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Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

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



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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Message from the President	161
Spiritual Talks of Swami Shivananda	162
Education— <i>Editorial</i>	166
The Vedic Testimony and Its Speciality—2— <i>By Swami Satprakashananda</i> ..	172

CONTENTS (*Contd.*)

	<i>Page</i>
Man or Machine?— <i>By Dr. (Mrs.) Sarasvati Chennakesavan</i>	182
Two Voices Come to Us— <i>By Swami Budhananda</i>	186
The Conception of the Free Will— <i>By Sri C. C. Chatterji</i>	194
Notes and Comments	196
Reviews and Notices	198
News and Reports	200

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No. 4



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have great pleasure in sending herewith my good wishes to *Prabuddha Bharata* and, through it, to its numerous readers spread over the different parts of the world.

Prabuddha Bharata was started under the inspiration of the great Swami Vivekananda to work for the regeneration of our motherland and to spread the message of the harmony of all religions and universal brotherhood to mankind at large. During its useful career of nearly seven decades, *Prabuddha Bharata* has been contributing creditably towards the fulfilment of these ends. But its task is not over, and much yet remains to be done. Man, today, more than at any other time, needs the reassuring conviction of the power of goodness and firm faith in himself to work out his salvation, which lies in the manifestation of the divinity inherent in each soul. That reawakening to his real nature will help man reconstruct a new social order, where love will replace hatred, and where jealousy and suspicion will give way to mutual confidence and goodwill. Then only will man live at peace with himself and his neighbour and enjoy real happiness of life.

May *Prabuddha Bharata* be instrumental in the advancement of this happiness is my earnest prayer to Sri Ramakrishna.

BELUR MATH

8th March 1962

Swami Vishuddhananda

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Belur Math, July 15, 1930

Many monks have been coming to the Math today from early morning, as though to witness some celebration, till quite a crowd has gathered round Mahapurushji. He, too, has been talking with them about God and spiritual matters without respite, thus satisfying all the inquirers. At about half past three in the afternoon, an attendant announced: 'Maharaj, Ya— wants to come in to meet you. He is extremely eager for the interview; and so he telephoned to us seeking for permission.'

'He came here but the other day, and had a long talk', said Mahapurushji. 'What disquiet could he have developed in the meantime? What does it matter if a man should receive basketfuls of instruction? He must understand these and act accordingly. Nothing will avail otherwise, my son. They go on repeating, "The mind is very much restless". Yet, they will not act up to my advice. Can peace be restored thus? The scriptures are full of instructions, to be sure; but can anyone make any progress by merely reading the scriptures? One has to fulfil those instructions in life. "The weather forecast promises plenty of rainfall," said the Master, "but you will not get a drop by rinsing the chart that presents this." So also, you may mix with holy men and study the scriptures; but unless you practise, nothing will avail. And I do not like anyone to sit so close by me while talking; I cannot bear their breath. At times, I have to undergo the ordeal out of other considerations. That is why I often stand up when it becomes unbearable. Besides, my boy, I cannot go on talking endlessly like that. My mental make-up is of a different sort. I talk, because I have to. But they have no idea how much mental fatigue all this brings to me. I like keeping to myself; that's bliss. But even so, do I

forbid anyone to come? That is not a fact. I know that they are staunch devotees, though rather emotional. They think that it is all so easy. Is that really so? One has to undergo long hardship for that. It requires quite a lot of self-control, and intense spiritual struggle. One wavers and moves from one person to another, only when one's own conviction is not firm. Do you know the real meaning of all this? They lack true love for God, real hankering. Can anyone run about searching for the best water all one's life, if one has a real thirst? He has come to the Master, and taken shelter with him. But he would not consider that enough; he would have something more. Neither has he love, nor steadfastness. Stick to the Master and follow him in your own way; and you will get everything in time. That's why the Master often sang:

"Keep to thyself, O my mind, run not to
others' houses;
Search within thy heart; whatever thou
wantest shall be thine without much ado.
This indeed is a priceless philosophers'
stone; it grants all desires.
What a number of gems lie scattered at the
portals of the dancing hall that thy mind is!"

'One should stick on with such conviction. God is the blissful Self of all, and He is inside every heart. He lets everyone know whatever is needed. It is He who fulfils all desires if one but prays with earnestness. He is the ordainer of all the desired results of everybody. It is He who vouchsafes all the fruits that people want—be these virtue, secular prosperity, enjoyment, or liberation. One has to tread steadily the path indicated by a perfect *guru*. This is a difficult path, my son. One must needs have steadfastness, faith, and above all untiring diligence. As a man can never get water if he goes on shift-

ing his site for a well as soon as he strikes hard ground, so also an aspirant can never succeed in his spiritual quest if he cannot continue in the same path with perseverance. Such a man can never reach God. I feel sorry for him, because I know so much about him. What a fickle-minded man! He has no depth; he takes everything so lightly! It is no good to be so unsteady about one's own position and to frequent all sorts of places and mix with all sorts of people. That shatters one's own conviction. "Say yea, yea to all, but sit tight at your own place." (This he repeated several times.) "One's own place"—that is to say, what the Master called "one's own spiritual mood". One must get firmly established in one's own spiritual mood, one must get that mood fully matured. And yet one must live in harmony with all.' Then, as though addressing the devotee of whom he was talking, he said: 'I tell you what, my son; you will get the highest joy from the Master's name itself, you will get everything from his name—be it spiritual ecstasy or God-absorption. But everything must take its own time. Besides, you are a householder; and you have your own worldly duties. Well, I understand your going to some solitary place now and then. Solitary living is very fruitful, as the Master pointed out. But this does not mean that you will not make any spiritual progress at all without that. One has to obey the directions of somebody with all sincerity. That is why the scriptures speak of placing oneself under a *guru*. A perfect *guru* informs the disciple of the correct path; he sets him on the road.'

He continued: 'What do they understand of spirituality? We have seen quite a lot of such so-called paroxysms of divine impulse. That is not what the Master taught. All that is a sort of stunt for popularity. That is rather a source of evil. The Master would say, "When you meditate, do so (secretly) within your mind, in a solitary corner, or in a forest". Those who belong to

a lower grade of aspirants are given to showing off their spiritual attainments; they seek popularity. Why is anybody so eager for external expression? That only betrays that such a man is not fully established in his own special path. It will not do to be over-eager. One has to get deeply absorbed in spiritual exercises; one must strengthen one's spiritual mood in one's own mind. One may get a temporary enthusiasm by noticing somebody else's spiritual fervour; but then one must remember that all such men had to pass through hard struggle. All had to practise for long with diligence, and then only they had the grace of God. As a matter of fact, God does become gracious when one is sincere. There is no injustice in His domain; He is just to all. He that wants gets Him. His compassion is on all; in fact, He is only too eager to help all. Call on Him earnestly, and He is there for you. But they have neither the desire, nor will they make any attempt. Instead, there is only so much of fickle-mindedness and complaint that they are not getting anything, that they are not making any progress. It does not all come in a day. It needs introspection, and along with that regular practice. One need have no worry if one but has regular spiritual practice; peace is bound to come. Let them but make some effort to see if the result is true or not. Tell him that he need not come to me now. I told him everything necessary on that very day. Let him now do accordingly if he would have peace.'

The attendant kept on thinking: 'Aha! How very solicitous he is for every devotee's welfare; how deeply he feels and thinks for them!'

Belur Math, December 21, 1930

Tomorrow is the birthday of the Holy Mother, when some young men of renunciation will be initiated into the vow of *brahmacharya*. In connection with that, Mahapurushji said: 'It is excellent to study the scriptures as a matter of daily

duty; for it constitutes a form of spiritual exercise. At the first instance, the *brahmacārins* should study the *Gītā* carefully. What other book can compare with the *Gītā*? How exquisite! It sets forth all the spiritual paths of knowledge, devotion, selfless work, and *yoga*. What I like most in the *Gītā* is where the Lord Himself holds out the promise to His devotee by saying: "O son of Kuntī, boldly may you announce that my devotee can never miss the mark." Aha! What an encouraging promise! He is very solicitous for those who take shelter with Him. One who takes refuge at His feet with all sincerity can have no more misgiving; He protects him in every way. Aha! What compassion! But such is the cosmic illusion woven by the Great Mother that man cannot understand even this incomparable compassion! And unless God is gracious, nobody can escape out of this illusion, be he ever so learned or wise. It is only when He removes a little this covering of *māyā* that a man can understand how great this grace is.

"This Self cannot be known through much study, nor through the intellect, nor through much hearing. He is attainable by him to whom He becomes gracious; To him, He reveals His true nature" (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I.2.23).

'What great heroes were Alexander the Great, Napoleon, and Kaiser, who had the power of breaking the world into pieces, as it were! From the worldly point of view, they were great heroes, no doubt. And yet, they were mere bubbles in this stream of creation that has been flowing eternally. They cannot cut through the meshes of this *māyā*, no matter how great their power is. And till that can be done, nothing in this world avails; this human birth remains unfulfilled till then. For that, one needs God's grace. And the Lord Himself has pointed out the secret of getting that grace: "Consecrate your mind to Me, be-devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, and salute Me. Devoting yourself to Me, and acting in this way, you

will reach Me alone. Giving up all other rites and ceremonies, take shelter in Me alone; I shall save you from all sins. Free yourself from all misgivings" (*Gītā*, XVIII. 65-66).'

When a certain devotee requested him for initiation, he said: 'I have nothing esoteric about my process of initiation. All that I know is that a man will become free if he but takes the name of Sri Ramakrishna, the incarnation for this age. Anyone who will take shelter with him will surely be saved by him. This is what is ordained for this age. The Master said that the coins of the age of the Mogul emperors do not pass current now. The name of Sri Ramakrishna is the *mantra* for this age. What else can initiation mean? The Master himself is the initiation. I tell you, my son, I know nothing of the initiation according to the Tantras that the priests resort to. Do but make a *japa* of his name; and pray whole-heartedly, "O Lord, be kind to me". If the prayer proceeds from the heart, he will surely hear. The Master himself said: "He who came as Rāma, and he who came as Kṛṣṇa, has descended here again" (and with that, he pointed to his own body). Well, my son, this is a declaration from the lips of God Himself, this is the message of the incarnation for this age. One will attain freedom in this age by merely calling on the Master. If you are ready to live with this blind faith, I am also ready to teach you whatever I know without any reserve. Otherwise, you can depart and have your logic-chopping to your heart's content; and then come when the time arrives. This is not fanaticism; this is a felt truth. We know it for certain that the Master is none other than the eternal supreme Brahman Itself. One must have this faith. You are a good boy; you are intelligent, as well as learned; you are energetic and enthusiastic, too. You have read much, and you may read more. But, along with all that, you have to get your mind fixed. Develop a love for God in your heart, be earnest, and call on Him. Then you will find that every-

thing will be fulfilled in time. Make your mind ready. "When the flower blooms, the bee comes of itself", said the Master. This is why I ask you to open out the lotus of your heart first, and the *guru's* grace will come of itself. He knows everybody's heart: He is within your own heart, as the Soul of your soul. He will reveal everything when the time is ripe.

'It is good to have high worldly aspiration. But you had that for so long. Now, should you not try to acquire the knowledge of the Self? This is the highest ambition in life—to know God. Be up and doing. Concentrate all your energy and direct it to that end with all your might, so that you may be blessed with true life.'

As the devotee was eager for initiation, Mahapurushji agreed to this.

Belur Math, December 22, 1930

It was the birthday of the Holy Mother. From early morning, Mahapurushji had been calling on the Mother, as though he was a little child dependent on his mother. With folded hands and closed eyes, he prayed: 'Mother, Mother, O Thou Great Mother, glory be unto you, glory be unto you! Mother, grant us devotion, faith, full faith, knowledge, detachment, love, concentration, and God-absorption. Do good to this organization of the Master, do good to the whole world.' He sat silent for a while, and then added: 'We have no devotion, and so we cannot fully realize the greatness of days like this. Is this an ordinary day? This is the birthday of the Great Mother. It was the Great Mother Herself who took birth on this day for the good of the world and its creatures. It is hard to understand how God plays by accepting human bodies. How can one understand unless He makes one do so out of His grace? How commonplace a life she led! How hidden remained her spiritual

stature, as though she were in disguise! How little can we understand her! The Master alone knew her properly. He told me one day: "The Mother that is in that (Kālī) temple, and the mother who lives in the concert tower are the same." The next one who knew her was Swamiji. Ah, what a deep reverence he had for the Holy Mother! He said that it was because of the blessing of the Holy Mother that he could go to the other shore of the sea and conquer it.'

As the monks came in one by one to salute him, he kept on asking most of them, 'Did you see the Mother?' The number of devotees was rather great, it being a Sunday. About three thousand devotees, both men and women, had *prasāda* at noon. When it was very cloudy in the morning, many had feared that it would rain and mar the celebration. When an old monk expressed some concern on this score, Mahapurushji kept silent for a while and then said: 'No, there is no fear. By the Mother's grace, there will be no trouble. She is the maker of good, and she will do good to all.' Ganguddhar Maharaj (Swami Akhandananda) came to join the celebration in the afternoon. Mahapurushji was very glad to meet him. A party was singing *Caṇḍī-kīrtana* at the Holy Mother's temple. This was the first performance there of this kind, and Mahapurushji kept on enquiring, every now and then, how it was progressing. Lastly, he said: 'The name of our Holy Mother is Sarada (which means Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning). The Mother is none other than Sarasvatī. It is she who grants illumination out of her grace. Illumination means the knowledge of God. One can have true and firm devotion only when one is vouchsafed this knowledge, and not otherwise. Pure knowledge and pure devotion are the same. And all that comes from the grace of the Mother alone. Knowledge is dispensed at her bidding.'

EDUCATION

In Swami Vivekananda's scheme of India's regeneration, education occupies a pivotal position. It is the panacea recommended by him for the cure of all social ailments as also for the advancement of man in all other fields. To this problem, he paid great attention, it being a necessary prerequisite for the success of his other plans. Of course, he did not study it elaborately as a topic by itself like any other pedagogue. This was in a way a blessing; for being free from the technicalities of pedagogy and having his mind fixed on the broader background on which education has to play its part, and the values it has to preserve and perpetuate, he could speak like a prophet who inspires and leads, rather than a reformer who breaks more than he reconstructs or a schoolmaster who follows the beaten track. His utterances, in this field, therefore, were revolutionary when judged by the beliefs and practices obtaining in his days. Though he had no occasion to speak elaborately on education as such, yet the India of those days was in a ferment of thoughts and plans for betterment, so that others put questions to him often enough to draw out vignettes of short observances, which when pieced together make a wonderful complete picture.

Swamiji's emphasis on the need of education in any scheme of national advancement finds support even today in the utterance of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: 'I regret to say that the schemes of development adopted by the Centre and the States do not pay attention to this most important of all problems, the education of the youths of the country. Our whole experiment in democracy will suffer if education is not given top priority. The future leadership of the country will be imperilled if university education is allowed to deteriorate for lack of financial support.' Swami Vivekananda would have gladly subscribed to this warning; only he would have gone

further to urge the need of education on all levels of society as also for all age groups. Again, he would have drawn pointed attention not only to general education, but also to the formation of character. Without suggesting in the least that modern educators do not agree with Swamiji in his contention for both depth and expanse, we do maintain that he was one of the earliest leaders of thought in India who felt that both the connotation and denotation of the term education needed a re-appraisal.

What was his conception of education? 'The true education, however, is not yet conceived of among us', he remarked in the course of an interview. 'And how would you define that?' asked the interviewer. 'I never define anything', replied the Swami. 'Still it may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words; or as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently.' It was all-round, man-making education that he aimed at. And he added, 'I look upon religion as the innermost core of education. Mind, I do not mean my own, or any one else's opinion about religion. I think the teacher should take the pupil's starting point in this, as in other respects, and enable her to develop along her own line of least resistance' (*Complete Works*, Vol. V. pp. 231-32). Swamiji was then speaking in connection with women's education. But the remarks apply to education in general.

Elsewhere, he made two pithy statements about education and religion, which may be accepted for all practical purposes as his definition of the two terms: 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man.' His conclusion from these two axiomatic truths was: 'Therefore the only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off! as I always

say, and everything will be right' (C.W., Vol. IV. p. 358).

Certain ideas stand out clearly from these observances, which are elaborated by him elsewhere. The child must form for ever the centre of all educational endeavour. His growth must be from within and not by a process of conditioning from outside. With faith in the child's innate goodness, the teacher is to help him or her to grow according to his or her natural capacity. The teacher is not to infuse his own personality into the child's.

Education thus becomes a form of worship of the divinity in the child—the adoration of the Bālikā-Umā or the Bālaka-Nārāyaṇa as taught by and expressed in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Swamiji himself also said '*mūrkhadēvo bhava*—worship the ignorant as God'. He elevated the conception of education to that of adoration, and of schools to that of temples of learning, not in any figurative sense, but in actuality.

The need of moral education, particularly under the present-day atmosphere, has been stressed by all thinking men in India. We see patterns of behaviour which shock the older generation. There is growing juvenile delinquency and a rejection of all set patterns even of basic national cultures. While on one side we see tremendous advance in intellectual equipment, and material gain, on the other side we notice a disintegration of society, because the cement of moral and ethical standards and patterns of behaviour gradually melts away. We shall notice later on that this ethical backsliding and cultural alienation were noticed by Swami Vivekananda, who equally or even more forcefully regretted the trend. But he did not build his hope on mere moral rearmament, a mere raising up of the moral and cultural standards; rather he emphasized the more basic spiritual values. He was fully aware of communal conflicts; but this did not deter him from making spirituality the keystone of his educational edifice; for, in his conception,

spirituality was not a sectarian artificial appendage of man, but coeval with human nature itself, and admitting of infinite variation. It was something more fundamentally human than the mere religious expressions. According to him, it was possible for all educationists to co-operate on the basis of that universal spirituality.

II

To Swamiji's critical eyes, the system of education of those days suffered from several defects. It was anti-national in character, unpractical in attitude, and unmindful of the fundamental facts of human nature. 'In these modern days,' says he, 'there is a greater impetus towards higher education on the European lines. . . . The foreign conqueror is not there to do good to us; he wants money. . . . So these educational institutions of foreigners are simply to get a lot of useful practical slaves for a little money—to turn out a lot of clerks, postmasters, telegraph operators, and so on' (C. W., Vol. VIII. pp. 69-70).

Such an education did not make the Indians practical in the scientific or technological sense, nor did it solve the problem of poverty. 'What is the goal of your education?' he asks. His answer is that it helps one to become a clerk or a roguish lawyer, or, at the most, a deputy magistrate; and then, he flares up, 'Fie upon you. Is this education? . . . What good will it do you or the country at large? Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, proverbial for its wealth! Will your education fulfil this want? Never.' His solution was, 'With the help of Western science set yourselves to dig the earth and produce foodstuffs—not by means of mean servitude of others—but by discovering new avenues of production by your own exertions, aided by Western science' (C.W., Vol. VII. pp. 182-83).

Another defect of the prevailing system was that it was not broad-based, but catered only

to the needs of a few men at the top. The masses were entirely neglected and along with them the women, though India's hope lay in educating these two classes, rather than the upper ten thousand. 'The education imparted by the present university system reaches one or two per cent of the masses only. And even those who get that do not succeed in their endeavours of doing any good to their country' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 380); 'No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 222). He was aware of the fear in the minds of the upper classes all over the world that once the masses became educated, they would cease to be simply hewers of wood and drawers of water. But such cynicism he dismissed with the very pertinent question, 'Who constitute society—the millions, or you, I, and a few of others of the upper classes?' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 141) Elsewhere, we read: 'Who feels for them? They cannot find the light or education. . . . Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 58); 'Do you think there are *men* in our country, it is a Golgotha! There is some chance if you can impart education to the masses. Is there a greater strength than that of knowledge?' (*C.W.*, Vol. VI. p. 327)

The education imparted in the schools was negative; it denationalized the alumni, and cut them adrift from their cultural and spiritual moorings. In fact, this was a goal deliberately aimed at by the foreign rulers, as expressly stated by Macaulay: 'We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and intellect.' Macaulay left out religion, perhaps because the hybrid products of this foreign education could have no real love for their own-religion. Thus it was no exaggeration when Swami Vivekananda wrote: 'The school boy learns noth-

ing, but has everything of his broken down—want of *śraddhā* is the result' (*C.W.*, Vol. IV. pp. 483-84). Elaborating this idea, he said at another place: 'A negative education or any training that is based on negation is worse than death. The child is taken to school, and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies! By the time he is sixteen, he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless' (*C.W.*, Vol. III. pp. 301-2). 'The result of this, as noted by him, was that fifty years of such training had not produced any genius worthy of mention.

Another defect mentioned by the Swami was that the aim of education was not man-making, but rather turning him into a working machine by cramming and polishing the outside. He asks in disgust: 'What use in polishing up the outside when there is no inside?' (*C.W.*, Vol. II. p. 15) Cramming cannot certainly turn a child into a genius. It cannot impart to him that bold thinking, fearless enterprise, personal magnetism, and leadership through which a whole society can be galvanized. 'Now, consider, is that education as a result of which the will being continuously choked by force through generations is now well-nigh killed out, under whose sway—why mention new ideas—even the old ideas are disappearing one by one? Is that education which is slowly making man a machine?' (*C.W.*, Vol. IV. p. 490)

The whole effect of this exigent system of education has been summed up by the Swami in one beautiful paragraph: 'We have had a negative education all along from our boyhood. We have only learnt that we are nobodies. Seldom are we given to understand that great men were ever born in our country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet! We master all the facts and figures concerning the ancestors of the English, but we are

sadly unmindful about our own. We have learnt only weakness. Being a conquered race, we have brought ourselves to believe that we are weak and have no independence in anything. So how can it be but that the *śraddhā* is lost?' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 332) Each word here was not only true to fact, but also very bold for one to utter in the beginning of 1898, when the Indian nation remained still stupefied by the splendour of everything Western and awed by the brute force of the British Lion.

Swamiji, of course, admitted that the prevalent system of education was not wholly bad. It had its good points, to be sure. But its negative nature outweighed all its good features. The rectification lay in a system of national education to be formulated and conducted by Indians themselves. It was a sign of imbecility to rely on the foreign rulers, to deliver the goods for us. 'We must have a hold on the spiritual and secular education of the nation. Do you understand that? You must dream it, you must talk it, you must think it, and you must work it out' (*C.W.*, Vol. III. p. 301).

III

As between the influences of heredity and environment, Swamiji stressed the need of good parentage without overlooking the effect of planned uplift. He believed that moral and spiritual children can be expected only when the parents are good. 'Education and all these things come afterwards—are a mere bagatelle. You are what you are born' (*C.W.*, Vol. VIII. p. 60). That apart, a nation could be elevated through general education alone. 'Strength must come to the nation through education' (*C.W.*, Vol. VIII. p. 267). It is education that makes the difference between nation and nation: 'The whole difference between the West and the East is in this: They are nations, we are not, i.e. civilization, education here (in the West) is general, it

penetrates into the masses' (*C.W.*, Vol. VIII. p. 306). Education broadens the outlook, and intellectual understanding generates sympathy, thus leading to greater national cohesion. By education has been roused the Brahman, the faith in one's Self in the West, while through ignorance that power has been covered up in the East. To gain national faith, power, co-operation, and integration, the masses have to be educated. If they cannot come to education for reasons of poverty, education must come to them through popular talks, magic lantern shows, and so on. We must remember that silent pictures and talkies had not come into vogue then, and compulsory mass education was not even dreamt of in the nineteenth century.

India's future was linked up with the uplift of the masses through education: 'The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land . . . among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it . . . by spreading education among the masses' (*C.W.*, Vol. IV. p. 482). Education is bound to bring about revolutionary changes in India, or rather help her to regain the glory she lost through centuries of foreign rule, which divided her society into water-tight compartments and enervated the whole nation.

Education there must be. 'But the root is religion.' It is man-making education that is needed—education that will build up character, bring faith in oneself and one's tradition, and make one stand on one's feet. On the contrary, 'our pedagogues are making parrots of our boys, and ruining their brains by cramming a lot of subjects into them' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 366). Giving his own ideas of the type of education he would have, he said: 'The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education' (*C.W.*, Vol. IV. p. 490). 'The ideal of all education, all training should be man-

making' (*C.W.*, Vol. II. p. 15). Education should not aim merely at imparting information; it should pay more attention to the laws and methods of development of personality. This is the great secret of training that the Indian religious systems, and specially *yoga*, discovered. *Brahmacarya*, concentration of mind, living in close contact with a saintly man, devoting all one's energy to the highest ideal—these and such other methods constituted the ancient system of education in India, and these have to be revived.

Given such things, a formal schooling is not always necessary. Swamiji quoted the Upaniṣadic story of Satyakāma Jābāla, who got enlightenment simply by tending cattle under his teacher's behest and living a pure life in the midst of natural surroundings. The same effect of character, sincerity, and devotedness to an ideal are illustrated by the Upaniṣadic stories of Upakosala Kāmalāyana and Naciketas.

In Swamiji's scheme of education, personal contact played a very important role. 'My idea of education', said he, 'is personal contact with the teacher—*gurugṛha-vāsa* (living with the *guru*). Without the personal life of the teacher, there would be no education' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 224). In another context, he said: 'The old institution of living with the *guru*, and similar systems of imparting education are needed. What we want are Western science, coupled with Vedānta, *brahmacarya* as the guiding motto, and also *śraddhā* and faith in one's own self' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 366). All this was necessary if education was to conform to the ideal he aimed at. For he asserted: 'Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole

library' (*C.W.*, Vol. III. p. 302).

As regards the content of education, he stood for all-round growth—physical, mental, emotional, practical, aesthetic, and spiritual. We have noted that in Swamiji's scheme of education, the secular could not be alienated from the spiritual. We need not stress that point any further. To ensure the child's faith in and allegiance to Indian culture, he would have him study the national history. He should know the glory of the past so that he can have greater faith in the destiny and mission of his motherland. India of yore had a very eminent place among the nations of those days; and if foreign machination presents that antiquity in a dimmer light, the whole history has to be rewritten so as to accord with facts. In reality, there is nothing to be ashamed of in our past; rather, in the past lies a power to inspire generations of Indians yet in the womb of futurity. And Sanskrit must be given its due place of honour; for in Sanskrit is embedded the very life-force of the nation. It was the neglect of Sanskrit that brought in all this loss of self-confidence and denationalization. In Sanskrit lies the hope of cultural integrity and a fresh resurgence.

At the same time, India stood in great need of Western sciences and technology. Swami Vivekananda was fully aware of this. And so even in the days before the Parliament of Religions (September 1893), the American papers reported that 'he (Swami Vivekananda) said Americans, instead of sending out missionaries to train them in religion, would better send someone out to give them industrial education' (*C.W.*, Vol. III. p. 467). The same theme was taken up by him and emphasized almost every time he spoke about the reconstruction of education in India. The need is as acute today as it was seventy years ago.

IV

Swami Vivekananda studied the problem of women's education a little more in detail,

perhaps because this was sadly neglected in those days, and their intellectual uplift, according to his belief, was the *sine qua non* for India's progress. The contrast with the educated women of the West might also have urged him to think seriously about their betterment. But howsoever keen he might have been about this intellectual advancement of Indian womanhood, in one thing he was uncompromising: the women were to solve their own problems including that of education, man's part being only to help them from a distance. It is out of such a paramount consideration that he brought Sister Nivedita from the West and trained her as a Hindu woman to organize women's education in India: for just then he could not get any educated woman from India who would volunteer to work out his ideas faithfully. Later on, Sister Christine, another of his Western disciples, devoted herself to this very task. Thus was inaugurated in a very humble way a girls' school in the northern parts of Calcutta, which later grew into a full-fledged high school under the name Sister Nivedita Girls' School. At present, it forms the nucleus of multifarious educational activities by a band of nuns dedicated to working out Swamiji's programme of education for women.

As in the case of boys, so also in the case of the girls, he advocated late marriage; but this period had to be utilized for proper education, of which he spoke thus: 'I do not mean the present system, but something in the line of positive teaching. . . . We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's feet' (*C.W.*, Vol. V. p. 342). He believed that with such an education women would solve their own problems, and from them would arise great leaders of society as in the days of yore.

In his scheme of women's education, the *brahmacārinīs* and nuns, living in convents, were to play a dominant part; for in their

lives would be combined all that was best in the ideal of Indian womanhood—self-sacrifice, modesty, meditateness, spirituality—with all that is best in the West—intellectual attainment, practicality, boldness, freedom, and self-confidence. The educational edifice for the girls, more than that for the boys, had to be built around some temple. Their curriculum had to provide ample scope for worship, prayer, meditation, cultivation of the arts and sciences, and other essential household duties. 'Religion, arts, science, housekeeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene—the simple essential points in these subjects ought to be taught to our women. It is not good to let them touch novels and fictions' (*C.W.*, Vol. VI. p. 493). He would not, however, be satisfied with mere rituals: 'Their education must be an eye-opener in all matters. Ideal characters must always be presented before the view of the girls to imbue them with a devotion to lofty principles of selflessness' (*C.W.*, Vol. VI. p. 494). In this connection, he cited the glorious illustrations of Sītā, Sāvitrī, Damayantī, Līlavatī, Khanā, and Mīrā. And we know that he admired the courage of the Rani of Jhansi and the Rajput women of Chitor, which he would have the Indian girls emulate.

Often enough, he was reminded of the pitfalls attending the attempts at women's education in those days. Nothing discouraged, the Swami eulogized the little success attained by the pioneers in this field, and pointed out that they failed because they dissociated women's education from religion. The alumni as well as the workers in this field must lead a strict religious life. Nor was he to be deterred by the plea that the products of the prevalent system of education were not in many ways a social asset; for, according to him, all societies had defects. What mattered was the earnest endeavour that any society made for progress through education of the right type. 'Educate, educate', that was the first and last word he would utter.

One more aspect of education that engaged his attention was the training of a band of teachers, both men and women, who would be monks and nuns devoted to a life of selfless service for the spread of education among the masses and the women. They would be trained in monasteries, convents, and theological colleges. Themselves leading the purest of lives, they would show to others how the so-called secular life can be spiritualized, how breadth of intellectual outlook can be combined with spiritual insight. 'The modern system of education gives no facility for the development of the knowledge of Brahman. We must found *brahmacarya* homes as in times of old. But now we must lay their foundations on a broad basis, that is to say, we must introduce a good deal of change into it to suit the requirements of the

times' (C.W., Vol. VI. pp. 158-59). The modern 'root and branch reformers' had to be well grounded in the national culture, and yet well versed in the Western. He recommended for his monastic order all kinds of work that helped others and removed some felt want. But education occupied a special place in his conception of neo-monasticism. 'Our work should be mainly educational,' said he, 'both moral and intellectual' (C.W., Vol. VII. p. 495). In the Middle Ages, the monks, following on the footsteps of the Buddhists, had laid too much stress on world negation. The monks and nuns themselves, therefore, had now to take the lead in reorientating the educational system to suit modern needs, for they are still the recognized leaders of Hindu society.

THE VEDIC TESTIMONY AND ITS SPECIALITY—2

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from previous issue)

7. *The universal sympathy and all-comprehensiveness of the Śruti. Its object is to lead men and women at all levels of life to the highest goal by providing methods suited to their individual capacities.*

A spiritual aspirant worships God for God's sake. Whether he conceives Him as *saguṇa* or *nirguṇa*, he accepts Him as the ideal, as the goal. But there are many more believers in God who worship Him not for His sake, but for secular interests here and hereafter. Indeed, a vast majority of human beings hanker after the temporal, and not the eternal. The Vedas have not been callous to such men and women, but have taken their case into full consideration, and laid progressive courses for their spiritual unfoldment. The Vedic religion is, broadly speaking, a twofold way :

the path of prosperity and the path of perfection, characterized respectively by desire and dispassion. It teaches how the seeker of prosperity and pleasure, by the legitimate fulfilment of his desires through the performance of duties and righteous deeds, can gradually outgrow sense attachment and develop the spirit of renunciation and a yearning for God-realization. Thus, the path of prosperity, regulated by ethical principles and religious observances, is intended to lead the seeker to the path of perfection, regulated by spiritual disciplines and ideals; the ultimate goal of the two ways being one and the same—the attainment of Nirguṇa Brahman.

Both sections of the Vedas, *karma-kāṇḍa*, dealing with sacrificial rites and duties, and *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, dealing with spiritual knowl-

edge, have one common end in view : to lead human individuals of varying capacities and conditions of life to final liberation. For this supreme purpose, they have prescribed many forms of ritualistic worship, duties of different social orders and stages of individual life, and gradations of moral rules and spiritual disciplines including methods of meditation. Says Śāṅkara : 'The section of the Vedas dealing with knowledge has the same import as that dealing with rites.'⁵⁴ The reason is that the rites and duties are preparatory to knowledge by which Brahman is attained. They purify and quiet the mind.

The Vedas have prescribed sacrificial rites and ceremonies not only for specific results in a man's life here, but also for more durable and satisfying results in his life hereafter. By these latter observances, a seeker of welfare can acquire merit even for attaining to *svarga-loka*, the celestial region, which is the highest plane of sense-fulfilment. But the aspirant has to meet two pre-conditions. In the first place, he must have faith in the continuity of the soul's existence after death. Secondly, he must follow the path of virtue. 'The Vedas (the Vedic rites) do not sanctify an unrighteous person', says an ancient law-giver.⁵⁵ 'A man devoid of good conduct is not entitled to the Vedic rituals', remarks Śāṅkara in citing the above passage.⁵⁶

'One should practise non-injury to all living beings' is a general Vedic precept. But this can be followed especially by those who are capable of self-control. In order to encourage others lacking in self-restraint to abstain from violence, provision has been made for the killing of animals in certain sacrificial rites as an exception to the general instruction.⁵⁷ Such relaxation of hard and fast rules often serves as an incentive to the practice of self-restraint by those who are

not used to it. In the Vedic culture, righteousness is the essential pre-requisite for material well-being as well as for spiritual attainment.

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that a special characteristic of the Śruti is its universal sympathy and all-comprehensiveness. We have seen that it recognizes the differences in the capacities of the aspirants (*adhikāri-bheda*) and prescribes a variety of moral and religious courses to suit different types and grades of individuals. Various are the approaches to one and the same goal—this is the keynote of the Vedic way of life. The same supreme Being is variously conceived by the human mind according to its capacity. One transcendental Reality underlies all diversity and is the indwelling self in every living being. On this insight rests the universality of the Vedas. From time immemorial, the Śruti has declared to all humanity this eternal truth : 'Reality is One, sages call It by different names'⁵⁸ ; 'One Reality is variously conceived'⁵⁹ ; 'One effulgent Being is manifest in many ways'⁶⁰ ; 'Thou art one, but hast penetrated diverse forms'⁶¹ ; and so on. The authoritativeness of the Śruti is due as much to the affirmation of incontrovertible truth as to its divine origin.

Says Swami Vivekananda : 'And as the Vedas are the only scriptures which teach this real absolute God, of which all other ideas of God are but minimized and limited visions ; and as the *sarva-loka-hitaiṣiṇī* Śruti (the Veda, the well-wisher of all the world) takes the devotee gently by the hand, and leads him from one stage to another, through all the stages that are necessary for him to travel to reach the Absolute ; and as all other religions represent one or other of these stages in unprogressive and crystallized forms, all the other religions of the world are included in the nameless, limitless, eternal Vedic

⁵⁴ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.4.22.

⁵⁵ *Vāsiṣṭha Dharma-Sūtra*, VI.3.

⁵⁶ *Brahma-Sūtra*, III.1.10, commentary.

⁵⁷ Cf. *Bhāmati* on *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya* in the context that the Śāstras are for the unilluminated,

⁵⁸ *Rg-Veda*, I.164.49.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, X.114.5.

⁶⁰ *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, III.14.1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, III.14.3.

religion'⁶²; 'Although the supersensuous vision of truths is to be met with in some measure in the Purāṇas (mythologies) and Itihāsas (epics) and in the religious scriptures of other races, still the fourfold scriptures known among the Aryan race as the Vedas being the first, the most complete, and the most undistorted collection of spiritual truths, deserve to occupy the highest place among all scriptures, command the respect of all nations of the earth, and furnish the rationale of all their respective scriptures.'⁶³

8. *Not only Brahman (the supreme Being), but also dharma (moral ideal) is beyond the scope of normal experience and reason.*

The Vedas are the original source of the knowledge of Brahman and of the knowledge of *dharma* (moral ideal).⁶⁴ Spiritual and moral ideals leading to the ultimate goal are based on man's entire life—here, heretofore, and hereafter. They cannot be discovered by human reason dependent on normal experience. Neither *mokṣa* (liberation and its means) nor *dharma* (moral ideal) can be determined by perception or inference. Truly speaking, man cannot know what is right and what is wrong, until the mind becomes unbiased and free from egoism. His capacity for moral judgement requires some inner development, which is not possible without the practice of righteousness. It is the concensus of the Vedic teachers that virtue brightens intellect, while vice darkens it. Without the practice of virtue, reason does not grow, far less insight. In order to develop moral consciousness, a person has to make his life conform to ethical rules, which he must know from an authoritative source. If he depends on himself from the very beginning, his mind will be liable to self-deception; he will have a tendency to justify his wrong behaviour knowingly or unknow-

ingly. Hence, it can be reasonably held that man's moral evolution has not been purely a natural process. It must have been initiated by ethical principles set by a divine agency.

Morality in its lower forms, such as obedience to the government laws, or observance of social rules and conventions, or adherence to ethical conduct conducive to common secular interest, can be determined by normal intelligence. But the universal standard of morality, which is goodness for goodness's sake, which accepts disinterested love for all an ideal in itself, is based on the recognition of the spiritual relation among all beings irrespective of their physical and psychical differences, and cannot be established by ordinary human experience or reason. It requires the vision of one supreme Being dwelling in the heart of each and every individual as the inmost self. Basically, morality is the attunement of the individual self to the supreme Self. Unselfishness is the fundamental moral principle. Human reason, which is egoistic and secularistic in its outlook, cannot go beyond the ethics of enlightened self-interest.

Thus, in the last resort, the revealed texts have to be recognized as the final authority on man's moral ideal. So it is wise to hold to them for guidance. This is evident from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Arjuna: 'He who, disregarding the directions of the Śāstra, acts under the impulse of desire, attains no ability, nor happiness, nor the supreme goal. Therefore, let the Śāstra be your authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having ascertained what is prescribed or prohibited by the Śāstra, you should act here in this world.'⁶⁵ A person has to depend on the authority of the Śāstra for moral guidance until he is capable of discriminating the self from the not-self and is free from the delusion of the body-idea.

⁶² *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. IV, p. 289.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 155.

⁶⁴ Sāyana's commentary on the *Rg-Veda*, Introduction.

⁶⁵ *Bhagavad-Gītā*, XVI, 23, 24.

With the development of spiritual consciousness, morality becomes a part of his nature. No more does he need any direction for right conduct. So says Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna : 'When your understanding will cross the bewilderment of delusion (identification of the self with the not-self), then you will be unconcerned as to what you have heard and what you have to hear.'⁶⁶ Even then, the seeker has to hold to the Śāstra for spiritual knowledge and discipline.

9. *The Vedic conception of Rta, the cosmic moral principle.*

In the Vedic view, the cosmic order is controlled by a fundamental moral principle. An eternal law or unity, which can be conceived as the principle of rightness or justice, regulates all phenomena. This is called *rta*, literally 'the course of things'.⁶⁷ It governs the animate and the inanimate. As stated in the *Rg-Veda* : 'The whole universe is founded on *rta* and moves in it.'⁶⁸ It keeps all things and beings in their respective courses. Consequently, nothing deviates from its own nature. Because of *rta*, fire burns, wind blows, water flows, plants grow, human beings think, and seasons revolve. *Rta* maintains regularity in the movements of the sun, the moon, the planets, and other luminaries. It manifests itself as the universal law of causation, which finds expression in the human plane as the law of *karma*. It establishes unity between the cosmic forces and the individual powers. It is the basis of all laws, physical, biological, psychological, moral, and spiritual.

Rta is presided over by the all-pervading, all-knowing, almighty Being. It is born of the luminous supreme Self, as He reflects on the creation in the beginning of a cycle.⁶⁹ Īśvara plans the creation in view of the *jīvas'* *karma* and the unfoldment of their

inner nature. The new creation is a re-adjustment of the physical order to the psychical. To quote Śaṅkara : 'He reflected concerning the order and the arrangement of the world to be created. Having thus reflected, He created the universe with time and space, names and forms, as required by the *karma* and other conditions of the living beings. This is the universe that is being experienced by all creatures in all states according to their perception.'⁷⁰

Rta regulates *dharma*, the principle of equity, the moral law that governs human life. Because of this, right deed inevitably produces good result, whereas wrong deed leads to evil consequences. There is no unmerited happiness or misery, gain or loss, in man's life. *Rta* also provides the standard of morality. Right conduct must be in conformity with the cosmic law. Adherence to truth is the primary moral virtue. Untruth is '*anṛta*', deviation from *rta*. The word '*dharma*' is often used in the restricted sense of right conduct or deed. Truthfulness (*satya*), performance of duties, in other words, the fulfilment of all obligations (*yajña*), and self-control (*tapas*) are particularly enjoined by the Vedas. *Rta* (rightness) is sometimes used in the restricted sense of right thought and *satya* (truth) in the restricted sense of right speech.⁷¹ Right thought (*rta*), right speech (*satya*), and right deed (*dharma*) are essential moral traits. The two precepts : 'Speak the truth (*satya*)' and 'Practise virtue (*dharma*)'—form a part of the farewell instruction given by a Vedic teacher to his pupil after his graduation.⁷² According to the Vedic moral code, 'non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, cleanliness, control of the senses, charity, self-restraint, kindness, calmness, are the moral rules for all'.⁷³

10. *Even the law of karma is disclosed*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, II.52.

⁶⁷ *Vide Rg-Veda*, I.1.8, I.23.5, I.24.8, IV.21.3, X.121.1; *passim*.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, IV.23.9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, X.190.1.

⁷⁰ *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II.6, commentary.

⁷¹ *Vide Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, I.6.

⁷² *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, I.11.1.

⁷³ *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, I.4.122.

by the Śruti. It cannot be determined by perception or inference.

The term *dharma* and its antonym *adharmā* are also used in the sense of *punya* (merit) and *pāpa* (demerit) accruing from work. Whatever *karma* is done with desire, or secular motive, leaves on the doer's mind some subtle impression (*samskāra*) that has the potency of bearing fruit, good or evil, according to the nature of the deed, in course of time. In this context, *punya* (merit) signifies the subtle impression of a virtuous deed, having the potency of bearing good fruit, and *pāpa* (demerit) signifies the subtle impression of a sinful deed, having the potency of bearing evil fruit. Generally speaking, the cumulative effect of such impressions (*samskāras*) determines an individual's course of life here and hereafter.

According to the Vedas, *karma* produces a twofold result: seen (*dr̥ṣṭa*) and unseen (*adr̥ṣṭa*), in other words, known and unknown. The result of *karma*, as known to us, does not explain the inequalities and calamities of life. The Śruti says there are unseen, future effects of a man's *karma* which he reaps in another incarnation in this world or in the world beyond. Evidently, each *karma* is of short duration; the physical or the mental operation it involves ceases 'here and now'. How does it bring about a remote result? It is the subtle impressions (*samskāras*) left by *karma* on the mind of the doer that cling to him wherever he may be, here or beyond, and fructify in due course. As a man sows, so does he reap. Declares the Śruti: 'As an individual acts and behaves, so he becomes; by doing good he becomes good, by doing evil he becomes evil. He becomes virtuous through virtuous deeds and vicious through sinful deeds'⁷⁴; 'And then the vital force *udāna*, moving upward by the one upward nerve (*susumnā*), leads the departing soul to the domain of the virtuous in consequence of virtuous deeds, to the domain of the sinful

in consequence of sinful deeds, or to the human world in consequence of both.'⁷⁵ The result of *karma* is inevitable. Time cannot erase it, distance cannot avert it, nor can death annul it.

Truly, perceptual knowledge does not solve the riddle of *karma*. Nor can inference based on it help us. One may assume an inevitable relation between *karma* and its effect to explain the anomalies of life. But assumption is not inference; the one makes the conclusion possible, the other certain. The point is this. We do not observe in human life any invariable relation between *karma* and its result, such as good *karma* necessarily produces good result and evil *karma* evil result, and that in the absence of *karma* there is no result. Without the observation of such relation, no law of *karma* can be established. Indeed, many are the facts noticeable that belie the theory of *karma*. Not infrequently does it happen that the wicked prosper and the honest suffer, that one enjoys the fruits of another's labour, and that one is born an idiot and another a genius, for no obvious reason. There are also mishaps and catastrophes in life which we cannot account for and so dismiss as 'accidents'. Plainly speaking, with our limited knowledge of human life, we cannot propound the law of *karma*. Further, it requires the recognition of man's survival after death, which is beyond empirical knowledge. Indeed, the truth about *karma* imparted by the Śruti cannot be known from common experience.

'How did then Buddha, who denied the authority of the Vedas, establish the law of *karma*?' one may pertinently ask. In the first place, we should say that, though Buddha did not acknowledge the authority of the Vedas, he accepted the Upaniṣadic teachings and presented them in his own way.⁷⁶ He

⁷⁵ *Praśna Upaniṣad*, III.7.

⁷⁶ Cf. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Edited by S. Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 272: 'The Buddha takes up some of the thoughts of the Upaniṣads and gives to them a new orientation. The Buddha is not so much

⁷⁴ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.4.5.

must have received the idea of *karma* from the Śruti, but found a rational ground for it from the observation of natural phenomena. He applied the causality observable in the physical universe to human life. This involves an assumption as far as we can see. No doubt, a sequence of cause and effect is noticeable in the physical world. Every effect is preceded by causal factors, in the absence of which there can be no effect; and the effect corresponds with the cause.⁷⁷ Yet, what is true of non-human nature may or may not be true of human life. There is a gulf of difference between the two. In fact, *karma* prevails only in the human plane. It does not exist in the subhuman level, let alone inanimate nature. The law of *karma* is a moral law, while the law of causality is a physical law. There is no moral life below the human level. *Karma* means volitional conscious operation, physical or mental. It implies self-determination, which is lacking in non-human nature. All development in the non-human region can be characterized as a natural process, whereas the development of human life is primarily a cultural operation, that is, due to volitional deliberate action. Man's intellectual, aesthetic, moral, or spiritual life does not grow without cultivation. Thus *karma* belongs particularly to man's psychical nature. Its way cannot be deduced from the way of inanimate nature.

11. *The supremacy of the Vedas is due to the fact that they are the only source of incontrovertible truths, the knowledge of which is the highest and most fruitful.*

The validity of the Vedic testimony is evident from the fact that it discloses truths which can neither be contradicted nor established by any other means of knowledge.

formulating a new scheme of metaphysics and morals as rediscovering an old norm and adapting it to the new conditions of thought and life.'

⁷⁷ Cf. Buddha's law of 'dependent origination' (*pratītya-samutpāda*): 'I will teach you the Dharma,' says he, 'that being present, this becomes; from the arising of that, this arises. That being absent, this does not become; from the cessation of that, this ceases' (*Majjhima Nikāya*, II.32).

The Vedic truths are not determinable by reason based on sense-knowledge, nor are they contradictory to it. They admit of rational interpretation. In fact, the Vedānta philosophy developed out of an attempt to systematize the Vedic teachings. The Vedas reveal, as we have noted above, two fundamental truths.

(1) The identity of the individual self and the supreme Self.

(2) The ultimate reality of non-dual Brahman, pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

The two are intimately connected. The one points to the other. The Vedic mysticism, philosophy, religion, and ethics are rooted in them. In fact, they form the ultimate ground of all human knowledge, of all religious experiences and disciplines, and of all ethical principles.

Man's search for truth is bound for absolute oneness. It cannot go beyond, nor stop short of, this. Here is the culmination of human knowledge. The ideal of knowledge can be neither duality nor relativity, where ignorance prevails in some form or other. It must reach non-relational Consciousness beyond all distinctions and differences, including the duality of the subject and the object. Until then, the mystery of human knowledge remains unsolved, because 'otherness' persists, and the Truth, the Absolute, is unattained. The ultimate must be non-dual and non-relational. This is what is indicated by some great mystics of the East and the West as the attainment of intuitive or immediate awareness that transcends the duality of the subject and the object. It is actually the realization of the unitary Self beyond the bifurcation of the self and the not-self. So the Śruti declares: 'Then what delusion and what grief can there be for one who sees unity?'⁷⁸ 'It is from a second entity that fear comes.'⁷⁹

It is the more or less hazy vision of unity in diversity, of the absolute in the relative,

⁷⁸ *Īśā Upaniṣad*, 7.

⁷⁹ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.4.2.

that serves as the impelling force in philosophy, science, and religion.⁸⁰ While philosophy may remain satisfied with the conceptual comprehension of the absolute and science with the never-ending search for it,⁸¹ religion points out the way to its immediate apprehension. For it declares what is real in an atom is real in man and shines as his innermost self. By realizing the self, one can realize the truth of the universe, and this is the way to the attainment of the highest good.

The realization of the identity of the self with Brahman is the highest and the most fruitful of all knowledge. It means the culmination of all that man can aspire after. It removes for ever all his delusions, doubts, fears, bondages, and sufferings. He ceases to be a transmigratory being. He becomes free—in every sense of the term. He attains the highest end. On attaining the knowledge of Brahman, there remains nothing more to know, nothing more to achieve. 'He who knows the supreme Brahman verily becomes Brahman'⁸²; 'Verily, the Imperishable, supreme Being he attains who knows that pure, imperishable One free from darkness, free from

adjuncts, free from attributes. He becomes all-knowing, he becomes all'⁸³; 'When all the desires lodged in his heart drop, then a mortal becomes immortal and here attains Brahman. When all the knots of the mind are broken here, then a mortal becomes immortal. Only this much is the teaching of Vedānta.'⁸⁴

The unity of the individual self with the supreme Self, the omnipresent Being, is the goal of all religious disciplines. The direct knowledge of the supreme Being, the Soul of all souls, cannot be attained except by union, which means complete surrender of the self-regarding ego. By denying the apparent self, one finds the real Self. The relationship between the adorer and the adorable One, which is the keynote of every theistic religion, ultimately leads to their oneness.

Says Meister Eckhart: 'Any soul that sees God must have forgotten herself and have lost her own self; while she sees and remembers herself, she nor sees nor is conscious of God. But when for God's sake she loses herself and abandons all things, then in God does she re-find herself, for knowing God she is knowing herself and all things (which she rids herself of) in God in perfection'⁸⁵; 'She (the soul) is one with God and not united: where God is there is the soul and where the soul is there is God.'⁸⁶

The realization of the oneness of the individual self with the supreme Self is the way to universal love, which is the one goal of all ethical disciplines. Indeed, it is the ultimate ground of all moral ideals. To quote the Vedāntic texts: 'When a person following the instructions of a teacher directly realizes this effulgent Self, the Lord of all that has been and will be (as identical with his own self), he no longer finds fault with anyone.'⁸⁷ 'He who sees all beings as the very self and the Self in all beings, in consequence thereof,

⁸⁰ Cf. Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1945, p. 5: 'It is from the more or less obscure intuition of the oneness that is the ground and principle of all multiplicity that philosophy takes its source. And not alone philosophy, but natural science as well. All science, in Meyerson's phrase, is the reduction of multiplicities to identities. Divining the One within and beyond the many, we find an intrinsic plausibility in any explanation of the diverse in terms of a single principle.'

⁸¹ Cf. Max Planck, *The New Science*, Meridian Books, Inc., Greenwich, Conn., p. 150: 'How can we say that a scientific concept, to which we now ascribe an absolute character, may not at some future date show itself to have only a certain relative significance and to point to a farther absolute? To that question only one answer can be given. After all I have said, and in view of the experiences through which scientific progress has passed, we must admit that in no case can we rest assured that what is absolute in science today, will remain absolute for all time. ... The absolute represents an ideal goal which is always ahead of us and which we can never reach. ... To bring the approach closer and closer to truth is the aim and effort of all science.'

⁸² *Mundaka Upaniṣad*, III.2.9.

⁸³ *Praśna Upaniṣad*, IV.10.

⁸⁴ *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.3. 14, 15.

⁸⁵ *Meister Eckhart*, Translated by C. de B. Evans, Vol. I. John M. Watkins, London, 1952, p. 173.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 89.

⁸⁷ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.4.15.

abhors none.’⁸⁸ “The knowers of the self look with an equal eye on a Brāhmaṇa, endowed with learning and humility, a scavenger, a cow, an elephant, or a dog.’⁸⁹ ‘With imperfections exhausted, doubts dispelled, senses controlled, engaged in the good of all beings, the seers obtain absolute freedom.’⁹⁰

As observed by Paul Deussen : ‘The gospels postulate quite correctly as the highest law of morality : “Love your neighbour as yourself.” But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour ? The answer is not in the Bible (this venerable book being not yet quite free from Semitic Realism), but it is in the Veda, in the great formula *Tat tvam asi*—“Thou art That”, which gives in three words all of metaphysics and morals. You shall love your neighbour as yourself, because you are your neighbour, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbour is something different from yourself.’⁹¹

So says Vidyāraṇya : ‘The knowledge of the self leads to the identification of oneself with others as closely as one identifies oneself with one’s body.’⁹²

12. *Being the divine revelation of indisputable truths, the Vedas are intrinsically valid. They do not contradict perception or inference.*

The two sources of knowledge, the Vedic and the empirical (perception, inference, etc.), refer to two distinct orders of facts, suprasensible and sensible. They are authoritative in their respective spheres. The Vedas do not contradict other means of knowledge, nor can be contradicted by them. Just as the fundamental reality is out of the scope of the empirical sciences, so the order of phenomena is out of the scope of the Vedas. Most great thinkers acknowledge that neither

sense-perception nor any reasoning based on it can determine the nature of the fundamental reality. Metaphysical speculation is more or less conjecture or guesswork. It makes things possible, but not actual. While the Śruti refers to the facts of common experience in order to communicate suprasensuous knowledge, it does not intend to impart instruction on them or to pass verdict on them. In interpreting the revealed texts, the exact relation between revelation and reason has to be borne in mind.

The truths declared by the Śruti have to be known by reasoning on the texts and not by arguments independent of them. The function of reason is not to judge the truth of the Vedic statements, but to determine their true import, free from inconsistencies and in conformity with established facts. They are not to be accepted dogmatically, but through intelligent interpretation compatible with perceptual and inferential knowledge. There are also in the Vedas primary and subsidiary truths and statements with literal and implied meanings. A valid and independent source of knowledge as it is, the Śruti awaits rational analysis to yield its true import. To quote Gauḍapāda : ‘(Of the two contrary views mentioned in the Śruti) that which is ascertained by the Śruti and corroborated by reason is the import, and not the other.’⁹³

Thus, the acceptance of scriptural authority in Advaita Vedānta is by no means denial of reason. Truth is not irrational. Reason is inherent in revelation. So the alliance of revelation and reason does not mean a compromise. Authority and reason can be harmonious. One can reasonably trust the trustworthy. There is no inherent conflict between faith and reason. Truly speaking, the one rests on the other. Reason is the key that unlocks the scriptural truths and paves the way to their intuitive perception. According to non-dualistic philosophers, revelation, reason, and realization form the triple means

⁸⁸ *Īsā Upaniṣad*, 6.

⁸⁹ *Bhagavad-Gītā*, V.18.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, V.25.

⁹¹ *The Philosophy of the Vedānta*, published by Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

⁹² *Pañcadaśī*, VI.285.

⁹³ *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, III.23; see also *Brahma-Sūtra*, II.1.11, Śankara’s commentary.

to the full knowledge of Brahman. Thus, revelation is supported by reason and verified by the seers' immediate apprehension or mystical awareness. Throughout the ages, the Vedic revelations have been confirmed by the intuitive perceptions of the illumined souls.

13. *From rational theology medieval scholasticism turned into dogmatic theology.*

The alliance of revelation and reason was the keynote of scholasticism in medieval Europe. The schoolmen succeeded in achieving this, more or less. But their ideas of revelation and reason varied. So the relation between the two was conceived by them diversely. John Scotus Erigena, the founder (about the middle of the ninth century), set reason above faith. He recognized that truth cannot be unreasonable; revelation must be the revelation of truth; so it cannot contradict reason. In his view, speculative reason could independently evolve a system of the universe which would coincide with the teaching of the scripture. Indeed, he was more of a Neoplatonist than a scholastic doctor. But the schoolmen, as a rule, followed the method of allying logic with faith, in other words, reason with authority. Scholasticism declined, not that the very principle was wrong, but because its application was inappropriate. The church dogmas passed for revelation and refused to be put in the rational garb, for which they were not intrinsically fit. This was evident 'from the withdrawal of doctrine after doctrine from the possibility of rational proof and their relegation to the sphere of faith'. External causes also contributed to the decline of scholasticism.

14. *The Vedas have no author. They are without beginning and without end. They are not produced, but revealed, by Īśvara in the beginning of each new cycle.*

The Vedic testimony is infallible, inasmuch as its validity is intrinsic. The truths it embodies are eternal and universal and invariably conformable to reason. Just as Īśvara, the supreme Lord, and the universe (comprising

the animate and the inanimate) are without beginning, so are the Vedas. But all the three belong to the relative order. None but non-dual Brahman has absolute reality. In the beginning of creation, Īśvara manifests the universe from its causal state in undifferentiated *prakṛti*, His creative power. Likewise are the Vedas manifested from their potential state in His power of knowledge. Īśvara does not produce the Vedas. The Vedas of the previous cycle are revealed in each new cycle. Īśvara manifests the already existing Vedas to the cosmic soul (Brahmā) as the process of creation starts. He is the first teacher of the Vedas, but not their originator. Throughout the ages, the Vedas have been transmitted orally through a succession of teachers and pupils.

According to the orthodox view, the Vedic words embodying the knowledge of God are inseparable from it. They endure as potencies with the universals in God's power of knowledge or omniscience during the period of the dissolution of the cosmos. It is to be noted that a word (cow, for instance) represents the universal (cowness) and is inseparable from it. The word of words is the syllable *Om*, the verbal symbol of the divine idea of creation, the idea of ideas. This is the seed of the universe as well as of the Vedas.

Since the Vedas have no author and are without beginning, they are called *apauruṣeya*, literally, unconnected with a person, that is, without an author. As stated in *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*: 'In the beginning of cosmic projection, the Lord produced the Vedas having a sequence of words similar to that which had already existed in the Vedas in the previous cosmic projection, and not the Vedas of a different type. Hence the Vedas, not being the object of utterance that is independent of any utterance of the same kind, are not connected with a person (*apauruṣeya*). The utterance of the *Mahābhārata* etc., however, is not at all dependent on any utterance of the same kind. Hence

they are connected with a person (*pauruṣeya*). Thus two kinds of scriptural testimony have been determined, viz. that which is connected with a person, and that which is not.⁹⁴

Even the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (the Song of God) delivered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, God incarnate in human form, is not divine revelation in the sense in which the Vedas are. Being composed by a human being (Veda-Vyāsa) it is *pauruṣeya*, i.e. has an author; while the Vedas, having no author, are *apauruṣeya*. So the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, like all other scriptures composed by human beings, is included in the Smṛti.

According to Nyāya school, the Vedas are the means of valid knowledge, because they are produced by the supreme Lord, who is eternal and omniscient. According to the Mīmāṃsakas, who deal with sacrificial rites, the Vedas are the means of valid knowledge, because they are eternal, and as such free from all human defects. According to non-dualistic Vedānta, the Vedas issue from the supreme Being spontaneously in the beginning of creation. 'They (the Vedic texts) are like the breath of this (the supreme Being)', says the Upaniṣad. They are coeval with time. As explained by Śaṅkara: 'It is the eternally composed and already existent Vedas that are manifested like a man's breath without any thought or effort on his part. Hence they are an authority as re-

⁹⁴ *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, IV.

gards their meaning independently of any other means of knowledge. 'Therefore, those who aspire after their well-being must accept the verdict of the Vedas on knowledge or on rites, as it is. . . . Since the Vedas issue without effort like a man's breath, they are an authority; they are not like other books.'⁹⁵ Says Swami Vivekananda: 'The Vedas do not owe their authority to anybody, they are themselves the authority, being eternal—the knowledge of God. They were never written, never created, they have existed without beginning and without end, and so is the knowledge of God, without beginning and without end. And this knowledge is what is meant by the Vedas (from *vid*, to know).'⁹⁶ 'This knowledge comes out at the beginning of a cycle and manifests itself; and when the cycle ends, it goes down into minute form. When the cycle is projected again, that knowledge is projected again with it.'⁹⁷ 'The whole body of suprasensuous truths, having no beginning or end and called by the name of the Vedas, is ever-existent.'⁹⁸

It is worthy of note that the Vedic teachings relating to the rites and ceremonies and certain duties are not of universal application. It is the teachings regarding the fundamental truths and principles that hold good at all times and in all climes.

⁹⁵ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.4.10, commentary.

⁹⁶ *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III. p. 119.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. V. p. 325.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. VI. p. 154.

The scriptures contain a mixture of sand and sugar, as it were. It is extremely difficult to separate the sugar from the sand. Therefore one should learn the essence of the scriptures from the teacher.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

MAN OR MACHINE?

BY DR. (MRS.) SARASVATI CHENNAKESAVAN

Scientists are often characterized as a race of tough people. They have no sympathy with sentiments nor can they compromise with what cannot be proved. Their very existence is wound up with facts, experimental evidence, and empirical evaluations. In the course of their researches, they have given the problem of body and mind serious thought. After having wrestled with it for sometime and not finding a satisfactory solution, they have relegated the problem to the limbo of speculative metaphysics. Since no satisfactory answer at the scientific level is possible so far, they express the opinion that it is no problem at all, but only a pseudo-problem. Yet, again and again, the need to consider an answer to this problem crops up from behind, as it were. It may not be the central problem of enquiry, but an answer to this problem becomes a necessary prerequisite for the formulation and solution of major scientific problems. The very definition of the science of psychology depends on the meaning of the terms body and mind. Schopenhauer rightly termed the mind-body problem as a *welt-knoten* (world-knot), because all puzzles, whether they be scientific, epistemological, semantical, or pragmatical, depend on an explanation of the mind-body problem. Issues of purpose, teleology, free-will, etc.—all are basically dependent on a solution of this problem.

It is curious to note how philosophers themselves have repressed this problem. When the philosopher is faced with a puzzle which he cannot solve within the framework of his presuppositions, he suppresses the problem in the same manner in which unresolved interpersonal problems are suppressed. This characteristic is innate to man's nature, and it is difficult to say when man is not using it.

But a philosopher must guard against such a tendency all the more. A situation has arisen in the modern scientific world, where philosophers have to be all the more strictly conscientious in propagating their philosophies.

The problem of the relation between body and mind is capable of many interpretations. One important and basic way of looking at this problem is to hold that biological and psychological concepts cannot be reduced to laws of physics. McDougall, J. B. Pratt, and Kapp are some of the notable representatives of such a trend. Their arguments are based on a very strong evidence of teleological processes, purposive behaviour, psychosomatics, and the motivating features of perception, cognition, desire, volition, etc. This view implies the traditional relation of interaction between mind and body. This view does not explain what mind is, but only says that it represents biological and psychological laws. The danger with such a view is that it is quite possible to maintain that one is the epiphenomenon of the other. On the other hand, interactionism can also lead the way, as it has done, to the belief that man's actions such as planning, deliberation, determination, choice, love, hatred, expectation, remembrances, hopes—all these are causal factors moulding human behaviour. These factors in their turn, imply the existence of a non-corporeal, immaterial source of power known as mind or self. It is this which makes for the distinction between man and other living creatures. It is only the implications for the existence of the soul that one has usually to consider. The question that is raised is: How far is it possible to explain these actions by empirical evidence, and how far do they imply the transcendental Soul? If it be possible to duplicate these mental qualities

or reduce them to mechanical principles of action and reaction, then what is the status of man as a mind or self?

Within the last twenty or thirty years, much work has been done by neuro-physiologists and psychologists in the direction of solving the problem of the relation between mind and body. No definite solution is yet in sight; but the direction that the possible answer is taking is both challenging and dangerous to the lethargic philosopher. Specially, in our country, where philosophy is very much bound up with tradition, these modern developments raise very fundamental questions.

If science, combined with logic and psychology, produces enough evidence to show that man's mind is nothing else but a few electronic particles arranged in a particular pattern, then it is up to the philosopher either to revise his philosophy or to show the fallacies involved in such empirical evidence. Even to recognize the existence and possibility of such a situation requires a great deal of intellectual honesty. A situation of this type has arisen today under the name of *cybernetics*. Cybernetics is the most recent child of the system of scientific research known as Operations Research, where scientific experts from various fields co-operate to solve a definite problem. Cybernetics comes from a Greek word which means 'steersman'. The word was first used by Norbert Wiener in 1947. Wiener never clearly defined the word; but he used it to represent conveniently the various aspects of the uses of control and communication, both in the human and in the mechanical senses. According to him, if it be possible to devise a machine equivalent to communication and control between human beings, then the problem between body and mind will be solved. Even when the communication is in the form of a command or a supplication, such actions are always controlled by the counteraction of obedience and appeal. Therefore these two are basic in human

behaviour. Wiener relates these two basic factors to the vitalist and mechanist controversy and says that these camps of thought have not found a solution because they have been asking the question from a limited point of view. If the question of the nature of mind is raised from the combined point of view of control and communication, then it is possible to arrive at an answer. The vitalists argue that man's actions cannot be predicted in the same manner as a machine's actions, because there is something called soul in man. Wiener says that the postulation of something called soul reveals the necessity to explain causally the unpredictable and the uncertain in man. He maintains that such uncertainty arises from the incomplete nature of the statistical information about the factors necessary for every action. The evaluation of such statistical possibilities is tied up closely with the problem of communication between human beings. The mechanists also are not correct in saying that everything is predictable or determined. Determination is possible only when all controlling factors of an act are known and manipulated to achieve a desired result. In this sense, man is not and cannot be mechanical. Again, when the vitalists argue that man is completely free and not determined at all, that position also is not tenable from the scientific point of view. There is a great deal of determination at human level, just as there is quite a bit of freedom and adjustment. According to Wiener, all this cannot be explained by making use of the science of cybernetics. This is not to define cybernetics. It only shows the scope of its subject and how necessary it is to take stock of its growing importance. Very broadly speaking, cybernetics is the design and understanding of systems, both living and mechanical. However, it is impossible to deal with the whole of this fascinating problem. I am going to deal only with a minute aspect of it, viz. the analogies between man and machine and

to raise the problem of the status of man which such analogies reveal.

Analogies between man and automaton (name given by Wiener to man-made mechanical systems) may be drawn on several fundamental counts such as communication, control, and storage of facts. Psychophysiology and mathematical logic have been the two main currents of thought which have produced this new science. What is automatism? A mechanism may be termed automatic if it controls by itself the variations of its operation in time and space. There are various degrees of automation. When man produced the first machine from a tool, he made it such that, under given conditions, it constantly produced the desired effect. It replaced, to a very small extent, human effort and released man for other things. But the automatic machines of today not only do the work of man physically, but are also able to co-ordinate and correct their own efficacy. Thus it appears that the machine is replacing man not only at the material-physical level, but also on the intellectual plane. Is not self-correction and self-adjustment the hallmark of human intelligence? Let us examine and analyse the nature of human activity. Several factors show up on such analyses. Man requires the material with which to work and the mechanism to work with. These are already present. Nature provides the material, and the human body may be considered as the machine which works with nature. Then it is necessary to have a plan of action. But the plan of action has to be decided upon and carried out at an expedient time. All this planning and decision will be of no use if there is no physical aptitude for work. So the limbs and organs must be fit to do the work. Ability to act, therefore, is essential. This is not all. Ability to co-ordinate actions according to a logical programme directed towards a definite goal is useless, if such action is not constantly corrected and adjusted in the light of past

achievement. This is where man is said to be different from the machine by traditionalists. The opinion is that such highly intellectual work, only man is capable of doing. So far this opinion has been justifiable. But, today, comes a new discovery (the 'homeostat' of the famous British psychologist Ashby) which can actually take on the control, adapting their actions in terms of work already achieved, and direct actions towards what is yet to be done. This is a feed-back mechanism, which is a self-correcting device, enabling a machine to regulate its operation by adapting the procedure to new unforeseen deviations. The mathematics and physics of such a device is not our concern here. But we have to examine in what manner it resembles the human being. That it is capable of self-adaptation to new situations implies various facts.

First, the machine is able to remember (in human language) the past and present, and co-ordinate them towards a definite remembered goal. The machine works on a similar pattern to that of human memory mechanism. The mechanism of memory in the human being might be said to centralize in the neuronal mechanism and synoptic end connections. Starting from Pavlov, psychologists have proved that with each repetition of the stimulus, the neuronal path becomes more and more stabilized, thus making the repetition of the action almost *automatic*. It is the capacity of these neuronal paths which makes for a maximum in learning and remembrance. When the path becomes unused, then forgetting takes place. The function of memory is to store something in such pathways and produce it on the appropriate demand. The computing machines of today are built on the same principle. They never fail to produce the accurate answer, because they are able to correct themselves and check their answers every time!

The achievements of the machine are not yet over. The human mind is able to see

and to recognize forms, shapes, sounds, and colours. Extensive research is being made to produce machines which would duplicate these activities. Physiologists tell us that there is a brain neurone rhythm, known as the Alpha rhythm, which is responsible for the processes of recognition. Scientists are trying hard to duplicate this layer of brain activity and introduce it into a machine. So far, they have succeeded in making the machine recognize patterns by symbols.¹

There are other machines which come very close to man's actions based on sense-perception. Just as a human being responds to sense stimuli, so also the machines are made to respond to lights, sounds, and movements. The automatic door-opener, the automatic switch-off of kitchen stoves, the automatic elevator—these are some of the industrial examples of machines which function with sense-organs. In the field of military machinery, the achievements are still more awe-inspiring. The machine which can strike at a moving target automatically must be able not only to know the speed of the moving object at a given instant, but it must also *know* what its speed will be at a future movement, taking into account so many variable factors such as wind pressure etc. This is the 'anti-aircraft gun'. The controlled missile is yet another example of such machinery.

A very fascinating example of all such machines is the most famous tortoise of Prof. Grey Walter of the Barden Neurological Institute at Bristol, England. These are machines capable of free locomotion and have some characteristics of free independent life. It is a machine which 'lives' on electric current. It 'feeds' on light which it transforms to current. When its stomach is full, or when its accumulators are fully charged, it travels towards softer light where it 'rests' till it feels hungry again. These synthetic tortoises react differently to differ-

ent brilliances of light. When hungry, a bright light attracts it. Since, normally, there are various sources of light in a room, the tortoise pauses, weighs pros and cons, and acts in accordance with the best possible results. If any obstacle is put in the way, it does a zigzag dance movement in its efforts to avoid the obstacle. The tortoise does all these actions without any human aid, simply because its internal organization is so planned. How reminiscent of human child's actions these are! These mechanisms are original because they are able to balance different tendencies inclining towards optimum results. It is from this starting point that Ashby designed his homeostat which always finds its own equilibrium, corrects its actions, remembers, chooses, and also learns by the trial and error method.²

All these almost-human machines raise certain philosophic questions. The presuppositions of philosophy so far is that man is a being whose activities are purposive, goal-seeking, choice-exhibiting, and hence unique. We believe that man is endowed with ethical values which he seeks to realize in this life. How far is our belief in such things shaken by these modern developments? To a large extent, a lot of dust previously raised by biased philosophy is laid by these new discoveries. The old fashioned Western belief that mind and self are one is being shaken to its roots. The argument is: When it is possible to mechanically reproduce all the activities of the mind, then the equation becomes not mind=self, but mind=self=mechanism. Unless we are prepared to accept the position that man is a machine, we cannot accept the above equation. Then we have to go deeper into the problem. Is man only a goal-seeking, remembering, and perceiving mechanism, or is he something more than these? It has been said from the time of Aristotle that man

¹ Reference is here to the work that is being done at the Harvard University Laboratories in U.S.A.

² Readers who are interested in detailed information are referred to the book *Thinking by Machine*, by De Latil, translated by Y. M. Golla, published by Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1956.

is man because he is rational. Rationality means arguing deductively and inductively. If this is all, then, indeed, man is a machine; for a machine can be made to reason infallibly. Yet, a doubt lingers. If it is possible to duplicate most of the attitudes and causal relations of the thought processes, then the possibility of duplicating the whole may not be far off. Perhaps, this is the sword of Damocles hanging over mankind!

Even if what the cyberneticians forecast were to become true, there are two important aspects of man which may not be satisfactorily explained. These are the illogical and irrational behaviour on the negative side and self-consciousness on the positive side. It is also impossible to envisage a machine which could design itself, without a human mind, putting in its own checks and counter-checks, organizing its feed-backs and balances. These have to be conceived by a human being and incorporated into a machine. In addition to all this, a machine can never be a hero, a saint, or a lover. It may not have sympathy for others' suffering, nor can it have, as Kant would say, 'synthetic unity of perception'.

However difficult it may be for the Western philosopher to accept the theory that mind can be duplicated by a machine, it should not raise any obstacles for the Indian philosopher, because the latter already conceives the mind as material, and under the control of the Self or Ātman. It is the mental traces (*samskāras*) which are responsible for the

rising and continuity of knowledge and memory. That such a mind can be duplicated in a machine will not weaken the belief in the Ātman, but can only strengthen it. Such possibility speaks volumes in support of yogic discipline. Just as the scientist designs the purposes and controls the activities of the machine and directs it towards the achievement of the purposes, so also the *yogin* controls and redirects his mental activities towards his own conscious purposes.

But the danger is not past. With the possibility of conceiving man as a machine in the offing, the possibility of the relations between man and man becoming greatly strained is not far off. When all that makes for values and ideals is reduced to an epiphenomenon, then the ethical life of man becomes subservient to his economic life. When spirit or soul is envisaged as a function of matter, in the sense that cerebral activity is mechanical activity, then control of one human being by another can be done with impunity. It is this danger that has to be very carefully considered in the light of developments of cybernetics. It then becomes primarily a task of philosophers to accept the results of such researches as a help in their own search for the nature of reality and work hand in hand to clarify the issues in modern language to meet modern situations. Today, this is a very urgent task of our philosophers, religious teachers, and saints.

TWO VOICES COME TO US

BY SWAMI BUDHANANDA

Two voices are constantly reaching us across our times and climes, claiming our heads, hearts, and souls.

One voice in effect says: 'Fool, what nonsense are you about? We have seen search-

ingly through our powerful telescope, acutely through our penetrating microscope, we have not found God anywhere. Was He then hidden in man or other living creatures? We have mercilessly dissected their flesh, peered

through their bones with the all-seeing X-ray, we have not found the faintest trace of God anywhere. Driven by human inquisitiveness, had He then hidden Himself in the unseeable atom? Well, we have smashed the atom. Something tremendous did come out of it, but not God. What is, can be seen. What is not, cannot be seen. God cannot be seen, therefore He is not. Do you see this perfect logic, pure reason? How can the non-existent God love or be loved? You are naive! Not only that God just is not, He is also unnecessary. We have systematized philosophy, wherein God is superfluous. We have developed ethics, wherein God is redundant. We have worked out sciences, where nature explains everything. Fool, matter is all that matters. God is bosh. Give up soft-headedness. Cultivate your brain!

ONE VOICE GAINING STRENGTH

This is a powerful voice gaining volume and strength everyday and claiming the allegiance of the ever-growing number of educated people everywhere in the world. Whatever may be the reasons, there is no doubt about the fact that unbelief is on the triumphant march over the minds of men.

Writing to a friend on the 19th of July 1891, Lord Acton, the famous historian, said: 'For two hundred years, from the time of Hobbes, unbelief has been making its way. Unbelief came to be founded on science, because one half of the classic writing, of the creative thinking of the world, was done by unbelievers. The influences that reigned were in a great measure atheistic. No man could be reared except by aid of Grote, Mill, Austin, Darwin, Lewis, Huxley, Tyndall—to take England only.'¹

Forty-five years after Lord Acton wrote this, T. S. Eliot declared: 'The greater part of our reading matter is coming to be written by people, who not only have no real belief (in a supernatural order), but are even

ignorant of the fact that there are still people in the world so "backward," or so eccentric as to continue to believe.'²

Buttressed by science as they are, unbelief has a fascination of its own, atheism has its laurels, hedonism its insinuation, materialism its triumphs, and agnosticism its intoxication.

But at what price?

In his poem *The Rock*, T. S. Eliot indicates what that price is:

'The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless invention and endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion but not of
stillness;
Knowledge of speech but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of
the Word.
All our knowledge brings us nearer to
ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us nearer to
death,
But nearness to death no nearer to God.
Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in
knowledge?
Where is knowledge we have lost in
information?
The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries
Bring us farther from God and never
to the Dust.'³

In the preface to *Late Lyrics and Earlier*, published in 1922, Thomas Hardy wrote: 'Whether owing to the barbarizing of taste in the younger minds by the dark madness of the late war, the unabashed cultivation of selfishness in all classes, the plethoric growth of knowledge with the stunting of wisdom, a degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation (to quote Wordsworth), or from any other cause, we seem threatened with a new Dark Age.'⁴

In his book, *The End of Our Time*, pub-

² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³ T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems (1909-1935)*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York.

⁴ Quoted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his *Recovery of Faith*, p. 37.

¹ Quoted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his *Recovery of Faith*, published by Harper & Brothers, New York, 1955, p. 37.

lished in 1933, Berdyaev wrote: 'European man stands amid a frightening emptiness. He no longer knows where the keystone of his life may be found, beneath his feet he feels no depth of solidity.'⁵

And what does this losing of *terra firma* actually mean? Indeed, a very frightening situation of the modern man's mind. Embellished without, he continues to get shattered from within. Presenting a bold face, but covering a disintegrating soul!

From his long clinical experience, the celebrated psychologist, late Dr. C. G. Jung observed in his book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*: 'I have treated many hundreds of patients, the largest number being Protestants, a smaller number Jews—and not more than five or six believing Catholics. Among all my patients in the second half of my life, there has *not* been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that everyone of them fell ill, because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers, and none of them has really been healed who did not regain his religious outlook.'⁶

These remarks by these master minds about the human situation were made before the second World War. And one knows very well what happened during the war, and has been happening after the war.

It is not necessary for us to discuss the armament race and the entry of France in the nuclear club. All are aware of the problems of crimes and delinquency, immorality and neuroses, broken homes, smashed hearts, and alcoholism, specially in the 'advanced' countries.

And, it would appear, science is tending to become too much even for the scientist. Our deeds are overtaking us with a ferociousness unknown to any other animal but man. If Mephistopheles claims your soul at the end of

the contract, how, in fairness, can you say, 'nay' to him?

One remembers the madman in the market-place whom Nietzsche portrays with wonderful vision of a situation that was coming along: 'In the broad light of the forenoon, with a lit lantern in his hand, the madman ran into the market-place, crying incessantly, "I am searching for God". . . . As it happened, many were standing together there, who did not believe in God, and so he aroused great laughter. The madman leaped right among them. "Where is God?" he cried. Someone from among the laughing crowd said, "Well, I will tell you. We have murdered him, you and I. . . . Behold the noise of the grave-diggers busy to bury God. . . . And we have killed him! What possible comfort is there for us? Is not the greatness of the deed too great for us?"'⁷

Verily, the greatness of our deeds are becoming a bit too great for us. Man's soul weeps in the darkness of his own creation. And like the sardonic laughter of a disembodied spirit, the voice uncannily rings in his ears: 'Fool, what nonsense are you about? . . . Matter is all that matters. Cultivate your brain!'

This is the language and implication of one voice that is coming to us and claiming our heads, hearts, and souls.

THE OTHER VOICE, SOFT AND DIFFERENT

The other voice which has been coming to us across our times, even from the bounds of the timeless, has a very different language. Even when this voice comes to you in a language you do not know, it can leave your soul aflame with something ennobling: 'Listen, hearken, O children of Immortality, who dwell in these celestial regions, I have known and seen and experienced that supreme Spirit, who is beyond the darkness of all illusions and delusions. Only by knowing Him

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

does one pass over death ; there is no other way to the supreme Goal.⁸

‘This universe is truly the divine Person only. Therefore, it subsists on Him, the self-effulgent divine Being, who has many heads and many eyes, who is the source of joy for the universe, and exists in the form of the universe, who is the master and origin of humanity, whose forms are various gods, who is imperishable, all-surpassing ruler and saviour, who is superior to the world, who is endless and omniform, who is the goal of humanity, who is the destroyer of sin and ignorance, who is the protector of the universe and the ruler of the individual souls, who is permanent, supremely auspicious and unchanging, who has embodied Himself in man as his indwelling Spirit, who is the greatest object to be known, who is the soul of the universe and its supreme goal. Nārāyaṇa is the supreme Brahman, the supreme truth, the supreme light, the supreme soul. Whatever in this world is seen and heard of, all that, Nārāyaṇa stands pervading within and without—the unlimited, the imperishable, the goal of life, source of happiness to the universe.’⁹

The voice not only brings us the tremendous intimation about the supreme Spirit that pervades the universe, but also the gladdening news that the supreme Spirit can be realized in this very life, that in this mortal world, immortality is attainable.

‘When all the desires that dwell in the heart fall away, then the mortal becomes immortal and here attains Brahman.’¹⁰

‘When all the ties of the heart are severed here on earth, then the mortal becomes immortal.’¹¹

‘If a man is able to realize Brahman here, before the falling asunder of his body, then he is liberated ; if not, he is embodied again in this created world.’¹²

‘Whatever there is—the whole universe—

vibrates because it has gone forth from Brahman, which exists as its ground. That Brahman is a great terror, like a poised thunderbolt. Those who know it become immortal.’¹³

The voice not only brings to you the intimation of the possibility of attaining the supreme Spirit in this very life, and of the probability of attaining immortality in this mortal world, it also brings to you the knowledge of the means of attaining the supreme Spirit here and now : ‘This Ātman cannot be realized by much study of the scriptures (Vedas) or by much intellectual activity or by much hearing of sacred books. It is attained by him alone, whom It chooses. To such a one the Ātman reveals its own secret.’¹⁴ ‘He who has not first turned away from wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued, and whose mind is not at peace, cannot attain the Ātman. It is realized only through the knowledge of Reality.’¹⁵

So, the great question arises : On whom does the choice of the Ātman ultimately fall, how does one really become immortal ? And the voice declares in stentorian accents : ‘Not by work, not by progeny, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone one attains immortality.’¹⁶

Who has not craved and frantically sought for eternal happiness ? But who knows where to find it ? Everybody is seeking it everywhere, but not exactly in the place where it is to be found. With all the powers of all their senses, men and women are clasping the things of the world. Not only that, through scientific appliances, men are daily augmenting the powers of their senses in search of happiness.

And what is the result ? In the words of the Buddha : ‘Everything . . . is burning. The eyes are burning, thoughts are burning, all the senses are burning. They are burn-

⁸ *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, II.5 ; III.8.

⁹ *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, XIII.1-6.

¹⁰ *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.3.14.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II.3.15.

¹² *Ibid.*, II.3.4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, II.3.2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, I.2.23.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I.2.24.

¹⁶ *Kaivalya Upaniṣad*, 2.

ing with the fire of lust. There is anger, there is ignorance, there is hatred; and, as long as the fire finds inflammable things upon which it can feed, so long will it burn, and there will be birth, death, decay, grief, lamentation, suffering, despair, and sorrow.¹⁷

If this be the case, how to find the eternal happiness? The answer to this question is not known to the sciences or the arts of the world, however profound they may be. The voice, again, brings you the intimation: 'There is one supreme ruler, the inmost Self of all beings, who makes His one form manifold. Eternal happiness belongs to the wise, who perceive Him within themselves—not to others.'¹⁸

And, who is not talking of peace? Who is not aware where the war-like peace efforts of the rulers of the world are leading humanity to? The more man seeks peace, the greater is his peacelessness. It could not be otherwise, because in seeking peace man is all the while sowing the seeds of strife. Even this relative peace in the affairs of the world eludes man's grasp.

And we have heard it said that there is such a thing as absolute peace, peace that passeth understanding. Who would not fain have that peace? But where and how to get it? Is it in possessing much, in eating and enjoying? Is it in the good things of life? Is it in fabulous luxuries, uncounted wealth, frightening power, or in much knowing? How does one get that absolute peace, which no weapons can destroy, which time does not impair?

The voice brings to you the intimation: 'There is one who is the eternal reality among non-eternal objects, the one (truly) conscious entity among conscious objects, and who, though non-dual, fulfils the desires of many. Eternal peace belongs to the wise,

who perceive Him within themselves—not to others.'¹⁹

And, who is not seeking the end of misery? But where is the end? Civilization advances, miseries become more specialized, complicated, and devastating. The jewelled gold watch tirelessly ticks on, the midnight passes by; multi-millionaires toss on their downy beds; tranquillizers are ineffective. The much married woman finds her valued youth slipping between her fingers, notwithstanding all hormone estrogen and progesterone treatments. Hard drinking becomes harder, chain of smoking longer and longer, stiff lines in the face become stiffer. The heart was squandered away by much loving, now one day the lungs crack. And there is the end of foolish seeking after the end of misery. With multiplying gadgets, soaring standard of living, and luscious luxuries, where is the end of miseries?

The voice comes soaring through time and space: 'When men shall roll up space as if it were a piece of hide, then there will be an end of misery without one's cultivating the knowledge of the Lord, who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, blameless, unattached, the supreme bridge to immortality, and like a fire that has consumed all its fuel.'²⁰

If it is never possible to roll up the space as one does a piece of hide, it is utterly impossible to put an end to misery without the knowledge of the Lord. Only when the impossible happens, will misery cease without one's realizing God in one's heart.

Why should this be so? For the basic reason that 'the Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in what is finite. The Infinite alone is bliss'²¹

This voice has been coming to man from the heart of timelessness, sometimes in the persuasive manner of the plaintive melody of a flute, sometimes in the startling suddenness of a thunder, sometimes like the ray of

¹⁷ Paul Carus, *Vide The Gospel of the Buddha*, Section XX.

¹⁸ *Kātha Upaniṣad*, II.2.12.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, II.2.13.

²⁰ *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, VI.19, 20.

²¹ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.23.

the morning sun, sometimes like the beacon of the beloved from across the separating screen.

From time out of mind, when that voice had touched the soul, the king has left the throne and pleasure gardens and gone into homelessness seeking the Unseen, begging food from door to door, and lying on bare ground under the trees. When that voice had pierced the heart, the queen left the protection of a palace to seek the divine Beloved in the wide open of the world. In obedience to the call of this voice, countless people all over the world, down the ages, have renounced lust and greed, and lived the life of continence, athirst for the ambrosia of illumination. Hearing this voice, the lame have crossed mountains, the mute have become eloquent, the chronic sick have got transformed into the stormy petrels of divine revolutions. The hearer of this voice has blessed when oppressed, prayed when persecuted, loved when hated, forgiven when nailed on the cross. Charged with the power of the voice, men have discarded even the prize of salvation, beatitudes of heavenly joy, so that they might alleviate the miseries of the afflicted. Hearing this voice suddenly, the fallen man has walked straight from the harlot's home to holiness. Hearing this voice, the courtesan has abandoned her ways in the height of her professional success and gone by the noble path.

Countless people from all positions and walks of life in all parts of the world have heard this voice down the ages and, in obedience to the call, have staked their all in search of God and also found Him. They, in effect, tell you in the perfect unison of different languages: 'Child, go ahead. One day you will see Him. God is. We have seen Him in the heart of our hearts; we have seen Him in the chaos of this world; we have seen Him pervading the universe. And we do not know where He is not.'

'He shining, everything shines after Him. By His light, all this is lighted.'

'Unseen, He makes everything visible; unruled, He rules this universe.'

'He not only is, shines, and rules, He also loves. And so life is sweet, pain is a song, sorrow is a melody, and death a romance. There is no end to the flow of His love. We have known through and through in every atom of our being His tremendous love. Our lives are fragrant with His embrace. Our lips are moist with His ambrosia. God is. Go ahead. One day you will see Him.'

WHICH VOICE TO RESPOND TO?

In diverse ways, through exhortation, suggestion, implication, and insinuation, these two voices continue to come to us. One voice says: Fool, matter is all that matters. God is bosh. Give up soft-headedness. Cultivate your brain.

The other voice says: Child, go ahead, one day you will see Him. God is. We have seen Him.

The first voice is quick, strong, and hard-hitting, and readily possesses our heads and hearts and souls. It is armed with reason, logic, and proof. It claims to serve the cause of truth alone.

The second voice is mild, mellow, and unarmed. It comes to you like the soft subtle fragrance of flowers blossoming on trees of a distant forest. It fails to catch you, you fail to catch it.

Unless one is ready and prepared, one does not easily hear the second voice. There is such a thing as time-factor.

But as nobody knows whose time will have come for listening to this voice, continuously there should be the study and the exposition of the scriptures, where the voice lies stilled. Therefore, in the Vedas, it is said that there should be no desisting from studying and expounding the scriptures.

In the scriptures, we have the answer to the question which should have already arisen in your mind as to how to respond to these two contrary voices. Has one to reject one in favour of the other? Then which one

is to be rejected? Or is there any way to listen to both and go on one's own way? What is one's duty under these circumstances? How to decide about this? Both seem to have good points to their credit. Should it be an either-or, or a both-and decision?

If we analyse the implication of the two voices, we shall find that one is the voice of matter, the other is the voice of the Spirit; one is the voice of the temporal, the other is the voice of the Eternal; one is the voice of the finite, the other is the voice of the Infinite; one is the voice of the pleasant, the other is the voice of the True; one is the voice of prosperity, the other is the voice of Illumination; one is the voice of time, the other is the voice of the Timeless.

Which of these two contrary voices are to be responded to in life, and worked for? This is the greatest question to be answered in every single life, specially in our critical times.

Most of our inner conflicts at any time, specially in our times, arise from our incapacity to decide over this issue. A whole lifetime sometimes passes in indecision and in sitting on the fence, and really doing nothing with courage of conviction.

Or, in effect, one finds some decisions in some places, in either-or fashion, which have led to problematic results. Normally, confusion prevails everywhere in regard to this issue.

You may remember Dr. Jung's clinical view quoted earlier that many of the mental troubles arise from the failure to give proper place to eternal values (by which is meant spiritual values) in life. Again, it is also a fact that conflicts also arise from our failure to give proper place to temporal (or material) values in life.

If you accept only matter, matter crushes you. If you accept only Spirit, Spirit swallows you. And you have to decide.

If you reject the Spirit, you will die of poison whether it is of sensate living or of

nuclear war. If you reject matter, you will die of starvation and inanition of body and mind, which are the products of matter. And you have to decide.

There are heroic souls, very few, of course, at any point of time, who are so much fascinated by the Spirit that they enjoy being swallowed by the Spirit, for they know that one does not die when sunk in the ocean of immortality. But even the most avowed lovers of matter do not like to be crushed by matter. They want to enjoy matter as much as possible, but they also want to survive their beloved!

Now, what is the way?

In Hindu thought, we have a clear answer to this perplexing, but all-important issue.

From the earliest times of his history, the Hindu has always felt fascinated watching the interdependence between the eternal and the temporal in the scheme of the universe. In his poetry, in his drama, in his painting and sculpture, in his dance and song, the Hindu has always tried to give expression to this fascination, this rhythm of the Absolute in the relative.

In the formulation of his religious doctrines and social philosophies, the Hindu, therefore, always tried to emphasize the eternal values in the changing situations of life. Having known for certain that all this is verily Brahman, the Hindu vividly saw the manifestation of the eternal in the temporal, and understood the purpose of the latter as the pathway to the former. The temporal is the gateway to the eternal.

From such background of thought came the great teaching of the *Isā Upaniṣad*: 'In darkness are they who worship only the world, but in greater darkness are they who worship the Infinite alone. He who accepts both saves himself from death by the knowledge of the former and attains immortality by the knowledge of the latter.'²²

²² *Isā Upaniṣad*, 9, 11.

The Hindu does not venture to decry the due importance of matter, because matter really matters in our day to day life, and also because matter is but a mode of evanescent expression of the Spirit itself. But he shudders at the very thought of denying the Spirit, because, when the high connection of this dusty world with the Eternal is snapped, what remains is but pitiful futility. Therefore, Hindu teachers are never tired of saying that one must not neglect one's welfare; one must not neglect one's prosperity; one must not neglect one's duty to society; and one must, through everything he does, attend to the requirements of one's illumination and salvation.²³

That welfare which is not subservient to the requirements of illumination is the very opposite of welfare. That prosperity which takes you away from the path of illumination is veritable degradation. That discharge of duty to society which blocks your advance to illumination is a contraption of the very devil.

Hinduism is so definitive in this regard that it says even the natural cravings of flesh should be answered, controlled, and directed, and conquered in such a way as they may serve the requirements of illumination.

In Swami Vivekananda's teachings, we have a modern seer's creative suggestion as to how we should respond to these two voices coming to us all the time and claiming our heads, hearts, and souls. He says that the conquest of outer nature through the advancement of science is really a wonderful and glorious achievement of man. But more wonderful and glorious is man's conquest of his inner nature. The goal is to manifest the divine potentiality by controlling nature, external and internal.

Swami Vivekananda significantly calls

²³ *Vide Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, I.11.

those who reject the Spirit and ignore the conquest of inner nature, as 'surface scientists'. What is necessary today is to take through science and religion a complete view of Reality and pattern the human civilization in the light of that integral vision.

And, therefore, man must address himself to these two tasks simultaneously—the conquest of inner and outer nature. Those who neglect the conquest of outer nature cannot solve the problems of physical well-being. To those who neglect the conquest of inner nature, all their prosperity will become ash in their mouth. So, the path of sanity is in making the conquest of outer nature subserve the purpose of illumination, by which alone one can ultimately solve the riddle of life.

There is so much meaning in Sri Ramakrishna's simple saying: 'Do your duty with one hand and, with the other, hold to God. After the duty is over, you will hold to God with both hands.'²⁴

If you want that all the achievements of human civilization should not go to pieces; if you want that glorious attainments of your nation should not end in a senseless mess; if your personal life should not be 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury and signifying nothing'—then there is no other way open to you than to follow this simple teaching of Sri Ramakrishna.

Even if the world is overtaken by the worst, and you would not be able to prevent it, even if Nemesis would come, dancing like Kālī, in a procession of ruination and destruction, if you will have followed this teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, you will be able to stand full stature dauntlessly, and with the sweetest of smiles utter the loving invocation: "Then come, O Mother, come!"

²⁴ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, 1942, p. 138.

THE CONCEPTION OF THE FREE WILL

BY SRI C. C. CHATTERJI

'Where there is a will, there is a way' is a compendium of our belief in the freedom of the will, the power of self-determination, its dependability, and the calm confidence it brings. No physiological or psycho-physical theory can deny or doubt it. All of us, consciously or unconsciously, exercise our free will when we undertake, of our own accord, to do any work, right or wrong; or when we willingly say to a friend 'I will help you' when he has got into a difficult situation; or when we choose to follow a course of action and determine to achieve the end. Whenever the *ṛsis* of old gave their blessings or hurled their curses, their words never failed to produce the expected result, as they were uttered with confidence born of a firm faith in will power, however mysterious it may be. Free will, like human speech, is a gift of God; He allows us the liberty to make of our life what we will. Our present life is the outcome of our deeds in many past lives, and God leaves us free to live it as best we can, only remembering that we are to submit to Him: 'Our wills are ours to make them thine.'

A Sanskrit couplet, which has become almost a motto to live by, persuades people to be the makers of their own destiny. It says that the lion-hearted, industrious man earns immense wealth; whereas a coward says that everything is given by *daiva* or destiny. Free will, and for the matter of that, a strong will, makes more men than it breaks—men who have the grit to exclaim with the poet:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be,
For my unconquerable soul.
In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud;

Under the bludgeonings of chance,
My head is bloody, but unbowed.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears,
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.
It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

Mahatma Gandhi was conscious of what could be achieved by means of the will power that a man was free to possess. Though his faith was pinned in the holy name of Rāma, he was confident of the strength that lay in the free will of man. That is why he assured his countrymen, during the struggle for independence, that, if thirty-three crores of people could so will it, they might have independence overnight.

A man, who is upheld by faith in his will power, not set to work at variance with the will of the Almighty, tides over insurmountable difficulties. Jesus Christ said: 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, "Remove hence to yonder place", and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you.'

How free will could be made to work in the life of a man to his advantage is shown in detail by Aldous Huxley in his book *The Perennial Philosophy*. He writes: "The will is free, and we are at liberty to identify our being either exclusively with our selfness and its interests, regarded as independent of indwelling Spirit and transcendent Godhead (in which case, we shall be passively damned or actively fiendish), or exclusively with the divine within us and without (in which case, we shall be saints), or finally with self at one moment or in one context and with spiritual not-self at other moments and in other con-

texts (in which case, we shall be average citizens, too theocentric to be wholly lost and too egocentric to achieve enlightenment and a total deliverance).'

Will-to-be and will-to-become are both in the cosmic consciousness, which underlies all creation. It is given in the Upaniṣads that Brahman saw He was one, and willed to become many. For this purpose, He took to *tapasyā*; by means of *tapasyā*, He created this world; and having created it, He entered into it. So that the world is not only His footstool, but every object in it, living or non-living, is pulsating with His presence, who appears in varied forms of mind and matter. Man was not only made in the image of God, but he was endowed with a spark of His will, too. It is for him to make it the instrument of realizing the purpose of life. 'To fulfil God in life', says Sri Aurobindo in *The Life Divine*, 'is man's manhood.' God's grace descends on the man who directs his free will to shape his divinity which is in making. But 'Our free will can hinder the course of inspiration, and when the favourable gale of God's grace swells the sails of our soul, it is in our power to refuse consent and thereby hinder the effect of the wind's favour; but when our spirit sails along and makes its voyage prosperously, it is not we who make the gale of inspiration blow for us, nor we who make our sails swell with it, nor we who give motion to the ship of our heart; but we simply receive the gale, consent to its motion, and let our ship sail under it, not hindering it by our resistance' (St. Francois de Sales, quoted by Aldous Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy*).

What has been said above leads to the conclusion that, consenting to receive the grace of God, a man can so exercise his free will as to work out his aspirations, or to determine the pattern of his life, without worrying about the question of *daiva* (destiny) or 'the writing on the forehead'. But in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa mentions five factors which influence the actions of men :

'The seat of action (i.e. the body), likewise the agent, different kinds of instruments (i.e. organs of sense and action), various efforts, and, fifthly, destiny—these five are the causes of whatever action a man may perform with his body, speech, or mind, whether it is right or wrong' (XVIII. 14-15).

Dr. Radhakrishnan comments on the first verse thus: 'It is the wise, all-seeing will that is at work in the world. In all human actions, there is an unaccountable element which is called luck, destiny, fate, or the force accumulated by the acts of one's past lives. It is called here *daiva*. The task of man is to drop a pebble into the pond of time, and we may not see the ripple touch the distant shore. We may plant the seed, but may not see the harvest which lies in hands higher than our own. *Daiva* or the super-personal fate is the general cosmic necessity, the resultant of all that has happened in the past, which rules unnoticed. It works in the individual for its own incalculable purposes. Belief in *daiva* should not be an excuse for quiescence. Man is a term of transition. He is conscious of his aim, to rise from his animal ancestry to the divine ideal. The pressure of nature, heredity, and environment can be overcome by the will of man.'

A libertarian will certainly accept the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, specially the last ones, and emphatically assert the power of free will, leaving no room for *daiva*. But a determinist sees no freedom of the will; for he always assigns some constraint—physical or moral—some passion or desire, as the motive to all human volition or action.

It is worth while to refer to the illuminating discourse on 'Destiny versus Exertion', or 'Fatalism versus Activism', in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. At one place, the venerable Vasiṣṭha explains: 'One's own deeds, when ready to bear fruit, are called *daiva*; excepting this, there is nothing known by the name of *daiva*.' By his virtuous efforts, every man ought to counteract the harmful effects

of his actions of the past lives, which are now ready to cause trouble. "The deeds of the previous life—fate—have cast me into a particularly difficult situation" are rueful words; one ought to trample on the intelligence uttering such words, for fate is not stronger than present exertion. Everyone should try his best to make the noblest efforts till the bad deeds of previous lives cease to produce any results; that is, till the vicious deeds of the previous births are not destroyed to the roots, one should continue to work with enthusiasm and application. Through good deeds, a man gets good fruit early, and bad deeds bring bad fruit. Excepting these good and bad activities, there is nothing called *daiva*.

At another place, addressing Śrī Rāmacandra, Vasiṣṭha says: "O Rāma, the actions of the past lives constitute *daiva* or destiny. So, "I am under the control of *daiva*; I am not free to do anything"—such thoughts must be removed from the mind by means of association with pious men and the study of religious books. As striving continues, reward follows. This is manliness. He who does not make any effort in the present life to defeat *daiva*, tempted by the ephemeral joys of life, and always depends upon

luck, fate, or fortune, is a poor, pitiable fool. The deeds done in the past life and those done in the present fight like two rams; the stronger one overcomes the other in a moment. ...

'Man's self-interest centres round two things—one is the attainment of happiness and the other is deliverance from unhappiness. To be employed entirely in discharging the duties one has to do, or assiduously performing other works in order to gain these interests, has been called *pauruṣa* (manliness) by the wise. ... He is a fool who, setting aside this obvious good coming from exertion, falls into the delusion of *daiva*. So, O Rāma, instead of depending on *daiva*—a product of morbid imagination and false ideas, without basis in causality—have recourse to *puruṣārtha* (manly endeavour to follow one's religion, earn money, fulfil desires, and attain liberation) for the welfare of your soul. If, for the good of the Self, refuge is taken in noble *puruṣārtha*, then *daiva* is certainly vanquished.'

This is the final admonition of the venerable Vasiṣṭha to Śrī Rāmacandra; and this presents the true attitude that one should cultivate towards the problem of destiny and free will.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

It gives us great pleasure to announce to our readers that Srimat Swami Vishuddhanandaji Maharaj, till recently Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was elected President of the Math and Mission on the 6th March 1962. On the occasion of the assumption of his new office, the Swami kindly gave a 'Message' to *Prabuddha Bharata* and, through it, to its numerous readers spread all over the world. This has been published in this issue.

Swami Vishuddhanandaji is the eighth President of the Math and Mission, and succeeds Swami Sankaranandaji, who passed away at the Belur Math on the 13th January 1962.

Born in 1882, Swami Vishuddhanandaji is now 80. Early in life, he came under the spiritual influence of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, and the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He had his initiation from the Holy Mother in 1906, and joined the Order in 1907. During his active life, he

was connected with several centres of the Math and Mission, and he was the head of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Ranchi till his elevation to Vice-Presidentship. His association with the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati, the home of *Prabuddha Bharata*, has been very long, first as a member and then as one of its Trustees, which he continues to be even now.

The Swami became a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission in the year 1922. In 1947, he was called to the office of the Vice-President of the Order. The Swami was always noted for his love for a quiet and contemplative life. But ever since he became Vice-President, he had been travelling in different parts of India to minister unto the spiritual needs of thousands of devoted men and women. The Swami's conversations on matters spiritual are very illuminating. Several of his talks to groups of devotees at different places have been collected and published in two volumes (in Bengali).

On this happy occasion of his becoming President of the Order, we pray to Sri Ramakrishna that he may grant him a long life, so that he may carry on the great spiritual mission initiated by the Master and his immediate disciples. . . .

The second half of the article on 'The Vedic Testimony and its Speciality—2' by Swami Satprakashananda is concluded in this issue. . . .

Dr. (Mrs.) Sarasvati Chennakesavan, M.A., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Pachaiappa's College, Madras, shows in her article 'Man or Machine?', how the science of cybernetics may one day obliterate the distinction between mind, matter, and soul, dealing thus a heavy blow to the postulates of Western philosophy and religion which make no distinction between soul and mind. But Indian thought has nothing to fear from it, since it does not equate the Self with mind, which (latter) it recognizes as essentially material. The task before philosophers now is to take help from modern research to restate their belief about the self in modern language. . . .

Two voices come to us—one from above and one from nature. Man finds it most difficult to reconcile the two, and either rejects the world to suffer for life, or discards the Spirit to be crushed under the weight of materialism. Swami Budhananda, of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, shows in his article that neither path is suitable for man. Hinduism found out the way of searching for God through His expressions in nature. The promise for the future lies in that discovery. . . .

In his article on 'The Conception of the Free Will', Sri C. C. Chatterji, of Bombay, brings out the point that, 'consenting to receive the grace of God, a man can so exercise his free will as to work out his aspirations'; in other words, man can be the maker of his own destiny.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SISTER NIVEDITA OF RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA. BY PRAVAJKA ATMAPRANA. *Published by Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 5 Nivedita Lane, Calcutta 3. 1961. Pages 287. Price Rs. 7.50.*

It has often been said that it is a miracle how Sri Ramakrishna transformed the sceptic youths of Calcutta into saints imbued with a spiritual mission to the whole world. No less a miracle was the transformation of Miss Margaret Noble, an Irish young woman, into Sister Nivedita, in the hands of Swami Vivekananda, who, in his search for a real 'lioness' to work for the uplift of Indian women, found in her the right person for the purpose. Memories are short-lived, and fifty years in a century of momentous changes are long enough to make people forget her signal service to the cause of India. It is also a pity that it took such a long period for an authentic biography of hers, in English, to appear. Nevertheless, we feel gratified that this biography under review is published by the very school which owes its existence to Nivedita and is written by one of the nuns of a monastic organization, grown out of the work initiated by her.

Written in graceful style, this readable account of the Sister's life is divided into forty-seven short chapters with expressive captions. Though the story of her life is told in chronological order, the chapters highlight the varied facets of her magnetic personality—as a spiritual seeker, as a disciple undergoing the bitter, but necessary hardships of initial training, as a *brahmacārīnī* living the orthodox life of a Hindu woman, and as a leader of rising India, inspiring and guiding the young men to seek salvation in the service of India fearlessly. All these aspects of her inspiring life keep the reader enthralled. The book is replete with quotations and extracts from her books and diaries, which, besides corroborating the statements of the author, make the reading of the book an education in itself; for Sister Nivedita's varied writings on Indian life and problems are of great value even today. Her studies of our problems were penetrating, while the solutions she advocated were the product of a sharp intellect and a feeling heart that had identified itself with India and her welfare. Many foreigners worked for India; but Nivedita stands out singularly apart amongst them, because hers was a life transformed spiritually. It is essential that every Indian should acquaint himself with her life and her writings, which are a contribution not only to India, but to English literature as well.

The volume under review rightly refutes some of the incorrect theories regarding Sister Nivedita advanced by earlier biographers, in their enthusiasm to present an exciting account about her. That these versions of her

life had no real evidence to support them has been pointed out, briefly but ably, in the course of the narrative. A glossary, bibliography, and index add to the utility of the book. Some minor errors, like spelling '*Prabuddha Bharata*' as '*Prabuddha Bharat*' and referring to '*Advaita Ashrama*' as '*Ramakrishna Ashrama*' (last para, p. 280), need correction in the next edition.

The printing and get-up are excellent. We congratulate the publishers for putting this authentic and authoritative biography of Sister Nivedita in the hands of the public and wish that it be translated in other languages as well.

S. S.

THE MEMOIRS CALLED GOSPELS. BY G. P. GILMOUR. *Published by Hodder and Stoughton Limited., London EC 4. Pages 299. Price 21 shillings.*

Here is a book that will be useful both to the lay reader and a serious student of the New Testament in understanding the historical background of the gospels, the circumstances under which they were written by the apostles, and the purpose they might have had in their mind in writing the gospels in the way they did. In the modern world, it is customary to state these things in the preface or introduction of every book; besides, very often, a pen picture of the author, too, is given. In the case of a scripture like the Bible, the answering of these preliminary questions become all the more important, while the task itself is by no means easy. Numerous have been the interpretations, commentaries, expositions, etc. on such books that have shaped the destiny of mankind. The common reader, therefore, gets lost in the meshes of these interpretations. In the book under review, Dr. G. P. Gilmour, President and Vice-Chancellor of McMaster University, Canada, has attempted to present in simple style, for the lay reader, the answers to many of these questions with considerable success. He has filled the last seventy pages of the book with copious references, notes, and bibliographies for each chapter to help the serious student of the gospels in going through his task in a thoroughgoing manner.

In three sections, the author deals with the difficulties entailed in translating a sacred book from an ancient text to modern vernacular, the historical background at the time the gospels were written, and a survey of the gospel record. Unlike many Christian writers, the author's approach to the gospels is practical and shorn of all pedantic theology. He is more concerned with the spiritual import of the life and teachings of Christ than the academic questions. Thus, he has tried to dispel the popular notions about the miracles

done by Jesus, as well as the idea that the mission of Jesus was mainly on the ethical plane. He rightly insists that many of the miracles attributed to Jesus need not be considered supernatural; they may only mean that there are laws of nature which we do not know how to harness. The author is equally right when he states that the fourth gospel was written, keeping in view the background of eternity; indeed, the gospel of St. John is steeped with metaphysical and spiritual import. In most cases, the author has brought into bold relief the universal implications of the life and teachings of Christ.

However, we have to add a few lines in well-meant criticism. First, the author, being an avowed protestant, tries to play down the idea of renunciation which forms the core of the teachings of Lord Jesus. It is true that he did not preach dry asceticism; but many of his teachings are fully imbued with the monastic spirit, though they were mainly addressed to a select band of disciples. Every great religious teacher knows that monasticism is not meant for the masses but for those who are willing and prepared for a life of renunciation. It is even considered by some that Jesus, too, was a member of the Essene community. Secondly, mention has to be made of one or two hyperbolic statements which have a jarring effect. For example: 'Through these brief and unadorned accounts, unspoiled by moralizing or homily, we receive an impression of Jesus more memorable *than that of any other figure in human history*' (p. 52, italics ours). Such remarks are difficult to substantiate by facts.

Finally, we may add that, in the modern world, there is no place for exclusivistic religion. In the gospels, we do not come across any exclusivistic ideas; perhaps, they are a Judaic legacy to Christianity. Even such statements as 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me' (St. John, 14.6) can easily be interpreted on a universal basis, without asserting that Jesus is the only deliverer. It is the adherence to the letter rather than to the spirit of the words of the gospels, which are couched in a language of imagery, that has driven Christianity into the path of exclusivism. When the portals of religion are under the assault of science and technology, no religion on earth can survive through exclusivistic claims, despite their vaunted historicity. It would, therefore, be a welcome move, if Christian writers can come forward with broad-based interpretations of the New Testament so as to fasten their religion to the secure foundations of universal love and tolerance.

S. S.

THE CONCEPT OF MAN. A STUDY IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY. EDITED BY S. RADHAKRISHNAN AND P. T. RAJU. Published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd.,

Ruskin House, Museum Street, London. 1960. Pages 383. Price Sh. 42.

The plea for mutual understanding of the world's cultures has been in vogue since the early decades of the last century. The different wars have glaringly revealed to man that his own traditional culture and outlook are not adequate, and that he must amend and supplement these traditional patterns after a careful study of other patterns of life and thought. This gave a new impetus to the modern thinker, who believes that human values and civilization can survive only when man develops a comparative philosophy of life. In such a philosophy, the basic category is the concept of man.

The editors of the volume present here three essays on the concept of man in Greek, Jewish, and Chinese thought, all written by three professors of eminence from the United States of America. The concept of man in Indian thought and the concluding essay are from the pen of Professor P. T. Raju.

What the four great cultural traditions—Greek, Jewish, Chinese, and Indian—have to say about the individuality and dignity of man is the problem inquired into. In other words, philosophy here comes to mean the reflection of man about himself. And it was so even from the earliest dawn of human philosophizing. Yet the work can stimulate one to come back to the actualities of life from the abstractions of the positivists and their allies. The contributors explain, from the standpoint of their respective traditions, problems like man in relation to nature, society and the divine spirit, evolution, complexity of the human individual, ideas of life, and influence of education. Such a synopsis might make the volume look like a sociological study of man within the framework of a certain tradition.

The plan of the volume seems to be influenced more by the importance of the physical and of the practical. This has restricted a detailed presentation of the concept of man. When we accept that man is the total individual, we would like to know what the different traditions have to say about the psychological, epistemological, and metaphysical nature of man and about the implications of such an individual. The approach of the editors to the concept is closer to that of Confucianism. The essays on Greek and Jewish thought are stimulating. Professor Raju's essay on Indian thought focusses our attention on some basic problems; but it does not appear to fall in line with the prospectus.

The volume deserves a careful study and examination. If a study like this can pave the way for an integration of different truths and values of and for man, it would really be a landmark in the history of man. Any such integration from a sociological and ethical point of view can make this world truly the best of all possible worlds to live in.

DR. P. S. SASTRI.

SPINOZA IN THE LIGHT OF THE VEDĀNTA.
By R. K. TRIPATHI. Published by Banaras Hindu
University, Varanasi. Pages 349. Price Rs. 10.

This book is a modified form of the author's doctoral thesis, and has all the merits and some limitations of such works. The language is clear, and the chapters are well organized and closely knit; and the main Vedānta-oriented thesis running through the book reveals perspicacity of the author's mind. The main limitation is that the author does not let his creative mind go whenever there is occasion for such free expression, because he is constantly under pressure of proving his major thesis. Even so, this is a work of real merit.

The first important point to which the author draws our attention is the Spinozistic distinction between philosophy and religion—*reason* governs philosophy, while religion is ruled by *sentiment*. Religion is *realistic*; philosophy is a deliberate search for *ideals*. The argument proceeds in this strain. This contention may be true enough in the case of Spinoza. (The reviewer has grave doubts about its universal applicability to all aspects of Spinoza's philosophy.) But the question is: Will the Śāṅkarite accept this distinction?

Spinoza, according to the author, converts the theism and dualism of his predecessors into absolutism, and it is from this absolutistic angle that all philosophical problems should be viewed. The author gives the well-known traditional interpretation of 'Attributes'. His originality consists in introducing Īśvara as a dynamic principle of explanation for elucidating the relation

between absolute Substance and *Natura Naturans*. Similarly, in regard to 'Modes', the author thinks that Hiraṇyagarbha would correspond to Spinoza's immediate infinite modes (p. 203). In discussing the possibility of freedom, the author stresses Spinoza's distinction between morality and spirituality, which Western thinkers cannot easily understand, and shows how the acceptance of the *vyāvahārika-pāramārthika* concept would illumine the dark places in Spinozistic ethics.

It is in his treatment of causality that Dr. Tripathi achieves notable success. The dilemma that Spinoza has to face is this: If substance is pure unity, then a cosmism is the consequence; if substance is conceived as changing itself into the world, then the notion of pure unity has to be given up. According to Dr. Tripathi, Spinoza tries to escape the horns of the dilemma by introducing the conception of double causality. This trend of the thought is exactly parallel to the Vedāntic way of looking at things from the *vyāvahārika-pāramārthika* standpoint.

On the whole, as the reviewer has already said, this is a meritorious work deserving wide recognition and careful study. The General Editor points out in his Foreword that the author 'proposes an emendation of Spinoza in the light of Śāṅkara'. True, this is an emendation and a very extensive emendation, too. The reviewer would suggest a change in the title to 'Spinoza Baptized in Vedānta'. But one question remains: Had Spinoza been alive, would he have accepted this baptism; would he have welcomed this emendation?

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA RANGOON

REPORT FOR 1960

The following were the activities for the year under review:

Outdoor: New cases treated: 66,316 (male: 26,899; female: 20,408; children: 19,009); repeated cases: 1,46,065 (male: 56,571; female: 48,797; children: 40,697).

Number of cases treated by other departments: Eye: 5,838; E.N.T.: 4,351; dental department: 8,368; V.D. department: 1,789; X-ray department: number of cases X-rayed: 1,809; screening: 1,125; deep X-ray therapy: 1,903; physiotherapy department: 2,943; I.M. injections: 45,058; I.V. injections: 866; minor operations: 7,124.

Indoor Department: Number of beds: 162; number of patients treated: 4,030 (male: 2,440; female: 1,158; children: 432).

The Nurses Training School: In the preliminary examination, seven candidates appeared and six passed; in the final examination, fourteen out of the fifteen candidates passed.

Some of the Needs of the Sevashrama:

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| 1. Reconstruction of wards damaged during the war | K. 10,00,000 |
| 2. Doctors' Quarters | K. 75,000 |
| 3. Cancer Department: Accessories for deep X-ray | K. 1,00,000 |
| 4. Diagnostic X-ray | K. 1,00,000 |
| 5. Other departments | K. 90,000 |



SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA

New President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission