

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. LIV

SEPTEMBER 1949

No. 9



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

BELURMATH, 7 DECEMBER 1929

It was morning. A sannyasin of the Math had gone to Kashmir in spite of the severe winter. Mahapurush Maharaj remarked on this :

‘P. has gone to Kashmir in the winter. I hear he has walked there all the way from Hrishikesh. Since hearing this my mind is very worried. O Master, save him ; he has taken refuge in you. I think something is wrong with his head, or else why should he make such a decision ? Does anybody go to Kashmir at this time ?’ He remained silent for a while, and then went on : ‘My child ! this road is very difficult. This business of *brahmavidya*, the science of Brahman, is extremely arduous. Not all minds can form a conception of it which is the subtlest of the subtle. It is comparatively easy to acquire phenomenal knowledge, say to become a great philosopher, or a great scientist, a great poet, or artist, or statesman, but it is very difficult to acquire the knowledge of Brahman. So the *Upanishad* says : “The wise declare that the road to Brahman is

sharp and difficult like the razor’s edge.” Those who have not taken to this life cannot have the faintest notion about the obstacles in this path. The *Upanishad* calls this knowledge of Brahman the supreme knowledge by which the Imperishable Godhead is known, and speaks of all phenomenal knowledge as the lower knowledge. Absolute chastity is necessary for the acquisition of this supreme knowledge. As a result of long observance of chastity in thought, word, and deed there develops in the body and mind an ability to conceive the pure idea of the Godhead or Brahman ; new neural paths are opened in the head, and the whole body, down to its minutest particles, becomes transformed. Unbroken chastity is essential. The Master would say, “One is afraid to keep milk in a curd pot, lest it should turn sour.” That is why he used to love the pure-hearted boys so much. They alone can form a true conception of the Godhead. These are very subtle things. Of course, the thing necessary, above all, is the grace of God. Without the special grace of the Divine Mother nothing at all in

this line can be achieved. Only if She opens, out of her mercy, the gate of the knowledge of Brahman, can a *jiva* attain that knowledge, not otherwise. The *Chandi* says: *saisha prasanna varada nrinam bhavati muktaye*. "She, when pleased, grants the boon of Liberation to men." There are so many fine nerve cells in the brain. If even a few of these go wrong, all is lost. The Holy Mother used to say: "Pray to the Master that the head may not go wrong. If the head goes wrong, everything is finished." ...

'When P. first came to the Math, no sooner did I see his head than the thought came to me that he would go mad. I heard that he had been learning *hathayoga* at Hrishikesh. All this, my child, is not good. Apart from this, he was aimlessly moving about from place to place outside, and maintained no connection with the *sadhus* of the Math; he went about doing as he liked. Now you see, he has gone off his head. Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) also would say that it is not at all safe for a *sadhu* in the beginning to remain absolutely alone. At least two should be together. And, further, does that sort of life make for *tapasya*? Is *tapasya* done by simply running about in mountains and forests, or at Hrishikesh and Uttarakashi?'

Remaining silent for a while, he said, 'O Master, save your child; he has taken refuge in you. If you do not save him, who will? Poor boy! He was very good!'

A Brahmachari: The *Uddhava-Gita* in the *Bhagavata* says that it is very difficult for a *sadhaka* to make progress in the spiritual path. Supernal beings, planets, diseases, relations, etc. create in various ways tremendous obstructions for the *sadhaka*.

Mahapurushji: All obstructions, whatever their nature, vanish if the Divine grace can be had. The Master can abrogate one's fate. If one takes refuge in Him, all impediments, physical or non-physical, are removed. The *Chandi* says:

*Rogān asheshānapahamsi tushtā rushtā tu
kāman sakalānbhishtān*

*Tam āshritānām na vipannarānām
tvāmāshritā hyāshrayatām prayānti.*

"O Mother, when pleased, you destroy all diseases, and when displeased, you frustrate cherished desires. There is no more danger for those who have been sheltered by you; they become in turn the refuge of others."

There is another way. It is the company of the good; this saves men. Holy company is very necessary. Thousands of men try, but only one or two attain the Truth. Someone asked Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda), "How can one have love for God?" To this Maharaj replied, "Holy company, holy company and holy company." The great sages introduce men to God. Holy company is necessary, my son; holy company is necessary. All the scriptures have greatly praised holy company.'

The Brahmachari: The *Ramayana* speaks of the blessings of the rishis who were like fire.

Mahapurushji: 'You are right. Sri Ramachandra made preparations for the destruction of the *rakshasas* after he had received the blessings of the fire-like *rishis*.' Then he repeated the words "*satām sānga—holy company*" a number of times. Finally he said: 'But then, do you know what it is, after all? Whatever be the other conditions, nothing can be achieved without the grace of the Divine Mother. One can be safe if only She, being pleased, allows one to go beyond Her realm of *maya*. There is no other help. Grace, grace, and grace! And if one is sincere, She does become gracious.'

BELURMATH, 9 AUGUST 1929

Today Swami ... is returning to Madras. He came early in the morning and prostrated himself before Mahapurush Maharaj who said:

'To day Y.... is leaving. This time you stayed at the Math for a long time. You are going now; that is all right. You are devotees of the Master; wherever you go, the

Master will be with you. Wherever His devotees are, He also is there with them.' . . .

Subsequently, in the course of a talk with Swami . . . on many important matters regarding the Order, Mahapurush Maharaj said :

'*Satyameva jayate nānritam*, "Truth alone triumphs, falsehood never." Truth has always been victorious, and, my child, this will happen ever afterwards. All this is the play of the Divine Power. After giving up the gross body, the Master is now living in the Order. Now He exists as the Order—these are the words of Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda). The fact that all of you, devotees, have come from distant centres and met together will have a very good result. The Master sometimes shakes up the whole organization to show that He is still guarding the Order and will do so in future. Swamiji himself has organized this Order according to the Master's intention and has laid upon it the tremendous responsibility of preaching the Master's broad spiritual conception all over the world. None will be able to harm this Order, know it for certain. If anybody ever comes with wrong ideas, the Master will turn his mind round. He will give everybody the right understanding, even if that requires throwing him first into adverse situations. To err is human. Man is so poor of understanding. But He is merciful to all. The sinner and the afflicted—no one is deprived of His mercy. Swamiji has said, hasn't he? "*Āchandālāpratihataraḥ yasya premapravāhaḥ*" etc. He came down in the form of Sri Ramakrishna to redeem all, down to the *chandala*, the outcaste. You have read about Jesus Christ. He prayed with a tender heart to the Father of all for forgiveness to those who had crucified him : "Father,

forgive them for they know not what they do." That Parabrahman (Supreme Godhead) came down this time as Sri Ramakrishna. We have seen with our own eyes his limitless and wonderful forgiveness. And the Holy Mother—there can be nothing comparable to Her. She was the very Mother of the Universe. We have heard of this incident : One day someone came to the Mother complaining that one of her disciples had committed a most heinous act. Mother listened to everything. After that, when he said : "If you call him to you and say a few words about this, it will do him good," Mother replied : "My son, you can do so, but I am the Mother. All are equal in my sight. He may be a great delinquent and vicious in your eyes, but not so to his mother. How can I, being a mother, despise my son?" Such was the forgiveness of Mother. All this has happened before our eyes and we have also learnt that lesson. We have to learn from the lives of the Master, Mother, and Swamiji.'

As he was saying this, Mahapurushji's voice became almost choked with feeling and he could not say anything more. Remaining silent for a while, he broke out into a song :

'Sing of the Ruler of the Universe, the Adored of all, Brahman, the Eternal and Destroyer of all sin.

The One Providence of the three worlds, Ocean of Mercy, Beautiful, and the Guide of all.

He is the Delight of the devotee's mind, Giver of good and Dispenser of knowledge, prosperity and intelligence.

The devotee prays for your feet with folded hands, pour the moon-light of your love on the *chakora* * bird of his heart.'

* A legendary night-bird that drinks moonlight.

Iron touched by the philosopher's stone is transformed into gold. The waters of the road being mixed with those of the Ganges become pure. In like manner, O Mother, being attached through devotion to Thee, will not my heart become pure, greatly soiled though it be by many taints?

—Sri Sankaracharya, *Anandalahari*

THE WESTERN QUESTION (VII)

BY THE EDITOR

We have so far taken into our survey the period of Indian history that stretches from its very beginnings right up to the eve of the advent of Islam. The survey, it must be noted, is very broad. In thus trying to help ourselves through the jungle of historical facts we have relied on a pattern. Before we proceed on to the next stage it will be well if we examine this pattern a little more closely. Historical investigation must not be a mere academic delight, but should be of practical help to us in individual and collective life. Unfortunately, history never explains itself, nor does it teach a lesson. It is we who superimpose an explanation upon it and it is we who draw a lesson from its happenings.

In the present series of articles we have been trying, above all, to bring to the fore the intimate relationship that subsists between history and religion. This is one of the fundamental conceptions to which the Indian mind has adhered since the very beginning of the drama of Indian life. India has always held firmly to the conviction that there is a moral element in the very structure of the universe; she has made religion central in her thinking. The moral factor operates not only in biography but also in history. To have a comprehensive understanding of the drift and purpose of life we have to see all our problems and experiences, personal as well as collective, in moral terms. The grand happenings of history on a colossal scale as well as the vicissitudes of individual life are laid on the same plan; they follow a similar pattern. What is in the *pinda* (microcosm), is also in the *Brahmānda* (macrocosm). A spiritual element lies embedded in all the processes of time. There is something in the very composition of the universe which executes moral judgment upon actions which fly in the face of a

Providential purpose. This conception of a spiritual meaning of history enters deeply into the texture of the Indian religious thought.

The vedic Aryans who created this civilization of ours conceived life and universe in moral terms. *Rita* stands for both physical and moral order. While necessity reigns supreme in the physical realm, the moral order admits of freedom of the individual. Taking facts as they are on the practical plane we cannot but pay due regard to these principles. In the moral order individuals are given a choice, arising out of the practical sense of freedom, to march with the true intention of history or against it. By cooperating with the Divine, or, to put it better, by becoming instruments of the Providential purpose, we fulfil ourselves and help the fulfilment of others; by fighting against it we retard our growth and produce cataclysms. The Divine ordinarily remains veiled as the secret urge in material happenings. But there are occasions, when history becomes catastrophic, on which the Divine breaks into the story and steps right on to the stage of human drama. The Divine intervention becomes overt and direct. *Yadā yadāhi* . . .—Whenever vice prevails and virtue declines the Lord incarnates Himself in human form to destroy evil and to establish righteousness. History is not without purpose, and the purpose is moral.

The new motto of the State which the Indian Government has so wisely adopted is a very well-known vedic dictum, *Satyameva jayate nānritam*: Truth alone prevails, falsehood never. The Epics sum up the moral judgment of history in the words: *yato dharmastato jayah*, victory always belongs to the righteous. Not victory alone, but peace and prosperity also come to those

who have the faith and patience to rely on Providence and stick to the right course. This conception has come to be challenged in modern India among the educated in a way it never was done in the past. They say: 'Look and behold! what religion and reliance on God have given us except superstition and poverty, weakness and degeneration? The West is rich, strong and happy and rules over the world; we are poor, weak and miserable and at its mercy.' Perhaps the complaint is not so bitter now as it was before. But it is still there. This, we hold, arises from a false, secular conception of history which the godless education of modern times has instilled into the minds of its pupils. We challenge this view even on mundane grounds. We have taken the line that even the very secular phenomena of history cannot be properly explained without the interpolation of a supernatural element. For example, we cannot explain the consistent, though long-term, victory of truth and tolerance over falsehood and fanaticism, unless we admit of a spiritual principle back of matter. If we do not do so we shall be thrown upon Chance. A nation which takes to the creed of chanciness is doomed to paralysis of effort and defeat. History does not bear out the view of the powerlessness of good against evil.

We hold all history, particularly the Indian, substantiates this moral thesis. In these articles we have sought to make it plain. . . .

Mahatmaji, of course, contradicted this modern disbelief in the spiritual factor in thought and action in the political field. This has had a great effect which, however, seems ephemeral, because wrong thinking concerning fundamentals still persists. There is a blithe belief that we can heal the moral confusion without faith in God, that is to say, without a positive spiritual conception, or a total spiritual attitude towards life. Unless we see the inseparable relation between ethics and religion, our morality will never descend

from the verbal to the practical plane. All along in the past, India has been fortunate in having the unparalleled leadership of men who emphasized our inside spiritual resources more than other things. That is how very catastrophes had been transformed in the past into spring-boards for a grand creative achievement. If we do not see this we shall convert our present opportunities into great disasters.

It is, of course, not easy to perceive the moral factor that lies embedded in the processes of history. It requires perception of a subtle kind depending on depth and extensity of experience (*bhuyodarshana*) to see this. We cannot understand the world unless we understand our own self and see things for a long time. India can claim both these dimensions of experience; it is the only civilization living today outside the currents of materialism, and it is the oldest. Her approach to human problems cannot on this account alone be lightly dismissed.

History is essentially a way of interpreting man's doings on earth. It is not a bare and dry catalogue of facts that can be manipulated by the apparatus of the technical historian. This apparatus can never reach to the deeper tides of human action. We always try to superimpose some kind of interpretation or other on these facts. And this interpretation can come only from the intimate experiences of our soul. We are always approaching history with presuppositions drawn from our own self.

In the final analysis there are only two ways of interpreting history, the one secular, the other spiritual. It is deluding ourselves and others to think that we can sit on the fence and avoid taking any decision in regard to the deeper issues of life. Religion and religious phenomena confront us at every inch of the historical ground, and our judgments and evaluations of these rest upon our basic presuppositions. There is no neutral attitude. The belief that there can be one

rests upon a superficial analysis of our self. The interpretation that we superimpose upon history depends ultimately upon the posture we adopt towards life. We understand the world in the measure we understand our self. All this means that history requires ultra-historical principles for its explanation, and these principles are to be discovered within our own selves. It is a mistake to think that history is self-explanatory in the same way as the physical sciences are. In the one case we deal with human appetites, consciousness, freedom, and intelligence; in the other we merely take account of matter and motion, that is to say, facts which can be weighed and measured. If no mental and spiritual factor were involved, history could easily have been a branch of mechanics. Even in the matter of physical sciences we have to make certain *a priori* assumptions which are not subject to rational proof, but without which no rational argument can start. But that does not concern us now beyond this point.

Even the Marxists who deny all extra-material element and regard history as a dialectical movement of matter reserve all their opprobrious epithets for the wicked bourgeoisie. In so far as they do so they refute their own dogma and rely for historical explanation on the factor of human wilfulness.

Men have begun to say today that the basic problem of modern civilization is moral. We prefer to call it religious, which it really is at its roots. This has always been the problem of civilization, but the development of science and the power of technique have given it an urgency not known before. We have come to see that the causes of world-wide stresses and strains and conflicts lie within us more than in external circumstances. The individual and the world act and react on one another. Unless we have an insight into the happenings that go on in the intimate interior of our personalities we shall never come to a true understanding of the forces that operate on a grand scale in history. The

real fight between good and evil is waged deep down in our selves; what we see outside is merely a social reflection of this.

In modern times men have paid more attention to the study of nature than to the study of self with the result that they lack a knowledge of human personality at a deeper level of analysis. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the wide prevalence of a romantic conception of man. The belief was circulated that man was naturally good and pure, and that evil was the product of certain faulty systems and beliefs. If these were changed and man given the opportunity to express himself freely and openly without let or hindrance from artificial systems and religious dogmas about heaven and hell, man would steadily move towards a kind of social paradise. These romantic conceptions recorded a protest against the prevailing injustice in Western society and the church dogma of Original Sin. But the romantic thinkers never resolved the antinomy involved in their thoughts. The point is this: if men are naturally good, how could a section of them come to tyrannize over others?

The cataclysms of the last two world wars have shattered these beliefs altogether by showing the seamy underside of human nature. It is not disputed now that the seamy underside is always there and only requires certain conditions to bring it to the open. There is an undeniable relation between force and general ethical conduct. If policemen are long absent from street corners, the thoughts of an average individual will turn to antisocial purposes. No greater falsehood has been preached than this that man is naturally good or that mere external arrangements and adjustments will secure peace. Man is born free but is everywhere in chains, said Rousseau. An equivalent proposition would be to say that the tiger is born a vegetarian but lives on flesh.

As a result of the recognition that the problem of evil in society is essentially a

personal spiritual problem, there is noticeable today in Western thought, at high philosophical and theological levels, a very marked tendency to return to something like the old conception of Original Sin. Evil is regarded as an essential ingredient of human nature; the only way to overcome it is constant striving for goodness, backed by faith in God. Our redemption is dependent on Divine grace.

This, in our opinion, is also a wrong conception of man, though there is much that can be said in favour of it, considering the worldwide manifestation of evil today. The analysis is certainly more correct than a naturalistic and materialistic interpretation of man. Man in nature is a mixture of good and evil, and man cannot achieve goodness except through constant effort directed to a religious goal. All this is very true in practice. But this analysis of the human personality does not take us very far, and we cannot stop at a personal conception of man or God, without encountering great logical difficulties, or contradicting the highest spiritual experiences of seers. Besides, the doctrine of sin carried beyond the point of its practical necessity and affirmed as more than an apparent truth, can easily become a dangerous doctrine. It presents to a rational mind too many difficulties to be considered true and helpful.

After all personality is a limitation. The Divine factor in us and in the universe is, of course, all that personality means, but it is also much more. If we believe that the Divine is infinite, then surely It must be something beyond and above all our conceptions of It. This is not to say that personality has no value. We cannot reach to the Divine Truth by taking up an altogether negative attitude towards life and its impulses. The whole point is whether or not we should take life as a means. We usually take life in the wrong way and try to persist in our egoism, that is to say, in our limitedness. We take the world as something to be enjoyed instead of as an arena for spiritual striving.

This wrong movement, this effort to persist in our limitedness and separateness from others, arises, according to Vedanta, from an initial fact of ignorance. This is the root of all evil, this ignorance of our own real nature. Once we have this conception, theoretical in the beginning but accepted as a goal, personality can be properly utilized as a stepping-stone to Divine Perfection, here and now. We are all seeking the same goal; while some seek it in the right way, some do it in a wrong manner. All evil arises from the wrong movement to persist in an imagined limitedness. But if we have the right goal before us, our fulfilment need not stand in opposition to the fulfilment of others. Religion says that we truly fulfil ourselves when we help the fulfilment of others. All love, charity, peace, and harmony rest upon this principle of unity; all hatred, violence, disorder and imbalance spring from making matter or separation or ignorance the standard and aim of life. We have to seek the One among the Many. All our search for knowledge, love, justice and truth take for granted this principle of unity. Only because we do not see this, due to cloudiness of vision, we are willing to offer vast human sacrifices to abstract nouns.

Man in nature, limited and evil, is a fact to be faced, but is never the basic truth. This entails the conclusion that though we have to fight, situated as we are, with evil, our perfection does not lie somewhere at a distant point of time in the future. Because we have missed the real purpose of history, which is essentially the education of human personalities, we seem to think that the historical aim lies somewhere ahead of us. The past and the present are, in this view, the stepping stones to a future perfection of humanity. This is how false philosophies like Marxism arise. We do not move nearer to eternity when we move forward in time. All points of time are equidistant from eternity.

This, then, is the true purpose of history, namely, the spiritual perfection of individuals.

A past generation of man may be nearer to God than the present, for it is not the clever intellectual who is closer to God but the man of simple heart. Our intellectual systems resting upon initially false assumptions come between us and God, as thick dark screens. The screen is thinner for the man of faith.

There is, however, a sense in which history may be said to be continuously moving forward to a greater fulfilment on the stage of time-space. This is the gradual victory of love and justice, of truth and equality on the social plane. To this point we have already referred in detail in a previous article of this series. We can look on the world-process as leading to the unification of mankind, embodied in certain political and social institutions, but resting upon the spiritual truth of man. The moral judgments of history are long-term affairs, which is one reason why they are not easy to see. History presents us with moral paradoxes at every turn; we see that the innocent suffer while the wicked prosper. The paradoxes become resolved when seen in a sufficient perspective which only the passage of time can give to events. Of course, the moral dilemmas in biography and history cannot be puzzled out to complete satisfaction until we turn to the kind of speculation that is called eschatological. It requires researches into a realm too deep and subtle for ordinary scientific methods. But as we have already said even common human history bears out the moral thesis, and purely historical investigations lead us to assume ultra-historical principles operating in the time processes.

The moral dilemmas arise from a short-sightedness of vision and also from oversimplification of the issues involved in a conflict. In actual practice, when suffering is involved, those who suffer are not hundred per cent innocent, nor those who inflict it are hundred per cent wrong. On this earthly plane there is never a conflict which is a clear cut

and straight issue between an absolute good and an absolute evil. Things are very much mixed up in this world of ours, and usually we see only a very superficial aspect of a deep and complex process. And, further, in the long view, it seems that our sufferings are not without meaning, but are an inevitable condition of our growth. Therefore, we must be patient and enquiring when, faced with suffering, we are apt to lament that our goodness has not helped us, or that Providence has let us down.

The stream of time is littered with the wreckages of civilizations and systems which went against the moral grain of the universe. Something always happens to bring about the downfall of injustice and tyranny. Systems prosper so long as they serve the purpose of human destiny, and their overthrow is brought about by immorality and injustice. The moral judgment falls the heaviest on the peoples who put themselves in the place of God. Assyria, Greece, and Rome fell not for want of cleverness and strength but because of worship of nature to the exclusion of the spiritual element in man. Fanaticism spelled the ruin of Spain and Islam in modern times. Napoleon in his early days was an instrument of Destiny. His success was essentially due to his co-operation with the new forces disengaged by the French Revolution. But the moment he flew against the very forces which carried him to victory he was cast down. The fall was not only individual but national also, since France relinquished her early idealism and followed a policy of selfish aggrandizement. The Napoleonic wars which fell heavily on many countries in Europe came as a Providential judgment on anachronistic systems which prevailed in them. Viewed in the perspective, the wars were necessary, since they formed the starting-point of all modern national developments.

Take also the case of Germany. Prussian militarism was not unjustifiable in the beginning. It arose in answer to certain needs of

the situation. It played a great part in European history by holding back Mongol and Muslim invasions from Western Europe and by achieving the unification of Germany. Bismark had an intuition of the real intention of history. He could, as it were, see the real forces in play and make proper use of them. He could, therefore, despite his *Realpolitik*, cry a halt to a career of victory in time. Unfortunately, his methods laid a bad precedent and Prussian militarism, grown lusty and powerful, thought it was omnipotent and could shape human destiny at will. It pursued a demoniacal aim under Kaiser Wilhelm II and Hitler. It has not taken much time for the moral factor to execute judgment. And what a judgment! Consider Japan also, how she lost a splendid opportunity to become the leader of Asia by making a just use of her strength.

All this shows that untruth and fanaticism contain within themselves some inner contradiction which the withering process of time is bound to lay bare. The lesson of history is that evil is self-destructive, and evil arises from the worship of false gods: nature and natural man. It is often thought—the thought is dangerous—that Hitler lost the war purely due to a stroke of ill-luck. What appears as ill-luck is really something that is bound to happen when a wrong line is taken. Consider the two following facts from two different and very intricate situations. Spanish religious fanaticism drove away all the Jews from Spain and her Empire in the Middle Ages. The result was that trade and business, built up by the Jews and on which Spanish power rested, went to pieces. This step contributed principally to the downfall of Spain, which in the beginning of the modern era stood at the head of the Western nations. Similarly, if Hitler had not driven away the scientists from Germany on false racial grounds, he might have been in possession of the atom bomb earlier than the Anglo-Saxons. Falsehood operates in unforeseeable ways to bring

about the annihilation of its votaries.

It requires the withering test of time to reveal the faults that lie concealed in a system. To understand the business of life we are required to make a supreme judgment about life. India has made the supreme judgment in a way as no other country or people has ever done. She has made *dharma* the basis and aim of society, and thereby made a direct hit on the problem of life. She has set the direction of her national life by the distant star of God and has sought to achieve a balance of affections and impulses on this basis. She has never lost sight of the moral conception of history, to which the most emphatic utterance has been given by Sri Krishna in the following words of the *Gita* : *Na hi kalyānakrit kaschit durgatim tata gachchhati*,—Never a doer of good, my son, comes to grief.

India has made mistakes and suffered for them. No nation has lived without making many. But India has never made a mistake about the essential facts of life.

The reliance on the Divine can be and has sometimes been taken in a wrong way. A spiritual vision does not demand of us to remain passive spectators of the human drama. It does not tie us to particular political ideologies or economic systems. On the contrary it requires us to help to create a society that will reflect the spiritual ideal of unity. We are required, in the words of the *Gita*, to be instruments of a Divine purpose.

Today war and independence have together disengaged new and mighty forces in our society, which are causing terrific stresses and strains. There is hardly any due appreciation of them. Poverty and injustice are crying for solution, while the soul of India is crying for expression. Unless we are able to relate the aim of a just economic and social structure with the basic Indian conception, there will be a terrible catastrophe. Alas, we seem to be helplessly moving forward to a cataclysm of this kind. There is not a moment to lose.

The crying need is a programme of action combining social justice with spirituality. Only Vedanta can meet the challenge of our time. Rootless humanism is fighting a losing battle against the destructive forces. Let us see this and take steps for an all-round reconstruction of Indian society.

(To be continued)

THE MARCH OF HISTORY (II)

BY P. S. NAIDU

(Continued from the August issue)

VII. LLOYD MORGAN AND EMERGENCE

Up to this point we have been discussing philosophical views based on biology which have been actually employed in interpreting the past course of world history and in predicting its future. We have now to consider two groups of views which lend themselves readily for use as tools for handling the facts of cultural history, but which still await such usage. The first of these is the Emergent Group with Lloyd Morgan as the chief exponent. At first sight it seems as though the biological theory of Emergent Evolution is eminently suited to interpret the contingent, the novel, and the elusive in history. But there is a deep-seated fallacy in the Morganian conception of emergence which makes it unsuitable for our purpose. 'What after all is emergence?' asks the penetrating thinker Professor Leighton, 'What is it except a name for the mere succession of novel forms and configurations. I do not see any persuasive way, except verbal conjuring trick, of getting a world of teeming individuality and diversity of structure out of a featureless simplicity, without first concealing in the simplicity, the complexity that is to emerge out of it.' Dean Mathews of King's College once likened the theory of emergence, when he was in a lighter mood, to a conjuror's trick. 'We have all seen a conjuror produce a rabbit out of a hat. We may have felt some pleasure

when the conjuror promised to explain how it was done; but we should have been greatly disappointed if he had informed us that when the passes of his magic wand reached a certain degree of complexity the rabbit emerged. After all we knew that already.'

The concept of emergence is drawn from the realm of the physical sciences, and nothing but confusion is likely to result from the fallacious extension to the realm of life and mind a principle inspired by the properties of lifeless matter. We are familiar with what are called the emergent properties of chemical compounds. These properties are, no doubt, novel, but they belong to the same category as those which are old and out of which they arise. The white colour of chalk emerges as a novelty from calcium, carbon, and oxygen, no one of which is white. But what emerges is only a new colour from other and older colours. Water freezes at 0°C., and quenches thirst; these properties are possessed neither by oxygen nor hydrogen. Yet they are after all physical properties arising out of others akin to them in every respect. Again in the new way of thinking in mathematics, quantities when put together give rise to a whole which is greater than their sum. Two plus two may be made to yield five or seven. But the result is still a number. Two plus two cannot be made to yield a star or a rainbow or a Tyagaraja *kriti*. In the theory of emergence something more surprising than the rainbow or the star or the melody is produced, and

that is Life. Life emerges from the organization of chemical molecules! Apart from the absurdity of the whole conception, emergence is incompetent to explain values in the historic process. There is confusion of a most serious type lurking in the Morganian concept. It must be remembered that values in the historic process emerge not from any type of physical organization *in* an individual, but from the organization of individuals in complex social groups. The concept of Emergent Evolution is competent, if we grant its competence for anything at all, to deal with life as emerging from the organization of matter *in* a living cell, and with mind as emerging from the organization of living cells *in* an animal organism. Values, on the other hand, depend on the organization of human beings in social groups. These two concepts belong to two different orders of explanation, and what is suitable for one is out of place in the other. In brief, all the charges that we have urged against Spencer, and many more besides, may be brought against Lloyd Morgan too, and so we have to set aside the concept of emergence as of no value to our purpose.

VIII. BERGSON AND CREATIVE EVOLUTION

The only biological concept of value to the philosopher engaged in interpreting history is that of Creative Evolution. Temporal processes occupy the centre of the stage in history, and any philosophy of history which has not got its roots deeply set in a correct appreciation of time and its meaning is unsuited to the interpretation of human cultural advancement. One of the reasons why Hegel completely failed in this field is the absolute incapacity of his absolutistic metaphysics to appreciate the significance of time. The real in his system had of course to be confined to the rational, and this to the logical which had finally to be reduced to the abstract mechanism of the triadic dialectic. And then followed all those absurdities with which we are familiar. The only philosopher, then, who has any

understanding of time and the temporal process in history is Bergson. His Creative Evolution is eminently suited to the correct interpretation of history. I have already hinted at the central part played by human will in shaping the course of history, and Bergson alone has the clearest insight into the psychology of the human will. On a foundation of Creative Evolution, well and truly laid, a noble and inspiring edifice of Philosophy of History may be erected. Such a monument awaits erection. But as is necessary in all attempts of this kind, the bare metaphysical framework has to be filled in with rich psychological content. The deplorable consequence of transporting bodily, without first clothing it with flesh and blood and breathing life into it, the gaunt metaphysical skeleton to the realm of history is seen in the insane ravings of Hegel against Asiatics and their cultural achievements. We shall not fall into the trap which caught Hegel, but shall make psychology the bedrock on which to found our formula for interpreting the course of history.

IX. COMTE AND POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

All the existing biological formulae having proved unsatisfactory for interpreting history, let us turn to the last or the psychological group for help. In the absence of any avowedly psychological interpretation of history, I propose to refer to Comte's contribution as the nearest approach to the psychological view-point. Comte's evolutionary method of treating history is anti-metaphysical. His conception of the three stages of development—the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive—, and the application of that conception to history have been shown to be faulty in the extreme. But there is a suggestion in his theory of social dynamics which merits our consideration. 'The development of the individual' he says, 'exhibits to us in miniature, both as to time and degree, the chief phases of social development.' It

is this significant statement lying at the foundation of Comte's view of cultural progress that prompted me to include his Positive Philosophy in the last and the most important head of my classification. But Comte too fails in his attempts to build up a theory of social progress. As the Dean of St. Paul remarks, the connection of Comte's philosophy with his doctrine of social evolution is very slender. Once again the secret of failure is to be found in the mishandling of elements that go to make up human individuality and personality. Comte's deification of the positive sciences leads him quite naturally to overlook the conative elements in human personality. By a curious turn of fortune the great Positivist at the very close of his Positive Philosophy hits upon the true function of aesthetics in advancing the pace of social progress. That is an indication of what Comte's positivism might have been, but unfortunately is not, had the gifted French thinker followed the path indicated by the true light. He did not, however, follow that path; so he failed, as his predecessors had failed, to grasp the true significance of the historic process.

X. THE FAILURE OF PHILOSOPHIES OF HISTORY AND A WAY OUT

Our brief survey of the philosophies of progress has given us some indication as to why they have proved so thoroughly unsatisfying, and why pessimism has an irresistible attraction for quite a few serious-minded thinkers. The remarks of Dean Inge come pat to the occasion. He says that 'Optimists have not made it clear to themselves or others what they mean by Progress, and that the vagueness of the idea is one of its attractions.' I agree so far as the objection of vagueness is concerned, but instead of admitting that this vagueness is a source of attraction, I should say that it is the cause of detraction. And the only means of dispelling the vagueness is to start rebuilding the concept of progress on sure psychological foundations.

The philosophies of history surveyed so far suffer from two most serious defects, namely, environmentalism and mechanistic determinism. Outward circumstances, geographical conditions, climatic changes, and social conventions merely provoke those human reactions which constitute the fabric of history; they do not produce them. 'The driving power of all change is,' as Sir Radhakrishnan points out, 'in the mind of man, his purposive striving to make the world adopt itself to him.' It is human psychology that gives meaning to history making it irregular and inconsistent, as well as attractive and interesting. And this psychology has not so far been 'made the basis of any theory of progress. A third and a very serious defect from which all philosophies of history suffer is the absence of any gradation of creative purposes and values. The significance of history is to be judged by its relation to absolute values, to the purpose which is independent of the historic process. In other words, history has to be judged and estimated in terms of a supreme Divine purpose running through all temporal events and conferring meaning and value on them.

History, be it noted, is a record of man and his doings; his hopes, aims, and purposes; his achievements and failures; his successes and frustrations; his hates, feuds, and jealousies; his lusts and passions, and above all of his gropings in the dark, now and then illumined by light, of his conscious and the unconscious, of the unconscious more often than of the conscious, after the Divine essence hidden in outer nature and in his inner self. This is no doubt a trite saying plain enough to the common man, but rather puzzling to the philosopher who believes that *reason* alone rules man and his doings. A Philosophy of History must have its roots in the deep-seated sentiments and the passionate strivings of the human race. And the clue for unravelling this mighty tangle of the history of our race is to be found in the working of the psychological forces in the individuals composing the

race. Man's individuality and personality are the bedrocks on which we shall have to found our philosophy of history. The psychological study of the forces operating within the individual will have to yield the clue for a correct interpretation of the content of history. It is to me a source of wonder and keen disappointment that, in spite of the well-established principles of ontogeny and phylogeny, philosophers should have failed to see the almost complete and perfect parallelism obtaining between the psychological development of individual personality and the progress of the human race as a whole. The steps and gradations in the progress of our race are reproduced in each one of us. By tracing these stages we may not only see the one increasing purpose running through the ages but also get some insight into the final goal of the evolution of man.

XI. OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL FORMULA FOR INTERPRETING THE HISTORIC PROCESS

Let us now turn to psychology for aid in unravelling the tangled skein of human progress. Some faint glimmerings of psychological light did flit across the intellectual horizon of Hegel, but in the absence of the proper type of depth psychology or conative psychology he failed to develop his insight. 'The first glance of history convinces us' he says, 'that the actions of men proceed from their needs, their passions, their characters and talents; and impress us with the belief that such needs, passions, and interests are the sole springs of action—the efficient agents in the scene of action.' This is a strikingly true statement, but it just stays there without any further development. Our task now is to unfold it with the help of tools forged by contemporary psychology.

I have already hinted at the close parallelism existing between the course of development of the human race as a whole and of the individuals composing the race. We have to look to the process of individual

development, then, to reveal to us the secret of human progress, and the only type of psychology competent to deal with this individual progress is Depth Psychology. Other types of psychology, such as Behaviourism, Gestalt-theories, Functionalism and so forth are utterly useless for our purpose. Depth Psychology insists on understanding the structure and function of the human mind before entering into the fields of history, economics, politics, aesthetics, and literary criticism, for these are, when all is said and done, only branches of applied psychology. Before you attack problems of applied psychology, of which the history of the cultural progress of man is a branch, you must equip yourself with a knowledge of the fundamentals of general psychology.

It has been established after critical scientific investigation that the structure of the human mind is instinctual in essence. We may perhaps express the conclusion of contemporary Depth Psychology in popular language thus: 'The human mind at the start is just a bundle of instincts, nothing more and nothing less.' All the motives which impel man to behaviour of various kinds and grades—from simple food-seeking to the highest type of self-sacrifice—may be resolved ultimately into the fundamental elements of mental structure known as instinctual propensities. It is to be borne in mind that this conclusion has been reached after a careful comparative study of men and higher animals on the one hand, and of primitive and civilized races on the other. So, we hold that the human mind to start with at birth is composed just of instinctual impulses and emotions.

When we declare that man is a creature of instincts, we are confronted immediately with a huge volume of protests and objections. Is not man the proud possessor of reason? the critics ask. Is he not moved by noble and divine sentiments? Is he not a seeker after truth, beauty, and goodness? How could you, then, reduce all man's ideals, ambitions,

hopes, and aspirations to primitive instinctual elements? Now, as a first answer to this challenge, I would draw the attention of the critics to the ghastly happenings at the battle fronts. These blood-curdling scenes of savagery demonstrate beyond any shadow of doubt that man is still a creature of primitive emotions and impulses. The veneer of civilization lies very thin indeed over primitive lusts, passions, and hates, and it takes very little to break this crust and reveal the ugly instincts boiling and seething underneath. Man is not a rational animal; but an instinctual animal. As a second answer to my critics let me raise a counter question: Does any one protest against the view that this earth and the lovely objects on its surface are all composed of chemical elements? Yet, do we find these elements, except in a few rare instances, lying loose and in their pure form on the surface of the earth? The earth's crust, the trees and all the beautiful objects on its surface are composed of chemical elements organized into compounds, and of compounds—organic and inorganic—organized into objects. In the same way, the immediate antecedents of civilized man's behaviour is, no doubt, in many instances, a highly organized or cultured sentiment-pattern acquired by him in the course of his experience, but this pattern may be finally resolved into its constituent elements, namely, the primitive instincts and emotions.

Man, therefore, begins his life with a battery of innate, inherited, instinctual impulses. How many of these fundamental elements are there? Here there is wide disparity in the views held by psychologists. We, in our country, have upheld an eightfold scheme, while the sober-minded among the Western psychologists are inclined to double that number. This divergence in the views of experts need not cause us any surprise, for contemporary science in all its departments is full of such conflicts. The more important among these instinctual elements of the human mind are fear, anger, food-seeking,

curiosity, disgust, sex, self-assertion and submission, acquisitiveness, amusement and appeal.

The human mind is dynamic and is constantly developing through its contact with the environment. And in this process of development the elementary units of mental structure enumerated above get organized into sentiments. Through the formation of sentiments man lifts himself above the level of instincts and impulses which rule and control rigidly the life of the lower animals. Let us consider a simple and familiar example of the way in which the process of mental organization known as sentiment-formation takes place. A freshman from an up-country school enters the university and registers for a course in Biology. He attends the first lecture delivered by the professor of Biology and is charmed by the way in which the great scholar presents the intimate connection between biology and life. The young man is struck with *wonder* at the vast learning of the teacher and is moved to extreme *self-submission*. The two primitive impulses of wonder and submission are now combined in the mind of our young scholar and organized round the professor as a vital centre into the sentiment of *admiration*. If the professor is a strict disciplinarian and our young friend rather lacking in self-control and sense of responsibility, then *fear* of disapproval or of punishment will combine with admiration to produce the sentiment of *awe* with the professor as the centre of organization. And this new sentiment may develop into gratitude and reverence through the further addition of the tender emotion. In this manner the primitive elementary instinctual mental elements get organized round men and objects in the environment into concrete sentiments. Up to the period of adolescence these concrete sentiments—that is sentiments organized round concrete objects and human beings—hold sway over the mind of the individual. Then abstract sentiments—that is sentiments organized round ideas—come into existence

creating ideals, hopes, and aspirations in the mind of the young, and making life richer and more meaningful. So, we find man lifting himself up from the level of primitive instincts to the higher stage of concrete sentiments, and then to the next higher stage of abstract sentiments. These sentiments, concrete and abstract, can never lie quietly side by side, but get often into conflict, each pulling the individual in a different direction. This conflict however is soon resolved, and there evolves as a consequence a scale of sentiment values arranged in a hierarchical order with a master sentiment at the top of the scale. Man alone is capable of experiencing the conflict of sentiments. In his case there arises the need for an abiding scale of sentiment values. In the mind of a person of a well-developed,

well-balanced character there does exist such a permanent scale of values. He or she has organized all the sentiments in such a manner that there is always one dominant sentiment ruling over all the others.

From rudimentary instinctual impulses and emotions to concrete sentiments, and from concrete sentiments to abstract sentiments, and from these, through the instrumentality of conflict and the resolution of the conflict, to an abiding scale of values with a sovereign sentiment at the top—that is how man progresses. This is the basic plan of man's character and of his culture. And this is the psychological formula which I shall use in my next lecture for the purpose of interpreting human history.

(To be continued)

INDIAN HYMNS

BY BATUK NATH BHATTACHARYA

SACRED PRECEDES SECULAR

In the literature of almost every country it is remarkable that the sacred or religious preceded the secular. In early history religion is the expression of the awakening soul of a race. It is the outcome of the curiosity and the sense of wonder which are the first reactions of man's thinking soul face to face with the panorama of the world. In India this phenomenon has been more marked than elsewhere. And not in early literature only but in later times also, so long as Hinduism shaped and coloured the polity, the stamp of religion was set upon the entire circle of knowledge. But this larger question apart, our devotional literature, from its first beginnings in the *Vedas* to the latest stages of its development in the *Puranas*, *Tantras*, and popular lyrics, bears in it evidence of the lines of growth and the phases of change of the genius of our people, its thinking mind, and

its evolving ethos. By this evidence we can trace the process of transformation and see how indefinite ideas became definite, the abstract became concrete, and what was inchoate became sharply defined.

THE SENSE OF WONDER

In Vedic *suktas* the first stirrings of a sense of wonder and of the spirit of enquiry are evident in the questions asked as also in the answers that were evoked:

*Ko addhā veda kā iha pravochat
kuta ajāta kuta iyam visrishtih;
Arvāk devā asya visarjanena atha ko veda
yata āvabhava.*

Who knows truly and who will here tell whence this creation? The gods also are later than creation. How can one know whence it sprang up?

This primordial state is vividly described in the *Nasadiya Sukta*.

*Nāsadāsin no sadāsittadānim nāsiddājo no
vyoma paro yat ; ,*

*Kimāvarivah kuha kasya sharman ambhah
kimāsid gahanam gabhiram.*

Neither existence nor non-existence was then. Then there was neither the atmosphere nor the region beyond the skies. Who covered (whom) and where? For whose delight? Was there water deep and fathomless?

*Na mrityurāsidadamritam na tarhi na vātryā
ahnah āsit praketah*

*Ānidavātam svādhayā tadekam tasmād ha
anyat na parah kinchanāsa*

Then was there neither death nor immortality. There was no sign either of day or of night. That through Its own power (sole Entity, self-contained), breathed without the (help of) air. Nothing other than (Itself) That existed.

FAITH IN SUPREME POWER AND PERSON

The mind of man can hardly reach back to this primeval state in which time, space, and matter, form and dimension, life and thought, all made up One category—the Uncreated. How can there be certainty and definiteness in regard to that which preceded Cosmos? It is the eye of the seer that here seeks to probe into mysteries which baffle human comprehension. But amidst the darkness of this chaos, the inspiration of the sage holds fast to the basic truth of the Person and Power whence all creation emanated. This faith does not falter but utters itself in the noblest accents:

*Shrinvantu vishve amritasya putrāh ā ye
dhāmāni divyāni tasthuh.*

Hear, O Ye all, the sons of Immortality as well as those who abide in the celestial regions!

*Vedāhametam purusham mahāntam aditya-
varnam tamasah parastāt*

*Yameva viditvā atimrityumeti nānyah
panthā vidyate ayanāya.*

I have known this Supreme Person radiant like the sun and beyond darkness, by knowing whom alone death is transcended; there is no other way to go by.

It is only the reality of vision that could lend this emphasis and confidence to the tone. And along with this promulgation there is the summons to all to accept it:

*Sameta vishve vachasā patim divah eko
vibhuratithirjanānām*

*Sa Purvvyo nutanamāvivasat tam vartani-
ranuvavrita ekamit puru.*

Come ye all together with words of praise to the Lord of Heaven. He is the sole Lord and supreme over all. The Ancient One, He still dwells in all that is new. All the diverse paths lead to Him alone.

To read these verses is to be lifted to a higher plane and to be transported to an early world in which the basic notes of pious feeling and devotion were first sounded—those notes which in later ages swelled in volume and reverberated in echoes throughout our intensely spiritual country. The solemnity that breathes through them and the depth of conviction which they evince reach the very limit of exalted utterance.

THE SUKTAS OF PERMANENT VALUE

Vedic literature is one long paean of praise addressed to different deities. Amidst this enormous mass of devotional literature certain *suktas* stand out conspicuous as permanent landmarks in the memory of the race. They still have their hold on the orthodox mind as connected with religious practices which have continued through the ages, and they have deeply influenced both faith and modes of worship as well as devotional formalities. They may be said to have moulded the religious creed and practice of Hindus for all time. The most famous of these are the *Purusha Sukta*, the *Rudra Śukta*, the *Devi Sukta*, and the *Soura Sukta*.

SACRIFICE—THE ORIGIN OF CREATION

The first of these, the *Hymn of Man*, presents creation as the original and supreme sacrifice from which social order and the bases of Ethics and Religion emerged, along with the cosmic system, the heavenly bodies, the elements, the atmosphere, and the different kinds of creatures. In sublimity of conception and magnificence of expression, the *Purusha Sukta* is unique in the world's sacred literature. Very aptly has it been the primal utterance on which the creed and social order of India have been reared :

*Sahasrashirshā purushah sahasrākshah
sahasrapāt*

*Sa bhūmim sarvato vritvā atyatishtad-
dashāngulam ;*

*Purusha evedam sarvam yad bhutam
yachcha bhavyam*

Utāmritatvasyeshāno yadannenātirohati.

Of a thousand heads and eyes and of a thousand feet, He covered the earth on all sides and transcended it by ten digits. All that is, is the Purusha, all that is past and all that is future. He is the Lord of Immortality. He is also the Lord of that which grows through manifestation.

*Etāvānasya mahimā ato jyāyāmscha
poorushah*

*Pādosya vishvā bhootani tripādasyāmritam
divi.*

All this shows His greatness but the *Purusha* is still greater. All creations are a fourth of Him ; three fourths of Him are the Immortal portion in Heaven.

COSMIC OUTLOOK

*Yat purushena havishā devā yajnamatan-
vata*

*Vasanto asyāseedājyam greeshma idhmah
sharaddhavih*

When the gods performed the sacrifice with the *Purusha* as the oblation, Spring was the melted butter, Summer the fuel and Autumn the libation.

*Tasmādyajnat sarvahutah richah sāmāni
yajnire*

*Chhandāmsi jajnire tasmād yajustasmā-
dajāyata*

From that sacrifice where all were offered, originated the *Riks* and the *Sāmans* and the Hymns in verse and the *Yajus*.

*Chandramā manaso jātashchakshoh suryo
ajāyata*

*Mukhādrashchagnishcha prānādvā-
yurajāyata*

The moon was born of His mind, the Sun of His eye, from His mouth Indra and Fire, from His breath Air.

*Nābhyā āseedantariksham sheershno dyauh
samavartata*

*Padbhyām bhoomirdishah shrotrāt tathā
lokānakalpayan*

From His navel the atmosphere came to be, from His head Heaven emerged, from His feet the earth, from His ear the quarters. Thus were the regions formed.

*Vishvatashchakshuruta vishvatomukho
vishvatobahuruta vishvatah pat*

*Sambāhubhyām dhamati sam patattraih
dyāvā bhoomi janayan deva ekah*

Everywhere are His eyes, everywhere His mouths, His arms and His feet are on all sides. The sole Lord, He created Earth and Heaven and with His arms held them apart as if on two wings.

The *Purusha Sukta* presents the Creator as the Transcendent and yet as the One from whose limbs all created objects, all kinds of animate beings, all classes in society issued.

RUDRA'S MULTIFORM HUMAN IMAGES

In the *Rudra Adhyaya* there is a passage which reads like a remarkable worship of Humanity. All classes in society, even those that are vile and fearful, the *lilāvighrahas* or forms assumed in sport by Rudra are mentioned in specific detail and are saluted and adored :

*Namo virupebhyo vishvarupebhyashcha vo.
namo, namo mahadbhyah kshullake-
bhyashcha vo namah*

*Namo rathibhyo arathebhyashcha vo namo,
namo rathebhyyoh rathipatibhyashcha
vo namah*

*Namah senābhyah senānibhyashcha vo
namo, namah kshatribhyah sangri-
hitribhyashcha vo namah*

*Namastakshabhyo rathakārebhyashcha vo
namo namah kulālebhyah karmāre-
bhyashcha vo namah*

*Namah punjishtebhyoh nishādebhyashcha
vo namo namah ishukridbhyoh dhanva-
kriddbhyashcha vo namah*

*Namo mrigayubhyah shvanibhyashcha vo
namo namah shvabhyashcha shvapati-
bhyashcha vo namah*

I salute you, the deformed and the multiform, and you of mighty powers as well as you of petty parts. I bow to you, charioteers and those without chariots, the chariots and lords of the chariots; I salute you, soldiers and captains, Kshatriyas and collectors, carpenters and chariot-makers, potters and ironsmiths; fowlers and fishers, arrowsmiths and bowsmiths, hunters and keepers of dogs in leash, the dogs and the masters of the dogs as well.

It is a very long list and as one recites the muster-roll of artisans and wielders of weapons, one has a glimpse of human society in its early stages and visualizes the emergence of those most useful crafts and industries which marked the evolution of society from the savage and barbarian to the civilized state.

SUPREME GODHEAD IN EVERY DEITY

The point to be stressed in regard to these great hymns is the vastness and comprehensiveness of the conceptions of the Deity. As a result, the One divinity looms so large as to leave no room for any other. Thus the *Rudra Sukta* has the verse:

*Esho ha devah pradisho anusarvāh purvo
ha jātah sa u garbhe antah
Sa eva jātah sa janishyamanah praty-
angjanāstishtthati sarvatomukhah*

Such is God. He is present everywhere.

He is the first born. Yet He is still in the womb. He is all that has been born and that will be born. Facing all sides He dwells in everybody.

*Savitā pashchātāt savitā purastāt savitot-
tarāttāt savitā adharattāt*

*Savitā nah suvatu sarvatatim savito no
rāsatam dirghamāyuh*

Savitri is behind, Savitri is before. Savitri is above and Savitri is below. May Savitri send us perfection. May Savitri grant us long life.

This verse occurs in the *Saura Sukta* as well. This latter *sukta* contains, besides the famous verse which asserts the Identity of all the Gods who differ in name only and which has served as the bedrock of the tolerant catholicity of the Hindu view of life.

MANY NAMES BUT ONE GOD

*Indram mitram varunam agnimāhur-
atho divyah sa suparno garutmān
Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti agnim
yamam matarishvānamāhuh*

They call Him by various names—Indra, Mitra, Varuna or Agni. He is also called the One of shining plumage. There is only one Entity—the sages name it variously as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Yama or Matarishwan.

This concept of a single Deity pervading all creation is noticeable everywhere in the hymns to any of the gods that have been worshipped by our society. The devotee absorbed in the meditation of his special god exalts Him above all, and his mind is wholly filled by the object of his adoration. The Hindu religious attitude cannot therefore be characterized as polytheism. It is more fitly described as multiple monotheism. Hence we meet with resonant echoes of the same kind of paeon, though the context varies. The *Hiranyagarbha Sukta* sets the seal, for all time, upon this attitude which isolates the attention and focuses it on the Supreme Power. This is in sharpest contrast to the altars raised to the Unknown God in Greece which Paul,

the Apostle of Christ, found and which led him to remark 'whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.' In the *Hiranyagarbha Sukta* the opposite idea is stressed—not doubt and ignorance but conviction, clear and strong :

*Hiranyagarbhah samavartatāgre bhutasyā
jātaḥ patireka āsit*

*Sa dādihāra prithivim dyāmutemam kasmāi
devāya havishā vidhema*

In the beginning *Hiranyagarbha* alone existed. Coming into being He was the sole Lord of the universe. He upholds the earth and yonder Heaven. To whom else should we offer oblation !

*Ya atmadā baladā yasya vishva upāsate
prashisham yasya devāh*

*Yasya chhāyā amritam yasya mrityuh
kasmāi devāya havishā vidhema*

He gives the soul ; He gives the strength. All the worlds obey His supreme command, so also the gods. His reflection is Immortality ; His shadow is Death. To whom else should we offer oblation !

*Yasya ime himavanto mahitvā yasya samu-
dram rasayā sahāhuh*

*Yasyemāh pradisho yasya bāhu kasmāi
devāya havishā vidhema*

Whose majesty the Himalayas declare, as well as the sea and also the *rasa* or river. Whose arms are all these directions. To whom else should we offer oblation !

*Atmā devānām bhuvanasya garbho
yathāvasham charati deva eshaḥ*

*Ghoshā idasya shrinvire na rupam tasmāi
vātāya havishā vidhema*

Soul of the gods, the womb of the universe, this God moves about at His own will. One can hear His voice but not see His form. Let us offer oblation to this God who is like unto the Air.

*Pashchāt purastāt adharādutrāt kavih
kāvyena paripāhi rājan*

*Sakhe sakhāyam ajaro jarimne agne
martyān amartyastvam nah*

Behind and before, below and above, protect us by your grace, benevolent King,

Save a friend, O Friend ! Eternal and Immortal as you are, save us who are decaying and mortal.

This note of unwavering faith swells in volume and pitch as the ages roll on ; it is the ground-note that sounds in the ecstatic outbursts of devotion that throughout history have proceeded from the heart of *Aryavarta* and the *Dravidian South*. And in the procession of the centuries the desire to draw closer to the Root-principle of all-being by the two-fold approach—humanizing of the Divinity and the deifying of Man—becomes more and more explicit. It is the distinctive feature of the Hindu cultural heritage—this pervasive God-consciousness. As the *Svetāshvātara Upanishad* has it :

*Yo devo agnau yo apsu yo vishvam
bhuvanamāvivesha*

*Ya oshadhishu yo vanaspatishu tasmāi
devāya namo namah*

I salute again and again that God who dwells in fire and in the waters, who permeates the whole universe, who resides in herbs and in the lordly trees of the forest.

IDEA OF UNITY IN THE DEVI SUKTA

The idea of Oneness is repeated in hymns of diverse kinds. The *Devi Sukta*, which is the root and germ of the *Chandi* or the Great Hymn to the Mother, has the verses :

*Mayā so annamatti yo vipashyati yah
prāniti ya im shrinotyuktam*

It is by me that one eats food, sees and breathes and hears what is said.

*Ahameva vāta iva pravāmyārabhamānā
bhuvanāni vishvā*

*Paro divā para enā prithivyaitāvati mahinā
sambabhava*

Having created all these worlds I move about freely like the wind which blows where it lists. I, who am beyond the sky and beyond this earth, came to be so by my majesty.

LATER-DAY HYMNS STRESS MONOTHEISM

Emerson, the sage of Boston, points out the contrast between the spirit of the East

and that of the West in the two words, Unity and Diversity. The highest unity in the realm of thought is monism or Advaitavada, and different schools and sects in India, under varying nomenclatures, have tended to espouse this principle of unity. This is easily proved by citations from the hymns of a later date addressed to any of the five deities whose worship distinguishes the varnashramic society. Thus the *Ganeshāshtaka* has the stanzas :

*Yatashchāvirāsit jagatsarvametat tathābj-
āsano vishvago vishvagoptā*

*Tathendrādayo devasanghā manushyāh
sadā tam ganesham namāmo bhajāmah*

Whence appeared this whole world as also the lotus-seated Brahma, Vishnu, the protector of All, so also Indra and the other hosts of gods, and mankind, ever do we salute him, Ganesha, and worship him.

*Yato vahnibhānu bhavo bhurjalan-
yatah sāgarāshchandramā vyoma
vāyuh*

*Yatah sthāvara jangamā vrikshasamghā
sadā tam ganesham namāmo bhajāmah*

Whence sprang Fire and Sun, Bhava (i.e. Shiva), Earth and Water, whence issued the Oceans and Moon, Ether and Air, whence were born the immovable objects and the moving creatures and the clustering trees, ever do we salute him, Ganesha, and worship him. In another hymn He is lauded thus :

*Ajam nirvikalpam nirākāramekam parā-
nandamānandamadvaitapurnam*

*Param nirgunam nirvishesham niriham
parabrahmarupam ganesham bhajema*

We adore Ganesha, the Unborn, Immuta-
ble, Formless Deity, Highest Bliss and Joy,
filled with the sense of oneness, Transcendent,
Attributeless, negating all differentiation,
Effortless and the Supreme Brahman.

These citations may be multiplied but it is
time to pass on to other aspects of our
literature of devotion.

EVERY CONCEPTION LIMITS DIVINITY

The transition in thought from the con-

crete and personal to the abstract and imper-
personal, from the embodied to the attribute-
less, is so common a feature of our hymns that
it is palpably a misuse of language to charac-
terize the attitude as idolatrous. All strivings
of the limited human mind to conceive the
Ineffable are bound to lead to delimitation
and circumscribing of the Absolute. The
impossibility of rightly comprehending the
Ultimate Principle in the Infinite is feelingly
brought out in the well-known *shloka* :

*Rupam rupavivarjitasya bhavato dhyānena
yatkalpitam stutyānirvachaniyatākhi-
lagurordurikritā yanmayā*

*Vyāpitvam cha nirākritam bhagavato yat-
tirthayātrādinā kshantavyam jagadisha
tad vikalatādoshatrayam matkritam*

That I have imagined in meditation your
form, formless as You are ; that I have limited
the idea of your inexpressibility by expressing
you in hymns, Master of the Universe as you
are ; that I have denied in practice Your all-
pervasiveness, Lord of supernal majesty, by
pilgrimages and the like, O Lord of All, I pray
for pardon of these three faults of mine, born
of my infirmity.

The keynote of this trend of thought was
heard in the well-known upanishadic verse :

*Apānipādo javano grahitā pashyatyacha-
kshuh sa shrinotyakarnah*

*Sa vetti vedyam na cha tasyāsti vettā
tamāhuragryam purusham mahāntam.*

Without hands and feet he runs fast and
seizes ; without eyes he sees ; without ears
He hears ; He knows whatever is knowable,
but there is no knower of Him. He is called
the First and the Supreme Person.

Alongside and akin to this confession of
the narrowness and poverty of man's powers,
the acute feeling that all rites of worship are
quite inadequate for the adoration of the
Absolute who needs nought that man has to
offer. Hebrew Psalm and Christian hymn—
every outpouring of the enlightened human
spirit—is at one in this recognition. In the
hymn of highest worship, (*Parāpujā Stotra*).

as in the early upanishadic verses, the same ideas find expression. The Upanishad says :

*Na tatra suryo bhāti na chandra tārakam
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto ayamagnih
Tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam tasya
bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti*

There the sun shines not, nor the moon, nor the stars, these lightnings flash not there, what to speak of this fire? He shining all shines, by His light all this shines.

The *Parāpujā Stotra* has these verses :

*Purnasyāvāhanam kutra sarvādhārasya
chāsanam*

*Svachchhasya pādymarghyamcha shud-
dhasyāchāmanam kutah*

Wherefrom is the invocation of Him who is ever full, a seat for Him who is the support of all, foot-laver and oblation for the Stainless, mouth-wash for the Pure?

*Nirmalasya kutah snānam vastram vishvo-
darasya cha*

*Nirālbasyopavitam pushpam nirvā-
sanasya cha*

Wherefore the rite of bathing for the All-clean, and cloth cover for Him, inside of whom is the Universe, the sacred thread for Him who has no material substratum, or flowers for Him who has no craving?

*Nirlepasya kuto gandho ramyasyābhara-
nam kutah*

*Nityatriptasya naivedyam tāmbulan-
cha kuto vibhoh*

Wherefore the sandal-paste for Him who suffers no smear, or ornament for Him who is the soul of Beauty, food-offering for the Ever-satisfied, or betel offering for Him who is All-pervasive?

*Pradakshina hyanantasya hyadvayasya
kuto natih*

*Vedavākyairavedyasya kutah stotram
vidhiyate*

How can there be circumambulation of the Infinite, and obeisance to Him who has no second? How can there be adoration of Him who is unknowable even by means of vedic sayings?

*Svyam prakāshamānasya kuto nirājanam
vibhoh*

*Antarbahishcha purnasya kathamudvāsa-
nam bhavet*

How can there be waving of lights before Him who is self-luminous, or change of raiment for Him who is full, both within and without?

WORSHIP, AN INSTRUMENT OF ASCENT TO GOD-LEVEL

Hymns are a part of the ritual of worship. Worship is a process of psychic elevation of the limited, finite being to the god-level, with raptures and exaltations which help to free the human mind from the pettiness and narrowness of mundane existence. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection that is already in man, and Religion, the manifestation of the Divinity that is already in man.' This saying crystallizes the maxims and directions that our sacred literature contains regarding devotional exercises. Thus it is said: *devo bhutvā devam yajet*—'Worship a god by being a god.' The idea underlying sacrifice and partaking of the sacrificial remnants is the at-one-ment of the devotee with the object of adoration or a communication of the attributes of the adored to the adorer. Such is the significance also of the Eucharist. Whoever partakes of the consecrated water and wine, which in the eye of faith turn into the Redeemer's flesh and blood, becomes one with him in spirit and shares His saving grace. Likewise our *Shāstras* lay down:

*Aham devotha naivedyam pushpagandhā-
dikamcha yat*

*Toyādhārastathā toyam devam devāya
yojayet*

Myself, the food-offering, flowers, perfume and the rest, the water-pot and the water—all these are God himself and in worship it is the God that is dedicated to the God.

HUMAN ACTIVITIES—FORMS OF DIVINE SERVICE

It is but one step from this attitude to the devotee's outlook in which all human activities are forms of service of the Divinity. Here the limits of resignation, self-dedication and self-surrender are reached. In the *Gita* the advice to Arjuna which sums up all is :

*Yat kāroshi yadashnāshi yajjuhosi dadāsi
yat*

*Yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kurushva
madarpanam*

Whatsoever you do, eat, offer at sacrifice, or give or perform as austerity, O Kaunteya, dedicate all that to me.

In the hymn of mental worship addressed to Shiva occurs a stanza which exactly corresponds to this injunction. Like meditation, this mental worship is a part preceding the external rites. And the psychic process is symbolically detailed in the *shloka* :

*Atmā tvam girijā matih sahacharāh
prānāh sharīram griham*

*Pujā te vishayopabhogarachanā nidrā
samādhisthitih*

*Sanchārah padayoh pradakshinavidhih
stotrāni sarvagiro*

*Yad yadkarma karomi tattadakhilam
shambho tavārāadhanam*

Thou art my Soul, Thy consort, Himalaya's daughter, is the mind, Thy attendants the vital airs, Thy shrine this body, Thy worship is the enjoyment of sensible objects, mystic meditation of Thyself is sleep, the rite of circumambulation the movement of the feet, Thy hymns are all the words that are spoken, whatsoever acts I perform are, O Shambhu, the adoration of Thyself.

The same sentiment occurs in the *Bhāgavata* :

*Sa vāg yayā tasya gunān grinīte karau cha
tat karmakarau manashcha*

*Smaredvasantam sthira-jangameshu shrinoti
tat punyakathāh sa karnah*

*Shirashcha tasyobhayalingamānamet tade-
va yat pashyati taddhi chakshuh*

*Angāni vishnoratha tajjanānām pādoda-
kam yāni bhajanti nityam*

That is the speech which lauds His excellences, those are hands that perform His work, that is mind which recalls Him who dwells in creations—both motionless and moving—that is the ear which hearkens to His sacred lore, that is the head which bows to His two-fold manifestation, that is the eye which sees Him, those are limbs which accept the foot-lavings of Him and His favoured souls.

Thus the Ego of the devotee seeks to merge itself in the will of the Maker and Sustainer of the Universe and man realizes himself as in tune with the great Laws that weave the garment of life on the loom of Time. 'Thy will be done' is the prayer of piety, no matter what the religious denomination may be.

ABSOLUTE SELF-RESIGNATION IN BHAKTI

The absolute resignation to the will of God is specially marked in the psalms and prayers inspired by the cult of Bhakti, whether enshrined in Sanskrit or in the provincial languages of India. In this mood the sole desire of the *bhakta* is that he may never lose communion with the deity he worships, whatever betide him in terms of material good or in the cycle of existences he may have to go through. Verses expressing this sentiment abound in the Vaishnava literature of devotion :

*Nāsthā dharme na vasunichaye naiva
kāmapobhoge*

*Yad bhāvyaṃ tad bhavatu bhagavan pur-
vakarmānurunam*

*Etat prārthyam mama bahumatam janma-
janmāntarepi*

*Tvat pādāmbhoruhayugagatā nishchalā
bhaktirastu*

I do not rely on pious exercises, on store of wealth or on the enjoyment of objects of desire. Let what will happen, O Lord, in accordance with the past karma. This is the boon dearest to my heart—that in this as well

as in other births my devotion to Thy lotus-feet may ever remain unshaken.

Sri Gauranga, in his Eight Stanzas of Instruction, utters the same sentiment :

*Na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavī-
tām vā jagadīsha kāmāye
Mama janmani janmanishvare bhavatād
bhaktirahaituki tvayi.*

Nor wealth nor a large following, nor woman's beauty, nor poetry, O Lord of the World, I crave, but only this—that my devotion to thee, O God, which has no ulterior motive, may ever abide, birth after birth.

Two other stanzas carry this sentiment to a further reach—the sense of man's insignificance and his absolute dependence on grace, as also the supreme value of resignation to His will :

*Ayi nandatanuja kinkāram patitam mām
vishame bhavāmbudhau
Kripayā tava pādapanakajasthitadhulisadri-
sham vichintaya*

O son of Nanda, view me, in your mercy, your slave, fallen in the fearful ocean of life, as no better than a speck of dust on your lotus-feet.

*Āshlishya vā pādanatam pinashtu mām
adarshanānmarmahatām karotu vā
Yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampato mat-
prānanāthastu sa eva nāparah*

Prostrate at His feet, He may, after embracing, trample me down, or by withholding his countenance, cut me to the quick. Let the wanton gallant treat me in any way he likes, still He is the Lord of my life and none other.

VAISHNAVA VARIETIES OF DIVINE LOVE

The language of this *shloka* strongly suggests a relationship between the Divine adored and the human worshipper as between the human lover and the object of his love—a depth of feeling and intimacy which we associate with earthly love. And this brings us to the latest phase of devotion inspired by the cult of Bhakti. In this phase, the devo-

tee's attitude to his Lord is differentiated by certain distinct feeling-tones which are variations of the sentiment of affection according to the relationship between the parties. They are evoked, not by the acceptance of the Supreme as the attributeless (*nirvishesha*), unconditioned Brahman, but of the Lord as endowed with concrete personal attributes, which make realization vivid and worship an experience of intense sweetness. These variations are (a) *dāsya priti*—the lowest bliss—arising from the sense of servanthship to Lord Krishna, of power and majesty inconceivable, (b) *sakhya priti*—the affection that subsists between friends—a closer bond, free from diffidence and formality, as between equals, (c) *vātsalyarati*—or parental love—such as Yashoda felt for the Lord of the Universe in her arms, shorn of the ideas of His overwhelming greatness and potency, and lastly (d) *madhura* or *ujjvalā priti*—a sublimation of conjugal love which is turned Heavenward and raised to the highest pitch of intensity.

FOLK-LITERATURE OF DEVOTION

These different expressions of the sentiment of love and the modifications and variations of devotional attitude which they imply are products of the latest stage in the evolution of Indian spirituality. This stage has yielded a variety and richness of emotional fervour and a rapturous literature, the survey of which would call for separate treatment. The literature of this last phase of devotion is extensive and embodied not in Sanskrit alone but also in the provincial languages of India. The appeal of the hymns and songs in the popular tongues is to larger masses than is possible in the case of Sanskrit verses. Bhakta Kabir says : 'Sanskrit is like the water in a well, the language of the people is the flowing stream.' The *Bhāgavata* is replete with outpourings of Bhakti from all the varied emotional standpoints. The *Prabandhas* which the Sri Vaishnavas of the South regard as the Tamil Veda and which embody the ecstatic utterances of Nammalvar and the other

Alvar saints and Kulashekara's *Mukunda-mālā* reveal the depth of devotional feeling which image-worship has evoked. In them we visualize the moods of the rapt devotee depicted in the *Bhāgavata* :

*Evam vratah svapriyanāmakirtyā jātā-
nurāgo dutachitra uchchaih*

*Hasatyatho roditi routi gāyatyunmāda-
vanrityati lokabāhyah*

So dedicated and filled with love by the chanting of the name dear to his heart, and melting within, he laughs aloud, weeps and cries out and sings like a madman and dances like one outside society.

ADORATION OF INCARNATIONS

And the stream swells in volume and the channels get wider and deeper in works like the *Sursāgar* and *Rāmcharitmanas*; in the lyrics of Jayadeva, Vidyapati, and Chandidasa and the *padas* of the post-Chaitanya Vaishnava poets of Bengal, which are sung in *kirtan* or devotional tunes; in the *abhangas* of the Maharashtra devotees, Jnanadeva, Nama-deva, Tukaram, and Ramadas; in the *bhajans* of the Upper India saints and reformers—Ramananda and the line of his disciples, Mira-bai, Kabir and Tulsidas; in the songs and poems (many of them poured out extempore) of the Shaiva saints, like Manikka Vachakar, Appar, Sundaramurti, and Jnanasambandhar of Southern India—known for their heart-touching appeal—which are collected in treasuries like the *Tevaram*. Bhakti is said to have flowered in the Dravida land and, through Ramananda and Kabir, to have spread to seven countries. This vast literature records the outpourings of the heart of India—the raptures and exaltations, poignancies and effusions of joy felt by mystics and saints of the Shaiva, Vaishnava, and Shakta sects in all parts of our subcontinent. All this is an outcome of the process of humanizing and personification of the Divinity which has marked latter-day religious thought. It has flourished round the two personalities,—

at once Divine and Human—viz. Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, that have enthused devotional hearts in the country—more than the deities of former epochs—stirred the deepest feelings, influenced conduct and discipline, stimulated idealism and strengthened humane impulses.. The basic idea of an Incarnation which started this process has found classic utterance in two lines of the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* :

*Krishner yateka lilā sarvottama naralilā
Naravapu sarvarupasāra*

Of all the manifestations of the play of the Divine the best is in the form human, and the human body is the best of all the forms of beauty assumed by Him.

It is, in another way, the 'diapason closing full in Man'. The touching situations and the flow of sentiment which these two Incarnations conjured up, as also the cult of Shakti or the Great Mother, make up a chapter of very great interest in our literature, and illustrations of these, no matter how sparingly picked out, would require more space than this discourse can afford.

CONSOLATION TO THE BELIEVERS

These Incarnational hymns have been the source of a special kind of consolation to believing hearts in times of individual and national vicissitudes. It is the solace of the ultimate triumph of Righteousness which is held out in the *Gītā* in the oft-repeated lines :

*Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati
bhārata*

*Abhyutthānamadharmasya tadātmānam
srijāmyaham*

Whenever Righteousness suffers, O Bharata, and Unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then do I project myself (in Incarnations).

And the same assurance is given by the Shakti (Goddess of Power) in the *Chandi* :

*Ittham yadā yadā bādhā dānavotthā
bhavishyati*

*Tadā tadāvatiryāham karishyāmyarisam-
kshayam*

Thus, at all times, when opposition due to demons will arise, I will descend and destroy the enemy.

In the new set-up of our political existence today a deeper and newer significance attaches to these utterances.

PARALLEL MOVEMENTS OF PURE THEISM AND ETHICISM

It is curious, however, that alongside, but opposite in direction, another current of thought ran during this period—a tendency to pure theism and rejection of all ideas bearing on worship of the Deity in sensible concrete forms and images. It is a form of Protestantism within the Hindu fold, coupled with a discarding of the accepted social polity—its hierarchy of castes, its ceremonies, its privileges and exclusions. However unorthodox and dissentient all this may appear to social no-changers, it would be presumptuous to label it as alien to the genius of India. These ideas may well be shown to follow from the fundamentals which the *Upanishads*, in their wonderful breadth of vision and clarity of insight, reveal. The stress, in this phase of religious evolution, is on purity of heart, on the simple life, on faith in the one God who transcends all thought, on the need of human fellowship and harmony.

INDIAN TOLERANCE AND CATHOLICITY

But it is time to conclude this somewhat desultory treatment of a subject of absorbing interest and enormous extent. And this is best done by touching upon the notes of tolerance, catholicity, and cordial accommodation of other viewpoints that may well be claimed to be India's contribution to the world-concert of faiths and feelings, religious creeds and cults. The *Gītā* contains the Divine utterance on this point :

*Yeṣānyadevatābhaktāḥ yajante shraddhāyānvitāḥ
Tepi māmeva kaunteya yajantyavidhipurvākam*

Even those attached to other deities who in sincere faith worship—they also adore me, O Kaunteya, though not in accordance with the scriptural directions.

The oneness of God, while, the names differ is set forth in the familiar stanza :

*Yam shaiivāḥ samupāsate shiva iti brahmeti
vedāntino
Bauddhā buddha iti pramānapatavah
karteti naiyyayikāḥ
Arhannityatha jainashāsanaratāḥ karmeti
mimāmsakah
Soyam vo vidadhātu vānchhitaphalam
trailokyanātho harih*

He whom the Shaivas adore as Shiva, the Vedantins as Brahman, the Bauddhas as the Buddha the Naiyyayikas, skilled in proof, as the Creator, the Jainas as Arhat, the Mimamsakas as the inexorable Law of Karma or Action may He, Hari, the Lord of the three worlds, grant you the boon you desire.

The *Shivamahimnastotra*, the Hymn to the Majesty of Shiva, nobly declares :

*Trayi sāmkyam yogah pashupatimatam
vaishnavamiti
Prabhinne prasthāne paramidamadah
pathyamiti cha
Ruchinām vaichitryād rijkutilanānāpatha-
jushām
Nrināmeko gamyatvamasi payasāmarnava
iva*

The three Vedas, Sankhya, Yoga, the Pashupata cult and the Vaishnava—these different ways appeal to different men as sound and wholesome ; so they pursue paths straight and meandering, according to the variety of tastes—but Thou alone art the goal and destination of all men, even as the Ocean is the receptacle of all streams.

This note of harmony among diverse faiths should fitly close a survey of the devotional literature of India, for it is the distinctive contribution of the country to the world-concert of credal religions. And it is sincerely to be hoped that this note will grow fuller and firmer now that India has attained indepen-

dence after centuries of subjection to alien rule. With independence, a new feeling of self-esteem will grow in the people as well as a conviction that every human expression in action or in literature is of value and significance; that every record of what the nation felt or did, strove for or achieved in the past, matters. This should lead, among other things, to the compilation of anthologies of religious lyrics and songs, psalms and hymns, larger and more various than any made in the past. Dadu's collection of sixteen hundred

and of the Granth Sahib of sixteen hundred and four furnish precedents and examples of such inspiring spiritual records compiled more than three centuries ago. Since then, the volume of literature in this line has increased and the mind of the race has developed and moved forward in the path of religious experience and it is time to recall what has been so well said by Rajjabji: 'If I can unite all the streams of thought in the world, such a confluence would indeed be the holiest of places.'

THE VEDANTIC WORLD-VIEW OF SHANKARA

BY DR R. P. SINGH

I

Shankara is the central thinker in the history of Indian philosophy. In him all lines of thought converge: idealism and realism, pragmatism and rationalism, naturalism and mysticism, agnosticism and faith-philosophy. For this very reason his philosophy is difficult to characterize. This fact also explains to a great extent the divergent interpretations that have been put upon his teachings. But Shankara binds together the different strands of thought present in his writings with the help of the unique point of view from which he looks at the problems of philosophy, namely, the standpoint of value.

The root of the whole difficulty about the interpretation of Shankara's teaching is that his true position in the history of Hindu thought has been missed. His philosophy is an embodiment of the cultural spirit of Hinduism, and he appears before us as an exponent and guardian of this cultural spirit. The system of thought which he has bequeathed to us is an attempt to supply the philosophical foundation on which the superstructure of Hindu culture rests. The interpreters of Shankara do not realize this

sufficiently, and his critics do not seem to be aware of it.

Shruti is a repository of the truths realized by the *rishis*—truths which constitute the very life-blood of the Hindu race. The history of Hinduism from the very early times when Manu and Vyasa, Buddha and Shankara, appear on the Indian soil, down to our own age has been the history of the reaffirmations and fresh declarations of those eternal truths and of attempts to embody them in the social, religious and political institutions of the race. Shankara associates himself with the long line of vedic seers and emphasizes the traditional way of looking at things. But in insisting upon tradition he does not forget that no generation can merely reproduce its ancestors. Tradition for him is life and movement and perpetual re-interpretation.

The preservation of this cultural spirit which is permanent and abiding, and the defence of it are the tasks which Shankara's philosophy imposes upon itself. The preservation of this spirit which is the spirit of the *Vedas* means the preservation of *brahmanatva*. Shankara's philosophy is an exposition and

also a defence of that supreme Reality and supreme Value from which *brahmanatva* gets its meaning and its justification. The vedic religion has always stood for the truth that there is an Eternal Good, an Absolute Value, a Supreme Perfection, an Infinite Life, a Universal Existence. What 'exists' here and now draws its substance and its value from this reality which the *Vedas* call Brahman. Brahman is the most perfect Reality and the most supreme Value. In it value and what appears to us mortals as bare 'existence' meet and fuse in one. But the duality of, which also means the discrepancy between, Value and Existence is an inalienable feature of finite life. There is a gulf between the Ideal and the Actual. Hence all willing and striving on the part of man who is aware of the Ideal and also of the distance which divides the Actual from the Ideal. Hence also the striving to know. Hence all the problems man has to face in his life. Hence also the problem of all problems which philosophy has to solve, the problem, namely how Reality, Value, and Existence are related to one another and how they are to be comprehended in the unity of a system. The story of the way in which Value, Reality, and Existence are to be conceived as related is the story of the development of the different speculative systems of Hindu thought. These systems recognize that there is a supreme Reality. They have an unshakable faith in the reality of a supreme Good without which human life is as naught. They admit that there is a spatio-temporal order of existence and there are finite individuals struggling their way to a region where the fetters of time fall away and time becomes 'the moving image of Eternity'. The systems firmly believe in these. And how could they not? Do they not derive their inspiration from the *Vedas*? But when it is a question of preparing an intellectual scheme which will supply the philosophical foundation of the triple faith of the *rishis*, faith in Reality, in Value, and in a world of spatio-temporal existence, the different systems diverge.

Shankara's philosophy is an attempt to

show that Brahman is the supreme Reality and also the supreme Value, and that the spatio-temporal world which represents the duality of value and existence is finally rooted in Brahman, and also that the individual self which at present finds itself to be part and parcel of the world of existence is, in substance, one with Brahman. Shankara criticizes the different systems of thought which claim to be vedic but which, in Shankara's view, are not so either because they ignore the ultimacy of Reality or dissociate Reality from Value. Samkhya and Yoga do not find favour with Shankara. The Purusha which is the supreme Value lacks the fullness of reality; it is not the source of anything. The Prakriti which is the type of all reality has in it no trace of intrinsic value. The insistence on the atomic, instead of the divine, constitution of the world in the Nyaya and Vaisheshika systems detracts from the full reality of God. Both these systems offer a conception of the supreme Value which is just the opposite of that with which the *rishis* make us familiar. The only absolute Value for the seers is the absolute Life in which the Self is reconciled to the world and the world to the Self. Shankara expresses this by saying that Brahman is the Atman and the expanding universe nothing other than Brahman. There is no *anatmanastu*, no not-self. What appears as the not-self is really the Self. The Self thus becomes the supreme Value and the centre of every other value. The universe is substantially one with us—this is the fundamental contention of Shankara's philosophy.

This truth is the imperishable insight of the vedic seers. This insight is the true religion. Philosophy is a reflective activity. It did not have its birth so long as there was an inexhaustible faith in the reality of the vision and in the whole cosmic process having its end in that vision. The vedic *mantras* represent this stage of Hindu culture. When there was a slackening of faith, the spirit of enquiry, which is what is meant by philosophy, had its birth, and the task which it found

as already assigned to it was to prepare an intellectual scheme in which these imperishable insights of the *rishis* could be preserved and harmonized in the unity of a system. Shankara belongs to this age of philosophical construction. He shares the faith of the *rishis* that there is something which man recognizes as the greatest value when his life is fullest and his soul at its highest pitch. He feels that his existence cannot be abstracted from it and his life is as naught without it. It is Value *par excellence*; but it is also Reality *par excellence*. The relation of value to being—this is the key problem of Shankara's philosophy.

II

That the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara is primarily a philosophy of value is the fundamental truth which has been missed by his interpreters. What the modern philosophic consciousness calls axiology represents for Shankara a specific point of view from which he looks at the ultimate problems of philosophy. His insistence on this point of view means making the evaluational consciousness ultimate and subordinating the claims of logic and scientific understanding to the more pressing demands of the former. But when we say that Shankara's philosophy is a philosophy of value, we do not mean to suggest that his philosophy does not concern itself with 'Reality'. For Shankara Being or Reality is the goal of true knowledge and philosophy, a well-trodden path which takes us to the gates of the Real, having prepared us for that vision of it which is the consummation of the process of knowledge. The ontological motive has been the constant driving force of his philosophy. But it has been so because he has always recognized the value-character of the ontological predicates, and has never allowed himself to forget that for an ultimate reflection Value and Reality must be one. For Shankara axiology would be a collective name for a group of problems—epistemological, ontological, and cosmological; and the entire group of problems is focussed by him into

one—the metaphysical status of value. The two fundamental theses of Shankara's axiology are (i) that the philosophical notion of Reality should be that of 'Value' and (ii) that the *ens realissimum* is also the *summum bonum*, the possibility of realizing the true nature of Reality being also the possibility of attaining the highest Good. These two theses are, according to him, bound up together.

The very test of that which is existent or non-existent, real or unreal, true or false, is precisely an acknowledgement of the values involved and the validity of the value-judgments and distinctions. These distinctions depend upon, presuppose, and will not be possible without, the ideals and norms of truth and reality. To realize the value-character of the ontological predicates is to recognize that Reality and Value are one and inseparable, that to separate Reality from Value becomes meaningless, that the question, 'What is the real?' is a futile question, if being is abstracted from Value, for, as Urban points out, the question 'How ought I to conceive the real?' is logically prior to the question, 'What is the real itself?' To say all this is to say that the notion of Reality is that of Value. From this standpoint the truly ontological judgments are axiological, and the contrast between judgments of Reality and value judgments in any absolute sense will break down. We shall cease to separate ontology from axiology and, instead, we will have an axiological ontology and an axiological epistemology.

Reality for Shankara is an ultimate notion. Like Descartes he raises the question: Where shall I get a fixed foundation for my knowledge? and answers that the presupposition of an ultimate Reality is a necessary presupposition of intelligible thought. The affirmation of 'being' is immanent in every act of judgment. This presupposition is called by Shankara *astitvanishttha* or *sadbuddhinishttha*. This *sat* or Reality is Brahman. Buddhistic Nihilism, in denying a foundational reality, undermines the very foundations of knowledge and life. To say that Brahman is *sat*

is to say that Brahman is the Atman of everything. Shankara's conception of the Atman is the conception of the essence, of that which makes a thing what it is and without which a thing cannot be. The notion of reality becomes the notion of the Atman. This Atman cannot be denied, for to deny it would be to deny that which makes a thing what it is. It has not to be proved; it has to be acknowledged, being the basis of all proof. Brahman being the foundational reality is the Self not only of everything, but also of every conscious being. Brahman is therefore not only *sat*; existence, but also *chit*, Consciousness. 'An unconscious something cannot be the Self or essence or Atman of a conscious entity' (S.B.I.1.7). Accordingly, for Shankara, the problem of the discovery of the Self or Atman of the universe is the problem of discovering the self of the conscious individual, the *pratyagatman*. *Brahma-vidya* becomes *Atmavidya*, an enquiry into the nature of the *pratyagatman*.

'Every one is conscious of the existence of his own self and never thinks "I am not". If the existence of the Self were not an ascertained fact every one would think "I am not." (S.B.I.1.1). The reality of the Atman or Self is the basis of all epistemological and ontological enquiry. The operation of the means of knowledge, perception, inference, etc. proceed on the assumption that the Self is. This existence of the Self is not a matter of proof, or reasoning, the Self being the condition of such thinking and reasoning. Shankara, therefore, says that the Atman is *svayamsiddha*, *svatahsiddha*, self-evident or self-established. Shankara has been able to find a fixed foundation for our knowledge in the reality of the Self or Atman or in the acknowledgement of an absolute Reality, which for him is Brahman.

But it is just at this point that the difficulty about the reality of the Atman begins. What is the sense in which Atman or Reality is? What do we mean by predicating reality in an ultimate sense to Atman? What is the status of the objectivity of the Atman? When

Shankara predicates reality to the Atman and emphasizes its absolute objectivity, he means to bring out the truth that Atman is 'worth existing' that Atman is 'what ought to be.' Its ontological status can be described in terms of value predicates only. In the case of the Atman, as in the case of Value, its being is its validity, its worthiness to be. Atman is not being or *sat* in abstraction from value. Atman is, but in quite a different sense from that in which objects either of perception or conception are. The predication of reality to the Atman is not like the predication of a quality to a thing, for instance, sweetness to sugar or redness to stone. It is different from the attributive of predication of existence, for instance, when we say 'there is a cow', 'there is a pot.' It is Atman's worthiness to be, which constitutes its validity and confers upon the Atman the status of an *ens realissimum* and an ultimate Value whose denial results in contradiction. When we judge that 'Atman is *sat*', we do not merely bring the subject and predicate together as we do in the judgment 'fire is hot.' The former is a value judgment, in which, in addition to the act of bringing together the subject and predicate, there is the further act of acknowledgement that 'Atman ought to be', that 'it is worthy to be.' It is this act of acknowledgement that brings out the value-character of the reality of the Atman and also of the judgment in which Atman's nature as a value is embodied.

Every one of us is aware of the Self or Atman. The knowledge process is intuitive as well as judgmental. The noetic character of the awareness of the Atman can be described only as the 'recognition of or assent to a form of objectivity.' The word acknowledgement (*svayamsiddha*) brings out this aspect of the awareness of the Atman. Accordingly, for Shankara, the Atman is neither 'something to be rejected nor something to be accepted even', it is neither *heya* nor *upadeya*. One can reject something other than oneself; there is also no intelligible sense in which one can speak of accepting oneself. The noetic,

according to Shankara, has something of the valuational in it, namely, that no knowledge is possible without acknowledging that Atman is, that there is a foundational reality as the basis of all epistemological enquiry and all knowledge. While recognizing the valuational character of cognition itself, Shankara does not think that valuing involved in the awareness of the Atman is an operation supplementary to knowing as Sellar holds it is. In being aware of the Atman, in acknowledging an Absolute Reality, we have the consciousness that it is a value, that it is worth existing. Valuing is part and parcel of the cognitional process. This is the doctrine known in contemporary Value philosophy as the doctrine of the value-character of the theoretical. Not only is valuation noetic; cognition itself is valuational.

The Atman, the conception of which is put forward by Shankara as central to his metaphysics, is not the conception of an all-knower who, by knowing or being aware of things, maintains them, so to speak, in existence. It is hardly correct to think that the Vedanta of Shankara 'pushes aside everything objective, and relies on the Subject only' Shankara's approach to the problem of reality is neither subjective nor objective, as Professor Radhakrishnan points out it is; it is rather an axiological approach. In Shankara the concept of God blends with the concept of the Self or Atman. 'Atman is Brahman and the Brahman is Atman.' In equating Atman with Brahman Shankara has two classes of readers in mind, one consisting of those who are of Descartes's way of thinking and hold that the Self of which we are indubitably certain is in its essential nature a finite and imperfect being; the other made up of those who are like the deists in thinking that the Self and God are entirely different realities belonging to different orders. Against the former Shankara points out that the Self is not a finite and limited being in its real nature; to the latter his rejoinder is that the God or Brahman who should be the proper object of religious devotion is not something

other than the Self. The metaphysical truth as well as the religious ideal is summed up in the formula 'Atman is Brahman.'

Shankara's notion of Reality as that of Value gives us a clue to his doctrine of ontological predicates. The predication of reality to a thing in the metaphysical sense has a value-character and the distinctions between truth and falsity, between Reality and unreality, and between Reality and appearance, turn out in his hands to be distinctions of value presupposing certain ideals and norms of truth and reality. For Shankara *sat* and *asat* are value concepts. *Sat*, for Shankara, is 'what always maintains its nature,' 'what is true no matter what,' 'what ought to be,' 'what must be acknowledged.' The notion of *asat* is the notion of something about which it cannot be said that 'it ought to be no matter what.' The 'pot', the 'cow' are, in this metaphysical sense of the word, *asat*, because of them it cannot be said that they ought to be, that their very being is their validity. But the case with Brahman or Atman is different. It is its essence to be *sat*. But, according to Shankara, to deny reality to a thing is not to deny existence to it; it may have a being for factual consciousness.

The notion of the Atman becomes the notion of the Absolute ground or cause, the very essence, the very self of the effect. The categories of cause and substance in their metaphysical use are axiological categories. There appears to be little justification for Deussen's remark that the Indians were never ensnared into an ontological proof. As, according to Shankara, Being is inseparable from, and the same as, Value, the ontological proof is really the axiological proof which asserts the absoluteness of the Value, not merely of *sat* but also of *chit* and *ananda*. Shankara develops further the implications of this axiological ontology, and argues that intrinsic worth and absolute Value must belong to what can be called an end-in-itself. The demand for an absolute Reality is the demand for what is an end-in-itself, what exists-for-itself, what

Shankara calls *svārtha*. What is *svārtha*, an end-in-itself, is also *svātahsiddha*, self-established, for him; its being is also its validity. What exists for the sake of another can but possess a derivative being and a deficient value. In offering this as the test of all reality and the measure of all value Shankara intends to guard us against the validity of any attempt to give a relational definition of value.

Shankara further maintains that the concept of a value in itself, without any reference to consciousness, is inconceivable and rejects the idea of the absolute transcendence of value. He maintains that the concept of an absolute reality which is not also an absolute consciousness is an unintelligible concept. Such a reality lacks the fulness which it would possess, if it realized eternally and uninterruptedly its absolute being. Brahman is *sanmatram* as well as *chinmatram*. According to Shankara, Consciousness or Self alone exists for itself; it alone is *svārtha*. Spirit is the *terminus ad quem* of nature; the world of not-self, the *anatmanavastu*, gets its meaning and value from spirit or consciousness of which it becomes an object. There is nothing in the world of not-self which fulfils Shankara's test of reality. The Self, the Atman alone exists for itself. The Self or Atman or Consciousness, which is set up as the supreme Reality, is not viewed by Shankara as a factual something, existing as a fact among other facts. It exists as one setting up an ideal, a standard, to which everything must submit; it makes itself felt as a law which is sufficient unto itself; it is conscious of itself as a self-justifying end. Shankara's appeal to *prajñanam* or to Atman in order to explain the very being of the world-fact is an appeal to a principle whose very being is its validity and whose awareness constitutes its reality. At any rate, the argument in favour of consciousness being the foundational reality does not proceed upon the principle *esse est percipi*, and its validity is not bound up with the disappearance of the world for the perceptual consciousness.

The Vedantism of Shankara is not inspired by Buddhism, and it is unproductive to affiliate it to Idealism and Nihilism of the Buddhist type. Buddhism, like Humian empiricism, treats the Self as a fact merely and hopes to catch it in its fulness by having recourse to introspective observation and empirical analysis; and it is no wonder that the 'existential' standpoint adopted by it and the empirical method incidental to this standpoint enables it only to 'stumble on some particular perception or other—of heat or cold, love or hatred, pain or pleasure.' Buddhism is never able to catch the Self as a stable entity and becomes content with a fluid self. It is not able to do so because it seeks it where it cannot be found and tries to know it in a way which is foreign to its nature. Buddhism is not able to grasp the metaphysical status of Self as a Value in a world of facts. This difference in the axiological and existential standpoints adopted respectively by Vedantism and Buddhism explains the difference in their watchwords. The watchword of Buddhism is: *sarvamanatam*, all this is non-self; that of Vedantism is: *atmaivedam sarvam*, all this is Self.

Buddhism no doubt offers us a notion of the highest value; *nirvana* is the supreme Value and it is similar in certain respects to vedantic *moksha*. But Buddhism dissociates this supreme Value from Reality and does not show how Value and Reality can be brought together in the unity of one Self. For Shankara *moksha*, Self, and Brahman are identical. The supreme Value is the supremely Real also. Atman is both. It is high time that we learn to distinguish between Vedantism and Buddhism. And this we shall not be able to do unless we realize with Urban that the problem of reality in order to be solvable at all must be turned from a merely existential or logical problem into an axiological problem. This is exactly what Shankara has done. He has impressed upon us that the metaphysical notion of Reality is the notion of Value. It is this insistence on the profound significance of human life and of the Self as

a value and a centre of value which distinguishes the Vedanta of Shankara from Buddhism ; for 'the man to whom his own life is a triviality is not likely to find a meaning in anything else.' History has yet to show how the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara came to be confounded with Buddhistic Idealism and Nihilism.

III

Atman or Self has been shown to be the supreme Reality and the supreme Value. But the Self is confronted with a not-self ; the Atman finds an *anatman*. This duality of Atman and *anatman*, of Self and not-self, is the most persistent of all dualities and the final paradox of philosophical thought. This dualism sets up a problem, namely, the problem of reconciling the Self and the not-self, the Atman and the *anatman*. This problem of reconciliation is not a merely epistemological problem, nor is Shankara's solution a merely logical solution. It is the great problem of life and of the living soul who has awakened to the need of that life. An intensely religious soul like that of Shankara, who is keenly conscious of the distance which divides him from his Ideal Self, craves for that meeting-point where the ideal and the actual fuse into one. If the Atman is the supreme Reality and Value, it must be the measure of all reality and of all value. It must then determine the reality which can belong to the world of not-self. Existence, we may say, must have its being in Value. Shankara's celebrated commentary on the *Brahma-Sutra* opens with the exhibition of the dualism between the Self and the not-self, the Atman and the *anatman*, value and fact, and ends with the revelation that they are not strangers to each other, that the not-self is an expression of the Self, the *anatman*, of the Atman, fact, of value ; and that the not-self, the *anatman* and the fact, while they are not themselves values, possess value which is derived from the Atman, the supreme Value and Reality.

There is an Integral experience wherein

all distinctions which constitute the very life-blood of finite existence fall away, the distinction between fact and value, value and existence, the Self and the not-self. This experience is nothing other than *moksha*. This *moksha* is for Shankara the same as Brahman. This highest experience transcends the distinction, which is sometimes treated as absolute, between what is and what ought to be. It is only another way of saying that Atman is *advaitam*, and the supreme principle of reality is 'wholeness,' 'completeness,' 'individuality ;' anything which falls short of this can possess but deficient value and deficient reality. This principle is called by different names. It is known as the principle of *sarvatmabhava*, *brahmatmabhava*, *advaitabhava* or *sarvabhava*. The principle is expressed by Shankara as follows : 'This universe is myself who am all—this identity with all is his highest state, the Atman's own natural, supreme state.'

This wholeness is identified by Shankara with Bliss. The Atman's own natural state of being pure, absolute Consciousness, which exists for itself and is an end-in-itself and for which the not-self becomes transformed into the Self—this is known in the Vedanta of Shankara as Bliss which is another word for Brahman. This Bliss is not an attribute or a quality ; and consequently it is not something belonging to Brahman. (*Brihad. up. S. B. IV.3.33*). It is not something which has its genesis in the attainment by a subject of an object. It is the very *svarupa* of the Atman, 'the state of identity with all, which is another name for liberation.' Pain and suffering are associated with finite life—a life wherein the Self finds itself opposed to a not-self. In this life the Self feels itself separated from the not-self. 'It is in conflict with that from which it is separated, and because of this conflict it is killed, overpowered or pursued. Thence also arises the desire for that from which it is separated ; desire prompts it to action.' Failure to realize the end involved in the action leads to pain. In this way the regular cycle of pain and pleasure goes on.

As the Self or Atman is the highest Reality whose acknowledgement is a necessity of rational thought or of the intellect oriented towards value, similarly there is, according to Shankara, some supreme 'Good' which represents the realization of our most sustained purposes and the satisfaction of our deepest and most permanent desires. This 'Good' is something in which the entire world of not-self becomes reconciled to the Self, and is seen as its very manifesting life, existing in and through the Self; and in any attempt at severing it from the Self it appears as even less than a mirage, a barren woman's son, a flower in the sky, a snake in the rope, and silver in the mother-of-pearl. The supreme Good thus becomes the regaining by the Self of its own natural state of being an end-in-itself, a supreme living consciousness which fully reconciles itself to the world and the world to itself, a consciousness or life for which the distinction between the Self and not-self disappears, because what presents itself and is taken for not-self is finally seen to be a revelation of the Self. The Absolute Life becomes the Absolute Good. The most supremely Real is also the most supremely Good. Brahman is the Reality as well as the Good. The Atman, which is the *ens realissimum* for the value-charged cognitive consciousness, becomes the *summum bonum* for the value-charged conative consciousness.

Consciousness alone can be said to exist for itself, and only a self-conscious reality can be said to be absolutely Real. This is the supreme idealistic principle of Reality and Value, and when made ultimately determinative in a philosophical reference, it gives us an intelligible world which sets limits to the exclusive pretensions of the world of sense-perception, and defines the mode or degree of reality which can be said to belong to it. It has been pointed out above that, according to Shankara, the existential order is grounded in Value, in Brahman. The manifestation of this entire world consisting of names and forms, acts, agents and fruits of action, has for its cause the reality of the light

of Brahman.' And when we rise from the sphere of logic to that of religion it is seen as the glory of Brahman. But when we attempt to describe its nature from the standpoint of logical understanding, for which the duality of value and existence is an indispensable condition, the universe appears to entail this duality and discrepancy in its nature. It is neither Brahman wholly nor something entirely other than Brahman; for apart from Brahman it is as naught. The universe can be described neither as absolute Value nor as absolute non-value. It is characterized neither by oneness of value and existence nor by absolute antagonism between the two. It represents at once oneness and duality of value and existence, their inseparability as well as their discrepancy. Shankara represents this dialectical antinomy embedded in the heart of the world of existence by calling the world of existence *tattvanyatvabhya-manirvachaniya*—as being indescribable (*anirvachaniya*) either as Brahman (*tat*—that) or as something other than Brahman (*anyatva*—other than that). Its proper function is to direct our attention to Brahman as its source and its goal. Brahman manifested itself in different forms 'for the sake of making itself known. Were name and form not manifested, the transcendent nature of this Self as Pure Intelligence would not be known. When, however, name and form are manifested as the body and organs, it is possible to know Its nature.' (*Brihad. up. S.B. II. 5.19*). A detailed discussion of this point takes us to the most knotty problem in the Vedanta of Shankara, the problem of creation and the relation between the created universe and the Creative Source.

If the truths about Shankara's philosophy which I have tried to bring out and emphasize are realized, it will be seen that his philosophy has sufficient vitality in it to provide the philosophical foundation of a world-religion and a world-culture which are today in process of evolution. For there is no uncertainty that the religion and culture of tomorrow is neither going to be an eclecticism nor is it

going to be built up around the personality of any specially chosen prophet or divine. Man's awareness of a world of Value from which his own life is inseparable and an inherent and insistent craving on his part to 'conserve' value are sufficient guarantee for

the reality of religion and culture and their power to promote human happiness. Shankara's philosophy awakens us to the reality of this world of Value and to the inherent craving in man to make that world his own.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

A study of Indian religious hymns from the earliest vedic times down to the most recent periods, in Sanskrit as well as in other Indian languages, reveals the deep and broad spirit of our civilization manifested in an amazing variety of thought, emotion and expression.

Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharya gives in his *Indian hymns*, with the help of well-chosen quotations, a fair cross-section of the Indian religious mind that is possible within the limits of the article. ...

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

In his address at the opening of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Building on 8 August last, His Excellency Sri C. Rajagopalachari made the point that the present-day university education has been a great failure since it does not develop personality and produce leaders capable of guiding society or taking charge of national affairs. The remedy, of course, lies in giving our university boys some sense of moral and spiritual values through acquaintance with our rich spiritual heritage. A purely negative attitude towards moral training in schools and colleges, which is prevailing now, is fraught with dangerous consequences.

He said: 'The most important equipment that a young man must get before he leaves his university is personality, not learning but character. The men and women who come out as graduates have to learn everything and personality has still to be shaped only after

employment somewhere. This is most unsatisfactory when the burden of responsibility of the public service has increased beyond the wildest imagination of the previous generation of our public men Professors, students, members of our Parliament, the general public, the various Public Service Commissions, all agree that the stuff manufactured in the universities is not by any means good enough. The demands of the State are not met, although in numbers there is no question of insufficiency. There is deplorable inadequacy in quality. ... It would be no exaggeration if we admit that the gap between the needs of the times and the quality of supply from our universities is a yawning gulf. ... The atmosphere of our colleges is far too much vitiated by intellectual and moral confusion for anything like this to be attempted. ...

'The universities, I once again emphasize, must give the nation the leaders, teachers and administrators who are required in this complicated age to fulfil the duties devolving on the State and to guide society in its cultural life. ...

'Young men today are the sport of random and confused thought that finds expression in ephemeral printed matter of whose un-dependability even the victims are not unaware. In the great experiment which India has, in the evolution of her destiny, undertaken to make in our generation, there is nothing more unfortunate than the present state of our colleges and universities. ...

'Had our philosophy and our culture which

formed a great bulwark that protected India through past ages been intact, the mischief arising out of the inadequacy of our universities might have been of relative unimportance. . . . The discipline and restraint and the sense of moral values which vedantic culture implies, have been almost completely jettisoned by the steady and unrelenting educational plans pursued during the last 50 years, which alas, did not furnish us with anything in place of the old inheritance that was thrown overboard. . . .

'I am not unaware of the difficulty of moral training. We cannot get the right type of personalities to live and move among the youth gathered in the universities, whose very life and deportment would without direct instructor or compulsion of discipline be an inspiration. We get teachers vastly competent in every other respect. The greatest reluctance is generally felt in introducing anything in the scheme of school or college education which may be mistaken for denominational religious teaching. One must recognize the validity of the reasons and apprehensions that lead to this. But we may easily overdo all this.

'We cannot afford to exaggerate our fears and rest content doing nothing. The crisis is far too real and grave. We cannot take a simple negative attitude on account of our hesitation. I feel there is a way to achieve the object. A comprehensive scheme creating opportunities for studying and understanding various religions and philosophies, including what goes by the name of classical humanism in the Western universities, namely, the thoughts of Greece and Rome would, all taken together, furnish an atmosphere and an incentive which will enable our boys and girls to seize the truth and assimilate the culture and philosophy of our own land without exclusive direct effort organized for that purpose. The indirect approach may achieve what may not be directly undertaken. . . . Not by total

exclusion of all religion and spiritual thought but by all-embracing acquaintance and appreciation of spiritual thought of all kinds shall we be safe and shape ourselves properly.'

One of the greatest—one may say the greatest of all—difficulties that stand in the way of Indian reconstruction is lack of understanding of the real India. This is largely due to an almost exclusively Western education. As a result of this a general attitude came to be formed among the 'intelligentsia', created by Britain's contact with India, that the West represented something classic and standard to be imitated in every plane of life. Unfortunately, those who are still committed to this view are pathetically holding on to forlorn hopes, for the best Western minds now value their secular achievements far less than the Christian inspiration of their civilization. They clearly recognize that science and technology can be constructive of peace and happiness only in a Christian framework of thought. They have veered round to a religious concept of civilization, while many of us are attempting to refine the spiritual constitution of our society to a Western secular purity.

Some continue to think still here that we can unite hearts on the superficial plane of politics. If history teaches any thing, it shows that politics and economics are the factors which always divide and bring on conflicts, and that the principle of social unity has to be sought in a plane transcending these, upon the basis of love and tolerance, taught by the higher religions. Fanaticism attaches itself to all isms. It is a product of human weakness and ignorance. It can be cured only by spirituality derived from true and universal principles. To try to sterilize fanaticism by taking up a negative attitude towards religion and so helping to extinguish faith is to make for the absolute triumph of fanaticism and chaos.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE PAGEANT OF INDIA'S HISTORY. BY GERTRUDE EMERSON SEN. *Published by the Longmans, Green & Co., New York, USA. Pp. 406. Price \$ 4.50.*

The Pageant of India's History is a remarkable production of the year that has passed. Though the history was evidently undertaken for foreigners who want to know something of the literature and history of our country, its importance for New India can by no means be exaggerated. There are several Indian histories written by eminent Western and Indian scholars. Each one has its special merits; but so far, the books written by Western scholars have been vitiated by certain propossessions which make them of questionable value to the younger generation of our country at this date. The Sahibs' way of looking at the early periods of Indian History was to consider them to be a sort of narrow porch leading to the main building, which, in their eyes, was the period of British occupation of this country; and therefore the only period which was worthwhile for us to know, without, of course, the details of those incidents in which the British played the most ignominious part. They emphasized internecine wars, fights, murders, loot, oppression, tyrannies of every grade and description making it appear as if India had nothing else to show on the human side of the account till the British came to this country for our benefit. It was as if only with the introduction of *Pax Britannica* that this benighted heathen country came to be habitable for decent human beings—this was the interpretation of Indian history with which at least three generations of Indian students have been fed. Even Vincent Smith, whose books *The Early History of India* and the *Oxford History of India* enjoyed great popularity as textbooks in our universities was partial to the European point of view and treated Indian history from the angle of the ruling British caste to which he belonged.

The bigger modern histories of India, like the *Cambridge History*, are mostly for specialists with the specialists' lack of a proper perspective of the cultural history of the country, a defect, which makes them unable to see the wood for the trees. Now that India has achieved her independence we are expecting our own scholars to study and interpret Indian history aright both for this country as well as abroad. A number of Indian scholars are now busy retelling our history from a synthetic point of view, based on authentic data and evidences from unbiassed quarters.

The task, however, is one of tremendous difficulty for, even after eliminating the British imperialistic bias, national prejudices remain and then, again, for the early periods, authentic data are still lacking; only the spade-work has begun and we have to wait yet for years before a fully documented systematic and continuous history of the country is available. In the meantime certain

landmarks have emerged through the patient investigations of antiquarians and research scholars, and in a general way, it is now possible to cover a certain distance of a very wide area, without entirely losing our way in darkness. What the layman needs from time to time, is a skilled writer to make the fruits of laborious researches of scholars available for his study in an easy readable form. It is no small credit to Mrs Gertrude Emerson Sen that she is now first on the field with her *Pageant*, to remove this desideratum. And yet when we say this we do not imply that the book is not for the scholar, at the same time. It has all that a scholar requires without the dry-as-dust-ness that invariably accompanies her type of learning. Her book brings before us the results of most up-to-date researches in interesting Wellsian narrative style. As far as possible she has given us a connected history of the past of India without burdening her pages with pedantic footnotes etc. dear to the heart of the professed specialist. In almost every case she has gone to the best possible sources for her information and very artistically she has introduced her authorities in the main body of the narrative without even letting it appear that she is doing so.

Mrs Sen's qualifications for writing a history of India of this kind are many. She has known India intimately for many years. Her first notable effort in understanding the heart of India took the shape of a remarkable book significantly called *Voiceless India*, which elicited high praise from Rabindranath Tagore. Later, as the wife of a well-known Indian scientist, she started living in her picturesque home in a secluded corner of the Himalayas, where, safe from all distractions, she has been busy for years devoting her energies to the task of unfolding the past and present of India, her adopted country.

In this book, Mrs Sen has given us good measure, pressed down and running over to 432 pages, with maps and illustrations provided by her sister Miss Edith Emerson, who has also performed her share of the work in a highly praiseworthy manner. The subject has been divided into thirteen chapters. From a study of the Indian map (Chapter I) she proceeds in Chapter II, to tell us in a general way all that is known about the *Dawn over India*, which is a consideration of the earliest phases of primitive life here, culminating in the thrilling tale of the Indus Civilization of Mohenjo-Daro, of at least five thousand years age, 'only a very short time after the Sphinx and the Pyramids rose in Egypt.' This was a civilization which was not confined to the Indus Valley alone but included in its orbit a great part of the farthest west and some part of the south of India as well. The stage darkens for a while and then she comes to her chapter on *Aryan Morning* where she relates the story of the old Indo-Aryans, basing her evidence, among

other authorities, on the Rig-Vedic hymns and the *Shatapatha Brāhmana*. The Indo-Aryan culture gave us our 'priceless heritage,' the power of synthesis and assimilation that India evolved through her upanishadic wisdom and the sure knowledge that there is but One in the heart of the many. India's genius in envisaging unity in the midst of multiplicity was all along fully demonstrated in the treatment she accorded to many different elements that sought shelter within her borders.

Primarily, for the past four or five thousand years India has been the home of two great basic types of civilization, the 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian.' Mrs Sen's careful study of these two elements side by side and the results of their intermixture, that provided us with the main pattern of Indian life and thought, is highly illuminating. It sheds a good deal of light exactly on that process of synthesis which we value most in our culture. Then follow the chapters that contain the story of Buddha and the great Buddhist sovereigns of India, Numerous new tribes and races of men, including the Greeks, came into India and each one of these contributed something of importance to the basic pattern of Indian life and thought. The Tartars, the Mongols, the Sakas, the Huns, all have contributed to the common-stock and from all, India has taken something, absorbing and assimilating them, in turn, to serve her own purpose. In our university textbooks in Northern India the contribution of the south of India to Indian history is either generally neglected or summarily disposed of. Mrs Sen deserves our thanks for going over the whole subject in a very well-written chapter which she calls *The Dravidian Matrix*.

Her study of Buddhism, of Asoka, of Harsha, Samudragupta, the great age of the Imperial Guptas and the legacy that it left of art and literature at its best, in her chapter on *The Golden Age of Indian Civilization*; the account of the ancient Indian universities, and above everything else, her parallel studies of the religious, meditative and active India in the two last chapters, *Indian Culture Beyond the Seas* and *Indian Culture Over the Mountains*, are the high lights of the picture she sets before us.

One surely expects from a properly written history of India a record of the influence her people have exerted on the civilization of mankind; but the histories that we read are generally very disappointing in this respect. Scholars are now agreed on the possible contact of India with Babylonian and Egyptian cultures, and the details of the history of the intimate relationship between India on the one hand and China, Japan, and Indonesia on the other are now being slowly rescued from oblivion, while also the impact of Indian thought and discoveries on Western culture and civilization are no longer matters that can be looked askance. Reading through the last two chapters of Mrs Sen's history we begin to understand the greatness of the Indian past, the strong points of India's civilization, her capacity for expansion, her

inherent vitality that has lasted through the ages and the part that she has still to play in moulding 'not only her own future but the future of the whole Asian continent,' or more broadly speaking, the rest of humanity.

The account she writes of Indian achievement in positive sciences will make the Western reader pause before branding the East as wholly meditative and, therefore, unpractical. The legend that India knew only how to shut her eyes while the 'legions thundered past' is now gradually vanishing. The shallow superficial misinterpreter of the culture of the East will learn from Mrs Sen's pages the fact that the so-called mystic East does not at all despise science. In fact some of the fundamental truths of modern Chemistry, Astronomy, Mathematics, and even social sciences, including Codes of Government and Municipal Administration, were known to her and constitute some of her invaluable gifts to the world at large. India's *Upanishads* distinctly declared that both kinds of knowledge have to be mastered, the *Para*, which is the highest spiritual wisdom, and the *Apara*, which implies the knowledge that gives one mastery over the sciences born of sense-knowledge. The false notion that India is only mystic and unfit for worldly aims has been belied particularly by the discovery of the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, who fully recognized even the darker propensities of man's mind. The argus-eyed legislator of ancient India had to provide safeguards for as many as forty different kinds of embezzlement, and graft in its varied forms among officials was not unknown even in the days of her remote past.

Indian civilization never ignored any aspect of humanity. It is no wonder Carlo Formici, the famous Italian orientalist wrote: 'I love India which on one side gives Buddha to the world and Kautilya on the other.'

Without a doubt the book will serve as an eye-opener to many in the West as well as in the East. We read here not only the political but also the cultural history of our country without losing our way in a tangle of interminable rise and fall of dynasties and incursions of numerous races and tribes of men into it. The second volume which will comprise a study of India's contact with the Muslim and the Christian civilization of the West, will, we are sure, be now waited for with eager interest.

The bibliography appended is select and judicious, but two more books might have been included in the list: one is Dr B. N. Seal's *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus* and the other, Sister Nivedita's *Footfalls of Indian History*, the first one, remarkable for its solid array of facts and the other, for the vision and inspiration that it provides to every serious student of our history.

A cheaper Indian edition of Mrs Sen's very valuable book will be welcome for that only can give it the wide circulation that it deserves in our country also.

D. MITRA.

THE FUTURE OF THE CONGRESS. By ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI. *Published by the Hind Kitabs Ltd., 261-263 Hornby Road, Bombay. Pp. 33. Price As. 10/-.*

In this small pamphlet Acharya Kripalani gives us a penetrating analysis of the position of the Indian National Congress, pointing out the trend of its activities since its inception. He gives us glimpses into the mind of the Congress-leadership and its membership. He shows the difference between the Gandhian outlook and that of the Congress—the former, though appearing very mild, potentially contained the seeds of revolutionary changes, capable of altering the very basis of unjust social, political, and economic institutions; and the latter, though passing high-sounding resolutions, was essentially wedded to the no-change outlook, though here and there *re-forming* the old conceptions. He holds that because Gandhiji found out this character of the Congress mind, he separated himself from it. And further Sri Kripalani is of the opinion that the Congress outlook has remained the same even after Independence and thinks that the Congress, though it has to its credit great sacrifice and at present enjoys much popular support, cannot be an instrument of the revolutionary changes according to the Gandhian conceptions, unless it changes its character.

Acharya Kripalani's views deserve careful attention, as he is an ex-president of the Congress and was its General Secretary for a number of years, in which position he had the opportunity to study the Congress mind at close quarters. This pamphlet should prove an eye-opener to the Congress and spur it on to efforts to fit itself with the changing conditions, if it is to retain its popular leadership.

WHY PROHIBITION? BY DR H. C. MOOKERJEE. *Published by The Book House, 15 College Square, Calcutta. Pp. V+221. Price Rs. 4/-.*

In this book Dr Mookerjee gives an elaborate survey of all the havoc done to humanity by the use of Alcohol. He uncompromisingly rejects the use of anything alcoholic, even when administered as a drug. To give the necessary basis to his claims, Dr Mookerjee adduces the judgments of many experts in the field of medical research. The greater part of this book deals with the effects of alcohol on the human mind and body, and the author goes into details so as to give the essential emphasis to his warnings. It may appear that much has been painted too black. That does not, however, invalidate the essentially sound thesis of the book. The second portion of the book deals with the case of prohibition in this country in particular and gives a very sensible and objective opinion in favour of it, after a brief summing-up of the pros and cons thereto. It will be of great help in forming a sound opinion in favour of prohibition.

R.

BENGALI

PATRAVALI—PRATHAM BHAG. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. *Published by the Udbodhan Karyalaya, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 512. Price Rs. 4/8.*

Gandhiji once wrote 'Surely the writings of Swami Vivekananda need no introduction. They make their own irresistible appeal.' This statement is true more especially of his letters. One finds in these letters the growth of Swami Vivekananda into the great personality that the world knows. Here one comes into touch with his intimate thoughts, feelings and aspirations and all that he felt for the regeneration of India and the upliftment of the world. Not originally meant for the watching public gaze they represent the true expression of his inner thoughts and feelings. Many of the letters were written under great emotion and inspiration surging in his heart, and they infused the same into the hearts of those to whom they were addressed. Since their publication they have been of great source of inspiration to many. Nobody can read some of these letters without being electrified.

The Udbodhan Karyalaya is doing a great service in bringing out a complete Bengali edition of these letters. Swami Vivekananda wrote some of his most intimate letters to his brother disciples in Bengali and this edition has the advantage of presenting them in his own language.

The printing and get up of the book are good.

HINDI

KALYAN—UPANISHAD ANK. EDITORS: HANUMAN-PRASAD PODDAR AND CHIMANLAL GOSWAMI. *Published by The Gita Press, Gorakhpur, U.P. Pp. 776. Price Rs. 6/3.*

The publishers of the Gita Press, Gorakhpur, deserve to be highly praised and congratulated on the excellence of the recent publication, *The Upanishad Ank* of their Hindi monthly magazine *Kalyan*, which has gained wide popularity in Northern India and is doing invaluable service to the Hindus by keeping them in contact with their cultural and spiritual heritage.

The *Upanishad Ank* is one of the valuable publications of the Gita Press and consists of 776 pages, very moderately priced at Rs. 6/3 only, which amount also includes the price of the ordinary numbers of *Kalyan* for the whole year. Besides incorporating thoughtful and learned articles from eminent spiritual leaders, scholars, and public men of India, the *Upanishad Ank* also gives a Hindi translation of fifty-four *Upanishads* in clear and simple words.

We again congratulate the publishers of the Gita Press for their laudable efforts in enabling the spiritually minded people of India to keep in touch with the gems of their ancient lore based on the *svanubhuti* of a long line of saints, seers and *rishis* at a time when the world is fast approaching a cataclysm and its people are vying with each other in excelling in *asuric* behaviour.

DEVI DATT PUNETHA

URDU

MURAJEBAAT. BY DR MIR WALIUDDIN, PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD, DECCAN. *Published by the Educational Conference, Hyderabad, Deccan. Price Rs. 2/8.*

Those who are interested in the study of Islamic philosophy, mysticism, and religion already know what position Dr Waliuddin occupies among first-rate writers on philosophical and religious themes. He has not less than a dozen books on weighty subjects to his credit which have won the appreciation of eminent critics and literary men all over India. His contributions have added weight and value to the Urdu language. He has implicit faith in religious values and yet he is convinced that religious tenets could not be divorced from reason and commonsense.

The book under review is his latest contribution to the deeper aspects of religious life. The theme of his book may be summed up in a few words: He says there is no use having a lip faith in God. Those who have well-reasoned and deep-seated faith in One Supreme Reality, called by various names, should have no fear of anything. If once a man establishes his relation with the Source of his being, who is the Giver of all goods, most beneficent, most merciful, most powerful, all-seeing, all-knowing, He can surely confer on him all that he prays for provided he prays to him sincerely and surrenders to His will completely. There is nothing which he cannot achieve through divine grace because He loves His creation and is ever ready to save the lost souls. He is ever ready to listen to the prayers of His devotees. The benevolence of the Lord is said to work in ways too difficult to grasp, since they do not follow any man-made laws; at the same time it affects the lives of the devotees profoundly. The Lord removes the barriers that stand between Him and His worshippers. He confers His Infinite blessings on His devotees. It is very interesting to note that even the most despised sinners and confirmed atheists sometimes come under the purview of the Grace of God. There is no power that can stand against God's love. We should not

forget in this connection that the devotees have also a part to play in order to make them a fit recipient of the divine grace. All religions point out that self-effort is also necessary, however weak one may be. No attempt for a virtuous life will go in vain, but will lead a person higher and higher in the spiritual life. All that we have to do is to purify our minds and hearts of vicious thoughts and tendencies. The Grace of God is the crown and consummation of religious duties piously practised. It is an end in itself and is capable of far-reaching influence in the lives of seekers of God throughout the world.

The learned Doctor, having stated his case in a lucid, convincing, and simple manner has suggested various practical means of acquiring the different kinds of virtues necessary for winning divine grace and achieving our objects.

He has assigned seven topics for seven days to be meditated on and pondered over in such a way as to assimilate them and make them part of one's inner being to be able to respond to and receive the inestimable privilege of close relationship with the Author of his being. He advises us to start this practice from Friday when one has to meditate on the Unity of God. Saturday is meant for the practice of Contentment, Sunday for patience, Monday for thankfulness, Tuesday for prayer for nearness to God, Wednesday for prayer for the attainment of livelihood, and Thursday for the removal of fear and grief.

The title of the book is rather significant. It is not meant in the mystical sense which means one-pointed attention to and absorption in one's own Higher Self. But it simply means whole-hearted attention to God and acquisition of necessary virtues to draw His attention towards man's plight on this earth. It is one of the most inspiring, instructive, and elevating books that have been published in recent times. It deserves careful study and thought and is highly recommended to all those who seek contentment and peace of mind.

Dr M. Hafiz Syed

NEWS AND REPORTS

**THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA,
SHYAMALA TAL, HIMALAYAS
THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT (1948)**

The Sevashrama was started in 1914 in the Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal, about 4944 feet above sea-level and nearly 11 miles away from the nearest Railway Station of Tanakpur, O. T. Ry. Nestled in the deep Himalayan forests, the Ashrama is a great help to the poor, sick hill-people of the locality. It is the one and only permanent source of medical relief to the helpless hill-people over a range of 30 miles. Moreover, the Sevashrama, being located near the trade-route

between Tibet and the plains, many Bhutias and members of other trading communities, who fall ill in the jungles or at Tanakpur, derive great benefit from it.

The Sevashrama has a Veterinary Department also, and treatment is given to animals like cows, bullocks, buffaloes, horses, dogs, goats and sheep.

During the period under report 7057 patients, of whom 63 were Muslims, were treated in the outdoor-section and 206 in the indoor-section, which has 12 beds at present.

The Veterinary Section treated 2805 animals during the year.

The total receipts of the Sevashrama for 1948 were Rs. 6612-15-6, and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 5645-3-9, leaving a balance of Rs. 967-11-9 in hand. The Sevashrama has at present a permanent fund of Rs. 24,300 only.

As the number of patients who are coming to the Sevashrama for medical help is increasing every day, it urgently needs funds to cope with the growing demand and to expand its useful activities. The following are its present needs: (1) Funds for the upkeep of the Sevashrama, (2) A Permanent Fund of not less than Rs. 45,000 for general expenses, and (3) a Permanent Fund of Rs. 25,000 for the Veterinary Section. The

number of beds also urgently requires to be increased, at least by four, and for this purpose endowments may be made at the rate of Rs. 2,000 per bed in the name of any near and dear relative or friend. Contributions to the Veterinary Department should be specified as such. Contributions, however small, will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged by Swami Virajananda, President, The Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Shyamala Tal, P.O. Sukhidhang, District Almora, U.P.

The Management of the Sevashrama render their heart-felt thanks and best wishes to all the donors in cash and kind toward the expenses of the Sevashrama in course of all these years..

SRI RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE AT PATNA

AN APPEAL

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Patna (Bihar) has been carrying on charitable, religious, educational and philanthropic activities in Patna, the capital city of Bihar, for the last 27 years. In view of its many-sided humanitarian services, the institution has become very popular and it is daily visited by numerous devotees, friends and admirers of the Mission from far and near. But it is a matter of great regret that for want of funds we have not as yet been able to build a temple and a prayer hall where devotees may congregate to attend religious discourses and scripture classes and carry on worship from day to day. The existing shrine which is housed in one of the side rooms of our country-tiled residential quarters is too small to serve any useful purpose. It is moreover in a dilapidated condition. His Excellency Sri Madhava Srihari Aney, Governor of Bihar, in the course of his Presidential address on the occasion of the last birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna held on the 5th March 1949 in the Ashrama premises made *inter alia* the following observations: 'I particularly invite the attention of the public to the demand made in the report for establishing a shrine or a spacious prayer hall with a temple dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. I think the Ramakrishna Ashrama will not be complete without a temple and a prayer hall of this kind. The atmosphere of the temple and the prayer hall must permeate through and through among the boys and girls who will take advantage of the institution growing up under the auspices of the Ashrama.'

The proposed temple with a prayer hall is estimated to cost about Rs. 25,000, if the structure is to have R. C. roofing and a suitable dome over the shrine. We have up till now been able to raise only Rs. 5,000, with which some building materials have already been purchased. But we still require Rs. 20,000 to make our contemplated project an accomplished fact. Names of donors of Rs. 500 and above will be inscribed on a marble slab to be put up at the entrance of the temple. The foundation of the temple was laid on the 4th April 1945 by His Holiness Srimat Swami Virajanandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. We hope the religious-minded people of our country would kindly extend their financial help to this noble cause and thus enable us to build the proposed temple and the prayer hall at an early date for the benefit of all.

Any contributions, however small, would be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by :

SWAMI TEJASANANDA

Secretary,

Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,
Patna (Bihar)