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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वराभिबोधत ।”

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

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

BELURMATH, 1932

Mahapurush Maharaj did not have much sleep in those days. Most of the time he was absorbed in deep moods. He would occasionally hum a song in a low voice ringing with deep inner joy. Sometimes he would recite verses from the scriptures like the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, *Chandi*, and *Bhagavatam*, and would then forget all his surroundings.

One night he was sitting quietly on his cot with eyes closed. It was two o'clock and a profound silence pervaded the Math. He spent a long time in this way and then began slowly to recite to himself :

*Āpuryamānam achalapratishtham
samudramāpah pravishanti yadvat ;
Tadvat kāmā yam pravishanti sarve
sa shāntim āpnoti na kāmakāmi.
Vihāya kāmān yah sarvān pumānshcharati
nihsprihah
Nirmamo nirahamkārah sa shāntim
adhigachchhati.*

When he had finished, he turned to the attendant nearby and said :

‘Do you know what it means ?’

As the latter kept silent, he himself began to say :

‘The sea into which waters are constantly flowing is always full and steady like a rock ; it never becomes agitated in the least because of them. In the same way, due to *prarabdha karma*, desires may enter the heart of a Realized Soul, who is always full like the sea and established in the Bliss of Brahman ; but his mind never becomes disturbed by these. He remains steady in Brahman, in full possession of the peace of *Kaivalya*. But a “desirer of desires” has never any peace. He who gives up all desires and remains without a sense of I and Mine, he alone attains Peace.’

‘So long as desires remain, it is not possible to attain lasting peace. And, further, root-and-branch destruction of desires is not possible without the Grace of God. The Master, by His grace, has wiped away all desires from my heart ; not a trace of them remains. Only the body remains, due to His will and for His work. I am of the nature of Freedom, Purity, and Knowledge. Often I

do not even feel that there is a body at all. Because the Master is getting His work done by this body He has preserved it until now. But remember that I have no desires. I am of the nature of the Bliss of Brahman !'

So saying, he sat motionless. His countenance changed completely and he looked like another being. One felt afraid even to look at him. . . .

It was quite long before he spoke again, saying to himself :

'The Mother, by Her Grace, has given me everything. She has made me full by giving me abundantly from her store. I have nothing else to desire. I have got everything through Her grace. I have got that "gaining which one does not consider any other gain greater." . . .'

On another occasion, it was the dead of night. Mahapurushji was sitting on his cot absorbed in meditation. After a long time had passed this way, he opened his eyes once or twice, but closed them again. Suddenly, a cat which was moving on the floor mewed. Looking in the direction of the sound, he saluted the cat with folded hands. The attendant who was near did not realize at first that Mahapurushji was saluting the cat and looked at him a little doubtfully. No sooner had he done so than Mahapurushji said :

'Look ! The Master has now kept me in such a state that I see everything as Intelligence ; there is the same Intelligence in this building, bed, and animals. The difference is in name only ; at bottom they are all one. I see all this very clearly. I am not able to check this feeling in spite of much effort. All is Intelligence. The same Intelligence is shining even through this cat. All these days the Master has brought me experiences of this kind. People come and go and I talk to them because I have to ; I go through the gesture of daily duties. All this I do through the force of habit as it were. But if I lift my mind from it even a little, I find that it is all

the play of the same Intelligence everywhere. Name and form and the rest—all these belong to a very low plane of existence. If the mind rises to a plane higher than that of name and form, all is transformed into Intelligence and Bliss. These things cannot be made intelligible through speech. Only he who attains to that realization can know.'

He was going to say more, but suddenly stopped. The attendant stood motionless, in dumb amazement. . . .

Mahapurush Maharaj would very often tell his attendants emphatically that intense spiritual exertion must go hand in hand with the service of the *guru*. If the service of realized souls or association with them is not accompanied by spiritual practices, it is likely that pride or vanity may arise in the mind. At dead of night, on one occasion, he said to an attendant :

'Look, it is very good that you are serving me. The Master is very gracious to you since He is getting the service of one of His children done through you. But, my son, spiritual exertion should be combined with it. Only by regular practice of *japa*, meditation, and other spiritual exercises can you realize what the Master is in truth. Woe betide you, if you begin to look upon us from the human angle ; remember this well. Intense spiritual practice is required to achieve a divine outlook. Spiritual truths flash in the heart after it has become purified through repeated taking of God's name or continuous practice of meditation on Him. Take our own case, for example. We had seen the Master, lived with Him, and received His grace. Yet, what severe *tapasya* has He not made us go through ! Even we could not clearly realize, in the beginning, that He was God Himself and that He came down on the earth for the Liberation of mankind. Gradually, this knowledge has become ripe through spiritual practices. Of course, nothing at all has happened without His grace. But if one calls on Him yearningly and with fervour, He does

become gracious. We have gradually come to know that He was God Himself, the Lord of the Universe and the Ruler of the heavenly beings. He has, through His grace, revealed His true nature to us.

‘Do *japa* at dead of night. If you do this, then you will have quick results. You will feel so much joy that you won’t like to get up from your seat and leave off the *japa*. Here you have to keep awake for my service. Do *japa* as much as you can during this time. It is not always that you have something to do. This is a very good opportunity to do *japa* as much as you can—do you follow? My son, never allow time to pass uselessly. You have got to get immersed in His name; half-heartedness will not bring anything. Howsoever you practise, do it with full absorption. Then alone will you find joy. That is why the Master used to sing: “Dive, O my mind, taking the name of Kali, into the fathomless deep of the heart (which conceals rare gems).”

‘You can have no joy until you are thoroughly absorbed in some work or other. He sees the heart’s sincerity, he does not look at the time you devote to practice. *Japa* and meditation, done regularly, purify the mind and spiritual feeling takes firm root in the heart. They must be practised at regular hours and without a break. The Lord has said in the *Gita*: “The mind can be seized, O son of Kunti, through repeated effort and renunciation.” Go on calling on Him daily; you will see that the Power of Brahman, which now sleeps, coiled up like a serpent as it were, at the base of the spine, will wake up and open the way to the Supreme Bliss. Everything will come if the Mother, whose nature is Brahman, becomes pleased. The *Chandi* says: “It is She Herself, who, when pleased, grants Liberation to men.” She is ever stretching Her hands to give it but

who is there to take it? If one asks of Her with a little yearning, She gives all—Bhakti, Liberation, and everything. You have left hearth and home for the realization of God. That is the only aim of life. See that you don’t forget the real thing. Install the Master in the shrine of your heart by constant practice of *japa*, meditation, and remembrance of God. Thereafter, it will be all joy, and you will be cheerful always. All bodies must perish. Our bodies will last only a few days more. This body is very old. When it will pass away shortly, you will see darkness all around. But if you can realize your spiritual Ideal or have a vision of the Divine Form you worship, you will find that the *guru* is ever installed in the shrine of the heart. The *guru* is not destroyed by the destruction of his gross body. Because we love you, we are saying so much. . . .

‘You are near me and serving me because my body is ill . . . That’s all right. But if you think that it is you alone who are thus serving me and doing a great work, you are making a big mistake. Do you follow? Do you think you do me a great service by just fetching me a thing, or serving this body a little? To do the Master’s work with all one’s heart and soul, even from afar, is to render service to us. The Master is the Self of our self. Those who are doing the Master’s work with all their heart, and at the same time trying to install Him in the shrine of their hearts through spiritual practices, are very dear to us, though they may be thousands of miles away. They are truly serving *us*. We are pleased when He is pleased through service rendered to Him. The world is pleased if He is pleased. They will reap better fruits by serving the Master than by merely serving the *guru*.’

‘When all the desires that dwell in the heart fall away, then the mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman here itself.’

—KATHA UPANISHAD

REFLECTIONS ON NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

BY THE EDITOR

India will celebrate this month the second anniversary of her Independence. This is an occasion for joyous emotion as also for calm reflection. It is, therefore, good to remind ourselves of what we stand for, what we have to defend, what we have to achieve, and how.

The Indian attitude towards Freedom and the State is not the same as it is in other countries, where nationalism has long been an ideological disease. Recently other abstract nouns have arisen claiming man's devotion and demanding vast human sacrifices. We do not look at politics in that way—as an instrument of power, or as self-sufficient. Our aim is not power as an absolute or final end. With us the guiding motive everywhere and always is Service in the cause of Freedom in the truest sense. In our eyes politics must be a means to the attainment of this Freedom for all and everywhere.

Our highest conception of polity is embodied in the phrase *Ramarajya*—a word now widely used, but vaguely, for its true content is hardly grasped by many. *Ramarajya* represents the essential elements of a truly civilized polity. The word strikes a deep chord in the Indian heart because the appeal is primarily spiritual. *Ramarajya* is based on truth and justice where the interest of the common man is prior to all other considerations. People are happy, contented, prosperous, and loyal; the ruler is guided not by the motive of power but by that of service. All this is true because the State rests upon a spiritual basis. *Ramarajya* is *dharmarajya*. We stand for this.

In society we shall ever strive to embody this conception of freedom and justice in political, social, and economic institutions. What truly characterizes a civilization is not so much its control over environment, natural or human, but its capacity for inward self-determination for an end higher than the

material. For this reason India means something very big to the world.

From the earliest times our best men have made a large claim for our civilization. They have claimed that all the peoples of the world will learn the basic principles of conduct from Indian wisdom. It is not a vain claim.

Religion in India has all along been a guide to action and not just a decorative addition to life. This total spiritual attitude towards life is something unique in history. Our tradition ascribes the highest value to the Self of man and has made the supreme judgement that the Self of man is also the Self of the Universe. All morality and achievement in India are to be traced to this supreme vedic judgement. Her view of life is that of a pilgrimage of the human soul towards Freedom. A true child of India must never forget that....

Having regard to the difficulties which faced Free India at birth and which were left behind by the foreign power when it withdrew from the scene under pressure of worldwide economic and political forces, these two years have been of no mean achievements. A short glance at India's Asiatic neighbours will quickly convince one of this. Her prestige in Asia and the world has leapt up to a height beyond all astute calculations and optimistic hopes. She is gradually assuming the chief rôle in the Asiatic drama. She has become a factor very much to reckon with in world politics. She is being regarded and relied upon as a mighty bastion of peace and order in the East. Thanks to her, Asia has risen to new importance in world councils.

At home also she has surmounted the grave initial difficulties which would have taxed to the utmost the intelligence and efficiency of any government that ever ruled. Internal chaos has been averted. Enough food has been procured and made available to

stave off famine, and a very sound food policy aiming at making India self-sufficient in matters of food by the end of 1950 has been put into execution with remarkable earnestness and drive. The inflationary spiral has been halted. Nearly all the princely States, which posed a big problem for Indian statesmanship, have been integrated, vastly increasing India's potential. But for heroic and intelligent leadership these successes could not have been achieved, and chaos and anarchy might have taken complete possession of India.

We recognize and record all this with pride and gratefulness.

But such thoughts should not blind us to the grave questions which confront us still. They cry for quick and radical solution, and unless this is done the gains will prove ephemeral and India will be overtaken by chaos and strife. True, we are not altogether blind. Are we not all familiar with the grim and menacing spectres of poverty and ignorance, and corruption on a colossal scale almost everywhere? Who can say we are not? Yet we feel there is no deep and wide understanding of a fundamental factor in the scheme of Indian reconstruction.

Our problem is both material and spiritual, and unless we recognize it as such and take practical steps—not merely verbal ones—to liquidate it on these two planes, our efforts, however bold and heroic they may be in the material sphere, will not carry us far. We are not going to talk of politics or economics here, but we feel that we should emphasize on this occasion a point which in fact we have been emphasizing all along in these pages.

To be a real, major constructive force in our national life, a political party in India must be, above all, representative of its cultural consciousness. No party can live and thrive which repudiates India's soul. India, as we have said before, has a distinct attitude towards life. It will not do to conceive it in a narrow way under the influence of Western education and against thousands of years of

historical evidence. We cannot put all nations on a level in every matter. Nations, like individuals, have their peculiar excellences. This is a matter of observed fact, and no amount of vague *a priori* theories can refute it. India's excellence lies in her broad spiritual tradition and her total attitude toward life. This is as yet very imperfectly understood. Were it not so, we would have had a very positive and nationwide approach to this fundamental national idea.

There is no contradiction between our tradition and what people love to call the modern conception of justice. Indian spirituality is not tied to any particular political or economic ideology, or social arrangement. All such human institutions are governed by historical forces which change from time to time. But one constant aim should be to realize through all these temporal institutions the ideal of man's unity and divinity. In truth, the political ideal of liberty and the economic ideal of equality derive their force and validity from the vedantic truth of man's unity and divinity. 'The gist of vedantic morality,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'is this sameness for all.... Religion has no business to formulate social laws and insist on the difference between beings. Because its aim and end is to obliterate all such fictions and monstrosities.'

Speaking on *Vedanta and Privilege* more than fifty years ago in London the Swami remarked: 'The practical side of vedantic morality is necessary as much today as it ever was; more necessary perhaps, than it ever was, for all this privilege-claiming has become tremendously intensified with the extension of knowledge. The ideal of God and the devil, or Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, has a good deal of poetry in it. The difference between God and the devil is in nothing except in unselfishness and selfishness. The devil knows as much as God, is as powerful as God, only he has no holiness—that makes him a devil. Apply the same idea to the modern world; excess of *knowledge* and *power* with-

out holiness makes human beings devils. Tremendous power is being acquired by the manufacture of machines and other appliances, and privilege is claimed today as it never has been claimed in the history of the world. That is why Vedanta wants to preach against it, to break down the tyrannizing over the souls of men.'

Elsewhere in the same speech: 'None can be Vedantists and at the same time admit of privilege to anyone, either mental, physical, or spiritual; absolutely no privilege for anyone. The same power is in every man, the one manifesting more, the other less; the same potentiality is in everyone. Where is the claim to privilege? All knowledge is in every soul, even in the most ignorant; he has not manifested it, but perhaps he has not had the opportunity; the environments were not, perhaps, suitable to him; when he gets the opportunity he will manifest it. The idea that one man is born superior to another has no meaning in Vedanta; that between two nations one is superior and the other inferior has no meaning whatsoever. Put them in the same circumstances, and see whether the same intelligence comes out or not. Before that you have no right to say that one nation is superior to another. And as to spirituality, no privilege should be claimed there. It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is the worship of God; God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man; what privilege can men ask?'

'The work of the Advaita, therefore, is to break down all these privileges. It is the hardest work of all, and curious to say, it has been less active than anywhere else, in the land of its birth. If there is any land of privilege, it is the land which gave birth to this philosophy—privilege for the spiritual man, as well as for the man of birth. There they have not so much privilege for money (that is one of the benefits, I think) but privilege for birth and spirituality is everywhere'

Alas, the last sentence is no longer true.

Today money rules and has monopolized almost all the privileges. The economic caste of our times is more diabolical in its operation than a social class.

And, further, the elimination of privilege 'is really the work before the world. In all social lives, there has been that one fight in every race, and in every country. The difficulty is not that one body of men are naturally more intelligent than another, but whether this body of men, because they have the advantage of intelligence, should take away even physical enjoyment from those who do not possess that advantage. The fight is to destroy that privilege. That some will be stronger physically than others, and will thus naturally be able to subdue or defeat the weak, is a self-evident fact, but that because of this strength they should gather unto themselves all the attainable happiness of this life, is not according to law, and the fight has been against it. That some people, through natural aptitude, should be able to accumulate more wealth than others, is natural; but that on account of this power to acquire wealth they should tyrannize and ride roughshod over those who cannot acquire so much wealth, is not a part of the law, and the fight has been against that. The enjoyment of advantage over another is privilege, and throughout ages the aim of morality has been its destruction. This is the work which tends towards sameness, towards unity, without destroying variety.'

The law of which the Swami speaks in the above paragraph is the spiritual law of self-determination which is the essential mark of a civilization and to which we have referred earlier in the beginning of this article. The constant aim of a civilization is to embody this law in social, political, and economic institutions. The attempt at such material translation has always been opposed by selfishness and ignorance. The struggle between these two factors, divine and demoniac, make the main thread of history.

When the above words were spoken by the

Swami, the rumblings of the socialistic thunder were heard in the far distance. The logical conclusions of Science and Technology, the two distinguishing marks of the modern age, were far from worked out. Today Science and Technology, which held out the promise of an earthly paradise around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have developed into the greatest threat to human peace and security. The reason is that such developments have taken place in a materialistic framework of thought.

We have quoted the Swami at some length, because he gave the correct and most up-to-date expression of the Indian tradition. And also because he makes it clear with authority and beyond doubt that justice on earth has an organic tie with a spiritual conception of reality.

Without this vedantic truth the modern ideals of liberty and justice lack a positive spiritual sanction and can claim no higher basis than a mere moral inclination. In fact, otherwise, virtues become mere moral epiphenomena. And such a basis is easily repudiated by individuals and communities when the real testing time comes, or even without such an excuse. It is a fact of common observation that we have to aim higher than what we actually want to achieve. Purely on this ground it becomes necessary to look beyond society in order to achieve social happiness.

The temporal man has an eternal reference. It is this reference, the Divine Order behind the scenes as it were, which saves life and history from being a mere string of meaningless events. The values we prize, truth, compassion, charity and love, are incompatible with materialism. They wither away in a materialistic atmosphere. Russians are today accused of materialism by the liberal democracies. But Marxism arose as a reaction to British industrialism of the eighteen-forties and as a material version of Hegelian dialectics which reduced the Absolute to a process in time. Marxism is a Western heresy; the

Russians have only drawn full logical deductions from modern beliefs. The working dogma of the modern age is that the temporal process is the only reality and that Heaven will be achieved on earth at some undated millennium. Of course, liberal humanists throw over it a patchy cloak of spiritual phrases. Unfortunately the cloak does not last long. For the contradiction between our moral values and a materialistic hypothesis is realized in the end.

Swami Vivekananda wanted that this vedantic truth must be made practical and operative in all the planes of society. The conception of freedom and equality must be embodied in appropriate social, political, and economic institutions. Religion is not for us a decorative addition to life. We are not committed to the defence of every pocket or prejudice in society. Our tradition does not stand for a system of private enterprise that operates to the detriment of general interest. Vedanta is not tied down to any defined system or dogma. We do not defend a *status quo* politically, socially, or economically. We do not associate our tradition with servitude to received habits and with the protection of vested interests. We stand for a broad spiritual conception of Freedom. And we shall defend our culture against its denial implied in the conception of a secular society. To say that religion is what a man does with his own solitariness is to take a very poor view of religion. It is absolutely un-Indian.

For nearly a thousand years the soul of India has been starved of expression. Adverse forces, originating mostly from wider causes than national, compelled India to retire into a narrow shell of social rigidity, which, however, has preserved a few embers from a once bright and living flame. The darkest period was reached in the eighteenth century; the nineteenth saw the first glimmer of a new dawn. Today the day has just broke and India faces the morning sun of a resplendent day yet to come. If we cast a glance at the recent past we shall see that our freedom

has come as an inevitable conclusion, in the political field, of a total resurgence which is going to have far larger consequences in every plane of life in future. The vast majority of us may have no notion of this, many may even discount it as a dream; but those who have the subtle perception to judge the deeper forces in action and see the long-term operations of history will not doubt this.

India's hour has struck; the time has arrived to give the fullest expression to her soul. Any attempt to repudiate or ignore the spiritual basis of our civilization will entail very serious consequences. The one large conclusion we can draw from Indian history is that our civilization has not perished, as the great majority of known civilizations have, because we have always emphasized the spiritual aim of life. Let us recognize this.

But mere recognition is not enough. We need practical steps to preserve this tradition. Side by side with material improvement steps are necessary for spiritual reconstruction of India. The old institutions from which the people in towns and the countryside used to derive spiritual values have mostly decayed. They require to be preserved and extended and emphasized. Modern conditions may necessitate their alterations or replacement in new forms. These can be easily done, keeping in view the central aim. It will be folly to leave religion to ignorant priests; an intelligent public concern is essential. Unfortunately, a negative and unintelligent approach to the question has long been in evidence. The consequences of such an attitude cannot be weighed or measured but are clear to those who have knowledge of man at a deeper level of analysis and who are diligent enough to enquire into the deeper

causes of the prevalent moral decline. As hunger is not appeased by speeches, so character is never formed by moral verbiage.

We feel anxious about this because we know the challenge of the disruptive forces which give themselves rosy hues and alluring names to entice people with hungry stomachs and empty minds, cannot be met by bread alone. Man does not live by bread alone. He needs a positive and significant outlook on life. The view which regards religion as a projection or ideology serving as a mere fillip to morality can never be a faith for men to live by, particularly in times of trouble. It is a view that actually makes for the forces of destruction and tyranny. Unless our youths can be inspired by the positive and broad conception of Vedanta, crude heretical faiths are sure to be drawn into the spiritual vacuum created in their hearts by modern education and the prevailing social atmosphere. The challenge of the destructive forces of our time can be met and defeated by a broad, rational scheme of reconstruction based on the real truth and value of man. Vedanta offers the only solution. On its basis political parties can be built up relating the spiritual end of man with the broadest social and economic programme. Nothing will appeal so much to the Indian mind as a spiritualized conception. Unless we are able to see the forces at work in Indian life and shape policies according to them, we shall fail to achieve anything.

Our seers have dreamed of a future India standing on a new pinnacle of glory unattained before and as a light unto the world. Will it remain a dream? All the conditions for its fulfilment are there. It is up to us to make an intelligent use of them and convert it into a reality.

‘Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas.’

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SOCIETY AND DHARMA*

BY HON'BLE DR SAMPURNANANDA

It is a happy sign of the times that we are meeting here in this Conference today. I cannot say what the Conference will actually accomplish, but if it succeeds, as I trust it will, in focussing attention on some of those social, ethical, and spiritual problems which are apt to be neglected owing to the pressure of political and economic questions which demand an immediate solution, it will have a great achievement to its credit. As a matter of fact, any solution of political and economic problems that ignores psychology and ethics and is not broadbased on a sound system of philosophy cannot be of an enduring nature.

Indian society, particularly that section of it with which some of us are so intimately connected, viz. the Hindu society, is today in a state of spiritual chaos. The relentless logic of economic, and political conditions is breaking down many of our social institutions. It will be impossible, for instance, to rebuild the fast crumbling edifice of the joint-family system. Caste, as we knew it, is dying. Whatever the old *smritikara* might have meant when he said, *na stri svatantryan arhati*, no woman today is going to admit this and no man is bold enough to say that she should. The old taboos and the old religious sanctions have no vitality left in them. There is a crying need for a re-orientation of our whole social system and our whole social outlook. Those who seek to deny the need for such orientation on the ground that our laws, the basis of our social system, are immutable, are hopelessly in the wrong. A glance at the *Smritis* will give ample proof of the changes which society has been continually undergoing. To a large extent change is spontaneous, but it is susceptible to guidance and control. It is possible, if our religious leaders and those who are learned in the *shastras* will take a timely and liberal view of things, as did the great

smritikaras and *munis* who in their gatherings at Naimisharanya and elsewhere expounded the *dharma* from time to time, to evolve what might be called a new *Smriti* suited to these times, a code of social organization and conduct, responsive to the needs of the times but attuned to the wisdom of the *Shruti*. This is what our tradition and history demand. But if religion takes a negative stand and ignores the past history of its own growth, the result will still be a change but a change grafted from without. The Hindu Code Bill is an instance in point. Of course, it is good in parts but it is ill-conceived as a whole. It is not the expression of a genuine and insistent demand from below. But those who oppose it on the ground that no change is needed, that the *shastras* countenance no change and that the Legislature is not competent to enact social laws are among its most powerful, though unwilling, supporters.

The attitude of the average educated Hindu towards the religion to which he is supposed to be formally affiliated is one of cynical contempt. And he cannot always be blamed for this. Hinduism has not been presented to him in a form commanding his respect or serious attention. He has heard of Brahman and Maya, of course, and knows in a vague way that somehow these words and the concepts for which they stand are not entirely disreputable in Western eyes. But some of the current stories about gods and *rishis* are disgusting, and the Hinduism with which he is most familiar at home is often nothing but a mummery designed to bring some money to a brahmana whose personal character or attainments do not entitle him to any special consideration. The temples and the *sadhus* seem equally repellent. The wrangles, so delightful to the heart of the pandit, the endless verbal juggleries centering round

* Inaugural address delivered at the Conference of Religion and Culture, Lucknow University, March, 1949.

avachchheda have no relation to life. I repeat, the educated man is not always to blame if he forms such opinions. In their foolish zeal to glorify Shiva and Vishnu, particularly the latter, the authors of some of the *Puranas* have dragged down into the mud the characters of Indra and the other great Vedic gods. *Paurohitya* has degraded itself beyond recognition. A man is ostracized if he takes food from forbidden hands, but no standard of knowledge or conduct is expected from the man who is to mediate between heaven and earth. There will be a howl if the Legislature is invoked, but public opinion and notably brahman opinion is every day flouting Manu's injunctions :

*Nanutishthati yah purvam, nopaste
yahscha pashchimam
Sa shudravadbahishkaryah, sarvasmadvija
karmanah.*

(He who does not perform the morning and the evening *sandhya* should be deprived of all the functions of a *dvija* like a *Shudra*.)

Our temples and monasteries are, as a rule, more unclean than was the temple at Jerusalem which Christ cleaned, whip in hand. It is up to our great *sadhus* and scholars to try to undo this mischief. Hinduism must be brought down from the clouds to the solid earth. I believe in all earnestness that the truths it embodies, the eternal truths revealed to mankind by the *Shruti*, contain in them the key to all knowledge. There is no problem of modern life that cannot be solved in their light. They provide that philosophical background against which we can build the brave new world which shall ensure peace, equality of opportunity, and social justice to all men. It is a sin to interpret Hinduism as a collection of curious formulae about a world that is no more. Hinduism is dynamic and capable of infinite adjustment to variations in the subjective and objective environment.

The strength of Hinduism lies in the fact that it is not a religion with a compelling and exclusive credo. A man may believe in one

God or a hundred or in none and yet he can be a good Hindu if he accepts the Hindu way of life. That way of life can be expressed by one word and by none other, *dharma*. One can define *dharma* in many ways, but Kanada's definition seems to me to be quite exhaustive :

*Yato abhyudayanihshreyasasiddhih sa
dharmah*

(That which conduces to a happy and prosperous life in this world and to the realization of the Supreme Object of life is *dharma*.) A happy life is an ideal that may be variously expressed but surely the wellknown vedic prayer which every one recites while performing his *sandhya* gives expression to much the most important part of it :

*Pashyema sharadah shatam, jivema sharadah
shatam, prabravama sharadah shatam,
shrinuyama sharadah shatam, svadhinah
syama sharadah shatam.*

(May our senses of knowledge and action serve us for a hundred years, may we continue to gather the True knowledge for a hundred years, may we remain independent of any one else for a hundred years, may we live thus for a hundred years.) A life so lived will naturally be a life dedicated to *dharma*.

The world today is a prey to a hundred evils because we are all taught to stand up for our rights. *Dharma* places the emphasis on duty. If all were to perform their duties, everyone will get his rights, for what is one man's duty is another man's right. Their can be a scramble for rights but no two men intent on performing their duties need come into conflict with each other. Our old literature only defines duties, it nowhere gives a catalogue of privileges. Whatever caste might mean, the *Smritis* only lay down what the members of the four castes shall do in relation to others, not what they shall seek from others. *Dharma* is the third *purushartha*. It follows naturally from the two others, *artha* and *kama*. Intelligent analysis shows that the *artha* and *kama* of every individual is bound up with the *artha* and *kama*

of others. A hundred individuals contribute, each in his own different way, to the happiness of every individual. The surest way, then, to secure one's own happiness is to work for the happiness of others :

*Parasparam bhavayantah shreyah param-
avapsyatha*

(Serving each other, ye shall attain the Supreme Good.) Starting from the plane of enlightened selfishness, the pursuit of *dharma* reaches a stage when the means become the end and *dharma* is practised for its own sake, without any thought of profit to one's own self. The attainment of this stage is helped by the constant practice of *maitri*, *karuna*, *mudita* and *upeksha*—the active spread of happiness and the active removal of pain, the active help of those engaged in doing good and the active opposition of evil, without any feeling of ill-will towards the evil-doer.

But what is the criterion of *dharma*? It may well be asked. How is one to distinguish that which is *dharma* from that which is not? A hundred answers have been suggested by writers on ethics, and they are all partially correct. Hindu thinkers answer the question thus: The substratum of Reality behind this world of appearance and diversity is One. They call it Brahman. But it appears as the many through Maya, nescience or ignorance. The supreme object of life is *moksha*, the permanent removal of this veil of *avidya* and the realization—not merely intellectual acceptance—of that Oneness. Such realization, *sakshatkara*, comes from the practice of Yoga till *samadhi* has been experienced, and in no other way. But there are moments when, at least temporarily, the veil is lifted and there is a blinding flash, as it were, of non-duality. Such moments are those in which a man performs a truly moral act. A lover may feel a sense of identity with the object of his love, or a mother with her child. But this sense of identity with one is surrounded by a thick

dark ring of exclusiveness and separateness from every one else. But in the moment when one performs an act of supreme self-sacrifice for another, one feels identity with the other and separateness from no one. The world of diversity ceases to exist for him for that instant of time. He may be dragged down to earth the next moment, but for once his feet have trod the golden path of the gods. The test of a moral act, then, is this. Whatever tends to produce a sense of unity is *dharma*, virtue; whatever, on the other hand, creates or fosters a sense of separateness is *adharma*, sin. Duality is always to be shunned: *dviteeyadvai bhayam bhavati*. The practice of *dharma* is not easy, but then nothing worthwhile is ever easy. What matters is effort. If one's determination is sincere, every failure will be a stepping stone to success. There is nothing to which *tapas* will not win through. *Tapas* is not self-inflicted bodily pain but a reasoned self-denial of the things of the flesh as being unworthy of a man's desire: *Tena tyaktena bhunjeethah magri-
dhah kasyasviddhanam* (Enjoy through self-denial. Do not be greedy for the property of others.) The others are the five senses of knowledge and worldly objects are their property.

It is all very good, it may be said, to speak of the true knowledge, supposed to be enshrined in the *Vedas*, but is it not a fact that the *Vedas* speak, among other equally reprehensible things, of the four castes as having sprung from the four parts of the body of the Creator and is not the Shudra relegated to the lowliest part of that body? The answer is an emphatic no. The *Veda* is not responsible for the folly of its interpreters who would seek to foist all their convenient customs and prejudices on to the scripture. In the first place, our philosophy knows no Creator, like the God of the *Bible* and the *Koran*. The *Purushasukta*, in which the vedic verse referred to above occurs, in speaking about the Virat, says:

*Sahasra shirshah purushah sahasrakshah
sahasrapat
Sa bhumim vishvato vritva atyatishtthat
dashangulam*

(The Being whose head is the head of all beings, whose senses of knowledge and action are the senses of all beings, he who is immanent in the world and goes beyond the ten fingers, the ten directions.) Clearly this is the Oversoul, the sum total of all things, the Being which coordinates all beings as parts of one transcendent Organism, so that the humblest bacillus is linked up with the highest gods. The succeeding verses describe Its manifestation in several ways. And the verse which is supposed to sanction the tyranny of caste does no more than portray Him in the form of human society. In God as society the teachers and seers will naturally occupy the highest place and the manual workers will be the feet, the solid foundation on which the whole edifice will find support. To read an anthropomorphic meaning in this beautiful passage will be to reduce it to absurdity. If the brahmana literally came out of the mouth of the Virat, from which mouth did he come, because all mouths, the mouth of the saint and of the sinner, of the cow and of the dog; belong to Virat? And if he came out of all the mouths, he would share the virtues and vices of all the creatures, and there would be no superiority because of birth in him. The *Vajrasuchikopanishat* says :

*Jati brahmana iti chet na tatra jatyantara
jantushu aneka jati sambhava maharshiyō
bahavah santi ... yah kashchidatmanam
adviteeyam ... sakshat aparoksheekritya ...
kamarāgādidosharahitah, shamadāmadī sam-
panno ... dambhahamkaradibhih asamsprish-
tacetah vartate ... sa eva brahmanah.*

(If it be said that a man is a brahman by birth, it is replied it cannot be so. There have been many *maharshis* born in non-brahman families and some have had non-human origins. He who has realized the One Self, and is devoid of lust and attachment, who is possessed of

Self-control and is free from hypocrisy and pride, he alone is a *brahmana*.)

But the theory of *varnashrama vibhaga* is one of the integral parts of the Hindu way of life. False pride and abuse of privilege may have rendered the old terms odious but every society that does not wish to govern itself on the basis of prejudice and greed must adopt the system—I am referring to *varna*, not caste, in some form or other. The present-day concentration of power and prestige in the same hands is one of the greatest curses which the Industrial Revolution has brought in its wake. That those whose one claim to distinction is the ability to exploit the brains and muscles of others and thus to amass wealth should be in a position to prostitute the machinery of administration to suit their own ends and even to guide the intellectual and cultural life of the people is a great social disaster. The only conceivably greater disaster would be mobocracy.

If humanity is to be saved from the mania of mass suicide which seems to have overtaken it today, if this beautiful earth is not once again to become the free-hold of the hyena and the jackal, the vulture and the mosquito, with a few naked savages skulking in the shadows of the giants of the forest, then a new society has to be built up. There will be room in it for science as a great mental discipline, as an indispensable aspect of that knowledge of Truth which man must possess if he is to function properly and as an ameliorator of pain and want. But science and Art and every other institution must derive their inspiration from philosophy. And no system of philosophy other than the Advaita Vedanta can give the necessary inspiration. The essential oneness of all existence must always be present before those whose privilege it should be to guide society in one capacity or another, and all life, social, political, cultural, and economic, should be so correlated, so organized, as to further the realization of this Oneness. The educational system will be a

great instrument in this process. The State cannot create yogis and it cannot force men into the state of *samadhi*, but it can, if it wills, consciously set this task before itself, reduce the obstacles to such realization to a minimum.

In such a society, the guiding principle of all activity, individual and communal, will be *dharma*. Men born and brought up in an atmosphere which emphasizes the unity that underlies all seeming diversity cannot possibly be dominated by ideas of self-aggrandizement and intolerance. They may, due to past *samskaras*, make mistakes but their mistakes will not be irretrievable and will not leave behind them that aftermath of bitterness which is the characteristic of *sakama karma*, action dictated by the desire for personal gain. Such men will not try to make scripture a scape-goat for their own indolence and love

of money and power. Their lives will be cleaner and more austere than ours but there will be more of beauty in them, for Art comes from communion with nature and nature does not allow the impure of heart to cross her inmost portals. It is such men who alone can live the old and eternally true teaching, 'Do to others as thou wouldst be done by,' for they will constantly feel that they themselves are the seeming others and no one can wish ill to himself.

If such a society is to be born, there is no time to lose. The thinkers of all countries, and not they alone, must come together and rise above the petty prejudices of race, colour, or religious faith.... It is thus alone that the new society can be fashioned. Let me hope this Conference will prove a step in that direction.

THE MARCH OF HISTORY

(BEING AN ATTEMPT AT A PSYCHO-PHILOSOPHIC INTERPRETATION OF THE COURSE OF HUMAN HISTORY AS AN EFFORT TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF CULTURAL SYNTHESIS)

BY P. S. NAIDU

PREFATORY NOTE

The two lectures on 'The Historic Process' contain the ideas which took shape in the mind of the author as he attempted, from a psycho-philosophic point of view, to think through the main currents of the cultural history of the human race. The philosophies of progress, of Hegel, Spencer, Comte, and Spengler, and the metaphysical concepts of the evolutionary philosophies of Lloyd Morgan and Bergson, on which striking theories of human advance may be erected, arranged themselves into a hierarchy with a three-fold gradation, as the author struggled to synthesize into a unity the conflicting elements in the annals of man's cultural achievement. The first lecture contains a brief critical survey of this hierarchy, and concludes with the formulation of a new

psycho-philosophical formula, for viewing in a correct light the nature and direction of human advance. In the second lecture the new formula is elaborated, and the cultures of Eastern and Western nations are evaluated and graded according to the extent of their contribution to the cultural unity of mankind. Indian culture alone, it is shown, holds the key to final unity. The spirituality of our ancient land is the crown and culmination of the Historic Process. Vedantic unity is the distant goal towards which the mighty current of human history is rolling on.

THE HISTORIC PROCESS

I. INTRODUCTION

PESSIMISM VS. OPTIMISM

Many of us assembled here tonight are fortunate in having our lives carefully pro-

tected from the rude and vulgar shocks of the workaday world by the loving care of the University or the College to which we belong. And as we contemplate calmly and dispassionately the progress of the institution which has nurtured our intellect, we are inclined to say that there has been real advance in matters that count most in our life. We feel that not only in the external appurtenances of our intellectual life, namely, buildings and equipment, but in the deeper things, too, of the mind, there has been notable progress in recent times. Do we not then, while turning over in our minds and reflecting on the inner meaning of the history of the University to which we belong, perceive one increasing purpose running through the ages? I have no manner of doubt whatever in affirming that we do. And while we are in this expansive mood we may be tempted to march along joyfully with the great poet of optimism when he calls to us invitingly 'to grow old with him, to trust God, to *see all* and be not afraid.' And as we feel inwardly cheered by the sight of the apparent spread of faith, hope, and love, we have an irresistible urge to exclaim, 'God is in his heaven, and everything is right on earth!' But—when we step out of the protected cloisters of the University campus into the ugly world of power politics abroad, and above all into the hideous battlefields of the 'civilized' nations, and when we consider 'the wholesale cruelties, lusts, manias, and obsessions that rage like all-consuming forest fires in the life of humanity', we feel inclined to agree with the pessimist who says that 'theories of progress seem ridiculous escapisms, fashioned by timid, bloodless and unimaginative spiritual bankrupts.' It is not as though the sadistic lusts and barbaric brutalities marred the pages of history here and there, so that they may be passed by without comment. The human race seems to indulge in these unholy orgies periodically, and the advance of civilization seems but to refine the means by which nations slake their thirst for human blood. Ponder over the hecatombic

sacrifices of the Carthaginians and Aztecs, and the atrocities of the Romans, Semites, and Huns. Consider the careers of Nero, Attila, Ivan the Terrible, and the long succession of their compeers ending with their monstrous blood-brothers in contemporary Europe. 'The perusal of general history unfolds a gloomy tale of the insensate greeds, lusts and panic fears, and of the ferocious passions and hideous deeds of the uncultured mass.' The gloomy Dean of St Paul seems to be right when he asserts that of progress in such a system as a whole, there cannot be a trace. Nor can there be any doubt about the fate of our own planet. Man and all his achievements will one day be obliterated like a child's sand castle when the next tide comes in. I am reminded in this connection of a little known poem of Byron, *Cain*. It opens with a service of thanksgiving to the Almighty in which all join but Cain. 'Hast thou nought to thank God for?' asks someone. 'No' he answers. 'Do'st thou not live?' asks Adam. 'Must I not die?' replies Cain. And left to himself Cain breaks out into a soliloquy, the refrain of which is:

'I judge by the fruits—and they are bitter—
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.'
Cain's pitiful wail seems to represent truly the mood of many of our contemporaries who are inclined to read in the pages of history 'the same old story of human greed and human brutality, the hand of man raised against man, and one evil succeeding another with short-lived interludes of great men and pleasing romances of love and life.' And yet, as one of my predecessors very pertinently asks, 'Have we lived in vain? Can we not wring out of the records of man's doings their inner secret, some plan, some dominating idea, which could illumine vast masses of arid historical facts?' The tenor of our answer to these questions is of supreme importance at the present moment. And the proper answer may perhaps be found by reflecting on that awe-inspiring creation of our age—the atom bomb. The bomb is both a challenge and an answer:

a challenge to our faith in the moral perfectibility of man, and in the ever-increasing goodness of his relationship to brother man and to God: and an answer to those who seek anxiously for a clue to a clear understanding of the nature and direction of human progress. Atomic energy is neither morally evil nor morally good in itself, but human will makes it so. The forces released by atomic research are ethically colourless; what endows them with ethical value is human character, human endeavour, and human purpose—the character of the men or the groups of men who handle it, their aims, and purposes. This is a very trite saying, but it is profoundly true. Natural events and natural forces are clothed with ethical and social values through the operation of the human will. If that is true, then it goes without saying that historical events are doubly draped in the fabric spun out of the same will, nay more, their very stuff is composed of human will. Therefore, the direction, forward or retrograde, which these events take will depend on how the will wills which will guide the great movements of history. The cultivation of this will through proper training, its refinement by first anchoring it in an optimistic faith, and then making it see the rational grounds of such faith—these are indicated as the supreme need of the hour. That there are evil tendencies in mankind few who have lived through the last quarter of a century would care to deny. But of this I am sure, the balance, the overwhelming balance is on the side of good. This is a matter of faith. And the very act of faith in the essential goodness of man, the very act of willing to see and find such goodness will help to further that goodness, just as the Nazi faith in the wickedness of men has nourished human brutality and animality by the very act of believing in such evil tendencies. The very act of faith in ‘an increasing purpose running through the ages’ will not only enable us to see that purpose, but will also strengthen the Divine hands toiling to forge the conditions for its fulfilment. Collective willing, I mean,

the co-operative act of focussing different centres of individual consciousness on the same purpose, is a potent force in determining the destinies of mankind in as much as it may help or hinder Divine will. The solemn duty of directing human will into proper channels rests not only with us, teachers, but also with leaders in every sphere of human activity. But, even the sturdiest will falters sometimes. It is then that reason should step in, and prop up faith with convincing arguments for a belief in the inherent goodness and perfectibility of man. It is the duty of the Philosopher of History to produce these arguments, and to the fulfilment of that duty I shall now address myself.

II. FAILURE OF PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

It is a matter for grave concern that even after Hegel and a whole host of post-Hegelian philosophers had strained every nerve to convince the intellectuals of the reality of progress in human history, there should still remain bleak scepticism in the mind of a good few of the serious-minded. Doubts will always assail those of poor intellect, and scepticism will invariably take hold of the undeveloped minds of the common mass. But when highly refined intellectuals, accustomed to careful sifting and weighing of evidence, are inclined to hold that the idea of progress is an illusion, then the blame for their disbelief should be laid at the doors of the philosophers who have evidently mishandled the data of history. When we make a thorough search for the root cause of the incompetence of these philosophers we find that *environmentalism* is the source of their failure. These thinkers have laid undue emphasis on the superficialities of historical movements, utterly neglecting the supremely important and essential factors. In their anxiety to display the part played by the environment in shaping the destiny of human events, these philosophers have individually and collectively ignored human motives, passions, aspirations,

and ideals which are the true causes of historical events. Man is the central, dominating figure on the stage of history, and a philosophy of history which neglects the inner forces operating in the mind of man is doomed to fail sooner or later. It is this neglect of the psychological forces that is the root cause of the barrenness of the several philosophies of history that have come down to us from Hegel and his numerous successors. We shall, therefore, essay to give a psycho-philosophical orientation to world history, displaying great human events and movements since the dawn of civilization as so many stages in a struggle for cultural unity. This new approach to world history will reveal the one increasing purpose running through the ages by throwing into relief the collective effort of the human race to achieve unity and co-operation. Before we take up this task let us attempt a very brief but critical survey of the existing philosophies of history, with a view to locate the flaws in them.

III. THE THREE METHODS OF PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY

There are three methods of treating the cultural history of man, the *mechanistic*, the *biological*, and the *psycho-philosophical*. The first method draws its inspiration from the deterministic laws established by the physical sciences, the second from the biological concept of evolution, and the third from the elusive indeterministic psychological factors of the human mind. As man is infinitely superior to the mere beast, and this to brute matter, so is the psychological method far above the biological and physical methods of interpreting history. And let us remind ourselves that brute matter is capable only of change in place, animals, of simple growth, while man alone can progress towards an ideal. This progress towards an ideal cannot be handled by logical tools forged out of the deterministic stuff of the physical sciences, nor can it be handled by evolutionary tools coined out of mechanistic and environmentalistic biology.

It can be handled only by the subtle concepts of philosophical psychology.

IV. HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Hegel's Philosophy of History belongs to the first head of our classification; in fact, it is the example *par excellence* of the mechanistic approach to the problems of world history. This will come as a shock to many of you who will at the moment be recalling to your mind images of the grand parade of Freedom, Spirit, Reason, and Self-consciousness that Hegel makes in the opening chapters of his well-known work. But I shall in a few moments establish the soundness of my contention. And in the meanwhile let us give Hegel his due. Before him Leibnitz, Lessing, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Rosencranz had made brilliant guesses respecting the foundations of general history, but their inspiration failed to crystallize into anything substantial for the benefit of their successors. There were a few among Hegel's predecessors who formulated views which served as irritants to our philosopher. The names of Vico, Herder, Schlegel, and Winckelmann may be mentioned in this connection. Vico concerned himself with ancient history, and what little he has to say about human progress is covered over with so much that is ugly and forbidding that we are tempted to pass it by without notice. Herder who is often eulogized by scholars was a poet with a distaste for metaphysics, and consequently blundered into false analogies regarding human progress. Schlegel starts with the dictum that man was born free, and sees in the historic progress only a degeneration of original freedom—a view hardly helpful to a proper interpretation of the events of human history. Winckelmann attempted to write cultural history, but failed because of his dogmatism and of his concentration on the outward conditions of culture. Before Hegel, therefore, we find only dots, lines, and curves on the historical canvas. Hegel poured these into the vigorous mould of his intellect, and drew out a strikingly

complete pattern, full and finished to the minutest details. As Egon Freidell, a recent recruit to the ranks of the Philosophers of History remarks, 'In Hegel's philosophy of history culminated the efforts of a whole series of German writers...to appreciate the nurturing influence of the great collective institutional products of humanity.' And it must be admitted that the influence of Hegel on post-Hegelian writers has been deep and abiding.

From ancient China to the July Revolution—it is a vast stretch of history indeed that is covered by Hegel. On the canvas of world history spread out before us we see a grand and impressive panorama of vast events, of infinitely manifold forms of peoples, states, and individuals in unrelenting succession. 'The play is presented of everything that can enter into and interest the soul of man—all his sensibility to truth, beauty and goodness. On every hand we recognize aims adopted and pursued whose accomplishment we desire. We hope and fear for them. In all the grand events and achievements presented before us we behold human action and human suffering predominant; everywhere something akin to ourselves, and therefore everywhere something that excites our interest.' Such is the grandeur of the Hegelian painting, and such are the feelings and sentiments aroused by its appeal to the depths of humanity in us. China and India are there in the picture, and so are Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor; Poland and Russia; France and England; and above all Germany. But—where are the African peoples, where are America and Australia? Ah! those are very inconvenient questions, and our philosopher would have us wink at the omission. But how could we? It takes a very big wink indeed to hide out three whole continents and a big chunk of the fourth. So, Hegel advances some lame arguments to bolster up his false position. America, he says, is the echo of the past or the land of the future, and has little interest for philosophy of history. African character exhibits

absolute injustice and so may be dismissed from further consideration as lying only on the threshold of history. Thus does Hegel drop more than half the world out of his history: but even so, how much has he achieved? Mighty little, we should say, judged by the sober criticism of learned scholars. We are justified in asking why, in spite of the meticulous care with which Hegel handles his material, fair-minded critics are so thoroughly disappointed with him? Why does a recent German writer on cultural history characterize Hegel's philosophy of history as a mere skeleton which may never be clothed with living flesh, and within which pulsating blood may never circulate? Why has Hegel failed, in spite of his avowed *idealism*, to establish, in his treatment of history, the operation of one abiding purpose running through the ages? When we make an unbiassed and objective examination of the Hegelian position we come upon a surprising secret in Hegelian philosophy hitherto concealed from our view. Hegel conceived of the historic process in terms of the *consciousness* of freedom. I want the term 'consciousness' to be noted in particular. It was the undoing of Hegel. The vision that he had of the true nature of human history was completely clouded and distorted by the rigidity of his logic of consciousness. Freedom is not easy to define, and Hegel sought to interpret it, quite legitimately I should say, in terms of spirit. But in the spirit he emphasized consciousness and reason, to the exclusion of the foundations of these elements in conation. He saw in the grand movements of world history the objective manifestation of infinite reason, and a steadily graded harmonization or reconciliation of the objective with subjective intelligence. 'The only thought which philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history' says Hegel, 'is the simple conception of reason.' And this *raison*, of course, follows the dead and deadening triadic process known as the dialectic process. So the grand Hegelian opening in

the exaltation of Freedom has a sorry ending in the crippled dialectical formula. If you stress consciousness, you have to over-emphasize the cognitive elements in it to the exclusion of the dynamic conative elements which are the heart and soul of personality and individuality. The emphasis on cognition is bound to result in some such rigid and abstract logical formula as the Hegelian dialectic which is incompetent to deal with life and its upsurging development. It is this *dialectic* that is the main spring of Hegel's philosophy of history, and it is also the root cause of his failure. No wonder that his disciple Marx embraced this principle passionately to bring forth his materialistic *weltanschauung*. If the philosophy of history is the solid kernel of Hegelian philosophy, then the triadic formula is the juice in that kernel. And this formula is too wooden, too rigid, too mechanistic to deal with the life-process which is fluid and alogical. From thesis you jump across to the antithesis, and then somehow get kicked up to the synthesis. The whole movement is jerky, staircase-like, rickety and rockety! No wonder, then, that a reviewer of a recent edition of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* speaks of 'the hocus-pocus of the dialectic.' No wonder that Sir Radhakrishnan says that 'the idea of a dialectical movement in historical sequence is an illusion,' and no wonder that Professor Leighton speaks of the entire Hegelian scheme as a *myth*.

Two criticisms, then, we urge against the Hegelian formula considered as a conceptual tool for unravelling the tangled skein of history. Firstly, there is visible here an utter neglect of the conative elements lying at the very foundations of the contingent and the unforeseen, governing the direction of human destiny. This neglect is evidently motivated by the desire to make the dialectical formula work smoothly. Secondly, the Hegelian conception of freedom is an empty form without any content. How could any content pulsating with dynamic life be found

by one who is wedded to an abstract, life-destroying dialectical formula?

Weighty objections have been urged against the Hegelian way of interpreting history. Sir Radhakrishnan draws our attention to the absence in it of any creative gradation of purposes and values. F. M. Smuts shows how the Philosophy of History has debased idealism into repulsive materialism. Spengler ridicules the mystic three-fold order of the dialectic, and shows how Hegel was forced in a rather naive manner to ignore those nations which did not fit into his rigid scheme. A more pointed criticism is that Goethe's deep and spiritual idea of historic development has been mechanicalized and debased through the instrumentality of Hegel and his dialectic. But the weightiest and the most damaging criticism comes from the facts of history. It is a significant comment of real history on Hegel's view that India whose people he characterized deprecatingly as those who had not attained to the true knowledge of the spirit, and whose conception of freedom was one of caprice, ferocity, and brutal recklessness of passion, should have produced a whole galaxy of the true liberators of the spirit, a Buddha, a Shankara, a Ramanuja, a Ramakrishna, a Tagore, and a Mahatma, while Germany, the land characterized by Hegel as the highest in the scale of evolution, and as the only true reflection on earth of God's self-consciousness should, after a long course of spiritual development, have produced a Hitler, a Hess, a Goebbels, a Goering, a Himmler and the Belsen monsters, whom not Attila, not even Tamerlane could have rivalled in caprice, ferocity, and brutality and utter disregard of human personality and individuality. And so we turn away from Hegel and his Philosophy of History sadly disappointed, and turn to those thinkers whose thought has its roots in the sciences of life.

V. SPENCER AND EVOLUTIONARY PHILOSOPHY

Among the thinkers who look to biology

for an orienting concept, Spencer is the earliest. His system marks as it were a transition from the mechanistic to the biological trend in interpreting history. In Spencer we find great anxiety to make use of the then newly discovered principle of the evolution of living organisms to the elucidation of the apparently wayward path taken by human institutions. Yet, the rigour of logical determinism is still there in the neat and trim formula of Spencer which displays the relationship between the whole and its parts. That is why I have chosen to speak of his system as an apt example of determinism in biological philosophy.

No one has any hesitation in pronouncing today the Spencerian formula as inadequate for dealing with the historic process. There was a time when the concept of an ascent from the indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity through a continuous differentiation of parts accompanied by greater and greater integration of functions was held to be valid even in the realm of human affairs. But when Spencer attempted to apply his formula to the evolution of social laws he failed, and at the very moment when he was publishing his mighty tomes on *Sociology and Ethics*, industrialism was rapidly moving towards centralization, blowing up the very foundation of the Spencerian formula. Apart from the numerous exceptions to Spencer's formula, which far outnumber the favourable cases, and apart from the objections which Bergson urges against it, there is a most serious defect in our thinker, and that is the mechanical rigidity of his conception. There is an inescapable determinism of a rigid type at the basis of the orderly sequence envisaged by Spencer. From brute matter to plant life, and from plants to animal organisms, the order of development seems to fit into Spencer's evolutionary hypothesis. But when we ascend from the animal to man we find that the ground under the Spencerian concept is getting shaky. My great teacher Dr Skinner was in

the habit of referring to the mechanism of a watch as the most perfect example of the Spencerian formula for progress. It is not without significance that this rigid mechanical model was chosen by the acute thinker to illustrate the highest level of progress as conceived by Spencer. How can such a deterministic and logic-ridden concept help us to see any enduring purpose running through the ages? Had Spencer attempted a philosophical generalization on a basis of embryonic development he might have fared better. But embryology is of post-Spencerian origin. Anyway the unilinear theory of Spencer is unsuited to the interpretation of the facts of human history.

VI. SPENGLER AND HIS DECLINE OF THE WEST

To the class of biological determinism also belongs the great work of Spengler. We are constrained to pass this judgement in spite of the admiration which Spengler's *Decline of the West* has elicited from the most thoughtful critics. Egon Freidell points out that 'Spengler is perhaps the most powerful and vivid thinker to appear on the German soil since Nietzsche. One has to climb very high in world's literature to find works of such scintillating and exuberant intellect, such triumphant psychological vision and such personal and suggestive rhythmic cadence as his *Decline of the West*. . . . Yet Spengler is the product of his age precisely in that he is an atheist, agnostic and materialist in disguise. He takes his stand on mechanistic biology, and draws freely on subtle statistics, and even mechanics. He does not believe in a meaning of the universe, in its inherent divinity. Spengler is the last heir to the technical age, and at bottom he is a pupil of Darwin and the English sensationalists.' The Spenglerian formula is based on the growth, decay, and the final dissolution of the body. It is purely mechanical in outlook, confining itself as it does to the material and the perishable, to the utter exclusion of the immaterial, imperish-

able mental elements in human nature. The formula which Spengler has framed, is, therefore, eminently suited to establish not an increasing, but a decreasing purpose running through the ages, ending finally in the collapse and annihilation of civilization. Mechanistic formulae, then, are incapable of dealing with history which is full of the capricious and the

contingent, akin more to the elusive will of man's mind than to the physiology of his body. Let us, therefore, set aside these deterministic and mechanistic biological views of history and turn to those which may prove more helpful to us in our efforts to find an increasing purpose running through the ages.

(To be continued)

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE UPANISHADS (III)

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

(Continued from the July issue)

VEDIC KNOWLEDGE

The knowledge that was prized most in ancient India by the *rishis* was known as *Vidya*. As a result of this *Vidya*, or Knowledge of Reality, one attains Bliss and Immortality. It is quite different from ordinary knowledge, which is the product of the intellect. *Vidya* is a supersensuous and supramental experience.

According to the *Mundaka Upanishad*, one should acquire two forms of knowledge; the *apara* (lower) and the *Para* (Higher). The lower consists of the four *Vedas* (that is to say, their ritualistic portions) and their six auxiliaries. It deals with the phenomenal universe. The importance of the lower knowledge was admitted by the *rishis*. It is conducive to a man's material welfare; but its results are impermanent.

The Higher Knowledge is that by which the Imperishable Substance is known. This Imperishable Substance was given the name of Brahman by the Indo-Aryan seers; hence the Higher Knowledge was also called *Brahmavidya*, the Knowledge of Brahman; and this is the knowledge to which was given the general name *Upanishad*. *Brahmavidya* was regarded as the foundation of all other forms of knowledge, *sarvavidyapratishtha*. Highly treasured by the *rishis*, it was zealously

guarded by them; for they regarded it as more precious than the earth filled with riches. The secret of Brahman could be transmitted only to a qualified disciple. 'He who meets with a teacher to instruct him obtains the true knowledge.'¹

'Only the knowledge that is learnt from a teacher leads to the Highest Good.'² The qualifications of the aspirant have already been described.

'If these truths have been told to a high-souled person who feels supreme devotion for God, and for his *guru* as for God, then they will shine forth—then they will shine forth indeed.'³

The actual experience of Brahman, which is the culmination of the Higher Knowledge, requires extremely austere disciplines. Only the great renouncers known as *paramahansas*, belonging to the highest order of *sannyasins*, gain this complete Knowledge of Brahman. For Brahman cannot be perceived or comprehended by the senses or by the intellect that depends on them. Only yoga can give a man that subtle depth of understanding by which the supramental truths can be appre-

¹ *Chh. Up.* VI. xiv. 9.

² *Chh. Up.* IV. ix. 3.

³ *Svet. Up.* VI. 23.

hended. The *rishis* were adept in yoga. That is why their hearts were open to the secrets of creation and the universe.

The methods of the modern physical sciences for the discovery of truth are based upon a different notion of how to search than that which directed the *rishis* in their realization of Brahman. A scientist seeks to understand the universe through reason based on the knowledge derived from the sense-organs. But the powers of the senses are limited. Therefore, he utilizes the aid of various instruments. With the help of the telescope he brings a very distant object within the range of his vision ; with the help of the microscope he immensely magnifies a minute object. Similarly other instruments come to the scientist's assistance. The technicians of science are busy, day and night, inventing new instruments by means of which to strengthen and intensify the powers of the senses.

But there exist minute things in the world that cannot be detected even by the most powerful electronic microscope. And the universe is so vast and widespread that its remotest objects would not come within a man's ken even if the largest telescope known to us were to be magnified a million times and directed toward them. The final secrets of the universe will for ever remain unrevealed to physical scientists ; for intellect, aided by the senses, is the only means employed by them in their quest for understanding.

The *rishis*, on the other hand, did not entirely depend upon reason, as this word is usually understood. They developed another faculty of understanding, which is called *bodhi*, or deeper consciousness. The seeker of *Brahmavidya* wakened the subtle power of the mind and senses by means of concentration and self-control. By withdrawing the senses from outer objects, he made the scattered mind one-pointed. This practice of concentration presently endowed it with keenness, depth, and a new intensity, and as the power of concentration increased, the seeker

became aware of deeper phases of existence. Instinct, reason, and intuition, or higher consciousness—the three instruments of knowledge—all are differing states of the same mind. Hence a lower state can be developed into a higher. The means to this end, however, are not external instruments but appropriate disciplines directed within.

The vedic teacher prepared the soil of his disciple's mind before giving him any instruction regarding Brahman. Moreover, there were occasions when the instruction given was not oral. An ancient Sanskrit text says : 'The teacher explains in silence and the disciple's doubts are resolved.' When a pupil approached the preceptor for instruction, often he would be asked to meditate on the problem and seek the answer from within his own self. And so we read in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*⁴ that Bhrigu came to his father Varuna and asked : 'Revered sir, teach me Brahman.' Varuna did not give him a direct reply ; he asked the boy to practise meditation and austerities. Bhrigu followed this advice and came to the conclusion that food alone was Brahman. He was asked to meditate again. This time he realized that *prana* alone was Brahman. His father exhorted him to concentrate further. At last the nature of Brahman was revealed in Bhrigu's heart and he realized that Brahman is *Anandam*, Bliss Absolute.⁵

The *Upanishads* teach the truth unknown to the sense-organs—regarding living beings (*jivas*), the universe (*jagat*), and God (*Ishvara*). They describe the nature and attributes of Brahman, Its reality and manifestations, Its powers and aspects. They also describe the creation, preservation, and ultimate dissolution of the universe, and the changes and modifications of nature (*prakriti*). Furthermore, the *Upanishads* deal with the development of the individual soul (*jiva*), its evolution and its destiny, its bondage and

⁴ III. i.

⁵ *Tai. Up.* III. vi.

its freedom. The relationship between matter and Spirit, between God, the universe, and living beings, also belongs to the subject matter of the *Upanishads*. These concerns relate to a supersensuous realm unknowable to a man's everyday state of consciousness. Yet the weal and woe and the good and evil of a man depend, in a special manner, upon his knowledge of these things. For man is rooted in a reality far deeper than is apparent to the senses. Just as only a small portion of an iceberg is visible, so only a small portion of man is available to the senses, no matter how they may be magnified. The solution of many of our most vital problems must come, therefore, from regions beyond the scope of the ordinary faculty of reason.

Is there a soul apart from the body? What happens to the soul after the death of the body? If a soul survives the destruction of the body, does it ever return to earth? Is a man responsible for his good and bad action? What is the goal and purpose of human life?

Our conduct and work depend upon our answers to these questions. And yet we cannot answer them intelligently with an intellect aided only by the senses.

Or again: Does God exist? Is God just and compassionate? Or is He unconcerned about man, regarding him with indifferent eyes? Is God endowed with a form or is He formless? Has He attributes or is He attributeless? Is He immanent in the universe or is He transcendent? Or is He both? Is the universe real or unreal? Does it exist outside man's mind or is it a figment of our imagination? Is the universe beginningless or has it a beginning? Has the Godhead become the universe or has He made it, like a watch, or is the universe a mere appearance superimposed upon the Godhead through an inscrutable illusion of some kind, like a mirage upon a desert? And if the universe is not unreal, is it finite or infinite?

An inquiring mind longs to find satisfactory answers to these philosophical questions; but there is no human means to satisfy such

a longing. Only the Knowledge of Brahman can break the 'fetters of the heart' and solve all doubts. This is the Hindu view. That is why the Lord Himself promulgated this Knowledge in the world through the *rishis*. The more a man's intelligence deepens, the more his heart is made pure and his mental horizon widens, the more will he understand and appreciate their teachings, as preserved in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*.

One can hardly exaggerate the influence of the *Vedas* upon the individual and collective life of the Hindus. Since the days of their greatness, both the political and the religious life of India have undergone tremendous changes. Many aggressive races have entered the country from outside and been absorbed in this melting-pot; other powerful cultures have retained their individual traits, like the ingredients in a huge salad-bowl. Foreign conquerors have sought, by various means, to impose their customs and ideals upon Hindu society. Nevertheless, through all these vicissitudes, the Hindu world as a whole has retained its loyalty to the *Vedas* and still recognizes them as the highest authority in religious matters.

The outer forms of the Hindu religion have certainly changed. Modern Hindus do not perform sacrifices like their ancestors. The worship in the temples has been influenced by the *Smritis* and the *Puranas*. *Tantra* has also left its impression upon the worship in many parts of the country. Yet underlying all of this there are certain fundamental truths, taught in the *Upanishads*, to which the Hindus have always adhered. It is this flexibility of the Hindu mind in adapting itself to the demands of changing circumstances, while remaining true to the immutable ideals of religion, that accounts for the marvellous vitality and the enduring character of the spiritual culture of India. Even now the vedic rituals are observed at the time of birth, marriage, death, and other important occasions of a man's life. Every orthodox Hindu belonging to the three upper castes recites,

three times a day during his prayers, the same selections from the *Vedas* which his forbears repeated five thousand years ago, while his daily obligatory religious devotions are the remnants of similar obligatory sacrifices of the vedic period.

Indian philosophy is divided into two classes: orthodox and heterodox. The orthodox philosophy is, again, subdivided into six groups. These groups are called orthodox because they rest upon the *Vedas*, not because they accept the idea of a Creator God. The Samkhya philosophy, one of the orthodox systems, does not believe in God as the Creator of the universe. Jainism and Buddhism, on the other hand, are called unorthodox because they do not accept the *Vedas* as their authority. Yet they, too, have incorporated in their systems many of the vedic doctrines. Thus the *Vedas* have influenced every vital phase of Hindu life. The Smritis and other canonical laws, which

govern the life of a Hindu, derive their validity from the *Vedas*. In Hindu society the laws that regulate the inheritance of property, adoption of children, and other social, legal, domestic, and religious customs, claim to derive their authority from the *Vedas*. Hindu society has always drawn its power and vision from the spiritual experiences of its ancient seers. Under the crust of the many superstitions of the present-day society, the penetrating eye can still discern the shining core of the vedic wisdom.

Yet this wisdom, the knowledge of Brahman, is not the monopoly of any country, sect, or race. It was developed in a special manner on the banks of the *Ganges* and the *Indus* by the Indo-Aryan seers; nevertheless, like Brahman Itself, *Brahmavidya* is universal. It belongs to all peoples and all times. It is the universal truth that is the common essence of all religions and faiths.

(Concluded)

HOW COULD I ENDURE THE RUIN OF MY LIFE WORK ?

BY GERALD HEARD

The first of the three basic questions which we have been asking is the question of a devotionalist. And the answer is given by a devotionalist. For, in spite of all his scholastic rationalism Aquinas was a spiritual lover, devoted to his *Ishtam*, Christ Jesus. Beside this first question the second is psychological. For Eckhart was, of all the Western mystics of whom we have adequate record, perhaps the one who most nearly approached the ideal of a *jnanin*. The first question tells us how to love God—when we have made up our mind that it is this that we would rather do than anything else. The second tells us what we may do when we find that in spite of our

intention to 'adhere' we have lost contact with the Eternal Being who is our life.

The third question is practical. It is then, as should be, answered by a man who was the most practically successful of all the saints canonized by the Church of Rome.

By founding the Jesuits, Ignatius Loyola gave back to the Roman Church half the territory and all the intellectual prestige that Rome had lost to Protestantism. The non-Christian world was re-assaulted with a vigour that none of the other founders of the Orders had been able to mobilize. Indeed, the missionary attack compared with that which the Church had not been able to summon

since it made peace through Constantine with the Imperial power. After Ignatius' work took shape, to be a scholar and a devout Christian became no longer a paradox but something of a commonplace. Jesuits made a new architecture for Europe—tired of medieval gothic and renaissance pedantry, captured the teaching profession and, in a little while, were makers of astronomic instruments for the Emperor of China—who was therefore not unimpressed with their metaphysics—and founders of a communist paradise for the pre-agriculturists of the Parana, who were captivated by their teachers' wonderful skill in music.

Ignatius knew what he had done and what was growing from the plan he had laid down. Working up from his psychological instrument, *The Exercises*; by the selection of lieutenants who could supplement his genius; by adopting the techniques of militarism to the needs of ecclesiasticism; he had already made a company whose head he named The General—and whose headship he accepted for himself—a Generalship commanding such complete obedience over men of outstanding ability that the Jesuit General was soon called the Black Pope.

The actual Pope, however, was as capable as Ignatius of perceiving what a mixed blessing such an offer of service could prove to be. Ignatius himself was far too capably complex a character not to have many enemies. One of them was elected Pope when the Society was yet young, yet had shown its mettle. When Ignatius heard of the election, he said (and it is obvious he was no more a rhetorician than a coward) his 'bones became like water.' The self-control of this man had become so complete that his closest associates bore witness that when he was merry they never knew whether he felt cheerful, when he showed black anger if he was inwardly the slightest disturbed, when he was peaceful that there might not be despair or bitter pain in his heart. This self-statement of his condition is

therefore valuable and need not be doubted. The destruction of the Order was probably the one thing that could really affect this utterly mortified nature.

Yet when someone, with more psychological curiosity than consideration, asked, 'What will you do if the Pope dissolves the Order?' he replied—'One quarter of an hour in Orison and it would then be all the same.' Again, it does not seem possible to doubt his word. And when we examine the reply we see there is about it a realism and definitude which makes it not only convincing—carrying its own authenticity in the very style of it—but also arresting and informative. For in the first place it is an answer to a question so general and so grim—and yet so specifically aimed at those who have tried to be of service—that nearly everyone has heard it asked—if not of themselves, of someone they have admired—and hardly anyone dare face it. Even the good too often take refuge in the plea (so little substantiated by history): 'God could not let His work (which of course I have been doing) come to naught!' What would you do, what could you do if your life work, in which you had sublimated your passions, sunk your possessions and exchanged your pretensions—should be put to death and you poor pointless thing left to live on? It is possible that the good confront this issue at its sharpest point. But every man of energy must know how helpless he is should his work, the meaning of his social, economic and physical being, be taken away utterly from him and he become an unwanted failure. And in the second place the answer is an exact, diagnostic reply. Ignatius knows what is at stake, what the failure of the Society will mean for him, because of what it will mean to his loyalist friends and for the Church which he adored and which was still fighting an undecided counter-attack. Ignatius was not a contemplative. His vocation was action, a call to save his communion. Ignatius does not, then, play the Stoic or any of the rôles

of the superior person. He does not dismiss the painfully apt curiosity, telling the enquirer not to be inquisitive and so wrap up his wound in the mantle of offended dignity. Nor does he make light of it all. He might have carried conviction, if he had laughed it off. He had proved his toughness, yes, and his capacity for humour, so that he might have felt it wise to say, and carried conviction in the saying that it would really make no difference. Or he might have said, God will never let it happen. Again he had shown that his belief that he was doing God's will was rigid enough to have made such a statement credible. He does not use any of the great clichés: *Fiat Voluntas Tua: Laus Deo: Deo Gratias*. He gives a time table. And that is characteristic of him. For like all moderns he was interested in time in a way that the medieval was not. His 'Exercises' show that—so many weeks to have acquired this attitude toward Hell, so many to gain that toward Heaven. So when he says 'one quarter of an hour' there can be little doubt he means exactly what he says. Ignatius prayed by the clock. He was making a careful estimate and calculation between two things and the distance between them. He knew he loved his work and the extent and weight of the hopes he had for its success. He knew it was his life as far as he, an individual, had any reason for living. But he also knew how he was involved, engrossed. This was a certain degree of real discrimination—the power to see the two things—the work and the person who worked—Ignatius Loyala. And the being that looked on and saw both the Society of Jesus and its founder, with an equal detachment, that being it was who could see what to do with Ignatius, what must be done with the busy passionate Spaniard, if that creature's reason for living was suddenly taken from it. The central being Ignatius never quite lost touch with; though he evidently by his own words did not always keep in close contact with him. In fact the

distance that Ignatius found was separating the two sides of himself at the crisis in his life was precisely fifteen minutes. He was out from the shore, away from his base a quarter of an hour. Give him that time and he would know what to do with it. In that little space he would be able—he had evidently done so before—to 'pay in' the 'slack of the line' that kept him and the Atman within apart. Then, once that contact was really made, once the eternal life had absorbed the temporal, the fluctuations in the waves of circumstance would make no more difference to him than billows of mist sweeping past a walker can make him sway. 'Orison' was for Ignatius what we should probably call induced contemplation, that total awareness of Reality to which many who have practised meditation can after some time summon by an act of the will. In Ignatius' case it was not an instantaneous act. We may venture to think that in Ruysbroeck—to mention another Westerner—it would have been if not instantaneous at least a matter of seconds. Ignatius lived too busy a life to be in immediate contact, but—and in this he differs from many of our busy churchmen of today—he did not neglect to keep in mind the time it would take him to recover the essential contact. And, of course, he was aware that each day, by his contemplative prayer—which we are told he never neglected—he brought himself back to that distance. Had he found that his distance was increasing then there is little doubt he would have put himself into 'retreat.' Ignatius had no intention of 'gaining the whole world and losing his own soul.' The quarter of an hour was as much 'free play' or 'slack line' as he allowed himself. Ignatius' reply is then very germane for those—the vast majority who feel that they must live active lives but find, in Father Baker's phrase, that that life does 'deordinate' them: not only would the total miscarriage of their effort throw them into something like despair—the little

contretemps of everyday dealing with people make them irritable, depressed, patently unspiritual, uncharitable, un-peaceful. And they often wonder with gloom how they could take any major disaster—and pray God that He will not try them. Does not the answer to this very common state we have all experienced lie in Ignatius' advice? 'Know how far you are out, take care never to be beyond where you can recollect yourself. Day by day—three times a day—make at least an honest check-up—and if you find the distance between you and your anchorage is increasing take more time till you are once more within sufficient distance to make yourself fast and secure should the wind come down and the sea rise.' This check-up Ignatius calls the 'examin'. It does not take long—one honest glance will show how much one has drifted in the three or four hours one has been attending to surface things. Of course the necessary re-hauling may take considerable time and exertion.

A similar illustration of this practical power in an 'active' is given at the beginning of a Japanese monk's account of his penetration into Tibet, when that country was closed to outsiders. A Tibetan Abbot, whose big monastery lay near the frontier, had permitted a foreign pilgrim to enter. The Lhasa Government, learning this, not only degraded the Abbot—which meant that he lost a powerful and dignified position—but condemned him to be drowned in the almost freezing waters of the source stream of the Brahmaputra river. He was taken in his criminal garb to be drowned. When they arrived where he was to be bound and sunk in the stream he made the Ignatian statement, 'Permit me to read over slowly to myself three times *The Diamond Sutra* and then it will be all right.' The time was

permitted him. He then with complete composure let himself be lowered with a heavy stone round him, into the stream. After some time the body was raised. He came to life again. He quietly submitted to be once more immersed. A second time he was raised, only to be found once more alive. Only at the third time was his release completed.

So many people today talk of Brother Lawrence and the continual Practice of the Presence of God, and when they do so often disparage any regular times of prayer and meditation. They say, to spend all one's time with exercises, or even a good part of it, is both pretentious and unnecessary. And yet we know that when many such good social workers meet disaster their conduct does not differ—for it cannot—very much from that of the most casual liver. They still are desiring the fruit of their works and have not achieved Karma Yoga. But they may be right that they cannot give their lives to trying to achieve a constant contemplative state. They must also realize, if they read Brother Lawrence with the slightest real care, that the state he reached was very advanced and had taken a life of austerity, which they would consider unhealthy. May not the middle step between that Carmelite perfection and the way that most of us feel compelled to live, lie in the Ignatian advice, 'Know how far you are out; never let it be more than a quarter of an hour; and see daily that you keep that distance—see that it is not growing!' Then when ruin and death come to complete our detachment, they will serve this, their intended purpose and we too shall be able to add to the authentic record of essential advice, 'Fifteen minutes in prayer and it will be all the same. The One remains, the many change and pass.'

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY PANDIT SHRI SHRIDHARA NEHRU

All these fifty long years and more have kept and confirmed an abiding memory of the great Swami's abounding Grace, as it then was showered upon me, a child of seven and then eight, and has given me spiritual sustenance when none other was available or intelligible to me. It has been in a deeply moving way, in the words of Goldsmith, 'my shame in crowds, my solitary pride.' That perhaps, was my sole reason why in the course of numerous addresses on religious and spiritual subjects during my five visits to America and ten to Europe, I never revealed what was, and is, one of my greatest spiritual treasures.

But the unexpected happened, and the silence broke. During a recent visit to Colombo, Ceylon, I quite forget my previously self-imposed, self-denying ordinance and revealed my very deep debt to the personal influence of Swami Vivekanandaji, and how the spiritual light and leading, half-consciously absorbed, as a child in those dim and distant years, had helped me through the onward path in life, and helped me automatically pick out the straight from the crooked, the smooth from the rough, the bright from the dark and the true from the false.

I had lost my mother when very young; gone for me at the tender age of six were her 'blest, sweet, beloved, neighbourhood;' her lofty spirit, which could see all, penetrate all, and in a flash aspire to Heaven's light and glory. And yet who could have imagined that such a mother's subtle influence should be unconsciously but none the less convincingly replaced by a Swami's!

But inscrutable are the ways of the Unseen! 'He who doth the raven feed, yea providently caters for the sparrow' had also taken care to provide that secret guiding hand and spirit for me when I was seven and then eight years old.

Usually the mother's place is taken by a sister, an aunt, who can bring all their latent and patent affection to bear on the growing child or boy, so that he can have somewhat of the spiritual moulding which is to determine his near future and leave its indelible mark on his later life. But to think that a very highly revered and learned and worshipful superman should take such a homely place, inspire such simple feelings in a growing lad, go so far to shape his being—is to think the unthinkable, the incredible.

Reverend gentlemen, in black or saffron robes, are held by women and children as 'a thing ensky'd and sainted: by their renouncement an immortal spirit.' Forbidding and forbidden folks! Unapproachable to simple human emotions and responses. Of such a one said in *'The Blind Saint'* the Lord:

'When the Heart itself receives no tint,
what use this tinted robe?'

But in the Swami's case, which is, alas, so rare in the annals of Panditry and devotion, the heart itself had received the tint, long before the robe was tinted, or the tinted robe was donned. And it went much beyond that.

In the grave reverend master in saffron robe I had somehow recovered the lost one, who was taken away from me in her reddish brown wrapping. The scene of parting from the dear departed still lives in my mind. To say that I understood at the age of five or six just exactly what was happening or further what was still going to happen is to say something which is neither here nor there being neither wholly true nor wholly false. Some said she was going on a journey and would soon return. Ah, yes, would soon return!

Whoever said it, was more than a prophet. For a prophet is sure of his words, his pro-

phesy, his vision or peep into the future. In this case the amateur prophet would have been most surprised of all to see his prophecy coming true in a sense, and in a way, he never knew or could have known.

For just two years later (in which 'life had passed with me but roughly,' when I went from pillar to post, and passed from hand to hand, amid people who were kindly and cordial and yet could also be curt and frowning, whose very names I could not dare utter or even call them by their names, such was my inborn fright and bashfulness;) came new visions and horizons, opening out on a gloom which had depressed me in the midst of general cheerfulness and homely joys of kind and considerate uncle's home. When the other children were being looked after by their doting pappas and mammas, I, although partaking of their cheer and pleasures was yet something, somehow, an 'also-fellow'. The feelings of such an 'also-fellow' of seven are best depicted by the master *haikuist* of Japan, *Bashao*, in his well-known nineteen syllable *haiku*, composed when he was a child of seven or eight, and left alone in the house of the aunt who had taken her children away to the fair and *Bashao* was left sitting on the threshold with a sparrow hopping about :

'Come with each other let us play, little sparrow without any mother !'

But there came, when the gloom was thickest and the need the sorest, not a silver lining to a cloud but a whole panorama of new scenes, new vistas, new virtues, of a great Master in saffron robes, who was so totally different from the others of the saffron-clad fraternity; who with looks and nods and gifts more than mothered the motherless child, who endeared himself no less by his invisible sympathy as by his gifts of a 'biscuit or a confectionary plum.'

All that happened in Almora, or more correctly Almorah, or phonetically 'Almurh', dear queen of the Kumaun Hills.

AT SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S ABODE IN ALMORA

My father had rented a house or bungalow overlooking the famous Ranidhara spring located on a bluff as you enter the horseshoe bend of the hills, following the cart-road (now motor-road) as you leave Kausani and enter the ups and downs of houses forming the habitations of Almora proper. The bluff commands a view of the snows beyond Bageshwar depression and away to a side are the Kalimat hills. Crowning one end of the horseshoe above the bend, set in shrubbery and some foliage is the Ochterlony Monument, which was an agitated spot during the mornings especially, when the Gurkhas and the kilted Highlanders both, though from the ends of the earth, used to indulge in sham-fights.

My father used to thrill to the sham-fights, perhaps more so than did I. At one point he actually argued with the British Company Commander as to why he did not take the unaware Gurkhas in the rear and fall on their back, to be told by the polite Highlander that he would be only revealing his own position which was not of considerable strength. This incident is only noted as a preliminary to show that in his Himalayan retreat my father was not perforce leading a 'retired' life but was very much alive and alert.

The *dhara* of Ranidhara was not what it was thirty and then forty years later, an exiguous trickle but a big, broad gush of water with plenty of sparkle and spray. And that spray has a niche in my memory: A very voluble *pahari* dame, fills her outsize pitcher at the current, withdraws, I step up and lean forward to the orifice when, lo and behold! she complains to my father coming up from the rear: 'There, your son has polluted my pitcher with the spray from his hands! 'Not a bit of it,' and I was on the point of protesting when my father clinched the matter and solved the dispute by asking the

harassed soul the price of a pitcher ; so much, she said. He gave it to her and to my surprise she walked off with the old pitcher too ! 'Won't you leave this behind ?' I asked her ; 'it is no good to you.' 'Of course it is good to me. I shall store grain in it.' And so she rambled away with the spoils of victory. Fifty years a judge, my father knew how to enforce a decision, which was sound, even if the evidence was dubious. The judicial temperament is not one of all poise and repose, but of grim determination. In a subsequent scene, a husband is seen beating his wife on the open street, just in front of his dwelling, or I should say their dwelling, before he turned her out. My father was not the one to rush in where even angels might fear to tread, when a husband and his wife are at loggerheads. So with extreme foresight my father got in front of the couple and raised shouts of 'Police ! Police !' Not a policeman was in sight, but the very fear of the police coming in put a stop to the assault, the estranged couple composed their differences and made themselves scarce.

After the excitements of the mornings and the days, it was the afternoons and the evenings which were undiluted bliss at the abode of peace in the retreat of Swami Vivekananda.

Its exact location and the way thither alike escape me. Not that it very much mattered or matters. I was used to trudging big distances. Eight or nine miles to the Ramsay Collegiate School for day and night classes, with extra mileage thrown in for the morning scampers was good going ; and thereafter to the abode of Swami Vivekananda was also some distance, but it did not entail any extra fatigue or any at all, for I had learnt to look forward to it. On the contrary the extra mileage was covered with extra zest, as it brought extra joy.

My father particularly enjoyed and appreciated this evening outings to Swami Vivekananda's retreat if for no other more abstruse reason than this, which to me was apparent

as it indeed was to all simple fellows, that it brought the Western atmosphere of Europe and America to one who had in those distant lands received something of his larger education. For was it not these that had learnt to shed most of the shackles of caste, custom, tradition, orthodoxy and Ind-fed bigotry ? The dense silver-grey bushy beard which might have done a Sheikh or Sikh great honour had been replaced with a well trimmed fashionable whiskered growth to either side of the jawbone and not too much of it in the style then in vogue ; his mind alert to every current of thought and emotion in the world ; his free-thought and free thinking, which had replaced his orthodoxy, meaning 'you are free to think as you please, but please do your own thinking !'

To such a one was the Swami Vivekananda's society particularly welcome.

To begin with the classless category there was our worthy dollface waxwork Kaul Sahab. I can still see his dark rubicund amethyst face, sharply chiselled, wreathed in smiles and extracting good-humoured fun. Kaul Sahab had not much to do in the way of austerity ; he was a late sleeper and a very late riser, and his day might begin any time after noon, but his candour was compelling ; and he had a 'hail fellow well met' with everybody, which endeared him without being copied. I believe seeing him now and then at the Swami Vivekananda's retreat but I do not think that he made any vigorous contribution to the conversations or debates. Kaul Sahab did not stay very long in Almora ; why exactly he ever came there I do not recall unless it be for this sound reason that he wished to escape the heat of the plains during his first summer on return from Europe and alongside revived old friendships from Europe. In the latter case it speaks volumes to Swami Vivekananda's manysidedness and humanity, charitableness, and attractive power that people of all types and persuasions and stamp were drawn to him

and went away from him with something good, noble, and uplifting. Before autumn snows Kaul Sahab had left for Rajputana to embark on and achieve with distinction a very honourable career as Chief Judge.

With him would come as admirer and friend Shri Badri Dat Pande who was then struggling through the mysteries of Shakespeare for his graduation, and I can still picture Pandeji, with buff-bound copies of Shakespeare's plays such as were set in his course, making for Kaul Sahab's lodging located over the old Railway Depot, which was on the first floor and where I too was a very welcome, self-invited guest, because I loved to watch the weighing bridge from which I would dangle at times, and watch the contacts with the toy train which though lost to sight still was to memory dear. Pandeji would tackle Kaul Sahab in the early hours; Kaul Sahab would be ready for going out in the afternoon. The most obvious suggestion in the evening stroll would be in the direction of Judge Sahab as my father was called, or in the direction of the retreat where Swamiji was there to welcome us.

Pandeji was hoping to get some familiarity with literary England through Kaul Sahab; he got more than familiarity with religious and cultural topics of the world, especially Hindu contribution to world uplift through Swami Vivekananda on the other hand. He may not have realized it, but Pandeji was the gainer. And Pandeji was not an isolated specimen of *homo studiosus* or the student type of humanity. In those days a student of the B.A. class was undoubtedly rare. But he was the observed of all observers and a hero amongst the class boys including myself, perhaps the youngest who eyed with envy. He formed a 'cell' where he would transmit secondhand the inspiration he would derive from England-returned people and the inspiration that he received from the retreat of the Swami Vivekananda.

That in itself was an achievement for the new style student to be got to interest himself

in matters transcending his course and curriculum. Moreover, Swami Vivekananda's English was in itself an education. Volumes could not do justice to his English, so chaste and pure, so mellifluous and smooth-flowing; you caught it with your avid ears and eager mind. Who am I to go to sing its praises, when the mighty intellects assembled at Chicago had been captivated by its charm and sweet persuasiveness? Suffice it to record as the impression of an eight year old youngster that he was understood whenever he spoke, every word, every gesture, every nod, every smile.

I can still imagine him sitting in his saffron robes, saffron turban, and his yellow-rose apricot complexion to which the fine Almora climate had affixed its glowing seal of health, sitting, taking in the various questions, remarks, points addressed to him by his manifold admirers; including such others as might have been against their better judgements, critics, cynics, sceptics, but let there be no misunderstanding! Those who came to scoff remained to pray!

The student world as represented by the two extremes, (Badri Dat Pande the B.A. candidate at one end and the humble IXth standard schoolboy that is myself at the other) were his willing captives and thrilled to the thought that the Swamiji was interested in them. That through him the whole world was likewise interested. That lent an hour's importance to the little fellow's heart. I have had occasion to hear other eminent speakers speak to us as students. Two may be mentioned, but with this clear conviction that neither could equal Swamiji in his persuasive power and accommodating spirit. He seemed to be moulding your mind and spirit as he went along. Those two speakers, each a giant in the giant's way, were Romesh Chandra Dutt and Mrs. Annie Besant.

Romesh Chandra Dutt had rendered yeoman's service to the cause of Hindu revivalism. Already when he lectured to us

in our school and I had the rare distinction of being presented to him we were struck by his supreme erudition which had brought him into the coveted ranks of the Indian Civil Service, or the I.C.S.—which three letters seemed to represent a sort of talisman to many a striving, struggling student, including some impostors who, though studying in the Intermediate Class, would call themselves I.C.S., in other words, Intermediate Class Student (I.C.S.). His *Lays of Ind* were taught to us in the English rendering based on Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* that we should have known to ourselves in the original. But he achieved greatness and sublimity through simplicity and in that respect showed gleams of the light which shone with full blaze in Swami Vivekananda. Typical of the effect he achieved in his *Lays of Ind* may be quoted the line :

'Touch me not with hands unholy, sacred is a woman's hair!' But what R. C. Dutt did to the letter, Swami Vivekananda did to the spirit.

Mrs. Annie Besant was also one who went deep into the spirit of things, but hers was a thwarted soul which found no relief, neither in religion nor in politics, although she shone in both and outshone many a compeer. She approaches, if such contrasted extremes as Omar Khayyam and Annie Besant may be mentioned in the same breath, the picture of frustration and pessimism, put by Omar in the quatrain :

'A falcon I whose Mighty Wing,
Earth's Highest Treasure o'ersprings,
But nowhere finds a niche to hold it,
And flops to earth, poor broken thing !'

Omar stood for *kismet*, static, passive, negative ; Besant for *karma*, positive, dynamic, active ; and yet the sense of disappointment in Besant is acute. She turned from the Rev. Besant and the Christian faith as it did not satisfy her ardent soul. She built up a Hindu revivalism, as she understood it, not as it should have been, and that too did not satisfy her either, or she would not have drifted into

politics, which proved the bane of a beautiful apotheosis. She understood *Shri Bhagavad Gita* in a cold, rational, word-pure way, without thrilling to it in the same dynamic manner as did Mahatma Gandhi, or she would have broken the shackles of politics before they squeezed the marrow out of her hurt soul.

Swami Vivekananda had the sublime simplicity of the one, and the cold intellect of the other, with a vitalizing grace of his own which carried conviction to the meanest of the densest. That explains his great triumph over Western materialism, but I am anticipating, for a boy of eight or nine was not concerned with any 'ism' home or foreign-made.

Turning from the student to the businessman's set represented at the evening gatherings at Swami Vivekananda's abode, must be mentioned in the first and last place Lala Anti Ram Sah, *pahari* banker, agent, supplier, and a sort of 'universal providor' after the style of William Whiteley, whom both my father and Swami Vivekananda must have come to know fairly well in their stay in London. Lala Anti Ram Sah certainly banked for my father, and I have every reason for presuming that he also banked for Swami Vivekananda and particularly for a charming English couple, whom I had come to know under Swami Vivekananda's hospitable and uplifting roof. They had been very much impressed by Swami Vivekananda's eloquence, erudition, spirituality, and above all by his personal magnetism, almost approaching mesmerism, and they had followed him, if my reporter was not a liar, all the way from England to Almora. In fact I am not sure if they had not accompanied him on his way up to this Himalayan retreat. . . .

The circle of devoted friends and admirers who gathered together at the peaceful pleasure-giving and inspiring abode of Swami Vivekananda in the Almora hills is complete except for two who need particular mention, my father and Swami Vivekananda himself, and, of course, myself as their boy-introducer. The

part which I had to play as their unseen or rather unfelt introducer will be apparent as I go along with this narrative.

My father had shed his orthodoxy after a lifelong service according to the stringent rite and ritual in that losing cause. Perhaps I am wrong to call orthodoxy a 'losing cause.' Orthodoxy is not a losing cause; it is those who misapply it, who lose the spirit for the letter, who are losers in consequence. Orthodoxy, like any other 'doxy', is a discipline and needs to be modified and clarified and amplified and rationalized in response to the changes of the changing times.

My father had shed his orthodoxy and filled the vacuum overflowing with humanism, liberalism, freethought of the right type, eclecticism, an inspired agnosticism, I-do-not-know-but-I-am-anxious-to-know-and-I-will-know. He had brought along with him from America a very fine collection of works of enlightenment (*Aufklaerungsbuecher* as the Germans call them) and the library which was weekly expanding with the incoming foreign weekly mail was freely placed at Swami Vivekananda's service.

The books included original or latest editions of Haeckel, Volney, Voltaire, Tom Paine, Wynwood Reade, Darwin, Schopenhauer, etc. Most in demand was the latest India paper complete edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the daily *Pioneer* from Allahabad. Books and papers were taken on loan, read, returned, discussed, digested and cast aside. There was also one mysterious book which I could not understand despite its catchy title: *Madam How and Reason Why*.

Rationalism and Spiritualism as two contrasted poles were under constant discussion and reference. As I was to learn later that purely unadulterated, misguided rationalism had been started by the uninspired and uninspiring English school, which might take Lord Kelvin's dictum for its watchword: 'I can take nothing for understandable and under-

stood so long as I cannot form a mechanical picture of it.' This was rationalism not only to the mind but also to the eye. The contrary and much truer view was taken by the German philosophers represented by Goethe, who said:

'Mysteriously by light of day,
Nature her Veil cannot be made to lose;
And what she will not to your mind display,
You cannot force from her with levers and
with screws.'

(Goethe's *Faust*, I & II)

Swami Vivekananda—I can still recall his delicate smile for I stood near him—viewed the subject of rationalism with amusement; my father, with bemusement; but Kaul Sahab—I think it was he or some substitute—with approbation. I can still recall the drifts of talk. But I was otherwise engaged. Swami Vivekananda would keep my interest in the proceedings alive 'with a biscuit or a confectionary plum,' as I have quoted from Cowper, earlier. I can still recall his gentle hand playing still more gently with my curls. I can still recall and visualize Swami Vivekananda's deep brown eyes shedding a suffused and subdued warm glow from their finely chiselled orbits, a radiance which might well be compared with the poet's:

'The light that never was on sea or land,
The inspiration and the poet's dream.'

I can still see that light and that radiance, subduing all, inspiring all, lingering now here, now there, but most of all—how little I realized that benefit, now and then on myself.

'I could not have said then but I could say now:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!

Glory is given; glory is received; glory is transmuted. What transmutation has that glory undergone in me? I know it, for I feel it: that there has been a powerful transmutation of that glory. Only I should name the child by its proper name!

It is to the inspiration imbibed without thinking because not understood, or received in all its purity and entirety because there was no shadow of doubt or deception that I feel privileged to claim something of that inner light which has made life worth living and worth serving for.

And it is exactly thanks to the inspiration then received and subsequently garnered and treasured as it came from the lips, hands, gifts, and presence of the Great Master that I have been able to realize something of the meaning of the *Gita* and can carry that meaning with me wherever I go and propagate its message to alien lands and in alien people.

To the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome must be added the Light that was, and is Alhora. A light transcending both, Glory and Grandeur. For Glory blinds and dazzles; Grandeur begins and ends in vanity; but Light guides, philosophizes, and befriends.

The light that Vivekananda was irradiating shone with equal glow, whether seen through the coloured glasses of mysticism or of faith or of both. Whatever the individual prismatic hues one fastens on at a time or successively or simultaneously, that light is one, whole, entire, overwhelming.

I go back to my childhood days, my boyhood reactions, as I stood repeatedly, perhaps closest of all, bathing in that light, imbibing

unseen, unfelt, unconscious, all the inner strength that has carried me since through and over the thorns of life, on a course which might well have been by him and to him set.

I have not belonged to any denomination nor borne any labels, nor joined any lodges, masonic or otherwise. Herein I have followed my father's dictum, when he answered the repeated calls of friends to join a masonic lodge: 'I belong to the brotherhood of Man.'

And so I appreciated the friend I had found in Swami Vivekananda, friend and more than friend, guide and philosopher, all the more; and I carry his vision of enlightened face before the eyes, more vividly than on print or picture. And later on in life I have found in the philosopher Nietzsche some lines which can truly interpret my own devotion to the Master from my childhood times:

'... Deep glows within my breath of fire:
The Inscript: 'To the Unknown Friend.'
Yours am I, howsoe'er I went
The Path of Sin and World-Desire.
Yours am I even as I go under,
Unequal to a strife unjust,
And yet I render
Service to you, for I must.
Will-bound, spell-bound, I take my stand,
Here where the ways divide and part,
Most certain in my inmost heart,
Go where I will, you hold my hand!'

SOME ASPECTS OF ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

BY DR M. HAFIZ SYED

In the present day, on account of political upheavals and lack of good understanding, Islam, unlike other religions, is greatly misunderstood in many quarters. People have begun to doubt whether it has any spiritual or moral value or not. There is no religion in

this world, ancient or modern, revealed by God and sent through His messengers to all mankind which lacks spiritual inspiration and moral vitality. Islam is no exception to it. Every religion worth the name has had and should have the exoteric and esoteric sides to

it. God and soul remain mere names to such of us as have not learnt to realize their inner intrinsic meaning. It is only by living a life of purity, chastity, truth, non-violence, and austerity that one becomes fit enough to tread the path of spiritual realization, which in course of time enables the aspirant to understand what human soul and God are.

The divinity of man and his close relation with the Supreme Reality are more or less acknowledged by almost all the religions of the world. A devout Muslim who has full faith in the tenets of Islam and its pristine purity has to observe its outer form, and, therefore, he does not own his divine nature publicly, but when the same devotee learns to dive deeper into his own being and grasps the divine essence in him, he treats the fact of his divinity as a secret over which he has to keep silence and which he can convey only to those who are his fellow-travellers on the path. This knowledge of spiritual wisdom is conveyed from 'breast to breast' and not talked about. This is an old tradition of Islam. The idea underlying this secrecy is that the peace of public mind should not be disturbed. The majority of the people are expected to lead a moral life as laid down by Islam in their everyday life and acknowledge their relation to God as a humble creature and regard Him as the Source of his being, the Supreme Creator, Master, and Patron.

The conception of the Unity of God is the pivot round which revolve all other doctrines. The oneness of God is acknowledged by all the schools of mysticism. The pure existence of the Supreme Reality is called *Zat*, without any reference to His attributes. It is known through its qualities and attributes called *Ism-e-sifat*. The neophyte is expected to meditate on Divine attributes and through his constant meditation, prayerfulness, and single-minded devotion, a glimpse of His Beauty, Greatness, and Grandeur is vouchsafed to him. The aspirant is enjoined to draw a curtain over his mind

against *Masewa*, that which is not God, and desire nothing but Him and the ability to do His will, which is another name of Islam which really and literally means complete resignation and surrender to the will of God—an attitude which is to him the only ruling idea of his life. He owes allegiance to no other being. He bows down before none, kneels down before the Almighty Allah who is his sole Refuge, Benefactor, and Supreme Master,

The first step enjoined by Islam for the attainment of this goal is five times' prayer, a full month's fast once a year, sharing at least one-fortieth of one's property with poor and indigent persons, and performing a pilgrimage to Mecca called Hajj. The second step is constant repetition of God's name, mentally and verbally, and meditation on Him and His Qualities. In order fully to succeed in his effort of spiritual realization he has to seek the help and guidance of a *murshid* or teacher, to whom he offers his utmost devotion and who in his turn initiates him into the mysteries of divine wisdom and takes him along from one step to another in the sphere of spiritual development. In this connexion three kinds of meditations are practised. The first is called *Tasawwur-e-Shaikh* (meditation on one's teacher), the second, *Tasawwur-e-Rasul* (meditation on the Prophet), the third, *Tasawwur-e-Allah* (meditation on God). Thus an aspirant is led from one step to the other systematically till he attains His grace and an insight into the mystery of Divine Wisdom.

It may be noted here that the methods and stages of spiritual realization laid down by Islam bear close resemblance to some of the schools of ancient Hindu thought.

THE SUFI DOCTRINE OF THE UNITY OF GODHEAD

The Muslim mystics are agreed that God is One, Alone, Single, Eternal, Everlasting, Knowing, Powerful, Mighty, Majestic, Generous, Clement, Master, Merciful and

Compassionate ; that He is qualified with all the attributes and named with all the best names ; that since eternity He has not ceased to continue with His name and attributes ; that there is no eternal but He and no God besides Him ; that He is neither body, nor shape, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident. One of the great Sufis says, 'He is hidden in His manifestation, manifest in concealing, He is outward and inward, near and far ; and in this respect He is removed beyond the resemblance of creature. They are agreed that He is neither perceived by the eyes, nor assailed by the thought, that his attributes do not change, and that His names do not alter ; that He is First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward, that He is acquainted with everything, that there is nothing like Him, and that He sees and hears.' (*The Doctrine of the Sufis* pp. 14, Cambridge Press).

It may be added that all these statements about the Godhead have their Quranic sanctions, too numerous to be quoted here.

The most manifest of existences is the Existence of God. The existence of things is by the light of God. The perception of yourself is the perception of God. He who has understood his *Nafs* (Real Self) has understood his God. The Reality of God is His existence which is really His *Dhat*. The Absolute existence has no form, no shape, no limitations, neither beginning nor end ; and in spite of this He has manifested Himself in different shapes without any change in His *Dhat*. It is like a person surrounded by mirrors of different sizes and colours and appearing differently in them without any change in His own personality.

Dhunnun-e-Misri has said, *Al ilmu fi dhat Illahi jehlun*. Knowledge in God's *Dhat* is ignorance. No prophet or *Wali* has ever reached or will ever reach that point. The Prophet has said: *Ma arafnaka haqqa merifatika* 'I have not known Thee to the extent that Thy knowledge demands.' The

Sufis believe that God has two aspects: (1) *Tanzih*, corresponding to Nirguna Brahman and (2) *Tashbih*, corresponding to Saguna Brahman. They also believe that He is both present and absent, both the One and the Many. He thus joins in Himself contraries and contradictories.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES (*Sifat*)

Prophet Muhammad once said, 'I am from the light of God and all things are from my light.' Truly God is beautiful and He loves beauty. Beauty is the personal attribute of the *Zat*. God created man in His own face, says the Sufi. He clothed him with His own attribute of beauty. Man is therefore inclined to the beautiful. God was thus Beauty and Love. His beauty was love, and his love was beauty. He was the lover and beloved at the same time. He saw himself in the mirror of His own beauty. He loved Himself (*La yahibulla*). God does not love 'other than Himself', (*The Doctrine of Sufis*, pp. 16 & 17, Cambridge Press).

THE GUIDE (*Pir*)

The *Murid* (disciple) must observe the *jamal* (beauty and grandeur of *Pir*). The *Pir's jamal* must be reflected in the mirror of the *murid's* heart. 'Whoever hath seen me hath seen God,' says the Prophet. 'The reality of *iman* is the observance of me,' says the Prophet.

Shayk-i-Akbar says that a *murid* who seeks another *pir* during the life-time of his own *pir* breaks his covenant with God, which he made at the time of performing *byat* (initiation). The follower of one prophet cannot become a follower of another, during the former's life-time.

The objects of *shagal* (practice), *ziker* (repetition of God's name), and *muraqaba* (deep meditation) are to enable the mind not to retain in itself the remembrance of other-than-God. The beginner should not be estranged from the path. After the purity,

of heart is established, all defects will disappear of themselves.

The *shaykh* (guide) can be in the west and aware of the condition of his *murid* (disciple) in the east. The least capacity of the *pir* is that he possesses *kshaf-i-qulub* (that is, he reads the minds of his *murids*) and *Kshaf-e-qubur* (that he is conscious of the condition of the dead in the grave). If he has not this capacity, it is forbidden for him to accept any one as his disciple. He should know the past and future conditions of the world. He is the *Khalifa* of God on earth. We have made him, says the *Quran*, vicegerent on earth (*Suratu'l Baqarah*, II. 30).

Abu Yazid-i-Bistami had twelve *pirs* in succession. In fact, all *pirs* are the manifestation of the Name, *Al-Hadi*. *Murid* shows extreme respect to his *pir*—not as in hero worship but as a mark of his love.

Murids (disciples) are of two kinds: ordinary and special. The *pir* instructs them in different ways, according to their aptitudes and temperaments; the one gets ordinary instructions, and the other gets instructions that are kept back from the ordinary *murid*. 'Shariat is my words, *tariqat* is my actions and *haqiqat* is my personal condition,' said the Prophet (peace on him). *Al shariatu aqwali, wal triqatu afali wal haqiqatu ahwali.*

Abu Yazid-i-Bistami and Uthman-i-Khybari were saying their prayers together; the latter concluded his prayer thus: 'O, God, grant all that I desire, and the former concluded; 'O, God, cut off all that I desire.' Uthman said, 'How is this?' Abu Yazid said, 'What has a seeker after God to do with the desires of his *nafs*? He relinquishes all *ma-siwalah* (other-than-God) and forgets his own existence.' (*Irshadat S. Gazur-i-Illahi*).

PERFECTION OF MAN

The question of perfection of man, according to Muslim mystics might be answered in different ways. In a word a perfect man may be defined as a man who has fully realized

his essential oneness with the Divine being in whose likeness he is made. This exalted position as enjoyed by prophets and saints and shadowed forth in symbols to others, is the foundation of the Sufi theosophy. Therefore, the class of perfect men comprised not only the Prophets, from Adam to Muhammad, but also the superlatively elect amongst the Sufis, that is the persons named collectively *awaliya*. Since the *wali* or saint is the popular type of perfect man it should be understood that the essence of Muslim saintship, as of prophecy, is nothing less than Divine Illumination, immediate vision and knowledge of things unseen and unknown, when the veil of sense is suddenly lifted and the conscious self passes away in the overwhelming glory of one True Light. It may be noted that an ecstatic feeling of oneness with God constitutes the *wali*. It is the end of the path, and prepares the disciple to receive this incalculable gift of Divine grace, which is not gained or lost by anything that a man may do, but comes to him in proportion to the spiritual capacity with which he was created. (The Perfect Man, Chapter II. page 78, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* by Nicholson, Cambridge Press).

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUFI SYSTEM

It may be added that the knowledge of Divine wisdom is available to those alone whose eyes are fixed, like an archer on the arrow, on the object at which he aims, and that without purity of purpose and unceasing effort, deliverance or salvation cannot be obtained.

In all ages and in all times men have sought and found truth. They have shown the way and means of attainment. But men have listened to the message with incredulity and continued the mad pursuit of sense objects. Passion of body and mind govern men and kindle fires of desire, of greed, attachment, egoism, and anger. These enslave and obscure the mind which must be freed and restored

to its pristine purity to reflect Truth. According to the Muslim mystics the seekers of truth, therefore, concentrate all their strength in driving away from the mind all sense objects and setting it free from the domination of fear and hate. Some mystics follow the path of knowledge, and others the path of devotion, hoping to lose all sense of duality in the supreme experience of love. The world-forsakers are something of an enigma to world-seekers. The truth is that a Sufi gives up that which has no real value.

'Muslim mystics declare life to be a journey over an unknown path which is as straight and narrow as a razor. There is no other light but that of faith to guide the seeker, no

sustenance but devotion. The track ahead cannot be seen, going is uncertain, and pitfalls await the unwary. The seeker must travel in the dark. He must not cry for a candle to grope in the gloom or seek the rush light of reason. He must go steadily forward in the hope of reaching a great illumination which awaits him at the journey's end. It would profit little to dwell on the system of Sufism. Volumes have been written in Persian and other languages on the subject. It is not a system really, it is a way of life. It is beyond the range of reason. It cannot be comprehended but it can be realised.' (*The Persian mystics*, pp. 14 & 15).

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

We are interrupting the series *The Western Question* this month for the present editorial, *Reflections on National Independence*. The series will be resumed from the next month . . .

The March of History by P. S. Naidu represents the two Miller Endowment Lectures delivered by the author at Madras on January 4 and 5, 1946. Under the terms of the Endowment the subject should be one dealing with the exposition of 'The meaning of Human History as disclosing the one increasing purpose that runs through the Ages.' In these lectures Prof. Naidu gives a spiritual interpretation of world history by a rapid survey of civilization, past and present, in terms of Indian conceptions. He points out the inadequacy of the different philosophies of history and principles of social evolution which ignore the supreme spiritual factor of God or Brahman. He concludes, and rightly so, that Indian culture alone holds the key to the final unification of mankind. The lectures

will appear in the *Prabuddha Bharata* in four instalments, of which the present one is the first. . . .

Introduction to the Study of the Upanishads (III) is the last instalment of the series. The book will be shortly published in India. . . .

Some Aspects of Islamic Mysticism by Dr M. Hafiz Syed shows a side of Islam that is generally hidden from common view and almost lies submerged under the main tradition of the popular religion.

SANSKRIT AND THE INDIAN MIND

We are in the habit of saying, among other things, that the leadership of India should come from the soil. Generally it is taken to mean that leaders should arise not from the city-dwelling intelligentsia and commercial people, who are often economic and political superfluities rendering nothing or very little in return for what they take from the community, but from the common people of the countryside who toil and moil and

keep society going by their labour. Such men alone can make national politics truly reflect the needs and aspirations of the country. As things are, the masses are still mostly ignorant and voiceless and are led by people whose interests and outlook cannot be identical with theirs. In a country like India where the vast majority of its inhabitants dwell in villages and live by agriculture, one should expect national politics to be greatly influenced by the interests and ideas of these people. Can we say it is so?

Of course, it will be wrong to say that our politics do not reflect peasant needs at all, for there are many who have tried to understand the peasants' problems and whose aim is to improve their standard of living. Still it cannot be questioned that if the peasants were intelligent and vocal and could bring all their legitimate weight to the political field, national policies would have taken other turns.

While this is clear, there is a deeper sense in which the statement is true. The peasant is rooted not only in a material soil but also a cultural soil. In order to make them strong and happy and in order to develop in them the habits and the capacity for moral judgment, required of its citizens by a democracy, we should know their mind and ways of thinking. A leadership which understands their material needs but fails to take account of their cultural basis will either be ineffective or make for chaos. Unfortunately, there are many in the political field who understand economic theories and the business of government but have no acquaintance with the soul of India. This is mainly the result of a defective education. A true leader of India must have adequate knowledge of the true values of her culture. We cannot expect of politicians and administrators whose knowledge is confined solely to Western history, politics, science, or vague generalities about that much abused abstract noun humanity to understand or view with sympathy the institutions which have held society together

and given the people of the country that moral and spiritual nourishment for centuries without which everything would have been lost.

One of the ways in which the youth can be introduced to the true spirit of our culture is the widespread study of Sanskrit. In the course of an interesting article on *Bhaskara's Leelavathi: Its Cultural Importance in the Aryan Path* July 1949 Shri K.S. Nagarajan, the writer, says :

'To evaluate properly its cultural importance, some understanding of the vitality and persistence of Sanskrit and of the rich cultural heritage of ancient India is necessary. These have greatly influenced the Indian social and economic structure, though Indian mathematics and the glory of Indian womanhood suffered a set-back from the foreign invasions from which we have not yet been able to recover. Sanskrit, once the language of the people, helps one to think, act and speak nobly. We shall be doing a great disservice to our country if we neglect the study of that celestial language, necessary for the revival of India's ancient glory. Now that India is free, a revival of Sanskrit study, combined with substantial progress in the discovery of ancient relics, and the unearthing of some of the mighty works of the past which indicate the progress made in the exact sciences, must be commenced in earnest. ...

'Bhaskara's *Leelavathi* is not the only work which plays an important role in the cultural history of India. There may be many more such works which should be discovered by the earnest efforts of research scholars taking to the study and popularisation of Sanskrit without further delay. Such works enhance the prestige and glory of India in the eyes of the world. Let me close this short article with this fond hope : May the beautiful Sanskrit language flourish in Independent India with renewed splendour, delighting our minds.'

Encouragement of the study of Sanskrit

among all the elements of our population should be a main concern of national politics. The tremendous potentialities the study of Sanskrit holds for the growth of a healthy and integrated national life are beyond all imagination at present.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BUDDHI YOGA OF THE GITA OR THE BASIC SCIENCE OF THE SOUL. BY MAGDAL RAMACHANDRA. *Published by the author from Gitashram, Chamrajpet, Bangalore 4: Pp. Sixtytwo+248+56. Price Rs. 4/8.*

Ever since the *Gita* was preached it has been holding the attention and interest of people of varied temperaments and in various walks of life. Many are the commentaries upon its teaching, each commentator interpreting it in the light of his own experience or understanding. And such a course is inevitable, for one can give only what one has grasped of it in the absence of direct contact with its original preacher. Yet, a detached study with an open mind, free from prejudices and preconceptions, can help much in arriving at the truth. This is what the author of the *Buddhi Yoga of the Gita* claims to do. He depends for the meaning of technical words used in the *Gita* on the definitions given in the *Gita* itself. Apart from the other merits of this book we must say that any attempt to confine the *Gita* to any one scheme of interpretation is futile, except as a purely scholastic feat to force its teaching into a strait jacket—supposing it were possible—for such attempts tend to confine to a few what is meant for all. Each one sees a facet only of the truth. As such, though there may be apparent conflict between these various views, which the author points out, the conflict is not between the *Gita* and its different votaries. After all the *Gita* may be multi-purposed. It must be remembered any sublime idea has the capacity to give inspiration in different and new ways to different people which its author himself might not have realized.

Still, the *Buddhi Yoga of the Gita* is a welcome publication providing another and a somewhat new and original line of thought regarding the teaching of the *Gita*. The author gives an elaborate introduction to the study of the *Gita* as *Buddhi Yoga*, a simple English translation of the verses with copious notes and comments, a glossary and the text of the *Gita* in *devanagari* at the end. Here *Buddhi* is used not in the sense of the pure intuitive Reason which apprehends Reality, but in the sense of purified intuitive intellect which surrenders itself to the highest personified aspect of

this Reality as the Purushottama, the Overlord of all creation.

A large number of printing mistakes have crept in which we hope will be rectified in the next edition.

GOODWILL MESSAGES TO INDIA. BY DR. TAI CHI-TAO. *Published by The Sino-Indian Cultural Society in India, Santiniketan, West Bengal. Pp. 14. Price As. 8.*

H. E. Dr. Tai Chi-Tao, a great political and cultural leader and literary figure of China, who was the right-hand man of Dr Sun Yat-Sen and an exponent of his ideas, was invited in 1946 by various institutions in India. He accepted the invitations, but at the last moment illness prevented him from undertaking the journey. So he sent his goodwill messages to these institutions, namely, The Benares Hindu University; The Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan; The Sino-Indian Cultural Society of India; The Mahabodhi Society of India; The Calcutta Art Society; and The Oriental Cultural Conference, Calcutta. These messages have been published with a view to promote goodwill between India and China.

The pamphlet contains a short biographical sketch of H. E. Dr Tai Chi-Tao by Mr Tan, Yun-Shan. The messages trace the cultural relations between India and China and bear the impress of the great scholarship and character of the author.

THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE (CHAMPAGNE—LOIRE—SARTHE): BY MISS INDIRA SIRKAR, M.A. *Calcutta Oriental Book Agency, 9, Panchanan Ghose Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 19. Price Re. 1/-*

This booklet by Miss Indira Sirkar, authoress of a few brochures on French life and thought, contains three letters to her mother giving an account of her visit to Champagne, Loire, and Sarthe in France. They throw interesting sidelight on the French life of today. Though as letters from a daughter to her mother they are fine, a recasting of the material with more details regarding the natural surroundings of the countryside and about the life and culture of the village folk in general would make the book more useful to the general public.

The price of the pamphlet is rather too high.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NEW DELHI

FOUNDATION LAYING CEREMONY OF THE NEW CHARITABLE DISPENSARY BUILDING & THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FREE T. B. CLINIC.

Shri Shankar Prasad, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, laid on May 1, 1949 the foundation-stone of the new building, in the Ramakrishna Mission premises at New Delhi, to accommodate the Charitable Dispensary, and the Free Library & Reading Room which are now housed in the living quarters of the monastery and lack sufficient accommodation.

Before the laying of the foundation-stone Swami Gangeshananda, Secretary of the Mission at Delhi, gave a brief account of the history of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Delhi Branch. The Dispensary and the Library & Reading Room were started when the Delhi Branch was established in 1927. About 22,000 cases are treated annually in the Dispensary. The Library has 2500 volumes, and the Reading Room gets six dailies and 33 periodicals. The cost of construction of the new building is estimated at Rs. 40-45,000 of which the Mission has already collected Rs. 15,000 and hopes that generous people will come forward with donations to meet the rest.

Shri Shankar Prasad in his speech pointed out, among other things, that at present the refugee problem—their proper rehabilitation, education and medical welfare—was an urgent one. He said that the missionary bodies like the Ramakrishna Mission with the true spirit of service could do a great deal in helping the Government to tackle this gigantic problem. Concluding Shri Shanker Prasad paid a tribute to the work of the Ramakrishna Mission and hoped that the Dispensary, and the Library & Reading Room would render great service to the citizens of Delhi.

On May 4, 1949 the Opening Ceremony of the new building of the Free T. B. Clinic of the Mission at Karolbagh was performed by the Hon'ble Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, India's Health Minister.

Swami Gangeshananda gave a brief account of the origin and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, its Delhi Branch, and a history of the T. B. Clinic.

The Ramakrishna Mission, established by Swami Vivekananda in 1897, has been doing immense service to the country through its religious, cultural, educational and medical activities as well as through its famine, flood and other relief works. It depends solely on public help to carry on its activities. At present there are 111 centres of the Mission working in the country and 21 abroad. The activities of the Delhi branch of the Mission include organization of religious and spiritual dis-

courses, lectures, *bhajans*, celebrations of the anniversaries of great men and saints of all religions and creeds, and dissemination of their teachings for comparative understanding, maintenance of a free reading room and library, a charitable dispensary at the Mission premises and a free tuberculosis clinic. Last year, this centre organized relief work at the Kurukshetra Relief Camp

The Free T. B. Clinic was opened in 1933 at Paharganj, thanks mainly to the voluntary services of some noble-minded gentlemen, highly qualified in the treatment of T. B. In 1934 the clinic was shifted to Daryaganj to a more commodious building which also was found insufficient for the purpose as the work increased in scope and quantity. The construction of the new building was started in 1941, which, after being interrupted during the war years, has now been completed with the help of the Government and the public. The construction cost Rs. 1,07,809, of which Rs. 40,000 were contributed by the Government of India. The cost of equipping the clinic with X-Ray, Laboratory, surgical instruments, furniture, etc. was estimated at Rs. 72,000 and the Government has met 75% of this amount. The Government has also made a grant of Rs. 14,200 towards running expenses of the clinic for 1949-50 which were estimated at Rs. 33,670. Though the clinic is newly started in this area the number of cases treated went up to 2,494 for the month of March 1949. At present the clinic has 16 observation beds. The clinic has also undertaken, besides its normal activities, the Home Treatment Scheme, to serve those who are unable to attend the clinic in person. The cost of the scheme is fully met by the Government through the Provincial Tuberculosis Association.

Performing the Opening Ceremony of the Clinic Rajkumari Amrit Kaur asked the people to fight in every way the deadly disease of tuberculosis which is taking a heavy toll in India. She also detailed the plans of the Government of India in this respect and dwelt broadly on the cause of the spread of T. B. and the methods for its prevention. She also remarked: 'Partition and our responsibilities in Kashmir and Hyderabad have strained our financial resources to the utmost, and since health is a spending department it is not possible for my Ministry to get all the financial aid that I would fain have to carry out my many projects.' Earlier she said, 'Today I could fill the T. B. hospital in Kingsway and all the other sanatoria whether run by the provincial Governments or by the Central Government twice over, so that it is obvious how dire is the need for further expansion in the matter of T. B. dispensaries and clinics and sanatoria.'