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OR

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By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
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No. 2



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

MAHĀSAMĀDHI OF SWAMI SANKARANANDA

With the deepest sorrow we announce that Swami Sankarananda, the seventh President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, passed into Mahāsamādhi at Belur Math in the early hours (3.10 a.m.) of Saturday, the 13th February 1962, at the age of about 82 years. Though he had no specific ailment, he had been suffering for the last two or three years from general debility due to old age. The news of his passing away was passed around. In the morning, monks and lay disciples gathered at the Math premises to pay their homage to the great soul. The last rites were performed in the afternoon on the bank of the holy Gaṅgā in the southern extremity of the Math premises, in the presence of hundreds of lay and monastic followers of Sri Ramakrishna.

Before ordination, he was known as Anrita Lal Sengupta, pet name being Amulya. He was born on the 10th March 1880 on the Śivarātri day at Hooghly, his ancestral home being at Bamunmura in the 24-Parganas. He discontinued his studies at the Medical College to join the Ramakrishna Math in 1902. As a student he attended Swami Vivekananda's lectures and was drawn to the monastic life by Swami Sadananda, his maternal uncle and a disciple of Swami Vivekananda.

He was an initiated disciple of Swami Brahmananda, under whom he took orders in 1906. As a beloved disciple and also as a personal attendant of Swami Brahmananda for several years, he had the rare privilege of living with the Swami and of visiting many Math and Mission centres and various places of pilgrimage all over India. In 1903, he, along with Swami Sadananda, went to Japan, where he stayed for about six months and visited China, while returning. Subsequently he visited with Sister Nivedita many places of cultural interest as well.

He was intimately connected with the manifold activities of the Organization, and directed a number of relief operations. He had a good knowledge of building construction and per-

sonally supervised the construction of the Bhubaneswar Math and Swami Brahmananda Temple at Belur. He earned the gratitude of all by collecting and preserving a considerable number of letters of Swami Vivekananda and other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He was also well versed in the Purānic literature and could quote verses on specific points of spiritual practice.

In 1947, he was appointed one of the Vice-Presidents of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and on the 19th June 1951, he was elected President. His was a life of austere asceticism. In habit he was simple, regular, and self-reliant; in work he displayed great efficiency and paid attention to necessary details. By his passing away, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has sustained an irreparable loss, and his disciples have been deprived of a loving spiritual guide.



SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Belur Math, December 25, 1929 (Continued)

A monk: 'Maharaj, the Master used to say that mystic powers are an impediment to spiritual progress, whereas the life of Jesus Christ is seen to be full of supernatural events. He brought dead men to life, cured diseases, and showed many other miraculous powers. He transmitted those powers to his twelve disciples and sent them out with his permission to use them. I cannot quite understand this.'

Mahapurushji: 'What the Master said is quite true. If a spiritual aspirant pays attention to mystic powers, he cannot progress any further towards God; he ends with them alone. The Mother of the universe also showed it to the Master that these mystic powers are to be shunned like the most obnoxious thing. However, the incidents that happened in Christ's life were not meant merely to demonstrate his supernatural powers; all that he did was to remove people's misery out of compassion for them. For the Bible itself says that, after granting sight to the blind and curing the lepers with a mere touch, he warned them not to divulge all this to others. He did not do all that for gaining popularity or public applause. The scriptures also state that the perfected souls continue in this world even after the fullest enlightenment, simply out of compassion for

others. They have no other wish or prompting. Besides, Jesus was not just an ordinary aspirant. He was an incarnation. He had his whole being merged in God, the Father of the whole universe. Hence it was nothing unnatural or wrong for him to have done so. Such activities, which the ordinary people consider to be amazing and impossible, are quite as natural to the incarnations as inhalation and exhalation. They do not have to get all that as a result of long and strenuous practice. Supernatural things happen at their mere wish. In certain places, Jesus demonstrated those supernatural powers in order to win back unbelievers to the path of religion. It is often very difficult to understand the hidden motives of their actions.

'As for curing some disease by a mere touch, it is not after all so very supernatural. All this is an easy affair. The Master demonstrated the greatest of wonders—he gave the vision of God to men by his mere touch; he sent men into moods of profound divine absorption (*samā-dhi*). The greatest mystic power is to efface in a trice all the results of works accumulated in hundreds of past lives and to turn the mind completely towards God. No other incarnation had done such a thing before. Ah, what wonders have we not seen the Master perform! One's hairs stand on end even to think of such things. He played with people's minds and

removed all their angularities, and all their mental diseases were healed at his mere touch. What a great dynamo of spiritual power was the Master! To all outward appearance, he was just like an ordinary mortal; and yet, it was none other than the omniscient God Himself who manifested through his body.'

A German lady devotee came in and saluted Mahapurushji with great reverence. As she stood up, Mahapurushji asked her: 'How did you like the Christmas Eve celebration last evening?'

She replied: 'Oh, I enjoyed it immensely. I had never experienced such happiness during Christmas before. In our Western countries, they observe the occasion mostly with merriment, feasts, fine dress, dance, etc. The worship follows some set routine. One misses any touch of the heart in all that. They spend millions in enjoyment; but all such external ceremonies cannot satisfy the hunger of the soul. So I earnestly prayed to Jesus during the last Christmas at about 1 a.m.: "Lord, please grant me at least once in my life the real bliss of Christmas." He heard my prayer. I have got the real bliss of Christmas here this time; my heart is now full.'

Mahapurushji: 'Our worship proceeds from devotion. The Christmas celebration here is an outpouring of pure hearts. The chief factors in this celebration are love, devotion, faith, and sincere prayer. This is what real Christmas should be.'

The lady devotee: 'Was the Lord really a Jew?'

Mahapurushji: 'He was neither a Jew nor a Gentile. He was far above all that—a true incarnation of the divine power. He came to this world in a human body for saving mankind.'

Belur Math, January-March 1930

A devotee, who wanted to renounce the world and join the monastery, had been living here for some days. Mahapurushji asked him: 'Have they (i.e. your friends and relatives) come to know that you will not return?'

'Yes, sir', said the devotee.

'That is good', said Mahapurushji. 'They have a craving for enjoyment; so, let them enjoy to their heart's content. But, by the Master's grace, you have got over such desires; you stay on here. Let them enjoy this bitter world as long as they like.'

* * *

It was the occasion for the public celebration of the Master's birthday; the sky was overcast with clouds, and there was a little rainfall as well. The celebration was planned on a grand scale. An attendant came in to say: 'Maharaj, we shall carry you down in a chair, so that you can see for yourself the arrangements made for the celebration.'

Mahapurushji: 'No, I do not like to create a scene. I pray that all may be granted happiness, devotion, love, and peace. May the Master vouch happiness for all; in that alone I shall feel happy. It pleased the Master to gather clouds and pour down a little in order to cool the earth; otherwise, the people gathered here would have suffered much. He will manage his own affairs.'

In the afternoon, he enquired about the cattle of the Math: 'Alas! I think the cattle cannot come out today. It will be very difficult for them.' In the evening, too, he enquired about the cattle again, as to whether they had been given fodder. The attendant went out to see for himself and returned to report: 'Yes, they have been given.' At this, Mahapurushji felt very happy.

* * *

They were talking about a woman devotee of East Bengal. She was much given to spiritual practices, and had made considerable progress. 'This is all through His grace', said Mahapurushji. 'In the *Devī-sūkta* (of the *R̥g-Veda*), it is said: "Whomsoever I want, I make dominant—I make him Brahmā, I make him a ṛṣi, and I make him full of wisdom." Her grace is the main thing—no matter whether it finds expression in a woman's body or in a man's body.'

Belur Math, April-September 1930

It was the Rāmanavamī day, and the talk was about Tulasīdāsa. Mahapurushji said: Tulasīdāsa popularized the greatness of the Lord's name. The name and the person named are inseparable, as, for instance, Hari and his name, or Rāma and his name. Sing the name of Rāma today from the bottom of your hearts. "Rāma, Rāma, Sītā-Rāma."

* * *

A certain monk had made an amulet with the dust taken from the Master's feet and had inserted it into the rosary which he wore round his neck. 'Let me have it, give it to me,' said Mahapurushji, 'that is what one should have round one's neck. Come here, place it on my head.'

* * *

The talk turned to his health. He said: 'The body is now unwell. It is all hollow now. The Master has been keeping it going according to his will, and he will do so as long as it pleases him. It helps in the expansion of his blessed work a little if this body lives; that is all that matters.'

* * *

A monk returned to Math after visiting his ancestral home. In that place, nearly a thousand people had gathered to see him. 'That was good for them', remarked Mahapurushji. 'They had the good fortune of seeing a man of renunciation; it will do good to them. A real monk is rare indeed.' And he blessed the monk: 'May you have pure devotion; may you have pure knowledge, though both these are the same!'

* * *

A woman devotee had committed suicide. Mahapurushji was talking of the incident with an attendant. 'I heard that she killed herself with opium', said he. 'She did so, because she could no longer bear the pain she was suffering from her disease. In any case, her soul will reach the Master, for she was devoted to him. She had great reverence for the monks of this

monastery, as also for us. Her *prārabdha* (accumulated results of past works) had that fruit in store for her, and hence she had to do so. But her future course will certainly be good, though, in such a case, the soul has to remain for some time under a cover of something like darkness.'

* * *

A letter came from a certain Parsi devotee. Mahapurushji said to the attendant: 'Write to him in the most expressive terms that what he is doing is quite all right. It was God Himself who came as Zoroaster, and it is God, again, who has come as our Master.' Then he spoke about a Prussian gentleman, who was a Jew, and remarked: 'The man was a scientist. He discovered some food during the war, which did not require any cooking. He said: "If I had wished, I could make a fortune for myself." He was a very good man. At first, he lived at the Adyar Theosophical Society. He did not like Judaism, and he could not like Theosophy. Then, he came to the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Madras; and lastly, he came here to meet me. He had also been to Palestine, Jerusalem, and other places, which, however, he did not like. And he said: "No, there is no spirituality in those places." Now he is in America.'

* * *

The talk turned to some letters that had to be written to America. 'Some amount of love expresses itself through the exchange of such letters', remarked Mahapurushji. 'But, of course, when the inner vision opens, one sees everything as Brahman. "What can a man see and through what, when he has realized unity?" At the same time, it is necessary to have human dealings that stem out from an empirical idea of variety.'

* * *

In connection with the communal riot at Dacca, Mahapurushji said: 'Why did the Mother dispense it this way? The Master is our only hope; he will save us. Dacca never

saw a holocaust on this scale before. It is the Mother's power of destruction let loose. Out of evil cometh good; some good will come out of this even. May he be merciful; may he grant peace to all! What we want is that nobody should suffer.'

* * *

A monk came up to pay his respects to Mahapurushji, after having been bed-ridden for about a month. Mahapurushji, greeting him with the words 'Come, come' with great delight, said: 'Look here, N— has come upstairs. Very good, my son; it is the Master who has brought you round. Glory to the Master! You need have no misgiving; the Master will be merciful to you all. You have offered your body and mind to the Master, and you have taken shelter under him. He will protect you. The Master will take care of everything—your health, enlightenment, devotion, liberation, and all that. Well, my boy, you now return to your bed, for it will be difficult for you to keep standing. Alas, see how emaciated he looks! You will gather strength again when you start taking your normal food. Glory to the Master! He has saved you out of his mercy.'

* * *

On another day, when a letter from a devotee reached him, Mahapurushji said: 'He is praying to the Master heart and soul. He will firmly set on the spiritual path when he feels a little joy in this. If one but has love for the Lord's name, one need have no more worry. Troubles there are galore, and they will always be there. Let him call on the Master heart and soul, and he is sure to be blessed. He

carried on the worship till 3 a.m. on the night of Janmāṣṭamī. That is a fine boy, bravo!'

* * *

Mahapurushji now lay down in his bed; and in that reclining posture, he repeated the names of certain deities, and recited some Vedāntic sayings as also the *Devī-sūkta*. Then he sat up, saying: 'Fine, wonderful! I was having such a charming current of thoughts. There lay Śiva without any motion, and the Mother danced on him. Śiva is, of course, eternally motionless, while the Mother has her eternal dance. There is this eternal inaction inside, and this playful activity of the Mother outside.'

* * *

A *brahmacārin* asked him one day: 'When one feels a strong pull towards the path of knowledge, can one repeat merely the word "Om", without repeating the *mantra* of one's chosen deity?'

'Yes, there is no harm in that,' replied Mahapurushji, 'for that *Om* is nothing but Brahman. One can think of the Master as *Om*. There is no harm in it.'

A few days later, he asked that *brahmacārin*: 'Well, are you practising your *Om*?' When the *brahmacārin* replied 'Yes', he said encouragingly: 'That is fine; that is fine.' 'But, Maharaj,' put in the *brahmacārin*, 'as I keep on repeating *Om*, the body becomes stiff, and that produces some fear.' 'When you feel that way,' said Mahapurushji, 'you should pray to the Master thus: "Master, you yourself are this *Om*. Kindly lead me along the right path. Do please ordain it in such a way that I may attain the truth—be it knowledge or devotion" (for both are the same). Pray thus with all earnestness.'



HARMONY OF RELIGIONS

The word 'religion' is used in a vague sense to cover both the varied outer manifestations of religiousness and inner spiritual excellence. Truly speaking, spirituality begins where religiousness ends. Swami Vivekananda defined the inner core of religion as 'the manifestation of the divinity already in man'. Fundamentally speaking, 'Confucius, Moses, and Pythagoras; Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Luther, Calvin, and the Sikhs; Theosophy, Spiritualism, and the like; all these mean only the preaching of the Divine-in-man' (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VIII. Second Edn., p. 229). A further point to note is that he made a distinction between the original form of a religion and its later historical developments. For instance, he held that the disport of Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the Yamunā was greatly misinterpreted by the Hindus of later days; the Buddhism of Buddha was distorted by the foreign cultures into which it tried to penetrate; Christ was misunderstood by the reform movements of Christianity; and Mohammedanism became divided into conflicting sects.

Swami Vivekananda thus spoke of the unity of all religions as an actual fact, when he had in mind their essential and original forms. This might, again, mean either identity or non-contradiction. So he clarifies: 'I do not mean the different buildings, languages, rituals, books, etc. employed in various religions, but I mean the internal soul of every religion. ... I believe that they are not contradictory; they are supplementary' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. Eighth Edn., p. 363); 'There are differences in non-essentials, but in essentials they are all one' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. Ninth Edn., p. 316). Again, when he had in mind the various forms of religions, he spoke of harmony as a goal yet to be achieved. Thus it is that he led a two-pronged attack against sectarianism by revealing the essential oneness and non-contradictoriness of all faiths and by exposing the hollowness of the claim to exclusive possession of truth and the stupidity of

quarrels over non-essentials: 'You must see that every worship is given unto Him, whatever may be the name or the form; ... for He is the one Lord of all, the one Soul of all souls' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. Seventh Edn., p. 115); 'Here, on earth, we strive to enclose little spaces and exclude outsiders, but we cannot do that in the sky, though that is what sectarian religion tries to do when it says, "Only this way leads to salvation, all others are wrong". Our aim should be to wipe out these little enclosures, to widen the boundaries until they are lost sight of, and to realize that all religions lead to God' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. p. 24).

This realization of the sameness of the goal of all religions, and this striving for bringing about their harmony, he inherited from his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who proved by his own life and taught in clear terms that all religions are true. The history of his motherland confirmed this and impressed it on his mind. And this was the message that the Swami took upon himself to broadcast to the wide world, and this was the truth that found expression in his very first speech before the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. 'These men from far-off nations may well claim the honour of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance' (*ibid.*, Vol. I p. 1).

Here, we come across another speciality that marks out Ramakrishna-Vivekananda from others; they not only tolerate, but accept other faiths as true, without reservation. In Swami Vivekananda's scheme, all religions had their honoured places and fulfilled some felt needs; none could be denied. The watchword of India's civilization is 'Unity in variety', which is nature's plan in the evolution of the universe; and it is only by harmony and brotherhood among religions and by mutual toleration and help that the mission and destiny of humanity

can be accomplished. Starting from toleration, and cultivating the spirit of sympathy, brotherhood, and help, India found in acceptance the solution of her national problems.

This the other nations have to learn from India: 'The one great lesson, therefore, that the world wants most, that the world has yet to learn from India, is the idea not only of toleration, but of sympathy' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 114); 'Nay, more, . . . not only should we be charitable, but positively helpful to each other, however different our religious ideas and convictions may be' (*ibid.*, p. 188). In illustration of his thesis, the Swami cited how the Hindus built churches for the Christians and mosques for the Mohammedans. He also referred to the historical facts of granting asylum to the Parsi refugees, and scope for the spread of early Christianity under St. Thomas. In fact, religious persecution was unknown in India till others came to establish their supremacy at the cost of the indigenous faith. The attempt at extirpating the 'heathens' generated violent reaction, and the Hindus learnt to pay back others in their own coin, out of a sheer instinct of self-preservation.

This bellicosity is against all Indian tradition, and even under the present unnatural circumstances, the Hindus are trying their best to live with others in amity. The idea underlying Indian culture was succinctly summed up, and the motto for all future generation was supplied, by the R̥g-Vedic *mantra*: '*Ekaṁ sat, viprā bahudhā vadanti*'—Truth is one, but sages call it by various names. This coloured all the spiritual and secular endeavour of India, reconciling variety with unity. In the religious field, this harmony found clear expression in a verse of the *Śiva-mahimnaḥ-stotra*, quoted and translated by the Swami: 'As the different streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 2).

This was, again, the method of religious

harmony adopted by some saints and prophets of ancient days, as also of the Middle Ages, who not only tried to achieve a theoretical conciliation, but also a fusion of the best elements of each faith. Some religious sects thus grew up by a process of adoption and adaptation. But Swami Vivekananda did not envisage any such eclecticism, which would reject certain features of Hinduism and borrow certain others from elsewhere, thus presenting a body of religious beliefs and practices that would be universally acceptable. Rather, he stood for Hinduism as a whole; and if he advocated reform, it was not from a motive of patching up friendship with others, but rather on other rational grounds for the good of Hinduism itself. Modern Hinduism is comprehensive enough in its religious expressions to need any borrowing. All that he would advocate, for the sake of better understanding, was to accept other religions as true, mingle with their votaries on equal terms, and, if need be, help them as well. Assimilation of certain things might also be helpful at times. But there could be no compromise in essential matters. "Welcome, my brother," the Hindu says, "I am going to help you; but you must allow me to follow my own way, too." (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 132). He stood for *iṣṭa-niṣṭhā*—steadfastness in one's own chosen path. A Hindi saying sums up his position aptly: 'Say yea, yea, to all, but sit tight at your own place.' That was the Swami's position, though he conceded that all other religions, too, had the same right; in fact, that was the truest path of reconciliation that he advocated.

II

How to achieve harmony? Sects there will be, just because men differ. But sects are not really the cause of dissension, though they become very often helpful to organized brutality. Truly speaking, harmony is a far cry, so long as the animal in man is not brought under control. 'The tiger in us is only asleep; it is not dead. When opportunities come, it jumps up and, of old, uses its claws and fangs. Apart from the sword, apart from material weapons,

there are weapons still more terrible—contempt, social hatred, and social ostracism' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 364). One might also add to this list political oppression, racial hatred, economic allurements, communal fanaticism, and such other beastly manifestations of the darker side of man's nature, under the high sounding name of spiritual regeneration. Conversion by questionable methods can also be cited here. A more palpable illustration of communal arrogance and exclusiveness was provided by the thesis that the Hindus and the Mohammedans constituted two separate nations, leading to the consequent partition of India. And colonialists argue that the black, brown, and yellow people deserve to be under the whites, just because their religion is so backward that it cannot guarantee their economic and political freedom. Politics, and not religion, is to be blamed for this sorry state of things.

The remedy for such a position is not less religion; rather, more of it. History has proved that political wirepulling or war—cold or hot—solves no problem. Religious people must be up and doing in promoting spirituality and brotherliness, and not leave the matter in the hands of the politicians alone. For politicians are apt to prostitute religion for ulterior, selfish motives—be it on the individual, sectional, or national plane. Great souls first felt the impulse for 'love, peace, charity, equality, and universal brotherhood'. 'Later on, ignorant people have taken up those words to play with them and made religion a mere play upon words, and not a thing to be carried into practice. It becomes "my father's religion", "or nation's religion", "our country's religion", and so forth' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. pp. 374-75). Religion must be saved from being degraded to a mere slogan for group interest or war. Besides, religion in the hands of designing people degenerates into fanaticism, and fanaticism is one of the worst vices: 'All the wickedness of human nature is roused by it. Anger is stirred up, nerves are strung high, and human beings become like tigers' (*ibid.*, p. 376). Religion, which was meant for establishing peace among

God's creatures, thus becomes the deadliest instrument of fight and feud.

To get rid of such fanaticism, we must be better educated and better informed about others. The metaphysical presuppositions of sectarian doctrines have to be openly and critically examined. It will not do to refer dogmatically to somebody's saying, when the matter under discussion militates against scientific and rational conclusions. The mythological parts of the different religions have to be equally examined with an open and critical mind in order to separate the essentials from the dross. And the rituals also need such a rational scrutiny. We concede that each religion has its natural appendages, some mystical elements—be they rational or irrational; and these faiths cannot be stripped of these and yet live. But that is another matter. In such matters concession is possible when one's own faith is not fanatically pitted against others for decrying them as grotesque or irrational. Have your irrational mythologies, rituals, and mysticism, if you feel that they really help you Godward. But let others also have theirs.

The fact is that religion is an expression of the natural aspiration of men to reach God. If such an aspiration is true anywhere, it is true everywhere, so that all religions stand or fall together. One fact to be remembered by those who would harmonize religions is that each religion has its due scope relatively to the degree of development of the human minds concerned. The religion of the less advanced tribes is as much religion as of the more civilized communities; a child's faltering talk is also a form of human language.

The development of true brotherhood in personal life is the first need of the hour. 'Those who are really workers, and really feel at heart the universal brotherhood of men, do not talk much, do not make little sects for universal brotherhood, but their acts, their movements, their whole life show out clearly that they, in truth, possess the feeling of brotherhood for mankind, that they have love and sympathy for all' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 378).

Then comes planned action. Swami Vivekananda declared: 'I have also my little plan. . . . In the first place, I would ask mankind to recognize this maxim, "Do not destroy". Iconoclastic reformers do no good to the world. . . . Help, if you can; if you cannot, fold your hands and stand by and see. . . . Secondly, take man where he stands, and from there give him a lift. . . . Give up all ideas that *you* can make men spiritual. . . . There is no other teacher to you than your own soul' (*ibid.*, pp. 382-83).

Lastly, 'Man has an idea that there can be only one religion, that there can be only one Prophet, and that there can be only one incarnation; but that idea is not true. . . . Harmony consists in the sum total, and not in one note. . . . The sum total is the great harmony' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. Seventh Edn., pp. 120-21.) All this was amply exemplified in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, who condemned none, but helped each one to proceed and progress along his own path—be it 'intellectual, or devotional, or mystic, or active' (*ibid.*, p.178). He represented a type which future generations would have to strive to emulate, if the world is to have real spirituality and real brotherhood.

And it is the need of the hour that religious men should take the initiative to show to others how real harmony can be achieved. It is under their inspiration and by following their example that politicians now try such methods as 'coexistence'. Let this initial success encourage religious men to strive more vigorously, and let not the initiative pass on to others. Let religious men lead in matters religious, and not be led by the secular people.

III

For the promotion of harmony, Swami Vivekananda wanted to start a college for the study of comparative religion. But his life was too short for this. Besides, it was not comparative religion that he wanted to preach, but rather 'the philosophy of religion, the kernel of all its outward forms' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. Seventh Edn., p. 197). He said: 'It might convey a more definite idea to call it the kernel of all forms of

religion, stripping from them the non-essential, and laying stress on that which is the real basis' (*ibid.*, p. 190). When we go to the very core of all religions, we declare readily that 'All the religions are good, since the essentials are the same' (*ibid.*, p. 313).

To substantiate this claim and to show the path of approach to future generations, he studied and practised elaborately and assiduously the four well-known paths of spiritual life—*jñāna*, *bhakti*, *karma*, and *yoga*. He also spoke extensively about the great religions of the world.

From the standpoint of spirituality, Buddhism was, according to him, as also according to Sri Ramakrishna, an offshoot of Hinduism, though from the philosophical and social standpoints, particularly in its later-day manifestation, it might be called a rebel child of Hinduism. We are not concerned here so much with the later phase, as with the earlier. Buddha's teachings on the spiritual plane were in tune with those of the Upaniṣadic seers. 'Śākyamuni came to preach nothing new. He also, like Jesus, came to fulfil and not to destroy. Only, in the case of Jesus, it was the old people, the Jews, who did not understand him, while in the case of Buddha, it was his own followers who did not realize the import of his teachings. . . . Again, I repeat, Śākyamuni came not to destroy, but he was the fulfilment, the logical conclusion, the logical development of the religion of the Hindus' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 19). 'This Advaita was never allowed to come to the people. . . . The Buddha came and preached it to the masses, and the whole nation became Buddhists' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 138); 'Buddha brought the Vedānta to light, gave it to the people, and saved India' (*ibid.*, p. 139); 'Buddhism is one of our sects' (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 135). All that is true; and yet the Swami had the broadmindedness to admit that the later-day Hinduism was coloured by Buddhism. Even with modern Buddhism, he had no quarrel, though it did not suit the Indian conditions, and hence could not be bodily incorporated: 'The Vedānta philosophy is the foundation of Buddhism and everything else

in India; but what we call the Advaita philosophy of the modern school has a great many conclusions of the Buddhists. ... There is a conscious attempt to stretch out the whole doctrine to include the heretics also. The Vedānta has no quarrel with Buddhism' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 279). 'Buddhism and Vaiṣṇavism are not two different things. During the decline of Buddhism in India, Hinduism took from her a few cardinal tenets of conduct and made them her own, and these have come to be known as Vaiṣṇavism' (*ibid.*, p. 401). He was also convinced that some of the cruel social practices of the Hindus could be rectified by 'joining with it (Hindu faith) the wonderful sympathy of that logical development of Hinduism—Buddhism' (*ibid.*, p. 15). We may also quote the following for showing the interrelation between the two systems: 'The aims of the Buddhistic and the Vedic religions are the same' (*ibid.*, p. 455); 'Hindus believe Buddha to be an *avatāra*. ... Buddha was a reformer of Hinduism' (*ibid.*, Vol. VI. Sixth Edn., p. 116); 'It was Lord Buddha who brought them (i.e. the Hindu religious principles) down to the practical field' (*ibid.*, Vol. VII. Fifth Edn., p. 118).

In this connection, we should add that, though Swami Vivekananda joined issue with the Buddhists on rational grounds, he yielded to none in his adoration of Buddha; and in practical life, he was quite friendly with the Buddhists. Among his closest friends were Anagarika Dharmapala of Ceylon and Okakura of Japan.

The same can be said of his relationship with Christ and Christianity. Yet, historically speaking, he was not afraid of asserting: 'Christianity, with all its boasted civilization, is but a collection of little bits of Indian thought. Ours is the religion of which Buddhism, with all its greatness, is a rebel child, and of which Christianity is a very patchy imitation' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 275).

The fact is that, though the Swami honoured all the saints and prophets and all the religions of the world, he was placed by historical circumstances in a position where he felt it his duty

to speak out the truth. He had to play the twin role of harmonizing all religions and defending true spirituality; or, to put it in another way, the Swami was championing Hinduism against the motivated and ill-informed onslaught of other religious systems which believed in thriving by demolishing their rivals. And it seems that in this field, as in other fields, true friendship could grow from a better understanding and appreciation of the truth and the consequent admiration for others. If Hinduism was to be saved, and it had to be saved for the good of humanity as a whole, the path lay through a revelation of its intrinsic worth and beauty and its historical role in the evolution of culture and civilization. Such an approach might lead to a misunderstanding of the Swami's motive. But to common sense, it appears that he had to run that risk, if he wanted to achieve lasting concord. From this angle of vision, we can appreciate his honour for the initiators of religious systems and his trenchant criticism of the subsequent developments in them. Against such a background, let us look at his estimation of Christianity and other faiths.

He said: 'A Hindu devotee would say, "It is God Himself who became Christ and Kṛṣṇa and Buddha and all these (great teachers)"' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. Tenth Edn., p. 444). Still, about Christian propaganda, he had to add this note of protest: 'On metaphysical lines, no nation on earth can hold a candle to the Hindus; and curiously, all the fellows that come over here from Christian land have that one antiquated foolishness of an argument that because the Christians are powerful and rich and the Hindus are not, so Christianity must be better than Hinduism. To which the Hindus very aptly retort that that is the very reason why Hinduism is a religion and Christianity is not' (*ibid.*, Vol. VI. p. 390). It is easy to note here that the tirade is directed not against Christianity as such, but against material civilization and brute force masquerading as Christianity. The same attitude is displayed when he says: 'Our religion is older than most religions, and the

Christian creed—I do not call it a religion because of its antagonistic features—came directly from the Hindu religion' (*ibid.*, Vol. VII. p. 287). Certain activities of the Christians of old and of the present day hurt his sense of propriety. He could never tolerate the questionable methods adopted by some Christian missionaries for getting converts. Again, Christ never preached violence for the propagation of his faith; but Christian nations of the older generations never heeded his teachings. Christ was a *sannyāsin*, but reformed Christianity denies monasticism. Moreover, before the Swami's scrutinizing eyes, the Bible revealed many Vedāntic truths, which the Christians ignore or misinterpret. There could be no real *rapprochement* between Hinduism and Christianity till all these facts were laid bare and acknowledged. But the Hindus could wait for that happy consummation and, in the meantime, go on adoring the Son of Man.

That happy day, however, is not far off. For even in Christian lands, Swami Vivekananda is highly appreciated, and enlightened people now can easily look beyond their wonted horizon. The Swami's endeavour is already bearing fruit. The Hindus, too, now understand Christ better through Swami Vivekananda, who was full of the highest admiration for him. We can well conclude his estimation of Christ with his remark: 'These are the two lights of the whole human nature. Two men have been produced, Buddha and Christ; these are the two giants, huge gigantic personalities, two gods. Between them, they divide the whole world' (*ibid.*, Vol. VIII. p. 180). And we repeat that, if at times the Swami railed against Christianity, it was not just for the sake of abuse, but rather for winning back the faithful to the original teachings of Christ and the mode of living Christ advocated. We may quote, for instance, such passages as: 'You are not Christians. No, as a nation, you are not. Go back to Christ' (*ibid.*, p. 213); 'The Church tries to fit Christ into it, not the Church into Christ; so, only those writings were preserved that suited the purpose in hand. . . . All have to conform

to the book—science, religion, philosophy; it is the most horrible tyranny, this tyranny of the Protestant Bible' (*ibid.*, Vol. VII. p. 30). We may remark here in passing that this was the method and motive of his criticism of all the other modern religious faiths as well. What is more, he was unsparing even in his criticism of modern Hinduism; for he seems to have been convinced that humanity could regain its spirituality only by harkening back to the original forms of its religions. So he wanted the Christians to be better Christians, as he wanted others also to be better Buddhists, better Mohammedans, and better Hindus.

The Swami spoke less frequently about Mohammedanism. But he had a great regard for Mohammed, about whom he spoke before an American audience at San Francisco. Mohammed's message of equality appealed to him. 'Islam makes its followers all equal; so, that, you see, is the peculiar excellence of Mohammedanism' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 369), he said, though he noted that this brotherhood remained confined within Mohammedanism itself or certain sects of it. Sufism held many ideas in common with Vedāntism. 'Sufis are hardly to be distinguished from the Hindus' (*ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 195). He criticized Mohammedanism; but in him, Islam often found a defender. To cite an instance: In London, he refuted the theory that the Mohammedans do not believe that women have souls (*ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 192).

To cut short this discussion, we may conclude that, in spite of the invectives of others against Hinduism about the so-called idolatry, caste system, and such other things, which, according to the Swami, others also practise unknowingly, the Hindus are ready to be friendly with all. 'We not only tolerate, but we Hindus accept every religion, praying in the mosque of the Mohammedans, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling before the cross of the Christians' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 331); 'I shall enter the Buddhistic temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and his law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in

meditation with the Hindu' (*ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 372). The Hindu is clear in his thought and action. It is for others to say how they stand.

To the Hindus, Swami Vivekananda's exhortation was for a better co-ordination among themselves, and he indicated the way to this. The Vedas are a common source to them all, and the Upaniṣads are the quintessence of the Vedas, of which all Hindus must acknowledge the fullest authority. Looked at from the standpoint of the fundamentals, there is no reason for sectarianism; a wide catholicity is rather the common heritage of all Hindus. The three philosophical systems of dualism, qualified monism, and monism were reconciled by him as but the three stages leading to the same ultimate goal of liberation. 'First, we see God in the far beyond; then, we come nearer and give Him omnipresence, so that we live in Him; and at last, we recognize that we are He' (*ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 330). He held that the four practical paths of realization—*jñāna*, *bhakti*, *karma*, and *yoga*—did not conflict with each other. 'Our various *yogas* do not conflict with each other; each of them leads us to the same goal and makes us perfect' (*ibid.*, p. 90). The two statements about the stages and the paths may seem to be a little contradictory, but the contradiction is easily resolved when we keep in view the planes from which the statements are made. The paths as well may be divided into stages from the standpoint of the actual realization and the spiritual advancement made by the aspirant, but, for all practical purposes, each path is equally effective for its true follower;

and the stages are defined in accordance with the actual achievements. People who pay intellectual homage to any one of the three philosophical standpoints have, for all practical purposes, to adopt one of the four paths or make a suitable synthesis of some or all of them. *Yoga* means union, and the four *yogas* are 'different roads leading to the same centre—God'. 'You must harmonize the four different *yogas*—otherwise, how can you always keep your mind and heart wholly on the Lord?' (*ibid.*, Vol. VII. p. 274).

The Swami's appeal to his co-religionists is: 'The one common ground that we have in our sacred traditions is our religion. . . . All of us have to be taught that we Hindus—dualists, qualified monists, or monists, Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, or Pāsupatas—to whatever denomination we may belong, have certain common ideas behind us, and that the time has come when, for the well-being of ourselves, for the well-being of our race, we must give up all our little quarrels and differences' (*ibid.*, Vol. III. pp. 286-88).

Lastly, he was not averse to reform; rather he decried some of the practices that stood against progress and alienated the Hindus from others. Besides, as hinted above, he was ready to learn from others. According to him, Buddha's compassion, the Mohammedan feeling of equality, the Christian eagerness for active promotion of general welfare can and should be emulated by the Hindus for their own good. So also others can profit by the Hindu's experience; for reform and assimilation are also a powerful means for harmonizing the different faiths.



IN DEFENCE OF THE SĀṆKHYA PURUṢA AND ITS MULTIPLICITY

BY DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

The philosophy of Sāṅkhya is not merely a dualistic system; it is also a rationalistic and realistic metaphysics, because it mainly relies on logical analysis and argumentation at every step. As an *āstika darśana*, it believes in the

authority of the Vedas; but it has never made any attempt anywhere to justify any of its views by an appeal to the revealed texts.

The Sāṅkhya arguments for the existence of self and also for the establishment of its numer-

ical plurality are based on logic and reason. The logical procedure followed in this respect does not seem to involve any difficulties or contradictions. All the arguments concerning Puruṣa and its multiplicity are quite in keeping with the dualistic and the realistic position of the classical Sāṅkhya.

Professor D. D. Vadekar, in his learned article under the title 'The Sāṅkhya Arguments for the Puruṣa' (published in the *Philosophical Quarterly*, January 1960), has taken great pains to show that the Sāṅkhya arguments employed in the seventeenth *kārikā* have failed to prove the existence of the pure Sāṅkhya Puruṣa. The *kārikā* runs as follows:

*San̄ghātaparāthatvāt triguṇādiviparyayād
adhiṣṭhānāt puruṣo'sti bhoktr̥bhāvāt
kaivalyārtham pravṛtteśca.*

These arguments may be summed up as follows: Spirit exists as distinct from matter, (a) since collocations serve a purpose of something other than themselves; (b) since this other must be the reverse of what is composed of the three *guṇas*; (c) since there must be control of the collocations; (d) since there must be an enjoyment; (e) since there is activity for the purpose of release from the threefold misery.

In the opinion of Professor Vadekar, these arguments fail to prove the existence of the pure Puruṣa, the nature of which has been described in the nineteenth *kārikā* of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, in which Puruṣa has been described as indifferent (*udāsīna*) and neutral (*madhyastha*).

Here, the first point that should strike us at once is that this seventeenth *kārikā* has been employed to prove the existence only of Puruṣa, and not its indifference and neutrality. This Puruṣa is the one that has been caught in the snare of Prakṛti through reflection. Hence there is no difficulty in supposing that this Puruṣa is a purposeful being, and that its purpose is being fulfilled through the activity of the three *guṇas*. Here, one may pose a question: If this Puruṣa is a bound Puruṣa, having connection with desires and passions, then how are we to prove the existence of an indifferent and neutral self?

If we think over the metaphysical significance of this argument deeply and carefully, we shall be able to discover that this argument can be employed to prove the existence of the pure Puruṣa as well. The real meaning of the first argument is that the existence of the unconscious matter becomes meaningful only when it is associated with Consciousness. Matter, by itself, is of no use unless it is revealed by Consciousness. In the absence of its revelation by Spirit, it is as good as non-existent. Prakṛti is pure potentiality, and such a pure potentiality, devoid of any actual character, is of no advantage to anyone. Prakṛti assumes a definite character through its connection with Spirit, and so, in and through the whole process of its manifestation, the meaning of Prakṛti is being constantly revealed through its connection with Puruṣa. Prakṛti looks upwards to Puruṣa and finds in it its true meaning. Consciousness as mere revelation is always pure, indifferent, and non-agent. The word '*san̄ghāta*' refers to unconscious matter, and the word '*parāthatvāt*' implies that, without the existence of Consciousness, matter is blind and meaningless.

Even if we understand by *san̄ghāta* the objects of enjoyment like bed, mat, etc., and hold that the existence of these objects prove the existence of a *bhoktr̥* Puruṣa only, then also, there will be no contradiction in holding that Puruṣa, in its pure form, is indifferent and neutral. This is because, if we analyse *bhoktr̥tva* metaphysically, we find that *bhoktr̥tva* ultimately implies nothing but the illuminating consciousness that constitutes the nature of the pure Puruṣa. Such a pure consciousness is always indifferent and neutral.

The examples of bed, mat, etc. are given here only to show that these things cannot have any meaning unless they are related to some conscious being. These examples are not meant to suggest that a Puruṣa, too, enjoys the products of Prakṛti in a manner similar to what we find ordinarily in the case of the enjoyment of such objects by human beings.

Further, there is no such rule that there can be no enjoyment unless there is a desire for it.

There may be an experience even when there is no desire for it. The prisoners undergo jail experiences against their will.

The second argument (*triguṇādi viparyayāt*), too, seeks to prove the existence of a Puruṣa who has already been caught in the snare of Prakṛti. It is only in such a Puruṣa that *viveka*, in the sense of intellectual understanding of the distinction between Spirit and matter, can arise. Such *viveka* is a *vṛtti* of the intellect. So, it is only a Puruṣa endowed with *buddhi* that can become the possessor of *vivekajñāna*. Just as the purely unconscious Prakṛti is incapable of having such *viveka*, in the same manner, a pure Puruṣa, dissociated from *buddhi*, is not in a position to have this *vivekajñāna*. *Vṛttyātmaka-viveka* belongs to *buddhi* only. The *viveka* that belongs to Puruṣa is only *prakāśātmaka-viveka*, which implies simply the manifestation of two principles as different, and does not refer to an intellectual understanding and evaluation of the distinction. Hence *prakāśātmaka-viveka* is not in contradiction with the indifference and neutrality of Puruṣa. Just as there is no distinction between *caitanya* and *cetana* in the philosophy of Sāṅkhya, so also there is no distinction between *viveka* and *vivekin*. *Vṛttyātmaka-viveka* belongs to Puruṣa only when it is associated with *buddhi*. Even then, such intellectual modifications are owned by Puruṣa through reflection only. Therefore, *vṛttyātmaka-viveka* is a seeming attribute of Puruṣa and a real attribute of *buddhi*. There is, therefore, no contradiction in describing Puruṣa both as *vivekin* (from the point of view of *prakāśa*) and indifferent.

The subjectivity of Puruṣa, again, refers simply to its power of receiving the reflection of *buddhi-vṛtti* that has assumed the form of an object. In other words, Puruṣa is a subject on account of the fact that it reveals naturally any object that happens to lie in its proximity. This *viśaya-sambandha*, however, does not signify that Puruṣa is not indifferent. On the other hand, everybody will admit that consciousness, as mere revelation of objects, cannot be regarded as anything but neutral. The objects of the world are getting manifested by the light of the

sun; but nobody will admit that, in respect of the objects which are manifested by the sun's rays, the attitude of the sun is anything but neutral. *Triguṇādi viparyayāt* means that Puruṣa is different from the three *guṇas* which form the stuff of all the objects of enjoyment. In the bound condition also, the self refers to pure Consciousness only, and not to *buddhi*, even though it is the most powerful *jada-prakāśa*. All the objects of the world are manifested by the intelligized *buddhi*, and all attributes, like agency, enjoyment of worldly experiences, purposefulness, the motive of evaluation, etc., belong only to the intellect, and not to the pure Puruṣa.

Here, we must also remember that, according to the Sāṅkhya, the true *jīva* is not the *prati-bimba-puruṣa*, which is destroyed in the state of emancipation. *Jīva* is Puruṣa, the consciousness of which is reflected in a particular *buddhi*. Hence the arguments which establish the existence of the *jīva* also establish the existence of the pure Puruṣa. Any attribute, like subjective, discriminating, etc., belongs to Puruṣa from the point of view of *prakāśa* only. Consciousness in the sense of pure *prakāśa* is always indifferent, non-agent, and neutral.

In regard to the third argument, Professor Vadekar says: "This argument, most evidently, proves, if it proves anything, the agency of the Puruṣa, rather than its non-agency."

Here, the argument simply seeks to prove that Puruṣa is intelligizing Prakṛti by its mere *sannidhi* so as to make Nature fit for the creation of this world. Puruṣa is not, therefore, becoming an agent; Puruṣa is the principle of consciousness that vitalizes Prakṛti by its mere existence (*sattā*). Brahman, too, is the *adhiṣṭhāna* of *māyā*; but nobody imputes agency to Brahman on that account.

The fourth argument seeks to prove the *bhoktr̥bhāva* of the Puruṣa that has already been connected with Nature through reflection. Enjoyment in the ordinary sense is not possible in the case of pure matter; nor is it possible in the case of pure Consciousness. It is only the seemingly unified category of Spirit and matter

that becomes the enjoyer of worldly experiences. So, the Puruṣa that emerges from this argument, (when taken by itself) in its pure and unconnected form, must be admitted as neutral and indifferent, since pure Consciousness can never be the subject of any kind of experience. Moreover, Vācaspati has explained the *bhokṭṛ-bhāva* of Puruṣa in the sense of *draṣṭṛbhāva*, whereas Vijñānabhikṣu has interpreted *bhokṭṛ-bhāva* in the sense of enjoyment through reflection.

Further, enjoyment and indifference are not really two contradictory terms. They can go together. A *jīvanmukta* Puruṣa is indifferent to pleasures and pains; still, he has to go through pains and sufferings, as long as his *prārabdhakarma* is not wholly worked out.

The last argument seeks to prove the existence of Puruṣa on the basis of the observed fact of the world. In this world, we find that the whole of creation is marching towards freedom, which seems to be its supreme goal. Pure unconscious matter can never have the goal of freedom, which belongs only to the soul. So, we are led to believe that there must be bound souls which are to be made free in and through this process of world creation. In other words, the world is marching towards the freedom of these souls. All desires and strivings belong to Prakṛti. The pure Self is not an agent. The winding up of the colourful net of Prakṛti is done by Prakṛti itself, and not by Puruṣa. Bondage means a false unification of Consciousness with matter, and liberation means its dissociation. Unless there is *pravṛtti* in Nature, there will be no change and mutation, and consequently, the distinction of a static Prakṛti from a static Puruṣa cannot be fully realized. So, the argument that the strivings of Nature are for the purpose of emancipation (*kaivalyārtham pravṛtṭeśca*) is quite logical from the dualistic standpoint of the Sāṅkhya metaphysics.

Thus, all the arguments given in the seventeenth *kārikā* do prove what they actually intend to prove (viz. the existence of Puruṣa as

consciousness and illumination). It seems Professor Vadekar has not considered the Sāṅkhya with the care and sympathy that it deserves; otherwise, he would not have raised such unfair objections against the philosophy of this school.

The Sāṅkhya philosophy of the multiplicity of selves, too, has been unsympathetically criticized by many modern critics. While making any criticism of the Sāṅkhya, we must remember that this doctrine, like the Nyāya, is a realistic system, and, as such, every fact of experience is, in its opinion, real and not illusory. Difference, for instance, is a felt experience, and hence it must be admitted as real. The difference between Spirit and matter, the difference between one material object and another, and the difference between one individual soul and another are all real facts. Hence these real facts must exist in all the levels of experience. The Advaita Vedānta believes in the falsity of difference, and so, all sorts of difference vanish in the air in the Advaita state of *mukti*. Now, if we make an attempt to interpret the Sāṅkhya with 'Advaita inclinations' in our mind, then, we are bound to meet with logical contradiction and irregularity at every step. For Advaita, *jīvatva* produced by *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, etc. is false. It is purely imaginary, while the only reality is the undivided Consciousness or Brahman. According to the Sāṅkhya, however, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, etc. are not false. They are as real as consciousness. What is false is the relation of all these with Puruṣa. Since *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, *vāsanā*, *saṁskāra*, etc. are all real, the differences created by all these causes in the empirical lives of the different individual souls are also real. Differences, which are noticed in the different reflections of different *buddhis*, are all real. Since the images of *pratibimbās* are different, the *bimbās* also must be different. Real distinction in effects can be produced by really distinct causes. In the empirical sphere, we find real difference among individuals, and this difference must therefore exist in the transcendental sphere as well. There are different *buddhis*, different *pratibimbās* or reflections, and

different *bimbas* or Puruṣas. When a Puruṣa is finally liberated, the reflection is destroyed, and so, Puruṣa becomes fully dissociated from its *buddhi*, which then gets merged in Prakṛti. Diversity and multiplicity in creation are real, and these can be satisfactorily explained by assuming the existence of the different *avivekas* of the different Puruṣas. Created objects are many, and the selves that reveal these objects in different ways are also many.

If we hold that consciousness is one, and it falsely appears as many due to unreal investments (*upādhis*), then, we shall not be able to do justice to the essentially realistic and dualistic position of the Sāṅkhya. Real difference in the *upādheya* can never be caused by mere difference in the limiting adjuncts. A man may put on different dresses at different times; but this difference in his dresses will not cause any real difference in him. In the opinion of the dualistic and realistic Sāṅkhya, difference, in all its forms, is eternal. So, if difference is created by the non-eternal *upādhi*, then, with the destruction of the *upādhi*, difference, too, will vanish; and if difference is destroyed, the realistic and dualistic position of the Sāṅkhya cannot be maintained.

Further, it has been pointed out by some critics that qualitative identity cannot go with numerical plurality. If all selves are of the same nature, there can never be many selves, since there will be nothing to distinguish one Puruṣa from another. Now, if we reflect on this point carefully, we find just the opposite

fact. Truly speaking, it is possible for us to have numerical plurality even without qualitative difference. In fact, qualitative identity loses its meaning unless there is numerical plurality. Unless there are at least two, there is no sense in asserting the existence of qualitative identity. The expression 'qualitative identity' can never be used if there is only one substance. This point has also been emphasized in the *Muktāvalīṭikā* of the *Bhāṣāpariccheda*.

Another objection is that, according to the Sāṅkhya, there is no difference among the selves in point of proximity to Prakṛti, due to which sorrows and sufferings happen to them. So, it follows that, when one self is afflicted with sorrow, all the other selves will be equally afflicted.

Here, we should remember that a self is not afflicted with sorrows and miseries due to *sannidhi* alone. Pleasures and pains occur to a Puruṣa on account of its *karmavāsanā*, which remains stored up in the *buddhi* with which it is associated from beginningless time. Enjoyment, therefore, is different for different selves. *Aviveka* creates a seeming association of attachment and identification between Spirit and matter, and it is due to this sort of contact that a self goes through the experiences of pleasures and pains. When this *karmavāsanā* or *aviveka* of a particular self is destroyed, that self is liberated. If we consider the Sāṅkhya philosophy from this point of view, there will be no contradiction or irrationality in respect of the nature of pure Puruṣa and its multiplicity.

THE BASIC VALUES OF INDIAN CULTURE

BY PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

Indian culture is the embodiment of the Indian *way* of life, which, in its turn, is the outcome of the Indian *view* of life that has inspired countless numbers of saints and sages from time immemorial, and has been the polestar of many a son of this soil, who felt lost

in the bewildering maze of this worldly existence. In consequence, Indian culture is vast as the boundless ocean, subtle as the proverbial ether, tantalizing as *māyā-śakti*, and almost impossible of expression in the ordinary language of everyday life. Anyone who undertakes

to write on this profound theme has to meet a formidable challenge. In my own humble way, I propose to present here the salient features of the basic values of Indian culture, and it is for the reader to judge how far I have succeeded in my attempt.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN CULTURE

(a) *Dynamism and Vitality*

It should be noted, at the outset, that Indian culture is dynamic. It has an amazing vitality, the sources of which are hidden from many of us. It has survived the onslaughts of many alien forces. In fact, it has silently assimilated all non-Indian cultures; and by a process of thorough digestion, it has transformed them into something truly Indian.

(b) *Complexity with Underlying Unity*

This, however, does not mean that one is going to have an easy time of it in analysing our culture. Indian culture is exceedingly complex, just as life itself is complex, and just as the personality of the individual who has to face that life is also complex. Out of this complexity, it is not an impossible feat of intellectual jugglery to evolve differing scales of values, which are at variance with, nay, even contrary to, one another. Yet, underlying all this complexity, diversity, and even contrariety, there is a fundamental and deeper unity.

(c) *Monistic Tendency*

Scholars who have delved deep down into the core of Western culture usually speak of a plurality of values. Recently, a high ranking officer of the UNESCO expressed the view that the following are the basic values of the European way of life: Christian religion as a unifying force, respect for individuality, faith in democracy, trust in reason, and, last of all, readiness to accept material prosperity as something worth getting in this life. An attempt was, of course, made to integrate these values; yet, it seemed to me that a slightly greater stress was laid on plurality than on unity. This need not surprise

us. Pluralism is the foundation of democracy. The democratic concept of sovereignty is pluralistic. Indian thinking, on the other hand, leans heavily on the side of monism. Even where multiplicity is accepted as inevitable, the differing elements are organized into a hierarchical scale of values.

(d) *An Enlightened Optimism*

One other general remark about Indian culture is worth making at this stage of our discussion. It is generally believed that pessimism is the dominant note of our view of life. This is a mistaken estimate of our philosophic attitude. Students of Western philosophy will remember that Descartes employed universal doubt as his chief method for the discovery of truth. He is not, on that account, branded a sceptic. He used doubt as the means for attaining absolute certainty. Similarly, Indian thinkers faced up to the pessimistic elements in life, in order to win through to a firm optimism. And win through they did! The result is a sober outlook on the realities of the earthly life, coupled with an unbounded faith in its glorious destiny ultimately.

In this connection, it may be worth while to reproduce what I wrote sometime back in another context. I then remarked: 'It used to be, and is still in many quarters, the fashion to ridicule Indian culture as pessimistic. I should like to invite these critics of small understanding to view dispassionately the outstanding expressions of Indian culture and answer the following questions: Can a pessimistic culture create the marvellous beauty of Ajanta and Ellora? Do the frescoes, recently discovered in the southern temples of Tanjore and Sittannaval, betray any trace of an emaciated and dry mental attitude? Are the luscious cadences and passionate melodies of Carnatic music the outpourings of a nation whose heart is sere? Is Bharata Nāṭyam the expression of a pessimistic culture? Are the gossamer-like fabrics, with scintillating tints that vie with those of the rainbow and the feathers of the peacock, the creations of the hands of one who sees only de-

spair and death in the world about him? Lastly, is the ultra-exquisite refinement of our ladies in respect of their alluring drapery, ornaments, *coiffure*, and toilet, extending down to the minutest details of manicuring, the outward expression of a culture, lacking in the appreciation of the joyous in life? He who is blind to the significance of these manifestations of a refined feeling for beauty is the true pessimist.¹

The general outstanding features of our culture, then, are (1) a vigorous dynamism; (2) a tantalizing capacity for transforming into something truly Indian all that is non-Indian; (3) rich variety and diversity of values woven into a complex fabric with an underlying unity; (4) a well informed optimism, which takes full account of the tragic and the pathetic in human life; and, above all, (5) the presence, at the core, of a well-organized hierarchical scale, in which there is a place for everything that counts in human life.

MAJOR VALUES OF INDIAN CULTURE

(a) *The Supreme Value: Divinity of the Individual*

After the brief introduction given above, I propose to present here the core values, or the basic and foundational concepts of our culture.

Several times, I asked myself the difficult question: What is the supreme or sovereign value in Indian culture, to which every other value is subordinate? At different times, I got different answers. But now, this is what has finally crystallized in my mind as the central or foundational value in our culture, viz. the value that Indian culture holds supreme is the divinity of the individual. The core value of our *Weltanschauung* is the firm belief that each individual is an incarnation of Divinity. The divine essence is enshrined in the heart of each one of us. I am deliberately using the word 'Divinity'. It is not merely the dignity of the individual as an individual, not merely the inestimable worth of man's personality, and not even the sacredness of individuality that is at

the heart of our culture—all these are undoubtedly there, but there is much more besides—but it is that each one of us is an incarnation of the divine essence. This is the sovereign value that inspires and vivifies all the aspects of our culture. I should like to go a step further and say that our culture rests on the foundation that not only man, but every living creature, nay, every particle of matter is an embodiment of God. Call it pantheism or any other 'ism' you please, but there it is, the bed-rock of our culture. As I see it, this is the fountain-head, from which flow all other values of Indian culture.

Self-realization, the goal of life: Since man is divine in essence, it goes without saying that the full and complete realization of the divinity hidden within him should be the only aim of life. Self-realization is enjoined on all of us as a most sacred duty. Unfortunately, this term 'self-realization' has been misused by the naturalist and the pragmatist. Its connotation has changed out of all recognition. But true self-realization stands for only one thing, and that is realizing the exalted state in which there is complete identification of the *jīvātman* with the *Paramātman*.

(b) *Body, the Temple of God*

The path of self-realization is long and tortuous, and beset with many dangers and pitfalls, because man is not only spirit, but also body. This body may be the most powerful ally in man's fight for spiritual freedom, or it may turn into the most deadly enemy. It all depends. Our culture is fully alive to all the potentialities for good, as well as evil, inhering in the human body. We are therefore invited to treat the body with consideration and watchfulness. The body should, no doubt, be maintained in a thoroughly fit condition, but, at the same time, it should be purified, so that it can serve as the means for realizing the lofty goal of human life.

For another and a more exalted reason, too, the body is to be tended with loving care. The body is, in a true enough sense, the tabernacle

¹ *Prabuddha Bharata*, November 1949.

of God, His sacred temple, in the sanctum sanctorum of which He resides. It goes without saying that the holy abode of God should be treated with veneration. If, by His grace, your body is already fit enough and pure enough for Him to reside therein, then continue to exercise eternal vigilance, so that it may stay fit; if it is not fit, then you should straightway take measures to cleanse and purify it. By all means, feed the body, clothe it, and even adorn it. There is nothing wrong in doing so, provided you maintain the right attitude to your body. All the time, keep asking yourself: Are these hands of mine pure enough for God to use in the execution of His sacred tasks? Is this tongue of mine pure enough to utter His message? Are these eyes of mine clean enough to see His image in everything around? Are the fibres of my brain sufficiently pure to think thoughts that I would not like to hide from Him? And, above all, is this heart of mine prepared to receive the holy Father whenever He chooses to come? So, you see, it is not self-gratification, but the severest form of self-denial that is enjoined on us, when we pursue bodily values within the framework of our culture.

(c) *Material Wealth*

To make the body a fit enough vehicle for conveying the spirit to its destined goal, we have to get our resources partly from the environment. Wealth and material prosperity may not be despised, but, at the same time, we are not to hug them to our bosom. Enjoyment of wealth in a spirit of non-attachment is the attitude prescribed by our culture. It is difficult, but not impossible of attainment.

(d) *The Family*

In our scale of values, the family occupies a very exalted place indeed. It is to be treated as a sacred institution. Family ties are inviolable. Weaken these ties, and you break the backbone of our culture. The decencies of family life and the sweetness of relationship between its members, whom nature has drawn

together by silken bonds, are peerless and of inestimable worth.

Reverence: Besides, the family is the repository of one of our highly cherished values, and that is reverence. In a well-ordered family, reverence for elders is steadily inculcated in the minds of young ones. And this great sentiment spreads gradually to all that is estimable in life, to the higher values enshrined in our tradition, and finally to God.

Sanctification of Motherhood: This exalted view of the family finds a fitting expression in the sanctification of motherhood in India, nay more, in the deification of womanhood. All religions venerate God as Father; some worship the Mother of God incarnate; but we, in this country, look upon God as Mother. I have in mind not only Ardhanārīśvara, but Parāśakti, Jagajjananī, Ādilakṣmī, and Nārāyaṇī. Let those who dare, in a frivolous spirit, loosen the spiritual foundation of our family beware of the nemesis that will surely overtake their misguided plans.

(e) *Tolerance*

I pass on now to tolerance as one of the basic values. I am using the word 'tolerance' advisedly, in preference to toleration. Tolerance is a direct outcome of the supreme spiritual value of the divinity of the individual. Since every one is an embodiment of the divine essence, it is demanded of each one of us that we make an attempt to see the world as others see it, to try and feel as they feel, and then to understand and appreciate their view of life and their way of life. Having discharged this obligation, we can come back to our own position with redoubled strength and heightened conviction. This is true tolerance. It does not contain, as an ingredient, the patronage which a person, who believes himself superior, bestows on another of supposedly inferior culture. It is not synonymous with the spirit which animates a belief in coexistence. It springs out of a sincere appreciation of another's spiritual faith by one who is certain of one's own. Such tolerance is dynamic, and it is the only founda-

tion for peace and goodwill on earth, because it arises not only out of a deep realization of the brotherhood of man, but also out of a deeper realization of the motherhood of God.

(f) *Intuition and Reason*

A value in respect of which there is divergence in the views of European and Indian thinkers is reason. It is contended by the former that reason is the valid means, not only for the attainment of knowledge, but also for the emancipation of the human spirit. Anything that is supra-rational is frowned upon with disfavour by those of the West. We, in India, do not underrate reason. We respect it, and have drawn sustenance from it in certain fields of human experience and endeavour. But we cannot concede to it unquestioned sovereignty in all realms of experience. Reason can, at best, take us to the threshold of the temple of Truth. To gain access to the sanctum sanctorum, however, we need the help of supra-rational and transcendental powers of the human mind. I have no hesitation in using that much maligned term 'intuition' to denote what I mean by the supra-rational. In the last analysis, it is non-mediate perception or direct vision—*darśana*—that can uncover for us the secret of the ultimately Real.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BASIC VALUES

Let me summarize what has been said about the basic values of Indian culture. Basic to all these values is the faith in the presence of the divine essence in each individual human being. Consequent on this belief, it is held that the true destiny of man is the full and complete realization of the divine hidden in him. Every other aim of life is worthless. The body, which enshrines the divine spirit, is to be nurtured with care, and transformed into a living temple of God. Material wealth need not be despised, nor is to be chased with a consuming passion for selfish possession and enjoyment. It is to be acquired and utilized in a spirit of discriminating detachment. Over and above material resources, certain finer supra-material resources

are needed for attaining the goal of human life. These are to be found in the family. The family is a sacred institution. It is the repository of some of our most cherished values of life. In particular, it is the most favourable soil for the growth of the great sentiment of reverence. Since all individuals are embodiments of the divine essence, each one is enjoined to practise tolerance towards all others. For realizing these values, and for the proper conduct of this life, reason by itself is not enough. It has, no doubt, to be pressed fully into our service at the lower levels of experience, and then transcended by intuition to obtain a direct perception or vision of Truth. In brief, then, the divinity of the individual, sacredness of the human body, sanctity of the family, utilization of material resources in a spirit of discriminating detachment, practice of tolerance, and use of reason in proper subordination to revelation are the main basic values of our culture. They may all be summed up in one all-embracing value, namely, individuality at the spiritual level.

THE HIERARCHICAL SCALE

The core values of Indian culture, which have been enumerated above and commented on, are not to be left in a loose and disorganized condition. Plurality has to be built into a hierarchy. A suitable hierarchy has been evolved to accommodate these basic values.

(a) *Economic (or Material) Values*

Indian culture consigns to the lowest level of the hierarchical scale what are generally known as economic or material values, with their ruling concept of wealth. It will be recalled that Sigmund Freud associated wealth with refuse, and linked it with the anal stage of development of child mind. No doubt, wealth is to be utilized in the service of man, but the manner of utilization prescribed by our culture is unique. Our culture calls upon us to treat the earth, from whose bosom we draw our material resources, as Mother Earth. Just as the infant draws gently life-giving milk from

his mother to the extent he needs, no more and no less, so man is to draw his material requirements from Mother Earth to the extent that is good for him. Man has no right to exploit Mother Earth, and he will be less than human if he tries to enslave her. Thus the earth, the primary source of material wealth, is endowed with a certain degree of sanctity in our culture.

(b) Bodily Values

On the next higher level of the hierarchy repose values relating to the human body, with health and strength as the ruling concepts. I have said enough about the body and its care. Suffice it now to point out that, while striving to be strong and healthy, man should keep his gaze steadily fixed on attaining purity of the body.

(c) Social Values

Slightly, very slightly, higher in the ladder are social values. I confess, quite frankly, that I have not cared to bestow any thought on these values, nor have I even thought of a basic concept² for this stage, because I have very little respect for sociability, sociality, socialism, social service, etc., as understood by the contemporary age. I have just one remark to offer. Social values should be founded, not on collocation in space of bodily selves, not even on community of aims, aspirations, interests, and shared experiences of social beings, but on the communion of spiritual selves with one another and with the Creator.

(d) Psychological Values

Ascending higher, we reach the psychological level. Reason and harmony of personality are the orienting concepts in this region. Psycho-

² 'Belongingness' has been suggested by a good friend as the basic concept. I accept the suggestion, but should like to add that belongingness is not to be interpreted as the desire to belong to the herd (which is gregariousness at the instinctive level), not even as the desire to belong to a community or group (which is sociability at the concrete sentiment level), but as a pure desire to belong to the sacred association of devotees of God (which is *satsaṅga* at the spiritual level).

logical values are mental in essence; and mind, however fine and subtle, is still material from the Indian standpoint. In Europe, it was that peerless thinker Henri Bergson who exposed the materiality hidden within human reason. The discursive and analytic intellect of man is only a tool (in the most literal sense) fashioned by our *sūkṣma śarīra* to handle the *sūkṣma* aspect of the external world. Let us not make the mistake of attaching significance to psychological values on an exaggerated scale. Personality, let us remember, is entirely different from the Self. At best, it may be equated with the empirical self of James, and not with man's spiritual self. With the position thus cleared up, we may admit that psychological values have an important place in our scheme, as they have potentialities for pushing the individual up to the highest level of our hierarchy.

(e) Philosophical Values

We climb now to the next higher level of philosophical values. We are now in the elevating atmosphere of the near-spiritual region. Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are the ruling concepts in this region. So universal is the acceptance of these in all cultures that comment is needless. Though referred to in common parlance as three values, Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are, in fact, three facets of that single supreme spiritual value which I shall mention presently.

(f) Spiritual Values

Let us now halt for a moment and take in at a glance the steps by which we have been making our steady ascent to the peak of our value scale. From the lowest material (or economic) level, dominated by the idea of wealth, to the next level of bodily values, governed by considerations of health and strength, thence to the social level, and thence again to the psychological stage, oriented to reason and personality development, we have reached finally the philosophical realm, governed by Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. We are within sight of the lofty peak of the exalted spiritual region, pre-

sided over by the most sacred value of self-realization, the value which pervades the entire thinking underlying this paper. When this value is realized, life's quest is over. When knowledge matures into wisdom, beauty blossoms into holiness, and goodness turns into godliness, then, and then alone, according to the standards of our culture, man may be said to have lived as man. Such is the grand and awe-inspiring view of the ascent to *kaivalya* that Indian culture presents to suffering mankind.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The great merit of the hierarchical scale discussed above is that it is valid in all dimensions of human experience. Start where you will, the promise given is that you will make the ascent successfully and reach the peak, if not in this birth, then, surely, in the next or some succeeding birth. You have, of course, to keep your gaze fixed steadfastly on the summit.

I suspect that a question is lurking in the mind of the reader that he would fain pose to me. Let me give body and shape to what is, perhaps, nebulous in his mind. Philosophers have an inveterate habit of losing touch with realities of the situation, and soaring high into abstract realms. Their conclusions and generalizations seem to have very remote bearings on concrete situations in life. Are the values and the hierarchical scale discussed in this paper of the order of philosophical generalizations, or do they belong to the realm of the practicable and the realizable? Let me answer these questions. In the first place, it is not entirely correct to assume that all philosophical generalizations are abstract. They are as abstract or as concrete

as the conclusions of contemporary nuclear physics. In the second place, all the values that I have enumerated, specially the highest value of self-realization, have been realized, time and again, by countless number of sages and saints, by ordinary men and women, and even by monarchs rolling in wealth. Today, there are, as there have been at all times, such realized souls in our country. They have demonstrated that one can be a *jīvanmukta* here and now, in this very life, and in this very mundane existence. Let me direct your reverential attention to that great historic personage, the *avatāra* of *kaliyuga*, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Not only did he preach the values of Indian culture, the *sanātana dharma* of our country, not only did he realize them in his own life, but he also showed a way for all of us to reach the true goal of life. If, for a short while every morning, we can manage to close tightly all sense channels through which the external world impinges on us—remember that the mind is also one such channel—I say, if, for two minutes every day, we can completely block these channels, and open our inmost self to God, who is persistently and tirelessly knocking at our doors, then, surely, we shall reach the loftiest heights of spiritual felicity. But during those two minutes, there must be a complete transvaluation of worldly values, a transmutation of our inner nature, in fact, a real conversion, so that we are able to achieve complete self-surrender in the sense in which Śrī Kṛṣṇa most endearingly invites us to approach Him. Let us resolve, here and now, to dedicate our lives to the sacred task of achieving this self-surrender to God as the only worthwhile aim of human life.



Our ideal is the Brāhmin of spiritual culture and renunciation. By the Brāhmin ideal what do I mean? I mean the ideal Brāhmin-ness in which worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present. That is the deal of the Hindu race.

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENTS IN GERMAN POETRY

BY SRI S. SUBHASH CHANDRA

Among the nations of Europe, Germany occupies a unique place. Situated in Central Europe, populated by a virile people, and blessed with a formidable industrial and economic base, Germany has in many respects dominated the thought and culture of entire Europe. The impact of the German philosophers on the rest of the European thinkers has been deep and sustained. Indeed, European philosophy is inconceivable without German thinkers, like Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Dilthey, and Heidegger. The sublime compositions of musicians, like Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, and Wagner, constitute verily the apogee of the Western music. In literature, the immortal works of Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Heine, Meyer, Grillparzer, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, and Stefan Zweig are assured of a permanent place in the cultural niche of the world. Poetry is the soul of literature, and German poetry constitutes the acme of the rich and prodigious literary heritage of Germany. The cultural life of Germany has also been adorned by great mystics, like Eckhart, Jakob Böhme, and Angelus Silesius. And often, we are witnesses to a happy blending of poetry and mysticism in the cultural life of Germany. The purport of this article is to delineate this fascinating coalescence of poetry and mysticism and to provide a bird's-eye view of the mystical trends in German poetry.

The story of German poetry is verily the saga of the development of the German people and German language. German, a phonetic language as it is, affords almost illimitable possibilities of versification, and the poets of Germany have made a liberal use of these possibilities. The result is a vast poetical heritage of exquisite beauty and indescribable charm. Stretching over twelve centuries of creativity, German poetry is replete with traditions as rich as they are varying. An exhaustive analysis

being neither possible nor aimed at here, we shall restrict ourselves to mystical elements in the poetry of certain German poets. Apart from such poets as Goethe and Schiller, we shall also refer to the writings of less-known poets, like Logau, Angelus Silesius, Arnold, Klopstock, Arnim, and Mörike, in order to make our article representative of the various phases of the German poetry.

Founder of the vast schism that rent Europe into two warring camps of Catholics and Protestants, Martin Luther (1483-1546) was assuredly one of the outstanding figures in the history of Christianity. Indeed, no one has played so revolutionary a role in the religious history of the modern Europe as Martin Luther. Luther was one of the most dynamic figures of the Reformation. He was an eloquent preacher and a gifted writer endowed with a forceful style. His translation of the Bible is still regarded as one of the best German renderings of that scripture. He has also to his credit a large number of spiritual hymns, which constitute the foundation of the Protestant hymnody. A free rendering of one of his well-known hymns is inevitable in an article that deals with the mystical elements in German poetry. His poem *A Firm Stronghold Is Our God* (*Ein feste Burg ist Unser Gott*), though rather polemical, would serve our purpose. Luther writes: 'A firm stronghold is our God, a sturdy shield and weapon. He helps us against all the distress that has now afflicted us. . . . Our own strength is of no avail, we are indeed quickly lost. For us fights the Man whom God has Himself chosen. You enquire, who is he? He is called Jesus Christ, the Lord of Hosts, and there is no other God.'¹ Other compositions of Luther are also of the same trend. Luther was a priest and a missionary. He was a zealous advocate of the Reformation, and all

¹ Cited by Arnold E. Berger. *Deutsche Literatur: Reformation* (Leipzig: 1938), Vol. VII. p. 104.

his writings were addressed to this purpose. Polemical considerations often dominated the trend of his thought. Nevertheless, his poems are worth studying for their unmistakably rich religious value.

Friedrich von Logau (1604-1655) was a poet with very obvious mystical leanings. An Indian student of the poems of Logau is invariably reminded of the writings of Kabīr. Like the Indian poet, Logau was given to expressing his thoughts in simple couplets of exquisite charm. His style was direct and effective, and he could be devastatingly ironical without giving offence. Like the sages of India, Logau was convinced that the highest good is only attainable when the turbulent self is subdued, and that perennial joy is the reward obtained by the mastery of one's own self. To overcome one's own self, according to Logau, is to wage the toughest war; and to subdue one's own self is the noblest of all victories.² Religion for Logau was not merely ritual and formal worship, but something far more fundamental and deeply incarnate in the soul of man. Thus, in his poem *The Church of the Heart (Die Herzenskirche)*, he writes: 'One can, indeed, shut down all the churches, but never the church rooted in the conscience (or the soul) of man.'³ The church signified to Logau not a mere formal organization serving ecclesiastical functions, but the embodiment of the godliness in man. Religion, maintained Logau, should serve to articulate the divine spark in man.

Angelus Silesius (1624-1677) is undoubtedly the most popular mystic-poet of Germany. His original name was Johann Scheffler, and he was born in a Protestant family. In 1653, he became a convert to the Catholic faith and devoted himself to religious pursuits. Four years later, his masterpiece *Cherubinische Wandersmann* was published. This profound poem is rightly regarded as one of the most precious contributions to the religious heritage of mankind. The poems of Angelus Silesius embody not just

sporadic mystical insights, but are constitutive of almost a *Weltanschauung*. The couplets of Silesius represent a welcome coalescence of the verse and the vision. Rightly has Paul Fechter observed: 'Angelus Silesius is today, with his so often quoted Alexandrian couplets, something like a connecting link between the lyric and the philosophy of religion.'⁴ Silesius was undoubtedly a first-rate mystic. His verses contain no shop-worn jargon, but are based upon the profoundest mystical insights. Indeed, merely to read Silesius is to live through a religious experience.

The poetical aphorisms of Silesius testify to a fascinating kinship between him and other mystics all over the world. His writings provide the most convincing proof of the conviction of the Indian seers that Truth is One, though the sages call it by various names. Like the exponents of Advaita Vedānta, Angelus Silesius propounded the doctrine that God is at once transcendent and immanent. He propounded the unity of the One and the Many. In a famous couplet, Silesius avers: 'I know that without me God cannot even a moment live; if I cease, then He must also give up His soul.'⁵ For Silesius, the existence of the finite in the Infinite and of the Infinite in the finite was an ontological necessity. The man and his Maker are not two distinct entities, but two aspects of the same Unity. God exists within and not without man. Indeed, the Infinite and the finite are absolutely identical. All distinctions between God and man stem from ignorance. For Silesius in any case, these distinctions do not exist. He is immersed in God. 'God is my staff, my light, my path, my goal, my play, my father, brother, child, and all that I will.'⁶ And the following passage from Silesius reminds us of the famous 'neti, neti' method of describing God, current traditionally in the Indian philosophy: 'What God is, one does not know. He is not light, He is not spirit, not truth, unity, one, not what

² Echtermeyer and Benno von Wiese (Ed.), *Deutsche Gedichte* (Düsseldorf: 1960), p. 88.

³ Herbert Cysarz, *Schwund- und Kirchenbarock* (Leipzig: 1937), p. 18.

⁴ Paul Fechter, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur* (Gütersloh: 1960), Vol. I. p. 67.

⁵ Angelus Silesius, *Werke* (Munich: 1949), Vol. III. p. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 27.

one calls divinity. Not wisdom, not understanding, not love, will, virtues, no thing, no nothing also, no being, no mind. He is what I and you and any other creature, till we have become what He is, never know.⁷ In other words, the knowledge of God is not to be attained by mere intellectual inquiry, but by merging the finite being with the Infinite. We must lose ourselves in the plenitude of God, if we are ever to attain him. Man is not finite and ephemeral, but infinite and eternal. But he becomes aware of his essentially infinite and eternal being only in the mystical union with God. 'I myself am eternity, if I abandon the (bounds) of time and assimilate myself in God and God in myself.'⁸ It is notorious that man is a prey to his passions and carnal desires. He is bound to the mundane world. He is fettered to his finitude. But, asserts Silesius, we must tear asunder these shackles of finitude. We must overcome multiplicity in order to attain Unity. To cite Silesius: 'If the man rescues himself from the multiplicity and turns to God, then he attains the highest Unity.'⁹ And in this Unity, we obtain freedom from our fetters and attain our salvation.

It is a pity that the poems of Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714) are so little known. His poetical output, though not very voluminous, ought certainly to interest a student of comparative religion and mysticism. Arnold belonged to the baroque phase of the German poetry, and his poems were mostly devoted to mystical themes. He wrote in simple and unpretentious German, and the spontaneous impact of his poems stems from the utter simplicity of his diction. As an illustration of the contribution of Arnold, we shall paraphrase here his poem *The True Solitude* (*Die Wahre Einsamkeit*): 'Let not your mind wander away in banalities; your spirit must be wholly immersed in God. Should, O Soul, a deeper tranquillity enchant you, then let even it be swallowed into the One. . . . Get rid of your self and your ego,

then you are redeemed in this very world from the world.'¹⁰ In other words, salvation is possible even in this life, if only we are able to fully dissolve ourselves in God.

Friedrich Gottfried Klopstock (1724-1803) was a phenomenal personality. Born in the same year in which Kant was born, Klopstock belongs to the most creative phase of the German literature, viz. the *Sturm und Drang* phase. Indeed, he was one of the founders of this phase of immense creativity. He was in many respects a literary puzzle. He was overnight famous; he had no predecessors, no historical or literary links; he was free of complications. He was, as a German critic has put it, a man without 'Problematik'. In 1748, at the age of 24, Klopstock published the first three songs of his masterpiece *Messias*. The poem deals with the life and martyrdom of Jesus Christ, and is packed with religious thought, sentiment, and pathos. For the purposes of this article, we offer the following free rendering of Klopstock's poem *The Omnipresence of God* (*Die Allgegenwart Gottes*): 'Let me, O omnipresent One, seek and find you in your supreme sanctity! And if this hallowed thought (of seeking and finding you) is lost to me, then let me yearn for it with tears of joy, so that I may prepare myself, sanctify myself for seeing you in your supreme holiness.'¹¹

Now, we come to the greatest German poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Goethe embodies verily the apogee of the German culture. He was a profound philosopher, a great scientist, and an astute statesman. But his immortal glory rests primarily upon his sublime poetry. His *magnum opus*, *Faust*, is rightly regarded all over the world as one of the most valued legacies of the world literature. The impact of Goethe on the thought and culture of Germany is all-pervasive. He was the central figure of the *Sturm und Drang* phase of the German literature; and with his advent, the German literature lost its naivety of theme and

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 111.

¹⁰ Echtermeyer and Benno von Wiese, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

expression and attained a phase of spontaneous and virile growth.

Even a cursory study of the prodigious literary output of Goethe will bear out an essentially Goethian view of life. Although the roots of the Goethian philosophy of life were primarily intellectual, mystical elements are by no means wholly absent. Goethe was no mere composer of verses. He was not only an intellectual colossus, but was also endowed with a mind sensitive to the sublimities of religion and mysticism. Goethe could, if the occasion required, be not only as ruthlessly analytical as only a sceptic could be, but also as devout and humble as only a religious aspirant could be. He was also free from intellectual arrogance, and his inquiries were inspired by a mystical, nay a divine, devotion to truth and poetry (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*).

The writings of Goethe are replete with religious and mystical elements. The mind of Goethe soared high above the trivialities of the external world, and his whole life was devoted to an understanding of the inner content of the reality. Goethe sought to apprehend the core of the reality. He was determined to separate the wheat of reality from the chaff of appearance. And the key to the inner reality, asserted the German poet, lies not in the outward world, but in the innermost kernel of the soul of man. According to Goethe, nature represents neither the kernel nor the husk, but could be either of them, depending upon whether we have realized the essence of our own being or whether we are only aware of our peripheral being. Goethe warns the scientist: 'You are following the wrong track; think not that we are jesting. Is not the kernel of nature in the heart of Man?'¹² Goethe was a pantheist. The omnipresence of God was a compelling fact for him. He could not conceive of God as being external to the world. 'What would that God be who pushes from outside, and lets the world revolve around His finger tips! It would be more like Him to move the world from within, to contain nature in Himself and Himself in nature, so that

all that lives, moves, and exists never misses the presence of His Spirit.'¹³ We see, then, that Goethe canvassed an essentially pantheistic view of life, and was a votary of the immanence of God.

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) ranks among the truly great men of the world literature. A young contemporary and an intimate friend of Goethe, Schiller was a writer of a vast and an encyclopaedic range. He was a poet, playwright, philosopher, essayist, historian, and statesman. Along with Goethe, he was the main figure of the *Sturm und Drang*, and played an important role in turning Weimar into the cultural metropolis of Germany. Kant was another great contemporary of Schiller, and the German poet was deeply influenced by the writings of the philosopher.

The writings of Schiller are characterized by a truly philosophical approach to life. His great poem *The Song of the Bell* (*Das Lied von der Glocke*) is pregnant with a profound mystical significance, and his dramas are invariably laden with metaphysical reflections. Schiller regarded it as the privilege of the poet to be near to God and to be aloof from the mundane vanities of life. In his poem *The Distribution of the Earth* (*Die Teilung der Erde*), Schiller tells us that Zeus, the Greek god, having created the world, told the human beings that they could have all the world and distribute it fraternally among themselves. Everybody greeted this announcement of Zeus with grateful approval and hastened to acquire as much as he could. Thus, the merchant took as much as he could store in his godowns; the abbot chose for himself the most delicious wines; and the king sealed all the bridges and regally appropriated one-tenth of all goods as duty. Long after everything was appropriated, and had been duly (or unduly) distributed, came the poet. Embittered by the fact that nothing was left for him, the bard appealed to Zeus for justice. Upon being asked by Zeus, where he was while the distribution was taking place, the poet replied: 'I was with you, O Zeus!'

¹² Goethe, *Werke* (Leipzig: 1910), Vol. I. p. 405.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

Pleased by the reply, Zeus declared: 'What to do now? The world has already been given away, and I do not have anything else left with me that I can give you. But if you want to live with me in the heaven, then the doors of heaven shall always remain open to you.'¹⁴ The poet, then, is essentially a devotee. He is a *sādhaka*. His verses are but an expression of his *sādhanā*. The poet is a pilgrim, and not a mere composer of verses, however exquisite they may be. His verses embody the perennial quest for the Infinite and the Eternal. The poem *The Pilgrim (Der Pilgrim)* elucidates the role of the poet as the pilgrim, yearning for freedom from the transient and the ephemeral world. The pilgrim sacrifices all his earthly possessions and begins his spiritual Odyssey. His quest has no end; for eternal is the goal, and the way to the Eternal stretches into endlessness.¹⁵

Achim von Arnim (1781-1831) was a contemporary of Goethe and Schiller. Though hardly known outside the German-speaking countries, his poetry constitutes an important phase of the Romantic Movement in Germany. Born in Berlin, and a thorough Prussian by attitude and aptitude, Arnim was a voluminous writer. The poetry of Arnim is a model of the utter simplicity of thought and expression. There are no metaphysical intricacies in the writings of Arnim. Arnim was guided by an unerring common sense, and he was given to expressing ordinary things in an extraordinary way. His style was direct and simple and free from undue bombast. In conformity with his handling of other themes, Arnim dealt with religious topics, too, in a direct and simple manner. Thus, in one of his poems, he addresses the following prayer to God: 'Give me love and a hallowed voice, so that I may sing of you to the world; health with property and a devout heart and an unflinching courage you must impart; give me children who are worth the trouble, chase away the unsuspected foes from among the tried friends; give feathers and a

piece of land, let the piece of land be in the beloved fatherland, and lend feathers to the departing soul, so that it could with ease tear itself away from this world.'¹⁶

Now, we come to our last poet, Eduard Mörike (1804-1875). Mörike remained a typically provincial figure all his life. He was born in Ludwigsburg in the south German province of Württemberg, and he remained all his life in Württemberg. Aside from being a poet, Mörike was also a novelist of renown. His poetry is replete with devotionism. He was a clergyman, and religion played a primary role in his life. No wonder that his rhymes pulsate with a spiritual fervour. He often uses the childlike language of a *bhakta*. Thus, in his poem *New Love (Neue Liebe)*, Mörike avers: 'Could any one belong wholly to some one on earth as he would wish to? Through a long night, I reflected over it, and had to say: No. So I cannot belong to any one on earth, and no one could I regard as completely my own. But, then, out of this despair, a gleam of joy flashes out in me. Couldn't I have, as I would rather prefer to have, a fulsome relationship with God? What prevents me from that even today? A sweet sensation suffuses me. I am astonished that it could ever have seemed to me an unusual miracle to have God on the earth.'¹⁷ Mörike was once seized by a spirit of renunciation. He poured scorn over the temptations of life. He cried out: 'Leave me, O world, leave me alone. Do not seduce me with gifts of love. Let my heart remain lost in its own bliss and sorrow; for only through tears do I see the friendly sunshine. Often, I am hardly aware of it; and in my breast, the bright joy flashes out rapturously through the burden of sorrow that afflicts me. Leave me, O world, leave me alone. Do not seduce me with gifts of love. Let my heart remain lost in its own bliss and sorrow.'¹⁸

¹⁶ Cited by Echtermeyer and Benno von Wiese, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

¹⁷ Leonard Forster, *German Verse*, p. 349.

¹⁸ Echtermeyer and Benno von Wiese, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

¹⁴ Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke* (Berlin: n.d.), Vol. XXI, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. XIX, p. 145.

With this, we conclude our account of the mystical traditions in German poetry. Our study, we hope, has corroborated our assertion, in the introduction to this article, that we are often witnesses to 'a happy blending of poetry and mysticism in the cultural life of Germany'. Our article has had to contend with the formidable difficulties of translating the German poets into English. It is always difficult to translate the poetic heritage of one nation into another language; and if, as in the case of the present writer, one is not endowed with poetical talents, then the difficulties could assume even insurmountable proportions. We have sought

to extricate ourselves from these difficulties by paraphrasing the basic content of the poems that we have here dealt with. The underlying essence of the poem and not verbal exactitude was our watchword; and when essence and exactitude clashed, then the former was invariably preferred to the latter. Our survey also suffers from a cursoriness. There is a want of detail in it. But we hope we have succeeded in providing a broad outline of the very rich mystical elements in the poetical heritage of the Germans. The article is offered as a bare introduction, and should interest all students of comparative religion and mysticism.

RABINDRANATH ON RELIGION

BY PROFESSOR BATUKNATH BHATTACHARYA

Myriad-minded is an epithet which most befits Rabindranath, perhaps, of all men of letters on record. His creative personality was multi-form, and the apparatus of expression he was gifted with was the completest that may be imagined. Hence the variety of literary *genres* his works exhibit, with music and painting superadded to enrich the endowment. The appeal that his writings have for cultured minds is limited only by the latter's receptive capacity and range of interest. This appeal is generally assumed to be to the aesthetic faculty—to the musical sense, to emotion and imagination. But the lyrics and songs, poems and verse-tales, and plays of all kinds—all lively, rich, and delicately phrased—do not exhaust the self-revelations of this protean genius. They quicken and delight our sense of beauty, satisfy our love of sweetness and light, and so, perhaps, confront us with the most typical facade of the mighty human edifice. But they do not take us into the sanctum of this shrine, the soul of deep and serious thought that poured forth an endless stream of discourses, essays, sermons, travel accounts, and educative works of popular science and school instruction.

The centenary celebrations held everywhere

should open up all avenues of approach to the whole of this massive mind, so that the discipline of humanity, which Tagore's works are singly fitted to effect, may be realized. Emerson regretted that Shakespeare, with his superb genius, should have been content merely to be the master of the revels for the theatre-goers, and not given to the world a philosophy worthy of his powers. Such a complaint in Tagore's case can arise if the usual modes of appreciating his greatness are also made the exclusive ones.

But the whole mind of the poet could perhaps be known only to himself. In the *Śeṣa Saptaka*, he asks himself:

This my whole being
Painted with an art of variegated beauty,
Will it ever with all its garnerings, with all
its revelations,
Be fully bared before any divine eye?

And he replies:

With all its strivings austere, it has sought
experience,
And said, as says the dim figure of twilight,
Said, as says the rosy flush of the night's
close,
Come revelation come.

Elsewhere, the poet describes himself as the lover of Light. Light is the very element of his being, as his name happily suggests. None the less, while the other aspects of his luminous self-expression are eagerly studied, his religious thought is generally passed by. And yet, religion has been, through the ages, the engrossing topic, the perennial interest in his native land. It is also a theme on which his mind, nurtured in a family deeply influenced by the Upaniṣads, extensively meditated. *Dharma*, as understood in this ancient land, had for him the fascination of the untold centuries since Vedic revelation. Religion, for India, is the deepest probe into the mystery of existence, the riddle of creation, the problem of social behaviour, and racial and individual destiny. It is, in a word, the confronting of reality as a whole. It includes ethics as well as spiritual culture, social code and inner discipline.

Thus understood, it is the recurring and pervasive theme in his imaginative as well as discursive writings—from *Bhānu Sīrṅher Padāvali* to *Sonār Tarī* and *Śeṣa Saptaka*, from *Ātmaśakti*, *Bhāratavarṣa*, *Svadeśa*, and *Samāja* to *Pather Sañcaya* and *Ātmaparicaya*, not to mention *Dharma*, *The Religion of Man*, and nearly one hundred and fifty sermons in the Santiniketan Series. In every poetic volume, either as continuous outpouring or transient snatches, Rabindranath's spiritual musings find inevitable expression. The hidden reality behind the cosmic show and the mysterious forces of social progress and stagnation are glimpsed in the plays of the mystic type. Noble self-sacrifice and ascetic renunciation are the motifs of the tragic plays. Amidst the raptures of sensuous experience, in which his soul found its element, a feeling of mystery brooded over his whole being and lent a refinement and iridescence to all his communications. In all this, he was truly a scion of the Indian tradition of meditative musing.

But the inherited strain in the poet's make-up is only a part of his mental furniture as a thinker on religion. He did not belong to the past only; like every classic, he was the con-

temporary of all ages, mirroring the modern trends of thought and looking out on the future, dreaming and singing of the days to come and the achievements that would glorify posterity. His personality, in his religious thoughts, is therefore threefold. He is a son of India—limb from limb born, sprung from the very heart. Sensitive in every pore of his being, and responsive to waves of light and air pouring from whatever quarter, he communes with the humanistic and sociological thought-systems of his age, and reflects them with the clarity and suaveness which distinguish his art of presentation. And both these trends impinged upon an individuality sharply defined by its reliance on personal experience, inborn conviction, and original understanding. 'From the time of birth,' he repeatedly claimed, 'the life-form, which has been fashioned in me, has not been overlaid with the śāstraic coating of any decayed bygone age.'

With an outlook thus widened and contents thus enriched, Rabindranath has comprehensively glanced on the various aspects of the religious problem with a range and insight all his own. He has spoken on 'Religion', on 'My Religion', and on 'The Religion of Man', and like our Smṛti treatises, he has noted distinctions, such as social religion, personal religion, sectarian religion, etc. He has, at some length, given an exposition of the Brahmo theistic creed, differentiated it from the Vedāntic monism, and defined the path and goal of realization of his exalted father—Maharshi Devendranath. With a depth of penetration and fineness of understanding and felicity of expression, rare even in those within the traditional fold, he has delineated the values that have been cherished in India through the ages. He has adored the sublime elements in the Indian heritage, and yet, with unsparing trenchancy, he has exposed the dust and refuse which, in times of decadence, had overcast in any manner the riches of our eternal seeking. His appreciations of Buddha and Christ, his interpretations of their tenets, and his estimations of the abiding elements in both are now embodied in separate

brochures. All these highlight the poet's spiritual affinities with the historical religions of the world. But remarkable among these is the golden chain which linked his spirit to the Vaiṣṇava attitude and ideology, its sentiment of loving devotion, its melting raptures, the charming imagery in which it depicted the intimacies of the creature's relations with the Creator. The three lyrical treasures—*Gītāñjali*, *Gītāli*, and *Gītimālya*—in which these ecstasies of adoration gush forth in rich overflow, may well impart to the Vaiṣṇavism of our day a new dynamism and universality. They take the traditional Vaiṣṇava cult to another plane and charge it with a neo-catholic appeal for humanity.

A study of the poet's varied utterances on general and particular topics of religion should be an eye-opener to all, and exhibit the needs and aspirations of humanity which *dharma* has fulfilled. About Buddhism, he remarks that no religion can endure by neglecting any truth inherent in human nature, and he illustrates it by the transition of that widespread faith from the Hīnayāna to the Mahāyāna phase. The current view of life of our day can be wholly secular only by ignoring this basic truth—the rooted instincts and cravings of man which religion stands for and alone serves.

Is it possible to educe a simple statement, a single principle of synthesis, which would be a key to the heart of the matter, the essence of Rabindranath's religious philosophy? Unattempted yet at home or abroad, it is a challenge to the most capacious mind. Is it possible to nestle in a corner of the Titanic intellect and to discover the formula of harmony amidst the far-flung musings, comments, and expositions? All these were the outpourings of a mind of lively and long continued growth, which was, besides, remarkable at every stage for its stamp of fullness and maturity. Perhaps, the poet himself might be his own best exponent, as in *Ātma-paricaya*, in which he has held up his poetic and his inmost faith as featured in his verses.

But Rabindranath's religious thought is a progressive revelation, and breaks through the strings of a rigid unilinear formulation. 'I can-

not say', he writes, 'that I know fully and clearly what my religion is. It is no creed written down in the form of institutes or doctrines—not religion as inscribed in an ancient text.' And, again: 'All my expressions about religion are like notes jotted down in a notebook by a wayfarer while travelling.' Further, he says: 'Where I have explicitly set forth an exposition of religion, there I may not have spoken my innermost thought; there it is not impossible to use hearsay picked from outside. But in literary composition, the writer's nature unconsciously reveals itself, and hence it is comparatively pure.' The poet's individuality, as sketched in this autobiographic confession of faith, stands out fully in his poetry, in the lively colours of fancy, in the sonorous accents of rhythm, and in the melting lilt of lyrics.

'In me dwells', says the poet, 'the joy of expression of the indwelling Spirit.' 'I am the messenger of the soul of diversity. I am the companion in sport of the ever varying One. I am a tester of the ambrosial savour of the cosmic creation.' The same idea in verse runs thus:

Whatever joy there is in sight, in scent, in song,

Your joy shall dwell in the midst thereof;
My dark bondage shall flare into liberation,
My love shall remain fruitful in devotion.

In other words, as he puts it, 'Nothing else can be an easier rite of worship than the feeling of rapture in the cosmic scene'. More fully is the idea held up in the following:

In that rhythm of wave-like dance varied pose,

When the heart sways to its tune,
On the coursing stream of this world,
In that rhythm is my bondage and my liberation there.

This intense joy of experience, this *en rapport* feeling amidst the cosmic panorama, is generally taken to be the whole message and the sole spiritual balm our poet provides. It is expressed in his own rendering of the Vedic

verse: '*Devasya paśya kāvyam namamāra na jīryati*'—Behold this poem of God, it dies not nor decays. One cannot think of the end of this seeing. He adds, again and again: 'I have turned back to declare that it has pleased me well.' His own function has been to dispense this bliss, this immortal joy in what is usually deemed as life's unnecessary apartment. Accordingly with this view, he had, at Santiniketan, sought to base the quest of knowledge on the altar of Joy.

But this poetic creed of unending joy of experience, though personally sufficing, would appear partial and rootless unless related to the variety and immensity of all beings, to the background of before and after, and to the human context of fearsome evil and indubitable suffering. For so related only, it can satisfy as an adequate view of life. These links are in part indicated in *Ātmaparicaya*. The beatific vision sketched above turns solely to the benign and salutary aspect of Reality—the rightward face (*dakṣiṇam mukham*), the form most conducive to good (*rūpam kalyāṇatamam*). But he is the great poet who directs man's mind to those things as have in them abidingness, majesty, emancipation, things that are profound and comprehensive. 'If there is any truth of religion in my writings,' says Tagore, 'it is the realization of that perfect love between the individual and the Supreme, which has dualism on one side and monism on the other, separation on one hand and union on the other, bondage and release on either side.' 'On the path of this realization, this growing religious sense, first comes life, death next, and deathless bliss thereafter. The paradise which has not been gained through sorrow, through experience of evil, is not a paradise of knowledge.' Heaven is therefore that beatitude which manifests its beauty nobly amidst waste and desolation, to which good and evil are alike. It faces up to unexpected catastrophe in nature and enormous sin in man. This is the awful terror of Śiva's appearance; of the king who, like a holocaust, bursts through the door in stormy doleful night; of the master or spiritual guide who shows

himself in the guise of a foe in several mystic plays and poems of Tagore. 'The World War in Europe', he wrote, 'started on account of the advent of this terrible Teacher, who has to demolish the bastion of money, of prestige and honour, of egotism and pride.' Further, he wrote: 'When decay clasps society, custom becomes inflexible, and the oppression of the old treads down fresh life and seeks to deaden it, then man leaps into the midst of death and, through the turmoil of revolution, prepares for the festival of new-born spring. This is now happening in Europe.' He says that there are people who know *dharma* to be self-fulfilment in a world which is real, and which comprises both joy and sorrow, doubts and discords.

This comprehensive vision of Reality as a whole can be commanded not by human units, but by *homo universus*. For, as he puts it: 'The harmony of one's own nature with nature universal is possible in the field not of cosmic nature, but of man universal. By expanding our limited selves, we want to be one with this great Ego—the Soul of humanity. The glimpse of this religious sense, which is had in a latent form from universal nature, is derived from the taste or experience of the Infinite.'

Into this experience of immensity, man has stepped by traversing the whole course of evolution. 'From beginningless time, through states diverse and forgotten, He (the Maker) has finally brought me into my present self-expression. The grand memory of the stream of existence, which has flowed through the universe, remains in me cleaving to my life's angel or genius (*jīvanadevatā*).' And wistfully, he turns to personal immortality, when he says: 'If the possibility, so far as it lay in my present life of serving this divinity, has become exhausted, will He let this fire be extinct? How long would it take to throw away these useless ashes? But why for that reason will this flame die out?' In this passage, the poet links human survival with the doctrine of rebirth on the one hand and the hypothesis of organic evolution on the other. We are the cosmic pilgrims, he says of man, the pilgrims of Eternity. Elsewhere, he says: 'The

creature has been carrying his ego as apart from all else from beginningless time.' Thus limited by little births and deaths, a garland of many Rabindranaths has been strung together, he fancifully remarks.

Not through this persistence of the ego amidst successive forms and phases of being, but through mergence in and identity with *homo universus*, man is to realize himself and fulfil himself. It is this humanism that Rabindranath teaches in *The Religion of Man*. What man apparently is, he exceeds by far in reality. The unknowable and the impossible have ever been a challenge to him. He has so often lost himself to find himself, and died to rise to a fuller life. He exists in limitless possibilities. The inherent life-principle builds up animals; man has another life—it is his humanity. *Dharma* is man's essential nature, his proper function, his lifelong striving for self-realization, and his effort to develop and evolve religion within himself. *Dharma*, for man, is realizing the Self by reaching beyond Self. He is destined to grow towards the infinite in man—the human Brahman. Man the Brahman is integral man, man of all times, man as one Self striding over all time—past, present, and future. The individual mind rests in the universal, but the sum of individual minds is not the universal mind. And all truth would at last be revealed to this infinite in man. All the elements would be the executive instruments of his will, and adjuncts to the powers of his body. This concept of an immense and imperishable humanity is the core and crux of Rabindranath's religious philosophy.

To this, his cult of Brahman is naturally related, and to it the Buddhist tenet of *Brahma-vihāra* attaches itself as a necessary corollary, and Christ's supreme sacrifice is a virtue of necessity. For, according to Tagore, that which urges man towards sacrifice and renunciation, towards austere striving, towards loving service, is humanness, man's religion. In his *Brahma-*

vāda, *mukti* or emancipation is not isolationism (*kaivalya*), or extinction (*nirvāṇa*), or ascetic self-absorption or inaction (*samādhi* or *naiṣkarmya*). It is the magnification of the ego through knowledge, through work, through love. The cry of the heart is ever: 'O Revelation, be revealed to me.' Hence is the quest of knowledge without end. The Upaniṣad says: '*Tapasā Brahma vijijñāsva.*' The austerity or *tapasya* enjoined here signifies, according to our poet, social service. And in his exposition of the Vaiṣṇava sentiment and outlook, in his melting devotional lyrics, *mukti* or release from bondage is not world and life negation, but acceptance of all, association and oneness with all. It is, on the human level, reciprocation of the Creator's love and compassion for man, of His care and solicitude which are evident in the world order. To see Him everywhere, to be the instrument of His will by complete self-surrender, to efface the self by losing it in humanity's soul—these are the teachings of Vaiṣṇavism reinforced in Tagore's exquisite lyrics.

In *Pūrabi*, the poet likens his mind to a many-chambered mansion, far into the inner apartment of which, when finished, the Maker flung the key. To integrate his religious thought and to disengage the principle of unity and harmony amidst its rich diversity is like the search for this key. The attempt to find it repays itself in the precious wayside discoveries, even where the conclusion does not command unanimity of assent. Undeniable and outstanding is the human emphasis in all that the poet thought and wrote on religion. And it is most pointedly expressed in two sentences: 'My intelligence is human intelligence; my heart is the heart of man; my imagination is man's imagination. Science I call that which is demonstrated to man's reason, and the bliss of the Brahman state is a bliss revealed to human consciousness.' And he clinches his position by asking: 'If man's emancipation is to be achieved by effacing the man, then why have I been born as a man?'



JESUS, THE IDEAL SANNYĀSIN

By SWAMI AMARTYANANDA

Someone has said that Jesus was all things to all men. That is to say, we can all find our highest ideals embodied in the most sublime way in the personality of Jesus. He has been looked upon differently by different people. Some have looked upon him as a divine being, utterly above the common run of mankind; some, as a purely human being like any of us, but with this difference that he was endowed with more strength, more power, and more purity. Others have acclaimed him as a combination of the divine and the human, a god-man, an incarnation of God, who took upon himself the imperfections and shortcomings of ordinary men and women. To some, he is the ideal *sannyāsin*; and to others, an embodiment of boundless love. But whatever view we take of him, it must inevitably be a subjective view, more or less, because, in the gospels, we do not have a purely objective view of Jesus. Besides, our views are conditioned to a great extent by our background, training, and temperament. *Sannyāsins* like us can justifiably look upon Jesus as an ideal *sannyāsin*. But we must also remember that it is only one of the many aspects of Jesus.

The ideal of renunciation was not something new to the Jews or to Jesus. Long before his coming, there were the sects of the Essenes and the Therapeutae. It is suggested that John the Baptist himself belonged to the sect of Essenes. But, then, the renunciation of these and that of Jesus have not many things in common. Look at John the Baptist, for instance. His renunciation is the rugged, violent type, with which we are familiar. Living mostly in the wilderness, coming down like thunder on society, hurling invectives and threats at wrongdoers and sinners, never caring in the least for bodily comforts or personal safety, John is a bit too much for us. Even his dress is peculiar—a garment of camel's hair, nothing more. His

food is wild honey and locusts. With his unkempt hair and long beard, his eyes flashing fire as he called sinners unto repentance, warning them to prepare themselves for the last judgement and the coming of the kingdom of God, there is something strange and frightening about John. True, he looked every inch a prophet of God, but he has not much sympathy for us, and our hearts never run out to meet him. Even at his horrible death, we are not moved as completely and wholly as in the case of Christ.

But Jesus, he never lived in the desert. Only once did he go into the wilderness to fast and commune with God. For the rest of his life, we find Jesus living in the world and only occasionally resorting to solitude, and that, too, in the company of his disciples. His renunciation of family ties was not sudden. It seems to have been so smooth that we find nowhere in the Bible any reference to his leaving his family and friends. Again, we do not see him donning any special dress to distinguish him from other people. He dressed like others, ate like others, spoke like others, and behaved like others. He did not shun the company of men, women, or children. We find him sometimes at the feasts given by rich men. There is at least one reference in the Bible to his attending even a marriage feast at Cana. Compared with the language of John, Jesus' is very mild. He had wonderful sympathy with the masses and the greatest pity for the wicked and rich. His heart was too soft and too broad not to let in sinners and publicans. Indeed, two of his greatest disciples, Matthew and Magdalene, were recruited from among sinners and publicans. Unlike John, Jesus never baptized anyone, thus silently repudiating the view that men are wretched sinners. On the other hand, he taught men to think of themselves as the children of God, as is clearly seen in the Lord's prayer: 'Our Father

which art in heaven,' and so on.

To Jesus, the highest ideal seemed to have been that of renouncing everything for the sake of God. In the gospels, we have the story of a rich young man approaching Christ and asking what he should do that he may have eternal life. Christ told him to keep the commandments: 'Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and so on. The young man answered: 'All these have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?' Then, Christ said to him: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow thou me.' But when the young man heard this, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions, and could not part with them.

Like a true *sannyāsin*, Christ did not care for what the morrow would bring him. He relied entirely on the heavenly Father, and taught his disciples also to do the same. At one time, he warned them: 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else, he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; not yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought of the things of itself. . . . Seek ye the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.'

Jesus never possessed a house for himself. 'The foxes have their holes, the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.' He was not complaining; he was practising the ideal he preached. It does not mean that he never got a place to rest his head. It only means that he was never worried in the least about his next resting place. And the heavenly Father, who knew he had

need of all these things, provided them. It was a great lesson in self-surrender.

The renunciation of Jesus is not the negative, excluding type we find in his predecessors. In one sense, he never renounced the world. It will be more true to say that he embraced the whole world. Not even his mother, brothers, or sisters would be able to claim him all for themselves. He was not heartless towards them. His heart was so large that it went out and clasped the entire world. In the scheme of things Jesus envisaged and carried into practice, no one is an alien, no one is a stranger. Even the so-called enemies of Jesus, who crucified him, were excused and pardoned for their ignorance. 'Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do.' It is worth noting that he never laid wickedness or malice at their door—only ignorance; and he earnestly pleaded with his Father to forgive them. That is the highest ideal that any *sannyāsin* can ever hope to realize.

Though Jesus gave importance to the ideal of service, he gave equal importance to the contemplation of God. The point has been clearly brought home in the story of the two sisters, Mary and Martha, of Bethany. When Jesus, with his disciples, went to their house to be fed, we find that Mary came and sat near him and listened to his wonderful talk, and forgot everything else. Martha, the practical woman, was running in and out of the kitchen to see that everything was in order. But, when she found her sister Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus, absorbed in what he was saying, she complained to him about Mary's not helping her. Jesus' answer is a mild rebuke and a great revelation. He said: 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is necessary, and Mary has chosen that good part, and it shall not be taken away from her.' It is not that the Master discouraged service; no. On the contrary, he even encouraged it. 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto myself.' It is on this saying of Jesus that all Christian charity is based.

Charity has little meaning in the spiritual life, if done mechanically. It is to be understood as being done to Christ himself. Then, it ceases to be charity, as we understand it. It becomes worship of Christ himself in his fellow-beings. Martha, it is true, was also a great devotee of Jesus, and the work she had undertaken was certainly the service of the Lord and his children. But she had unnecessarily loaded herself with too much work, with the result that her mind was troubled, she became a victim of worry and anxiety, and even she desired that others should come forward to help her. Such work, which is nothing but burden, is not pleasing to the Lord, and he rebuked her for her over enthusiasm. Mere physical service is good and grand; but unaccompanied by contemplation, it does not help one to grow spiritually. Indeed, contemplation, as typified by Mary, is far superior to mere work, however good. Jesus calls it the good part and adds that it shall not be taken away from Mary—with the hint that there is a chance that the part chosen by Martha might be taken away from her. He probably means to say that the physical capabilities and energies are of such a nature that they will be taken away from us at one time or the other. On the other hand, contemplation or the thinking of God can be done at all times and under all circumstances. Even if the body is in a bad way, the mind of an aspirant can and does dwell on the thought of God. Contemplation or meditation is nothing but the service of God with one's own mind. So we must remember that Mary, the true devotee, was not idling away her time at all. She was so full of the Lord, her whole mind being so much absorbed in Jesus, that it was impossible for her to think of physical matters. She was not shirking work. She just could not. We have to bear in mind that work, however noble and good, unaccompanied by contemplation or meditation, cannot make us spiritual. On the contrary, mere work on the part of a spiritual aspirant makes him more worldly than

worldly people, and paves the path of spiritual degeneration. The story of Mary and Martha holds a grand lesson for all spiritual seekers.

The story can be interpreted in another way also. The mind of every man is Mary, and the body is Martha. Everything goes on well as long as these two are harmoniously working. The proper place of the mind is at the feet of the Lord; and, in the story, Mary is shown as sitting at the feet of Jesus. The body's function is to serve the Lord and His creatures; and, in the story, Martha is shown as doing a lot of service. The trouble starts when these two pull in different directions. When the body tries to drag the mind away from the thought of God, or, when Martha tries to drag Mary away from the feet of Jesus, the Lord is highly displeased. And if the mind had tried to drag the body away from the service of the Lord, there would have been no spiritual feast. Thus, the whole story can be explained as a beautiful allegory showing the proper place and the right role of the body and mind in the spiritual life.

Like an ideal *sannyāsin*, Jesus was not upset under any circumstances. Towards the end of his life, when one of his close disciples, Judas, betrayed him, and another, on whom he had hoped to build his house, Peter, denied him thrice, when one and all deserted him, Jesus remained calm and unruffled, as under peaceful circumstances. The trial before the Sanhedrin and the torture by the soldiers did nothing to upset his perfect balance. The march to Calvary and the death on the cross are perfect examples of his equipoise, sameness, and self-surrender to God. Nailed on to the cross, the soldiers removed his only garment and cast lots for it among themselves. The picture of Jesus on the cross is the most touching that we have in the history of mankind. And even the cross, the hated symbol of torture, shame, and disgrace, the cross on which the worst type of criminals used to be crucified, that very cross was purified, and achieved lasting glory when it came in contact with Jesus.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In her article entitled 'In Defence of the Sāṅkhya Puruṣa and Its Multiplicity', Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of Patna University, gives a clear interpretation of the seventeenth *kārikā* of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* from the Sāṅkhya point of view, and shows that, considered from that point of view, 'there will be no contradiction or irrationality in respect of the nature of pure Puruṣa and its multiplicity'.

In his learned and instructive article, Professor P. S. Naidu, M.A., of Vidya Bhawan Govindram Seksaria Teachers' College, Udaipur, and a regular contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*, presents in a nutshell the salient features of 'The Basic Values of Indian Culture'. ...

Sri S. Subhash Chandra, M.A., formerly of the

University College of Arts, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, and now working as a research scholar in some of the West German universities, presents in his article a broad outline of 'The Mystical Elements in German Poetry', taking into consideration not only such poets as Goethe and Schiller, but also such lesser known poets as Logau, Angelus Silesius, Arnold, Klopstock, Arnim, and Mörike. ...

In his article on 'Rabindranath on Religion', Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., formerly of Surendranath College, Calcutta, brings out the point that the human emphasis was undeniable and outstanding in all that the poet thought and wrote on religion. ...

The article on 'Jesus, the Ideal Sannyāsin' is by Swami Amartyananda, of the Ramakrishna Order.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS. BY PYARELAL.
Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Pages xxii+221. Price Rs. 2.

Caught up as we are in the midst of a headlong rush towards rapid industrialization on the Western model, we have no time to spare to pause and ponder on the wisdom of the strides already taken and the appropriateness of the model of society envisaged to be formed through a successive series of Five-Year Plans. *Towards New Horizons* by Pyarelal, embodying chapters 21, 22, and 23 of the second volume of *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, is a timely eye-opener to the men that count to ruminate over the social policies of the State, in order to do some critical appraisal of the values which we are ruthlessly pursuing, despite our loud profession of a strong faith in the Gandhian ideals. The book is highly

argumentative, and is punctuated with profuse, if not prolific, references to the highest of authorities in support of the various points made by the author. The analysis is not something casual and perfunctory. It is a serious effort to critically examine our economic, social, and political policies.

The first part of the book is an endeavour to understand the economic set-up of the country. The emphasis that has been rightly given on the overriding importance of rejuvenating India's villages through a vigorous improvement of cultivation and resuscitation of small crafts is hardly surprising, in view of the obvious fact that India's teeming millions mainly inhabit the five lakh and odd villages. In this connection, Pyarelal has brought to light how there is an acute unawareness of the phenomenon of symbiotism in our zeal to modernize our villages. He

has also laid a sharp finger on the dangers of over-centralization, which is emerging as a natural corollary of the onset of a factory-civilization, with the concomitant evils of excessive urbanization leading to the creation of a scarcity in all the basic essentials of life, such as housing, sanitation, water-supply, medical facilities, etc. The urgency of decentralization deserves to be repeatedly dinned into the ears of our authorities. The paradox of increasing wealth and decaying man must not be allowed to repeat in our country as well. Gandhiji visualized the establishment of a decentralized, self-sufficient rural economy, producing the essentials of life in plenty, but strictly avoiding wastage of resources on the creation of fancy-commodities. Simplicity needs to be practised on a country-wide scale, not merely because it is a Gandhian virtue; it is a necessity in the present context of our country to release resources for purposes of further development. Increased production is to be brought about through improved techniques, and Pyarelal has done well to obviate the popular misconception that Gandhiji was opposed to the use of machines in appropriate situations.

The insertion of a discussion on non-violence, world war, 'Shanti Sena', etc. in the midst of a serious discourse on the problems of Indian economic reconstruction appears highly parenthetical, and the relevance of these topics in the string of thoughts around the theme of our poverty and prosperity passes one's comprehension. It is always good to resist the temptation to go off the track in order to emphasize one's pet predilections.

The least convincing of all is the notion of trusteeship to solve the problems of mal-distribution of wealth. It is no use toying with goody-goody ideas which have little practical significance. There would be few men of saintly character prepared to counter effectively their own selfish interests at the back of powerful acquisitive and possessive instincts with the Gandhian ideal of holding property in trust for society. The struggle all over the world between the haves and the have-nots would have automatically come to an end long ago if the special species of acquisitive creatures among men were to pay heed to the wise advice of a Christ, a Buddha, or a Gandhi. The revolutionary changes in the distribution of the wealth of society have been brought about in some of the countries primarily through the coercive agency of the State. One fails to understand how one could blissfully ignore the dismal failures of the trusteeship idea throughout the ages.

The second part of the book deals with the problem of setting democracy on the march. Here, we find a lucid analysis of the essentials of a democracy, which, carried to its logical conclusions, leads one to 'an ordered anarchy', in which there is extreme

decentralization of all governmental authority.

The epilogue brings the book to an end with a metaphysical analysis of the nature and role of man in the cosmos. The conclusion reached is typically Vedāntic. The realization of the Ātman is the ultimate remedy for all the troubles of the human world. The upshot of the whole discussion is a reiteration of the most ancient of the values of our country. One may not see eye to eye with many of the things so ably discussed by the author, but the provocation of thought leaves a sweet aroma of having done some intellectual activity, when one goes through these pages.

H. G. KULKARNI

THE UNITY OF BODY AND MIND. By **LOTHAR BICKEL**. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 167. Price \$ 3.75.*

The Cartesian dichotomy between mind and body let loose such a host of philosophical problems that any attempt to give these a quietus by restoring the original unity between the corporeal and the mental will be eagerly welcomed. Here is such an attempt. But, unfortunately, the laudable effort at unifying mind and body is based on grounds, more or less behaviouristic, which will not have a ready appeal to many in our country. One can feel, as one reads the book, the clarity, the incisiveness, and the compelling nature of the arguments of Dr. Bickel, but they start with debatable premises supplied by Constantin Brunner. Brunner is little known in the English-speaking world, as his original works, in tough German, have not been translated into English. Brunner speaks of two 'faculties' of thought, the practical and the spiritual, the former aiming at life-maintenance and the latter at spiritual understanding. The two should be kept separate. When they are confused, then the absolute is made relative and the relative absolutized. This confusion is called 'analogous thought' by Brunner, and is given by him the status of a third 'faculty'. Religion, philosophy, and morality are the result of the activity of the third faculty. This, in brief, is the conceptual foundation of the book. It is subtle and dangerous. Great solicitude is apparently shown for preserving the integrity of the spiritual. It is sacred, and so pure that it should not be touched by human hands. All the efforts made so far by the human spirit—perhaps, one should not use the word spirit, but only mind—all these efforts of saints, sages, and *jīvan-muktas* have only produced one result, viz. they have polluted the Absolute. The Absolute should stay beyond human reach.

Dr. Bickel accepts these dicta, and consigns psychology to the region of practical understanding. This scientific discipline and the universe of its discourse—comprising man's psyche, consciousness, etc.—are of this world, worldly. They are 'thingly'. This, of course, is extreme right-wing behaviourism. On the basis of such extreme mechanistic and deterministic behaviourism, mind-body can be achieved only by reducing mind to the level of 'thing'. This is exactly what is done in the book.

A behaviourist will have perfect peace of mind after he had banished mind. Not Dr. Bickel. As one reads through his book, with its excellent logic, one can hear the deep and vague rumblings in the inner recesses of his mind. He has glimpses of the spiritual, which alone can confer real unity on body and mind, but which he has, following Brunner, placed beyond his reach. And then occurs 'reaction formation' in the shape of strong criticism of Freud and Scheler, specially of Scheler. It is unfair to charge Freud with destroying unity of mental life and of banishing cognition from psychology. He did neither. As a scientist, he presented the facts of mental life as they *are*, and not as they *ought* to be according to a predetermined scheme. In fact, Freud has conferred greater unity on our conception of mental life, and has given greater recognition to the role of cognition therein than Brunnerian metaphysics can ever concede. As for the shafts aimed at Scheler, it is really painful for a student of philosophy to see a distorted version of Scheler's thought and, what is worse, vitriolic criticism based on that version. Even John Laird concedes that 'his account of the essential unity of human and divine in the mystical body of Christ has a certain resemblance to Crescas's position, pretty thoroughly de-intellectualized' (*Recent Philosophy*, Home University Library, 1936, p. 126).

The whole trouble arises out of accepting the Brunnerian concept of motion as the universal principle of explanation. This book is an excellent example of what happens when a powerful and gifted intellect is forcibly confined within the narrow limits of a physical view of the universe. And, what is more, the book points to the road along which the imprisoned intellect may find the route to freedom. The road is the one leading to the Vedāntic monism and idealism.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

READINGS FROM ŚAṆKARA. By T. M. P. MAHADEVAN. Part I. Pages 77. Price Rs. 1.50nP. Part II. Pages 137. Price Rs. 2. Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17.

From 1956, the publishers are bringing out every year one book dealing with the works of Śrī Śaṅkara-

cārya, to commemorate the Ācārya's birthday, under the title 'Śaṅkara Jayantī Series'. The first book of the series was *A Morning Prayer and Hymn to Dakṣiṇāmūrti*; the second and the third were English translations of the *Īśā* and the *Kena* Upaniṣads, with notes based on Śaṅkara's commentary; the fourth was *Homage to Śaṅkara*. The two books under review are the fifth and the sixth in the series, published in 1960 and 1961 respectively. The first part contains 51 select passages from Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Īśā* and the *Kena*; and the second part, 105 passages from his commentary on the *Māṇḍūkya* and Gauḍapāda's *Kārikā*. In both the parts, the text is printed in both Devanāgarī and Roman scripts, followed by the author's translation into English.

The selection of the passages has been admirably done; and the passages, being representative, give the quintessence of Śaṅkara's thought in his own lucid language. The headings given for the various topics dealt with in these selections are very apt, and they should prove very useful. The English translation, while being literal, is simple and lucid. A study of these books will give a clear idea of the philosophy of Śaṅkara, and will surely create interest among readers to go through his works more fully. These two books are a welcome addition to the growing Śaṅkara literature.

S. B.

THE SĀMKHYA-KĀRIKĀ OF ISVARAKRṢṆA. EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY RADHANATH PHUKAN. Published by Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 6/1A Banchharam Akkur Lane, Calcutta-12. 1960. Pages 165. Price Rs. 5.

The book under review is an English translation of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, and it has been done in simple English so as to make it useful to the university students also. The author has added his own notes on the subject. In the introduction, he says: 'There is no important difference between the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta philosophy; what difference there is, is in the angle of vision.'

The author has not given importance to the fact that this difference in 'the angle of vision' is the sole factor that leads to the formulation of a different system of philosophy. Each system represents a particular 'angle of vision', from which the ultimate Truth is seen and realized. Philosophy is the 'vision of Truth'. How this Truth has been explained in a particular system determines the character of that system. The classical Sāṅkhya is essentially realistic and dualistic. While Advaita Vedānta believes in the falsity of difference, the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* asserts that all differences are true. In the empirical sphere, we find differences, and these differences exist in the

transcendental sphere as well. It is not possible for one to unify the Sāṅkhya philosophy with the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara unless one destroys the essentially dualistic and realistic character of the Sāṅkhya.

In his attempt to give a Vedāntic interpretation of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, the author has laboured hard to prove that the word 'avyakta' in the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* refers to Puruṣa. No impartial adherent of the philosophy of the Sāṅkhya will be willing to share this view of the author. That the word 'avyakta' stands for Prakṛti has been clearly indicated in the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*. *Jña*, *pumān*, etc. are the words that have been used for Puruṣa.

The author's attempt to interpret the fundamentals of the Sāṅkhya philosophy by citing examples from modern physical science is, however, commendable.

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

ORDEAL OF FAITH. BY FRANCIS P. WEISENBURGER. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 380. Price \$6.*

As the sub-title puts it, the work under review surveys 'the crisis of church-going America' between the years 1865 and 1900. By 1865, the crisis was deepened, and Victorian unrest, mental and spiritual, was reigning supreme. Newman's Oxford Movement, the study of the Bible by Colenso and others, the study of comparative religions, Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, and the advances made in the physical and natural sciences succeeded in unleashing the forces of scepticism, distrust, and materialism. These forces were not confined to Europe only. They had a free sway over the United States, too. Social and religious ideals, values, and emotions were practically frozen.

The conflict between faith and doubt, between the authority of the Church and the liberty of thought, and between the ideals and the actual pursuits did not so far receive a succinctly comprehensive treatment. Professor Weisenburger offers in this volume an illuminating study of the impact of this conflict on the lives of the leading Americans who underwent an ordeal of faith in grappling with the intellectual revolution.

The seventeen chapters of this interesting volume are of interest to the sociologist, to the historian, and to the student of Christianity. In a racy style, the author takes us through the lives of many dis-

tinguished Americans who managed not to lose their faith in the Church.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

FRENCH

INTRODUCTION À L' ASIE. BY JEAN HERBERT. *Published by Editions Albin Michel, 22 Rue Huyghens, Paris (14 e). 1960. Pages 691. Price 27 nF.*

This is a highly documented work, embodying a vast study of almost every aspect of Asian life. In this scholarly work, practically nothing is left out: Religions, Syntheses, Man and Universe, Time, Space, Causality, Logic and Symbolism, Individual, Family, Morals and Sexuality, External Politics, Economic and Juridical Aspects, Science, and Art form some of the most important chapters. Detailed bibliography, index, and contents have added further to the utility of this magnificent work.

As the author indicates, till recently the study of Asian cultures was nothing more than 'an intellectual pastime'. But today, many Europeans have realized the importance of the study of the Asian spirit and life, and so 'the immense contribution of Asia to human patrimony' is appreciated nowadays. An 'integral vision of the world and of mankind' is thus emerging.

All the difficulties in the study of 'occidental orientalism' are enumerated. The European who studies the Orient with a superiority complex 'will understand nothing of the Orient'. Neither the European officers, nor the militarists, nor the missionaries were placed 'in conditions particularly favourable' for an understanding of Asia. The author has therefore undertaken the study of Asia with detachment and a proper 'attitude of sympathy'. It is this approach which gives the book its great value.

A veritable mine of interesting details, the book is a guide to research workers and the lay readers alike. It is interesting to note that the knowledge of the *Āyurveda* had spread to distant Mongolia and Siberia very early, and that the *Caraka-siddhānta* anticipated Harvey's theories by fifteen centuries. The book introduces Asia not only to the Europeans, but also to the Asians themselves to a great extent.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE



NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MANGALORE

REPORT FROM JANUARY 1960 TO MARCH 1961

During the period under review, the activities of this centre were as follows:

The Boys' Home: It maintains poor and meritorious students, irrespective of caste or creed, and provides them with free board, lodging, stationery, clothing, etc. The special feature is that the boys themselves manage the affairs of the Home. The boys participate in the daily routine of the Ashrama. They are given moral training and also taught the chanting of sacred scriptures and singing of devotional songs. Number of boarders at the end of the year: Higher Elementary School: 9; High School: 23; and College: 10; Total: 42.

The Charitable Dispensary: Number of patients treated: New cases: 8,254; Repeated cases: 37,733; Total: 45,987. (Injection therapy: 3,227; Dental extractions: 150; Laboratory investigations: 473.)

Needs of this centre:

1. Endowment for the maintenance of poor students: Rs. 360 per boy per annum.
2. A dormitory: Rs. 30,000.
3. Bedding and clothing for the boys.
4. A permanent endowment procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 500 for the maintenance of the dispensary.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA KALLAI, CALICUT

REPORT FROM JANUARY 1959 TO MARCH 1961

Educational Activities: These consist of a secondary school, a primary school, and a students' home for boys.

(i) *The Secondary School:* Strength in March 1961: 855 (boys: 526; girls: 329). Staff: 35. Facilities for extra-curricular activities such as A.C.C., Boys' Scout, Girls' Guide, etc. are provided, and excursions to places of educational interest are arranged.

(ii) *The Primary School:* Strength: 521 (boys: 292; girls: 229). Staff: 10.

(iii) *The Students' Home:* Strength: 68 boys in 1959 and 72 in 1960. Donations are needed for

the construction of a good building for the Home, with necessary equipments and conveniences, so as to accommodate 100 boys.

The Charitable Dispensary: Number of patients treated: 1959: 29,810; 1960-61: 48,073. Average daily attendance: 200.

Milk Distribution: During the period under review, 7,500 lb. of powdered milk was distributed to about 350 children and patients daily.

Social and Cultural Activities: Daily worship, bhajanas, etc. were conducted in the Ashrama, and various religious festivals were celebrated. Lectures on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda were also organized.

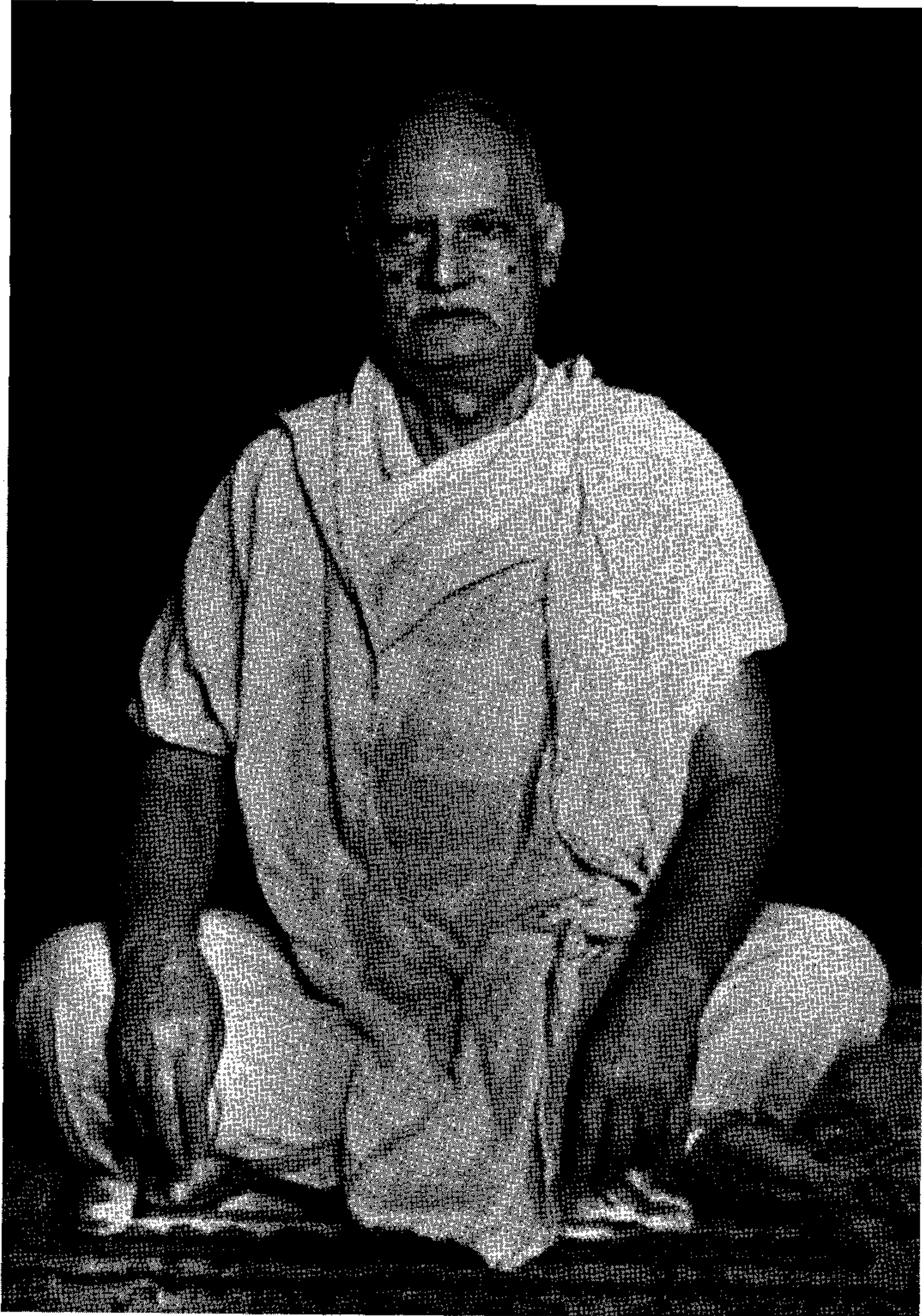
A community hall was declared open on the 9th October 1959, where twenty cultural and religious meetings were held during 1960-61.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BOMBAY FLOOD RELIEF WORK IN KUTCH AND SURAT: 1959-61

As a result of unprecedented rainfall in Kutch during July 1959, and the ravages of the river Tapti in Surat district during September 1959, both these areas suffered heavy loss of property, cattle, and houses. The Bombay branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, in collaboration with the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot, undertook flood relief work in these places, the details of which are as follows:

In Kutch: Total amount spent: Rs. 3,32,625.29 nP. An amount of Rs. 12,372.06 nP. was spent on the distribution of food-grains for immediate relief. In all, 4,300 families of 224 villages were helped with 4,391 pieces of blankets and an amount of Rs. 99,618.16 nP. A colony of 70 tenements was built at a cost of Rs. 1,90,000 on the outskirts of the town of Bhuj.

In Surat: In 57 villages, 49,510 persons were helped with clothing, blankets, and cash doles. The middle-class poor families were also helped with cash. Total amount spent on these items: Rs. 5,59,407.25 nP. An amount of Rs. 1,81,763 was spent on the construction of huts and prayer halls in various colonies. A damaged mosque was repaired, and a new library was also constructed.



SWAMI SANKARANANDA
(*Mahasamadhi on 13th January, 1962*)