

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

20th April 1900

Alameda, California

My dear Joe—

Received your note today. I wrote you one yesterday but directed it to England thinking you will be there.

I have given your message to Mrs Betts. I am so sorry this little quarrel came with A—. I got also his letter you sent. He is correct so far as he says—Swami wrote me—‘Mr Leggett is not interested in Vedanta and will not help any more—You stand on your own feet.’ It was as you and Mrs Leggett desired me to write him from Los Angeles about New York—in reply to his asking me what to do for funds.

Well, things will take their own shape—but it seems in Mrs Bull’s and your mind there is some idea that I ought to do something. But in the first place I do not know anything about the difficulties. None of you write me anything about what is that for—and I am no thought-reader.

You simply wrote me a general idea that A—, wants to keep things in his hands. What can I understand from it? What are the difficulties? What are the differences about I am as much at dark as about the exact date of the date of destruction !!

And yet Mrs Bull’s and your letters show quite an amount of vexation !!!

These things get complicated sometimes, in spite of ourselves. Let them take their shape.

I have executed and sent the will to Mr Leggett as desired by Mrs Bull.

I am going on—sometimes well and other times ill—I cannot say on my conscience, that I have been least benefited by Mrs Wilton. She has been good to me—I am very thankful. My love to her. Hope she will benefit others.

For writing to Mrs Bull this fact—I got a four page sermon—as to how I ought to be grateful and thankful, etc., etc.

All that is sure the outcome of this A— business !!

Sturdy and Mrs Johnson got disturbed by Margo and they fell upon me. Now A— disturbs Mrs Bull and of course I have to get the brunt of it. Such is life !!

You and Mrs Leggett wanted me to write him to be free and independent and that Mr Leggett is not going to help them—I wrote it—now what can I do.

Whether John or Jack does not obey you—am I to be hanged for it? What do I know about this Vedanta Society—did I start it? Had I any hand in it?

Then again nobody condescends to write me anything about what the affair is !!

Well, this world is a great fun . . .

I am glad Mrs Leggett is recovering fast. I pray every moment for her complete recovery. I start for Chicago on Monday. A kind lady has given me a pass up to New York to be used within three months. The Mother will take care of me—She is not going to strand me now after guarding me all my life.

Ever yours gratefully,
Vivekananda

July 20th, 1900
102 East 48th Street
New York

Dear Joe—

Possibly before this reaches you I will be in Europe, London or Paris as the chance of steamer comes.

I have straightened out my business here. The works are at Mr. Whitmarsh's suggestion in the hands of Miss Waldo.

I have to get the passage and sail. Mother knows the rest.

My *intimate* friend did not materialize yet and writes she will be sometime in August and she is dying to see a Hindu and her soul is burning for Mother India.

I wrote her I may see her in London. Mother knows again. Mrs Huntington sends love to Margot and expects to hear from her, if she is not too busy with her scientific exhibits.

With all love to sacred cow of India, to yourself, to the Leggetts, to Miss (What's her name?) the American rubber plant,

Ever yours in the Lord,
Vivekananda

14th July 1901

My dear Joe—

I am ever so glad to hear . . . coming to Calcutta. Send him immediately to the Math. I will be here . . . If possible I will keep him here for a few days and then let him go again to Nepal.

Ever yours in the Lord,
Vivekananda

57 Ram Kanto Bose's Street
Calcutta

My dear Joe—

I have invited a few friends to dinner tomorrow Sunday.

Will you kindly send Rahim Bux (cook) tomorrow with some fowl, eggs and mutton to cook a dinner for them?

He ought to come earlier.

We expect you at tea. Every thing will be ready then.

Sri Mother is going this morning to see the new Math. I am also going there. Today at 6 P. M. Nivedita is going to preside. If you feel like it and Mrs Bull strong do come.

Ever yours in the Lord,
Vivekananda

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

BELUR MATH 1922

One afternoon, nearly four or five months after the passing away of Swami Brahma-
nandaji, a highly placed Government Officer came to the Belur Math to see Mahapurush Maharaj. He saluted Mahapurushji touching his feet with great devotion and sat on the floor. He then introduced himself saying: 'I first saw Raja Maharaj (Swami Brahma-
nanda) nearly three years ago, since when I used to come to him whenever I had an opportunity. He was very kind to me and used to give me spiritual advice. And in my heart I chose him as my *guru*. One day when I expressed my desire to have initiation from him, he gave me great hope and said, "You will have initiation, of course, but don't be in a hurry. Now go on practising what I tell you. Let the mind be ready; everything will come afterwards." That day he gave me a lot of spiritual instruction. Since then I began doing *japa* and meditation according to his instructions. I would often come to see him. But such is my misfortune that I could not have initiation from him. Now the earnest desire of my heart is that

you may kindly initiate me. You have succeeded him and occupy his seat; his power is working through you. Please have compassion for me and do not refuse me my prayer.'

Mahapurush Maharaj had not seen the devotee before, still he addressed him affectionately as a very well-known and intimate person. He said: 'You are very fortunate to have received the blessings of Maharaj and to have been instructed by him. Do know what he has instructed you to be the *mantra*. That will fulfil your heart's desire. I don't think there is any need for initiation in addition. Call on Him with a yearning heart, weep for him and pray; you will surely have his vision. And if it is necessary he will also initiate you. His mercy cannot fail. He is no common realized *guru*. He is a companion of God Himself. By the mere grace of such souls men are liberated from the bondage of the world. When God descends on earth in human form for the good of humanity, they also come with Him for preaching the religion of the age and for completing God's Divine mission in the world. They

don't usually come separately. Apart from that, where could he have gone? He has only left the gross body. He is now in a finer body and in a finer plane with Sri Ramakrishna and doing infinite good to the devotees. Take it from me, you will surely have his vision.'

The Devotee: 'What you say is very true. I have also found clear evidence of it. After the passing away of Swami Brahmanandaji, I was very dejected by the thought that even after coming in contact with such a good *guru* I did not have the good luck of being initiated by him. I prayed fervently to Sri Ramakrishna. He has listened to my prayer. Three days ago I saw Swami Brahmananda in a dream and he also very kindly initiated me. But since waking I have not been able to recollect the *mantra*. I have tried my best, but to no purpose. The mind has since then become very much disturbed. So I have come running to you; you must find a way out of this. It is my belief he will satisfy this want of mine through you.' So saying the person began to weep in great emotion. Noticing his yearning, Mahapurushji comforted him once more saying, 'When he has been so kind to you, you need have no anxiety any more. Everything will be set right by his grace. Don't be downcast. If it is necessary he will reveal himself to you once again and bestow his grace on you.'

Without, however, being comforted by this, the devotee repeatedly prayed to Mahapurushji to tell him the *mantra* himself. Finding no way out Mahapurushji apparently agreed and asking the devotee to wait a little entered into Swami Brahmananda's room and closed it. The temple of Swami Brahmanandaji had not yet been built. The articles of Swami Brahmanandaji's use were still in the room where he used to stay, and regular worship continued to be offered there. Nearly half an hour later Mahapurushji opened the door of the room and beckoned the devotee to follow him into it. The door was

closed again after both of them had entered. Shortly Mahapurushji came out alone and sat quietly on his own cot. Nearly an hour later the devotee also came out of Swami Brahmananda's room and prostrating himself before Mahapurushji said, 'My life has become blessed today. You gave me exactly the same *mantra* which Swami Brahmanandaji imparted to me in the dream. This has specially delighted me. I clearly saw that he is within you. Bless me so that I may realize the ideal in this life.'

Mahapurushji: You are very fortunate. It is because of your many past good deeds that Swami Brahmananda has been so kind to you and has bestowed mercy on you in many ways. Now devote yourself heart and soul to spiritual practices with what you have got. The true devotee resigns himself to God during the period of spiritual practices, like a kitten depending utterly on its mother. And he calls on Him weeping and prays to Him yearningly. God alone knows when He will reveal Himself to His devotee. Resigning yourself to Him wait at the door of His mercy. Pray to Him with all your heart and soul for devotion and faith and love. He will fill your heart with all these.

The Devotee: Now please tell me a little how I should meditate and do *japa*. We always remain immersed in various kinds of worldly work; apart from that there is the heavy responsibility of service. Please bless me so that I may be free from these bondages and call on God.

Mahapurushji: Our blessing is always there. But you have also to devote yourself to spiritual practices with some amount of doggedness. And while counting His name pray yearningly to Him: 'O Lord! Grant me the power to meditate on you, and merge my mind in your lotus feet.' Know for certain that He will grant it. He is the *guru* in the heart of all—the One who is the path-finder, the Lord, Mother, Father, Friend, and the All-in-All of every being. Everybody in the

world whom men regard as their own and for whom they weep is only for a few days. He alone is the Eternal Companion. For the present go on counting His name as much as you can and you will see that meditation will come automatically. As you will go on repeating the name of your Ideal Deity with great love you will begin to feel gradually a serenē and limpid joy in the heart. When that blissful feeling becomes steady, it also becomes a kind of meditation. There are various kinds of meditation. You should meditate with great love on the luminous form of the Lord in your heart and think that the cave of your heart has been illumined by the light of His divine form. As you continue in this way your heart will be filled with joy unfelt before. Gradually the form will also disappear and there will only remain a feeling of bliss of the nature of Intelligence. This is also a kind of meditation. There are so many other varieties. You yourself will gradually come to know them. The real thing is to call on Him sincerely. The impurities of the heart are washed away by fervently calling on Him and weeping for Him. Mind gradually becomes purified, and then the pure mind itself acts as the *guru*. And you will know from within yourself what is necessary for you at a particular time, how you have to meditate, and how you should call on Him, and so on. Haven't you read what the Master used to say? The Master used to say, 'The wind of grace is always blowing, why not unfurl the sail?' Unfurling the sail means doing spiritual practices with perseverance. He is ever ready to bestow His grace, like a mother, with outstretched arms, ready to take up her innocent child in her lap. Practise a little and you will realize how great is His mercy.

The Devotee: Often I am at a loss to know how I should conduct myself in the world. It is very trying always to go on satisfying every individual.

Mahapurushji: You have of course

read the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Read it carefully. You will find solution of these problems there in the words of the Master Himself. This world is neither yours nor mine. God has created this world. All whom you call your own are God's. Live in the world with this attitude. Wife, son and daughter, relations and near ones are all God's creatures. Whatever service you do to them, do it looking upon them as God. In that case you will not get much entangled. And there should be discrimination at the same time. Discrimination between the real and the unreal will give rise to the spirit of renunciation. You are householders—what harm is there? But why should you get much entangled because of that? Whatever duty you owe to others, you must do it, but do it all in a spirit of service to the Lord. The boundless grace of the Lord is on you. There are so many individuals madly running about for a little food. They are restless with the thought of food itself; where is time for them to call upon God? You have no anxiety for food and dress. Is it a small mercy? God creates all opportunities for those who are truly devoted to Him. Rise up at dead of night when all are asleep and call on God with one-pointedness of mind and be one with Him. Weep much and tell Him all the woes of your heart. The more you weep for Him the more the dirt of your mind will be washed away; it will become pure and spotless. God reveals Himself to that pure mind. Midnight is the best time for spiritual practices. You have good signs; you will have success. That's why I am telling you so much. Work hard for sometime in the beginning, and you will find that your heart and mind will be filled with pure joy. You will get drunk as it were by the wine of bliss. What joy is there in worldly pleasures? To one who comes to enjoy even an atom of divine bliss worldly pleasures becomes tasteless.

The Devotee: Is it necessary to count the number while repeating the Lord's name?

Please tell me a little how much *japa* I should do and how?

Mahapurushji : *Japa* can be done in three ways—with a rosary, with the fingers, or mentally. The best *Japa* is done mentally. Tulsidas has said, 'It is bad to do *Japa* with a rosary, fair, with the fingers, and best when done mentally.' If the habit of doing *Japa* mentally be cultivated, then one can do it while moving about, eating, and lying down and during all the hours of the day. If the habit of mental *Japa* is practised for some time, it goes on even during sleep and a current of bliss will always flow in the heart. But in the beginning it is good to do *Japa* by counting a fixed number. Take a seat and do a fixed number of *Japa* every day morning and evening. See that you do at least one thousand at a time; the more you can do the better. The numbers can be counted on the fingers or on the rosary. (So saying he showed the devotee the method of doing *Japa*). The Master used to say, the name and the Person for whom the name stands are One. Picture in your mind the form of your Ideal Deity while repeating His name. In this way *Japa* and meditation can be done together. God is the Inner Ruler; He sees the heart. He does not heed the number or the time. If God's name be taken sincerely

even only once, it will have more effect than a million or billion repetitions of His name with a restless mind. What is needed is intensity, yearning, and sincerity. Success will come quickly if yearning comes to heart. All these do not happen in a day. Stick to it with doggedness; everything will come in time. And come to the Math now and then. Here are many *sadhus*. Stay in their company. Even the sight of *sadhus* awakens the love of God in the heart. If doubts arise in the mind in the course of your practices, you can come and ask me. The Master has put us here for that reason exactly. But you should know that doubts do not come so much when there is sincerity. Simplicity, sincerity, and purity—these are the foundations of spiritual life. Have you not read how the robber Ratnakar became perfect by repeating 'mara', 'mara'? You must have faith—childlike faith—in the words of the *guru*. All doubts dwell on the fringe of the mind; but when it turns inward and dives deep into the inmost regions then there is unalloyed bliss and the heart becomes filled with the love of God. Of course, all doubts do not disappear till God is realized. 'When the Supreme is seen, the knot of one's heart is cut, all doubts disappear, and all *karma* becomes exhausted.'

THE WESTERN QUESTION (III)

BY THE EDITOR

A 'foreign question' of one kind or another, often similar in many respects to the Western question of our time, has always confronted Indian society since history began. The way India has met such continuous challenges from outside not only makes her true history but forms a large and important part of the story of civilization itself.

We are of course using the word India here in an ideological sense. Indian society is a developing and expanding organization. From very insignificant beginnings, territorial and tribal, it steadily spread over new lands and enlarged itself by bringing within its fold numerous other races and cultures found in India. This point is not always clearly

realized, so that when we talk of Indian society we often talk vaguely or in terms of a static conception.

The two fundamental problems of civilization which constitute its real and basic history are the problems of social cohesion and of individual freedom. Social cohesion is necessary for security and survival, while individual initiative lies at the root of all progress. Man instinctively feels the need for social cohesion, for without an efficient organization and a just authority opportunities for development are not available. The highest fruits of culture can be brought to the reach of all only within the area of a wide and efficient organization. But man has also abused organization and authority for personal and sectional ends, as he has abused every means to a happy life under the sky, because he has not always had an insight into the true meaning of progress, that is to say, into the nature and destiny of man.

Human societies started in a very small way in prehistoric times and have gradually grown into the vast organizations that we see today. Several processes have contributed to such transformations, of which the most obvious and impressive is the political. Political methods appear in our eyes as the most essential factors of social cohesion. Yet if we glance back to past history we are no less impressed by the fact that vast political structures which arose all over the world in answer to the demand for larger organizations repeatedly toppled down for lack of a strong basis of psychological unity. Loyalty to a society rests primarily on a psychological attitude. If the necessary psychological unity is absent a political structure is sure, sooner or later, to break down. Contrariwise, if the psychological unity is present it will gradually translate itself into its equivalent organizational forms. Such organizational forms may not and need not always coincide with political structures. For political unities rest on other factors also, administrative, geographical,

and so on. But when psychological unity is present we need not be over-eager for large political unities, for small political structures suited to local conditions can live in concord and peace and without much and serious conflict within the field of a common society which is held together by a psychological tie.

In these days of emphasis on politics and still more on power politics such conceptions are not easily understood, for it seems to us that an intelligent view of life and progress has generally been lost to the present humanity. Today we are preoccupied with means and have little conception of the end to which these means must lead. For sometime past man in his pride has been worshipping power as an end, without realizing that the pursuit of power as an end is destructive of all that we hold dear in a civilization. In such a situation organization turns into a menace, instead of an aid, to individual evolution. There is also substantial truth in the demand for the limitation of certain organizations, political and economic, and for devolution of power to smaller units, for it has become plain that organization pushed beyond a point stifles individual initiative and creative effort. Power (*artha* and *kama*) is not an absolute end, but just a means for the evolution of spiritual perfection. But today power divorced from spirituality, like the jinn in the *Arabian Nights*, threatens mankind with anarchy and extinction.

All our interests today, material, moral, and spiritual, demand the unification of mankind, but at no time in the past was the world so divided by hatred and conflict. We talk of cooperation but cooperation is alien to the conception of power politics that rules the world. Apparently the worldwide stresses and conflicts can be relieved by either America or Russia imposing their own creeds on the rest of humanity. It certainly looks as if the fate of the world lies on the knees of these two giants. Both are winning converts and aiming at political leadership of the planet,

Such political shortcuts to unity have always appealed to man. If, however, we are prepared to take any lesson from the past, from the fate of the empires of Alexander and Caesars, Jenghiz Khan and Napoleon, we may not have much difficulty to realize that the present discords cannot be removed or a worldwide social cohesion secured by political methods that do not rest upon a common psychological attitude. It is in the hearts of men that peace and unity must first be constructed before they can be embodied in external structures. There cannot be a body without a soul.

This is the number one problem of our times, namely, how to bring mankind within the framework of a common idea. We need a new lodestar of human loyalty. This cannot be found in any ism or creed, for men are different and need different institutions though all aspire for equality. Unity and equality have been much misunderstood and misused. Unity is not uniformity. India achieved a splendid and, we may say, a unique success in her own field of social experimentation, and she brings to the modern world her own solution of the problem of social cohesion without which civilization cannot survive. We mean the principle of her society and not its externals which change and must change with the times. India's success was due to the creation of a psychological unity among the varied elements of her population by means of a spiritual interpretation of existence which faced as well as transcended the facts of life as they exist. A bare outline of the Indian attempt and its consequences will be given below. But before we embark upon it certain preliminary remarks require to be made.

Social development proceeds by means of resolution of conflicts. When two societies or cultures come into contact, the meeting is not pleasant but marked by hostility. The more powerful one tries either to exterminate

or enslave the other. The advance of White civilization in recent times in Africa, America, and Polynesia is a witness to this. Extermination, where it is possible, solves the problem quickly and radically. But we are yet far from aware of the psychological injury such ruthless methods inflict upon the victor. But that is a different question. When, however, extermination fails, the group that is laid flat in the political encounter tries to save itself in either of the following ways: The first response to the challenge of a powerful adversary takes the form of reactionism. The threatened culture tries to save itself by retiring into a shell and avoiding contact with the 'unspeakable' foreigner (the *mlechchha*, *kafir*, gentile or barbarian). This is perfectly symbolized by religion entering the kitchen pot. The other response is purely mimetic. The underdog tries, in this case, to transform itself into a replica of its enemy. This is the way in which Russia, Japan, Egypt, and Turkey, in recent history, have tried to meet the challenge from the scientific and technical West.

It is one of the most impressive and instructive facts of human culture that peoples all over the world tenaciously cling to the channels of self-expression they have evolved in the course of their history. They would often prefer swift extermination in a bloody battle to mere physical survival at the price of their way of life. This is how martyrs have been moved to ultimate sacrifices. The instinctive preference, at low levels in particular, for total and bloody death to renunciation of one's own way of life is based on a great psychological truth which is becoming plain today through the findings of anthropologists. It has been observed that when a people is compelled under pressure of 'civilization' wholly to give up its traditional pursuits, it gradually becomes listless and finally loses all capacity for effort. And in the long run such listlessness makes it lose all interest in life and disappear altogether physically. So it is,

after all, a choice between a swift extermination and a slow death.

When White civilization went to the Papuan head-hunters in South Pacific and imposed its own standard of conduct upon them, without finding out suitable alternative outlets for their anarchic impulses, the Papuans grew listless losing all zest for life and could not be moved to any effort for improvement or existence. They are dying out. Similarly the aborigines in Australia and New Zealand are also said to be fast becoming extinct, not as a result of White ruthlessness but as a consequence of the loss of their traditional life. Analogous cases can also be observed in modern India. For example, the Lepchas of the eastern Himalayas and various types of *adibasis* in the central plains or in the Tarai at the foot of the Himalayas are increasingly sharing the same fate. Apparently they are dying of flu, measles, or shortage of women, but really as a consequence of 'civilization.' The biological failures, so sudden and unexpected, cannot be explained except as expressions of a psychological breakdown.

When a people's way of life is subverted completely and replaced entirely by a new one by the high pressure method of civilization, the people become denuded of all creative effort. The history of Greece in post-Christian times is laden with instruction in this respect. Other instances will easily come to the mind of the reader. Creativity and survival of a people can be assured not by suppressing their accustomed channels of expression altogether or by detaching them from their traditional roots, but by finding symbolical and harmless outlets for their anarchic impulses and by a new orientation of their efforts. In a vast majority of cases, both individual and collective, restraint beyond a point involves grave psychological penalty that proves fatal to the organism or society. Modern psychological discoveries provide illuminating commentary on the dictum of

the Gita—*na buddhibhedam janayet ajnanam* etc. Nature can be controlled, not by suppression but by intelligent expression.

We were talking of the two kinds of responses from a culture threatened by its more powerful adversary. Reactionism does not save a culture. It is a confession of weakness and inner untruth which fears the light of knowledge. However much one may try to avoid the adversary, the adversary will not let one alone for a long time. In the end the dominant culture gets the other by the throat and destroys it utterly. Mimesis on the other hand appears to be more successful at first. But a people which willingly makes itself a replica of another becomes sterile of all creative effort and prepares its own doom in a not distant future. Nor is it successful in escaping the hostile attention of its enemy. It is not respected for its imitation which only inspires contempt. And if it tries to acquire the power which gives its adversary superiority, the latter sees to it that the former is irrevocably crushed. Imitation does not resolve conflicts which arise from the deep factors of blood and race, which can be transcended only by a spiritual conception. Some Whites and Blacks have for years lived together and shared the same culture at the same spots on this planet without ever being welded into a unity. How to overcome such barriers and build a society ensuring equal opportunities and justice to all its members is still a fundamental problem of civilization. Certain religions have tried to solve this by carrying over into a large area the emotional attitudes appropriate to a family or the tribe. But the emotional appeal to the brotherhood of man does not carry conviction to the modern mind distracted by disbeliefs. We need more than emotional religions talking in languages appropriate to a pre-scientific age. We need a true metaphysic to ground these religions on a firm basis. Only thus they can achieve their aims.

A third outcome of the encounter between civilizations is possible. And in this case the initiative for a right solution of the conflict may come either from the physically dominant side or the threatened adversary. But more often than not it comes from the political victim. The threatened culture may respond in an altogether new way, distinct from the ones mentioned above. It may, if its spiritual resources are superior to those of its enemy, mount a spiritual counter-offensive which ultimately gets the better of its opponent. The offensive not only guarantees physical survival and a creative future to the people from which it originates, but also generates new political forces which finally break up the political structure set up by the opponent on a basis of force, injustice, and exploitation. And this inward spiritual force prepares the ground for a wider synthesis. Our social and political institutions, like the other elements of a civilization, are the outward manifestation of an inward spiritual force. If that force is absent or is supplanted by a superior one, the outward manifestations will inevitably disappear or be changed. A society, in the words of Lincoln, is dedicated to a proposition. If the proposition is valid, the society lives; but if it fails to meet the new tests presented by the developing experience of a community the society breaks up.

When a culture superior in military, scientific, and economic power based on the technique of production faces an adversary that is inferior to it in these respects but superior in spiritual resources, the outcome is a fusion in which the spirit of one adapts for its requirements the valuable material and scientific achievements of the other. This happened often in the past, the most remarkable instance in Western history being the union of the Greek and the Roman. Such unification creates a wider civilization which becomes reflected in appropriate political structures.

If we look at history in this way, then the

essential thing in the development of civilizations presents itself as progressive and wider unification of mankind through a spiritual force. Social cohesion is at bottom secured by a spiritual idea, and such cohesion becomes stronger and wider the nearer it approaches the basic truth of man and nature. True unity is not of the form, which is another name for death, but of the Spirit. History is thus the story of the Spirit.

When the curtain of history first rises in India on the banks of the Indus (the exact date is unknown and is still the sport of guess), we are confronted with a civilization that is fully developed in essence but which occupies only an insignificant patch of earth. It is the Aryan culture, of which we get a picture in the *Vedas*. We find that even at that distant date the Aryans touched the very bottom of all ethical and spiritual researches when they proclaimed the divinity and equality of man and regarded society as a co-operative enterprise for the evolution of spiritual values. At this dawn of history the Aryans had not only made the ultimate discoveries in the realm of spirit but also enjoyed political and military supremacy. The political power, of course, passed away in after ages to new races and peoples, but the spiritual idea never suffered a reverse and gradually brought within the frame-work of a common society all kinds of races and cultures. Humanity upto-date has not awakened to a greater ideal than that proclaimed by the vedic Aryans, the founders of the *sanatana dharma*. Our historical sense, mainly a product of insufficient study of a narrow section of civilization, revolts at the idea, but facts are stubborn realities and cannot be suppressed by fancies. Civilization on the material plane is simply a translation of this divine idea of man. Today all our aspirations for social and economic justice need this metaphysical support. Mere emotional appeals in the name of religion or any other ism or way of life will not be effective

against hatred, skepticism, and disbelief. We need a conviction grounded on reason and experience.

The *Vedas*, the *Sutras*, the *Smritis*, and the *Epics* all record the assimilation of new races and the expansion of the Aryan culture. The Aryans did not attempt wholesale extermination of foreign peoples and cultures (some slaughter is inevitable), but slowly brought them all into a common social whole. This was possible because political power was backed by spiritual understanding rooted in the truth of man and of the need for multiform expression in nature. The outside impacts led to wonderful developments of the vedic tradition which radiated in periodical waves to distant corners of India and the then outside world till it led to new growth and transformation of civilizations not only here but also abroad.

A very interesting fact connected with the spread of the Aryan civilization is that the most brilliant developments of the metaphysical idea and new innovations in religion and ethics took place at the fringes of such contacts, that is, exactly at those places where new racial and cultural factors confronted the advancing Aryan society and called for fresh synthesis of cults and beliefs. For example, cultural and spiritual and even political

supremacy gradually and steadily passed, over a period of two thousand years or so, from the Indus and the upper Ganges Valley to the Gangetic doab and beyond. Similar progress can be noticed to some extent in the advance towards the south. The Kurus yield place to the Panchalas, the Panchalas, to the Videhas. Upanishadic researches reach their brilliant peak at the court of Janaka in Videha. But shortly after the political power along with the cultural supremacy passes further east to the Vajjians and the birthland of Buddhism. Magadha rises in new glory on the soil treated by this spiritual leaven. It is a fascinating theme requiring a whole volume for adequate treatment. The rise of the *Upanishads*, the story of *Ramayana*, the birth of Bhagavatism, Jainism, and Buddhism, the political ascendancy of the Nandas, the Mauryas, and the Guptas all afford illuminating commentary on the impact of Aryan culture on alien ones. In our own day the ancient tradition faced the challenge of Western secularism and political power in its severest form in the lower Ganges valley. And it was exactly from here that the true and perfect response came, after a series of timid reactions. The vedic idea seems to be deathless.

(To be continued)

MIND IN HORMIC PSYCHOLOGY

BY DR P. T. RAJU

(Continued from the March issue)

II

The scientific outlook of the nineteenth century was dominated by mechanistic explanation. Whichever explanation was not mechanistic was rejected as unscientific, and unscientific meant irrational. But towards the close of the nineteenth, and the begin-

ings of the twentieth centuries biologists discovered a number of facts which stubbornly refused to be explained mechanistically. There was an outcry for the liberation of biology from mechanistic explanation and, therefore, from the physical sciences. In the first two decades of the twentieth century a large

number of biologists raised their voices against mechanism, some of the foremost among whom are Driesch, Thomson, Huxley, Haldane, and E. B. Russell. Psychology, in the first enthusiasm of its conversion into a science, adopted mechanism, the inevitable outcome of which was behaviourism, though it could have been much worse ; for even behaviourism, which was the science of at least animal behaviour could not be thoroughly mechanistic. The outlook for psychology became gloomy ; spiritual values seemed to be at a stake ; and even culture and civilization were found to be inexplicable. At such a juncture Hormic psychology came as a relief. If biology could liberate itself from the physical sciences, why not psychology ? Psychology followed in the wake of biology and accepted purposiveness. The activity of life is purposive, so also is that of the mind. Instead of mechanistic explanation we have the teleological.

So far Hormic psychology has done real service to the science of mental life. But are life and mind the same ? Can the method of explanation of the one be adequately applied to the other ? This question was raised already by some, particularly by Olaf Stapledon, Ludwig Klages, and Hans Prinzhorn, from the side of ethics, culture, and civilization. But McDougall protests that their objections, if granted, would introduce the untenable dualism of the animal and human mind. Every thing can be explained in terms of sentiments and their growth. 'Until this interpretation of the facts shall have been shown to be inadequate, there would seem to be no sufficient foundation for the new dualism of Klages and Prinzhorn.'

If the dualism of the animal and the human mind and, therefore, of the biological and the psychological sciences is not justified, can the dualism of the physical and the biological sciences be justified ? That is why McDougall's contention that 'one advantage of the Hormic theory over all others is that it enables us to sketch in outline an intelligible,

consistent, and tenable theory of the continuous organic evolution, evolution of bodily forms and mental functions in intelligible relation to one another ; and this is something no other can achieve,'²⁶ is not at all appealing. If it is this continuity alone that is valuable then mechanism preserves it better. For it professes to explain not only organic but also inorganic evolution in the same terms. That is, it applies the same method to explain matter, life, and mind. But what is wanted of any science is not the levelling down of everything in the universe to a homogeneous principle, but the discovery of peculiarities. Even Lloyd Morgan with his naturalistic bias or what Alexander calls 'natural piety' differentiates between life and mind, though he is unwilling to admit a separate entity or entelechy called life and a separate reality called mind, and treats both life and mind as new relatedness which introduce a new go into the order of the material universe. Both life and mind introduce different kinds of behaviour into the material particles they 'involve'. There are other biologists who emphasize this difference. J. S. Haldane writes : 'Psychology must be regarded as a branch of knowledge which deals, not with the relatively abstract aspects of experience dealt with by the mathematical, physical, and biological sciences, but with the more concrete experience which is that of conscious behaviour and the interest and values expressed in it.'²⁷ Further, 'what we regard as a mere organism behaves, in both its development and character, as its parent organism and its progenitors behaved ; but this only exemplifies blind maintenance of the coordinated unity which we call life. The special characters of this have gradually differentiated themselves in the course of evolution, this differentiation being necessarily recapitulated more or less in individual reproduction. To attribute

²⁶ *Psychologies of 1930*, p. 26.

²⁷ J. S. Haldane : *The Sciences and Philosophy*, p. 146.

this maintenance to the memory of the past behaviour of the race is not necessary to our understanding of mere life, and only introduces obscurity. Memory is indeed a meaningless word apart from the ideas of a past in conscious relation to a present.²⁸ Even if the psychologists are anxious, in order to preserve continuity of explanation between life and mind, to recognize biological memory, all of even the progressive biologists are not prepared to admit memory into their science. If this continuity is to be kept up between life and matter also, inertia may be called physical memory. But where differences are significant, too much importance should not be attached to continuity.

It is not wrong to say that human behaviour is purposive; but it is an inadequate explanation. It places plant, protozoa, hero, and saint on the same level: we see purpose in the behaviour of all. In some, purpose is biological; in others it is something else. None would say that the purpose of the martyr in ascending the scaffold is biological. What brings about this difference? It may be said that we are taking an extreme instance. But it shows that the human mind has developed peculiar differences. It may be that the animal mind also contains these differences in the germ. We may admit the development of one into the other, but we cannot equate them. It may be that life and mind are correlates, as Lloyd Morgan asserts. But we cannot accept that in every form of life the peculiarities of mind are manifest equally. And when we speak of the growth of mind we do not mean the growth of life. When we explain mind we have to give more prominence to the factors that distinguish mind from life than to factors that are common to both.

For this reason the principle laid down by McDougall that 'all intelligent action is purposive, and all purposive action is more or

less intelligent,'²⁹ cannot be accepted without far-reaching modifications. It is true that all intelligent action is purposive, whether that action is that of Christ or Cain, man or moss, but all purposive action is not intelligent. McDougall places the adverb 'more or less' before intelligent, but there is no corresponding 'more or less' before purposive. Hence intelligence and purposiveness are not one and the same thing. To explain each in terms of the other must, therefore, end in failure. Otherwise, the materialist would argue that every activity is material, or concerned with matter; and none can disprove him. Mechanism would be as good an explanation. If we point to purposiveness and say that something besides mechanistic explanation demands recognition, we have to point to a similar extra factor in mind also. We cannot reasonably maintain that only life and mind go together, and not matter and life. If we are consistent in our use of the concept of evolution, when we acknowledge rudiments of mind even in the lowest forms of life, we have to acknowledge rudiments of life in all matter. And probably as a principle, we have to acknowledge some unrecognizable elements of mind even in matter and say that psychology studies the mental aspect of reality, biology, the life aspect, and physics, the material. Or we have to say that life emerges at a certain stage of inorganic evolution and mind at a certain stage of the organic. Anyway, psychology deals with something more than merely purposive behaviour.

The purposes, according to Hormic psychology, are at first fixed for every species. They are the goals towards which the instinct of animals are naturally directed. Being directed towards the goal, the instinct, as it were, knows the goal, and accordingly the behaviour of the animal becomes adaptable. When the goal is known any variation in the circumstances is appreciated by the animal, and the behaviour is altered accordingly.

²⁸ *The Philosophy of a Biologist*, p. 99.

²⁹ *Modern Materialism*, p. 44.

Here it is difficult to understand whether McDougall means that instinct contains intelligence also, or that instinctive behaviour is guided by intelligence also. He sometimes speaks of instinct and instinctive behaviour as different.³⁰ Instinctive action is due to instinct, and if it is intelligent, the reason may be the cooperation of intelligence. But if intelligence is the persistence of the instinctive energy in the pursuit of its goal, then instinct is, because of the very fact of being directed towards the goal, is intelligence. However it is difficult to pin down McDougall to either alternative.

If instinct and intelligence are two coordinate factors, then what justifiable ground can there be for Hormic psychology to emphasize instinct in preference to intelligence? McDougall gives a quotation from Dr Fr. Alverdes' *Social Life in the Animal World* in support of his position: 'Every act, A, is, therefore, at one and the same time a function of a constant, C, and a variable, V; expressed as a formula, this becomes $A=f(C.V)$. The constant is the instinctive element in the action of men and animals; the variable, on the other hand, is the element which produces in some cases an appropriate, in others an unforeseeable response to a situation. It must of course be emphasized that the analysis of the action of A into the components V and C is a purely abstract analysis. V and C must not be taken as two opposed natural agencies (as it were two souls) pulling the organism, now in this direction, now in that, as they battle for supremacy; they are merely symbols for the two different aspects of the same reality. The difference between instinctive and intellectual activity is: that in the former the constant, in the latter the variable, predominate. In instinctive action the C is greater than V (C > V), in intelligent action C is less than V (C < V).'³¹ If really

both factors are present, why stress instinct? Is it to emphasize the continuity between animal and human behaviour? The difference between the two is that in the former C is predominant and in the latter V. Then human behaviour should be explained more in terms of V than in terms of C. If it is V that distinguishes the developed from the undeveloped or rudimentary mind, we see the true mark of mind in V.

Is the human behaviour to be understood in terms of instincts because the C in it is the instinct side? If such an idea lies at the root of McDougall's psychological outlook, the fallacy it contains can be easily brought out. First, the so-called C is not one but many. All activity is not guided by the self-same instinct; instincts are many. Thus the C in one action is the food-seeking instinct, in another the sex instinct. Hence C also is a variable. Nay more, it is at least as variable as V. McDougall speaks of a conative disposition and awareness of the class of objects following an instinct. Thus the food-seeking instinct is followed by the awareness of the class of food objects, and the so-called cognitive disposition is this awareness. Instinct is a conative disposition. Every conative disposition is followed by a cognitive disposition. 'Then is not one as variable as the other? Where is that C which is a constant? It is this interpretation of human mind as consisting of so many conative dispositions that led to remarks like those of Spearman, who says: 'The orective mechanism, after all, does not consist simply of a number of instincts each fighting for its own hand. It includes some additional agency to control and coordinate these.'³²

Peculiarly enough, what is called V seems to be more constant in human behaviour than what is called C. If this V, which corresponds to the adaptive capacity, is the same as the perception of the whole and its parts and

³⁰ *An Outline of Psychology*, p. 418.

³¹ *The Energies of Men*, p. 41.

³² *The Psychologies of 1930*, p. 360.

their interrelations,³³ then it is intelligence, which is called *g* by Spearman. It is the same for all instincts, for its function is the same, the perception of the whole and its parts and their interconnexions. Hence it is present not only in the operations of the same instinct under different conditions, but also in the operation of the different instincts. It seems more reasonable, therefore, to interpret mental life in terms of something like Spearman's *g*, which is a constant, than in terms of instincts.³⁴ It may be said that if something like *g* will have to be accepted as common to all cognitive dispositions, then something like *W* will have to be accepted for all conative dispositions. True, but while intelligence is not common to both life and mind, this something like *W* will be, and, therefore, cannot differentiate mind from life. And it is the aim of psychology to point out what is distinctly mental.

McDougall maintains that each instinct has its particular emotion, which gets attached to the object of the instinct. There are as many emotions as there are instincts, or at least as many primary emotions as there are primary instincts. The doctrine of separate unitary and indivisible emotions has been criticized by Bernard,³⁵ and in line with our above criticism we may point out that there is something common to all emotions. It is probably because of this criticism that McDougall speaks lately of emotional excitement with different qualities.³⁶ The classification of emotional excitement into different emotions is due to these different qualities.

The greatest importance is attached by Hormic psychologies to its doctrine of sentiments, with the help of which it explains society, ethics, culture, and civilization.

³³ *The Energies of Men*, p. 46.

³⁴ Spearman admits *p*, *o*, and *w* besides *g*. But the first three factors are common to life and mind and so, not distinctive of mind.

³⁵ *Instinct*, p. 458.

³⁶ *The Energies of Men*, p. 148.

According to McDougall 'the essential nature of a sentiment, the scheme or plan of it, is then, a mental system in which a cognitive ability (in the older terminology, an 'idea') has become, through the individual's experience, functionally linked with one or more native propensities, linked in such a way that, when the ability comes into play (that is, when the corresponding object is perceived or otherwise thought of) the propensity also is brought into action and engenders its peculiar emotional tendency directed upon the object.'³⁷ The question to be raised now is whether we are still interpreting mental life in terms of the primacy of instincts. It is not whether instinct is still not a factor of mental life, but whether it is the dominant factor. We are earlier informed that every instinct has its natural goal, and that the goal of the instinct is the object of cognition. It is the instinct that sets the cognition in movement. But in a sentiment cognition leads. The cognitive ability first comes into play and then releases the instincts and their emotions. McDougall may say that this change is due to conditioning. Yet it is nothing but the admission that the growth of mind means the growth and leadership of intelligence.

There is a second point to notice in his view of sentiments. At first, in its primitive stages, mind works with some conative and cognitive dispositions, and also certain emotions. Every instinct has its own awareness and emotion. The sex instinct in its operation is followed by the awareness of the objects of the opposite sex and the peculiar emotional excitement. The same object is unnoticed when the instinct is not stirred. But in the sentiment the cognitive disposition ceases to be what it was; it is no longer a disposition which knows the object only as a sex object. For a cannibal among men and animals it is also a food object. To take a less extreme case, it

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 223.

may be an object of dislike. That is, the cognitive disposition is proclaiming its independence of the conative disposition and, after setting itself free, is able to stir two or more instincts up into active service. The same phenomenon is expressed when we say that we first know the object and then desire it. In the animal life, it may be that in many cases the animal first wants and then knows the object, as is evidenced by the newly hatched chick which first pecks at anything including the cinnabar caterpillar which it loathes. But in the developed mind and even in the later experience of the chick it is otherwise.

When we consider the nature of our highly complex culture and civilization, explanations in terms of instincts or the primacy of instincts becomes absolutely inadequate. Bernard writes : 'The demand of the accumulated complex social environment, which we call modern civilization, is for an organism with a maximum of variation of activity at a maximum speed.'³⁸ If instinct itself can be so variable, it would be a contradiction in terms to call it an instinct. It is difficult to understand how McDougall can meet the objection of Stapledon. He says that Stapledon has failed to grasp 'the implications of the theory of instincts.' In the working of a developed sentiment, whether love of country, love of parent for the child, or of man for woman, we have to do not merely with a blending and conflicting of primitive impulses. Such a sentiment is a most complex organization comprising much elaborated cognitive structure as well as instinctive dispositions, and its working can only properly be viewed in the light of the principles of emergence and Gestalt.³⁹ But the question is : What is the guiding principle? Instinct or cognitive structure? It is the latter as McDougall admits. This might be an emer-

gent which works with some gestalt. But the instinct has lost its primacy. Every highly intelligent action and, as Bernard says, every habit complex is built upon some instinctive foundation.⁴⁰ But instinct does not dominate. Civilization is not to be explained in terms of instinct. The whole field of abnormal psychology is strong evidence in favour of the conflict between instinct and impulse on the one side and civilization on the other. Abnormal behaviour is flight from reality and civilization to the more primitive and animal type of behaviour, which is dominated by impulse and instinct. That is why Hormic psychology is able to offer one of the most satisfactory explanations of abnormality, and McDougall is so often referred to and quoted by some of the eclectic psychiatrists like W. Sadler. In fact, when McDougall is taking the help of elaborate 'cognitive structure' and gestalt, he is giving up the importance of instincts in developed mental life. In his *Character and Conduct of Life* he preaches self-criticism. What else is it except exhortation to follow reason and intelligence and not instinct and impulse? Or is intelligence an instinct?

There is a more fundamental contention which cannot be overlooked in this connection, namely, that the instincts are not necessarily directed towards some ends. Bernard says : 'That the instinct is necessarily directed towards some end, except in the general and the anthropomorphic sense that all activity represents some sort of adjustment or adaptation, is not true. It cannot be said that every instinctive action is purposeful, for instance, the flying of the moth into the flame. If by adaptive or being directed to some end is meant a useful end or even a conscious end, the absurdity of this contention becomes immediately apparent.'⁴¹ Even taking the food-seeking instinct, the first pecking of the

³⁸ *Instinct*, p. 530.

³⁹ *Psychologies of 1930*, p. 24.

⁴⁰ *Instinct*, p. 516.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 82.

chick does not disclose any awareness of eatable objects. It is doubtful whether even the human child, immediately after it is born, knows the nipple. It gets its acquaintance after it is placed into its mouth. It will suck even the tip of a finger at first. It is experience that teaches the chick to discriminate between the cinnabar caterpillar and the white of an egg. That is, instinctive action as such is blind. The instinctive awareness or cognitive disposition can consist not so much of the awareness of a class of objects pertaining to that instinct as in the awareness of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that follows instinctive activity. Instinct of instinctive activity is not accompanied as such by an awareness of objects which satisfy it and which do not, as is evidenced by the behaviour of newly hatched chicken. This discriminating factor is the same for all instincts. That is why what McDougall calls the variable factor is more constant than the instincts. Instinctive activity is purposeful, not in the sense that it knows what classes of objects in the world satisfy it but in the sense that it knows its own satisfaction. This satisfaction is the satisfaction of the instinct, not necessarily a feeling of the welfare of the individual. Even the moth's instinct is satisfied when it rushes into the flame. It is the function of intelligence or cognition to find out which classes of objects satisfy the instinct and conduce to the welfare of the individual. When discrimination develops, instinct abdicates and accepts the guidance of intelligence.

As discrimination grows and the division of objects progresses, McDougall tells us, apperception comes on the scene. Without its synthetic activity the world would be an unwieldy chaos. The logical structure of the world is grasped through discrimination and apperception, and the historical through association. Now, none of the three processes is instinctive. They are aspects of intelligence. As intelligence develops it seeks new objects,

creates new ideals which become objects and, for realizing them, commands the services of instincts or propensities and emotions.

It is true that often conation and cognition develop independently and that the Socratic doctrine that virtue is knowledge is not to be literally accepted. But the moral problem arises only when our conation does not follow our cognition, when our volitions refuse to be guided by reason. When a man knowing that the act, A, is good and B bad, wills B, he is immoral. Yet his intellect subserves his conation. But if this subservience is what is demanded of morality, then he is quite moral. Hence it is difficult to understand McDougall's claim that hormic psychology does not leave out ethics but supplies the best psychological basis for it.⁴² It is true that some ethical writers have committed the mistake of separating the cognitive and conative functions completely. Yet it is not enough to stress their inseparability. McDougall treats conation as of primary, and cognition as of secondary importance. Inseparability of the two functions is inadequate, and primacy of conation defective as a psychological basis for ethics. Reason or intelligence as an ideal or purpose-builder should be acknowledged. Only when conation obeys reason does it become moral. Virtuous character is built up when conative tendencies obey reason, and the vicious when they become riotous and compel intelligence to be subservient. McDougall's psychology appears to explain the behaviour of animals, the building up of their character, because animal behaviour is not ethical.

In fact, it is not the recognition of purposiveness that renders a psychology dynamic. McDougall mentions Bergson in support of his doctrine.⁴³ But he seems to have forgotten or overlooked that Bergson calls teleology inverted mechanism. In mechanism the act

⁴² *Psychologies of 1930*, p. 29.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 34.

is merely a resultant of the given factors : the push is from behind or the past into the future. In teleology the act is the resultant of the pull from the future. McDougall by his admission of fixed goals clearly lays himself open to the charge of inverted mechanism. Yet, the instinct or drive is dynamic, not because of the goal, but because of its activity till it finds what its goal is, which is its satisfaction. The newly hatched chick does not peck at an edible object only but at all objects till it gets something it can swallow. Of course, it does peck, because the instinctive activity of hunger in that animal is of that type. Similarly, the human baby cries and throws about its hands and legs, not because it is instinctively aware of how to attract its mother or nurse, but because of the restlessness due to the disagreeable feeling of hunger. Woodworth seems to be nearer to truth when he speaks of 'drives' and 'sets' than McDougall when he speaks of goals of instincts. Perhaps it is better to understand instinctive activity as what is best suited to satisfy instinct than what is directed to certain objects or classes of objects. When a magnet draws iron filings towards itself we attribute dynamism not to the iron filings but to the magnet. Yet the iron filings are naturally directed towards the magnet. Dynamism consists in activity determined by itself. So also is the case of the civilized mind. It is dynamic, not because it strives towards ideals *given* to it by nature or civilization, but because it itself builds up its ideals towards which it struggles.

McDougall asserts : 'The Hormic theory projects a completely systematic and self-consistent psychology on the basis of its recognition of the whole of the organized mind of the adult as a structure elaborated in the service of the hormic urge to more and fuller life.'⁴⁴ Is this urge to 'more and fuller life' an instinct? If the instincts are this hormic urge, then they must be directed to 'more

and fuller life' and not merely to certain fixed and natural goals. And if they are so directed, they must be inherently intelligent, for the 'more' in any given situation can be known only by intelligence and not by instinct as such; or if instinct is said to know the 'more' it is a mistake to call it instinct. And in the higher stages of mental growth, when intelligence undergoes high development, instinct remains in the background and loses its guiding force. If the word instinct is used in the usual sense, then if the urge is to fuller life it is not directed simply to its natural goal and *vice versa*. Here McDougall is tacitly giving up his position. Fuller life is an ideal built up by intelligence. The study of human behaviour is psychology because of the presence of intelligence; and the study of animal and plant behaviour is biology so far as it does away with intelligence.

The plea for the primacy of intelligence in mental life may be met by the objection that it tends to revive intellectualism buried long ago. But the objection can be met by pointing out that intelligence has to be understood differently here. We have been talking of conation and cognition as two different functions. McDougall also does so. Reasons are not lacking for this practice. The disproportionate and uncoordinated development of conation and reason in man is a familiar fact; without it there would not have been the ethical problem. Yet it should not be understood that a highly thoughtful man lacks conation altogether. Even thinking hard requires conation. On the other hand, even the practical man has intelligence. Only, he uses his intelligence in pursuit of whatever good or evil ends he may have. If the activity of life and conation or what Spinoza calls *conatus* are identical, then intelligence is conation that is made reflective whenever there is a problem. It then performs what are called ideal experiments. It constructs a plan of the problem in itself, solves it ideally and, making that the purpose, moves on to

⁴⁴ *Psychologies of 1930*, p. 31.

solve the actual problem practically. For a highly intellectual life there is always a problem and many an intellectual solution. But it generally does not execute the plan of action. Or its problems are always intellectual like the mathematician's. Intellect, therefore, is a builder of plans or patterns for execution. The ethical conflict arises when a pattern of action built up to comprehend the whole of the known situation is not followed but, at the urge of some isolated impulse, another pattern is built up which comprehends only a part of the known situation, and is preferred. What we call a conflict between conation and reason is really a conflict between the conation considering the whole situation and the same conation considering only a part. That the same conation can be two is only a matter of fact. Otherwise, there would not have been remorse. Conation when it reflects upon itself and constructs patterns or ideals of behaviour, is intelligence; otherwise, it remains simple conation.

It is the author's belief that the conception of intelligence as a pattern—or ideal-building activity will be most fruitful in social, educational, and other applied psychologies. Human mind is not merely a creature of the environment, natural or social, and its aim is not merely to survive in the environment by adapting itself to it; it wants also to create the most suitable environment by

shaping it according to its heart's content. If this kind of activity is recognized as characteristic of mental life, then it easily follows that intelligence, as an idea-forming activity, is its chief mark. We have only to insist that these ideals are built up in a concrete situation, and not in a vacuum.

It may be asked: If mind is thus creative, does it not imply absence of all determinism? If so, what method of explanation are we to adopt? Every explanation implies some determinism. If, to the question, Why does the thing behave thus? it is replied, it likes to behave so, no explanation is given of the behaviour. Hence, the question is How is the activity of the human mind determined? In truth there is determinism everywhere. The determinism of material behaviour is mechanistic; the determinism of simple life is teleological; and the determinism of mental life is that of ideals. Teleological activity is mechanical as well; and activity determined by ideals is teleological also. Purposes are natural or *given* for mere life; but mind creates its own purposes. The ideals built for execution are of various stages. In the lowest, they may not transcend the merely sustenance or economic levels; but in the higher, they may even go against them. The growth of mental life is a growth of these ideals.

(Concluded)

TAGORE AND THE TRADITIONAL THEORY OF ART

BY PRABAS JIBAN CHOUDHURY

Tagore's theory of art has many points of agreement with the traditional theory. By 'traditional theory' we mean the Christian or scholastic theory which was held as absolutely true in the medieval times by all Christians. Also it means the aesthetic theory current in

Vedic and Buddhist India, the latter theory being essentially the same as the scholastic theory.¹ We shall briefly note here certain points of similarity that are found between

¹ A. K. Coomaraswamy: *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought*, chapters—II and X.

Tagore's aesthetic doctrine and the traditional one.

'The Scholastic doctrine of Beauty is fundamentally based on the brief treatment by Dionysius the Areopagite, in the chapter of the *De divinis nominibus* entitled *De pulchro et bono*.² A piece from this writing will show how the beautiful is regarded as the good also by the Christian theologians.

'The good is praised by sainted theologians as the beautiful and as Beauty; as delight and the delectable; and by whatever other befitting names are held to imply the beautifying power or the attractive qualities of Beauty.'³

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote a commentary on the essay of Dionysius the Areopagite, and his commentary had the title 'On the Divine Beautiful; and how it is attributed to God.' He also holds that beauty is but the attractive aspect of absolute perfection or God. The source of scholastic theory of beauty can be traced back to Plato. In *Symposium* he states that there is Absolute Beauty, while things of the world only participate more or less in this Beauty and are beautiful in a more or less degree; the ultimate reality is, according to him, Good, the absolute end or *summum bonum* of creation (this theory is to be found in the *Republic*, book VII, 534). Now it was natural for Plato to identify Absolute Beauty with Absolute good, for both (if different) cannot be absolute (i.e. entire, pure unmixed divine and co-essential with itself). So he says 'the Good is the Beautiful.' (*Lysis* 30).

Indian aestheticians of the past also held aesthetic experience to be something finer than sensation; it was called *rasasvadana* or 'the tasting of flavour' and also called the very twin of God, *brahmasvadana*. The experience of beauty is contemplative and not merely a sensuous pleasure.

Tagore also does not separate the good

from the beautiful. He says, 'That which is really good is both useful and beautiful, that is to say, it has a mysterious attraction for us over and above that of such purposes of ours as it may serve. The moralist declares its value from the ethical standpoint, the poet seeks to make manifest its unutterable beauty.'⁴ Again, 'The Good, I repeat, is beautiful to us not merely because of any purpose it may serve. Bread is useful, clothes are useful, and so are shoes and umbrellas; nevertheless these do not thrill us with their beauty. But the fact that Lakshmana insisted on accompanying his brother Rama in his exile, makes our heart-strings vibrate in music. It becomes a theme fit to be sung into permanence with beautiful words set to a beautiful tune.'⁵ Thus real beauty is real good for Tagore. This beauty is not mere charm that beguiles us temporarily by catering to our sensuous nature, rather it is a deeper experience which involves discipline and contemplation. Aesthetic satisfaction is not to be confused with merely emotional or sensational pleasures, it is a spiritual awakening and a joy divine. Tagore says, 'So we arrive at this, that ultimately beauty makes for discipline, so does discipline, in turn, make us more deeply conscious of Beauty.'⁶

Art, then, is not a matter of feeling only, but a kind of knowledge, that which is of a higher type than ordinary scientific knowledge. It requires *sadhana*, mental discipline. In this respect, too, Tagore's aesthetic creed resembles the traditional theory. Tagore says, 'I do not know details about *Yoga*, but we hear that the *yogis* could create by yogic powers. The creation by genius is of a similar kind. The poets, restraining their mind by virtue of their spontaneous power, and in a semi-conscious manner, somehow attract the ideas, feeling, sights, colours, and

⁴ *Sahitya*, p. 37. Translated in *Sense of Beauty* (published in *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, May, 1936).

⁵ *Ibid.* 37. Translated in the essay, *op. cit.*

⁶ *Ibid.* 29. Translated in the essay, *op. cit.*

² *Ibid.* p. 44.

³ Translated by Coomaraswamy. *Ibid.* p. 45.

sounds to their souls, and collecting them there, build out of them a coherent and lively whole.⁷

The *Shukranitisara* says⁸ that the image-maker should have a contemplative vision (*yogadhyana*) and should not directly observe any form or figure. The scholastic aesthetics also speaks of a contemplative primary act which should be followed by a secondary act of setting down what has been visualized in contemplation. The *Shukranitisara* also says, 'When the model has been conceived, set down on the wall what was visualized.'⁹

Thus inspiration is always a spiritual process, the artist is inspired by certain supersensible ideas; a sensible thing can only affect us, that is, raise sensational or emotional reaction. The inspiring agent is always spoken of as a spiritual power (Plato's Daimon, Immanent Eros, *Gandharva* of Indian aesthetics and *sanctus spiritus* of Christian theory). Plato says in *Ion* that the artist is possessed 'by a spirit not his own' and that 'it is God himself that speaks, and through them enlightens us; the makers are but His exponents according to the way in which they are possessed.' (*Ion* 334-35). In Indian aesthetics the *Gandharvas* (gods of love and music), offer to the voice (expressive power) their sacred science, the mundane deities offer things to please her. True art is significant and liberating (*padarthabhinaya* and *vimuktida*), while false art is coloured by passions and appeal to the uncultured and the commoners only. Tagore believes in the supernatural agency at work in artistic creations, and he distinguishes between the two types of art, 'highway' and 'pagan' so to speak. He says about the creative process in art, 'All this is a *yogasadhana*. As a poet composes a poem and as Tansen composes a

piece of music out of various tunes and rhythms, so does a woman construct her life, in the same semi-conscious and the same magical manner.'¹⁰

Again, 'The universal spirit breathes through the flute of our mind and sounds many a tune; literature tries to express these in clearer form. Literature is not, individualistic, it is not the author's, but a supernatural voice (*daiva-vani*).'¹¹

In *Atmaparichaya*¹² Tagore speaks of a universal spirit that works through the poet and that alone understands the complete meaning of what is written.

Again, according to the traditional theory, the artist when inspired becomes one with the idea or the model he is to set down. 'Alike from the Indian and the scholastic points of view, understanding depends upon an assimilation of the knower and the known; this is indeed the divine manner of understanding, in which the knower is the known. Hence the scholastic and Indian definitions of perfect understanding as involving '*adaequatio rei et intellectus* or *tad-akarata*.' It follows that the artist must really have been what he is to represent. Dante sums up the whole matter from the medieval point of view when he says, 'He who would paint a figure, if he cannot be it, cannot paint it.'¹³

Now Tagore, too, holds a similar view. He distinguishes ordinary knowledge in which the knower remains outside the object known, from intuitive knowledge, in which the knower identifies himself with his objects of knowledge. This latter kind of knowledge is involved in artistic creation. Tagore says, 'We are continually knowing the world with our mind. That knowing is of two kinds. Through knowledge we know the object. In this the knower is in the background and the object of knowledge in front of him as his objective.

⁷ *Panchabhut*, p. 171. (Translation mine).

⁸ Coomaraswamy, *Op. Cit.* Chap. X. on *The Intellectual Operation in Indian Art*.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Panchabhut*, p. 172.

¹¹ *Sahitya*, p. 6.

¹² pp. 3-6.

¹³ Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.* p. 153.

Through intuition (*bhava*) we know but ourselves, the object remains united with ourselves and is but an apparent objective. Science is occupied with the task of knowing an object, and it struggles to keep back the human personality from itself. In literature man is engaged in the work of knowing himself, the truth of his knowing rests on his actual realization and not on the verity of any objective fact.¹⁴

For Tagore the reality is ultimately within us, so when we identify ourselves with the object we know but ourselves, the intuitive knowledge of things required in art is but a kind of self-knowledge. He believes in the upanishadic doctrine that there is in truth

nothing but the self, all else is evil.¹⁵

Tagore says, 'When my individual self knows the infinite Self by uninterrupted intuition, knows this through my heart, mind, and soul, then he realizes in him his own self also. This principle of spiritual discipline (*adhyatmic sadhana*) can be brought down to the field of literature.'¹⁶

This is a refinement on the traditional theory and a deeper view of the matter. What suffices for aesthetics is to recognize the identification in intuitive knowledge of the subject (the artist's consciousness) with the object (the idea or the model). Traditional aesthetics recognizes this principle, so does Tagore.

¹⁵ *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, III. 4. 2.

¹⁶ *Sahityer Pathc*, p. 53.

¹⁴ *Sahityer Pathe* (VIII). (Translation mine).

THE WAY TO SPIRITUAL STABILITY

BY A VEDANTIN

When, being convinced that God is the only abiding reality, we resolve to find Him, we undertake the most arduous task imaginable. Spiritual growth depends upon forming new habits of thought and action and upon learning new ways of knowing ourselves and others. By acquiring such habits and ways, the mind becomes fit to know God and experience His blessed being and qualities. But accustomed habits are not easily eradicated, and formation of new habits is difficult and often requires unremitting struggle, demanding both time and energy.

During the period of struggle, the mind is apt to become fatigued by its strenuous labour and to react against the disciplines imposed upon it. Our predecessors on the spiritual path agree that as long as our mind is not sufficiently pure and calm, there is

always a possibility of such fatigue and reaction. Therefore most of us may expect periods of varying duration when the way to God seems blocked and dryness settles on the mind. Under those circumstances it is natural for most of us to become discouraged and even tend to revert to worldliness.

Since it is only when we are truly established in God that dry periods can be avoided altogether, they are a real problem in spiritual life. Certain practices have been found generally effective in minimizing the painfulness and shortening the duration of such periods. Of these, the most helpful is the practice of what may be described as continuous God-consciousness. This practice may seem like an end in itself rather than a means to an end and therefore not easy to be followed by a soul in spiritual distress. As a matter

of fact it is both end and means and can be mastered by anyone who sincerely undergoes three important disciplines.

I. The first discipline, training of the mind, is most inclusive, for it means that the energies and functions of both mind and body must be controlled. The body, as we usually know it, is obstructive to spiritual illumination. So also is the intellect, as long as it is concerned with the world of the senses, whether in gross or subtle form.

Neither body nor mind, until controlled by higher consciousness, is of any help in finding God; therefore those who seek Him are instructed to think of themselves not as body and mind but as spirit. They must learn to abide steadfastly in the spirit and to control the unspiritual tendencies of both body and mind. For this reason spiritual aspirants undergo severe austerities, attempting thereby to bring every aspect of their being—physical, intellectual and emotional—under control.

Of the three, the most difficult to subjugate is probably the emotional nature, which is liable to overwhelm the aspirant and prevent him from thinking clearly and acting rightly, unless it is properly regulated and purified. Most, if not all, mental traits are energized by emotion. Therefore if the emotions are right, the mind also is right. Guided and purified, emotions can be powerful aids in the attainment of spirituality. Since they are subject to the laws of habit formation, patient practice can eventually bring even the most unruly and obstinate emotions under control and purify them.

William James explained in his essay, 'What is an emotion?' how unworthy traits can be corrected: "There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know: if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance, coldbloodedly, go through the outward motions of those contrary dispositions we prefer to cultivate." The best way to conquer wrong habits of mind is to form

opposite habits deliberately, guided by the spiritual purpose.

II. The second discipline, constant application of the mind to God, follows naturally from mental control. The mind is not our true self but only an instrument, and the instrument must be perfected for our use. There are certain regular exercises which will help to mould the mind into spiritual form and thus enable it to apply itself to thoughts of God even when conditions are contrary.

(1) The most important means to this end is meditation, a practice of concentration whereby the mind is made to exclude all other thoughts and dwell on God alone. God may be contemplated in many different ways, and not each will suit every individual. Therefore meditation is most effective when done under the direction of a spiritual teacher: such a one, being able to determine the Divine Ideal most akin to the disciple's nature, can tell him what form of meditation is best suited to him.

Why should we meditate on one particular aspect of God and not on all His aspects? Will it not make our realization of God partial? And is not thinking of Him in any way beneficial?

No aspect of God, however specific, can be considered limited, for He is infinite not only as a whole, but also in every part. Therefore, on whatever aspect of Him the mind dwells—Divine Incarnation, sacred Word, an attribute such as all-pervasiveness, or Light—in every case ultimate perception of His infinity is inevitable.

It is true that to think of God in any way is helpful, but mere thinking will not do—if we want to realize Him we must meditate upon Him; and meditation, to be successful, requires that we should concentrate our mind on one single aspect of God continually. Until spiritual realization is attained the mind is restless, and diversity of thought, even regarding God, causes vacillation.

Meditating every day, year in and year out, diligently going through the same spiritual

process, the disciple inevitably achieves more and more steadiness despite all tribulations and vicissitudes. If the process were varied from time to time, the mind would fluctuate and never attain spiritual stability.

The aim of meditation being to exclude all other thoughts and dwell on God alone, meditation is successful when the disciple's mind, having become increasingly steady, is at last absolutely one-pointed. In that state of one-pointedness extraordinary experiences come; the mind becomes so still that nothing but the Divine Vision shines in the inmost recess of the soul, and all consciousness of the world's vibrating and everchanging phenomena vanishes in the Light. It is then that the qualities of God are revealed as they are in themselves, not as we usually conceive them. Words are inadequate to express them, for words are lost in the profound silence of rapture.

To attain this high state, many years of faithful, earnest, patient practice is required. But we know that if we persist in meditation and try to direct our energy, thought, emotion, and will toward God even when all seems dark and dreary, we prevent unspiritual influences from overwhelming our mind and at the same time prepare ourselves for the dawn of illumination. The practice of meditation negates all that is ephemeral and unreal in us. The false vision that usurps the place of truth and causes all our woes, vanishes when the mind is made to dwell constantly on the Divine Reality.

(2) If meditation for long hours at a time were possible, that alone would be enough to establish the mind in God-consciousness. Most spiritual aspirants, however, have many duties in the world and must engage in various activities. Some are active by nature, and it is not altogether unfortunate that they are so, for activity itself, properly guided, may gradually be transformed into spirituality. Most aspirants, moreover, find that they are not ready, physically and

mentally, to undertake meditation for long hours every day. And even those who are naturally qualified or who have prepared themselves to spend long hours in meditation, are often prevented by circumstances from doing so.

Thus it happens that almost all, whether active by nature or not, must learn to feel God in and through activity. This may be accomplished in four ways: (a) by offering the fruits of action to God; (b) by practising to see God in everything; (c) by worshipping Him ceremonially; and (d) by serving Him directly.

(a) When we offer the fruits of our action to God we prevent that action from distracting our mind from spiritual consciousness. The sense of being the doer of action is an obstruction, and the anticipation of results from action is another. The spiritual aspirant must feel that he is an instrument in the hands of the Lord—that neither the wisdom, the skill, nor the power to act come from himself; consequently the fruits of actions cannot be claimed by him, but must all, whether good or bad, be offered to the Lord to whom they really belong. Thus the aspirant, even when apparently busy with worldly work, is actually calm and peaceful within, knowing that nothing on earth or in heaven really pertains to him.

Is the incentive to work lost when this practice is followed? The aggressive, greedy, selfish incentive is indeed lost, but its place is taken by the pure desire to serve God in whatsoever way He wishes. As long as we live on earth we are active in one way or another, but in offering our every action—sleeping, eating, working, playing, worshipping—to God we become steadfast in our recollection of Him.

(b) When we try to see God in everything we saturate ourselves with the thought that God alone is real, that whatever we do is for Him and through Him. Perhaps the mind is averse to perceiving Divinity in those with

whom we live in worldly relationship; nevertheless it should be forced to think in this way again and again, until it realizes that everything and everyone is He.

We must not be discouraged if our efforts in this direction often seem unavailing. We do not expect an easy victory over the ever-restless mind even in meditation, and in meditation we are trying with all our being to perceive God. Why, then, should we expect the same mind to perceive God readily in the external world without repeated and zealous practice? Those who understand the necessity for consistent spiritual practice never complain of failure. Such complaints indicate that one either has yielded temporarily to unspiritual forces or has stopped struggling altogether because of self-pity. It is usually the latter, and this weakness has no place in the life of one who seeks God.

The continuous attempt to see God in everything, in spite of repeated reversals, is really a prolonged meditation. It not only extends the morning and evening contemplation, but confirms and supplements it throughout the remainder of the day.

(c) Though the third means of applying the mind to God through activity, namely, ceremonial worship, is great help, it is not universally practicable, as not all to whom this practice appeals can afford to perform elaborate ceremonies. However, most people can certainly make a few offerings regularly on altars in their own homes. God responds to our devotion out of His infinite love and accepts our flowers, incense and light when we offer them to Him. Although we use such ordinary objects in worship, in our mind they assume symbolic value, a deep spiritual meaning. Through them therefore we are made to feel close to God.

As Evelyn Underhill has said, the worshipper finds spiritual sustenance in significant ritual, because he feels the need of 'a bridge along which the Eternal Perfect may penetrate Time and the things of Time.' In performing even a simple worship, the devotee loses his

customary feeling of separation from God and becomes aware of His loving presence.

(d) The fourth means of apprehending God through activity—direct service to God—is one of man's highest privileges on earth. The fortunate ones who are able to serve God in churches and temples or in spiritual work of any kind can never quite forget His proximity even in their darkest moments. But to worship Him through service it is not necessary to be ostensibly working for him, great blessing though that is. The house-holder can live the life of earnest, faithful service to the Lord no less than the monk or nun, for there is never a lack of opportunity when one really seeks it.

Thus through the second discipline, application of the mind to God accomplished by means of the complementary practices of meditation and selfless action, the mind becomes more and more conscious of Him and at last firmly established in spiritual life.

III. Supplementary to the two disciplines already mentioned is a third, the practice of alertness. In this we wage a ceaseless, vigilant war against the tendency of our mind to turn from God to selfish pleasures, and are constantly on guard lest lower propensities of mind assert themselves. When detected in seed form they can be negated easily, and so the sooner they are noticed, the better.

It does not mean we are to be Puritans, solemn and dry, ignoring the beauty of art and nature. The truth is, we become more sensitive to aesthetic values as we grow in spirituality. But at the same time we neither avoid nor seek aesthetic joys, for they are only faint manifestations of the beauty and joy of God, not God Himself, who is the ineffable source of all beauty and delight and who alone is the object of our search.

There is one strange fact to be noted about spiritual life: we can never remain permanently in any one position in it, but are always moving either forward or backward. If a swimmer does not tread water even while he is resting momentarily in the current, he is carried downstream. It is the same in

spiritual life. If we relax too much and cease to be vigilant, we slip backward. Complacently resting from our spiritual labours, we are really going away from God rather than toward Him. He reveals Himself to those who prove their earnestness by strenuous effort, which even includes wisely directed rest and recreation.

To one who is just starting upon his spiritual journey, the three disciplines we have discussed may appear too comprehensive and

the task of practising them too difficult. But we are assured by the knowers of God that when a man filled with earnestness and humility tries to know Him, he does not have to depend upon his own efforts alone; God himself helps to remove his difficulties and gives him the necessary strength and wisdom. Therefore if we undertake our spiritual disciplines with faith in God, and with a sincere and yearning heart, we shall not fail.

SOLITUDE

BY LIZELLE REYMOND

In the period of upheaval in which we now live, when everything jars and disappointment grows upon us, we readily build up an illusion for ourselves. 'If only I could get away, I would find joy.... Yes, but where shall I go?' Wearied with the noise and the crowds, you let desire invade you to be alone and to taste the joy of solitude. Solitude lures you like an oasis. In sheer opposition to all that you leave behind, you imagine a solitude that would be pure delight. We forget, however, that the chaos we are leaving remains within us in our most secret life. In these conditions, how can the two words, solitude and joy, be taken together? Those who have forsaken the world assure us it is possible. They know, they tell us, of a solitude inhabited, visited by God, and which is actually a withdrawal from life in order to converse with God and to live by His spirit. This is perhaps the archetype of joy which the painters of the quattrocento showed reflected in the faces adorning their triptychs. Perhaps joy existed in those days; I do not know, I did not taste it then. What I can say is that around me, amongst millions and millions of people who live 'outside of God', I have never encountered

it except in very young children. Nevertheless, pure joy does exist. It was the food of my life in India and I have brought back a warm and everlasting remembrance that to me has become very real.

As for this joy, I do not think solitude should be asked to reveal its secret. Joy is beyond solitude. Solitude is a crucible, and he who has been through it is no longer the same as before. When joy springs forth, there is no longer solitude. The word 'solitude' leaves no room for anything but the one who is 'alone'. There can be no question and no answer. God himself is silent.

But this solitude is a great adventure.

It should be approached with infinite gentleness, I would almost say, with a shade of tenderness. It is always frightening, although it is desired 'intellectually' by all who like agitation and complications. 'Ah! if only I were in your place!' But when they happen to give it a trial and realize that solitude is that consciously desired state in which there is no one we can share our thoughts with, no one to listen to us and admire our smallest actions, they soon hurry back. Having no spectator of any sort, the soul wrestles with

time and is tossed like a ball between causes and effects until all the rough edges are smoothed. It is a stern and direct discipline: When living 'in the world', one very rarely has an opportunity of putting solitude to the test. Here is the one that I tried: a little house in the heart of the forest, three miles from the village. No neighbours. No road but a rugged footpath; no gate, no closed door at night. The postman, as he brought the mail, left the loaf of bread on the table. The rest of my food was supplied by the goat and the hens and the garden. I often spent as much as three weeks without going to the village or talking to anyone.

How did I enter into this solitude?

By a very narrow and stony path. I had a hard struggle. Solitude nearly defeated me. Then I looked it squarely in the face and a real duel began. I made it my task to conquer it and I was prepared to pay whatever it might cost.

There are of course several ways to venture into solitude. The Golden Legend tells us of cohorts of men and women saints who have tried it; the white enclosures of convents hold the secret of detailed and subtle experimentings. In life in the world, there are unfortunately very few cases of a personal experience which can serve as an example¹. Once again I appealed to India, where usually everyone at some time or other in his life goes in for solitude, following the theoretical teaching and practical instructions of some wise man. I humbly set my problem before me and let the skein unwind itself. Each stage to be cleared was plainly marked off. I will only deal with a few of them here.

I

Why are people so afraid of being alone, particularly at the approach of night, the most favourable time of all when, as the Hindus say, the air itself quivers with piety?

¹ I might quote that of Byrd at the South Pole; his book *Alone* extols man's struggle with himself.

The world of day sinks into the world of night. The great astral influence changes, bringing another rhythm. Man does the same. At that hour, children climb unto their mother's lap and want to be fondled; young animals seek their mother to be fed and to nestle between her paws. In India, this moment is called the 'hour of grace', and the sacred lights are lighted everywhere with a moving ritual, even in the booths amid the hubbub of the bazars. Here at home, the Angelus rings, but only a handful of believers respond to it in a moment of solitude born of prayer. The teeming multitudes, the numerous Christian nations all through the West, the toiling populations are no longer aware of this moment, no longer desire or feel the need of it. However distressing that may be, we must dare to recognize that we have completely dissociated the soul from the body just as we chased solitude out of our active life. The resultant callousness is the just price which we must pay.

The intellectual explains everything he does not understand by using more or less correct mental images, depending upon his power of expression. The countryman remains much more simple-minded, and the sensations he scarcely knows how to control are the only screen between him and his soul. That is why he acknowledges his 'fear' of the twilight and materializes it to the extent of seeing in it moving forms and of hearing voices; a shadow then assumes a density equal to that of a man. And this fear remains until the morning breaks. He bars and bolts his house. He lights the fire. He dreads the screeching of owls as much as the wind in the foliage. It is the fear of solitude—the least of all the solitudes—that which is met at the first gate.

Nevertheless, one must plunge into it as the baker plunges his arms into the dough, turning it over, spreading it out and kneading it. A man must measure the night as he measures the day. He then discovers that darkness

is not the opposite of the life he loves in the sun and that the absence of manifestations is not death. The earth basking in sunshine and the earth plunged in night are both steeped in the same solitude just as his soul within him that magnifies the Lord and his instincts that grovel in the mire are the same clay which he will work with his hands.

Lord, is not the solitude of twilight the courageous look on the workshop? The audacity to fathom the depth of the shadows to read the richness of the colours? The Hindu says: Meditate in this Holy Hour. Cast away all that you possess as so many garments that hinder you. Strip yourself. Lay aside your ornaments, your clothes, and your dirty linen. Strip yourself of everything. Give to your Lord all that you are in the whole of yourself, in good and in evil. Is it for you to choose your humble offering? Give to your Creator what He Himself has given you, without pride and without humility. Say to Him: 'Divine potter, fashion me:' Does the forest itself elect the tree with the straight trunk or the tree with the gnarled trunk? Do likewise, give of yourself with love. When you take up your garments again, you will easily know which of them you must wash in the river and beat on the stones in the living water....

II

There is another solitude which is pursued by making noise, no matter what noise, provided a voice answers the voice that speaks within the heart, and that is never silent, whether in daytime activity or in the dreams of sleep. One wishes both to hear it and not to hear it. It drives you from solitude and plunges you into it by a see-saw game which begins every time you are convinced you have found tranquillity.

Almost all monks have among their rules the following recommendation: 'From such and such an hour, keep the great silence within thyself.' They are helped in this by their director or their elders. Nevertheless,

many of them admit that 'it is a moment of terrible struggle.'

Have you noticed the complicated path taken by thought when it is out of control? It never stops. You may have calm gestures and be actively at work, and thoughts throb in your skull like water enclosed in a sluice. You feel imbued with an energy that is destroying you, and you know quite well, that a mere trifle might turn it into the constructive energy that would carry you forward. But how is one to go about it? I remember lying down heart-broken in a furrow in a field one day and crying out to heaven in my suffering. A few days previously, I had felt a profound joy on the same spot. Neither the sky nor my forest had changed, nor the powerful, majestic song of the earth. There was only myself, a poor human creature, who had carefully fenced myself off from the Creator—with a barrier of desires and intolences hindering the flow of life—instead of singing the divine Name of God:

The Hindu says: 'Repeat the Name of God ten thousand times, twenty thousand times a day, one forgets the Lord so easily....'²

The pious counsel makes us smile..., as well buy a prayer-wheel! So proud of our intelligence are we! It would irk us to put God between us and the world every moment, to let his Name hover upon our lips as naturally as the blood throbs in our veins without being noticed and without anyone thinking of it. Yet the Gospel says: 'Pray without ceasing.'³ The Hindu teaches a technique which seems childish to us. It consists in repeating the name of God till it becomes like the breath which actuates life itself, an imperceptible beating of wings mingled with the breathing—the Name of God always present. Then, is it we who seek God or God who seeks us? In the relation that is set up, an infinitely secret relation like prayer that no longer has any words, a new solitude is born in which

² A word from Shri Sarada Devi

³ Th. v,17.

every voice is silent—even the voice of God. The creature is now only a sensitive lyre that resounds in unison with the divine vibration.

III

No doubt, what one tries to do in solitude is to bring God to oneself. What ambition! But everything invites us to it. The Christian Church has permitted the portrayal of God the Father as a venerable ancient-of-days, thereby affirming that any form is proper for reflecting the immutable Light. Only one thing matters—to possess a particle of it, to have it for oneself. And to achieve this, one must tempt God. All means are good. Moreover, God willingly lets himself be tempted! He is like a mother watching her baby offer her the sweetmeat that has been sucked and dropped on the ground time after time. Is the work of the grass that lifts itself up to cry out: 'I draw near unto Thee', or the work of the ant close-bound to the earth, of the same value as that of man? Man says: 'It is mine that counts because I was created in Thine image', but God may have quite a different opinion in this world of Nature in which He has manifested Himself in His power and according to His pleasure.

That is why in solitude, alone with himself, man has the daring to wish to reflect God in his soul, as the infinitely small can reflect the infinitely great. The child's blood responds to that of its mother, saps of like boles can mix. Why does not the human soul find spontaneously the divine soul? Because man puts between God and himself his thought, his reason, these precious instruments of separation before they also become for him instruments of reconciliation.

'Long after he has recognized his God and has offered himself as a holocaust to God', says the Hindu, 'the worshipper must make a submission even more detailed and much more minute; the submission of all the parts of his being until, in the remotest corner, nothing more stands in the way of divine

grace....' A slow submission in detail begins, and it is an arduous and delicate task. One gains ground one day and loses it the next. There is nothing so wily as the spirit that trumpets 'I believe.' Subterfuges abound like cough-grass in an abandoned vineyard. We must toil and labour, let the birds and the worms feed on our flesh and continue the painful process to the end!

Blessed is the solitude in which this regenerating work is carried on. All the obstacles encountered are so many opportunities for discipline. Sleep itself is no more than a means of plunging into the unconscious in order to master it.

To bring God to himself, man models and raises himself up to God. Man watches out for Him as a lover for his beloved; he is thirsty, he is hungry, he lives in delirium. Shri Ramakrishna felt God's breath on his hand, he saw His gaze. Why should not God manifest Himself to one who loves Him? The slow work that builds in solitude is a constant labour of love in which nothing is ever abandoned, in which no sacrifice is ever made that is not rewarded a hundredfold.

IV

This reaching up of man towards God, the descent of God towards man, can only be achieved in solitude, the 'mould' of the sublime ravings in which exaltation and anguish, the vision of the lights of heaven and the shades of hell, are close to one another. It is the years of life spent in a cave or in the forest by the many wise men of India, it is also Saint Anthony wandering in the desert, a prey to manifold temptations, the steep and painful ascent of Christian saints. On the rock of his faith, with no other weapon than his feeble ego which he believes to be strong, man becomes a giant in order to conquer himself. It is a struggle which cannot have any witness, and in which, at a certain moment, the struggler becomes the spectator of himself, and in which he suddenly perceives

quite clearly the dualities that hold him in their grasp: on the one hand personal God (as understood by the Hindu—*Ishvara*, Krishna) whom he has created for himself in order to adore Him, and on the other, Satan whom he likewise needs in order to disown him. Then, before the immensity that he discovers—an immensity without end or beginning—he has no other support than the very solitude which he feared. It becomes his ally. It becomes the closed field of his labour where all the roots of the human sentiments that were still vibrating are broken. It is also the divine compassion in which the worn-out wrestler eagerly slakes his thirst.

On the human plane, the whole cosmos becomes the 'centre' of his security. Has man utterly forgotten that his life, that is to say, that which differentiates him from the state of death, is the very thing which links him with the perceptible mode of God, with God himself in His essence of manifestation? If he knows that 'all is That', he knows also, by entering into himself, that 'he is also That' in the lower universe where he too can play a creative role, at his will, reflecting in his tiny understanding a particle of the sublime understanding of the Creator. If he can watch young puppies play and laugh at their fight for the same bone, will he be able to understand that God watches His creatures besmirch the precious goods he has entrusted to them, with the same unconcern as that which we have for the puppies? We, in our egotism, say: 'Will God permit another war?' and at the same time, with the greatest sang-froid, we sow discord and death around us even in the details of our daily life without troubling to remember that every gesture we make invites the same gesture in return.

If, in the narrow sphere of my life in the country, I bring in a cat to keep away the rats, if I expect the hens to eat the grasshoppers, and the cockerel to fight against the sparrow-hawk, can I expect, above myself, the law of struggle to cease, because that is

what I would like? Does not the cockerel with his jutting spur also think: 'Will God again permit other sparrow-hawks to attack me?' One must be a good loser when it is one's fate to lose. An act is the arrow shot by the bow. It cannot halt in its consequences and will reach its target with the precision desired by the archer. Why not recognize our responsibility in the great game of God in which we like to create constantly, as He does, because we are the life itself which He has breathed into us?

But God creates by love. His sacrifice is to manifest Himself without end in form, to project Himself, to give Himself, while in his own creation man, on the contrary, aims above all at separating himself from the divine work and establishing his power of death in full liberty. By competition, by appetite, he sets up his limited sovereignty over everything he sees weaker than himself, and in so doing, builds even higher barriers between God and himself. Separated from God, man is essentially a creator of death. In ten thousand men, how many are there who, in life, have not pushed aside their neighbour in order to take his place? In ten thousand women, how many are there who have not killed their unborn child in order not to be bothered with it?

Man demands of God a law of love and claims for himself the exercise of the law of death. If the din of the world drives the remembrance of this law from his mind, solitude gives him a tremendous vigour. It forbids the hypocrisy which expediency teaches us and which a complacent moral code has ended by accepting. Between the two movements constantly in action—that of man towards God and that of God towards man—the seeker knows there is no other solution than to retire from the battlefield where he moves and to withdraw into the 'immobility' that is beyond dualities. This immobility is the perfect solitude in which there are no more struggles and no more joys, no more

obstacles and no more rewards. The human soul immerses in the divine soul as a drop of water given back to the ocean—there is now only passivity for action fallen back into itself, or, better still, form returned to the undifferentiated.

The divine solitude in which That irradiates is pure joy, the *ananda* of the Hindu. Words fail to describe this state which surpasses all that the intelligence can try to express.

V

Before attaining this perfect solitude, there are jungles and deserts to be traversed one after the other. All solitaries know this. The white walls of cells are the scene of weird phantasmagorias, which the forcibly detained prisoner also sees behind his bolted door. For the one, they are degradation, and for the other, exaltation. The Hindu does not drive them away. He is without the possibility of casting this burden on to the shoulders of the Son of man who walks before him. As a beggar drags his pouch after him, he will take stock of it, and with his sole strength will neutralize every element without destroying it. His supplication goes to Shiva, the Lord whose throat is blue because he drinks the poison of the world: 'Lord, grant me discrimination....' There is no fear in this appeal; there is the intrepidity that conquers illusions, the love of liberty that plunges into the subconscious.

In order to get there, the solitary chooses a sharp and imperative discipline in which he will not fail. The greater the solitude, the more rigid will be the discipline, because the slightest element of disorder leads to the destructive intrusion of unsatisfied desires, repressed demands. What a formidable procession! Evil rises up with such acuity that monks have seen it take shape and overwhelm them. The Hindu knows that this

evil is as much his own as his passion for renunciation; both are the same energy demanding its right. What he has to do is to seize it, to master it and to direct it without depriving it of its virulence. The *yoga* is a path towards the goal and a means of bringing balance into the spiritual life; it is in no way a maceration of the body or the death of the elements of storm.

The price of solitude is that the dregs of the obscurities of the ego rise to the surface. But any depression which would impede the transformation of the being is a sin in the proper sense of the word—a rejection of association with God's work toiling within His worshipper.

On the contrary, we must open the eyes of our intelligence in order to regulate the body, and interrogate the passions of the body in order to compensate the pride of reason. All is proportion. The chaos let loose in man's ego is no different from that of God's great world of Nature with its storms that uproot trees and cause springs to burst forth. In solitude, the soul, alone with itself, has the unique chance of returning to the life involuted in itself and of feeling the throb of the rhythm of divine Harmony.

In this very last submission, the being emerges from the beating down of the ego with a cry of victory—it is the whiteness of the almond tree blossoming when winter is over. The solitude which clothed the struggle disappears little by little. In the silence which was its sphere, it becomes melody. In the isolation which was the forest or cell, it becomes joy of union with God. Halleluiah! The solitary has emerged from solitude. He has surpassed himself so as to become all hearts that beat, all intelligences that think and all hands that work. He is also the sap in every plant and the rain from every cloud.

The throb of his heart is the pulse of Life.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Sj. Prabas Jiban Chaudhury, with whose thought-provoking and lucid contributions our readers are familiar, shows in *Tagore and the Traditional Theory of Art* the affinities between Tagore and the traditional conception on the subject of aesthetics. . . .

The Way to Spiritual Stability offers practical hints to deal with the periods of dryness which seem inevitable in our spiritual journey.

CHAOS IN INDIA

Looking at the Indian scene today a psychologist would say that the mind of the people has become negatively conditioned. Widespread strike, indiscipline, insubordination, and corruption certainly reflect this attitude. There are doubtless grievances and hardships, economic and otherwise, which cause unrest, but they do not reasonably explain all such manifestations. There is lack of a positive attitude and of consciousness of social solidarity. Sectional interests threaten the general interest. Groups which hold key-positions in the community and are so situated that they can at will put the life of the whole people in jeopardy seem bent upon using this advantage not for the redress of just grievances but for selfish gain at the cost of the general interest. But sections of the Indian people who are actually undergoing the greatest privation are not so vocal and organized and seem to be at the mercy of these organised groups. Indian politics of today hardly reflects the social realities of the situation. For this reason a tiny section is able to hold the entire community to ransom. Trade Unions cover only a small part of our people, but these organizations do not mind holding up production or transportation which can only injure general interest and may plunge the entire country in irretrievable

chaos, from which they will also not be able finally to escape. But at the moment a short-sighted spirit of bargain prevails.

Worst of all, this lack of a positive conception and of general responsibility is invading a field which, above all, must remain immune from it—we mean the educational sphere. Trade union methods do not suit the field of education, as they do not suit the army and the civil servants. The recent strike of teachers of the U.P., now happily ended, is an ominous sign. The teachers no doubt have grievances, and we are sure the Government is fully alive to these. The teachers hold a most responsible position in the community. In a sense it is *the* most responsible position. They are entrusted, above all, with the task of building up the character of their pupils, the future citizens and leaders of the community. If the students find that the teachers lack the very qualities which they teach, the former will never learn virtues through verbalistic efforts. Character is transmitted by character, it is not learnt from books.

Such remarks apply to students also. Active politics must not be their field, as active politics cannot be the pursuit of civil servants or the army, without destroying the foundations of authority without which no society can survive.

It is true teachers are often underpaid and their life is hard. It is essential that they should be given proper wages so that they may serve honestly and without grievance. Nobody will deny this, but it is also true that such wages cannot but be determined by overall considerations of the general interest. Besides, grievances can be put forward in a disciplined manner. Redress of just grievances cannot be long withheld under present conditions. The educational sphere must be inspired by a high sense of idealism. It cannot stand on a level with other institutions.

The widespread spirit of indiscipline, as we have already said, cannot be traced to economic roots alone. It is the symptom of a deeper disorder within the soul of the modern individual. We have carried over into the days of our freedom not only the negative attitude of mind we practised in pre-freedom days but also the unspiritual outlook that we have imbibed through Western education. There is lack of a moral sense rooted in spiritual convictions. It is of course true that in our complex society general interest seems remote from our sectional ones. This is one cause of our social apathy, but it is not enough to explain the unintelligent actions of the groups and individuals. At bottom the problem is one of loss of traditional values. We have lost the sense of human dignity and of self-respect. If we fail to recover it our society will go to pieces. If man lacks a sense of inner worth, if he fails to see that there is in him something more valuable than all he can possess, he will never be good or offer his best to society. The real problem is how to restore to our people this sense of inner intrinsic worth that has been destroyed by material values. The tragedy of the modern man is that he requires to be convinced by means of elaborate arguments and a preten-

tious jargon that he is more than an animal!

Unless this spiritual blindness is cured, no remedy is going to help us. Anarchical forces which dwell in the savage major part of everyman are today seeking undisguised outlets in the name of communism and self-expression. The savage has found a reason for the irrational. Such forces can be met only by spiritual strength born of true faith and reason. We need appropriate institutions and laws to awaken us to the spiritual truth of our personality. Good conduct is the fruit of a long process of culture; it is never automatic. What is automatic is the gesture dictated by glandular secretions. We have to base our education on this truth of man. If man is more than a mind, can there be any justification for neglect to develop his spiritual potentialities in our schools and colleges?

Modern society, however, seems completely to neglect this aspect of education. Go to a town and watch the life of an average town-dweller there. You will find hardly anything which suggests the possibility of existence of any reality beyond sight and touch. It is all sensation. Can any character come out of a society which forgets that man is a spiritual agent and has values to strive for which are not of this world?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RAMAKRISHNA: PROPHET OF NEW INDIA.—
TRANSLATED BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA. *Published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Pp. 304. Price \$3.50.*

This is an abridged edition of the larger and complete *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, translated a few years ago from the original Bengali by Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York. Last year the Religious Books Round Table of the American Library Association judged it to be one of 'fifty outstanding religious books for the year' (May 1947—May 1948). The book 'offers the Western (as well as the Eastern) reader a penetrating view into the authentic spiritual wisdom of a Hindu prophet of modern times. Here are intimate revelations of spiritual truth from a sensitive and disciplined mystic; here is

an uncommonly deep and broad understanding of the fundamental harmony of religions; here are vivid descriptions of India's genuine spiritual culture; here are helpful instructions about new modes of spiritual perception for everyday living.'

This abridgement was done for two main reasons: 'First, the regular edition contains many references to Hindu mythology and folklore with which the general Western reader is unfamiliar, as well as discussions of certain recondite aspects of Hinduism. These features create unnecessary difficulties. Second, the regular edition being a complete translation of all the authentically recorded conversations of Sri Ramakrishna, contains repetitions which are largely responsible for its one thousand and sixtythree pages. It is not convenient

to carry such a book around or to use it for daily devotional study. The abridged version removes the difficulties, yet without in any way minimizing the importance of the regular edition. On the contrary, it is hoped that the present volume may stimulate the reader's desire to read all the recorded words of Sri Ramakrishna.'

The book contains an elaborate introduction containing a brief account of the life of Sri Ramakrishna and other facts necessary for an appreciation of his life and teachings. There is a foreword by Aldous Huxley. It is beautifully got up and printed and handy.

NEGATIVE FACT, NEGATION, AND TRUTH. BY ADHAR CHANDRA DAS. *Published by the University of Calcutta. Pp. 292.*

This is a scholarly dissertation on abstruse logical topics addressed to specialists. To a common reader it will appear to be much ado about nothing and mere logic-chopping. Certainly much of our philosophical acumen is inhuman in this that it is engaged in polemics of a very narrow and special kind, mostly arising from and sustained by ambiguous use of words. The author's view of negation is quite sensible and an intelligent lay man feels that the philosophers he has criticized reached, through too much thinking, wrong views of the matter, which gave the author a scope for an elaborate refutation of these. This is not to minimize the importance of philosophy, and particularly this book, as criticism of false views; what strikes one is the enormous number of false and pseudo-views which intellectual philosophy breeds. This variety raises and demolishes many thought-structures giving us a feeling of vanity or dry discourse which, Shankara truly saw, has no ground (*pratiṣṭhā*) of its own. The present book unfortunately reminds one of this—while it delights him as an excellent intellectual irritant. The author has enthusiasm for his subject and displays learning, subtlety, and insight. We do not propose to enter the contents of the book which includes many topics (not well-knit together), associated with negation and truth. We may only offer a few comments of our own. *First*, the author would have done well if he explicitly mentioned and discussed the Indian theories of negation and truth which have directly influenced his thought. *Secondly*, he has by-passed symbolic logic which has a vast and important literature bearing on his subject. He has consulted Russell, of course, but not other and more recent thinkers of his line. *Thirdly*, the author says that negation of a negation is meaningless (p. 135). He has not discussed, not even referred to, the Marxist theory of negation of a negation which has gained so much importance in modern thought.

P. J. CHAUDHURY

THE THEISM OF NYAYA-VAISESIKA: ITS ORIGIN AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT. BY C.

BULCKE, S. J. *The Oriental Institute, 146, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta 12. Pp. 58. Rs. 5.*

It is a happy sign that scholars are today devoting themselves seriously to a more intensive study of the *Nyaya-prasthāna* of Indian Philosophy. The present well-documented monograph is a valuable addition to the understanding of the evolution of the idea of God in the systems of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. In a brief space, the learned author has attempted a critical exposition of the metaphysical problems in respect of the position and nature of God in these systems. In so far as the problems have been barely touched upon in the *Sūtras* and have undergone elaboration in the subsequent exegetical literature of the systems, his treatment of the problems cannot but be chronological to a great extent. This is evident from the general set-up of the work which, from chapter four onwards, devotes a good deal of attention to the interpretation of texts and commentaries. The author in the Preface declares his 'set purpose' to avoid all reference to Western philosophy in his exposition. By avoiding such a course, the author invites the reader to concentrate on the dialectical niceties of Indian thought, and we must admire the intellectual detachment which makes such objective presentation possible for a Westerner. In the first three chapters the reader has the further advantage of being introduced to the empirico-rationalistic standpoint of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, before embarking upon the thesis proper. In his exposition and evaluation of the positions of the different writers, the author shows sympathy and independence of judgment, although one may not always agree with his conclusions. For instance, in his exposition of the Nyāya theistic *Sūtras* the author avers (p. 30. f.n.1) that the *Sūtras* favour the view that Gautama was a theist. But the various divergent interpretations of the *Sūtras* leave enough room for doubt whether the admission of God in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika metaphysics is strictly demanded by a logical necessity. The fact of the matter seems to be that Gautama accepts the existence of God on belief, while the concept of God as a cosmic metaphysical principle is a later development. The author professes in the Preface to confine himself to Vāchaspati Miśra; yet in chapter six, he analyzes in detail Udayanāchārya's classical theistic arguments only to show that all the eight proofs for the existence of God are borrowed from earlier writers. But the Nyāya-Kusumāñjali is remarkable not merely for 'the refutation of rival theories' as the author opines, but also for the position which Udayana vindicates for the first time in Nyāya literature that philosophical speculation is a kind of worship of God. These, however, are minor matters, and it is to be hoped that this well-planned little volume will be enthusiastically received by the thinking public.

MAKHANLAL MUKHERJI

THE YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO—PART FOUR :
 BY NOLINI KANTA GUPTA. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 369 Esplanade, G.T., Madras. Pp. 79. Price Rs. 1/4.*

Sri Aurobindo is one of the great living personages in India, whose writings are read by a large public. But his style is generally too lofty for many, so the need for brief and simple statement of his views is real.

In *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, of which this book is the fourth part, the author gives an account of *Yoga* as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo in a very lucid manner, which holds the interest of the reader. Here one finds an attempt to synthesize all the spiritual realizations and aspirations of yore and the modern search after truth, represented especially by science, which has also been the attempt of other Indian thinkers since Ram-mohun Roy.

The main point stressed in this book, 'The core of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga ... is the mystery of Divine Descent—Spirit descending into Matter and becoming Matter, God coming down upon earth and becoming human, and as a necessary and inevitable consequence, Matter rising and being transformed into Spirit and man becoming God and Godlike.' The author, we feel, makes too bold a statement when he says, 'This is a truth that has not been envisaged at all in the past...' Sri Aurobindo doubtless sheds revealing light on many old ideas which remain generally obscure today and on the technique of *Yoga*; he has certainly made some dark corners bright. But all these are a different question altogether. Here and there in the book the author himself makes certain observations which contradict his above categorical statement.

This point apart, the book will be a highly useful one to all interested in higher life and thought.

SRI AUROBINDO AND INDIAN FREEDOM :
 BY SISIRKUMAR MAITRA. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 369 Esplanade, G.T., Madras. Pp. 80. Price Rs. 1/8.*

Sri Aurobindo was one of the earliest and foremost fighters for the freedom of India. If the part he has played in the national struggle is little known to the present generation, it is not because his contribution is in any way less than those of others, but because he retired early from politics so that he could work at the roots which not only enliven and energize all aspects of the activities of man and lead to happiness, but also elevate man to a higher level. It is a mistaken notion to think that only those who work on the actual field of politics are the liberators of the nation. Those who work deep below, though unperceived, are much more so, and the results they obtain are more enduring. If Aurobindo retired from politics, in which he made a mark, it is because he saw these points clearly. And he saw, too, a deeper meaning of bondage and freedom.

In this book, the author presents the part played by Sri Aurobindo in the politics of the country and his contribution after the change over in 1909, when he began to see man as Man and not as any countryman. He wanted the freedom of India so that she might elevate the world. Sri Aurobindo says: 'The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building up of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to be all-important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the eternal religion.' (p.60).

LIFE IN ANCIENT INDIA. By Jagadish Chandra Jain. *New Book Company Ltd., 188-190 Hornby Road, Bombay. Pp. 420. Price Rs. 35.*

This book is the result of laborious and painstaking research carried on by the author under the most adverse conditions. Nevertheless he has achieved a great measure of success in bringing under suitable headings in as connected a form as possible the various details relating to life in ancient India which are found scattered in Jaina literature. It will prove an invaluable work of reference to all scholars in ancient Indian history.

The price of Rs. 35 is not excessive, considering the nature of the publication. The printing and get-up are good.

SRI AUROBINDO CIRCLE: Fourth Number. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Circle, 32 Rampart Row, Fort, Bombay. Pp. 165. Price Rs. 6.*

These Numbers are studies in Aurobindian philosophy and literature. The Fourth Number is a worthy successor to the previous ones. There are many thoughtful articles which are worth reading. There is also an article in right Aurobindian style against 'Maya'—an almost regular feature of these numbers. Whether the readers agree with the conclusion or not of Aurobindian philosophy, they will find his ideas stimulating as they are often couched in terms of modern thought and science.

DELHI DIARY. *Navajivan Publications, Ahmedabad. Pp. 406. Price Rs. 3.*

These after-prayer speeches of Gandhiji were delivered in Noakhali, Calcutta, and in Delhi—in the most dis-

turbed period of the country; and represent the last phase of his thought.

One whose mind is never perturbed even by the greatest calamities and who can view all things in a sober and calm way, is indeed rare. But still it was true of Gandhiji, and every page of this volume bears witness to the calm repose of the mind of Mahatmaji, whose life was a dedication to peace and goodwill.

SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI. BY NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE. *Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.* Pp. 311. Price Rs. 4.

As Gandhiji himself said of them, these selections show the thoroughness with which the author has gone into his subject. These are culled out from different sources and arranged under various headings. Gandhiji has treated, perhaps, all phases of human life, with the idealism and fervour characteristic of him. And hence every one can profit by this book. The index is also very helpful.

HIMALAYAS—THE ABODE OF LIGHT. BY NICHOLAS ROERICH. *Nalanda Publications, Post Box No. 1353, Bombay.* Pp. 180.

This fanciful book of art by Roerich on the glories, and spiritual awareness of the Himalayas will be of great interest to all lovers of art and philosophy. The appeal is increased by the many paintings on Himalayan beauty by Roerich.

HINDI

ARYASAMSKRITI KE MOOLADHAR. BY ACHARYA BALADEVA UPADHYAYA. *Published by the Manager, Sharada Mandir, Banaras.* Pp. 428. Price Rs. 5-8.

This book deals with the sources of Indo-Aryan culture. The supreme endeavour of this culture from times immemorial has been to find an answer, rational and verifiable, to the question—*kasminnu bhagavo vijnate sarvamidam vijnatam bhavati?*—‘Revered Sir, by knowing what (Supreme Principle) all this manifested (phenomena) becomes known?’—a question which was posed in the *Vedas* at the very start of philosophic enquiry in India. And efforts have been consistently directed towards discovering that One Supreme Principle and expressing It in all aspects of life and thought. The results of this endeavour constitute the music of Indian culture throughout the ages, the leading note of which is the perception of Unity in Diversity.

Pandit Baladeva Upadhyaya, the author, has brought all the manifestations of the Indian mind under the comprehensive term ‘Arya’ and has given the name *Aryasamskriti* to this culture. In this book he tries to give ‘a brief but authentic’ account of the various scriptures and other literature which are the foundation on which the mighty structure of this *Samskriti* rests. The author is a great Sanskrit scholar and is also

well versed in other Indian literatures. He has a good knowledge of Western and other cultures too. He is conversant with the traditional method of interpretation of the scriptures and restores to us, following a band of illustrious pioneers, the grand meaning and aim of these scriptures, which have generally been interpreted in accordance with the ideas of the Westerners.

Yaska has said in his *Nirukta* that every passage in the vedic scriptures can be interpreted in three ways: *adhibhautika*, *adhidaivika*, and *adhyatmika*—that is, as referring to nature, gods, or Spirit. According to one’s development and need one will understand the meaning of passages in one of these ways. The Western system of interpretation has almost always tried to give a naturalistic explanation, often palpably forced, of many of the sublime passages.

The author has given us a lucid account of the contents and meaning of the literature of our culture. He combines traditional interpretation with upto-date methods of historical research. He deals with the *Vedas*, *Brahmanas*, *Vedangas*, *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, *Darshana-shastras*, *Dharmashastras*, *Tantras*, the *Bauddha* and the *Jaina canons*. There are, further, an introductory chapter on *Samskritika Swarup* (Characteristics of Culture) and a concluding one on *Samskriti ka Pran* (The Life of Culture). By going through the book one not only catches the ancient spirit of our scriptures but gets as well a knowledge of their vastness and richness.

The language is simple and clear. The book, ‘the first of its kind in *rashtrabhasha*’, fulfils a great need at a time when a common outlook on Indian culture has become such a great necessity.

GANDHI SAHITYA SUCHI (GANDHIANA). COMPILED BY P. G. DESHPANDE. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.* Pp. 239. Price Rs. 3-4.

As the title suggests, this book is an index to the writings by and on Gandhiji. The list covers nearly three thousand publications in English and other Indian vernaculars, arranged alphabetically and topically, giving particulars of publisher, price, etc. This result of several years of labour is justified in view of the immensity of Gandhian literature and the position that Gandhiji holds in the minds of the people of the world. The list is, however, far from complete. Efforts are continuing to make it as exhaustive as possible. This is only an interim production, and it needs no apology for its publication.

KALYAN—NARI-ANK. *Gita Press, Gorakhpur.* Pp. 800. Price Rs. 6-3 As.

The *Kalyan* publications are doing great work in spreading Hindu culture through its magazines and special numbers. We are glad to note the present *Women Number*, recently published, where the greatness and glories of our women from the very ancient days

up to recent times have been dealt with, with great learning and in detail. India had always held women with utmost regard and respect, and as Swami Vivekananda says, only that race which honours women can progress. This richly illustrated number is sure to be of great value to all who want to learn about the high position and achievements of the Indian women in the past. It also gives an account of some other famous non-Indian women.

BENGALI

HINDU DHARMA. BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA.
(*Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta*).
Pp. 274. Price Rs. 3.

This is a brief but lucid introduction to the religion of Hinduism. This religion, being a rich complex of apparently conflicting faiths, requires great insight on the part of an author who seeks to offer a just interpretation of it. Swami Nirvedananda fully possesses that insight, by virtue of which he has brought out the essential unity behind the superficial diversity in Hinduism. While stressing this fundamental unity he has ably justified the diversity on the ground of differences in tasks and temperaments of men and also in their capacities for spiritual discipline (*adhikaravada*). The means are different but the end is the same for all—the realization of the human soul as the Universal Spirit, Brahman, and of the world as a veil to it. Swamiji rightly points out that though the ultimate goal of a Hindu is to forsake the world his path lies through acceptance (*pravritti marga*). Hence rituals, which are practised for some worldly gain, have a positive though limited value. They purify the soul. The author is

not a blind conservative. While believing that we should be true to our ancient creed he agrees that changes are needed from time to time in many outer forms of this creed. His views on caste system and other controversial points are quite progressive. He has described and critically appreciated the different paths and faiths within Hinduism with impartiality and sympathy. But he has also cautioned us against the difficulties and dangers of imageless worship, *Yoga* and *Tantra*, and has generally recommended normal modes of approaching God. Without being pedantic he has given a scholarly interpretation of Hindu metaphysics, the concepts of God, soul, and the world. We can safely recommend this book to the reading public.

P. J. CHAUDHURY

MALAYALAM

WHAT IS HINDUISM? BY T. K. KRISHNA MENON. *Kumarylalaya, Ernakulam, Cochin State*. Pp. 93. Price Re. 1.

Sri Krishna Menon is already famous in Kerala through his various literary activities. As a scholar and as a man of religion, he tries to answer the question, What is Hinduism? In these times when so much thought is being given to the question of religion, it is timely that Sri Menon comes out with this book, summing up the great and eternal values of our ancient religion. Without any narrow ideas, he deals with the subject with scholarship and with great conviction. And we are sure this will be of great benefit to the youth of our day whose ignorance and neglect of its own religion is sad and shameful.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BOMBAY

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY OF THE STUDENTS' HOME, CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, AND LECTURE HALL.

The foundation stone laying ceremony of the Students' Home, Charitable Dispensary, and Lecture Hall of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, was celebrated at 9 a.m. on Sunday, 9 January 1949 in the Ramakrishna Mission premises. The function commenced with the chanting of vedic prayers by the students of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. Swami Sambuddhananda, while welcoming the distinguished guests of the morning, referred to the development of the different activities of the Mission during the last few years. He also explained the necessity of supplementing academic education by man-making and character-building training as preached by Swami Vivekananda.

While laying the foundation stone of the Students' Home, Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay, delivered a short speech, which is given below:
Swamiji, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be amongst you on this auspicious occasion to lay the foundation stone of the Students' Hostel. Everything connected with the venerable names of Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda is holy and sacred, and I rejoice to assist in the work.

The local Ramakrishna Mission has a long and proud record of social work to its credit. It runs a charitable dispensary which treats a large number of patients every year. Its Library and Free Reading Room meet the intellectual needs of hundreds of suburban residents. Through the dark days of the War and the darker ones that followed the Mission kept up its good work unflinchingly. Its Students' Hostel which so long sheltered

only fifteen students, will now have a spacious building of its own, which can take in many more. This would be a great service to the community indeed. The scarcity of accommodation in Bombay has resulted in great hardship to its student population because the minimum privacy essential for serious study is not available. The Government have been fully aware of the urgency of the problem. We have just started a Hostel for University students at Bandra, and the construction of the new buildings for the Girls, Hostel and the Elphinstone College Hostel is already under progress. But the magnitude of the problem calls for increasing effort from all quarters. The Ramakrishna Mission deserves the gratitude of our student-world for coming forward to do what it can in this urgent matter. If the gratitude of the parents and guardians of students does not merely remain a matter of words but takes a concrete shape, this building should not be long in coming.

This Mission has nothing sectarian about it. It is open to all, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. It celebrates the anniversaries of the prophets of different faiths. With reverence for all to whom it is due, this institution rises above the pettiness from which religious sectarianism suffers. The only religion it preaches is the Universal Religion of the Vedanta, which stands for harmony and not for dissensions—for realization and not for wrangling. Religion has so often been the arena for wars and hatreds that it is refreshing to be reminded that it should be the meeting ground of unions and sympathies. And with the Mission, religion is not mere abstraction. It is translated into service—the service of the people. The missions of the West have built up through the centuries a glorious tradition of service; and we too, have our heritage of self-effacing service. In these new times we need a synthesis of the best that is in both. Institutions like this Mission will help us to achieve it.

As I said at the outset, with this Mission are associated such revered names as those of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. These names stand for the higher values of life—for all that enriches us spiritually. Between them, they symbolize the blend of noble thought and vigorous, purposeful activity. Blessed by this inspiring background, this Mission is destined to go from one triumph of service to another.

The need of good hostels for our University students is, however, not a mere material need—a matter of brick and stone. Our educational system, so far, has been soulless. Books are crammed and examinations passed with a pathetic faith. The higher the examination, the more remunerative the job one is likely to get. The Sadler Commission was right in speaking of the 'anaemia' of the system. It lacked fullness and vitality. In this mockery of education, the cultural and the spiritual aspects were utterly neglected. The system afforded no

opportunities for that intimate contact of more highly evolved minds with others less evolved which alone makes for improvement. Such intimate contact can be developed only in well-conducted hostels. The need for such hostels is particularly great in cities like Bombay and Poona, and I have no doubt that the Ramakrishna Mission is not only meeting this adequately, but also helping to train the mind and character of its inmates properly.

The late Dr Rabindranath Tagore said: 'Perfect freedom lies in the perfect harmony of relationship which we realize in this world—not through our response to it in *knowing* but in being.' The knowledge we seek through examinations is too frozen to vitalize our life. At its best it is a private possession, at its worst a dead weight. It fails 'to form the mind' in the context of greater things. Minds are best formed when they respond to each other—when life is shared as equals. Young students, whose sensitive minds react to their environment so keenly, need the proper setting for their full-fledged development. With freedom must come disciplined direction. This Mission is competent to provide this direction to the budding mind. Its work of social service will instil into the student proper realization of his duties as a citizen. He will have living contact with better people. Learning will not be divorced from humanity, for the bond of service will unite them as nothing else can. Gandhiji's conception of Basic Education also implies this union of knowledge and service.

With sincere and heartfelt prayers for a bright future I lay the foundation stone of the new building of the Students' Hostel.

While laying the foundation stone of the Charitable Dispensary, Hon'ble Mr Morarji R. Desai, Home Minister, Bombay, exhorted the audience to follow the teachings of the *guru* (Sri Ramakrishna), and said that it would lead to *shanti*, peace. The teachings of Sri Ramakrishna preached by Swami Vivekananda throughout the world had brought much credit to India. The dispensary was only one of the many useful services rendered by the Ashram. True love was the best healer for all ills, he said.

Mr. M. A. Master, ex-president of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries, who laid the foundation stone of the Lecture Hall, spoke highly of the humanitarian activities of the Mission.

Mr. D. M. Daru, Secretary of the Mission, read a brief report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay.

Mr. G. L. Mehta, President, Indian Tariff Board, proposed the vote of thanks, which was supported by Mr. P. G. Shah, Member, Public Service Commission.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, RAJKOT FREE HOMEOPATHIC DISPENSARY

The opening ceremony of the Free Homeopathic Dispensary at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot was performed by Hon'ble Sri Nanabhai Bhatt, Minister for

Health and Education in Saurashtra, on the 19th September, 1948 at 6-30 p.m. Darbar Shri Gopaldas Desai, Sri H. V. Divetia, Chief Justice, Col K. Rai, Chief Medical Officer and several other leading gentlemen of Rajkot and officers of the Saurashtra Government attended this function and showed great enthusiasm on this occasion.

Swami Bhuteshanandaji, President of the Ashrama, first of all spoke on the occasion and gave a short history of the Ashrama, its various humanitarian activities and the idealism with which it is carrying on its work. In brief, he said, in the words of Swami Vivekananda 'our ideals are *Renunciation and Service*—for the purification of one's own self as well as the good of all beings.'

The Ashrama is conducting an Ayurvedic Dispensary but as per suggestions from the local people one Homeopathic section is being added. Dr. G. C. Chanda, D.M.S., has been appointed as the doctor in charge of this section. He has acted as the R.M.O. in one of the biggest Homeopathic Hospitals of Calcutta. The Swamiji then announced the donations given for doing this work by several generous-minded people of Bombay and Rajkot. More trained hands and necessary funds forthcoming, he hoped to extend this system of treatment to villages in the interior where the people get very little medical help under the present circumstances. Side by side with Homeopathy, he said, he proposed to start a surgical dressing section for minor cases fitted up with the required accessories.

Dr Ratilal D. Parekh, Homeopathic Practitioner of Rajkot, and Dr N. M. Tank, another Homeopath, also spoke on the occasion giving an account of the origin and development of this system of medicine. Shri B.M. Buch and Shri M. H. Udani gave speeches fitting to the occasion.

Then Shri Nanabhai Bhatt gave a very interesting speech during the course of which he admired the work which was being done so sincerely by the *sadhus* of the Ramakrishna Order in service of humanity. He wished every success to the Homeopathic Dispensary declared open by him at the request of Swamiji.

Principal Dr Ramanlal K. Yajnik, a Vice-President of the Ashrama, then thanked the President, ladies and gentlemen who had participated in the function. After garlanding and distribution of *Prasad* the meeting came to a close.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1948

The Home, which was started in a small way in 1905 with the idea of running it on a *Gurukul* system to provide facilities for an all-round training to its students, has grown to enormous proportions. The following is report of its activities during 1948 :

Working of the Home : The Home has three distinct sections : the Collegiate, the Technical, and the Secondary. So far as the first is concerned the Home provides only boarding and lodging to the students, while in the other two it provides instructional facilities as well. The Home is run free, the admission is restricted to the poor, and the selection is on the basis of merit. The total strength in 1948 was 255, and about 40% of the students were receiving scholarships or concessions in fees. The health of the students is examined by competent doctors ; they are given moral and religious training with catholicity of outlook ; opportunities are provided for the growth of self-reliance and organizing abilities. Training is given in music to those who have aptitude, dramas are enacted, various festivals observed, and talks given to cater to their cultural and spiritual needs.

A fine library with about 3000 books (excluding about 8000 books made over to the Vivekananda College and the Ramakrishna Math) is also attached to the Home.

High praises have been bestowed on the working of the institution by men like Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Sri C. Rajagopalachari, and Prof. Radhakrishnan :

University Education : Out of the 38 students in the Collegiate section 31 were in the Arts Colleges, 2 in the Medical College, and 5 in the Engineering College. Out of 28 sent up for various examinations 27 were successful, with 13 first classes in the Intermediate, and one stood first in the Presidency in the B.O.L. (Hons.).

Technical Education : The Technical Institute, which is recognized by the Government, prepares students for L.A.E. (Licentiate in Automobile Engineering). The Institute is well-equipped with modern machines and tools, and imparts training in various aspects of the work in this line. It had a strength of 74 students. Out of the 13 students sent up for public examination 6 came out successful. Most of the students who have passed out from this institution have secured good appointments.

The Union of the students published a type-script magazine, and met often to discuss subjects connected with their line of studies.

The training which was being imparted to the war-disabled was discontinued. The ownership of the '*Civmil*' Hostel building was transferred to the Mission by the Government of India.

Secondary Education : The Residential High School (Athur Camp), which was shifted previously from Mylapore to accommodate the Vivekananda College, is intended to be shifted back to Mylapore. The strength of the school in 1948 was 143 boarders and 10 day scholars. All the 26 students sent up for S.S.L.C. examination were declared eligible. One student won the prize of late Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar by securing 500 marks out of 600. Basic craft and manual training

in spinning, weaving, carpentry, mat-weaving, rattan-work, and gardening were given in addition to physical training and games. The Literary Union of the students brought out a fine manuscript magazine, and held debates. The Masters' Association also held fortnightly meetings to discuss matters of educational interest. The senior students conducted a Night School in the Harijan colony.

Elementary Education: The Centenary Elementary School at Mylapore was conducted well and grew in strength, which rose upto 304 (206 boys and 98 girls) as against 271 in 1947. It had twelve sections with 13 teachers including 4 lady teachers. It is run in thatched sheds, and efforts are being made to acquire a site measuring ten grounds to put up permanent constructions.

The Higher Elementary School and Harijan Hostel: The school which was started in June 1945 with classes 1 to 5 became a full-fledged one with a strength of 151 boys and 36 girls.

A Harijan Hostel was started in 1947 with the help of a grant from the Labour Department, and it maintained 29 boarders.

The Boys' Schools: In view of the large growth of activities, the management of these schools at Tyagarayanagar was entrusted to a separate committee during the year as decided by the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The Finance: The total running expenditure of all sections amounted to Rs. 1,50,844-12-9 and the normal receipts to Rs. 1,48,482-12-7, leaving deficit of Rs. 2,362-0-2 as against 7,033-13-8 last year. Small additions were made to buildings and equipment.

The donations and subscriptions that are being received are not sufficient to meet the growing needs of the Home, especially in view of the rising prices. For this reason the management has been forced to draw upon the slender capital funds of the institution to meet the deficit. Such a great institution rendering useful public service silently for years deserves all encouragement. It relies on the generous public for its maintenance and development. The Management of the Home feel profoundly grateful to all those who have helped the institution in cash, kind, or service.

SRI HARE KRISHNA MAHATAB AT THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA BHUBANESWAR

Sri Hare Krishna Mahatab, the Hon'ble Premier of Orissa, paid a visit to the Ashram on 31st January 1949 at 7 p.m. on the birthday of Swami Brahmananda, founder of the Ashram. He was welcomed by Swami Gobindananda, along with many ladies and gentlemen who had assembled. The School-building and the Math compound were decorated with national flags. In the pandal were placed well-decorated portraits of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda. The meeting began with songs and the chanting of vedic peace-invocations. Then Swami Sharvanandaji welcomed the Premier and spoke on the origin and work of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

The Premier, in his speech, said that religious institutions, in his opinion, are like the lighthouses of the world. The liners in the ocean determine their courses with the help of these lighthouses. They will be in danger if they ignore them. Similarly the religious institutions point out to the blundering people the true path. Because of this people have held in regard these institutions from time immemorial. He pointed out that society is now full of corruption and that the model life of the virtuous will help to purify society. The *sadhus* and the *sants* did this in the past and will have to do it at present and in the future. This was his firm belief. Drawing attention to the inscription of Asoka on the Dhauri Hill near Bhubaneswar, he said that reconstruction of society is impossible unless equality and fraternity be introduced in every field. Non-violence and truth preached by Mahatma Gandhi are but repetition of the ideas of Swami Vivekananda, realized in his personal life, for the awakening of India in the field of politics and religion. The Premier disclosed that in his long life in the prison he got much light by the study of Swamiji's lectures. He concluded by saying that the institutions of the Ramakrishna Order all over India have been doing immense service to the poor and the afflicted of the country, and that they deserved to be encouraged in their activities by the support of the local governments. After thanks-giving and distribution of *prasad* the meeting came to a close at 9-30 p.m.