. They desire to overcome the physical forces of nature, to make her laws their own so that they may construct weapons therefrom for gaining the inner citadel, and forcing the whole citadel to capitulate. India proceeds along different lines. She goes straight to the centre, to the Commander-in-chief of the unseen General Headquarters; for, the Reality she seeks is transcendental." This attitude to life characterizes the gradual evolution of Indian thought and has lent an abiding grace and coherence to the multiple forms of her culture. And that is one of the principal reasons why the civilization of India, in spite of the manifold vicissitudes of her political fortune, is still a living force to be reckoned with in the conflict of cultures. Indeed there is something in it which is maddening in its imperturbability and insistence. The West, despite her material glory and varied conquests in the realm of nature, cannot but feel dwarfed and insignificant before its sacred majesty. It is really refreshing to find that this distinctive cultural outlook and ideology have not escaped the notice of the author of the present volume. In it he has not only given a graphic picture of India's political history describing events in their chronological

* *Hindu Civilization*: By Radha Kumud Mookerji, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Indian History, University of Lucknow. Published by Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta. Pages (including Index) 351. Price 15s. net.

sequence in relation to sovereigns, but also 'a history of civilization presenting the broad movements in thought and morals, the evolution of institutions, the progress achieved through the ages in social organization, economic life, literature and religion' from the truly Indian point of view.

II

The book opens with a careful and intelligent survey of the Indus civilization. It has been placed by the author between 3250-2750 B.C., allowing for still earlier times for its previous history and origins. The author writes, "Recently quite a mass of conclusive and concentrated evidence has been unearthed by archaeological excavation in one region, that of the Indus, at two sites, *viz.*, Harappa between Lahore and Multan, and Mahenjo-daro ('The Mound of the Dead') in Larkana District of Sind. The evidence points to the development of an entire civilization which may be designated as the Indus civilization in a region which was then more watered and wooded than now." Sind, as the investigation shows, was then watered not merely by the Indus but also by a second river, the great Mihram, which existed up to the 14th century A.D., and these two rivers were responsible for the growth of this most ancient civilization in Sind. Only seven strata of remains have up till now been unearthed; but still there are undisturbed layers lying beneath the level of the subsoil water, which lend countenance to the reasonable surmise that they belong to much earlier periods. The rich variety of materials consisting of the remains of buildings, human figures and figurines, symbols and the script on the seals, pottery, spindle-whorls, terra-cotta toys, stone images, cinerary urns or other receptacles containing calcined human bones and

ashes, to mention only a few—all point to the evolution of a full-fledged civilization in the pre-Vedic age. In view of certain common elements, ideas and inventions, it is admitted by the historians that there was probably a connection between India and Mesopotamia and other parts of the ancient cultured world and that the Indus civilization was a part of a larger cultural movement that manifested itself in the establishment of similar early civilizations on the banks of the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates in the Chalcolithic Age. But these general resemblances notwithstanding, the Indus civilization, as the author points out, is as distinctly individual and national as any of the other great contemporary river civilizations. For the Indus civilization contains certain specifically Indian features which comprise (1) the use of cotton for textiles not known to the Western world until two or three thousand years later, (2) a higher standard of urban life and amenities, as seen in the commodious houses, baths, wells, and systems of drainage meant for the ordinary citizens, and not known in pre-historic Egypt or Mesopotamia or any other country in Western Asia, where architecture is chiefly aristocratic, being marked by magnificent palaces, temples, and tombs, without spending much thought on the dwellings of the poor or the masses, (3) a high level of achievement in glyptic art, as illustrated in the faience models or the intaglio engravings on seals of animals like bulls, or in the exquisitely supple modelling of human statuettes, and (4) religion, which is easily seen as the ancestor of modern Hinduism in its several features.

III

It is interesting to find that the author has culled ample evidences from the Rig-Vedic literature to establish links

between this Indus civilization and the subsequent Vedic culture. He contends that the references to the non-Aryans and their civilization as found in the *Rig-Veda* may, in all probability, be taken to refer to the Indus people who were responsible for the growth and development of this Indus civilization. The author then proceeds to give a graphic account of the Aryan culture which like Minerva born in panoply appears in all its richness and variety at the time of the *Rig-Veda*. There is no gainsaying the fact that the history of India practically begins with the advent of the Aryans into India. The Aryans belonged to a very ancient stock of the human race, and lived for a long period with the forefathers of the Greek, the Roman, the German, the English, the Dutch, the Scandinavian, the Spanish, the French, the Russian and the Bulgarian nations. But the locality of the region where they lived for long in close intimacy and the time for their separation are subject of keen and protracted controversy. The generality of opinion is that they lived in the steppes of Central Asia, though some historians would fix their original home in India, some in the Arctic regions and others in the regions now occupied by Austria, Hungary and Bohemia. Whatever be the actual regions to which the Aryans originally belonged, it cannot be doubted, says Dr. Mookerji, that their original home must have combined pastoral and agricultural conditions, horse-breeding steppes and high ground for pasturing of sheep. As regards the actual age of this Aryan culture, Dr. Winternitz, in his *History of Indian Literature*, remarks, "The available evidence merely proves that the Vedic period extends from an unknown past, say x , to 500 B.C., none of the dates 1200-500 B.C., 1500-500 B.C., and

2000-500 B.C., which are usually assumed, being justified by facts. Only it may be added, as a result of recent researches, that 800 B.C. should probably be substituted for 500 B.C., and that the unknown date x more probably falls in the third, rather than in the second, millennium before Christ." Dr. Mookerji holds almost the same view when he says that 'on a modest computation we should come to 2500 B.C. as the time of the *Rig-Veda*.'

The Rig-Vedic literature throws a flood of light on the existence of a healthy social, religious, economic and political life of the Indian people in that distant period. There was plenty and profusion everywhere and India did not experience the bitterness of an atrophied economic life which has become the lot of the people of the land to-day. The political evolution of Rig-Vedic India, says Dr. Mookerji, may be traced in the following ascending series of formations or groups: (1) The Family (*griha* or *kula*), (2) The Village (*grāma*), (3) The Canton or Clan (*vis*), (4) The People (*jana*), and (5) The Country (*rāshtra*). Thus the family served as the foundation of the State and the tribal State was the highest political unit. Though various forms of government, *viz.*, monarchy, oligarchy and democracy, are in evidence in the Vedic literature, it is certain that 'the head of the State was nowhere absolute, but everywhere limited by the will of the people which made its power felt in the assemblies (*sabhā* and *samiti*) of the clan, district and the tribe.' But these limitations notwithstanding, the ideal was to carry on the multifarious works of the State in an atmosphere of peace and harmony which is eloquently expressed in the concluding hymn of the *Rig-Veda*: "Assemble, speak together, let your minds be all of one accord. The place is common, com-

mon the assembly, common the mind, so be their thoughts united." Here do we find the genesis of the democratic form of government that attained to a high level of efficiency and to great prominence in a later period. No doubt kingship became hereditary in India as in other countries, with the slow process of time, but still the Vedic right and practice of election were not forgotten in subsequent ages. This tradition is kept up in the post-Vedic periods, for the sovereignty of the people was maintained not only in the theoretical right of election, but also practically in the elaborate ceremonies which attended the coronation of the king. In short even within the framework of autocracy there were in operation certain democratic forces which contributed to the maintenance of this autonomous form of government in the political history of the Indian people even up to a very late period of Hindu suzerainty. And Dr. Mookerji has ably shown epoch by epoch how these democratic institutions functioned side by side with other systems of government in the corporate life of India. Indeed in the light of the materials now at our disposal it will not be wrong to say that 'the nineteenth century generalisation about the Orient as the land exclusively of despotism, and as the only home of despotism, must be abandoned by students of political science and sociology. It is high time that comparative politics, so far as the parallel study of Asian and Eur-American institutions and theories is considered, should be rescued from the elementary and unscientific, as well as, in many instances, unfair notions prevalent since the days of Maine and Max Muller. What is required is, first, a more intensive study of the Orient, and secondly, a more honest presentation of Occidental laws and constitutions . . . In other words, political

science and sociology are eminently in need of a reform in the comparative method itself" (*vide* Hindu Politics by Prof. B. K. Sarkar, in the *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III.).

IV

So far as the socio-religious life of the Aryans is concerned, the readers would do well to remember that the cultures prevalent in the Rig-Vedic and Upanishadic ages were almost identical in spirit and outlook, the difference being only in the growing complexity in the texture of the cultural life of the people in the latter period. The Indo-Aryans, placed as they were in the midst of the most fascinating and sublime beauty of nature, naturally developed a spiritual temperament and a deeply introspective frame of mind. In artless simplicity the unsophisticated Aryan mind began to feel in the outstanding phenomena of nature the living expressions of some spiritual beings, and offered worship unto them with awe and reverence. In the Vedic hymns addressed to these deities, we find a wonderful process of sublimation of all such gods into the highest spiritual Entity. But gradually this charming appreciation of all that is good and sublime in nature began to yield to the spirit of criticism and rigid formalism in the later Vedic age. "The Brâhmanas", says Dr. Mookerji, "record a great growth of ceremonial religion and the consequent growth of priesthood. From the simplest Soma sacrifice occupying one day, there were now many others culminating in the Sattras lasting from twelve days to a year or years." The *Rig-Veda* knew of seven priests and now the sacrifices required seventeen priests—a phenomenon that only illustrates the growing complexity in the domain of human life and practices. The philosophy of life as embodied in the Upanishads is but

a natural development of what is found in its embryonic form in the Rig-Vedic texts. And Dr. Mookerji rightly points out that in the age of the Upanishads which represent the philosophic aspect of Hindu religion, were enunciated the leading doctrines of Hinduism—those of transmigration, Karma, Mâyâ, and Mukti or final release by absorption in Brahman, in all their complex bearings.

It cannot be denied that 'the Vedic civilization is lacking in great monuments of material progress like the Egyptian or Assyrian civilization but not in proofs of intellectual and spiritual progress. Life was simple, but thought high and of farthest reach, wandering through eternity.' As a matter of fact the culture of the age was based on plain living and high thinking. As the Indian civilization in its early stages was mainly rural and sylvan, the learning of ancient India was naturally the product of her hermitages in the solitude of the forests. The object of education in fact was to make every one realize the glorious destiny of his soul. But this intellectual life was not confined to men alone but even women had an ample opportunity of taking an active part in it. The two most significant features of the old educational system should be borne in mind in this connection: "The first is the part taken in intellectual life by women like Gargi, who could address a congress of philosophers on learned topics, or like Maitreyi, who had achieved the highest knowledge, that of Brahman. The *Rig-Veda* shows us some women as authors of hymns, such as Viswavârâ, Ghoshâ, Apalâ. The second feature is the part taken by the Kshatriyas in intellectual life, by kings as patrons and devotees of learning. The most famous of them was King Janaka of Videha. . . There was the Pâncâla King, Pravâhana Jaibili, who taught Brahmana scholars

like Silaka, Dâlbhya, Swetaketu, and his father Uddâlaka. King Aswapati Kaikeya was another learned king teaching Brahmana pupils. So also was King Pratardana or King Jânasruti." For the advancement of learning there were various arrangements in the society of the time. Besides domestic or residential schools run by the individual teachers who would choose their own pupils, there were regular academies for advanced study, and circles of philosophical disputants as well. A great impetus was given to learning by the kings themselves who organized conferences of learned men from time to time. As a matter of fact a high level of intellectual culture was maintained more for the spiritual uplift of the society than for satisfying the sordid interests of our earthly existence.

The bright and healthy picture of the economic life of ancient India presents a refreshing contrast to the moribund and atrophied condition of the present day. The pristine glow of enthusiasm that characterized the sturdy peasantry of India is now lost in the hectic flush of a diseased life, and chill penury has frozen to stagnation the healthy flow of nobler aspirations of the people today in this land which was once the veritable El Dorado of the East. The Indian masses are today no better than the Roman plebs of yore and the actual tillers of the soil seldom enjoy two meals a day. That is why the celebrated orator Edmund Burke while characterizing the whole army of modern traders as worse than Tartarian conquerors so eloquently appealed to the bar of humanity for the suffering Indians. Indeed the healthy life of the ancient Indians as depicted in Dr. Mookerji's illuminating volume, when contrasted with the present helpless state of the people, tells its own tale. "Ere yet the Pyramids looked down upon the

Valley of the Nile,—when Greece and Italy, those cradles of European civilization, nursed only the tenants of a wilderness,—India was the seat of wealth and grandeur.” Dr. Mookerji has collected all the available evidences to show under different sections this healthy economic life of ancient India from the Rig-Vedic age up to the time of the Greek invasion of India. It is really a pity that such a land of plenty and profusion has been reduced to a land of paupers and beggars. It is not for nothing that the illustrious poet Edward Carpenter broke out in righteous indignation in the following strain : “India the same . . . Five hundred million sterling from the famished myriads, taken to feed the luxury of Britain, taken without return—while Britain wonders with a pious pretence of innocence why famine follows the flag !”

V

The penultimate chapter is devoted to the exposition of Hindu civilization as reflected in the post-Vedic literatures such as the Sutras, the Epics, the Smritis and the Purânas, and the concluding chapter gives us a pen-picture of the political history proper that hangs on a framework of chronology. The cultural history of India had its origins in a remote antiquity but the beginnings of her chronological history do not appear earlier than about 650 B.C. The author has pointed out the various landmarks in the evolution of Indian States epoch by epoch. In the times depicted in the Vedic works, there had emerged nine different States representing Aryan civilization as it was extending through the county. These were (1) Gândhâra, (2) Kekaya, (3) Madra, (4) Vasa-Usinara, (5) Matsya, (6) Kuru, (7) Pâncâlâ, (8) Kâsi, and (9) Kosala. The next landmark is found in the grammar of

Pânini of about 700 B.C., which mentions as many as twenty-two different Janapadas or States. A fuller political map of India is presented in the literature of early Buddhism in which a list of sixteen principal States is given. They are (1) Anga, (2) Magadha, (3) Kâsi, (4) Kosala, (5) Vajji, (6) Malla, (7) Cheti (Chedi), (8) Vamsa (Vatsa), (9) Kuru, (10) Pâncâlâ, (11) Machcha (Matsya), (12) Surasena, (13) Assaka, (14) Avanti, (15) Gândhâra, and (16) Kâamboja. Thus India is found in the middle of the 7th century B.C. parcelled out into these independent States. The frequent struggle for supremacy amongst these mutually repellent molecules of body-politic resulted in the gradual emergence of Magadha as an imperial power lording it over the neighbouring principalities. Dr. Mookerji while dealing with the political history of Northern India between 650—325 B.C., has also dwelt at length upon the manifold achievements of Hindu genius in the various realms of thought and culture. The rise of Jainism and Buddhism, the growth of eleven republics and their systems of administration, art and architecture, the socio-economic condition of the people of the time as well as the invasion of India by Alexander the Great and its results,—all have received adequate treatment in this chapter at the hands of the author.

It is our honest conviction that a patient and careful study of this useful work will enable every student of history to have a correct and comprehensive knowledge of India's social, political, economic and religious development, as also of the creative forces that have contributed to the growth of this splendid edifice of Indian civilization. As already pointed out, the greatness of Indian thought lies in her cultural conception of the Eternal. Her religion is the aspiration to spiritual conscious-

ness. Her philosophy, science, art and literature have also the same upward look. Her founding of life upon this exalted conception, her urge towards the spiritual and the eternal constitutes the distinct value of her culture, and her fidelity, with whatever human shortcomings, to her ideal makes her people a nation apart in humanity. It is for this cultural characteristic that India stands even now as a living force in the world. There is to-day a return-swing of the pendulum in the East. India can no longer remain blind to her pristine cultural greatness inasmuch as the consciousness of her past brilliant achievements will serve as a powerful stimulus to her future expansion and show the manifold possibilities of her creative genius as also her infinite poten-

tiality. If India was great in the past, her future could be made all the more glorious. And we can say without reserve that a patient study of this book of Dr. Mookerji will not fail to stimulate our aspiration for nobler achievements in the various domains of human thought and culture. It has not only unfolded before us a living and faithful picture of India's material and spiritual conquests of the past but has struck the true keynote of her life and thought as well and shown the line of her future development. We have no doubt that this illuminating volume based on a critical study of all available materials, will be an eye-opener to many and prove a valuable addition to the stock of the historical literature of the world.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Master was seated on the small cot after meals. The devotees were pouring in. A batch of devotees from Manirampur arrived first of all. . .

The devotees from Manirampur were asking, "Kindly tell us how one can realize God."

Sri Ramakrishna: One has to do a little spiritual practice.

It is not enough to say that milk contains butter; milk has to be set into curd first and next butter has to be churned out of it. But then, one must retire into solitude now and then. It does not matter where you be, after you have gained devotion by living in solitude for some time. You can easily walk through prickly shrubs even with shoes on.

Faith is the chief thing. One gains what one believes; faith is the root." There is no fear once you have faith.

The devotee from Manirampur: Sir, Is a Guru necessary?

Sri Ramakrishna: He is necessary for many. But then one must believe in the words of the Guru. Success comes only when the Guru is looked upon as God. So the Vaishnavas say, Guru-Krishna-Vaishnava.

His name should always be repeated. In the Kali Yuga the name has great power. Life depends on food, so Yoga cannot be practised. If you clap your hands by repeating His name, the bird of sin flies away.

Association with holy persons is always necessary. The nearer you go to the Ganges, the cooler the air you feel; the nearer you approach fire, the more the heat you experience.

Sluggards never succeed. Those who still crave for worldly enjoyment say, "You will succeed; you are sure to realize God at one time or other."

I told Keshab Sen that if the son becomes importunate the father portions out his share of property even three years before.

Mother is cooking, while her young baby is lying in bed. The mother has left the baby with a false teat. But when it cries aloud throwing away the teat, the mother puts down the cooking vessel, takes the baby in her arms and suckles it. I told Keshab all these things.

It is said that if one weeps for a day and a night in this Kali Yuga one realizes God.

Be mildly resentful in your mind and say, "Thou hast created me. Thou must show Thyself unto me."

Wherever you live, in the world or anywhere else, God looks into the mind. The mind which is attached to objects is like a damp match stick; however much you may strike it, it won't take fire. Ekalavya learnt archery by placing before him the clay Drona, that is to say, the image of his Guru.

'Go ahead.' The wood-cutter found upon advancing sandal wood, silver and gold mines; on advancing still further he discovered diamonds and other precious jewels.

Those who are ignorant live, as it were, inside a house with mud walls.

There is not enough light within, while they don't see anything outside. One who lives in the world after attaining knowledge lives, as it were, in a glass house. There is light both within and without. He can see both the things which are inside and which are outside.

There is nothing else but the One—the Supreme Brahman. So long as He keeps up the "ego," He reveals Himself as creating, sustaining, and destroying the universe as Primal Energy.

That which is Brahman is the Primal Energy. A certain king demanded to be enlightened in one word. The Yogi replied, "Very well! You will have knowledge in a word." Sometime later there appeared before the king all on a sudden a magician. The king noticed that, on coming, the man began to whirl two of his fingers and was saying, "O king, mark this, mark this." The king watched with astonishment. After a time he saw that the two fingers had become one. The magician was swinging round one finger and saying, "O king, mark this; O king, mark this." That is to say, Brahman and the Primal Energy appear to be two at first. But with the dawning of the knowledge of Brahman there no longer remains the duality. Non-difference: One which knows no second! Non-duality!

A REJOINDER TO THE CHARGES AGAINST HINDU MYSTICISM

BY PROF. GIRINDRANARAYAN MALLIK, M.A.

There can be no denying the fact that the hidden treasure of the Hindu culture has captivated the minds of many reputed scholars of Europe and America. By devoting their whole life to the study and research work in the field of Sanskrit, by preserving rare Sanskrit books

and manuscripts and publishing them for the good of the inquisitive public both here and abroad, by writing learned commentaries, discourses and treatises on diverse topics connected with Sanskrit, they have undoubtedly done an immense service to the cultural heritage

of the Hindus. At the same time it must be admitted that in some cases those very scholars of outstanding merit have misunderstood many things, and by giving publicity to such wrong notions have done a great injustice to our sacred Texts. This however is to be condoned to some extent if we find clear proofs of their ignorance. But in some cases there lies concealed a political motive underlying all outbursts of adverse criticism. Whatever the reason might be, no true lover of Hinduism can possibly remain indifferent in the matter.

To take a concrete instance, the great mystical writer Miss Underhill has brought certain grave charges against Hindu mysticism and consequently against Vaishnavism, and this seems to be due to her ignorance of facts. In the present humble article we propose to answer some of these charges as far as lies within our scanty intellect and resources.

THE SENSE OF A DOUBLE MOVEMENT IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF HINDU MYSTICISM

It is urged that "the sense of a double movement—self-giving on the divine side answering to a self-giving on the human side—conflicts with the philosophy of Hindu mysticism" (*Essentials of Mysticism* by Underhill, p. 4). We fail to understand how and on what points the critic sees the discrepancy. She herself says that at the heart of reality is Brahman whose manifestation is Ananda (p. 9). The Vaishnava theory distinctly states that Ananda is not only the manifestation but the very essence of Brahman. The *ânandic* attribute of Brahman, again, is more significantly described as *rasa*. The full meaning of the term *rasa* evidently involves the idea that Brahman cannot remain indifferent in His own Supreme Region. To bring out the significance of His bliss and

knowledge potencies, He must Himself have a yearning after His devotees. He being Brahman, which word derivative-ly means 'That which is the greatest of all and makes all else very great—so very great that He Himself delights in being conquered by them', His love and passion for His devotees follows as a necessary sequence or co-existence. Besides, the Hindu theory describes Brahman as both transcendent and immanent. This very fact of the double aspects of Brahman presenting themselves simultaneously makes it quite evident that He can never be apathetic to His beings; had it been so, there would have been no significance of His immanence. Further more, the concept of *Bhakti* if thoroughly understood points to the same conclusion. It thus appears that if the theory of the Hindus is rightly understood there will be no justification for the statement that there is a want of consistency between it and the sense of the double movement.

HINDU MYSTICISM HAS SURELY GOT THE ETHICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

The point has been urged by some writers that "Hindu mysticism as compared with Christian is one-sided in that it is developed only on its speculative aspect and has no social side." To answer this charge it is to be carefully noted first that there is a fundamental difference between Eastern and Western social ideals and results. "In her social organisation the mother East has been guided by her natural instinct which is itself the wisdom of nature, by her strong human sympathies which have welded autonomous individuals and social groups into a harmonious co-operation for the common realisation of the ends of society—ends which are quite in keeping with those of universal humanity. Social grouping in the West

has been determined almost entirely by the instinct of appropriation and aggression manifested in the form of a yearning after productivity and exploitation. Consequently, social grouping in the East always tends to ensure the satisfaction of the totality of human interests that constitute personality. The communalism of the East, by its emphasis on the primary values of life, on human instincts and sympathies on a social and humanistic valuation, stands for much that is noble in enjoyment, art and religion—in other words, for true culture instead of the bare materialistic and mechanical ideal which has given a wrong trend to the civilisation of the West” (*Principles of Comparative Economics*, Vol. II, by Radhakamal Mukherjee).

The preferential character of the Eastern ideal of society, which appears from the above lines, is due to the fact that Oriental communalism draws its inspiration from religion which serves as the backbone of all the diverse elements of Indian culture. Indian social groups and social organizations have their root in the depths of divine feeling. The one God Nârâyana is the Indwelling Principle of our life, and yet He is in the end to be realized. In this realization of the Supreme Reality the sacrifice or self loss of an individual, his service to society, and subordination to the group are so many steps. The individual learns to subordinate his self-interest for his family good, family and communal interests for public welfare, and, when public welfare conflicts with the good of mankind, he does not hesitate in sacrificing the former. The Indian ideal is thus an ideal of the heart and in the language of the Japanese Artist, “It lies in that vibration of peace that beats in every heart, that harmony which brings together emperor and peasant, that sublime intuition of generic oneness

which commands all sympathy, all courtesy to be its fruits.”

That the two ideals differ fundamentally follows also from the derivative meanings of the words Dharma and Religion. Literally speaking, Indians have got no religion. Theirs is Dharma. Dharma implies more than what religion implies. It is really the Inner Law of Being and applies to mankind as well as to all else of the universe. The root of the word Dharma is *dhri* (to hold), that of religion is *ligare* (to bind). That which holds holds by an inner principle, that which binds is an external bondage.

It thus appears that on account of the artificial mechanical bond of relationship the society in the West is a matter of becoming, always undergoing changes that are necessitated by a yearning after material prosperity in clean forgetfulness of the underlying spiritual divinity and which therefore create nothing but an unending conflict and unrest; whereas the society in India, on account of the universal permanent elements supplied by an unflinching devotion to Dharma—the Immanent Real Self, is a real being that can stand erect and firmly rooted notwithstanding the many differences in respect of sect or cultus. It is this universal permanent nature that makes the Indian ideal of society a unique one radically different from the idea in the West. Owing to this distinctive feature the Indian conception of society “rejects individualism which abandons inner necessities, it rejects collectivism and state-socialism which repress individuality and hamper the originality of creative genius.” Yet the society in India might be regarded as individualistic in the sense that the individuality of each member of a society is not altogether repressed but asserts its own innate spiritual freedom and marches onward for higher and higher regions till

at last it reaches the highest goal by realizing the Ever-shining Identity underlying the diversities of the world. Be it noted here that in this losing of the material self in order to regain the real self lies the true meaning of individuality and so the individualistic character of the Indian society cannot be ignored. It might also be regarded as collectivism in the sense that in the attempt towards its own realization it does not fly alone to the Alone, but on account of the organic real relationship between itself and others it prepares the way for others' journey towards the same Infinite Ideal. Such striving towards the highest realization by way of conquering the immediate existence means nothing but a strenuous ethical effort; and because underlying all these efforts lies the religiosity of India, Mr. Milburn and others must have erred in saying that Indian mysticism has no ethical content.

We now come to a definite point. Indian spiritualism in general and Vaishnavism pre-eminently, by reason of its supreme inner vision and depth of divine feeling, has supplied the foundation of Indian sociology which reconciles and transcends all the different concepts of the Western social theories. This wholesome effect is brought about by the humanistic aspect of religion so profusely illustrated in the *Bhāgavat* and *Charitāmrita* texts. "*Bhārata-bhumite haila monushya janma sāra; Janma sārthaka kari kare para-upakāra—*" says the author of the *Charitāmrita*. Man is indeed the highest creation and human body the best body. This idea occurs in the *Bhāg.* texts III, 13,50 and IX, 9, 28. To bring out its significance we are to consider how man may best be defined. Various definitions have been attempted, of which the best seems to be "Man is a rational animal." This definition has been modified to some

extent by Prof. Mackenzie who defines man as not only a rational animal but a rational animal of a particular type with a peculiar and complicated structure by which his thoughts, feelings and actions are largely determined. It is useless for our present purpose to determine all these peculiarities. So far as India is concerned, the highest of these peculiarities consists in the fact that man is grounded in a spiritual world and has the greatest power of realizing the spiritual relationships. And so the *Bhāg.* text III, 13, 50, says, "Who else, except man, being cognisant of the essence of the object of human pursuit and drinking with ear-like folded palms the nectar-like words relating to God capable of removing (the fetters of) mundane existence, can detach himself from things temporal?" The essence of manhood is described here as lying in the capacity for transcending the immediate existence of temporal objects and attaining the fullest realization of the Highest Self. Referring to this very differentia of the man of India, the author of the *Charitāmrita* has observed that to be born as a man in India is preferable to that elsewhere, and this birth-right potentiality of the supreme manhood becomes concretely realized by the spontaneous flow of desire for doing good to humanity. The same idea occurs in the *Bhāg.* texts X, 22, and also in the *Vishnupurāna* text—

प्राणिनामुपकाराय यदेवेह परत्र च ।

कर्मणा मनसा वाचा तदेव मतिमान् भजेत् ॥

We have thus tried our best to show how Hindu mysticism is surely rich in ethical content and so has got the social aspect. Nor is it to be urged that Christian mysticism lags behind in this respect. So far as the present point is concerned, there seems to be no difference between these two poles of mystical experience. The sole aim of Christianity is to lead man to the eternal life by way

of enabling him to reject the immediate existence and overcome the material aspects of the world. The essence of Christianity lies in the great depth of divine feeling, a profound sympathy for humanity impelled by an inner vision and spiritual consciousness and attended with infinite love and real sympathy. With such a spirit of devotion and with this lofty ideal Christianity started upon a new adventure against the existing social theories of the West and justly thought of remodelling the European society by pointing out and suppressing the dangerous evils of the then conflicting theories. And, as Mackenzie points out, it has contributed to some extent (very little we should say) to the growth of international unity and the establishment of world peace, e.g., the outbreak in 1900 of the War between the Argentina and Chile was prevented by an emphatic appeal to the underlying principles of Christianity (*Social Philosophy*, p. 209-210). But this, we are afraid, is the solitary illustration of the spiritual triumph of Christianity. Generally speaking, the world of action in Europe remained only partially affected, and Christianity, in spite of all its efforts, could hardly effect any improvement upon the social and industrial life of the Christian peoples. Nor could Christianity, the living faith of Europe, mould her civilization in any way, as W. Bennet thinks (*Religion and Free-Will*, p. 126). The lofty ten commandments of God could not purge the European society of its defiled diplomacy and of the so-called morality called 'Trade morality'; the very salutary principle of non-resistance could not dissuade the people from sending their youngmen of sixteen to the army or navy. As a result, there has now been a great discrepancy between the true spirit of Christianity and the modern

civilization of the West. In fact "the West is not and never has been Christian. While the keynote of Christianity is humility, the keynote of Western civilization is egotism."

It will not be out of place to mention here that the charge of being unsocial is brought not only against Hindu mysticism but against the whole theory of mysticism in the West. This remark is perhaps grounded in the fact that mystics as a class lead a life of aloofness or isolation from the crowd and live at high levels to which the mass cannot rise. But it is to be remembered that this high stage of genuine spiritual progress cannot possibly be attained all on a sudden. The mystics must have during the noviciate undergone a wholesome discipline in some cultus or religious institution, and at that time they must have been influenced in a healthy way by a harmonious environment; and this very fact constitutes their social character. Besides, even in the state of aloofness they are forced to form a special group, to construct a special environment of their own within which their special religious tendencies would develop in a normal and healthy way. Moreover, the aloofness or construction of a special environment is not at all unmeaning; it gives rise to a wholesome effect inasmuch as by this they are enabled to acquire some thing, e.g., supreme vision, whereby they can do real good to the crowd or society by way of spreading their own healthy influence, and they, through their family circles, can effect the edification of other souls that might otherwise have degenerated to lower levels. Similar is the case with Vaishnavism. To become a true Vaishnava a man must pass at first through the preliminary stage of injunctory Bhakti in which he is surely an inseparable factor of corporate life. If at any rate there be found a class of

Vaishnavas whose spiritual individualism has been exaggerated to such an abnormal length that they are always inclined to repudiate altogether the authoritativeness of the Vaishnavic institutions and groups, these must be depreciated as so many rebel Vaishnavas, and in most cases theirs is a sham mockery in religion constituted only by a blind love of ceremonial rites and having no real depth of divine feeling.

THE ACT OF REDEMPTION IS NOT WANTING IN HINDU MYSTICISM

Miss Underhill observes, "It is the addition of the known fact of Christ's achievement (referring of course to the redemption) to racial consciousness which makes possible the specially Christian apprehension of God and differentiates it from that of a Hindu or neo-Platonic saint." Indeed the fact cannot be denied that the act of redemption is a great epoch-making event in Christ's life. It is this act of atonement which served as a noble ideal bent upon reviving the dying consciousness of the whole Christian race. It is nothing but a vindication of humanity, and in this vindication Christ did something towards the making good of humanity's falling short in one direction or the other, and at the same time gave to his fellowmen and the after generations some noble sentiments and ideas which they did not possess before or could not inherit otherwise. Yet it is not to be surmised that such a humanitarian ideal act is wanting in Hinduism. Look for a moment to the doings of Sri Chaitanya and his followers as depicted in the texts on Bengal Vaishnavism. The two brothers of the Brahmin caste, Jagâi and Mâdhâi, used all sorts of violence against the Incarnate Being of Bhagavân, assaulted him in a most inhuman way, and pelted him most

cruelly to the shedding of profuse blood, and yet all this could not provoke him to any violent retaliation which might have easily been done. The two greatest sinners were accorded a cordial treatment in return—they were kindly embraced and initiated into the path of devotion and turned at last into a pair of ideal saints. The atonement of the Lord had its marvellous effect not only upon the two sinners themselves, but forthwith spread its genial influence upon the whole humanity. The incident at once turned the whole Hindu mind to the right direction. It served as a healthy impetus to the mentality not only of the Vaishnava sect but of the whole Hindu community. The Hindu society has since then undergone a happy change and reconstruction which but for this act of redemption would not have been possible.

Take another instance. One Amogha showed signs of ill feeling towards Sri Gourânga. Shortly after that he died of cholera. The author of the *Charitâmrita* says that this death was the consequence of that serious transgression. Perhaps the doctrine of Karma is referred to here. But this seems to be rather inconsistent with the fact that the sinner acted hostile not against a stern iron-handed God but against a Deity whose whole essence consists of the sole ingredient of love, sympathy, kindness and graceful demeanour. In the Krishna incarnation similar incidents, e.g., the acts of Pûtanâ, Sishupâla, etc., did take place, and they were returned not by mere physical deaths but by the grant of the great good called Release. The Love God of the Bengal Vaishnavas could not, therefore, remain indifferent at the occurrence of the death—death which under such special circumstances takes man away from the sight of the Incarnate Being. The death indeed took place as a natural event having had no

causal connection with the hostile attitude towards God. And to save him from the miserable plight of losing the highest form of being Sri Gourânga made him revive. He thought off the penalty incurred by the man, and embraced him cordially and compassionately and turned his whole nature into one full of sympathy for the Highest Being and made him attain the *summum bonum*, Prema. This most sympathetic and loving act had its charming influence upon the whole human community and enabled it to acquire such noble sentiments and ideas as it by itself could not have got. Herein lies the true vindication of humanity caused by the noble act of redemption.

“An exaggerated regard for asceticism, contempt for life, contempt for work, an exaggerated regard for philosophy”—these charges are often brought against Hindu mysticism.

HINDUISM DOES NOT AIM AT EXAGGERATED
ASCETICISM OR CONTEMPT FOR LIFE
AND WORK

From the *Vaishnavic point of view* there is truth in these remarks, but not the whole truth. Indeed it cannot be denied that the ultimate object of all forms of mysticism, Western and Eastern, is the soul's union with God however differently the word ‘union’ might be interpreted, and that this union is not possible without that complete renunciation which consists in the cessation of all acts consequent upon the soul's freedom from bodies gross as well as subtle. But as regards the conduct of the soul while dwelling in a body, different theories are held by different thinkers, both Eastern and Western. These theories have been classified in the Shastras into two, namely, those of Action and Inaction. Looking to the Eastern Shastras we find that the two

prominent theories of Pravritti Dharma and Nivritti Dharma are in vogue from days immemorial. These two Dharmas are known as Yoga (*i.e.* Karma-Yoga) and Sankhya—the two methods of conduct so often referred to in the *Gitâ*. In the earlier part of the Vedas—the *Karma-Kânda*, prominence is surely given to the former Dharma, while in the Upanishads based upon the *Jnâna-Kânda* the latter is emphasized. The Sankhya system of Kapila agrees with the Upanishads in this respect. In fact, the theory that Moksha cannot be attained unless man forsakes the world of action, which is full of miseries and so is inessential, was first brought to light in the Upanishads and the Sankhya. The Vedanta again which preaches Vedic religion seems to involve both the methods according as it is interpreted differently by different commentators like Sankara, Ramanuja and others. As regards the non-Vedic religion in India, we find the two forms, Jainism and Buddhism, prescribing the method of asceticism or renunciation of action from the very beginning of life. If now we look to the Western form of religion, we find Christianity is based upon the principle of Nivritti as appears from the many utterances of Christ himself. “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me” (St. Matthew XIX, 21). Similar ideas also occur in Matthew VI—24, X—9-15, XII—46-50, and Luke XIV—26-23. From all these it appears that most of the early apostles of Christ led the life of an ascetic. “The new (Christian) converts seemed to renounce their family and country . . .; their gloomy and austere aspect, their abhorrence of the common business and pleasures of life, and their predictions of impending calamities inspired the pagans with the apprehen-

sion of some danger which would arise from the new sect" (*Historians' History of the World*, Vol. VI, p. 318). Professor Goethe also holds the same view when he says, "Thou shalt renounce! That is the eternal song which sings in every one's ears; which our whole life-long every hour is hoarsely singing to us" (*Faust*, p. I, II, 1195-1198). Even in modern days the German philosopher Schopenhauer preached some time ago the religion of renunciation of an extreme type similar to that of the Upanishads.

The above quotations would, I believe, sufficiently show how *sannyâsa* is regarded as one method—but not the only method—of religion both according to the West and the East. Such being the case, it would be very unfair to single out Hindu mysticism for the above unjust criticism. Probably the remark is based upon the critic's misconception about and unwarranted conclusion from that attitude of the Vedanta which declares the illusory nature of the world and which is ascribed to Acharya Sankara. But to do justice to India's epoch-making philosopher and religious reformer of the 8th century A.D., we must say that, as a saviour of Hinduism, as a reviver of Brahminism at that most critical historical moment of religious, social and moral abuses and depravity, Acharya Sankara could not but play the role of an extreme theorist coming forward with his abstruse philosophy of the Jnâna-mârگا. Even admitting the illusory theory to be the true view of the Vedanta we must say that it does not detract from the reality of the world. Only an enlarged meaning of the term 'illusion' will save us all from throwing strictures upon the Mâyâvâda theory of Sankara. "A dream, illusion or an hallucination is unreal from the lay standpoint, but to a psychologist it is as real a phenomenon as any other

having its conditions and consequences as good and genuine as those of any other. An unreal experience is thus a real event."

It is evident therefore that neither the illusory theory nor any other theory is based upon the whole volume of Hindu mystic's *exaggerated* regard for severe asceticism. The great law-giver Manu, for example, while including *sannyâsa* amongst the four stages of life, has distinctly stated that a man must not take to the ascetic's mode of life until his mind has attained the state of purity by the proper performance of all the duties in the first three stages; and fearing lest the whole society should be crumbled to pieces by many peoples' wrongly taking to the last stage from the very beginning he has fixed the time-limit of the last stage in verse VI, 2. The view of Manu again has been accepted by the great poet Kalidas in the *Raghu*. I, 8: VII, 68. This gradation in the four stages of life is also to be noticed in the *Mahâbhârata*, *Sâ.* 244, 3, and *Utt.* 36-39. In support of our conclusion we might further state that of the four stages of life a more prominent place has been accorded to the household stage by some scriptural texts, *viz.*, *Manu* III, 77, and VI, 89-90; *Mah. Sâ.*, 268,6.

Briefly speaking, the real view on the point seems to be that, according to the consensus of opinion of the Hindu scriptural texts, the two doctrines of *karma* and *sannyâsa* have been in vogue in India for a very long time since the dawn of Vedic civilization, and that *sannyâsa*, if it is to be resorted to at all during the life time, is to be done so only when the mind has already attained the state of purification by the performance of all acts without attachment and in a spirit of resignation. This might be the view of the *Gîtâ* according to many, but not

the universally accepted view. This no doubt is the *view of the Bhâgavata system*. Looking to the latter we find that the world is regarded here as a reality and life as worth living.

The *Bhâgavata* draws a distinction between two classes of ascetics—those that are *pakva-kashâya* (having ripe impressions) and those that are *apakva-kashâya* (having unripe impressions). The latter is discarded altogether, and why? As the derivative meaning shows, a thing is called *pakva* only when it attains a state of maturity by means of certain chemical processes caused by its relationship to environments. The impressions of the previous existence similarly are to be styled *pakva* when they bearing fruits in the present existence are acted and re-acted upon by worldly environments. This action and reaction means that man in order to attain the state of complete self-realization must at first take part in all sorts of worldly activities. Complete detachment as a necessary condition for the final end to be realized is possible, therefore, only when man as a true citizen takes part in all the diverse activities—social, moral, political, etc., without being carried away by them. This again is possible when there is always an inner spiritual consciousness of the One Pervading Being underlying the diversities. In such state of maturity it is that true asceticism consists, and if a man before this stage of life embraces asceticism, the keen love of temporal objects ever present in his mind always tries to muddle it with uneasiness instead of causing its tranquillity and composure. This very idea is clearly expressed in the *Bhâg.* text XI, 28, 28: “Just as a disease badly treated often recurs and pains the patient, so the mind of a bad ascetic in which the impressions have not attained

maturity, affects him, attached to all temporal objects as he is.”

Lord Gourânga while instructing the devotee Raghunâtha Dâs Goswâmî strikingly deprecates such affected asceticism. “Do not take to stunted asceticism and do not make a display of it before the public. Enjoy temporal objects without being attached thereto. Always make your inner soul inclined to Bhagavân, but outwardly act like citizens. And for this Krishna will save you in no time” (*Charitâmrita, Madhya Lîlâ*). These and similar other wholesome utterances no doubt tell us to be active members of the society. They also lead us to conclude, as against certain critics, that the two movements of the complete spiritual life called by mystics centripetal and centrifugal are not dissociated from each other and consequently there is no apprehension of any loss of wholeness and balance in each. Moreover, since according to the Vaishnava theory the world is the dwelling place of God as Paramâtmâ, since the *viswa* is but the gross form of Bhagavân according to the *Bhâgavata view* (II, 1, 24), it would be a contradiction to say that man should not enjoy the objects of the world. All that is emphasized is that the enjoyment must always be attended with a feeling of detachment; and detachment in religion means not that we must renounce all worldly action but that we must not be overpowered by the action, we must not be forgetful of the presence of One Active Divinity as the underlying Principle of all temporal activities. This indeed is the noble esoteric teaching of the whole volume of the *Gîtâ* texts, this indeed is the significance of the sacred Gâyatrî. Nor is the idea wanting in the Upanishads. The first three verses of the *Isopanishad* clearly illustrate this. The leading thought contained in these extracts has been thus expressed by

Milburn, "Let life be filled with a consciousness of God. Renounce the world in the sense that your heart is not set on wealth or worldly things and that you could, if need be, live a life of poverty quite happily. If you have, in this sense, renounced the world and have sunk all things in the thought of God, you may then freely enjoy the

world. Do not want to get out of the world either by death or as a hermit. Do not imagine that work will do you any harm if you live and work in this spirit. Accept life heartily, and do not imagine that you are not a human being who has to live a human life. But do not be covetous—that would be to kill your soul" (*Religious Mysticism of the Upanishads*).

INDIA IN WORLD CULTURE AND WORLD POLITICS

BY DR. TARAKNATH DAS, M.A., PH.D.

India has a definite important place in the fields of World Culture and World Politics. This fact is more and more being recognized in India and world at large. World interest in India is growing; this is evident from the recent publication of interesting works. I shall try to give a short account of a few excellent books published recently.

I

Prof. H. G. Rawlinson, while discussing the subject—Influence of India in European Literature and Thought—has recently written to the following effect: "India, it has been said, suffers to-day, in the estimation of the world, more through the world's ignorance of her achievements than the absence or insignificance of those achievements. The work of three generations of scholars has done much to dispel the clouds of prejudice which prevent the West from appreciating the true greatness of Indian culture, but much remains to be done. Even the greatest of Indian rulers are still scarcely known by name to the general readers, and Indian art and architecture are regarded as grotesque and unfamiliar. More and more, however, we are beginning to realize the innumerable contacts, throughout the course of

history, between East and West, and their mutual indebtedness in language, literature, art and philosophy. As time goes on it will be increasingly realized that a knowledge of the history and culture of India is essential to the foundation of a proper understanding of the origin and growth of Western civilization. The intellectual debt of Europe to Sanskrit literature, already great, may well become greater in the course of years."¹

In the work, *The Legacy of India*, edited by G. T. Garratt and published by Oxford University Press, fifteen most outstanding authorities—Indian and Western—have given us lucid essays on various phases of Indian culture, which should be useful to all students of cultural history of India.

In three volumes of about 2,000 pages of double-crown octavo size, the Ramakrishna Mission has recently given us *The Cultural Heritage of India*,² which might be regarded as an

¹ *The Legacy of India*, edited by G. T. Garratt, with an Introduction by the Marquess of Zetland, Oxford University Press, 1937.

² *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vols. 3. Published by The Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Howrah (Calcutta), India. Price Rs. 30 or \$12 or 50 s. Postage Foreign \$2.50 or 10 s.

encyclopaedia of Indian culture, containing contributions from One hundred Indian scholars representing fifteen Indian universities and culture centres. It is undoubtedly the first comprehensive work of its kind and its value cannot be over-estimated. "No library, no institute of social, scientific, philosophical or economic research, no university, can afford to do without a copy of the *Cultural Heritage of India*. Indian achievements in mathematics, the physico-chemical and biological sciences, the sciences of mind and the spirit, and religion, on the one hand, and in practical arts, industries, economic organization, politics, social welfare, on the other, are all to be found set forth and described in these fascinating three volumes." These volumes are enriched by 171 illustrations of exquisite beauty executed by master artists of India.

II

It is recognized by Western scholars that Indian thought influenced Greek philosophical ideas. Students of comparative religion find similarity in the teachings of Jesus Christ and those of the Upanishads of the Hindus which are supposed to have been written between 1,000 B. C. and 300 B. C., if not earlier. Until 1783, when Sir William Jones and others unveiled some of the treasures of Sanskrit literature, the Western world did not have the opportunity of studying Hindu philosophy from original sources.

The teachings of the Upanishads are not mysterious but sublime. Man is not matter, neither is he a born sinner. He is "part and parcel of God," the Eternal Existence-Intelligence-Bliss. Salvation of man lies in achieving unity with the Eternal Spirit. This is to be attained by endeavours of man whose inner cry is: "Lead me from the unreal to the real, lead me from darkness to light,

lead me from death to immortality." *Ten Principal Upanishads*,³ put into simple English by Shree Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats, will be helpful to all interested in the study of Hindu philosophy.

Since the days of the Chicago World Fair of 1893, when the late Swami Vivekananda, during the sessions of the Parliament of Religions inaugurated by the unceasing efforts of the late Lloyd Jenkins Jones, startled the Western world by his message of Hinduism, the Western people have taken active interest in the Hindu methods self-culture—physical, psychical and spiritual—generally known as Yoga.

At first the inquiry into Yoga philosophy and practices was limited to the microscopic minority; but the work of the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission and that of many sincere Western seekers after truth, has widened the interest of the general public to a very great extent. To be sure, many charlatans—Western and Hindu—have used in the past and now are using the garb of a Yogi and posing as a Master. Yet it must be recognized that the teachings of Yoga philosophy and practices spread through devious ways, have revolutionized the attitude of the Western public about the ideal of self-culture and salvation. In this connection I wish to draw attention to two books recently published in New York.⁴

Col. F. Yeats-Brown, the author of *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, *The Lancer At Large*, etc., in his recent work *Yoga Explained*, has given an excellent

³ *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, put into English by Shree Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats, New York, Macmillan, 1937, pp. 159. Price \$2.00.

⁴ *Yoga Explained*. By F. Yeats-Brown, New York, The Viking Press, 1937, pp. 164. Price \$2.00; *Yoga, A Scientific Evaluation*. By Kovoov T. Behanan, New York, Macmillan Company, 1937, pp. 270. Price \$2.50.

account of what is Yoga and how Yoga practices may be helpful to all, even the so-called atheists. The book is illustrated with Yoga-postures and is of immense value because the author, a former British army officer, explains Yoga from his personal experience, as he learnt it from great teachers of India and as he has practised for self-development.

Dr. Kovoov T. Behenan, an Indian scholar, sometimes a Sterling Fellow, Institute of Human Relations, Yale University, has given us in his work, *Yoga, a Scientific Evaluation*, a critical and comparative study of Yoga philosophy and the application of its teachings as a means of self-culture. This is a valuable work; and the chapters on "Yoga and Psychoanalysis" and "Yoga and Psychical Research" will be of great value to students as well as laymen.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that after 150 years (days of Sir William Jones), there are signs that Hindu philosophical ideals and practices are being popularized among the intelligent public of the West. This will have a tremendous beneficial effect in bringing about genuine cultural co-operation and better understanding between the East and the West.

III

India is as large as the whole of Europe, except Russia; and it has a population of more than 300 millions. Through the researches of Western and Indian scholars and archeologists, it has been definitely established that some 5,000 years ago, before the pre-Aryan conquest, a great civilization, in many ways superior to contemporary Egypt, flourished in the North Western part of India.

In his recently published *Creative*

India,⁵ Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar of the Calcutta University, has dealt with some of the creations of the Indian peoples in personalities, ideas, institutions and movements during the period of approximately 5,000 years (3,000 B.C. to 1935 A.D.). Among other things, he has discussed, literature, art and social philosophy of the Indian people, the influence of Indian culture all over Asia and other parts of the world. More than 250 pages have been devoted to the study of "Creations of Modern India". This phase of the work will be of great value to students of India in transformation, because it throws considerable light on the creative phase of Indian nationalism which is based upon the conception of increasing national efficiency in terms of the best of the Western standard. In interpreting the spirit of Young India, Prof. Sarkar speaks like a real cosmopolitan and presents the ideal of "world conquest" in terms of scientific, industrial, political as well as cultural achievements.

While study of Indian cultural history is receiving attention among scholars, the question of Indian struggle for freedom is one of the great problems of the twentieth century, affecting world politics and world peace. Of course the late Rev. Dr. Sunderland's classic work *India in Bondage and Her Right to Freedom* (New York) should be studied by all students of Indian politics. Mr. Chaman Lal, an Indian journalist of international standing, in his recent work *The Vanishing Empire*,⁶ gives his views regarding Young India's struggle for freedom, during recent years. The work is eclectic; yet Mr. Lal's attitude may be regarded as an expression of the younger

⁵ *Creative India*. By Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Lahore (India). Motilal Baranasi Dass, 1937, pp. 714. Price Rs. 15/- or \$5.00.

⁶ *The Vanishing Empire*. By Chaman Lal, Tokyo, Kyodo Printing Co., 1937, pp. 250.

generation of India and therefore this book will be helpful to those who wish to understand the trend of Indian thought regarding the political future of the land.

India's cultural heritage is a valuable asset to humanity and India's political future is bound up with the progress of the nation and the trend of world politics.

THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS

BY SWAMI VIVIDISHANANDA

It is man who errs. Again it is man who forgives. Man is human and at the same time Divine. In spite of his innate Divinity, man's path lies through errors and lapses. Find out a man who is perfect. Such a man is indeed very rare in this world.

Even those who are called great and command the respect and homage of thousands are not altogether without taints. There is a popular adage in our country which is quite significant. It says: "Even an elephant's foot slips, even the boat of a good man sinks".

We all commit mistakes or sins, but great indeed is he who acknowledges his mistakes and is lenient to others. But people in their blind self-love are unforgiving when they come to others' mistakes, forgetting that they themselves would not have fared better under similar conditions.

If man is in essence Divine, why does he commit mistakes? How are we to reconcile man's Divinity with his seeming imperfection? This is one of the most perplexing questions of philosophy. Vedanta answers it by saying: "It is the apparent man who errs or sins, but the real man is perfect and beyond all blemishes."

In the intermediate stage when man does not know his real nature, he is liable to make mistakes. With the dawning of knowledge the apparent man with all his imperfections vanishes and

the real man shines forth in all the glory of his perfection. "Know thyself" has therefore been one of the greatest precepts reiterated in almost every page of Vedantic literature.

Sometimes people err because they do not know better. Their understanding is so much clouded by ignorance that they do not really know what is right and therefore cannot help taking a false step. Their actions, judged impartially, are rather unmoral than immoral. They belong to the abnormal type of insane or idiotic people. But a man with normal intelligence and understanding, if he is not too much depraved, knows what is right. He is morally conscious and is therefore responsible for his actions, for he has the freedom to choose or reject.

But sometimes because of deep-rooted undesirable habits, which have become almost a second nature, he fails. His heart is willing but his flesh is weak. The force of habits is too strong to resist, and in spite of all pious determinations, he is no better than a straw before a gust of wind.

Considering all this we should be patient with others, and not hard task-masters. It is easy to condemn but hard to forgive. Our rule of life should be to forgive. For, to err is human, to forgive is Divine. It will make the world better and happier and there will be less intolerance and impatience.

The story is told in the Bible of a woman who was caught in adultery and brought to Jesus for punishment. Jesus in his infinite love and compassion forgave her, and to those who wanted to stone her, he said: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." They looking back into their own life could not condemn the woman with clear conscience, for none of them were sinless.

Condemnation does not help. It is something like insult added to injury and drags both the accuser and the accused down. Instead of finding fault with those who err or sin, we should rather help them in their struggles by positive good counsel and sympathy. A word of sympathy is a better teacher than the rod of justice.

Forgiveness is one of those cardinal virtues we should practise in our daily intercourse with people. If we are unforgiving ourselves, we cannot expect others to be forgiving to us. If we are merciless in our judgment of others, we should be ready for a similar judgment when we fail or sin.

Not only is forgiveness utilitarian, it is essential for our moral and spiritual advancement. Now the question is: To be spiritual why should we forgive? Why is an unforgiving attitude inconsistent with spirituality?

Christ explains: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

An unforgiving attitude is the offspring of hatred and hatred is a poison which affects more the person hating than the person hated. Love or hatred returns to the persons from whom it issues. It is a psychological law which holds good universally although it may

not be quite patent to a superficial observer.

If we love we shall get love in return. If we are full of hatred we shall be hated by all with whom we come in contact. Patanjali, the founder of the Yoga system, says: "Non-violence being established, before such a person enmity ceases." This aphorism is not mere poetry but a fact and can be verified by anyone who wants to. The more we love and forgive, the more shall we reflect Divinity.

If people cherish unkind thoughts towards us, there is no reason why we should do the same. Retaliation or vengeance may be the law with the savage, but not with the civilized man. The very fact that he is civilized demands that he should be guided by higher spiritual laws. So the precept is "Conquer hatred by forgiveness and love, evil by goodness."

Once upon a time a saint had a trying experience. While walking on the bank of a river, he noticed a scorpion being carried by the current, and feeling compassion for the creature took it out from water. The scorpion stung him and went back to the water and the saint tried to save the scorpion thrice successively from the watery grave and each time he was stung. At last being disgusted he made up his mind to leave the vile thing to its fate when he heard a voice saying: "It is for the scorpion to sting. That is its nature. It is for you to love and forgive." This experience opened the eyes of the saint and was a great lesson which he never forgot.

There is a joy even in suffering while trying to uphold an ideal, and this joy is immeasurable and indescribable. It is this joy which sustains those votaries of truth who are misunderstood and persecuted by the unthinking and the ignorant.

In Hindu mythology is told the story of a boy-devotee, who, because of his spiritual convictions, fell a victim to the unmitigated wrath and persecution of his father.

The name of the boy was Prahlad. Even as a child he was conscious of the omnipresence and omnipotence of God and gave Him his whole-souled love and devotion. Nothing could shake his faith and deter him from his spiritual practices—prayers and devotions. The trials and tribulations in the form of insults, humiliations and physical tortures he went through for the sake of the Ideal are unparalleled in history. Not for a moment he complained or cherished the least feeling of hatred or retaliation against his persecutors, and like a true hero he came out unscathed and triumphant. Like a piece of genuine gold he was literally tried in fire and proved the supremacy of soul-force.

In accordance with a tragic law which is inscrutable to most of us, Prahlad was born in an environment which, instead of helping him in his spiritual strivings, put in his way all sorts of obstacles before which the sturdiest of hearts would quail. The father, Hiran-yakashipu, an autocratic monarch, was a rank atheist and materialist, believing in nothing except lust, greed and power. He could not see any sense in his son's spiritual pursuit. When gentle persuasions failed he resorted to violent means of bringing the son to his way of thinking.

At first Prahlad was placed under a teacher with explicit instructions to teach him wickedness and vice, so that he might grow in hatred to God and His devotees. Not only did the boy refuse to be wicked and vicious, he started reforming his teacher and play-mates by the irresistible influence of his character. He taught them to be good

and kind and to love God, the perennial source of peace and happiness.

The importunities and reprimands of the teacher failing, Prahlad was summoned to the royal presence. He was calm and serene. The king was all upset.

“My boy, I was told,” the king said, “that you still persist in your old ways. You still love and pray to that being whom you call God. Do you realize that it is the height of impertinence to go against my wishes? Who is God and what is He? What has man to do with Him? Give up your foolish practices. Forget God and never utter His name under my roof.”

The young prince undaunted replied: “Father, how can I forget God? He is our mainstay and only refuge. He is the creator and preserver of this universe. He is all love, goodness, perfection and knowledge.” The king was provoked beyond all measure at this bold answer. In a fit of terrible rage he shouted: “Being my son, you dare to disobey me, ungrateful wretch! Mend your ways before it is too late. Never repeat the name of God.”

The court being dissolved Prahlad retired. Still under the influence of rage the monarch went to the inner apartment of his queen to complain against the seemingly outrageous behaviour of her son. The queen, full of motherly love and sympathy, sent for the prince and taking him on her lap, kissed him and tried to persuade him to give up the worship of God in order to avoid the royal displeasure. How could the boy, who had tasted the supreme bliss of Divine communion, renounce his spiritual pursuit? It would be going against his very being.

The king, in consultation with his helpless ministers who did not have the courage to differ from him, resolved to execute the prince. A great fire was

kindled and Prahlad was pushed into it. Undismayed he stood in the midst of the flames and folding his hands in prayer lifted his soul to the footstool of God. Not a hair of his head was burned. Next he was taken on the top of a precipice and thrown into a deep chasm bound hand and foot. The ground was soft as a bed of down and did not hurt him at all. He was then dragged to a place where there were mad wild elephants to trample him under their feet. The elephants forgot their ferocious nature before this innocent child of God—the embodiment of non-injury and love.

Thus and in many other ways did the executioners try to kill the boy but failed, and they were at a loss as to what is to be done, being mortally afraid of the angry monarch. The boy was miraculously saved by the all-merciful God who protects those who take shelter at His feet. The bewilderment of the king knew no bounds when he heard the story.

Driven to desperation he sent for the prince again. Prahlad stood before his father quiet and undisturbed. Not a muscle of his face moved. The king could not but admire the majestic demeanour of the saintly prince and for the first time in his life felt overpowered by a feeling of fear. He wanted the boy to tell him who had protected him from death.

“Father,” said Prahlad, “it was God, the author of creation and the source of life and consciousness, whom I love and worship.” “Is His power so great? Can he really save you from my wrath?”—rejoined the king. “Yes, father, He can. As He is omnipotent and the fountain of all powers, nothing is impossible for Him. He interpenetrates every atom of this universe and is yet beyond. Nobody can withstand His will with impunity,” said the boy.

It was too much for the haughty deluded monarch. Overcome by his uncontrollable rage he roared: “Does your God exist in this pillar?” The boy raised his eyes to the heavens and said, “Yes, father, as He is all pervasive He must be in this pillar also.” The angry monarch took hold of a heavy club and struck the pillar with all his strength. The pillar crumbled into pieces making a terrible noise. Out of the heap of ruins issued a monster, half man and half lion, and seizing the demoniacal king tore him to pieces.

God who is the eternal sanction of morality, who rights wrongs and upholds justice, would not permit his devotee to suffer any more. He embodied Himself as the aforesaid monster, and relieved the earth from the tyrannies of Hiranyakashipu. Prahlad fell on his knees in humility and poured forth his heart’s devotion in a hymn describing the infinite glories of benign Providence. In his hymn of praise he begged the Lord to forgive his father and illumine his soul.

Love and forgiveness are the essential characteristics of all saints, seers, mystics and prophets, and not their miracles. Buddha in one of his incarnations gave his own body to feed a famished tigress. Shiva drank the deadliest poison to save creation. Christ prayed to His heavenly Father to forgive his enemies who crucified him.

In a certain book of devotion there is a beautiful maxim which we shall do well to practise in our daily life. It says: “Be as humble as a blade of grass and patient and forgiving as a tree. Respect and serve those who deserve it without claiming any attention yourself. That is the way to serve and please the Lord.” This maxim demands humility, patience, forgiveness and unassuming service. If we practise this we shall grow in purity and saintliness.

We should be loving and forgiving to all because of the oneness of life and spirit. It is the Self which is present in every form. Just as it is ridiculous for the different members of the body to quarrel with one another, it is absurd for a man to be intolerant and impatient

with his fellow-men. Let us remember the story of the mystic who was badly beaten by some ruffians and who coming to consciousness said: "It is the Self that beat, and it is the same Self that is beaten, and it is again the same Self that is nursing." Is it not wonderful?

WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY OF ORGANISM

BY ANIL KUMAR SARKAR, M.A., (Gold Medalist)

Whitehead's philosophy of organism is a revolt against the view that mentality is an emergent quality in the evolutionary process. Alexander, Russell, Lloyd Morgan, Dewey, Mead and Charles Morris are the champions of the 'emergent' theory of mind. But Whitehead points out that such a view would be to invoke what is known as the 'bifurcation' of nature into 'causal' and 'apparent' natures. In his *Concept Of Nature* he very beautifully points out the mistaken notions of bifurcation when the two natures, causal and apparent, meet in mind. He shows in his *Science And The Modern World* that the false abstractions are responsible for having no correct notion of the 'actual entities' of the world of nature. The actual entities are so many unities or organisms, or rather occasions or events, not isolated units having simple locations. They are nothing but unifications of the aspects of all other unities in the universe.

The vast world of flowing nature, according to Whitehead, is nothing but a realm of unities of experience developing into further unities. There is no such thing as 'vacuous actuality'. There is thus no barrier among the 'actual entities' and the 'processes' of nature. This forms the starting point of what he calls his philosophy of feel-

ings or prehensions. Charles Morris, in his *Six Theories Of Mind*, says that it can be very well called a 'critique of feeling.'

The basic conception of this philosophy is to advocate a philosophy of organisms on a relativistic conception of the universe. His famous book *Process And Reality* shows that the universe is a vast realm of 'processes,' it is a realm flowing on continuously. In this flow organisms arise, and the natural processes are nothing but processes towards continuous organisms. These organisms are nothing but unities of feelings trying to realise themselves in further unities of feelings. These unities are nothing but coming to what are known as 'subjective forms.' These are stages of the attainment of 'satisfaction.' In this realm of the coursing of feelings there is always an advance towards continual satisfactions which mean realization of values. His small book *Nature And Life* points out how the world of science can be united with the world of values. The world of nature is not a realm of dead material atoms, it is a world of values. The failure to understand this fact that actual entities are nothing but such realizations of values, has led to the age of romantic poets who revolted against mechanistic science. In his

Science and the Modern World he has fully supported the revolts against science. He advocates the view that we must totally change our conception of nature. Nature is not a realm of mechanism, not a realm of dead atoms. It is a realm of feeling, a realm of values and of aesthetic satisfactions. The actual entities or occasions are so many partial satisfactions of their aesthetic ideals. There is no wide gap between the realms of science and philosophy. Thus Charles Morris's short remark with regard to this philosophy seems to be very appropriate. We might say in his own words: "Thus the philosophy of organism, as a 'critique of feeling,' regards mind as one omnipresent aspect of and factor in an emergent process, and consciousness and knowledge as complex and special phases of such a process. With both James and Bradley, Whitehead agrees that such special phases are 'growing pains' that have no place as such in the final 'satisfaction' which supervenes, and which such phases merely help to bring about" (*Six Theories Of Mind*, p. 186).

From this we can also gather the fact that Whitehead has put the problem of philosophy and of science in a novel way and to him the problem of knowledge has become a natural fact. It is not an enigma as is generally the case with many of the philosophical thinkers. Let us now examine his thoughts in brief before going into the details of it.

OUTLINE OF HIS PHILOSOPHY

Whitehead's conception of nature is a conception of a world of actuality and a world of possibility. It is a world of enduring patterns and flux. There is permanence and change combined. So there is a unity between the two worlds. This leads to his philosophy of feeling or prehension as he calls it. The enduring

patterns are unities of feelings, but as unities are nothing but unities of aspects of all other feelings or events, the whole universe is mirrored in the patterns and the patterns have visions or envisagements of the whole universe in themselves. So the patterns pass into the processes. So the patterns are actualities and possibilities both, or rather they are limitations to possibilities. Their very assuming of forms or patterns leads Whitehead to think of another kind of entities which are known as the eternal objects. They give forms to flowing processes. The actual entities are so because of those eternal objects. They are the permanent possibilities of all actualities. So we might say that the actual entities realize themselves in eternal objects. They give them values. They are what are known as conceptual valuations of actual entities. The actual entities from their own standpoints are physical feelings and when they are so realized they become conceptual feelings. As realization is the end of all actualities there is always a tendency towards the conceptual valuations.

But Whitehead warns us here by reminding us that such conceptual valuations are not conscious valuations; they are merely realizations of the actual entities. This fact of realization is a natural process, for it is the end of all to proceed towards a continual realization. The world of nature by successive enduring patterns or actual entities of various grades from stone to man, reveals to us one fundamental fact of aesthetic realization. The feelings tend towards the creation of organisms, and the actual entities upto man are nothing but organisms. So we can very well call his philosophy a 'philosophy of organism.'

In understanding his philosophy we have to understand the integration and growth of feelings to more and more

complex feelings. There is a passage from the physical to the conceptual feelings. The feeling that unifies them is known as the propositional feeling. As every actual entity is a feeling and is felt by other feelings there is always a contrast between the subject and object in every entity. The gradual advance of feelings to higher feelings only points to a gradual clearness of the feeling of contrast. The propositional feelings reveal to us this contrast in a clearer form than that of the physical feelings. But yet the propositional feeling is not a conscious feeling of contrast. This is attained in the case of intellectual feelings where the contrast is clearly expressed in the form of a proposition. The intellectual feelings are nothing but judgments. As they express the feeling of contrast they are called comparative feelings.

As this and all other feelings are feelings of contrasts, there is a subjective realization, it is an attainment of satisfaction in a subjective form. So the intellectual feelings also express the common ideal of all 'actual entities' or 'centres of experiences,' *viz.*, the attainment of subjective form which is a realization of values.

In coming to the intellectual feelings we come to the realm of knowledge. So the problem of perception, which is the dominating problem of philosophy, comes into prominence as a natural phenomenon. This problem only tries to solve how we can adapt ourselves to the vast world of prehension that lies stretching before us.

This adaptation is a problem for the human organisms. The ideal of this philosophy is to advocate the perfect adaptation of the organisms to the environment in which lies the realization of values. So the whole universe tends towards the realization of values, or aesthetic satisfaction or beauty. The

end of the world of feelings is the realization of values.

This philosophy of feeling which advocates a unity between the 'realm of actuality' and the 'realm of possibility' is grounded on the ultimate philosophy of creativity. But as creativity is an ideal process, it requires the principle of concretion. It is God who is the first non-temporal entity before the creative process began. He is the principle of concretion. In him, the two natures, primordial and consequent, are combined. The primordial nature is the vision or the conceptual realization of the possibilities before the temporal order. The consequent nature of God evolves in its relationship to the evolving world. Thus we live in a kingdom of God which is a realm of actuality and possibility, limitation and freedom. It is a world of realization of values through the organisms. It is really a kingdom of Heaven.

CRITICAL EXPOSITION OF HIS PHILOSOPHY

The clue to Whitehead's philosophy lies in the analysis of the actual entities or actual occasions for they are microcosms inclusive of the whole universe. We can call them occasions or epochal occasions, for they are not static unities, they are unities of experience or feelings. In fine, the actual occasions are unities of feelings. If scientifically viewed, they are unities of space and time, they are 'events.' Events are enduring patterns, they are 'modal unities' of space-time. But this modal unity of space-time depends on two other characteristics of space-time. They are their separative and prehensive characters. They being enduring patterns are separated from other patterns, but the very enduring patterns point out their togetherness or prehensive unity with

all other patterns. An enduring pattern is a unity of aspects of all other patterns. It is a unity mirroring the whole in itself. It is, thus, a momentary or enduring monad viewing the world from its standpoint. Thus, there is a relativity among the patterns.

The unification of the aspects of the whole universe means an all-pervasive relativity or the passage of the one to the other. This also means their mutual 'affections.' So none is without the other. The unities become processes and processes, unities. Thus the keynote of this philosophy is to advocate what is known as 'concrecence' and 'transition.' There is, thus, in every occasion an 'internal constitution' and an 'external determination.' There is a 'process of subjectification' and a 'process of objectification.' There is a universal relation between the feeler and the felt, the subject and the object. Every occasion is a subject feeling others as object. It is for this reason that Whitehead calls it 'bipolar' having a 'mental pole' and a 'physical pole.'

In calling every occasion bipolar he does not mean to suggest that the object is for the subject, for the subject-object relation is relative. An occasion is subject as viewing others as object, but it is itself an object as felt by others. But here also we must note that this feeling of the object is not conscious. It is merely a natural fact of prehension that links up one with the other. The universe is not a static universe, it is a process, so there is always a tendency towards a feeler, or subjective form. But when it tends towards further subjective forms it becomes an object, for it is unified in a higher subjective form. The attainment of subjective form means the realization of values. Natural processes only tend towards such subjective forms wherein lie their realizations. All have an end towards final satisfaction

or realization. In the process towards subjective forms or satisfactions, the subject is, as it were, thrown up the process. So he prefers the term 'superject' to subject. 'Subject-superject' is the end at which the feelings aim. So merely aiming at the 'subject-superject' does not mean a conscious aim. It is only coming to a new occasion which has its own 'microcosmic apprehension.' It is a blind perceptivity. Consciousness arises at a later stage of growth of feeling. The attainment of that conscious state means an intensity of the feeling of contrast between the world of prehension and the world of apprehension. The one is the realm of blind perceptivity and the other is the realm of conscious perceptivity.

The analysis of the actual occasions reveals to us another important factor. These actual occasions are not mere 'unities' or 'nexus'; they are 'societies' united in one ideal purpose, for they aim at ideal satisfactions. To hold this view would be to hold that these unities are related to all other unities as the parts of a body are related to all other parts of an organism. In fine, we can hold that nature is an organism, and the actual occasions are related to it as parts of an organism. We can say that there are organic relations among the occasions or entities of nature. There is, thus, an organic relation throughout. Every occasion is an organism comprehending other organisms and is comprehended in other organisms in turn. The natural processes are flowing towards higher and higher organisms. So there are atoms, trees, planets, beasts and men. There are grades of existences from the inanimate to the animate world. But there is a continuity throughout, for the evolution is nothing but evolution towards organisms. The organisms are societies having a common

aim which is the attainment of a final aesthetic ideal.

“Each actual entity is an arrangement of the whole universe, actual and ideal, whereby there is constituted that self-value which is the entity itself.”¹ So each entity is a unity of actuality and possibility. It is a form and a process. The form is its character, or it is its self-realization. So what is it that gives self-valuation to it? This leads Whitehead to refer us to the eternal ideas, which give form to all actual entities. In those forms the entities realize themselves. The entities realize themselves in those forms or eternal objects, and the eternal objects become actualized in the entities. So there is an inseparable union among the eternal objects and the actual entities. But there is a difference of relation between an eternal object and an actual entity. The relation of the eternal object is one of ingression into the actual occasion. It is a sort of external relation. It is a possible determination of an actual entity. But an actual occasion or entity cannot be such without the eternal object, for the pattern or form is given by the eternal object. Here the relation, therefore, is internal. The eternal objects are, therefore, self-existent, whereas the actual entities are not so. The eternal objects are, thus, possibilities of determinations; they are, therefore, universals. So actual determination is not a final determination but only a possible determination. The actualization of the eternal objects are possible actualizations, and every actualization is a possible self-realization; there is a vast realm of possibility in each case. There is concreteness and transition side by side.

We have observed that an actual occasion is a unity of feeling and the felt. But since the eternal object becomes actualized in an actual occasion,

it might also be classified into ‘subjective’ and ‘objective,’ according as it refers to ‘feeling’ or to the ‘felt.’ But as the actual object is a possibility aiming at further realizations, the eternal object is also a possibility of feeling in which the actual object is realized. Here we find a division between an actual entity and its possibility of further realizations. We might characterize the one as physical feeling and the other as the conceptual feeling. Eternal objects ingress into both of these aspects of actual occasions. The eternal objects, thus, give form to actual occasions without ceasing to be possibilities. They are realized in conceptual feelings. Now let us consider the eternal objects themselves.

They are ‘possibilities,’ and they give form to actual occasions; so they are not mere possibilities. Though they are the same as possibilities, they are distinct as they are the diverse realization of the actual occasions. They have also a relation among themselves. Some of them go together as in the case of flower which is both coloured and soft. But yet they cannot remain as mere possibilities of actual realizations. They must be actualized or determined before they are realized in actual occasions. Whitehead thinks that they are realized in the conception valuations of God, who is “the actual but non-temporal entity whereby the indetermination of creativity is transmuted into a determinate freedom.”² So the eternal objects as non-temporal beings are realized in the temporal occasions. S. Radhakrishnan in his *An Idealist View Of Life* speaks of them in contrast with the Platonic Ideas. We may quote him thus:

“Unlike Plato’s Ideas, they are not substances, but only forms. The view of forms as conceptually realized in God avoids the realism of independent exist-

¹ *Religion in the Making* ; p. 88.

² *Religion in the Making* ; p. 90.

ence as well as subsistence. The being of these eternal objects is not a ghost-like imitation of actuality, but consists in mere possibility. They are not metaphysical forces generating the world of existence, nor dynamic powers drawing men and things towards themselves. They are indifferent to their chance embodiment in existence, and many of them may not have been manifested at all in existence. They are eternal in their timeless being. They do not cease to be when all perishes. They are not imaginary or abstract, but identical and individual, universal and non-existent. Some of them are apprehended as possibilities logically prior to their manifestation in existence, and others as symbols of values we pursue. Yet they are not efficient causes, since they belong to the realm of pure being. The relation of form to the temporal world is that of potentialities to actualities. The forms and the temporal process require each other. The process can attain order and determination only by participation in the forms, and the forms exist as relevant to the realization in the process of becoming. Actualities in the temporal world need to be described as processes of becoming by which sheer creativity governs determination, character, order. On the one hand, actuality arises from the background of the system of all actualities, and is conditioned by them. On the other, it is a process of self-formation. It organises the data presented to it in the light of ideas or purposes. The temporary actualities realize the possibilities surveyed in God's nature. We have thus creativity and God's primordial nature which is the vision of the possibilities before the temporal order." (pp. 327-8).

Here in this long quotation we find a lucid presentation of the important concepts of Whitehead. He has spoken

of the character of the eternal objects in their relation to actual occasions, God and creativity. He has also pointed out the need of all those concepts.

A survey of the character of the actual occasions and the eternal objects points to a relation between the past and the present on the one hand, and the present and the future on the other. Every occasion is a creation of the past, and it passes on to the future. Thus an occasion has an eye backward and an eye forward. But as every occasion is a new creation, there are both causality and novelty mixed here. There is no contradiction here. In the universal becoming there is no gap. "An occasion arises as an effect facing its past and ends as a causality facing its future."³ As effect an occasion reacts to the past and as cause it anticipates the future. This seems to suggest that there is all-pervading causality and there is no place for novelty. But this is a false idea. We have already shown that an occasion is bipolar, a feeler and the felt. It is a dynamic agent aiming towards a further realization. It goes towards certain ideals, so the novelty is ingrained in the very passage of one occasion to another occasion. They all aim at ideal satisfactions. So many grades of occasions are so many attempts at the realization of values. There is obviously no gap from the inanimate to the animate world. Yet there are causality and novelty side by side. The existence of life or a unity of living societies only points to the coming of novelty in the process. In the inanimate world there is more of repetition than of novelty. Novelty is the very nature of the process; so there is ground for the supposition of discontinuity in the process. We may view the same thing differently. There is everywhere

³ *Adventures of Ideas*; p. 249.

duality, unification of mental pole with the physical pole. The passage towards the higher unities means a rise to the direction of the mental pole. This means a passage towards novelty. In the stage of consciousness or in the stage of unity of life in a personality the mental pole predominates. Thus there are four grades of occasions, viz., space, matter, life and consciousness. These also mark the four types of existences as expressed in his book *Process and Reality*. He writes: "First, and low-

est, there are the actual occasions in so-called 'empty space'; secondly, there are the actual occasions which are moments in the life-histories of enduring non-living objects, such as electrons or other primitive organisms; thirdly, there are the actual occasions which are moments in the life-histories of enduring living objects; fourthly, there are the actual occasions which are moments in the life-histories of enduring objects with conscious knowledge" (pp. 249-50).

(To be continued)

THE STORY OF ABU BAKER SHIBLI

BY AGA SYED IBRAHIM (DARA)

Spiritual realization is very difficult of attainment inasmuch as it requires a harmonious and perfect development of all the parts of one's own being. It is not enough if one gets the power in the heart, or the vision in the mind, or is able to awaken some spiritual force in one's vital being, for if the organs are not perfected, spiritualized, and transformed for the revelation of the spirit, it very often creates confusion in the complex texture of the life of an individual. At any rate truth is likely to be coloured by the limitations of the instrument, and the manifestation of the spirit may also remain distorted and imperfect. This has unfortunately been the case with many over-enthusiastic devotees in India as well as in other countries. A short sketch of the life of one such spiritual figure—a Sufi sage, named Abu Baker Shibli, who was greatly revered in his time for his spiritual attainments is given here.

Abu Baker Shibli was born in Bagdad. He was a fighter throughout his life and was never disheartened by failures or opposition. He used to utter the words

of Mansur, Anal Haq—"I am God." He lived upto the age of seventy-seven and died in Hijra 334. He was greatly troubled by the ignorant masses and attempts were made to assassinate him for his blasphemy.

The incident of his turning to spiritual life is interesting. He had a large estate and rich lands in the district of Wehawand and he was the governor of the place under the Khalif of Baghdad. He went to the court of the Khalif on being asked to present himself before him. For some reason the Khalif became angry and confiscated his property and he was sent back to his native place in disgrace. But after a time the Khalif again restored his property and presented him with rich robes of honour. Shibli took the costly robes and cleaned his nose with them. When the Khalif came to know of this, he again confiscated his property. Shibli thought, "When we misuse the clothes given by man, he revenges himself in this way. What then would be the punishment for misusing the gifts given by the Divine?" He returned to the Khalif after resolv-

ing upon the future course of his life and said, "O King, when you cannot brook the misuse of the things given by you, and take it as an insult, how can I insult God by being ungrateful to Him by accepting your service? I will not serve you any more but devote my life to the service of God." Saying this he left the court and became the disciple of Khaiyar Noussaz, who was a relative of Junnaid, a great Sufi sage. He directed Shibli to go to Junnaid. On approaching the latter, Shibli said, "You have got the real Divine love which I compare to a precious pearl. Kindly give the pearl to me. If you cannot give it as a free gift, give it to me by taking its price." Junnaid replied, "I think it beyond your power to buy the pearl. If I give it to you as a gift I fear you will lose it and may not be able to preserve it safely. Only one way is open for you by which you will get the pearl: if you have the strength and courage to plunge into the ocean of life and strive constantly with patience and faith you may attain it."

Shibli said, "Very well, tell me what I have to do and I won't be found lacking." Junnaid said, "Go and sell sulphur in the streets for one year." At the end of the year he came and asked, "What am I to do next?" Junnaid said, "Do not do any work for one year but ask for alms from house to house." He began to ask for alms but could not get anything. He returned to his master and informed him of what had happened. Junnaid said, "Now, do you see your own worth? The people do not care for you in the least, and hence you should not care for them and stop all your concern for them." Then he asked him to return to his native place Nahaund, and to ask pardon of the people who had suffered for his injustice and tyranny during his regime as a governor. He went away and

acted as he was told. But he could not find out one man whom he remembered to have wronged; so he gave one lac of copper coins in alms to atone for that sin. He took four years in this work and then returned to Junnaid, who replied, "Still the ego has not left you. Therefore spend one year in begging alms." Shibli says that he spent one year in begging from door to door and whatever he got he gave to his master, who distributed all to the poor and did not give him anything to eat at night. After the lapse of one year the master said, "Now, for one year render service unto sages." At the end of the period Junnaid asked Abu Baker Shibli, "Now, what value do you attach to your self?" Shibli replied, "I consider myself as the lowest of all creatures and sincerely believe it to be so." Junnaid said, "Now you are free. You have got the real knowledge."

In order to attract people towards God, Shibli used to say, "If anybody utters the name of Allah, I will fill his mouth with sugar." He used to give sugar to children and asked them to utter the name of Allah. After some time he again declared, "Whoever will speak 'Allah' in my presence, I will fill his mouth with gold and silver." So grown-up people also began to come to him and repeat the name of Allah. After a time he found out that people took the name of Allah in disrespect. He could not bear this and kept a naked sword in his hand and threatened that if any one spoke the name of Allah in his presence, he would cut off his head. Thereafter if anybody uttered the name of God in his presence he used to bow down.

Once he heard a voice, "Shibli, how long will you love the Name only? Why not seek God Himself?" On hearing this his heart was filled with intense emotion and love of God, and over-

powered by ecstasy he threw himself into the river. He was not drowned and the waves cast him on the shore. He, however, could not bear the separation and in another impulse threw himself into fire out of which also he was saved by a miracle. His intensity increased still more after this incident and he put himself to more dangerous tests and was saved each time. At last he exclaimed, "What should I do now? Even water, fire, the ferocious beasts of prey and the mountains do not end my life!" In answer he heard the voice, "The man who kills himself with the love of God cannot be killed by anything else." He became almost mad with the love of God, and also acted like a mad man. He was put under hand-cuffs and chains. Yet his passion remained uncontrolled and he was sent to the lunatic asylum, where he was detained for a long time.

People used to say to him, "Shibli, you have gone mad." He used to reply, "Yes, I am mad in your eyes, but to me you all are mad. I wish God might increase this my madness a hundred-fold." Once some people came to him and, on being inquired by Shibli, they said that they were his relatives. Thereupon Shibli abused them and threw stones at them. They began to flee for safety. At this he said, "You are all liars; you pretend to be my relatives and do not even put up with this much excess from me!"

On another occasion he took fire in his hand and said, "I will go to Mecca and burn the temple of Kaba. This alone will make them real lovers of God by diverting their attention from

the temple to the God who resides in the temple." One day he took a piece of wood burning at both the ends and said, "See, both the heaven and the earth are consigned to fire so that people may now resort to God without any attachment to heaven, or fear of hell."

On the occasion of the Id festival he used to put on a black dress of mourning. People asked the reason of this and he explained, "All these people are away from God. They take pleasure in worldly things and forget God. I therefore put on this dress as a mourning for their misdeed."

Once a bird was uttering the sound, 'coo', 'coo', incessantly. In reply he, on climbing the tree, uttered repeatedly the words 'Here it is, here it is.' On being asked what this meant he said, "The bird inquires, 'Where is It? Where is It?' and I too have to reply. She does not stop; so I cannot also stop replying." In Persian 'coo' means 'where', and hence this was interpreted by him as meaning the question, 'Where is It?'

He used to put salt in his eyes to keep awake. At this Junnaid asked, "Why do you do this?" He said, "The Truth has come and I have no power to bear it and hence in confusion I resort to such methods in the hope of keeping myself under control for a longer time."

Such were the efforts of the sages of the past who helped the growth of spiritual consciousness and light in this world. Let us hope humanity will be more ready and better equipped to receive a greater light and a richer realization.

THE SYNTHETIC METHOD OF THE UPANISHADS

BY PROF. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, M.A., PH.D.

The nature of any system of philosophy is largely determined by its methodology. The results of a metaphysical inquiry depend not a little on the method that a philosopher adopts. Method and material are interdependent. The former without the latter is barren, and the latter without the former is blind. Descartes is hailed as the father of modern philosophy because of his innovation in the field of metaphysical methodology. Immanuel Kant is known as the Copernicus of philosophy because of the unique epistemology he gave to the world.

“The diversity of our opinions,” says Descartes in his *Discourse on Method and Metaphysical Meditations*, “is not because some are more reasonable than others, but only because we conduct our thought by different ways, and do not all consider the same things.” Of all the different ways of approach, the most important are the objective and the subjective methods. Those metaphysical systems which pursue the objective path land themselves in crass materialism and arrant atheism. Though Descartes began with the method of ‘universal doubt’, and started his metaphysics with the postulate *cogito ergo sum*, he relinquished this position while actually building the superstructure of his system. The mathematical method of the Cartesian philosophers is mainly an objective method. It is because of this method that even Spinozism lends itself to a materialistic interpretation. In the East, the Vaiseshika system makes use, for the most part, of the objective approach. With its analytic skill in classifying the various phenomena of the uni-

verse, it leaves us with an infinite number of finite particulars. But particulars cannot be the ultimate reality. A billiard-ball universe will satisfy no thorough seeker of truth. Of late this objective method has invaded even the realm of psychology. The Behaviourist materializes the mind, makes it a shadow of the flesh and explains its functions in terms of physics and physiology.

The subjective method is equally one-sided, and if pursued to its logical consequence, would lead to subjectivism and skepticism. The history of the English empiricist school bears witness to this fact. The psychological method which Locke inaugurated led logically to the phenomenalistic pluralism and skepticism of David Hume. The Buddha’s way, in the East, was to a great extent subjective and psychological. Though he was launched upon his career of philosophic thought by an objective observation of human misery, in so far as his aim was to discover the cause and the cure of sorrow, the Buddha had to choose the subjective method of introversion and psychological analysis. And a thorough-going method of this kind involved him naturally in the position of an agnostic.

There are certain systems which employ both the subjective and the objective methods, but in an unsynthesized fashion. The Sankhya pursuing the objective method takes all the manifold of sense-perception to the primal source, Pradhâna or Prakrti, the prius of creation; and through the subjective method of inquiry Kapila arrives at a plurality of purushas. But because of a

lack of synthesis, he is left with an irreconcilable dualism as between Prakṛti and Puruṣa and a plurality of spirits.

The Upanishadic method is a synthesis of the objective and the subjective ways of approach to Truth. The terms 'adhyâtma' and 'adhidaivata' occur frequently and in a successive order in the Upanishads. The cosmic ether is spoken of as identical with the ether of the heart. "He who is in the puruṣa and he who is in the sun, he is one," says the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. Uddâlaka in the *Chhândogya Upanishad* instructs his son how from the Sat, One only without a second, the world sprang forth. After describing in detail the process of the objective mani-

festation of the self of the universe, Uddâlaka turns with a dramatic swiftness and says that the universal Self is identical with the self of Svetaketu, his son. This is a typical instance of the synthetic method of the Upanishads and of the system of Vedanta which is based thereon. It is through this method that the Advaitins reach the non-dual Absolute which can be characterized neither as objective nor as subjective. Brahman is to be discriminated from the external world through the objective method of approach; and the subjective method is made use of for analysing the sheaths that seem to encase the self and for divesting it of them just as we remove the chaff from a *kodrava* grain.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S LIFE AND MESSAGE

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

It is not within the powers of an ordinary individual to fully understand and properly appraise and evaluate the titanic spiritual personality of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva. However, it is Sri Ramakrishna himself who has facilitated the task of those who would like to understand him and his message, for he has described in his own words his super-human *sâdhanâs* and his high-soaring mystical realizations. His descriptions are in simple and easily intelligible language, abounding in suggestive similes, metaphors and parables; and these have been collected and authentically recorded by his immediate disciples. So, although we may fail to fathom the depths of the personality of Sri Ramakrishna, we cannot be in the dark or be mistaken about the vital message he has bequeathed to us.

As is well known, the first decades of

the nineteenth century were a period of world-wide scepticism in matters religious and spiritual. They were the palmy days of scientific Naturalism which found it very inconvenient to destroy the neatness of its mechanistic world-picture by the 'superfluous' admission of God or any spiritual principle in Nature. India too, to some extent at any rate, was drawn into the welter of this Godless Naturalism, and what is at once interesting and significant to note is that the first disciples of Ramakrishna were university-educated men, with a good grounding in Western science and thought and with a powerful leaning towards agnosticism and atheism. We can well imagine what a power Ramakrishna must have been in transforming them into mighty spiritual figures.

At such a critical time of human history was Ramakrishna born—

on the 18th of February, 1836, of poor Brahmin parents, in an obscure village of Bengal called Kamarpukur. Education, as we understand the term, he had none. He was no doubt sent to school in his early boyhood, but he would often play the truant there. And ultimately, seeing that the object of coming to school was not knowledge for its own sake but earning money, he left it altogether in disgust. He remained an illiterate, and yet he rose to be, as his great French biographer, M. Romain Rolland, aptly remarks, "the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people (of India). . . . a symphony built up of a hundred different musical elements emanating from the past." How was it possible? The answer to this question—the story of Ramakrishna's breathless struggles and intense heart-searchings—forms one of the most glorious and unforgettable chapters of human history.

Now, what was the secret of Ramakrishna's life? It was, in one word, the burning eagerness in his heart to know God and to see God. It was his all-consuming passion for God-vision that moulded his life from the very start of his career as a worshipper of Kâli in the temple of Dakshineswar. He was not content with merely worshipping in the conventional ways the external image of Kâli, but wanted to see God whom he called his Divine Mother, face to face. Day after day, he would stand before the image of Kâli and pray, not only with his lips but with his whole heart and soul: "O Mother! dost thou really exist? If thou dost exist, why am I not able to see Thee?" Every day, gone without the vision of God, was a day full of tortures to Ramakrishna. It would make his heart bleed. In his intense longing for seeing God, he became, as it were, completely

mad. He forgot the conventional ways of worshipping and would cry for the Divine as any child would cry for its lost mother. So intense became his passion that one day finding his life unbearable without the sight of God, he took up the great sword lying in the temple and was about to end his life with it, when in a moment the desired vision came and Ramakrishna saw the Divine everywhere around him and as everything.

God or Death—that is the price one has to pay for seeing God. People want to get God very cheap, but who has got Him that way? What marvellous life was Ramakrishna's that he should have thought from his very school-going age that God was the worthiest object of quest in life and that all else was vanity!

From very early times learned men and philosophers have been discussing and are still discussing about the proof of God's existence. Now, is there not a ring of absurdity in speaking of a proof of God's existence? Proving a thing means deducing it from something which is more certain than it. Would not, then, the proof of God require something more certain than God from which God's reality could be deduced? Proof of the nature of logical deduction about God, there cannot be from the very nature of the case. The only proof of God's existence is *seeing* Him and realizing Him as a factual content of living experience. Nothing short of a direct and soul-felt contact with Him can convince the seeker of His reality. The old philosophical arguments for the existence of God—the ontological, cosmological and teleological ones—are all, as Kant showed, unable to establish the existence of God as a *fact*. They can at best indicate God as a necessary logical postulate of experience, an Idea of Reason in the Kantian phrase.

Ramakrishna realized God not as a logical postulate, but as an indubitable fact of experience—a Verity. So when young Narendra (afterwards known as Swami Vivekananda) met Ramakrishna and asked: “Have you seen God, Sir”? “Yes!” came the unhesitating reply, “I see Him more intensely than I see you and I can also make you see Him.”

Thus Ramakrishna knew of God, not from books and argumentation, but from the great Book of Life itself. His was the knowledge derived not through the weak instrumentality of the plodding intellect but through what Goethe called “the scholastic of the heart and the dialectic of the soul.” Page after page, chapter after chapter, Ramakrishna turned the Book of Life, till he came to the Epilogue—the vision splendid of the One Real—the Advaitic realization. But the infinite plasticity of his being did not pin him down to any one particular phase of mystical realization. His soul frequently alternated between realizations of mergence in the Unity and the sweet delights of communion and fellowship with the Divine. The width of his spiritual experience embraced all the phases and stages of realization. “God tastes infinite joys in infinite ways,” said Browning. Ramakrishna tasted the joy of God in infinite ways. He played the whole gamut of the music of spiritual experience, realizing the truths of the Dvaita, the Visishtâdvaita and the Advaita in an ascending hierarchy of mystical perception. To him God was both impersonal and personal, according as one realized Him in His ultimate essence as the sum total of all existence, as the All, or, as personalized according to the pragmatic and practical demands of the concrete religious consciousness.

That is why Swami Vivekananda remarked that his life was a living com-

mentary on the texts of the Upanishads. Scholars have always been scratching their brains in determining what philosophy the Upanishads have taught. Is it the Dvaita of Madhwa, or the Visishtâdvaita of Râmânuja, or the Advaita of Samkara? Well, there are passages in the Upanishads which lend support to all these views. This does not mean that the Upanishads are vague and inconsistent. They mark out the Dvaita and the Visishtâdvaita as stages, halting stations, in the soul’s journey to the ultimately Real—the Advaita. The super-mystic Ramakrishna had traversed through all these different stages and thus his life had become a living commentary on the Upanishads. The mystic soul reconciles in his living experiences what the dry doctrinaires remain wrangling about.

Nor did the all-consuming avidity of Ramakrishna for diverse spiritual experiences allow him to remain contented with the practice and mastery of *sâdhanâs* prescribed within the pale of Hinduism. He began practising the *sâdhanâs* of other faiths also. He got himself initiated into Islam and during the time he was practising the ways of the Islamic faith, he lived, moved, ate and dressed like a Muhammadan, forgetting, as it were, for the time being, all Hindu ways and manners. And he found that the Islamic faith could also take one to the Divine.

A similar thing happened with Christianity. His interest in Christianity began with the reading out of the *Bible* to him by one Sambhucharan Mallik. Then one day he happened to see in a neighbouring house a beautiful picture of the Madonna and the child Christ and the sight threw him into transports and ecstasy. Thenceforth he put himself completely in a Christian atmosphere, stopped going to the temple and gave up for the time being all his Hindu ways.

He realized the Divinity of Christ and accepted him as an incarnation of God.

Thus, one by one, Ramakrishna practised all the great religions of the world and came to the conclusion that all religions, if followed in their essentials with sincerity and earnestness, were equally efficacious in leading man to the Divine; and therefore, there should be no quarrel, fanaticism or bigotry in matters religious. The differences in the racial and individual psychology of different peoples and individuals will naturally lead them to seek the Divine in different ways, and these differences should be tolerated and not fought with.

How unfortunate it is that religion should have been a dividing factor of mankind, causing so many wars and so much bloodshed! With his colossal spiritual capacity and universality of outlook, Ramakrishna demonstrated to the world by his unique life that the Infinite can be approached in diverse ways, and became the harbinger of a new era of religious toleration.

In the dark and dreary arena of the modern world where living and thirsting for God has become an almost obsolete ideal of life and where men and nations are running a frenzied race for power and self-aggrandizement, the wonderfully God-centred life of Ramakrishna untouched by the faintest taint of worldly longings and carnal desires, stands as a beacon light of unsurpassed brilliance and lustre. Ramakrishna's life is a challenge to the scepticism of the time and a mighty vindication of what the highest blessedness for man can be—the blessedness of God-life. The great lessons which we learn from the life of Ramakrishna are that God *is*, and can become an object of direct experience to man if only he has in his heart a yearning for Him so intense that he prizes nothing on earth higher than Him; and that the essence of religion is to come

face to face with the Divine and that all the great religions of the world are different pathways for taking man to the self-same Goal.

Another great message of Ramakrishna, of which India and the entire world stand in burning need today, is his gospel of seeing God in all living beings, and serving them as such. Service of suffering humanity is to be understood—not as the humanist or the utilitarian conceives it to be, “a good turn to others”—but as a worshipper of God would do it seeing Him tangibly manifested in all living forms. Thus viewed, service comes to mean not doing good to others or ‘helping’ the world, but a spiritual gain to one's own self. “*Jiva is Siva*; all living beings are God”—was a wonderful proclamation given by Ramakrishna one day in a state of absorbing God-consciousness. It was this message which made Vivekananda, a mighty patriot, writhe in agony for the suffering millions of his country. It is this message which is the foundation of the great Ramakrishna Mission with its numerous acts of philanthropic and social services.

And again, it is this message which is needed by the modern world to set right its attitude towards the phenomena of evil and suffering in human life. The problem of evil has, of late, been dragged into the very mid-stream of philosophical discussion, especially in the West. Some eminent Western philosophers¹ have ventured the opinion that the existence of evil in the world, manifested especially in the form of want and suffering in human life, is not compatible with the omnipotence of God. Had God been omnipotent, it would have been within his power to have avoided the existence of suffering

¹ The notable amongst them are William James, Dean Rashdall, Dr. McTaggart and Professor James Ward.

and cruelty in the world. But since he could not do so, He also must be labouring under conditions over which He has no control. So, these philosophers say there is a "limited God." God is not an omnipotent being, but merely a being *primus inter pares*.

Now, instead of heaping curses upon God for his not removing want and misery from this world, let us pause to consider if the existence of evil and suffering in the world can also be turned

to the spiritual advantage of man. Why may it not be so when man gets an opportunity to attain his spiritual perfection by *servicing* the Divinity in suffering humanity? Why should this not be reckoned a part of the Divine plan? Why should we not think it to be a spiritual failure to turn away from the call of the Divine in the living forms that suffer? It was given to Ramakrishna to perceive and proclaim this wonderful truth to the modern world.

SRI-BHASHYA

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

THE GREAT SIDDHANTA

Advaitin's position refuted

SCRIPTURES CANNOT CARRY GREATER WEIGHT AS AGAINST DIRECT PERCEPTION WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT BETWEEN THEM.*

The view held by the Advaitins that direct perception is affected by an inherent defect and is capable of being explained otherwise and therefore is sublated by scriptural knowledge is not quite a sound one. What is this defect with which direct perception is contaminated? If it is the inherent defect (Nescience) that makes us see manifoldness, how do we know that this perception of manifoldness is an error? If it be said that this manifoldness is an error because it conflicts with scriptures which teach unity, then this would lead to a logical seesaw. For it would mean that direct perception is defective, be-

cause we know for certain that scriptures teach unity. How do we know that scriptures teach unity? Because we are sure that the manifoldness experienced through direct perception is an error. Moreover, if direct perception is contaminated by this error of manifoldness, so are also scriptures which are based on this manifoldness. It cannot be said that though scriptures are defective yet, as the knowledge of unity taught by them dispels the manifoldness experienced through direct perception, they are later and are capable of sublating direct perception, for what is defective cannot sublate another knowledge merely because it is later. When a person mistakes a rope for a snake, his fear is not removed by another person who is known to be under a delusion only by saying that it is not a snake but a rope. The very fact that one has to practise

* Refutation of Section 4 of the Purvapaksha. *Vide* February issue, p. 94.

reasoning and meditation on Vedic texts after hearing them shows that a person who hears these texts is aware of their inherent defect, that they too have a tendency to show differences, for they are made of words and sentences which are differentiated. Moreover, there is no proof to show that scriptures are free from all defects while direct perception is so contaminated. Consciousness which is self-proved and unrelated to any object cannot establish that scriptures are free from defects. For consciousness to prove this it must be connected with them and it is not. Nor can direct perception prove it since it is defective and gives wrong knowledge; nor can any other means of knowledge prove it since they are all based on direct perception. So the view that scriptures are free from defects cannot be proved. Empirical means cannot establish it, for empiricism means that which is accepted as correct on a first view but which is refuted by reasoning. But then it might be argued that though both sense perception and scriptures are defective yet the unity taught by scriptures nullifies the knowledge of manifoldness through sense perception, while the unity taught by scriptures is not so sublated by anything else and therefore non-dual Brahman alone is the reality. This argument is not sound, for what is defective, though not sublated by anything else, does not for that reason become real. In a country where all are suffering from cataract, the fact that their knowledge through defective vision (as for example, experiencing the moon as double) is not sublated, does not vouch for the reality of their knowledge or its object, a double moon. Both their knowledge and its object, the double moon, are unreal. So the knowledge of Brahman based on ignorance and its object, Brahman, are unreal though it

is not sublated by any other knowledge. Brahman is false because it is the object of knowledge of persons affected by ignorance, even as the phenomenal world is false for the same reason. Brahman is false because It is the object of knowledge even as the world is.

Again Brahman is false because Its knowledge results from an unreal cause, even as this world is false for a similar reason. Its knowledge is derived from scriptures which are based on Nescience and therefore unreal. It may be said that scriptures are not absolutely unreal like sky-flower but have a relative reality. They are real for the man under Nescience and cease to be real only for the man of realization, when they have created the knowledge of unity and not before that. But then, the idea of reality about what is unreal in truth cannot but be false, and so the reality of scriptures being false, the knowledge produced by them is false and so is Brahman, the object of that unreal knowledge. If one infers fire at a place mistaking a cloud for smoke then, since the smoke is unreal, the fire also, the object of the knowledge inferred through the unreal smoke, is unreal. It is also not true that Brahman cannot have any subsequent sublating knowledge, for It may be sublated by the 'Void' of the Buddhists. If such a knowledge of a 'Void' be said to be based on an error, so is the knowledge of Brahman based on the unreal scriptures. Between Brahman and the Void it is the latter alone that has nothing which can sublimate it and so if reality depends on the absence of anything else that can sublimate it, then the Void is the reality and not Brahman.

It may be argued that scriptures, though they are unreal, can yet give rise to real knowledge of a real Brahman even as dreams which are unreal forecast events which are real. But then,

here also reality does not result from unreality, for though things seen in a dream are unreal, yet their knowledge is not unreal and it is this knowledge which is real that forecasts events which are real. Nobody on waking up thinks that the perceptions he had in dreams are unreal but realizes only that the objects of those perceptions are unreal. The objects are sublated and not their perception on waking up. So also when one experiences objects in a magical performance or sees a snake in a rope the perceptions are real though its objects are unreal and it is the perceptions that produce fear. Similarly, a person who thinks that he is bitten by a snake when pricked by something in the dark, the experience is real and may even lead to death. All these states of consciousness are real, for they have an origin and produce real results, while the objects of those states of consciousness are not real because they do not originate and are not capable of use like real objects.

It may be objected here that if the objects are unreal how can the perceptions be real? They are real because what is required for such perceptions is only the appearance of the objects and not their reality. When we have experience of past and future objects we have only the appearance of those objects and not their real existence. So to have a knowledge of an object it is enough if there is a mere appearance of the object at the time; its actual presence is not necessary. So in all these cases cited it was real perceptions that produced real results.

Even where the sound of a letter is apprehended through a line or symbolic representation, it is not a case of the unreal giving effect to something real, for the symbolic representation of the letter is real. It may be argued that the symbolic representation is not actually

the letter but by convention it indicates the letter and so it is untrue and this unreal thing is seen to produce a real thing, the knowledge of the letter. This is not correct, for if the representation were unreal then we could not have had the knowledge of the letter. Nothing unreal is seen to produce any real result, nor is it possible. If it be said that the idea of the letter in the symbol results in the knowledge of the letter then this idea being real, it is a case of something real producing something real and not a case of the real originating from the unreal. Moreover, this argument would mean that the means and the object are identical since there is no difference between the letter and the idea of the letter, as both are perceptions of the letter. If the symbol were not real, that is, not the letter, then one symbol would have represented all the letters that do not actually exist in it and thus give rise to the perception of all sounds. It will be no way out to say that even as the word Devadatta represents a particular person by convention so also a certain symbol perceived through the eyes represents a particular letter (sound) heard and so particular lines or letters produce the knowledge of particular sounds, for in this case it is only a real thing that produces a real thing since both the symbol and the convention are real. So also when the knowledge of a real cow results from its picture it is the likeness between the two that causes this knowledge and this likeness is a reality.

Finally, even where we have knowledge of certain things from certain sounds heard, it is not a case of something unreal giving rise to something real even if Sphotavada is accepted. The Sphotavadins say: There is one eternal inexpressible sound, Sphota, which manifests as different particular-

ized sounds (letters) due to difference in the intonation. This Sphota is the material of all sounds and yet it is not any definite sound in its fully formed state. That is to say, if all the peculiarities which distinguish one letter from the other be removed, then what remains will be the Sphota. Every sound symbol intended to express this inexpressible Sphota will so particularize it that it would be no longer the Sphota. This Sphota alone is capable of conveying ideas and not the particularized sounds, and this Sphota conveys different ideas on account of the differences in the particularized sounds (letters) which are

superimposed on the Sphota. So from these superimposed differences which are unreal real difference in ideas is conveyed. This view, however, is not true, for, even as the difference in the intonation causes real differences in the sounds (letters), so also the different manifestations of the Sphota by these sounds (letters) are also real. Moreover, this theory of Sphota is unnecessary since we find that particular sounds heard denote particular objects.

Therefore, it is impossible to establish that from the unreal scriptures real knowledge of Brahman can arise.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In our *Editorial* which is a critical study of Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji's historical work entitled 'Hindu Civilization,' we have dealt with the various aspects of Hindu thought and culture as also their line of development from the days of Mahenjo-daro and Harappa up to the establishment of the Maurya Empire in India. Prof. Girindranarayan Mallik, M.A., of the Comilla Victoria College, in his thoughtful article on *A Rejoinder to the charges against Hindu Mysticism*, has given a spirited reply from the Vaishnavic point of view to certain grave charges levelled against Hindu mysticism by the great mystic writer Miss Evelyn Underhill. In his article on *India in World Culture and World Politics*, Dr. Taraknath Das, M.A., Ph.D., of New York, U.S.A., has given, in the light of a few latest monumental literary works on India, a graphic account of the important position India occupies in the realm of culture and politics. *The Law of For-*

givenness by Swami Vividishananda of the Vedanta Society, Denver (Colorado), U.S.A., points out that love and forgiveness are the most effective means to the realization of eternal felicity and abiding peace in life. Anil Kumar Sarkar, M.A., (Gold Medalist), Research Scholar at the University of Patna, (Formerly, Fellow of the Amalner Indian Institute of Philosophy), has shown in his learned article on *Whitehead's Philosophy of Organism* that this philosophy is based on a realistic conception of the universe which is a vast realm of process—a realm which is flowing on continuously, and that in this flow organisms which are nothing but unities of feeling are developing into subjective forms through various stages for the attainment of satisfaction which is identical with the realization of values. In *The story of Abu Baker Shibli*, Aga Syed Ibrahim (Dara) of Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry, has depicted in bright colours the life-history of a God-intoxicated Sufi sage of Baghdad. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Asst. Pro-

fessor of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras, has pointed out in *The Synthetic Method of the Upanishads* that the Vedantic method is a synthesis of the objective and the subjective ways of approach to the non-dual Absolute. The article on *Significance of Sri Ramakrishna's Life and Message* by Prof. Sheo Narayan Lal Srivastava, M.A., of the Hitakarini City College, Jubbulpore, presents a pen-picture of the harmonized vision of Sri Ramakrishna, as also of the vital message he has bequeathed unto humanity.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN GERMANY

Modern pedagogics realizes the importance of the education of children as one of the chief factors in the development of civilizations. Recent advances in psychology, which have extended the limits of our mental life far beyond the horizon of the narrow sphere illuminated by consciousness, are revealing day after day the tremendous implications of the oft-repeated and almost trite observation—child is the father of man. In India, however, we seem miserably to lack that knowledge. We still teach the children through fear, set a prize for cramming, and kill all the creative impulses by imposing a dull, lifeless, and rigid routine. There is a widespread ignorance of the possibilities of an environment replete with helpful suggestions in developing the will, the imagination, and the intellect of children. It will be interesting in this connection to have a glimpse of the general features of the education of children in Germany.

Speaking on the occasion of a variety entertainment at the Home School, Madras, Dr. V. N. Sharma said (as reported in the *Hindu* of the 18th of

October last) that "the child in Germany was respected and honoured. He was treated as an equal by the teacher, and was given complete freedom of thought by the parents. At school, the German child spent a quarter of an hour every morning listening to musical compositions from the masters and to passages from books embodying the highest flights of human thought. The *Bhagavad-Gitá*, the Upanishads and the works of Gandhiji and Tagore and of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were widely used for this purpose. This reading period was followed up with a silent interval meant to afford the child the time he needed for thinking over the passages that had been read to him.

"The German teacher was not merely an expert in the subjects he taught, but was also a friend and guide to the children placed under his care. The Germans held that cramming stifled the creative faculties of the child and turned him into a second-rate gramophone machine. The German teacher was given a free hand in the teaching of his subject. He was not obliged to adhere to any rigid curriculum or to a fixed timetable. On the other hand, he was expected to create in the child placed with him, a capacity for original thinking in the subject he taught. The children were often induced to give expression to their psychological development through paintings or drawings on subjects of their own choice. These paintings furnished the teacher with a key to the internal development of the child and guided him in his efforts to solve the child's difficulties."

There is a great stir today in our country with regard to the reconstruction of the educational systems. We believe adequate attention will be paid to the creation of a healthy, noble, and idealistic environment in which the child can develop head and heart equally well.

CAN MAN DO WITHOUT RELIGION?

Man may dream of autarchy on the material plane and may well realize it in practice, but this visible world is too narrow to meet the demands of his spirit. There are persons dull enough to ask if religion is a necessity of man and if man cannot live happily and in peace without it. It is almost as silly to ask if man can live without food and air and water. The question is usually raised because we are generally too obtuse-minded to pursue the meaning of existence beyond the daily trivialities of life and also because intelligent thinkers often confound religion with dead forms and lifeless dogmas. It is impossible for man to escape some form of religious faith or other, because its roots lie deep in the true personality of man.

This point was forcefully presented by Sir S. Radhakrishnan in one of the Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh lectures he delivered last winter under the auspices of the Calcutta University. Speaking about the truth of religion he pointed out that the problem of religion will remain so long as there is the intellectuality of man. Only animals can lead a placid and contented life. But man is never quite so happy. "He has got in him the promise of achieving perfections. He cannot live that kind of life automatically and instinctively as animals do. He asks many questions and he has not been able to live in tranquillity in the same way as animals happen to do. So far as animal life is

concerned, it never asks the question, 'Who am I, whence am I and where am I going? Is there any kind of self?' But the moment a human individual exercised his consciousness, he raised all these questions and thereby introduced some kind of discord in his own nature. This exercise of intellectuality or 'avidyâ' had resulted in a conflict within man's nature as well as a conflict between man and society."

How to get over this conflict? Science is impotent to heal this disruption of the inner and outer harmony of life. Life comes from the unknown and passes away to the unknown. "There is dark at the beginning and dark at the end. Science after all deals with the lighted, space intervening." This conflict can only be resolved by attaining to a state of experience, characterised by *abhaya* and *ahimsâ*, beyond the reach of intellect. This supreme experience is the goal towards which humanity is knowingly or unknowingly drifting driven by the inner urge to perfection and peace. And man can ascend to such visions only by treading the path of religion pointed out by the great seers of the world.

If we take cross sections of history the significance of great movements and events eludes us; but if we map it on a sufficiently large and grand scale we are sure to discover, unless we are stricken with blindness, the steady drift of the world towards the unfoldment of spirit—from matter to life, from life to consciousness, from consciousness to mind, from mind to ethics, and from ethics to religion, holiness and perfection.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TWELVE RELIGIONS AND MODERN LIFE. BY HAR DAYAL, M.A., PH.D. *Modern Culture Institute, Edgware (Middlesex), England.* Pp. 250. Price 2s. 6d. net.

Dr. Har Dayal belongs to that school of timid materialism which styles itself Humanism ; more particularly he subscribes to that special brand of it which is of his own formulation and which has been christened Dayalism. Humanism as a creed and as a philosophy is too well known to need any elaborate statement of its aims and principles. The Humanist vision does not soar above the material plane. Individually, its aim is the harmonious development of the human personality as it understands it. Collectively, it sets before itself the task of bringing peace, happiness, concord and plenty on earth by eliminating hatred, cruelty, competition, and war. This it seeks to achieve mainly with the help of a few moral maxims which have no extraneous reference. This may sound like magic, and though humanists will heartily repudiate such characterization, they very nearly deserve it. For, it has little use for supernaturalism of any kind ; for them what the senses do not reveal do not exist. For metaphysics which endeavours to pierce the veil of phenomena it has only disdain ; and it will confine all knowledge to the deliverances of our ordinary consciousness. But while its Spencerian attitude towards metaphysics must necessarily reject the fundamental principles and assertions of the great religions of mankind as pure bunkum, it is nonetheless magnanimous enough to salvage from their wreck certain features which it admires and considers to be of benefit to itself.

It is in this vein of smug self-complacence that the author approaches the twelve religions of the world, namely, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Shintoism, Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sufism, and Positivism—though the last can hardly be called a religion unless we are prepared to do violence to the term and radically alter its content. We may as well call sheep, lions. From these bundles of superstitions the author rescues certain hygienic and ethical principles like cleanliness, fasting, truthfulness, etc., as worthy

of adoption by the modern man. It is the height of absurdity to go to religions for these gifts alone as it is ridiculous to stand before an emperor's treasury and come away content with a few copper pieces. In this fourth decade of the 20th century he repeats in a most inept manner some of the stale arguments which have been urged against certain theological and philosophical positions pretty long back. These admirable dialecticians consistently ignore experience and facts and always rivet their attention on certain incongruities of interpretation or logical difficulties. They do not realize that if logic does not or cannot square with facts, so much the worse for logic. No philosopher has succeeded up till now in offering an inexpugnable characterization of the reality we daily come into contact with ; but it would be the height of foolhardiness on that ground to ignore it. Similarly, we have to approach in a really scientific manner, not in the pseudo-scientific fashion, which is the author's, the consideration of facts delivered by our religious and mystical consciousness. We have to bow down before stubborn and irreducible facts even if we are at a loss to account for them, and even if our rut-bound intellect is shocked by them.

It is easy to talk glibly about a morality that is autonomous, that disdains to rear itself upon extraneous sanctions. But we do not always realize that with all our rationalism, with all our developments of science we are living on the capital of our moral and religious tradition ; and with its exhaustion the question about the why of ethics must inevitably appear and will refuse to be silenced by the iteration and re-iteration of empty phrases. And unless man finds a higher sanction for it, which is to his interest, all these arid formulas and anæmic faiths like Humanism, internationalism, universalism, etc., would be like straws before the tide of man's selfish impulses.

VEDIC RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY. BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA. *Published by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.* Pp. 121. Price Re. 1-4.

Though there is no dearth of literature of scholarly interpretation on the subject of Indian philosophy, we are sure this extremely

readable and lucid work will make a wide appeal to that growing body of intelligent interest in Indian philosophy and civilization, which is so much in evidence to-day. It is not always that we come across one so eminently qualified both by intellectual attainments and way of life to speak in clear and authoritative accents upon the elusive problems of Indian philosophy. For, the standpoint of Indian philosophy, in its origin and outlook, may very well be described as the antipode of that of the speculative systems of the West. And though the account given is short and popular, it is by no means jejune and shallow, and it will meet, as the author hopes, the severest scholarly tests.

The exposition of the philosophy in ancient India very aptly starts with a recital of the spirit of Indian philosophy, which embraces such topics as the relation between religion and philosophy, the place of reason in it, the authority of the Vedas, the central

problem of Indian philosophy, and the place of psychology and ethics in it. Its spirit is aptly and tersely put by the author in the following words: "Indian philosophy is . . . not a mere way of thinking but a way of life, a way of light, and a way of truth. To become a philosopher is to become transformed in life, renewed in mind, and baptized in spirit." Then follow an exposition of the Vedas and their teachings, the philosophy of the Upanishads, and the message of the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* in three short chapters. Right through the treatment the author keeps in the forefront the chief characteristic of Indian philosophy as a gospel of life and often elucidates various statements in the scriptures by a reference to the experience of mystics like Ramakrishna.

The work will no doubt help to stimulate among a wide circle of readers a living interest in Indian philosophy; and we eagerly await the publication of the larger work "Indian Philosophy and Religion" of which the present book forms so good an earnest.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA BACK TO INDIA

Sawmi Nikhilananda, Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York City, U. S. A., reached Belur Math on the 12th of June, for a short stay after seven years of strenuous work in the cause of Vedanta in the United States of America. We are glad to announce that the Swami has been able to stimulate a keen interest amongst the American intelligentsia in the profound truths of Indian thought and culture by his masterly exposition of the fundamentals of the various systems of Hindu philosophy. The establishment of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre at New York on his own initiative opened a fresh channel for coming into more intimate touch with the religious-minded and thinking section of the American public and thereby strengthening the bonds of cultural fellowship existing between the two countries. The Swami, during his period of stay in America, held regular religio-philosophical classes and discourses, and delivered a series of interesting and thought-provoking lectures on a variety of subjects, and

thus succeeded, to an appreciable extent, in orienting Western imagination to the universal gospel of Vedanta as also to the spiritual background of India's cultural idealism. We extend our heartiest welcome to the Swami.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA'S ACTIVITIES IN EUROPE

Our readers are already aware that Swami Siddheswarananda, formerly Head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore, was deputed to France about a year ago by the authorities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur, to popularize Vedanta and Indian culture in response to the earnest personal appeals made by Mons. Jean Herbert, the celebrated French litterateur, and Miss J. MacLeod. It is gratifying to learn that even during this short period of his stay in France, the Swami has been able to gather a fair knowledge of French and become very popular for the interesting and learned discourses he has given in different places. The letter addressed to us by Mons. Jean Herbert from Geneva on 26-4-38 speaks for itself and is reproduced below for the information of our readers.

My dear Swami,

I know that some of you have been rather wondering at not receiving much news about the activities of Swami Siddheswarananda since he came to Europe. I am fully aware of the great sacrifice which it meant for the Mission to send us one of your most capable men whom you entrusted with great responsibilities in India and it is quite natural that you should have wondered whether that sacrifice was in fact justified. As a matter of fact, we intentionally arranged things in such a way that the Swami should have as little activity as possible during the first six or eight months of his stay in France. It is absolutely necessary for his work that he should have a thorough command of the French language, since trying to get into touch with French people without speaking their language would be just as utopian as wanting to teach philosophy in Calcutta in Telugu or Kanarese. We felt however that as soon as people began to come to him, all his time would be taken up and he would not be able to pursue his study of the language. In spite of our efforts, a number of people came to him individually and he even had to take up work with a few groups in and around Paris.

I am glad to say that Swami Siddheswarananda has now reached a point when he can read the most difficult French text with perfect ease, also read manuscript letters which have been sent to him in French, and that he can understand what is being said in French with very little difficulty. As regards talking, he is now able to handle private interviews and conversations without any outside help whatever, which is the most crucial point. He does not yet feel able to address large audiences or to write articles or even letters in French, but this is not so important and it will come quite naturally in the course of time.

When we realized that he had reached this point we thought we would give him an opportunity of tackling a comparatively small centre and trying his hand there before starting any work on a large scale in Paris. For that reason we suggested that he should come to spend a couple of weeks in Geneva and we arranged a full-time programme for him. The Swami very kindly consented and arrived in Geneva on the 27th of March. He remained here until the 11th of April with the exception of three days which he

spent in Lausanne and Villeneuve. On his way back to Paris he stopped in Lyons for one day.

Before I mention in any detail the work which he did in Geneva during that fortnight, I should like to say that he made a most profound impression on all the people who came into touch with him. He showed himself perfectly able to meet each and every person on his or her own ground, giving each one the precise help and inspiration which was wanted. He met people of all professions, social strata, religious beliefs, etc. As it was not possible in the short span of time at our disposal to arrange private interviews with all the people who wanted to see him, we had a number of small group meetings to discuss various topics.

On two separate evenings we had talks and discussions on the most abstract metaphysical questions. The people who attended were University professors, professional psychologists, physiologists and leaders of various spiritualistic and educational movements in Geneva. On the first of those evenings, the Swami spoke for about an hour on the Vedantic approach to Philosophy, and on the second on the doctrine of Love, Predestination and Grace. Each of those talks was followed by an extremely keen discussion in which a number of people took part. The Swami was able to reply to all the questions in such a way as to command the deepest respect and admiration from all present, and even from those who held views entirely different from his. The professors and the psychologists were very much interested to see the presentation from two separate and distinct standpoints, one of pure philosophy and the other of religion. In those discussions, as well as in all those that followed, those view-points were clearly kept separate, and therefore there could not arise any confusion of issues. The French mind, which is so particular about the logic of a presentation, felt perfectly satisfied, as no fallacy could be discovered, reason and emotion being allotted their proper places in the pursuit of Truth.

The interest which people took appears clearly from the fact that it was nearly midnight when we had to suggest it was time to adjourn, and also from the other fact that practically every one of those present made a special request to be invited again during the next visit of the Swami to Geneva.

Two other evenings were devoted to the

general principles of Raja-Yoga and practical meditation. The people who attended were not so intellectually minded as the other group, but had been selected because of their special practical interest in the subject. There also the Swami began by a talk which was followed by a large number of questions and answers, and the evening closed with a methodically arranged and beautifully explained meditation, from which all present drew great inspiration. The enthusiasm shown was evinced by the fact that a large number of the people who came asked the Swami to give them individual teaching for spiritual practices.

On two other evenings, the Swami led the discussion, study and meditation in a group which has been meeting regularly in Geneva once a week during the last two years, to study the works of Swami Vivekananda. Most members of that group had already the privilege of instruction from Swami Yatiswarananda, and were most grateful to have a teacher with whom they could freely converse in their own language. I may mention that on the weekly meetings which followed the visit of the Swami, everybody showed an extremely keen desire to have Swami Siddheswarananda come again as soon as possible for a longer stay, when he could devote much more time for individual instruction.

In the course of another meeting which took place at the house of some other friends, the Swami spoke on the Hindu view of Christ. One prominent clergyman and several very active members of the Oxford Group were present and a great many questions were asked. The meeting lasted about three hours and would certainly have lasted much longer, if another meeting had not been arranged for the same evening. There also several of the people present asked for private interviews either for themselves individually, or for small groups of their family or of their friends.

Although we took great care that the Swami during this first visit should not be identified with any group already existing in Geneva, we found it impossible to refuse an invitation which was extended to him to speak in a small group devoted to spiritual research. The Swami spoke on spiritual life in Modern India with special reference to some of the most famous matters of the last hundred years. A number of questions were also asked after the lecture and answered to the satisfaction of all present.

The Swami also addressed a fairly large meeting in a famous international school near Geneva. He spoke on the Indian ideal of education and had a number of private talks with various members of the staff and other people.

Two other meetings, one in the evening and one in the afternoon, were devoted to a discussion of the "Psychological Approach to Reality" with a few professional philosophers, professors and practitioners.

In Nyons, a small town half-way between Lausanne and Geneva, the Swami spent the better part of a day with some prominent members of the medical profession and members of their family.

While in Lausanne, the Swami spoke in public on two successive evenings. On the first one, I had asked him to take my place in a series of lectures I was delivering on the various Yogas. The subject for that evening was Jnana-Yoga and the Swami spoke with great inspiration. Some people very deeply versed in Buddhistic and Vedantic scriptures asked him a number of highly technical questions which he answered with perfect ease and great mastery of the subject. On the next evening he spoke in the Temple of the Rosicrucians on practical meditation and the evening ended with actual collective meditation in a remarkably serene atmosphere.

In addition to all those public functions, the Swami gave private interviews to a large number of individuals or small groups and his time-table was so arranged that he had an average of half a dozen of such appointments on each day. In order to enable him to have talks with more people, it was arranged that he should meet one or two practically every day for lunch or for dinner. Some of the people he met (professors, psychologists, etc.) had travelled very long distances by rail to have the opportunity of a talk with him.

One interview which is worth relating in greater detail is the one which the Swami had with Romain Rolland and his sister. It was a great day indeed for them all, and Romain Rolland, in spite of his advancing years and of the considerable amount of work which he has to do, had set aside a whole afternoon for that meeting. The Swami was very deeply moved at meeting the man who first broadcast the names of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in the West and to whose books can be traced the interest of 99 per cent. of the people who now study

the teachings of those two great masters in the West. Romain Rolland, on the other hand, was overjoyed at being able to converse for the first time in his life, with one of the spiritual children of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda without the help of an interpreter. He welcomed the Swami like a long-lost son, and the feelings shown by the Swami were certainly very much akin to filial love. I suppose it will not be an indiscretion on my part to mention that Romain Rolland and his sister in a letter sent to me on the next day expressed the unqualified opinion that the Swami was certainly the very best man possible to bring the actual teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda to French-speaking countries.

During the day which the Swami spent in Lyons on the way back to Paris, two small group meetings were arranged, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Each lasted for several hours and was a continual exchange of questions and answers on the Vedantic view of all sorts of subjects. The people in Lyons were most grateful for the visit of the Swami and expressed the great desire that during his next trip to Switzerland he should stop in their city for several days.

I feel I cannot close this letter without paying a tribute to the admirable selfless work which has been done in many parts of Europe and more particularly in Switzerland and in Paris by Swami Yatiswarananda. Although Swami Yatiswarananda has now commissioned Swami Siddheswarananda to attend to France and to other French-speaking countries, so as to devote all his activities to other parts of Europe where he is very much wanted, it should never be forgotten that it is entirely owing to his own exertions and efforts that the way was open for Swami Siddheswarananda. If it had not been for Swami Yatiswarananda's impressive personality which commanded respect and admiration from everyone with whom he came into touch, there would certainly not have been in Geneva to-day about one hundred persons who wished to receive individual instruction or to be enlightened on difficult points in the teachings of Vedanta. May the work of Swami Yatiswarananda, unostentatious as it is, be as successful in other countries as it has been in Switzerland.

(Sd.) JEAN HERBERT,

Geneva,
26-4-38.

VEDANTA SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO
2963 WEBSTER STREET

(CORNER OF FILBERT ST.)

In March last, Swami Ashokananda gave two lectures every week at 11 A.M. on Sunday and at 7-45 P.M. on Wednesday, in which he explained the general principles of Vedanta and other cognate subjects. The Sunday morning lectures were given at the Century Club, 1355 Franklin Street, and the Wednesday evening lectures in the Hall of the Vedanta Society at 2963 Webster Street. The Swami held a class every Friday evening at the Vedanta Society Hall at 7-45, in which he conducted a short meditation and explained the Vedanta Philosophy in greater detail—both in its theoretical and practical aspects, while expounding the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The lectures and class were open to all. The subjects for the month were as follows:—“The Procession of God in India”; “Can Man See God? How?”; “Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India”; “The Cosmic Prana and the Psychic Prana”; “Love and the Religion of Love”; “Harness Your Thought-Power”; “A Search for the Heart of the World”; “Miracles of Meditation”; and “The Way of the Mind and the Way of the Spirit.”

While a general idea of Vedanta can be had from the lectures and class, many points still remain unexplained. A greater satisfaction is possible through a personal interview with the Swami. So he gladly granted interviews to those who desired to know more of Vedanta or discuss their spiritual problems with him. He gives practical instruction for spiritual development to those who sincerely want it. Anyone who accepts the principles of Vedanta may become a member of the Society with the approval of the Swami. The Library is open every evening from 8 to 10, except Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, and every Saturday afternoon from 2 to 5. All are welcome to use the books in the Library, but only members of the Society are permitted to borrow books. Books may be returned and borrowed after lecture and class Wednesday and Friday evenings.

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, which came on Friday, March 4, was publicly celebrated the following Wednesday evening, March 9, in the Vedanta Society Hall. Arrangements were made for special music, and Swami Ashokananda lectured on “Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India.” The Annual General Meeting of the Vedanta

Society was held at 8 P. M. on Thursday, March 17, in the Vedanta Society Hall. At this meeting the Board of Trustees for the coming year was elected and other pertinent business of the Society was transacted. The following members of the Society were elected Trustees for the ensuing year: Mr. T. J. Allan, Mr. E. C. Brown, Mrs. H. D. B. Soule, Mrs. D. L. Webster, Mrs. Mae Weber, Mrs. J. P. Stanbury, and Mr. A. S. Wollberg.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1937

The report on the working of the R. K. Mission Students' Home, Madras, for 1937, shows various improvements carried out in its different departments during the year under review. The Home provides free board and lodging to indigent students of approved merit and has undertaken with great success the noble task of fulfilling the economic and cultural needs of the country through its various sections, viz., the Residential High School, The Industrial School (providing a course of training both theoretical and practical in automobile engineering for a period of five years), the Home for school and college students and the Branch High School at Tyagarayanagar, a suburb of Madras.

The total strength of the Home during the year was 176; of these, 107 belonged to the Residential High School, 48 to the Industrial School, 19 to the Arts Colleges, 1 to the School of Indian medicine, and 1 to the Medical College. The results in the S.S.L.C., the University and other public examinations were also highly satisfactory. Out of 33 candidates that appeared at the various examinations, 27 came out successful. A distinguished old boy of the Home took his Doctorate in Philosophy during the year. One student of the final year Honours won the South Indian Inter-University cup for Debate and another got the Christian college Gold Medal for standing first in the Intermediate Examination. Two pupils of the High School won prizes for Tamil oratory and English elocution in the Inter-School competitions organized by the Education Week Committee. About half the total number of the students of the Home were in receipt of scholarships from various sources.

The total number of volumes in the general Library at the end of the year was 6,700 and in the auxiliary libraries of the High

School and the Industrial Schools 8,500 in the aggregate. Thus there were altogether 15,200 volumes. Almost all the leading Dailies of Madras both in English and in Vernaculars, and nearly 60 Periodicals were supplied free to the reading room.

The aim of the Home is not merely to prepare boys for public examinations, but for the larger examination of life. To fulfil this noble end, the work of the Home is so planned that the inmates are trained to habits of self-help, self-reliance and service. The boys had to do the major portion of the household work. Every boy had to participate in any one of the organized games. The boys of the Residential High School moreover devoted daily a period after school time for garden work under the immediate supervision of their teachers. Reciting the Bhagavad-Gita, recounting Pauranic stories, and daily congregational prayer in the shrine attached to the Home were some of the main items of religious instruction imparted to the boys. As usual music classes were conducted thrice a week, and various festivals and the birthdays of great saints and sages including the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, and instructional excursions were held during the year.

The strength of the branch High School at Tyagarayanagar (Mambalam) was 1,608 as against 1,150 of last year. Out of 82 pupils sent up for S.S.L.C. public examination, 48 were declared eligible for University education. The library contained 4,000 volumes with a fairly good collection of books on various subjects. There were 32 pupils residing in the Hostel attached to the School. The main line of work in the parent institution, the Students' Home at Mylapore, was followed in this branch High School in respect of provision for physical training, games, religious instruction and formation of good habits. The income for the school year 1936-1937 by way of school fee collection was Rs. 51,430 and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 51,379, leaving a credit balance of Rs. 51. The school has no permanent endowments and looks forward to the generous public for providing financial stability to it.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ANNIVERSARY AT BASIRHAT

Sri Ramkrishna Anniversary was celebrated at Basirhat on Saturday the 19th March and Sunday the 20th March last, with due solemnity under the auspices of Basirhat Sri Ramkrishna-Vivekananda Sangha.

On Saturday special Puja was offered and the pupils of Bharat Sangit Vidyalay sang Ram-nam Kirtan.

On Sunday there was a whole day celebration. From the early morning Puja, Homa, Aratrika and distribution of *Prasad* formed part of the programme. Streams of people from neighbouring and distant villages came to the Sangha premises from morning till late at night. The *élite* of the town including the local S. D. O., the Munsiff, the Government Pleader, the retired Government Pleader, Zamindars, Vakils, Doctors, Merchants, teachers and students joined the function. Bharat Sangit Vidyalay of Calcutta sang devotional songs during the whole day at intervals. A grand public meeting was held on the extensive grounds under the distinguished presidency of Mr. B. C. Chatterjee, Bar-at-Law, and was very largely attended both by the rich and the poor, the old and the young. Srimat Swami Sundarananda of Belur Math, Sj. Surendra Nath Sen of Barisal, Srimati Umashasi Debi, Srimat Swami Siddhatmananda of Belur Math and others addressed the meeting.

After dusk Sj. Tarak Nath Roy, Asst. Secretary of the Vivekananda Society, delivered an illuminating lantern lecture on "Ramakrishna and Vivekananda" and the address was listened to with rapt attention.

Many monks of the Ramakrishna Mission from Belur and a very large number of respectable ladies and gentlemen from Calcutta attended the celebration.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CHARITABLE DISPENSARY BELUR

In pursuance of its twofold ideal of Tyaga and Seva (self-dedication and service), the Ramakrishna Mission Headquarters at Belur (Dt. Howrah), in addition to its various other activities, has been conducting, since the year 1913, a Charitable Dispensary at the Belur Math, with a view to alleviating the sufferings of poor and helpless patients in and around the locality. From very humble beginnings it has risen to be an important centre of medical relief in the district. Its great popularity and expansion will be evident

from its increasing number of patients. In its first year it treated only 1,000 cases, whereas in some of the succeeding years it treated well over twenty times that number. During the twenty-five years of its existence, it has treated 4,07,325 cases in all, of which 2,63,568 were new ones. The quality of service rendered by the staff attracts patients from far beyond the Municipal limits.

The institution not only serves patients of all castes and communities with medicines, but also helps them in cases of need with diet, provides them with clothes and blankets when absolutely necessary, promptly refers serious cases to the best hospitals, bestows special care on the women and children and attends to urgent cases even at night.

The dispensary treated 23,614 cases in 1937, as against 18,981 in the year before, showing an increase of nearly 25 per cent. The number of new cases in 1937 was 12,160, of which 1207 were surgical cases. Of the new cases 3,686 were from outside Belur.

The financial position of the dispensary, however, is far from satisfactory. The total receipts for 1937, including the previous year's balance amounted to Rs. 1,252-1-8, and the total expenditure to Rs. 1,149-15-0, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 102-2-8 only. Contributions in the shape of medicines and other useful articles worth about Rs. 1,400 were received from philanthropic medical firms.

The pressing need of the dispensary at present is a spacious building furnished with modern appliances and outfit, the estimated cost of which is Rs. 11,000. A great part of this amount has already been contributed by some generous friends. We still require a sum of Rs. 3,000. Impelled by necessity, we have started the construction, relying on the generosity of the public. We fervently hope that they will come forward with their liberal contributions to enable us to complete the building within a couple of months. Service of the sick and poor always carries with it the blessings of the Lord, and those who help in it are sure to receive their due reward.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,
P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.