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JANUARY 1962

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or  
all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.



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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVII

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No. 1



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

## SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

*Belur Math, December 9, 1929*

An old monk came in to salute Mahapurushji and enquire about his health. Mahapurushji smiled at his enquiry, pointed to the attendant nearby, and said: 'Put your question about this body to him. I care very little about all that. Often enough, I have little consciousness of having a body at all. This is the real truth. But when people ask such questions, I answer them just as it occurs to my mind. What I know is that I have dedicated my body, mind, life, and everything at the feet of the Master—all these are his. Now, he will do with these just as it pleases him. Should he feel it necessary to maintain this body longer, he will do so. Else, I am ready to depart at his first call; I am only waiting for his call. But that does not mean that I neglect this body. I try to pull it on, just as you all and the doctors desire. And think of the troubles I put my attendants to for the sake of this body. Do you know why I do all this? This is not just an ordinary body; it has its own distinction. God-realization has been attained in and through this body; this body has touched divinity, lived with it,

and served it. The Master has made this body a vehicle for the propagation of his message for this age. That is why I bestow all this care. Otherwise, this body is nothing but a bundle of flesh and blood. As a matter of fact, the Master would not easily allow me to render personal service to him. This often pained me very much. Then, from an incident one day, I came to learn why he was so unwilling. Who, indeed, can understand his motives easily? One day, I stayed at Dakshineswar; there were other devotees as well. After spending a long time in his room in talks about religious matters, he got up and proceeded towards the casuarina grove for answering the call of nature. Generally, one of the devotees would carry his water vessel and follow him on such occasions to pour water on his hands when he wanted it. Most often, he could not touch any metal vessel. When he proceeded towards the casuarina grove that day, I carried the water pot and waited for his return at the proper place. On his way back, when he found me standing there with the water pot, he said: "Now, look here, why did you do such a thing? Why did

you come with the water pot? How can I accept the water from your hand? Can I accept services from you? I honour your father as a *guru*." That struck me with wonder; and then only did I realize why he would not allow me to render all kinds of service to him. The Master had infinite moods. How can we gauge them? The little that he vouchsafes others to understand can alone be grasped by human beings.'

Afterwards, they fell to talking about initiation with *mantra* etc. In that connection, Mahapurushji said: 'No, I never feel any discomfort while initiating others; rather, I feel happy. As the devotees come, I make them hear the name of the Master, and I talk with them about the Master. In this process of initiation that I follow, there is nothing of priestcraft. I do not know much of their *mantras* and mystic rites, nor do I care to know them. All that I know is the Master, and he is all in all to me. His is the name imparted and his is the power transmitted. It is through his will that I initiate all with his name; and as I do so, I pray: "Master, do please accept these; fill them with love and faith; and take pity on them." As a matter of fact, he does fill all with love and faith. The Master is my all in all in life. "Thou art my father, and Thou my mother; Thou art my friend, and Thou my companion; Thou art my knowledge, and Thou my wealth; Thou art my all, O God of gods." He grants virtue, prosperity, enjoyment, and liberation, just as one prays to him. Herein lies the greatness of the Master that his name brings peace, his service ensures peace, and his thought bestows peace. All this is true, because he is the incarnation for this age. All this must necessarily be true. And such is his power of attraction that people are naturally drawn to him, no matter to what community they may belong.

*Belur Math, December 18, 1929*

The talk was about South India and Ceylon. Mahapurushji said: 'Yes, I had been to Ceylon. A few months after Swami's (Swami

Vivekananda) return to India, he sent me there to preach Vedānta. I was in Colombo for seven or eight months, living at a charity house, where I held regular classes on the *Gītā*. Several people attended these. I was quite happy there, and visited the local temples etc. They have a tooth temple, where it is claimed that Buddha's tooth is preserved. What a grand structure they have raised there! One is struck with wonder at the magnificence of the temple. When Swami was on his way back from America to Madras, I reached the city earlier to meet him there. Of course, I had visited those parts once before, and had been to Rameswaram and almost all the other important places of pilgrimage in the South. From the mere dimensions of those huge temples, one can very well realize how very religious the Hindus are. All their activities centre round God alone; it is Him that they want to enjoy in every way. The devotees want to serve God in various ways, and in that alone they find satisfaction.

A monk: 'How did you like Ceylon, Maharaj?'

Mahapurushji: 'I like all places; I never feel dissatisfied with any place. I feel happy wherever I am. One feels happy everywhere when one is enwrapped in the thoughts of God. Yes, I like Ceylon and South India very much.'

The monk: 'Was there any special reason, Maharaj; for your boyhood name of Tarakanath?'

Mahapurushji: 'Yes, I heard that my parents had no male issue for a long time; and so they made a vow to Tārakanātha (Śiva of Tarakeswar temple, thirty miles north-west of Calcutta) and prayed to Him for a son. Tārakanātha appeared before my mother in a dream and promised her that she would have a good son. After that, I was born, and so they named me Tarakanath. My mother's name was Vamasundari: she was very pious, and brought good luck to our family; she was very beautiful, too. I imbibed my religious tendencies from her in my childhood. My father also was very pious; and he had a large income. He used to maintain

some twenty-five or thirty poor boys in his own house. They all read in the Barasat school. I, too, lived with them. My mother used to cook for us all; and though my father wanted to engage a cook, she would not agree, but said: "It is a great fortune for me that I can cook and feed so many boys." She did not bestow much personal care or affection on me; she was ever so busy in her chores. I was just one among those twenty-five or thirty boys. She would not prepare anything special for me; I just sat for food with all. Some neighbours would protest: "She does not so much as take the slightest care of her own child." But my mother would say: "It is His (i.e. Tārakanātha's) child, and not mine. He has given it to me out of His mercy, and He will look after it." When I was about nine years of age, my mother died, so that I do not remember much about her. My father Kanai Ghosal was a pious devotee, with many excellent parts. He was a very charitable person, though he had to curtail his charities when his income dwindled. At night, he would cry, saying: "Mother, how hard dost Thou deal with me! I am still denied Thy vision."

'My mother was really the most lucky member of the family. With her death, the income of my father dwindled considerably. I was very fortunate to have been born of such virtuous parents. Children can be good when the parents are good. My father was a very self-sacrificing man. He earned so much, and yet he would not build even a good house to live in. He spent his money in the service of the poor and the needy. He practised the Tāntrika mode of worship. To him came a Brāhmaṇa spiritual aspirant from Kamakhya. What an attractive personality he had! He was short in stature, and had a very fair complexion, almost reddish. They both spent whole nights in worship etc. In our own house, there was a seat made with the skulls of five creatures, called the *pañca-muṇḍi-āsana*. It is said that, once, they had placed a green cocoa-nut on the sacrificial pitcher for the worship; from that cocoa-nut, a

full tree grew up to almost the height of the roof.

*Belur Math, December 25, 1929*

The Christmas Eve had been observed with due *eclat* the night before. In the visitors' room downstairs, the picture of Virgin Mary with the divine Child in her arms was tastefully decorated with leaves, flowers, and garlands; and cakes, sweets, etc. were offered. In addition to the monastic members of the Math, many lay devotees also had joined in the function. After the portion that dealt with the advent of Jesus had been read from the Bible, some old monks spoke impressively about him. Mahapurushji was too old to be personally present there, but he had a very detailed report of the ceremony, and expressed great delight. As the *sannyāsins* and *brahmacārins* began to gather in his room this morning, he greeted them all one by one with 'Happy Christmas!' In connection with the Christmas Eve celebrated last evening, he remarked: "This ceremony started from the old Baranagore days. A few days after the Master had passed away, the mother of Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) invited us to her village home at Antpur. Swamiji took us all to Antpur. Our hearts were then afire with renunciation; we felt great agony of sorrow at the loss of our Master; and all were engaged in intense spiritual practices. The only thought we had during those days, and the only effort we made, was for the realization of God. When we were at Antpur, we applied ourselves much more intensely to spiritual practices. We would light up fire with logs under the open sky, and spend the nights there in *japa* and meditation. Swamiji would talk with us fervently about renunciation and self-sacrifice. Sometimes, he would make us read the *Gītā*, the *Bhāgavata*, the Upaniṣads, etc. and hold discussions on them. Thus we spent some days.

'One night, we sat near the log-fire absorbed in meditation. After a long time, Swamiji broke silence all of a sudden; and, as though in an inspired mood, he went on talking about Jesus Christ with the utmost devotion. He spoke

about the intense spiritual practices, burning renunciation, and message of Jesus, and, above all, his realization of unity with God. This he did with such spirit, enthusiasm, and lucidity of expression that we were all struck dumb. It seemed to us for the time being that it was none other than Christ himself who spoke to us through Swamiji's mouth. And as we heard, we floated on a current of bliss, as it were. The only idea that reigned supreme in our hearts was that we must realize God, howsoever hard the struggle might be, and we must become one with Him; for all else mattered little. It was Swamiji's habit that whenever he took up a topic, he would follow it on to its uttermost implication. We came to know later on that that was the Christmas Eve, and yet we had no idea of it earlier. So, we were convinced that it was none other than Christ himself who, through Swamiji, made us hear that glorious life and message of his, so as to intensify our spirit of renunciation and our quest for God-realization. While at Antpur, the firm determination grew in us to take the vow of monasticism and organize a collective life. As a matter of fact, the Master himself had made us monks; that idea took firmer roots at Antpur.

'Jesus was a prince among monks, a shining star in the firmament of renunciation. One cannot fully appreciate his wonderful life and unique message, so distinct from common life as they are, unless one is a monk oneself. We can understand the Master just a little, because we had the good fortune of seeing him and living in his company. But how can ordinary people appreciate him? Even the immediate followers of Jesus Christ could hardly understand him; and as for the Christian priests today, they scarcely comprehend him. They can seldom realize the distinctive contribution of his life. For most of the preachers today lack that spirit of renunciation and intense spiritual struggle, that power of discrimination, and that longing for freedom from the meshes of this world. As for the Indians, they know what true religion means and how to live a religious

life. As a result, you can judge for yourselves the degree of success attained by the missionary attempt at conversion during the last one hundred and fifty years. It is almost nothing. How many, indeed, have attained true spiritual life as a result of their preaching! Selflessness, renunciation, holiness—these form the basis of a true religious life. Christ himself said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This seeing of God is the goal of religion. As distinguished from this, it does not lead to any real advancement of religion if one merely organizes big churches and registers a million persons as followers of those churches. All these may have some worth in the political field, but they are of little consequence in the domain of religion. "If I can succeed in transmitting spirituality to even ten people," said Swamiji, "I shall feel my endeavour amply rewarded." The real significance of this utterance is that it is extremely difficult to lead a truly spiritual life. Religion is realization. Among the Christian preachers, there are great intellectual people, who are well read and well informed; but all these would have been a real acquisition if these were associated with the spirit of renunciation and sincere spiritual effort that Christ preached.

'You have come to this holy Order of Sri Ramakrishna; you have accepted the Master, who was a prince among the *sannyāsins*, as your ideal; and you are trying to realize that ideal in your lives. You are sure to be blessed; you will achieve that bliss of Brahman—there can be no doubt about that. So long as this organization believes in the realization of God through selflessness, renunciation, and spiritual practice as the primary aim of life, so long as it accepts the Master with his diverse spiritual moods as the highest ideal, and acts accordingly, so long shall its spiritual power remain intact—there cannot be the least doubt about it. It is very easy to expand activities and gain fame; the really difficult task is to spend one's whole life in a continuous stream of hard spiritual practices for the sole aim of God-realization. "Our motto shall be: 'For one's own salvation, and for the good of the world'", said Swamiji. The

first thing that matters is the knowledge of the Self, and then comes public good. The Master himself demonstrated the same thing in his own life; and his instruction to Swamiji and other intimate disciples was also the same. Service and such other activities that Swamiji has introduced in this organization have to be pursued in association with daily spiritual practices, as part and parcel of the latter; only then will service itself be properly

done. Instead of this, if one is carried away by the current of social work, one will find it difficult to maintain one's balance. Sometimes, success in social service brings in a sort of infatuation. That is no good. It only makes one forget the ultimate goal of life, and leads one astray. From the Master, we never heard any talk except about God. His only instruction, and the burden of all his talks, was but this: "Somehow, realize God first."



## UNIVERSALISM

The charm of universalism had won many a heart long before Wendell Wilkie wrote his *One World*. Ages ago, a Vedic seer sang '*Yatra viśvam bhavati ekanīdam*'—where the whole universe finds a common home. Swami Vivekananda, therefore, was not the first in the field to speak of universalism; he merely followed a long line of highly inspired souls who dreamt of universal brotherhood and worked in their own way for the fulfilment of that cherished dream. Our present study is concerned with how Swami Vivekananda actually felt, spoke, and acted with regard to this problem. We begin from how he conducted himself in his own life, before we come to a consideration of what he said; for, when dealing with spiritual personalities, we Hindus attach more importance to the actualization of the ideals in life than to the ideals themselves.

Swami Vivekananda claimed no originality. "The search after the universal is the one search of Indian philosophy and religion" (*Complete Works*, Vol. III. Seventh Edn., p. 81); 'Ay, long before ideas of universal religion and brotherly feeling between different sects were mooted and discussed in any country in the world, here, in sight of this city, had been living a man whose whole life was a Parliament of Religions, as it should be' (*ibid.*,

p. 315). Sitting at the feet of his Master Sri Ramakrishna, the Swami learnt his lessons of universal love and harmony, and it is these that he preached everywhere.

In his own life, he acted up to his belief. When his own countrymen and co-religionists naturally expected him to return soon from the West to devote himself wholly to India and Hinduism, and wrote to him accordingly, at the same time that they showed no sign of constructive effort, he reacted very strongly and replied: 'I have a message to give; let me give it to the people who appreciate it and who will work it out. What care I who takes it?' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. Seventh Edn., pp. 67-68). At other times, he wrote or said: 'I want to preach my ideas for the good of the world' (*ibid.*, p. 67); 'I belong as much to India as to the world, no humbug about that. . . . What country has any special claim on me? Am I any nation's slave?' (*ibid.*, p. 95); 'You must not forget that my interests are international, and not Indian alone' (*ibid.*, p. 124).

Nothing could be clearer. And the Swami was as good as his words. In America and Europe, he worked for their spiritual regeneration. In personal life, the elderly ladies there were regarded as his mothers and the old gentlemen as his fathers, in all of whom he had im-



plicit faith. The younger generation represented his brothers and sisters in a much more real sense than we can ever imagine. His letters to Miss Mary Hale and others reveal just a glimpse of this side of his personality. They also reciprocated his brotherly love and trust equally. He was welcome at every home, for he wholly identified himself with the people among whom he lived. Again, readers of his life are familiar with the fact as to how he was befriended by all people in the various regions of India, and how completely he adapted himself to the region he happened to be in at a particular moment. Thus, though born in Bengal, he evinced the sincerest sympathy for all people everywhere, and had his staunchest friends and admirers in the South. His catholic outlook and loving heart endeared him to all.

Barriers of religion could never hamper the flow of his spontaneous love. So, he was quite at home in the churches and synagogues in England and the U.S.A. He had many friends among the Buddhists and Mohammedans. He worshipped a little Muslim girl in Kashmir as the goddess Umā. When returning from the West as a conquering hero and a world famous figure, he would often be found engaged in friendly chats with the Mohammedan sailors of India in his ship. When the ship touched at Aden, he wandered about the place and came across a Mohammedan betel seller, near whom he sat and started smoking from his hookah in a friendly way, so that his disciple and companion Captain Sevier was constrained to remark humorously that he realized from that fact alone where the Swami's sympathies by and where he could be really happy.

Although the Swami declared that he wanted to get some money from the U.S.A. in order to execute his cherished plans in India with it, and to this end he exerted himself unsparingly, he never hesitated to deliver lectures in aid of charities in that country. When the Negroes congratulated him in the U.S.A. for his resounding success, thinking him to be one of their own race, the Swami never protested, nor did he care to deny such an assumed affinity.

When treated with indignity under the impression that he was a Negro, he did not try to save himself by revealing his identity. If someone suggested such a course, he would explain that he could not save himself at the cost of others. The fact is that, when his heart was moved by a noble feeling, he never stopped to think to what race or creed the beneficiary belonged. This was universalism in practice. A Sanskrit verse says: '*Udāra caritānām tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*'—to the liberal-minded, the whole universe is a family.

## II

He had his own theory about the harmony of nations, which he derived from the harmony of religions taught and exemplified by Sri Ramakrishna. Here also, as in religion, the dictum was 'Unity in variety'. Each nation had its peculiarity, and each had its quota to contribute to the welfare of humanity as a whole. If any nation were to be eliminated or totally changed into another, humanity would lose to that extent in its variety of expression and in its total strength and inspiration. One nation has, for instance, specialized in politics; another in social equality; a third one in economic welfare; a fourth in artistic expression; a fifth in spiritual endeavour; and so on. These types have to be preserved, so that they may contribute better to other nations that are relatively backward in those particular fields.

India's mission has been to spread spirituality. She has, of course, to learn from others the arts and sciences, but she must needs be spiritually stronger, so that other nations may profit by her practical experience and proficiency in matters spiritual. 'Each nation has a destiny to fulfil; each nation has a message to deliver; each nation has a mission to accomplish' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 369). 'Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality' (*ibid.*, p. 277). A little more materialism is perhaps good for us, and a little more spirituality is good for the West. 'Thus the balance will be preserved. . . . But each will have to supply and hand down to future generations what it has, for the future

accomplishment of that dream of ages—the harmony of nations, an ideal world' (*ibid.*, p. 171).

Variety in types should not be destroyed to produce a dull monotony; nor is this a possibility, for the very nature of man will resist this. Man's adjustment to nature differs according to circumstances, and hence groups form round distinct cultures and interests. True integration can be achieved by striking a balance among diverse factors, by bringing about harmony in the midst of differences. In that lies the promise of the 'one world' of the future: 'In this world, there will be different nations producing the harmony of result' (*ibid.*, p. 165). 'Each nation has its own part to play; and naturally, each nation has its own peculiarity and individuality with which it is born' (*ibid.*, p. 148). Let each nation develop in its own way, learning from others and assimilating other ideas as it progresses, and allowing at the same time others also to develop according to their own genius. 'Help and not destruction' should be the guiding principle in all international dealings. 'Each nation is a type physically and mentally. Each is constantly receiving ideas from others only to work it out into its type, that is, along the national line. The time has not come for the destruction of types' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. Second Edn., p. 523).

As regards the possibility of the realization of 'one world', Swami Vivekananda noted that the nations were coming closer together willy-nilly. Almost no problem can now be solved on purely national grounds; each one of them becomes somehow inter-linked with international problems, so that 'There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 269). Besides, international activities and institutions are on the increase: 'International organizations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day' (*ibid.*, p. 241). And this is so, partly because thinking men are deliberately trying to come together, and partly because universality is ingrained in the very nature of things. Looked at from the standpoint of practically realizing

it, the Swami had his doubt about the consummation of 'one world', though he himself pleaded for an earnest effort for achieving this. 'Whether that ideal world will ever come, I do not know; whether that social perfection will ever be reached, I have my own doubts; but, whether it comes or not, each one of us will have to work for the idea as if it will come tomorrow, and as if it only depends on his work, and his alone' (*ibid.*, pp. 171-72).

Though such an artificial approach leaves one cold, still from another standpoint, there is a great hope of universalism. This optimism is sustained by man's natural love and goodness, which, though not so potent or apparent in all places and under all circumstances, are still there all the same. 'Which of you, that have travelled far and wide, have not found brothers and sisters in every nation?' the Swami asks, and he affirms: 'I have found them all over the world. Brotherhood already exists' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. Eighth Edn., p. 365). But people with a blurred vision fail to see it, and run after some imaginary brotherhood. Let us have faith in the natural onward march that individuals and groups are ever engaged in: 'Through high philosophy or low, through the most exalted mythology or the grossest, through the most refined ritualism or arrant fetishism, every sect, every soul, every nation, every religion, consciously or unconsciously, is struggling upward, towards God; every vision of truth that man has is a vision of Him and of none else' (*ibid.*, p. 381).

### III

Naturally, Swami Vivekananda linked up the success of universalism with a higher spiritual consciousness all around. It is by a more intense spiritualization of the human race that true universalism can become a fact; else, it will remain only one of the so many policies adhered to by different groups for advancing their own points of view. Pursued as a policy, universalism will end in creating more sects, just as much as religion has done in the hands of politicians and fanatics. Misconceived and misdirected uni-

versalism thus cuts at its very root, making a parody of 'one world', of universal brotherhood, and of universal religion. If, instead of perfecting our inner feelings, we go on shouting about universalism, it will be acting like the inebriated brothers in the story told by the Swami himself. Two brothers had surreptitiously drunk wine, and wanted to hide the fact from their uncle. So, each warned the other alternately with a voice rising higher and higher, 'Don't shout, for uncle is near at hand'. The result was that the shout developed into a brawl and brought the uncle there!

Similarly, universalism may just be a camouflage for hiding the motive for advancing one's own particular faith; but people soon find it out and lose faith in universalism itself. 'Now, we all shout like these drunken men: "Universal brotherhood! We are all equal, therefore let us make a sect." As soon as you make a sect, you protest against equality, and equality is no more' (*ibid.*, p. 378). Hence his conclusion was: 'Brotherhood already exists; only, there are numbers of persons who fail to see this and only upset it by crying for new brotherhoods. . . . If the priests and other people that have taken upon themselves the task of preaching different religions simply cease preaching for a few moments, we shall see it is there. They are disturbing it all the time, because it is to their interest' (*ibid.*, p. 365).

Swami Vivekananda learnt this fact from his bitter experience at the Chicago Parliament of Religions and the Paris Congress. The motives of the organizers at both the places might have been very honest and laudable, but the performance of some of the stalwarts on the platform left the impression that these were convened for demonstrating the superiority of the Christian faith. Such also was the attitude of the followers of other faiths in relation to their rivals. Through propaganda and conversion in the name of universalism, they aimed at bringing the whole world under the aegis of their own faith, or worse still, under their own political hegemony or economic serfdom. Universal religion thus became the handmaid of colonialism

in the last century, and of murder, arson, and pillage in the centuries preceding.

Apart from such questionable motives and methods pursued by misguided fanatics, universalism fails because of the wrong approach made even by its sincere adherents. Each of these would have his own brand of universalism discovered through philosophical dissertation and cooked up with the help of an intellectual eclecticism; this therefore appeals neither to the heart nor to the spiritual consciousness. It is not a felt reality. 'Universal religion . . . and all that are very good in theory, but one must practise' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. p. 80). The organized religions are awfully fanatic, and are full of hatred for one another; the universalists are hollow in their talks. Universalism is thus a far cry under the existing circumstances.

The emphasis laid on personalities, rather than on principles, is another drawback from which real brotherly understanding suffers. People can understand principles; but when one brings in persons, they lose sight of the principles and fall foul of the defects they can discover in the character of the saint or prophet put up as the embodiment of universalism. In fact, it is difficult to find out a true universalist from the galaxy of ancient leaders of religion, not because no one of such stature actually existed, but because the sects have spun round them such a heap of their own beliefs, aspirations, metaphysics, and taboos as to make their real personalities unrecognizable. The principles get stifled under a plethora of books, rituals, and symbols, on which sectarianism relies for its own prosperity. Thus priestcraft prevails and group interest rules the show in all the sects at the cost of the principles the founders stood for.

Here, then, we are faced with the crux of the problem. There can be no real human progress unless the whole world moves in unison; and yet, we have not discovered any practical way that can help us in our endeavour. What is the way out? We want universalism very badly, and we talk of universal brotherhood, universal religion, and all that out of a felt

necessity. But in what do these really consist, and how can these be actualized? The paths followed so far have failed miserably.

#### IV

Swami Vivekananda was convinced—and he expressed it more than once—that universalism, or, for the matter of that, whatever method of human integration and progress be adopted, must be based on spirituality—not on the superficial aspects of it, but on the very basic principles which are common to all religions, though they may not always be recognized to be so. He was also equally emphatic that, of all the existing systems dealing with these fundamentals, Vedānta was the best and most representative. This is because Vedānta not only teaches universal brotherhood, but it believes in the spiritual oneness of all. Again, Vedānta can comprise within its ambit all who tread diverse paths of progress. ‘Vedānta can be carried into our everyday life, the city life, the country life, the national life, and the home life of every nation. For, if a religion cannot help man wherever he may be, wherever he stands, it is not of much use; it will remain only a theory for the chosen few’ (*ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 298). This all-comprehensiveness is a factor very much in favour of Vedānta’s claim to universality; for no other system accepts life in all its variety and totality in the same earnest way as Vedānta does, and we saw that universal brotherhood cannot be established by denying or destroying any form of life’s expression—scientific, religious, theistic, atheistic, or any other.

According to Vedānta, all religions are but different forces in the economy of God, working for the good of mankind. From time to time, a religion may retrograde or move forward, but the ideal which every religion represents is never lost. So, every religion is on the march towards the ideal, which fundamentally is the same everywhere. ‘And that universal religion about which philosophers and others have dreamed in every country already exists. It is here’ (*ibid.*, p. 365). It exists in every heart

and in every endeavour, though its expression may be misdirected.

A universal religion has to embody the essence of all religions; it must also accommodate all minds and methods, for the essence expresses itself diversely according to time, place, and environment. In every religion, there are three parts—philosophy, mythology, and rituals. As sectarians, we find it extremely difficult to agree even in philosophy; much less can we do so in mythology and rituals, though all these can be equally rational or irrational. We decide in favour of one or the other, not according to any intelligent principle, but according to our own culture, tradition, and personal predilection. While holding steadfastly to the principles, Vedānta, on the other hand, is ready to make concession to all these varieties under the belief that each mode of worship is necessary for a particular mental disposition, and each is supplementary to the other, leading by stages to the highest human goal, namely, God-realization. Nay, even sinners deserve sympathy, for even their actions proceed from love for others, a love that is Brahman Itself, though unrecognizable as such under very adverse circumstances. They, too, are stumbling onward to the fullest manifestation of that very Brahman.

Vedānta can be the universal system, just because it is free from certain drawbacks from which the other systems usually suffer. ‘Vedānta is not antagonistic to anything, though it does not compromise or give up the truths which it considers fundamental’ (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 122). Religions, as a rule, are based on some book or books; they centre round certain person or persons venerated as incarnations or prophets; and each religion believes that it alone has the whole truth, for without this conviction it cannot impress its followers. ‘Vedānta does not believe in any of these teachings. First, it does not believe in a book. . . . It denies the authority of any book over any other book. . . . The Upaniṣads . . . say again and again, “Not by the reading of books can we realize the Self”’ (*ibid.*, p. 124). Secondly, Vedānta holds that

all souls are divine, and hence does not feel the need of sticking to any particular person for worship. And, lastly, Vedānta does not teach the old idea of God at all; Vedānta teaches that God is in everyone, that He has become everyone and everything. This absolute democracy based on the spiritual oneness of mankind places Vedānta in an advantageous position to preach true universal brotherhood.

Vedānta does not stop at merely disowning fanatical partnership with particular books, persons, and personal gods; it asks its votaries not to keep their minds crammed with limited material conceptions; it also places before them an impersonal God beyond the senses. The senses create limitation and difference, but true vision discovers that there is only one, infinite Reality. All is here right now. 'Therefore Vedānta formulates, not universal brotherhood, but universal oneness' (*ibid.*, p. 129). This belief in oneness supplies the most stable foundation of universalism, as also of morality in general. 'One benefit from this theory we practically see is that the idea of a real universal love is only possible from this point of view' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. Ninth Edn., pp. 420-21). It also ensures mental strength, and removes fear by bringing home the conviction that all are one, so that there can be no scope for enmity. Vedānta can stand the severest rational scrutiny, and at the same time champion the cause of all religions from the standpoints of their essentials and the need of varying minds. According to Vedānta, the soul is infinite, eternal, free from all qualities, good or bad, and one with the ultimate Reality Itself, which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. The infinite Truth is not to be acquired. It is here with us all the time, undying and unborn. So the Swami's conclusion is: 'Vedānta is not a new religion. So old—as old as God Himself. It is not confined to any time or place; it is everywhere. . . . The unity of existence—you have it already within yourselves. . . . The whole universe is one existence. There cannot be anything else' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. pp. 137-38). Vedānta is not merely an intellectual system, it is a spiritual path lead-

ing to full emotional satisfaction and realization of Truth.

True universalism can spring from the realization of this unity alone, by whatever name it may be known in the different religions. Men with this kind of realization alone have the right to talk of universal brotherhood. To others, it is only an intellectual jargon that lacks conviction. It was no dogmatism, therefore, when Swami Vivekananda asserted: 'I think that it is Vedānta, and Vedānta alone, that can become the universal religion of man, and that no other is fitted for the role' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 182); 'Vedānta only can be the universal religion, . . . it is already the existing universal religion in the world, because it teaches principles and not persons' (*ibid.*, p. 250). Besides, Vedānta can bring about universal brotherhood, just because it is a religion not only of the head, but of the heart as well; for it is love alone that can bind individuals together for all time, and universal love springs from a felt unity of all.

The true definition of universalism was thus given by the Swami at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago: 'It must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite, like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Kṛṣṇa and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahminic or Buddhist, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development. . . . It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, . . . and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 17).

Against such a background of all-comprehensiveness, Swami Vivekananda felt that any struggle merely for one's personal liberation could not be called universalism proper. If the whole world is one, the aspirant must strive and pray for the good of all. There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake. The Swami's universalism was thus an active ideal to be followed by all,

Such being the rational considerations, such the facts as they stood, such the need for active promotion, and such his own personal realization, Swami Vivekananda's utterances could not but end in a note of high optimism about univer-

salism: 'Gradually, these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when separation will vanish and that Oneness to which we all belong will become manifest' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 188).

## THE RELATION BETWEEN THE TWO MĪMĀNSĀS

BY DR. P. S. SASTRI

In the systems of Indian philosophy, we come across two Mīmāṃsās, the first and the second, or the old and the new. 'Mīmāṃsā' is an intellectual inquiry. The terms 'pūrva' (first) and 'uttara' (second or later), as applied to an intellectual inquiry, are bound to make us believe that they together constitute a single comprehensive inquiry into reality (*eka śāstra*). The first inquiry may be said to lead us to the second. This interpretation has been put by some thinkers on the first word in the opening aphorism of the *Brahma-Sūtra*, 'atha' or 'then'. The ritualists and the systems of Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita contend that the word 'atha' indicates that something ought to be accomplished before one takes up an inquiry into the nature of Brahman. This something is supplied by a study of the Vedas and by a knowledge of the social and religious duties, just as the inquiry into Dharma, with which the other inquiry begins, is preceded by a systematic study of the Vedas. The inquiry into Brahman must needs be preceded, then, by an inquiry into Dharma.

Moreover, the Smṛti and Sūtra literature abounds in references to the sixteen or even to the twenty chapters of the Mīmāṃsā. Jaimini's twelve chapters, the four chapters of Saṅkarṣaṇa, and Bādarāyaṇa's four chapters would make up the number twenty; and when we omit Saṅkarṣaṇa's contribution, we get at the sixteen chapters. The Smṛti and Sūtra literature seems to consider the two Mīmāṃsās as one single inquiry.

It is only Śaṅkara's school of Vedānta that holds to the view that the two Mīmāṃsās constitute two different inquiries, and therefore two different systems of thought. The rituals and the knowledge they require are not essential for one striving after the knowledge of Reality. Even before the performance of rituals, if one is well versed in, and acts in accordance with, the Vedānta, one can and does directly apprehend and experience Reality. The knowledge and experience of Reality is dependent neither on the fulfilment of a ritualistic law nor on a duty imposed by the family and the society. There is no causal relation between the two.

Yet, those who stick to the view that the two Mīmāṃsās constitute a single inquiry attempt to maintain that the opening word of Bādarāyaṇa means a knowledge of the sequence. In the context of a sacrifice, for instance, we come across a passage: 'Hṛdayasyāgre'vadyati atha jihvāyā atha vakṣasaḥ.' Here, the *avadāna* or cutting of the heart does not necessarily give rise to that of the palate. But there is only a sequence conveyed by the word 'atha' (then); and this sequence alone is expressed. In the same way, it is contended, the inquiry into the nature of Brahman follows the inquiry into the nature of Dharma.

Even this is untenable, since there is an essential difference between those entitled to take up the inquiry into Dharma and those that are qualified to inquire into Brahman. The two inquiries have two different agents or doers.

In *śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāva* or in *adhikṛta-adhikāri-bhāva*, on the other hand, we have the ordainment of a sequence, since the agent is only one. We have also the relation of the part and the whole (*aṅgāṅgi-bhāva*) between the *prayājas* and *darśapūrṇamāsa*, for the agent is the same in both. In such a case, we have an identical doer, method (*prayoga*), and purpose (*phala*), whence it is that one has to perform these rites in a given sequence.

Such an identity is entirely absent in the case of the two Mīmāṃsās. The inquiry into Dharma sets its goal in a heaven, while the seeker of Brahman or Reality strives after the realization of an identity or oneness between the individual soul and the Absolute. Moreover, it is after having carefully studied the Vedas that one has to take up the inquiry into Dharma; and even this is not essential for the seeker of Brahman or Reality. The two inquiries involve also two distinctly different methods or processes. As such, we can neither speak of an identical agent for both the inquiries, nor accept a sequence between the two. No sequence can be made out even on the basis of *adhikṛta-adhikāri-bhāva*. Take, for example, this passage : 'Darśapūrṇamāsābhyāmiṣṭvā somena yajeta' (Having performed the *darśapūrṇamāsa* rituals, one has to offer the *soma* sacrifice). The participial ending of the verb reveals that there must be the same agent in both the acts. One is qualified to perform the *soma* sacrifice after having done the other sacrifice. One becomes eligible (*adhikārin*) for the *soma* sacrifice only when one has availed oneself of the eligibility (*adhikṛta*) for the other. Such an identical agent is not required for the two Mīmāṃsās.

The two inquiries also differ in their objects and purposes. The inquiry into Dharma involves religious observances and rites, and it assures of prosperity or good fortune (*abhyudaya*). The other inquiry does not depend on such acts (*anuṣṭhāna*), for it is directed to final beatitude (*niḥśreyasa*), which alone is beyond time and space. Further, Dharma, the object of one inquiry, is a thing of the future. It is yet to come into existence; it does not exist

at the time of the inquiry, for it depends on the activity of the person. But in the other, Brahman, the object of the inquiry, is not something that merely will be. It is already an existent reality, and, as such, it depends on no human activity for its existence or for its reality.

There is another difference also between the two inquiries. It arises from the injunction (*codanā*) that determines the act proper. The injunction of Dharma instructs a person only by engaging him in an activity, while that of Brahman merely instructs him. The injunction is only to give rise to an apprehension or knowledge of Brahman, and the person is not directed to any other activity in respect of this apprehension. Brahman is not a product, not a derivative. It is eternal; and if it is to be produced by any activity arising from an injunction, it will cease to be eternally real.

Then, again, the two inquiries differ in the accessories they involve or imply. In the inquiry into Dharma, the object inquired is Dharma; the person eligible to undertake this inquiry is one who has studied and mastered the Vedas; it is the performance of the various prescribed rites that relates him to his object and to his goal; and the goal is an abode in the heavenly kingdom. In the inquiry into Brahman, on the other hand, one who is equipped with the four prerequisites is eligible for undertaking this investigation. A preliminary knowledge of a distinction between the real and the unreal, a detached and disinterested love of duty, self-control, and a yearning to be free are the four prerequisites. The object of inquiry for such a one is Brahman. He has to hear about Brahman, discuss it through, and contemplate it; this is the way through which he is related to his object. And the goal or purpose of such an inquiry is the realization of oneness with the Absolute. Such a stupendous difference between the two groups of accessories cannot be accounted for on the presumption that the two together constitute a single inquiry.

Even if we admit, for the sake of argument, that they are the two parts of the same inquiry, we have to explain the necessity for employing

the word 'atha' at the very beginning of the first aphorism of Bādarāyaṇa. The inquiry was already begun by the first aphorism of Jaimini. The repetition of the word 'atha' by Bādarāyaṇa would amount to the beginning of a totally distinct and new inquiry. If the injunction of contemplation (*pratipatti vidhi*) were the purpose of Vedānta, there is no necessity to begin a new inquiry with 'atha'. Even if it were to be commenced, it ought to have read as 'Now, therefore, the inquiry into the remaining religious duty', just as we find 'Now, therefore, the inquiry into what subserves the purpose of the sacrifice and what subserves the purpose of man'. But the realization of oneness with Brahman is not the goal set out by the inquiry into Dharma; and for a new purpose, there must needs be a new inquiry.

The two Mīmāṃsās, then, have nothing in common regarding their doctrines or fundamentals. The terms 'pūrva' and 'uttara' have only a chronological significance. The Vedic literature is divided into Saṁhitā and Brāhmaṇa. The Āraṇyakas are taken to be a part of the latter; and the last portions of the Āraṇyakas are called the Upaniṣads. That Mīmāṃsā which has a reference to the earlier portions of the Vedic literature is called *pūrva*; and the other is known as *uttara*, since it is based on the latter portions. The two Mīmāṃsās represent the two great parts of the Vedic literature. It is only when we consider that the whole Vedic literature is one and indivisible that the two Mīmāṃsās can constitute one single system. But their contents differ.

Jaimini has an aphorism: 'Since the scripture is for the purpose of ritual, there is futility for whatever has not that purpose' (I.2.1). Jaimini also says that the knowledge of the ritual comes from an injunction (I.1.5), and that the words denoting existent things are related to that whose purport is ritual (I.1.25). Śabara echoes these aphorisms when he maintains that the purport of the Vedas is the teaching of ritual (I.1.1), and that an injunction prompts one to action (I.1.2). From these passages, it is evident that for Pūrva Mīmāṃsā the Vedic

passages that have no direct bearing on rituals are futile. As such, the Vedānta must be deemed to be futile. But all Veda is one; and the Mīmāṃsaka cannot accept only a part of the Veda. This compels him to find out some way of explaining the Vedāntic texts; and he offers two possible methods.

The first alternative is to consider the Vedāntic texts as being subsidiary to the direct injunctions, in so far as they reveal the agent and deity implied by the injunctions. The second alternative is to accept them as prescribing some other actions, like divine service or worship. These alternatives construe the Vedāntic texts as related to some action, or as supplementing some injunction or other with a certain essential information. The passages dealing with the soul define the agent or the doer, while those referring to Brahman speak of the deity invoked by the act. The passages describing the creation can then be taken to refer to the spiritual endeavours. In some such way, the Upaniṣads can be taken to be supplementary to action, and consequently purposeful.

But an already existent reality called Brahman is an object of experience. The Vedas cannot be said to give information regarding such self-established and already existing objects, for they can be apprehended through other ways. The Vedas offer that which is not obtained otherwise, or they reveal that which is not known. The teaching of Brahman would become futile if it were devoid of what is to be rejected or accepted. A mere statement of fact about an already existent thing, incapable of being desired or rejected, would make the Vedas purposeless. The *arthavāda* texts in the Vedas are equally futile and purposeless; but Jaimini renders them purposeful by considering them along with the injunctions and prohibitions. They are said to praise the things ordained, or to denounce the things prohibited. Even passages like 'Iṣe tvā' are related to the ritual, as they mention rituals or the instruments thereof. Thus the injunction becomes the central purport of the Vedas. In such a case, even the Vedāntic passages also must be made



subsidiary to the ritual, since they reveal the nature of the agent and that of the deity presumed in every rite.

This view is based on the idea that the two Mimāṃsās constitute only one system of thought; and we have seen the futility of this interpretation. The ritualist, then, argues from the standpoint of action, which, he considers, is central to the Vedas. The Vedāntic passages have their purport in divine service or worship ordained by some passages in the Upaniṣads.

The Vedāntic texts, replies Śaṅkara, have Brahman alone as their main topic. All the passages have their meaning only with reference to Brahman. Then, it is improper to assume another meaning or reference by rejecting that which is stated, by assuming the unexpressed, and by violating or ignoring the given. The passages like '*Tat kena kaṁ paśyet*' reveal plainly that we cannot assume an act, or an agent, or an end to be made and possessed for the knowledge of Brahman. They cannot and do not imply the nature of an agent or that of a deity.

Moreover, Brahman may be an already existent, self-established thing. But the identity between the soul and Brahman cannot be understood or apprehended except through the great intuitive judgements of experience that constitute the basic framework of this system. It cannot be argued that the teaching of Brahman is futile, because it is devoid of what is to be accepted or rejected; for the chief end of human activity cannot be realized in the absence of the annulment of all accessory and adventitious things. The attainment of the human end results even from the realization of the self as Brahman, which is devoid of what is to be accepted or rejected. This knowledge alone leads to the destruction of all hindrances.

Worship or *upāsanā* requires an object of worship, the worshipper, and the act of worship. These must be presumed to have a reality independent of one another. But one can be real only when the other two are real. This limitation would render their reality temporal, finite, and unreal. Nor can they be predicated of Brah-

man, the absolute Reality. In such a case, it is impossible to take Brahman as standing in subordinate relation to contemplation mentioned in the Upaniṣads. The fact of identity between the self and Brahman cannot provide any scope for the survival of dualism or of pluralism.

The statements of the earlier parts of the Vedas have their validity and significance in being only injunctions. Yet, the passages of the Upaniṣads, in spite of their non-injunctive nature, are valid and significant. The validity or invalidity of any text is determined only by what it seeks to establish and accomplish. The knowledge of the self has a purpose, viz. the identity of the self with Brahman. When there is a purpose for a Śāstra, we cannot deny the validity of its teachings. Hence it is that the ritualistic contention of the Vedānta texts' being futile, if they do not refer to an act, is illogical.

The Vṛttikāra and his followers opine that Brahman of the Upaniṣads is the object of worship. The Śāstras have a purpose in inducing an individual to, or prohibiting him from, some action. Some act or other constitutes the main purport of the Vedas. The purpose of the Śāstra is to be sought in some act, positive or negative. Those portions of the Vedas that speak of neither a positive act nor a negative one are subordinate to some acts or other. The Vedānta passages can become significant and meaningful only in this way. It is therefore argued that just as one desirous of a heavenly life hereafter is to perform the rites of *agnihotra*, so must one desirous of immortality take to the inquiry after the knowledge of Brahman. Further, the mandatory suffixes do appear in passages like '*Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ*', '*Ātmetyevopāsita*'. Such suffixes give rise to the questions: Who is the Self? What is Brahman? They find an answer in the Vedāntic texts that teach the true nature of Brahman. By worshipping and contemplating such a Brahman, one realizes the end called spiritual freedom. If these passages fail to find a place in the injunctions of command, and if they are mere statements of fact, then the Vedānta will have

to be futile. To avoid such a contention, the Upaniṣads enjoin the realization of Brahman through intuition. In the injunction 'Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsītavyaḥ', hearing is enjoined first. Then the command is to discuss and reflect, and finally to contemplate, so that one may have the direct experience of Reality. Such passages do formulate the injunctions of worship and contemplation with regard to the knowledge of Brahman.

This contention is untenable. The Vedānta passages cannot be taken to be subsidiary to the injunctions prescribing *upāsana*, since there is a great difference between the ends outlined by the knowledge of duty and that of Reality. The first aphorism of Jaimini ordains the duties that refer to the body, speech, and mind; and it also implies that one has to know what *adharma* is, so that one can know what one has to reject. The effects or the consequences of *dharma* and *adharma* are respectively pleasure and pain; and they arise from the contact or relation between the subject and his object. But the differences in the *dharma* presuppose differences among the agents, and these result in a gradation even in happiness. These gradations of happiness and misery are brought about by the gradations of merit and demerit, which are not eternally real. But in the stage of absolute spiritual freedom, there can be no such degrees of happiness; and the Upaniṣad accepts this position when it says: 'Aśarīraṁ vāva santarṁ na priyāpriye sprśataḥ.' This freedom from the body as an eternally real state is the meaning of *mukti*; and it is an already existent and self-established state, whence it is that it cannot be produced even by an act of *dharma*. Therefore does Śaṅkara observe that the unembodied state called final freedom is eternal and is totally different from the fruit of the ritual to be performed.

If we were to speak of this spiritual freedom as something to be produced by *dharma*, it will have to be a thing of the future; and being produced, it would have to be also unreal. But the freedom assured by the knowledge of

Brahman is an existent fact. It is only veiled for the time being, and the veil awaits its removal by knowledge.

Further, the Vedāntic concept of spiritual freedom cannot be treated as involving an act implied in an imagined identification; it is not of the nature of an appearance, nor is it caused by association with a distinct mode of activity. It is not also of the nature of purification, which appears to be a subsidiary to a ritual. The imagined identification and the appearance make freedom a thing created anew; and this would render it unreal. Since Brahman alone is the self, there can be no specific or special act that can bring about this realization. Since it is self-revealing, it stands in no need of a purification or transformation. It is neither produced, nor evolved, nor attained, nor transformed.

The end prescribed by Dharma is dependent on the individual; it requires an act to be performed. But the end of knowledge is dependent only on knowledge. Whether an individual strives after it or not, its nature remains unchanged. The ends of Dharma are experienced only when the soul manages to leave the body. But the freedom resulting from the knowledge of Reality is experienced always here and now. This experience is the higher immediacy; and the individual who has it is known as a *jīvanmukta*. The concept of *jīvanmukti* widens the gulf between the two Mīmāṃsās.

The Upaniṣadic Absolute is not a subsidiary to anything else. It is Brahman, the eternally free, the true Individual. It is the only Individual which is identical with Individuality. This Absolute or Brahman is apprehended by a reflection of knowledge on itself; and such a knowledge is gathered for us in the Upaniṣads. This absolute Being is identical with the individual soul; it cannot be negated, for the very negation is made by the Absolute. Negation falls within the Absolute, and it cannot negate itself. Such a self is the object of the concept 'I'; and it is neither an agent, nor a doer, nor

an enjoyer. It is the immutably eternal witnessing Consciousness, which is universal. Such a Reality can be understood neither by Pūrva Mīmāṃsā nor by discursive logic. It is the self of all; and, as such, there cannot arise the

questions regarding its acceptance or rejection. As such, even though the Vedānta texts refer to an already existent Reality, they have a purpose in the realization of the supreme identity between the self and the Absolute.

## THE BHAKTI-YOGA OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

BY SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

Saint John of the Cross is eminently a *bhakti-yogin*, who practised devotion as a path of perfection and who lived on the heights of spiritual experience by the aid of devotion. Though the various stages he passed through—the ‘nights’—are comparable to the stages in *rāja-yoga*, it is not correct to call him a *rāja-yogin*. For instance, Sri Ramakrishna went through the ‘ladder’ of *rāja-yoga*, but nobody calls him a *rāja-yogin*. *Rāja-yoga* is only the technique, and being the technique, it is the common denominator of all *yogas*. What is the nature of the basic fervour in a mystic? Is it devotion or discrimination? What is the texture of his highest experience, and what does he teach? These are the questions which will decide the class to which a mystic belongs. And applying these standards to St. John of the Cross, we arrive at the conclusion that he was pre-eminently a *bhakti-yogin*.

The basic urge of St. John’s personality is love for God and His creation. Towards God and man, he knows no other relationship, no other language, than love. There is in him a flaming poetical genius; he is a great lyricist.

Within my flowering breast  
Which only for himself entire I save,  
He sank into his rest;  
And all my gifts I gave  
Lulled by the airs with which the cedars  
wave.

Even if St. John of the Cross had not written anything else, these lines by themselves would

have condensed all that he lived, all that Spanish mysticism could have conveyed to us. It was always a love which is a secret between God and the soul, a secret which no language can convey, but yet tries to convey, ‘a love, of which if one drop fell into hell, hell would be transformed into heaven’.

All mystics of the type of St. John of the Cross had their experience in the form or in terms of human love, and they used the same terms: union, rendezvous, separation—terms used by ordinary lovers. ‘In darkness, up the secret stair I crept.’ . . . ‘End it, pursue your course. And for our sweet encounter tear the robe.’ But on reading, the reactions induced in us are quite different; we feel like being led into a sacred atmosphere, where Lord Christ has condescended to come to fulfil his rendezvous with his chosen St. John, who considers himself Christ’s bride. We are induced or inspired to say love is God, for love is sacred here, and all notions of sacredness pour into love.

We have a beautiful parallel to this in one of the sacred books of India, the *Bhāgavata*, when it speaks of the love of the *gopīs* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *Bhāgavata* says: ‘Those who meditate on this form of Kṛṣṇa as the Cupid of Cupid will easily subjugate the cupid in themselves, transcend the aspect of human beauty, and ascend to the Divine.’ In the same way, the ‘love affairs’—if I may use the words in a special sense in regard to mystics and God—between St. John of the Cross and the Lord,

when we read them, awaken in us the Divine and not feelings of the flesh. Never did the devotion of St. John fall to the sentimental level. It was all pure gold, the gold of divine fire and fervour, which was his very essence. Sentimentalism dulls the edge of true devotion, and when the edge is gone, it seeks fruition in any cheap form of religious manifestation, rapture, or pseudo-ecstasy.

According to St. John, man's natural destiny is to love God. Man is constituted physically to love God:

For the bride he built a palace  
Out of his knowledge vast and grand,  
Which in two separate compartments,  
One high, one low, he wisely planned.

The lower storey was of endless  
Differences composed: the higher  
He beautified with wondrous jewels,  
Refulgent with supernal fire—

That the bride might know her bridegroom  
In the true glory of his power,  
In the top part, he set the angels  
In shining hierarchy to tower.

But tenant of the lower mansion  
Our human nature was assigned,  
Because its human composition  
Falls short of the angelic kind.

And though the Being in two places  
He divided in this way,  
He composed of both one body  
To house the bride, who thus did say:  
That the love of one sole bridegroom  
Made them into one sole bride.

Man's position as bride makes his nostalgia for God an inalienable state of his being. Devotion thus is his destiny. Also, in this composition of man with the spark divine lies the possibility of God coming down in human form—in other words, God becoming man—to make possible this interchange which is the substance of all religion.

And so the God would be the man  
And the man be the God: and then

He would roam amongst them freely  
And eat and drink with other men.

This natural destiny to love God lies forgotten and unused in us. The fire of divine love cannot burn with the faggots that kindle the fire of the senses. All the fuel that feeds the senses must be withdrawn; the objects, the persons, and the thoughts that feed the fire of the senses must be withdrawn. In the darkness that follows alone, God can kindle His light. So long as the lights of the senses are on, God cannot light His own. It is not creativity that ushers in God's presence, but silence and absence of effort. We should cease acting, so that God becomes creative. 'My will is mine to make it Thine.' It is not that God is a jealous lover. A jealous lover refuses to talk to us when we are talking with others, and is anxious to get us all alone. God is a lover of great patience and understanding. He waits until all have finished talking and have departed. And when I am alone, all by myself, I will hear His voice. When I am all alone, I am with God. This solitude, which is otherwise communion with God, is not to be laboured after. It must be spontaneous in us, it comes on us even as sleep comes on us. Though in a sense it is voluntarily induced by starving the senses, the actual event is as spontaneous as sleep.

In safety, in disguise,  
In darkness, up the secret stairs I crept,  
(O happy enterprise)  
Concealed from other eyes,  
When all my house at length in silence *slept*.  
Upon that lucky night  
In secrecy, inscrutable to sight,  
I went without discerning;  
And with no other light  
Except for that which in my heart was  
burning.

It lit and led me through,  
More certain than the light of noonday clear  
To where One waited near  
Whose presence well I knew,  
There where no other presence might  
appear. . . .

Lost to myself, I stayed  
 My face upon my lover having laid  
 From all endeavour ceasing:  
 And all my cares releasing  
 Threw there amongst the lilies there to fade.

The idea of 'nights' in the thought of St. John of the Cross, as a state of superior spiritual discernibility, is an original contribution so far as the Western mystical thought is concerned. St. John familiarizes us with the night and darkness, of which we are otherwise afraid. Indian thinkers use 'nights' as symbols of spiritual light, when we develop a higher vision. Indian thought uses the 'night' to symbolize a metaphysical state, which, by other means, remains incomprehensible. During day, the sun's light keeps up the distinctions of form and colour. When night falls, the forms remain, but the distinctions are annihilated, or are eaten up by one solid mass of darkness. In the same way, during the state of deep sleep, consciousness solidifies in a mass and abolishes all distinctions and duality. Duality of subject-object or duality of consciousness is necessary for knowledge. When consciousness solidifies and all duality vanishes, it is an incomprehensible state. We can talk about it only using symbols, like darkness, night, vacuum, etc. When darkness signifies the absence of the usual light of understanding, night is the night of empirical knowledge, to use the language of the *Gītā*: 'What is night to all beings, therein the *yogin* is awake. Where all beings are awake, that is the night of the sage who sees.' Here night is night for the senses, but day, rather midday, for the Self or Consciousness. And how can there be darkness at noon? St. John forcefully puts it: 'More certain than the light of noonday clear.'

For St. John, the obscure night is the heart and core of his teaching, the being of his teaching. It is both the way and the goal, the path to spiritual awakening and a state in which the naked soul abides for all time. Night for him is not simply weaning the senses from their sensuous delights, but weaning the soul from its

spiritual delights, like visions and false ecstasies. It is thus a kind of *spiritual tonic to the soul*. It is walking with God, not in ordinary darkness, but in divine darkness created by God. God is incomprehensible. We must put to sleep that part in us which asks for the comprehensible. Quoting Denis the Areopagite, St. John says, 'God is a ray of darkness', and therefore should be approached through 'ignorance', through 'the night of understanding', which is also named by him as 'obscure faith'. Ignorance, which is the innate obscuration of one's powers and not a condition enforced from outside, has to be traversed before we come to illumination. The four 'nights' make up the bulk of his teaching. In the first book of 'The Ascent', he speaks of the night of the senses or purification of the 'appetites'; in the second, he speaks of 'the night of understanding through faith'; in the third book, of 'the night of memory by hope'; and in the fourth, of 'the night of will through love', which he left unfinished.

The night of the senses is, according to St. John, a state of vacuum or suspense, when the longing for sensuous things is withdrawn from the sense objects and turned towards God. Normally, our senses are always going towards the objects. How can we change the direction of this current? We must feel the pull of a greater force, a greater magnetism. And this magnetism can come only from God, who is supra-terrestrial. St. John is definite that the sustaining force behind the night of the senses is love for God, and not renunciation or self-denial. Although there is the pain of 'mortification of appetites', the aspirant is always being sustained in bliss by the assurance that every moment of this mortification is only the other side of the bliss of divine union. Even in psychological language, the other end of mortification is self, that is to say, all pain is absorbed through stages of sensation, memory, and consciousness. The words of St. John sound psychological, when he says that the 'appetite is the mouth of the will'. The self, in the capacity of the will, absorbs sensations and transmits them until the last stage of lucidity or pure experience.

So, it is the food taken through the senses that becomes transformed or purified into will. If the food is good, in the spiritual sense, there are all chances of the will becoming spiritual. We are reminded of the words of Śrī Rāmānuja in relation to an Upaniṣadic passage: 'If food is pure, the interior becomes pure; if the interior becomes pure, knowledge of the Self returns; and with the knowledge of the Self, all knots of the heart are dissolved'. Śaṅkara adds that food does not mean only food taken through the mouth, but the food taken through all the senses. If this food is conducive to spiritual life, then it awakens pure will, which is the Self. It is the food itself that becomes refined as will.

We find in all religions insistence on the pure food we supply to our senses, because on that depends the formation of our tendencies, on our tendencies depends the aspiration, and on the aspiration depends the power of the will. So, in saying that the 'appetite is the mouth of the will', St. John is very traditional and pregnant with spiritual import. When the appetites are turned towards God, then their pull towards the world is extinguished by and by, and finally disappears. This reminds us of the words of the great devotee Prahlāda, who prayed: 'O Lord! May my mind be turned to Thee with the same intensity of attachment with which the minds of unregenerate people are turned towards sense objects.' Here, it is clear that the mortification of the appetites is not an ascetic process, but a process which brings increasing freedom, because it brings to us more and more a transmuting momentum. St. John says in 'The Living Flame of Love' that the transmuting power of the appetite for God develops into the passionate fire of love for God. In 'The Ascent', he puts the same idea in another way: 'It is not a negative destruction of our sensory powers, but a positive refinement of them in order to enable us to open ourselves to the divine influence.' To conquer our attachment to worldly things, we should be drawn by an

attachment and a love which is stronger than our love for sense objects.

This night of the senses is active so far as we are concerned, but there is its complement, the part which God achieves passively. The passive night of the senses is brought about by God in creating in us a dryness, an impossibility to meditate, even to pray. It is the transfer from the senses to the spirit that brings about this dryness. This transfer is entirely the initiative of God, but we should understand it and co-operate with the action of God. At this stage, 'We should not worry; we should be content with a loving look on God; we should be content with contemplation, which is but a secret peaceful loving infusion of God which kindles the soul with the spirit of love'. If we can turn the dryness to spiritual advantage (and this no beginner can do, but only one who is spiritually advanced), then the deserts themselves become the oases of spiritual sweetness and the sweet pleasure of God. After all, true spiritual life is an entire dependance on God's will and initiative; and the more we feel assured of God's hand, the more we are freed from human imperfection.

One is tempted here to compare the thought of St. John with that of some earlier mystics, like Plotinus and St. Augustine. Plotinus says: 'We must abstract from the body which does not belong to the true nature of the Self, from the soul that shapes the body, from sense perceptions, appetites, and emotions, and even intellect with its duality; then the soul touches and gazes on the supreme light.' To quote St. Augustine: 'I seek my God in everybody, earthly and heavenly, and find Him not; I seek His substance in my soul and find it not there; still longing to understand and discern the invisible things of God by the things that are made, I have poured out my soul above myself, and now there remains nothing for me to touch but my God.' The importance of his confessions is centred on the words 'there remains nothing for me to touch but my God'. It reminds us of St. John: 'God who leads me in darkness all alone.'

After the obscure night of the senses comes the night of understanding. St. John says that very few have the courage to go through the suffering of the first night to enter the second night. The night of understanding is a continuation and a ripening of God's action and our openness to it. This continued action of God cannot be understood by us; our logical understanding must be purified or even dispensed with. The usual work of understanding is to conceptualize, to form images, and to revel in imagination. The night of understanding is a stopping of conceptualization, of the forming of images and imaginations. Naturally, when we stop feeding these faculties, we feel as though we were lost in oblivion, as though we had no sense of time. This is exactly a marked stage in the path of progress. The mystic says: 'The soul remains for long hours lost in oblivion, beyond time, and united with celestial intelligence.' He quotes the passage from 'The Song of Songs': 'I sleep, but my heart is awake.' 'The soul feels the savour of love, without knowing what it loves in particular.' God, at this stage, plunges us in an 'obscure faith'. This cannot be analysed or known by our superior intelligence, not even by the faculty that distinguishes between being and non-being. This faith, which is blind, henceforth becomes the light and guide of our soul. Everything is night in this faith!

Its clarity unclouded still shall be:  
 Out of it comes the light by which we see  
 Though it be night.  
 Flush with its banks the stream so proudly  
 swells;  
 I know it waters nations, heavens, and hells  
 Though it be night.

Here, the night is of the understanding, which is the day of the Self, the Self with its pure knowledge. The faith of St. John can be compared to the 'substantial knowledge' of Tauler and to the 'ground' of Meister Eckhart. It can also be compared to the *śūnya* of the Buddhists, who hold that it is devoid of conceptions and determinations, but full of consciousness. In

this state of faith, we lose all distinction between love and knowledge. When we love God without knowing Him, which is happening in this stage, we are confirmed in the certitude that, when we push love to its limits or knowledge to its limits, it is the same thing. To love God who is formless is to get His resemblance. And in this stage of love by faith, we resemble God; and this resemblance is no other than identity. Listen to St. John's own words:

Its origin (since it has none) none knows:  
 But that all origin from it arose  
 Although by night.

I know there is no other thing so fair  
 And earth and heaven drink refreshment there  
 Although by night.

Its clarity unclouded still shall be:  
 Out of it comes the light by which we see  
 Though it be night.

Flush with its banks the stream so proudly  
 swells;  
 I know it waters nations, heavens, and hells  
 Though it be night.

The current that is nourished by this source  
 I know to be omnipotent in force  
 Although by night.

The purification of understanding by faith, according to St. John, is the preparation to divine resemblance and divine union. To resemble God is to get His divine nature. What is God's nature? Two words alone can describe this nature: immanence and transcendence. We have these qualities of immanence and transcendence in us, and it is by faith that we affirm them and augment them. We exist, and we are conscious of it; this is immanence. We are also conscious of our consciousness; this is transcendence. In this transcendence lies the promise of joining our wills with the will that is the heart of other existences and persons. By virtue of the quality of transcendence in us, we see ourselves reflected in others; we love them as we love ourselves. By virtue of transcendence, we overflow the limitations imposed

on us by our body and mind, and embrace the whole of existence; we have the feeling that we carry the world in our hearts when we are happy or chagrined. When we have the certitude that we have everything, then we do not ask for anything, we do not hope for anything. But to come to this, we must purify ourselves of the sense of possession, or, more correctly, get rid of our memory which is the seat of all possessiveness.

So, then, it is very significant that, after the purification of understanding or mind by faith, St. John comes to the purification of memory by hope. The linking of the mortification of memory to the theological virtue of hope is one of the most original parts of his doctrine. The advice given is not for beginners, but for those who have already gone through the night of the mind. The principle of the night, as laid down by St. John, is as follows: 'What one hopes is what one does not possess, and the fewer other things one possesses, the greater the capacity and ability to hope there is; and the more things one possesses, the less one is capable to hope, and consequently the less hope there is.' In other words, the hope of material things pushes out the hope for God. Here, hope is the hope of salvation, hope of grace, where faith and hope are sisters in our journey of life. Because we have faith, we have hope of salvation. And because hope is the dynamism of transcendence, it feeds faith.

The possessive souls do not experience hope, for they do not permit God to come and take possession of their interior. On the contrary, when we allow God to take possession of our interior, He becomes the sovereign of our hearts. Then God is hope, in the sense that the goal of our hope and he who hopes for are one and the same thing, God.

The discipline involves not only the destruction of all memory accumulated by the five senses, but also what St. John calls 'imaginative memory', either natural or supernatural. The substance of our personality is memory. It is the memory of past experiences that pushes us forward; it is the memory that solidifies as

possessiveness. This possessiveness can possess only certain things, and not the All; and this means cutting ourselves away from the All in the secluded corner of a selfish life. In entering this life with a few things, we are cutting away from the All, which is God's memory, for the whole of manifestation is a thought in the mind of God. To renounce the life of a few things is to come by the cosmic memory or God. When one recovers one's cosmic memory, whatever one thinks or wants one realizes. That is so with regard to the liberated ones. Their wants and thoughts are for the cosmic good, and do not have selfish motives. When God is pleased, and we are united with Him, what is there that cannot be had in this world? But when we have God, we have desire for nothing. With this certitude, we are liberated from all desire and memory, and even time. This idea is beautifully brought out by St. John: 'When the soul is firm in the habit of union, which is the sovereign good, it no longer suffers from blanks in the memory of reasonable things or natural things; on the contrary, it is more perfect in whatever it undertakes. Memory and other powers of the soul seem to be divine, and ... it is He who moves them by His will and also makes them act divinely, ... for the Holy Spirit lets them know what they must know, ignore what they must ignore, remember what they must remember, forget what they must forget, and not love what is not God.'

In the fourth book of 'The Ascent', St. John teaches the night of the will by love. The act of loving God is an act of will, an openness of will. It is neither emotion nor intellect that is involved in this act. To love by sentiment is shallow; to love by emotion leads us to feebleness and emotionalism. To love by intellect is dry. But to love by the will is to pour out our whole being on God, and be transformed into His being.

St. John says: 'It would be useless to purify the mind and settle it in the virtue of faith, and memory in hope, if we did not purify the will by the third virtue which is charity.' In dealing with the active night of the senses, he



has already given a new dynamism to love by asking us to make love and love alone the means, not to resist temptation, but to transcend it. With the purification of will, this method attains its final culmination.

When the momentum to love God comes from the will, then, of the two wills, of man's and of God's, there will be only one. In order to give the momentum, the will must be cleansed, cleansed of joy, pain, hope, fear, etc. So, then, from the first active night of the senses, when love is the means not to resist temptation, but to transcend it, to the last night, where loving through will is the discipline prescribed, love is the thread that runs through the whole series of nights, one after the other. Love is the undercurrent and impelling force that makes the aspirant renounce even spiritual delights in the night of the senses, that drives him to purify understanding, imagination, memory, and will. While the total surrender of the soul to God is an act of love from man's side, the touch of the Holy Spirit is an act of love from God's side. This total abandon, which is night, is really the day of love.

The next significant idea in St. John's thought is his conception of himself as the bride and the Lord as the bridegroom. He considered himself as dedicated to God, as the eternal virgin consecrated to God. Meister Eckhart would go one step further and say that it is not enough to remain virgin, but one must be woman in order to engender the son that is realization. This fundamental attitude of St. John, considering himself as the eternal feminine and God as the eternal masculine, has a striking parallel in Indian thought. The mystic in this case is not a man, but a woman—Mīrābāī, a composer and singer of medieval India—who gave herself up completely to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She said: 'Who are the men in this world? There are no men; all of us, men and women alike, are women. There is only one man, and that is the Lord.' The idea of the human soul as the eternal feminine waiting to be enriched and fecundated by the eternal man, God, cannot be more strikingly brought out.

St. John, the poet as he is, pictures the ascent of the human soul to perfection by a ladder with ten steps. The first step is a kind of languor of love. Having lost all taste for the things of the world, the soul finds neither help, nor taste, nor comfort, nor rest in anything. Renunciation of all gratification of the sense, and of memory and imagination, is the second and the third step. The agonizing pain of separation is the fourth step. The fifth is a very high state of impatient union. This state of intense passionate love resulting in excruciating agony of the soul is expressed in the earlier stanzas of the 'Spiritual Song'. The sixth step is the joy of betrothal, the first stage of equality of love with God. The seventh prolongs that state of union. The aspirant's passionate love makes him climb the eighth step. The ninth step is, for St. John, the perfect state. The Holy Spirit infuses in the aspirant a supreme love of sweetness and bliss. This state quickly leads the soul to the tenth step of the ladder, wherein the soul experiences total union with God. At this stage, the soul is ready to leave the body, and it feels that it is God 'by participation'. It is a stage of 'clear vision', wherein the soul is totally assimilated with God.

It is interesting to find similarities between the ten steps of St. John, especially the last ones, and the four stages of union with God in the Hindu books of devotion. The first is entering the domain of God (*sālokya*); the second is going nearer to Him (*sāmīpya*); the third is becoming like Him (*sārūpya*), which reminds us of St. John's divine resemblance; and the fourth is becoming one with Him (*sāyujya*). The state of intoxication by divine love, which is the eighth and ninth stages in St. John, is the stage of *mahābhāva*, which we find in Śrī Caitanya and Sri Ramakrishna.

The teaching of the ten stages is very significant, as it takes devotion far beyond the plane of spasmodic emotional upsurges and enthusiasm, and makes it a whole time job or even the job of many lives. Love for God and devotion to Him must be viewed as a longing

that is sustained and developed through several mounting stages. Then only, it can develop our personality, and have lasting effects on our lives. When viewed as temporary enthusiasm, it degenerates into emotionalism and sentimentality.

## UDDĀLAKA'S INSTRUCTION TO ŚVETAKETU

BY SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

This instruction is set forth in the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, and it is known as *sad-vidyā*. This name derives its justification from the teaching that *sat* is the sole reality; and everything else, including the world and the finite self, is only an appearance thereof. The central theme of this instruction is set forth in the statement: 'There is one reality, by knowing which everything else would be known.' Śvetaketu, though he had read all the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, was still wanting in humility. He was apparently proud of his learning. His father observed a certain *hauteur* in his general behaviour and asked him: 'O Śvetaketu, since thou art so highly conceited, regarding thyself as a great scholar, and arrogant, didst thou call for that teaching through which the unheard becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought of, and the unknown becomes the known?\*' The point that he seeks to bring home to the mind of his son is that true learning and humility go together. Where the latter is wanting, we have reasons to infer that the student has not imbibed the highest teaching. This teaching relates to the Self, and he who has learnt it from a competent *guru*, has bestowed thought on it, and has assimilated it will become self-possessed, humble, and even innocent as a child.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III.5.1), it is said that one who knows the Ātman will rise above the pride of learning and become

innocent as a child. This idea is embodied in the *Vedānta-Sūtra*, III.4.50. Commenting on it, Śaṅkara quotes with approval two verses from the *Mahābhārata*, whose import is that the truly learned man will spend his days in such a silent and unobtrusive manner that other people will have no means of knowing whether he is even alive. His sole concern will be the carrying out of the duties that devolve on him by virtue of his station in life. He will not seek publicity, and not a trace of self-assertion will be found in him. This is the mark of true learning, and, where this is absent, we may reasonably conclude that knowledge has not produced its highest result. Such knowledge simply remains a possession, like wealth and other things. Śaṅkara observes: 'What we learn from the story of Uddālaka and Śvetaketu is that, even after having read all the Vedas and learnt all else that there is to be learnt, if one does not know and understand the essence of the Self, his chief purpose in life remains unfulfilled.' This statement brings out the great importance of the knowledge that is going to be imparted to Śvetaketu by his father. Since it will bring about a total transformation of man, liberate him from all forms of egoism, and give him new values and a fresh outlook on men and things, it is bound to be not only the highest truth, but also the highest value. Only the highest Reality can claim to be the ultimate truth and the ultimate value.

This highest Reality is called *sat* or Being. It is what remains of a piece of knowledge when all that is unessential and adventitious

\* Ganganath Jha's translation of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and of Śaṅkara's commentary thereon is adopted throughout this paper.

in it has been eliminated. Ordinarily, knowledge implies a subject and an object, a knower and something that is known. The latter is a substance that is characterized by an attribute. We say, for example, 'This rose is red'. Here, we are calling attention to only one of the attributes of the flower. Even to say 'It is a flower' is a way of characterizing the object that is presented to our sense perception. What is presented is, in the expressive phrase of William James, 'a big, buzzing confusion', a mere 'that'. We simply know that something is before us, and it takes some time to know *what* it is. The *thatness* of perception is mere being or existence. Though it is devoid of qualities, and consequently cannot be set forth as a judgement, still there is no dismissing it as unreal, since it is presented to perception. Hegel and Bradley have characterized bare being as bare nothing. Bradley writes: 'That anything should be and yet should be nothing in particular, or that a quality should not qualify and give a character to anything, is obviously impossible' (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 162). But Śaṅkara is definitely of the opinion that only dull-witted people will confound Being for nothing. In his introduction to the eighth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, he observes: 'The absolutely true Brahman, being one without a second, is regarded by dull-witted persons as non-existent.'

Just as it is possible to strip an object bare of all its attributes and show that it does not vanish into nothingness, but remains as mere existence which is its being, even so it is possible to analyse the whole of the external world and show that, though time and space, cause and effect, substance and attribute, and all names and forms vanish, there still remains a hard inner core which may be called Being or Brahman. The process of analysis and elimination finds its limit here. The colours and contours of the world may vanish, but not the inner substratum of it all. The objects of the world—what we call the realities, animate and inanimate, moving and unmoving—are all compounds made up of the five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These elements, in their turn, are

also compounds, in the sense that each has entered into all the others. This is what is called *pañcīkaraṇa* or quintuplication. A particle of earth, for example, is only one half earth, the other half being composed of the remaining four elements, each contributing one-eighth.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* mentions only three elements—fire, water, and earth. Fire is red in colour, water is white, and earth is black. This is so in their pure and untriplified form. When they get mixed up, each element comes to possess all the three qualities. If we eliminate whiteness and blackness from fire, for example, fire as such will disappear. So also the other elements. Fire appears as fire only so long as discriminating analysis has not taken place. Fire appearing as fire is like a white crystal appearing as a ruby by virtue of juxtaposition. If the crystal is placed close to a red china-rose, it appears as a ruby. It is clearly a case of error or *bhrama*, arising from the presence of an adjunct. The three elements mentioned in this Upaniṣad are typical. They stand for the whole universe, including the human body. They enter into the sun, the moon, and the lightning. They also enter into man as breath, water, and food. The finest part of the food that man eats is transformed into mind, that of water into breath, and that of fire in the form of ghee and oil into speech. Thus mind and speech, which are the characteristics of man, are the outcome of the elements entering into his body. Food is ultimately reducible to water, water to fire, and fire gets back to its source, viz. Being. All this is most picturesquely set forth in the Upaniṣad. Just as the cowherd leads the cattle, the groom leads the horses, and the commander or king leads the forces, even so water leads food, fire leads water, and Being leads fire. The idea is that the mixing of water with food decomposes the latter into various juices, which get transformed into blood, flesh, fat, bones, and marrow. Similarly, water by its association with fire is turned into blood and life-breath.

That mind is the subtle essence of food is proved by means of a rather hazardous ex-

periment. If a man goes without food for a fortnight, his mental powers become enfeebled, and he is not able to recall the things that he has memorized. When he breaks his fast and gradually increases the intake of food, his powers of memory become active again, and he is able to repeat whatever is called for. When a blazing fire is almost extinguished for want of fuel and only a feeble spark remains, it is not powerful enough to illumine or burn; when the spark bursts into a flame by the addition of straw and other easily combustible materials, it becomes fierce, and can burn anything. Though a man refrains from food, he must drink plenty of water, for, otherwise, the life-breath will stop. That shows that water is a more fundamental need than food. That fire is more essential than water is shown by the example of the dying man, in whom, though speech and mind have ceased to function, the warmth of the body still remains, indicating that life is not yet extinct. The human body, including the mind, is thus reducible to food; food, in its turn, goes back to water; and water to fire. Fire ultimately merges in Being or Brahman. The physical world is therefore a product of Brahman.

The question is whether the product represents a real transformation of Brahman, or only an apparent modification. At the outset, we have the unambiguous declaration of the Upaniṣad that what we call the effect is a mere matter of words and that there is nothing corresponding to it in fact. This is illustrated by means of three examples: clay, gold, and iron. 'Just as through a clod of clay all that is made of clay would become known, all products being due to words, a mere name; the clay alone is real.' The same formula is repeated with regard to gold and iron. The fundamental idea conveyed by these statements is that the effect is non-different from the cause. The usual distinction that we make between cause and effect has its origin in pragmatic considerations. It is empirical, being intended to serve the needs of everyday life. Language, which arises to serve the practical concerns of life, confirms

these distinctions by using different words, such as cause and effect, ground and consequent, and so forth. But these distinctions, based on the practical needs of life, should not mislead us. Strictly speaking, there is no real difference between them.

This point has been argued at length by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtra*, II.1.14. He points out that, when the clay is turned into pots, jugs, and saucers, no real change comes upon it. It does not grow into these products. Rather, we superimpose these forms on the clay to serve our purposes. These forms are therefore quite extraneous to the clay. These are exactly on a par with illusions, like the rope appearing as a snake or the heat-waves appearing as water. When we see a snake where there is only a rope, no real change comes upon the latter. Similarly, the heat-waves do not get transformed into water. Examination will show that, in both cases, there has been an unwarranted superimposition of one thing on another. Just as the snake and the water have no existence different from their substrate, viz. rope and heat-waves, even so pots and jugs do not exist apart from, and independently of, the clay. We find that the clay persists in the so-called effects. The pot would disappear if all the clay which has gone into its making is removed from it. That the clay is the abiding reality becomes clear when the pot returns to clay on being broken. When clay becomes pot or pot returns to clay, what takes place is a mere change of form. The lump-like form of the clay made place for the form of the pot; and when the latter is destroyed, the clay regains its original form. It is simply a case of one form being replaced by another. This change in respect of external appearance leaves the original clay untouched. Name depends on form. Both are adventitious to the clay. There is no real becoming.

This view is known as *vivarta-vāda*, and it is to be distinguished from *pariṇāma-vāda*, which maintains that the cause undergoes a real modification when it becomes the effect. The latter is therefore different from the former. Yet, it

is not altogether different either. The clay persists in the pots and jugs, and hence we have an element of identity running through the differences. The tree is one, though it has differentiated itself into branches, twigs, foliage, flowers, and fruits. The sea is one, though ripples, foam, and waves appear on its surface. On the same analogy, we have to look upon Brahman as the element of identity pervading the universe, characterized by perpetual change and an infinite variety of forms.

This view of the relationship between God and the world is known as identity-in-difference, and it has found influential support among Western thinkers, especially Hegel and Bradley. Among Indian thinkers, Bhartṛprapañca, who preceded Śaṅkara, and Rāmānuja, who belongs to a later date, are the two well-known exponents of what is called Bhedābheda. But Śaṅkara thinks that the conception is self-contradictory, inasmuch as identity and difference can never be reconciled. The two can never go together, as they are mutually exclusive. The conception of identity-in-difference, like that of cause and effect, has an empirical origin, and has no metaphysical validity. Facts of everyday life, such as recognition and the feeling of self-identity, lend support to this conception. A closer analysis will, however, reveal that the two elements are not on the same level, but belong to different planes. If the element of identity and the element of difference belonged to the same order of reality, it would be difficult to explain why the process of change, which affects the latter, leaves the former untouched.

Symbolically, we may represent the conception of identity-in-difference by the proposition A is B, where A stands for the element of identity and B for difference. The copula 'is' indicates that the two can exist side by side. We are asked to believe that, while B changes to C, C to D, D to E, and so forth, A remains constant all the time. And so, A is B, A is C, A is D, A is E, and so forth. The crucial question is how A manages to retain its identity in the midst of the changes that come upon

B. Intellectual integrity requires us to admit that A also undergoes similar changes. In that case, A would change to A<sup>1</sup>, A<sup>1</sup> to A<sup>2</sup>, A<sup>2</sup> to A<sup>3</sup>. In the result, we would have a series of changes with nothing permanent to connect them. This was the view of Buddha, who spoke of flame-series, river-series, and so forth. Heraclitus, in ancient Greece, taught the same doctrine. He said that everything was in a fever of change. He put it in the form of an epigram: 'You cannot step into the same river twice.' It is equally true to say that it is not the same man either who goes to the river on two successive days. The river changes, and the man, too, changes; and there is nothing permanent. But without an element of identity running through the differences, we cannot account for the facts of recognition and self-identity.

As T. H. Green has said: 'A series cannot be aware of itself as a series.' And so, we cannot dispense with the element of identity, nor with that of difference. Since the two cannot go hand in hand, the only way of reconciling them is to assign them to different orders of reality. Identity belongs to the metaphysical plane, while difference belongs to the empirical level. The former is real, and the latter is an appearance thereof. To clinch the argument, Śaṅkara refers to the Śruti text (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, IV. 11), which avers that there is no difference whatsoever here, and he who seems to experience it, as it were, is condemned to the cycle of repeated births and deaths. He asks why the man who sees difference should be so condemned if difference is quite as real as the element of identity. We have therefore to conclude that the real import of the Śruti texts, which deal with the creation of the world, is to point to the underlying unity. The reference to the world of difference is only as a sort of concession to the weak-minded. It is just a device to introduce the higher teaching, as Gaudapāda puts it.

We may point out further that only on this view can we understand the initial statement that there is one Reality, by knowing which one can claim to know everything else. The

same idea occurs in two other Upaniṣads. In *Muṇḍaka* I.3, we find Śaunaka asking Aṅgiras: 'Revered one, what is that by knowing which everything else could be known?' *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* II.4.5 provides, as it were, the answer to Śaunaka's question. Yājñavalkya tells Maitreyī: 'By seeing the Ātman, hearing of it, and reflecting on it, one gets to know everything.' This is the central theme of Uddālaka's instruction to Śvetaketu. His teaching is that Brahman is the one reality without a second, and that it leaves no room for difference of any kind, *sajātīya*, *vijātīya*, or *svagata*. A cow, for example, is different from other animals belonging to the same species, different also from animals belonging to other species. There are also internal differences within the framework of its body in the shape of so many limbs. Brahman, on the other hand, rises clean above all differences, so much so, as the Upaniṣad puts it: 'It is one only without a second.' It is 'one only', in the sense that even in the form of its products it does not become something else. We should not therefore take it as affirming unity or oneness of Brahman. It is only intended to deny difference. Vācaspati says: 'We do not affirm non-difference, but only deny difference.'

So far, we have shown that the world has ultimately Brahman as its substratum. We have now to deal with the *jīva*, which is the subject of all our experiences. Its essential nature is pure sentience, though empirically it appears as a complex of spirit and matter. That the real nature of *jīva* is pure sentience can be proved by analysis and elimination. A particular cognition, for example, 'This is a tree', is called a *ṛttijñāna*. A tree is presented to consciousness, and the resulting knowledge takes the form of the judgement 'This is a tree'. The objects that are presented to consciousness go on changing, and hence we make different judgements, 'This is a mountain', 'This is a river', 'This is a cow', and so forth. All these judgements are made in our waking moments. When, however, we fall sound asleep, we lose touch with the external world, as our sense-organs are no longer

functioning. Even the mind becomes quiescent, and hence there is no reproduction of past experiences. Nothing is therefore presented to consciousness. Still it does not fail. We have the reminiscent experience the next morning that we slept well, and did not see anything. This recollection would not be possible if consciousness also had failed then. If objects are presented to it, we form particular judgements. When no object is presented, it shines by itself. It is the constant factor running through all our cognitions and other experiences. It is called *sākṣi-caitanya*. All presentations are mere superimpositions on it, like the ripples, foam, bubbles, and waves on the surface of the ocean. In its pure form, it is taintless, free from attributes, not limited by time or space, and wholly unclassifiable, and therefore indefinable. It is the Ātman.

But how does it appear as the *jīva*? The Upaniṣad says: 'It (Brahman) entered the three elements through the living self.' In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* also, we get the statement: 'That (Brahman), having created (all that exists), entered into that very thing.' These statements have to be carefully interpreted. They do not mean that there is a *jīva* independently of Brahman. They only mean that, when Brahman is viewed through the human intellect and the mind, it appears as the *jīva*. We have seen that fire, water, and earth enter into the food that we eat, and that the finest essence of food is converted into mind. When we view Brahman through the mind and intellect, which are ultimately material in composition, we see it as the *jīva*. The point in discussing at length the origin of the three elements, their respective qualities, their getting mixed up, matter or food getting transformed into mind, is to show that Brahman is bound to appear as something different when it is viewed through these material adjuncts. Śaṅkara elucidates the conception by giving the example of a man's face being reflected in a mirror when he stands before it, or the sun being reflected in a pool of water. These images arise when there is a suitable reflecting medium, the mirror or the

pool of water. They have no reality independent of the man's face or the sun. If the mirror is removed and the water gets dried up, we no longer have these reflected images. They get back to their source. In the same manner, we have to look upon the *jīva* as a reflected image of Brahman. The medium of the mind, though material, is polished enough to reflect what is presented to it. This view of the relationship between Brahman and *jīva* is known in later Vedānta as *bimba-pratibimba-vāda*, as distinct from *avaccheda-vāda*. It is set forth very clearly in Hastāmalaka's poem, known as *Hastāmalakīyam*.

As the *jīva* has its origin in Brahman, it has its final resting place also in Brahman. In the eighth section of this chapter, Uddālaka shows that in deep, dreamless sleep the mind becomes inactive, and, in the absence of the reflecting medium, the *jīva* loses its *jīvahood* and merges in its source. 'Just as a bird tied to a string, having flown in different directions and finding no resting place elsewhere, settles down at the place to which it is fastened, so also the mind, flying in several directions and finding no resting place elsewhere, settles down at the life-breath, because the mind is fastened to the life-breath.' Śaṅkara interprets 'mind' as standing for the *jīva*, and 'life-breath' for Brahman.

If names and forms, which are mere superimpositions, are eliminated, what remains of the material world is mere Existence or Being. This is otherwise known as Brahman. The *jīva* is not a separate entity, but a mere reflection of Brahman through the mind and intellect. In its essential nature, it is pure sentience, which is otherwise known as Ātman. The Upaniṣad next proceeds by a bold sweep of constructive imagination to identify the two. It declares that Ātman and Brahman are the same. We do not have two ultimate principles, *sat* and *cit*, but only one. The sentient principle in Śvetaketu is identical with Brahman, which is the substratum of the whole universe.

This grand truth is expressed in the statement '*Tat-tvam-asi*'. It is one of the *mahāvākyas* to be found in the Upaniṣads. It occurs as many as nine times in the course of the sixth chapter, evidently to bring out its great importance. Repetition is one of the marks to indicate what are the really purportful passages in the Upaniṣads. Judged by this criterion, as well as by the other tests, such as *upakramopasamhāra*, *apūrvatā*, *arthavāda*, *upapatti*, and *phala*, this formula, without doubt, contains the final teaching of Uddālaka to his son.

Though all creatures are Brahman in their inner nature, and though they attain temporary merger with it in deep sleep, still they are not aware of it, owing to their primeval ignorance. To get rid of this ignorance, they have to betake themselves to a proper teacher. His instruction, if imbibed in the prescribed manner, will at once dispel the wrong notions regarding the nature of the Self and liberate man from his bondage. He becomes a *jīvanmukta*, and has to wait only for a short while to attain *videhamukti*. *Prārabdha karma* has to run its course, though the saving knowledge has set in.

Towards the close of the chapter, we find a number of examples, such as bees collecting honey from different sources; rivers arising from the ocean and finally losing themselves in the ocean; trees drawing nourishment from earth and water and standing majestically; the huge banyan-tree growing out of the minutest particles of the seed, which are not visible to the physical eye; the lump of salt dissolved in water perceptible to taste, but not to touch; the gradual sinking of powers in the dying man; the blindfolded man finding himself in a strange country and making his way home by stages; and, lastly, persons seeking to prove their innocence by offering to pass through the fire ordeal. These images are all picturesque, and add much to the poetical charm of the Upaniṣad. They also serve to elucidate various doctrinal points arising from the main theme.



# GREATER INDIA

BY PROFESSOR SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKHERJI

Growth and expansion are the first and surest signs of life. Living civilizations and living cultures, like a living organism, have a tendency of expansion. Growth, expansion, and evolution stop after decay has set in. Civilizations and cultures, when they are alive, have also a tendency of migrating from land to land, irrespective of racial movements. This explains why Indian culture and civilization spread beyond the natural frontiers of the land of their origin in days of yore. The mighty Himalayan wall on the north, the formidable Indian Ocean on the south, the turbulent Bay of Bengal on the east, and the Arabian Sea on the west were no barriers to Indians of those days. Missionaries of Indian culture wandered far and wide. They gave religion and culture to several lands. Their message made an indelible impression upon the life and culture of many a strange land. Peoples and their lives were transformed.

The story of India's cultural expansion abroad is a romantic saga of bold efforts and heroic sacrifices. Her cultural expansion is, in fact, one of the most brilliant, though forgotten, chapters of her history, of which every true Indian may feel proud.

Prohibition of voyages by Manu, the author of the well-known *Dharmaśāstra*, notwithstanding, Indians have never been a stay-at-home people. Even today, more or less, five million Indians (and Pakistanis) are settled in various parts of the world. They are to be found in all the five continents. Indians from Bengal, Orissa, Andhra, Madras, Kerala, Gujarat, and other coastal regions of the sub-continent used to sail to distant lands in days gone by. There were traders and adventurers, as well as missionaries of religion and culture in their ranks.

To quote Sylvain Levi: 'From Persia to the Chinese Sea, from the icy regions of Siberia to the islands of Java and Borneo, from Oceania

to Socotra, India has propagated her beliefs, her tales, and her civilization. She has left indelible imprints on one-fourth of the human race in the course of long succession of centuries. She has the right to reclaim in universal history the rank that ignorance has refused her for a long time, and to hold her place amongst the great nations summarizing the spirit of humanity.'<sup>1</sup>

India was not stagnant. She did not stand aloof. High mountains and deep seas did not isolate her from the rest of the world. Bubbling over with energy, her children crossed the mountain barriers and perilous seas, and built up 'A Greater India politically as little organized as Greater Greece, but morally as harmonious'. 'In the high plateau of Eastern Iran,' observes M. Grousset, 'in the oases of Serindia, in the arid wastes of Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria, in the ancient civilized lands of China and Japan, in the lands of the primitive Mons and Khmers and other tribes in Indo-China, in the countries of the Malayo-Polynesians, in Indonesia and Malay, India left the indelible impress of her high culture, not only upon religion, but also upon art and literature, in a word, all the higher things of spirit.'<sup>2</sup>

From time immemorial, India had a free and intimate contact with lands beyond her borders. She had relations with the Far East in the Neolithic Age, and Indians in large numbers may have settled in Vietnam and in the Indonesian archipelago in remote antiquity. The Indus Valley people had close contacts with the countries of Western and Central Asia in the fourth and third millennia B.C. Of the two principal architects of the Indian civilization, the Aryans and the Dravidians, the former certainly and the latter probably came to India from across the north-western frontiers

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Progress of Greater Indian Research, 1917-1942*, Edited by U. N. Ghoshal.

<sup>2</sup> *Civilizations of the East*, Vol. II. p. 276.



of the country. Quite naturally, relations were established between the old and new homelands of the migrants. These relations must have been maintained at least for a time.

In the historical period, India had commercial intercourse with Egypt, Syria, and Babylonia. For the pre-Mauryan period, we have only indirect evidence of India's intercourse with lands beyond her borders. But from the Mauryan period (fourth to second century B.C.), we have direct and definite evidence of this intercourse. In the latter half of the first century A.D., a Greek sailor, living in Egypt, sailed to India along the coasts of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea, and wrote a detailed account of his experiences in a treatise called *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. We learn from this treatise that India had a brisk trade with the western countries at the time. The Indian seaboard was dotted with important harbours, such as Barbarike, Barygaza, Muziris, Nelcynda, Bakarai, Karkai, and Puhar. Ships built and fitted up by Indians in Indian docks used to sail with merchandise from these ports for distant shores. Exports included pearls, precious stones, spices, unguents, and muslin (a kind of fine cotton cloth), which were much in demand in western countries. Marts and production-centres in the interior of the country were linked with ports by a network of roads. The *Periplus*, which is the most detailed and authoritative account of India's trade with foreign countries in the past, speaks of Indian settlements on some islands of the Arabian Sea and of an Indian colony on the island of Socotra. Later writers supplement the information furnished by the author of the *Periplus*. Pliny, for example, complains that Rome annually pays one million sesterces<sup>3</sup> to India for luxury goods. Pliny's statement is corroborated by the discovery of a large number of Roman coins in India. Several missions were sent by various Indian princes to Roman emperors. The first of these missions was sent by the king

<sup>3</sup> Sesterce, Sestertius: Ancient Roman coin of silver (later, of bronze) of the value of 1/4 denarius or about 2d.

of the Pāṇḍya country in Southern India to Emperor Augustus in 26 B.C. Indian trade with Rome and other western countries was carried on *via* Alexandria in Egypt. A land route from India to the Mediterranean coast ran through Persia along the shores of the Caspian Sea; also to Syria and Asia Minor. Palmyra in Syria was one of the principal centres of Indian trade during the early centuries of the Christian era.

Religion and culture followed commerce. Emperor Aśoka of Magadha (c. 273 B.C.-232 B.C.) sent Buddhist missions to Western Asia, Northern Africa, and South-Eastern Europe. His edicts claim that the emperor made a spiritual conquest of his Hellenic<sup>4</sup>, TAMILIAN, and Ceylonese neighbours. Aśoka established philanthropic institutions in some of the Hellenistic kingdoms. Buddhism made some headway in Western Asia during his reign. Sects like the Manichaeans were not a little influenced by Buddhism. But Buddha's message of *maitrī* (amity) and *ahimsā* (non-violence) apparently did not impress the Greeks much.

The southern missions of Aśoka were more successful. Tradition has it that his Ceylonese mission was headed by Prince Mahendra, a son or brother of Aśoka. Devānāmpiya Tissa, the king of Ceylon, embraced Buddhism, and the king's example was followed by his subjects. According to Ceylonese traditions, Buddhist missionaries were sent across the seas to Suvarṇabhūmi, i.e. Lower Burma, Sumatra, and possibly some other regions in the neighbourhood.

Alexandria continued to take interest in Buddhism long after Aśoka. Buddhism and Brāhmaṇical Hinduism were quite popular in several Western Asian countries till the advent of Islam in the seventh century A.D. The knowledge of Indian philosophy and literature spread to the West. Competent authorities hold that 'Indian medicine and the wonderful invention

<sup>4</sup> Antiochos Theos of Syria (261-246 B.C.), Ptolemy Philadelphos II of Egypt (285-247 B.C.), Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia (276-239 B.C.), Magas of Cyrene (c. 300-c. 258 B.C.), and Alexander of Epirus (272-c. 255 B.C.) or of Corinth (252-c. 244 B.C.).

of the decimal notation in arithmetic, among others, became, through the Arabs, the universal property of the world'.<sup>5</sup> It was not a one-way traffic, however. Indian astronomy is definitely indebted to the Greek and Roman astronomy. Greek influence is discernible in Indian art and coinage.

The nomadic tribes of the regions between the Caspian Sea and the Chinese Wall were all converted to Buddhism, which thus became the universal religion of this area. Indians in large numbers settled in Kashgar, Chokkuk (Yarkand), Khotan, Niya, Kucha, Turfan, Karashar, and other places in Central Asia. Ancient Chinese literature speaks of two large monasteries in Khotan—the Gomati Vihāra and the Gośrṅga Vihāra. They were situated at Komari Majar, about thirteen miles from the modern Khotan town. The Gomati Vihāra, a stronghold of Mahāyāna Buddhism, attracted large numbers of Chinese monk-students during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The famous Chinese traveller Fa-Hien lived here for a time in the closing years of the fourth century A.D. More than three thousand monks lived here at the time.

Many of the Indian settlements in Central Asia were swallowed up by the Gobi desert, or were destroyed by some other cause or causes unknown to us. The Central Asian archaeological explorations of Sir Aurel Stein in 1900, 1906, and 1913, and of the Russian, French, and German archaeologists, have led to the discovery of a large number of Buddhist *stūpas* and *vihāras*, statues of Buddhist and Brāhmanical gods, and manuscripts written in Indian languages and in Indian scripts. The well-known Chinese traveller and scholar Hiuen-Tsang (sixth-seventh centuries A.D.) noted the predominance of Buddhism and Indian culture all over Central Asia. There were, according to him, one hundred Buddhist monasteries and five thousand Buddhist monks in Khotan. Hiuen-Tsang paid a visit to Kucha on his way

home from India. Swarna Tep (Suvarṇa Deva?), the king of Kucha at the time, was a Buddhist, and there were about five thousand Buddhist monks in the country. Hiuen-Tsang speaks of Buddhist kings ruling in various other Central Asian kingdoms. A Central Asian edition of the *Rāmāyaṇa* has been discovered in Khotan.

In 1906, Sir Aurel Stein discovered not less than five hundred caves in the hills of Tunhwang in Eastern Chinese Turkestan. About three hundred of them are adorned with paintings and sculptures. These caves are, in fact, temples, and are known to the Chinese as 'Chien-Fo-Teng' or 'Caves of Thousand Buddhas'. They were used as places for study and spiritual practices. At least, one thousand Buddhist monks lived in these cave-temples. Stein discovered about twenty thousand manuscripts in these temples. They are now preserved in libraries in Peking and Paris. Buddhism survived in Central Asia for many centuries after Hiuen-Tsang. Chenghiz Khan, the great Mongol conqueror of the thirteenth century, was a follower of Shamanism, which is a perverted form of Buddhism.

Buddhism made its way to China from Central Asia and profoundly influenced the Chinese civilization. Chinese monks flocked to India in large numbers to study, at first hand, the religious beliefs and practices of Indian Buddhism, and to collect Buddhist statues and religious texts. They travelled by land as well as by sea routes. Thousands of Buddhist religious treatises, taken to China by the Chinese monks, were translated into Chinese. The Chinese themselves learned Pali and Sanskrit, and invited Indian scholars to China to help them (the Chinese) in translating Pali and Sanskrit manuscripts into Chinese. Many Buddhist treatises, not to be found anywhere in India, survive in their Chinese translations. Intimate religious contacts apart, political and commercial links also drew China and India close to each other.

From China, Buddhism spread to Korea, and

<sup>5</sup>R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri, and K. K. Dutta, *An Advanced History of India* (Second Edition), p. 213.

from there to Japan. It is still a living force in the Far East. It has moulded their civilizations during the last fifteen hundred years. Tibet, too, came under the spell of Buddhism. Srong-tsan-Gampa, one of the best known kings of Tibet, introduced Buddhism in his country in the seventh century A.D. He married a Chinese and a Nepalese princess. His conversion to Buddhism was perhaps an outcome of these marriages. The Indian alphabet in use in Khotan at the time was introduced in Tibet by Srong-tsan-Gampa. He thus prepared the ground for the cultural regeneration of Tibet. Tibetan Buddhists came to India in large numbers. Tibet, on the doorstep of India that she is, came in much closer contact with her than China ever did. The Pāla emperors of Eastern India (eighth century-twelfth century A.D.) gave a helping hand to the reform of Buddhism in Tibet, and there was a lively intercourse between Tibet and the Pāla empire. Tibetan monks flocked to the universities of Nālandā and Vikramaśilā (both in Bihar State). Many Indian monks paid visits to Tibet. The memory of Dīpaṅkara Śrī Jñāna or Atisa Dīpaṅkara, who visited Tibet—he died there—in the eleventh century A.D., is still cherished by the Tibetans. Hundreds of Buddhist religious works were translated into Tibetan. Two famous collections of this translated literature—Tanjur and Kanjur—were preserved in the Potala palace library at Lhasa till 1959. We do not know where they are now, and what has happened to them.

Ancient Indian literature—the Jātakas and the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, among others—frequently refers to commercial voyages to Suvarṇabhūmi (the land of gold), the generic name given by Indians to several South-East Asian countries. Soldiers of fortune followed traders. Indian Kṣatriya princes, dispossessed of their ancestral kingdoms for one reason or another, are said to have sailed to Suvarṇabhūmi in search of fresh fields and pastures new. Indian political power in Greater India owes its beginnings to some such adventurous soldier or soldiers of fortune. Rulers with Indian names are found reigning

over various kingdoms in Greater India from the second century of the Christian era.

The religion, social manners and customs, and languages and alphabets of these kingdoms were Indian, and they may be regarded as Indian colonial kingdoms. The Malayan peninsula, Cambodia, Annam, and the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Borneo were the seats of these kingdoms. Sanskrit inscriptions found in these places and the accounts of Chinese writers constitute our source of information regarding them. Brāhmaṇical Hinduism, Śaivism in the main, flourished at first in these colonies. Buddhism made its way into some of them later on. The children of the soil adopted the new civilization from across the seas, and there was a gradual fusion of cultures and races in the Indian colonies overseas. A synthetic culture, which was neither fully Indian nor fully indigenous, took shape. But for 'nearly a thousand years, the essential features of Indian civilization were the dominant characteristics of society in these regions'.

There were great centres of Sanskrit learning in Champa, Angkor, Srivijaya, Majapahit, and other places. The rulers of the kingdoms and empires founded by Indians in South-East Asia had purely Indian and Sanskrit names. Let it not be thought, however, that all these rulers were Indians. But they were Indianized. State ceremonies were Indian, and Sanskrit *mantras* were recited while they were performed. State officials bore old Sanskrit titles, and some of these titles are in use even today in Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia. The ancient Javanese literature is full of Indian myths and legends. Balinese and Javanese dances, the great cultural legacy of Indonesia, are derived from India. Bali has largely preserved its Indian culture to our own days, and Hinduism is still a living force in that island. The Philippines owe the art of writing to India. The Cambodian alphabet is of South Indian origin. The Cambodian language contains numerous Sanskrit words, with minor modifications. Old Javanese has a very high percentage of Sanskrit words. Bahasa Indonesia, the national language of

Indonesia, and a language of very recent origin, too, has a sizable percentage of Sanskrit words. The civil and criminal laws of Cambodia are based on Manu's code, the famous legal treatise of ancient India. These laws, with variations due to Buddhist influence, have been codified in modern Cambodian legislation.

Some of the Hindu kingdoms in South-East Asia lasted for more than a thousand years, and continued to flourish long after the Hindu rule in India had come to an end. Champa and Kambuja were the seats of two powerful Hindu kingdoms. Champa, founded in c. A.D. 150, included the whole of modern Annam at the height of its power. Some of its kings were great heroes, and defended Champa against the Mongol hordes under Kublai Khan from the west. The rulers of Champa maintained diplomatic relations with China. Annamite onslaughts from the north finally eclipsed Champa in the sixteenth century A.D.

According to an old legend, the kingdom of Kambuja was founded by an Indian Brāhmaṇa, Kaundinya by name. The earliest Hindu kingdom in Kambuja dates back to the first or second century of the Christian era. This comprised the southern part of Cambodia, and was known to the Chinese as Fu-nan. It rose to great power, and a number of vassal states acknowledged its suzerainty. We have it on the authority of a Chinese account that more than one thousand Indian Brāhmaṇas lived in Fu-nan, and that the Fu-nanese were followers of Brāhmaṇical Hinduism. The Brāhmaṇa settlers married Fu-nanese maidens. The kings of Fu-nan sent ambassadors to India as well as to China.

The glory of Fu-nan departed in the sixth century A.D. Kāmbujadeśa, one of its vassal states, a petty principality in the north-east of Cambodia, gradually rose to power, and gave its name to the whole country. Jayavarman I, II, and VII, Yaśovarman, and Sūryavarman II are some of the most famous kings of Kambuja. Annamite invasions from the east reduced Kambuja to a petty principality in the fifteenth century. In modern times, Cambodia

was a French protectorate till World War II, after which it became independent.

Kambuja rose to greater power than Fu-nan, its erstwhile suzerain; and, at the height of its power, it included Laos, the whole of Cambodia, almost the whole of what is Vietnam (North and South) today, Thailand, and large slices of Burma and Malaya. We learn a lot about Kambuja from the large number of Sanskrit inscriptions left behind by its rulers. The magnificent temples at Angkor Vat, Angkor Thom, and other places stand today as mute witnesses of the glory that was Kambuja. They are also rude reminders of the inevitability of decay and destruction.

'The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth ever gave,  
Await alike that inevitable hour,  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'<sup>6</sup>

The temple at Angkor Vat ranks high among the wonders of the world. Dedicated to Viṣṇu, the temple forms 'a sort of covered gallery' decorated with sculptures. Numerous spires and towers enhance the beauty of the stupendous structure. The central shrine stands on the third terrace. Its tall tower rises 213 feet above the ground. The shrine is surrounded by a stone enclosure with gates and galleries, which is a little less than a mile from east to west and about half a mile from north to south. A moat surrounds the enclosure. A 36 feet long causeway with balustrades spans the moat.

The inspiration for Angkor Vat is undoubtedly Indian. But it was the Khmer genius that developed it; or, 'the two fused together and produced this wonder'. Dr. Quaritch Wales says: 'When the guiding hand of India was removed, her inspiration was not forgotten, but the Khmer genius was released to mould from it vast new conceptions of amazing vitality different from, and hence not properly to be compared with, anything matured in a purely Indian environment. . . . *It is true that Khmer*

<sup>6</sup> Grey's Elegy.

*culture is essentially based on the inspiration of India, without which the Khmers at best might have produced nothing greater than the barbaric splendour of the Central American Mayas* (italics added); but it must be admitted that here, more than anywhere else in Greater India, this inspiration fell on fertile soil.<sup>7</sup>

Angkor Thom (Nagaradhāma?) is the modern name of the new capital founded by King Jayavarman VII of Kambuja. The city was about two miles square and well fortified. A 330 feet wide moat encircled the city, and a high stone wall enclosed it. The temple of Bayon in the centre of the city 'can be said to be the most imaginative and singular in the world, more lovely than Angkor Vat, because more unearthly in its conception, a temple from a city in some other distant planet . . . imbued with the same elusive beauty that often lives between the lines of a great poem'.<sup>8</sup> The temple of Bayon was originally a gorgeous, pyramid-like structure, profusely decorated with tall towers and excellent sculptures. The central tower, which is 150 feet in height, dominates the whole structure. Each of the more or less forty towers of the temple has a finely carved human face on each of its four sides. The face is that of Śiva absorbed in deep meditation. Śaivism and Buddhism both flourished side by side in Nagaradhāma. Sectarian intolerance and communal jealousy were unknown. A number of temples and other structures were built around the temple of Bayon.

Everything in Angkor Thom was conceived on a truly grand scale, befitting one of the greatest cities in the contemporary world. Imposing towers and well-built guard houses contributed to the strength of the city, and added to the beauty of its gates. Five roads, each about a hundred feet in width, ran from the gates to the heart of the city, a little less than a mile away. The city had several tanks with embankments. A royal terrace, about 1,200 feet in length and 13 feet in height, 'with stu-

pendous reliefs of exquisite quality', adorned the city.

The Malayan peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago witnessed the rise and fall of two extensive empires, founded by adventurous soldiers of fortune from India. One of these, the Sailendra empire, was founded in the eighth century A.D. Some historians, however, contend that the Sailendras came to power in the first half of the seventh century A.D. The whole of Malaya and almost the whole of modern Indonesia, including Eastern Java, Bali, and Borneo, were included within the Sailendra empire. The Arab merchants who came to South-East Asia for trade testify to the wealth, power, and magnificence of the Sailendras. The powerful Sailendra navy successfully raided the coasts of Champa and Kambuja. Arab writers say that the Sailendras were held in high esteem by the rulers of China and India. Ibn Rosteh, writing about A.D. 903, observes: 'The great Sailendra king is called Mahārājā, i.e. the king of kings. He is not regarded as the greatest among the kings of India, because he dwells in the islands. No other king is richer or more powerful than he, and none has more revenue.'<sup>9</sup>

The Sailendras were mighty builders. The *stūpa* at Borobudur in Central Java, famous all over the world, survives as a living monument of Sailendra grandeur and magnificence. It stands on the top of a volcanic hillock and consists of a series of nine successive terraces, each receding from the one beneath it. The structure is crowned by a bell-shaped *stūpa* in the centre of the topmost terrace. The lowest terrace is 131 yards at its longest. Each of the next five terraces is enclosed on the inner side by a wall supporting balustrades forming four open galleries. The three uppermost terraces are each encircled by a ring of perforated cupolas. There was originally an image of Buddha in each of these *stūpas*. 'The galleries are covered with sculptures, illustrating scenes from Buddhist texts, and the balustrades are decorated with small niche-temples

<sup>7</sup> 'Towards Angkor' in *Harrap*, 1933.

<sup>8</sup> Osbert Sitwell, *Escape with Me: An Oriental Sketch Book* (1941).

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in *An Advanced History of India*, p. 217.

containing images of Buddha. The images and sculptures are the finest examples of Indo-Javanese art.<sup>10</sup> When we remember that the structure is about 400 feet square and that all its galleries are full of excellent sculptures and graceful images of Buddha, which no novice could have chiselled, we realize why Borobudur is called the 'eighth wonder of the world'. The art of Java and Kambuja was undoubtedly fostered by their rulers, who were of Indian origin. But Borobudur and Angkor Vat 'far excel, in grandeur of conception and skill of execution, anything that we know of in India proper'.<sup>11</sup>

Indian influence in the Indian colonies is most clearly discernible in the magnificent sculpture and architecture of these colonies. The original impulse 'was modified, adapted, and fused' with the indigenous genius, and out of this fusion arose monuments and temples like Borobudur and Angkor Vat.

The Sailendras were followers of the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism. They maintained diplomatic relations with China and India. In the ninth century A.D., King Bālaputradeva Sailendra sent an envoy to Emperor Devapāla Deva of Eastern India with a request to grant five villages for the monastery built by him (Bālaputradeva) at Nālandā. The request was granted. The Sailendra glory was temporarily eclipsed in the eleventh century A.D. by the invaders from Southern India. King Rājendra Cola I (A.D. 1012-1044) conquered a large part of the Sailendra empire. The fallen fortunes of the Sailendras were, however, restored after nearly a century of struggle. But an expedition against Ceylon in the thirteenth century miscarried, and led to the final disruption of the Sailendra empire. It fell never to rise again.

The Sailendras were followed by other ruling dynasties in Java. Towards the close of the thirteenth century A.D., King Vijaya founded a new line of kings with Majapahit (Tiktilva) as its capital. Vijaya's successors con-

quered the neighbouring islands; and by A.D. 1365, almost the whole of Indonesia, with the probable exception of Northern Sulawesi, had come under the Majapahit sway. Malaya, however, retained its independence. The Majapahit empire fell in the sixteenth century, when Java was converted to Islam and Muslim rule was established in Java. The royal family and many of the Hindu inhabitants fled to Bali, which had been a Hindu colony for nearly one thousand years. Hinduism still survives in Bali. But it has changed a lot. The whole of Malaya and Indonesia, with the exception of Bali, follow, generally speaking, the religion of the Prophet of Arabia.

Indian art and architecture flourished in Java to an extent unknown anywhere else in Greater India. Hundreds of temples in ruins and an extensive literature—in manuscript—based on Indian works and written in a language containing a very high proportion of Sanskrit, the language of Indian culture, bear an eloquent testimony to the influence of India on ancient and medieval Java. Here was a conquest of the spirit *par excellence*. The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* enjoyed—they do still enjoy—as great a popularity in distant Java as they do in their land of origin. Stories from them still furnish the theme of the Javanese shadow-play or 'Wajang' and theatrical performances. In Tagore's inimitable words:

'In a dim distant unrecorded age, we had met, thou and I (Java and India),  
When my (India's) speech became tangled in thine (Java's), and my life in thy life.'

Artistic activities in Java came to an end with the fall of the Majapahit empire. But the Javanese art is deathless. The head of a Bodhisattva from Borobudur is to be found in the Glyptotek in Copenhagen. It is not only a work of beauty, but, as Havell says, there is something deeper in it, revealing, as in a mirror, the pure soul of the Bodhisattva. 'It is a face which incarnates the stillness of the depths of ocean; the serenity of an azure, cloudless sky; a beatitude beyond mortal ken.' There is, in

<sup>10</sup> *An Advanced History of India*, pp. 220-21.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

fact, 'more of human contentment and joy in Indo-Javanese art' than in its Indian counterpart. This joy and contentment is a faithful expression of the peaceful security 'which the Indian colonists enjoyed in their happy island

home, after the centuries of storm and struggle which their forefathers had experienced on the mainland'.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Havell, *The Ideals of the Indian Art*, p. 169.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

With the publication of this issue, *Prabuddha Bharata* enters its sixty-seventh year. Started in 1896 with the blessings of Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary will be celebrated next year all over India and in several other countries, *Prabuddha Bharata* has ever since been holding aloft the torch of 'Awakened India' that was entrusted to its charge by its great inspirer. During the past six decades, it has been fulfilling, in its own humble way, the twofold task of revivifying India's ancient Vedāntic religion and philosophy and spreading broadcast the spiritual message of Vedānta to the world outside.

On this happy occasion of stepping into the new year, we cherish with gratitude the memory of all those who have helped us in the past in several ways in the conduct of the journal, and wish all our present contributors, subscribers, readers, and advertisers a happy new year. We also take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks to all of them for extending their kind help and co-operation in our work. . . .

'Spiritual Talks of Swami Shivananda'—being the translation of the Bengali book *Śivānandavāṇī*, Part Two—presented serially in our columns last year, will be continued this year also. As our readers are aware, Swami Shivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, and the second president of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, is endearingly and reverentially referred to as 'Mahapurush Maharai' or 'Mahapurushji'. . . .

Swami Vivekananda was not only a great patriot, but also a universalist of a very high order. His universalism was based neither on the principles of democratic socialism nor on those of secular humanism, but on the Vedāntic principles of the divinity of the human soul and the spiritual oneness of the whole universe. Our editorial this month, which is devoted to an understanding of the Swami's concept of 'Universalism', is one of a series of articles we have proposed to offer to our readers. Three editorials in the series have already appeared in October, November, and December 1961, and a few more will be presented in the course of this year. The series is meant to draw the attention of our readers to the views of Swami Vivekananda on various national and international problems—social, cultural, religious, and spiritual—on the eve of his birth centenary. . . .

In his article on 'The Relation between the Two Mīmāṃsās', Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., Reader and Head of the Department of English, Nagpur University, clearly brings out that there is nothing in common between the two systems, not only regarding the *adhikārins* (persons qualified to undertake them), methods, and purposes, but also regarding their doctrines or fundamentals. . . .

The article on 'The Bhakti-yoga of St. John of the Cross' by Swami Nityabodhananda, which makes an earnest study of the saint's mystic life and teachings, is based on a lecture

the Swami delivered at the Sorbonne University (France) in 1959. Formerly Editor of *The Vedanta Kesari*, the Swami is now the head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Geneva (Switzerland). . . .

A clear exposition of the main theme of the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, which contains 'Uddālaka's Instruction to Śvetaketu', is presented in the article by Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., formerly Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University, Madras State. . . .

In his very informative article on 'Greater India', Professor Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, M.A., of the Department of Letters, Gadjah Mada University, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, gives a resume of the past story of India's cultural expansion beyond her borders, particularly focusing his attention on the Far East and the South-East Asian countries.

#### UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Shall we take the mushroom growth of universities in India and the rush of students therein as a sign of a genuine thirst for knowledge and learning, the prime requisite of education? Whatever be the answer, there is undoubtedly a good deal of enthusiasm and upsurge of energy among the student community, though it is often frittered away in useless pursuits. The urgent need of the hour is to find ways and means for the proper canalization of this energy to creative purposes. The responsibility of the universities in this regard is, indeed, great, but the objective cannot be achieved by planning at the university stage alone. University education is, for a majority of students, the last stage of their academic life, and much depends on the training imparted in the earlier stages of the student career. One of the greatest drawbacks in our educational system appears to be the lack of co-ordination between the different stages of education. It is not rarely that we find students hard put to it to adjust themselves to the new environment and the

higher standards of university education, or even when they pass on from the lower stage of education to the higher at the pre-university level. This difficulty of adjustment, faced by the students at different levels of their education, is made more acute by the psychological conflicts within that arise at each stage of their biological growth, and is further accentuated by the undesirable influences from without. Consequently, there is great unrest among the students.

For any educational scheme to be successful, the educators as well as the educated must have a clear picture of the aims and objects of the education that is going to be imparted and received. The real difficulty, however, particularly in a time like ours, is in defining precisely the goal of education. As *Span*, a monthly published by United States Information Service, New Delhi, remarks in its September 1961 issue: 'Every society has always had the problem of what to teach the rising generation. It is a problem which must constantly be met, whether or not it is solved, and it has become steadily more difficult and complex, from the time when training the young meant teaching them to hunt and forage, then to farm, and later to write and cipher, up to the present age of instant communication and atomic power.' With the rapid advance of science and the increasing importance it is having in our everyday life, there is a conflict between the subjects of sciences and arts or humanities. This is one of the major factors in making the problem so complex and difficult of solution in our age. Specially in India, where the impact of modern science has been all too sudden, and a foreign way of life has been making rapid inroads into her society, upsetting the traditional values, the problem assumes an alarming proportion. This conflict, however, between science and arts, or between the East and the West, to put it broadly, is only superficial. 'The sickness of our times', as Robert Oppenheimer says, 'is not that we have two cultures that are growing apart from each other, but that the one culture we have is disintegrating—to the detriment of humanities and sciences alike' (quoted by Kingsley Amis in his



article 'The Cult of the Practical' in *The Hindustan Times*, Magazine Section, April 2, 1961).

When *Span*, mentioned above, questioned some men who have special interest in the matter of education on 'what to teach', they gave some useful answers, surely the result of their rich experience. Dr. Samuel Belkin, President, Yeshiva University, New York City, replied: 'The complete divorcement between scientific research and spiritual and moral ideas has brought disastrous consequences. A science which remains indifferent to the importance of morality in the life of society becomes an opponent of morality. The end of education should be the cultivation of intellectual and spiritual values, bringing to a maximum development the moral potentialities of man.'

Dr. Courtney Craig Smith, President of Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, replied: 'It is not enough for us to be a training ground for scholars. It is not enough to develop intellect, for intellect by itself is essentially amoral, capable of evil as well as of good. We must develop the character which makes intellect constructive and the personality which makes it effective. . . . What we want is a community that values values.'

Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, President, Notre Dame University, Indiana, said: 'As a university, our specific task is to train the mind in its quest for truth. We do not conceive of this task merely as one of filling the mind with information, to make the young man an animated encyclopaedia. Rather, we believe that the perfecting of the mind is bound up in four basic abilities: (1) to think clearly, (2) to communicate one's thoughts effectively by word and writing, (3) to make valid judgements in conflicting matters, and (4) to evaluate clearly what is important and unimportant in life. We strive for a graduate who is a good man, who has professional competence and a sense of moral and social responsibility. Education does not stop with the training of the mind. We give much additional attention to the important educative work of training the will. You may call it moral training, character guidance, or

anything else you will. This formation of good moral habits and solid character is an essential element in the good man we are trying to produce. St. Thomas has summarized all of this by saying that only three pursuits are worth our effort in life—to know the right things to love, the right things to hope for, the right things to do.'

Dr. Nathan Pusey, President of Harvard University, said: 'College education exists not least to foment—in each student, or in as many as it can reach—moments of heightened insight, rare experiences of great excitement when . . . one seems to see more clearly than ever before what the world is about, or what it can be about, and how one can fit creatively, and significantly, into it, and so is moved, out of hesitation and doubt and withholding, to elect for life. A major characteristic of the liberally educated person is that in any situation, however upsetting, he or she will start to look for the truth; will *want* to look for truth. . . . It is not our task to produce "safe" men, in whom safety can never in any case lie, but to keep alive in young people the courage to dare to seek the truth, to be free. If the university does not stand in some sense a critic of society and a force always calling for fresh endeavour, it cannot be the university.'

These views, expressed by eminent educationists of the West, reiterate in substance the ancient Indian view that education is complete only when all the human and divine possibilities are fully manifest in a student. The story is told, in one of the Upaniṣads, of the boy who, having stayed with the teacher for twelve years and learnt all the Vedas, comes back to his father conceited, arrogant, and proud of his own learning, and the father asks him, quite dissatisfied with the training the son has received: 'Śvetaketu, dear boy, you, I see, are conceited, arrogant, and consider yourself very learned. Did you ask for that teaching (about the supreme Brahman) through which what is unheard becomes heard, what is unthought of becomes thought of, what is unknown becomes known?' Swami Vivekananda, the foremost

exponent of the Indian ideals in our times, puts the same idea in his own inimitable way when he says that 'education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man'. Today, the system of education in India, the home of religion and spirituality, closely follows the pattern of education in the West, the home of modern science and technology. The West, on the other hand, if we may regard the above-mentioned educationists as representative of the Western thinking world, is veering round to the Indian view that a mere scientific education, without any spiritual basis, is insufficient to meet the complicated demands of life. There is a meeting ground here between the two cultures and civilizations, which have traditionally been regarded as poles apart in their approach to life and its problems. Swami Vivekananda always dreamed of a society wherein the best of both the cultures would be harmoniously combined to produce one of the best types of men. 'Europe', he says in one of his letters to his Indian disciples, 'has always been the source of social, and Asia of spiritual, power; and the whole history of the world is the tale of the varying combinations of these two powers.' Again, in another letter, he writes: 'India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature, and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature. Then there will be neither Hindus nor Europeans; there will be the ideal humanity which has conquered both the natures—the external and the internal. We have developed one phase of humanity, and they an-

other. It is the union of the two that is wanted.' 'Can you make a European society with India's religion?' he asks in another letter, and himself answers: 'I believe it is possible, and must be.'

And, if we may hazard an opinion here, it is in India, and India alone, that this dream of Swami Vivekananda is likely to be realized, and the meeting of the East and the West become fruitful. For it is here that the conditions for the realization of that ideal are most favourable. Here alone we have an ancient culture and civilization with an unbroken tradition of centuries, which is required to ward off the evil effects of the Western civilization and absorb the best in it. It is the task of our universities to work out in detail how best this dream of Swami Vivekananda may be made a reality. Our universities must regard this as a sacred duty and devote themselves whole-heartedly to the task, if they wish to retain their individual character and not be mere replicas of foreign universities. It is vital for their very existence, and is also a necessity of our times. Will they rise to the occasion and fulfil what is expected of them?

In this connection, we welcome most heartily the decision to start a university in the name of Swami Vivekananda, at Belur, in 1963, in commemoration of his birth centenary. We hope that this Vivekananda University will show the way in giving a practical shape to this ideal of the Swami—the harmonious blending of the East and the West.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE QUINTESSENCE OF VEDĀNTA. By SWAMI TATTWANANDA. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Kalady (Kerala). 1960. Pages xxxvi+144+191. Price Rs. 3.50nP.

The book under review—its name signifies the nature of its contents—is an English rendering of Ācārya Śaṅkara's *Sarva-vedānta-siddhānta-sāra-saṅgraha*, which comprises one thousand and six ślokas. The verses, in Devanāgarī script, have been placed

together, and then their translation follows. This will facilitate recitation if one likes it. The translation itself is simple without being too literal. When analysed, the verses are grouped under forty-nine topical heads. The last verse reads: 'The Quintessence of Vedānta has been specially composed in order that it might help other aspirants after wisdom in dispelling the doubts that might arise in their hearts.'

Apart from his famous commentaries, Ācārya

Śaṅkara's other writings, too, like the present one, bear the stamp of the great seer's originality and clear thinking. Moreover, he is very practical. 'He bases his teachings on experience. Of the three *pramāṇas*, he gives the first place to experience, the second place to Śruti, and only the third place to mere reasoning.' One of the greatest religious luminaries, and himself a *jīvanmukta*, Śaṅkara urges us to remember: 'That unchanging, formless, untainted Brahman, who knows no sorrow, and who is without a beginning and an end, and is all-pervading, That I am; and there is no doubt about it' (verse 893). He assures us: 'That person who is firmly convinced "I am Brahman, and nothing else; I am pure Consciousness, and nothing else" is, indeed, liberated in life (*jīvanmukta*)' (verse 978).

The belief is gaining ground that Vedānta is the only system that can survive the scalpel of scientific reason. Vedānta is far above dogma and fanaticism. As the introduction to the book says: 'Vedānta is not built upon blind faith. Nor is it pessimistic in spirit. The goal of Vedānta is eternal happiness.'

For a realized soul, 'the vicious cycle of birth and death has come to an end. Such a person attains the bliss that knows no obstacles, but which is eternal in nature, changeless, and continuous' (verse 875).

It is, of course, too much to expect everybody to reach the highest goal, just as we cannot expect all to achieve the same degree of success in secular sciences. Still, whoever earnestly endeavours to live the Vedāntic way of life attains mental poise and remains unruffled by the ups and downs that life presents before him.

A learned introduction by the late Swami Agama-nanda adds to the worth of the English version. An index of the *ślokas* would have been of much help to serious students of Vedānta. The translation itself leaves ample room for further improvement. One expects such books to be free from printing errors, which are rather too many in the present edition. We hope to see the next edition, at least, free from these defects.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### VEDANTA SOCIETY, ST. LOUIS, U.S.A.

#### REPORT FOR 1960

The following activities were conducted during the year 1960:

1. *Sunday services*: Swami Satprakashananda, the Swami-in-charge, spoke on religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings. Members and students of different churches, educational centres, and cultural groups attended these meetings. Total number of Sunday services held: 46.

2. *Meditation and discourse*: On Tuesday evenings, the Swami conducted a meditation and gave a discourse on *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, Chapter XI. He answered questions after the discourse. Total number of Tuesday meetings: 46.

3. *Additional meetings*: Special meetings were held in the Society's chapel for senior high school students on two different occasions. The Swami explained to them the Hindu view of life and answered questions.

4. *Anniversaries*: On the birth anniversaries of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Śaṅkara, Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brah-

mananda, and on special festive occasions, such as the worship of the Divine Mother, Christmas, and Easter, special meditation, devotional worship, chanting of hymns, and services for the public were conducted.

5. *The Vedānta group meets during the summer recess*: The Vedānta group met every Sunday morning and Tuesday evening during August and the first part of September, when the regular services were suspended. On Sundays, they listened to the Swami's recorded lectures. On Tuesdays, they read from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*.

6. *Interviews*: The Swami gave eighty-five private interviews.

7. *Library*: The lending library was well utilized by the members and friends of the Society.

8. *Extension of Vedānta work in Kansas City, Missouri*: A Vedānta group formed at Kansas City meets fortnightly. Open meetings are also held once a month, when those present listen to the tape recordings of the Swami's Sunday lectures delivered in St. Louis.

### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The 100th birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls on Sunday, the 28th January 1962.