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Prabuddha Bharata

OR

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By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXXII

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No. 1



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(114)

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Po. Belur, Howrah
10 July 1922

Dear Mother —,

I am glad to receive your letter. I cannot follow why in every letter you call yourself a 'wretched child'. You are blessed indeed! You have taken refuge in God incarnate in this Age and I, one of His direct disciples, have initiated you into His all redeeming *mantra*. Do you not take these into account? Know it for certain that you are very fortunate—never a wretched.

By way of repeating *japa* meditation will automatically come when you will have the divine form of the Master enshrined in your heart for ever and you will have joy and love in you. You will come to realize that He is the chosen deity of your heart, one dearest of the dear. It is He who pervades your body, mind and the soul as your inner consciousness; you feel yourself living because He is there within you. While practising meditation think as if the Master, seated in the lotus of your heart, is casting His compassionate glance at you and you, too, are looking at Him with devotion and love. To think in this way is to meditate. By this you will attain to inward peace and will always find yourself full of hopes and possibilities. Whenever you feel yourself dry, pray to Him like a child and say, 'Lord! grant me love, devotion and conviction. I am ignorant and I know nothing, so, give me knowledge'. Insist on these like a child and pray to Him. He is but father, mother and everything to you. Keep yourself conscious of this; mind then will have deep concentration at the time of meditation. The

sum and substance of all is to make Him your own, to look to Him as the Soul of your soul. None can attain to Him without love, so the more you have love for Him, the more you will attain to meditation and have joy. What to write you more! My heartfelt affection and blessings to you. You will surely attain to meditation. Take it for certain that the Master is merciful to you.

I am happy to learn that you all are keeping well. All, in the Math, goes fairly well.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

PS. Convey my blessings to your mother.

(115)

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Belur, Howrah
10 July 1922

Dear Sriman —,

I am very happy to receive your letter. May Master make you more and more steadfast in your ideal day by day—this is my heartfelt prayer and my blessing. I can well remember that Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) used to have much love and affection for you. Also I know that Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda), too, had great affection for you. I, too, love you much and I know it well. By Master's grace you are already free from the principal bondages of this world; He has been merciful to keep you away from the root cause of *avidyā*. May He make you remain so up to the last and make your life blessed by bestowing all the divine virtues as faith, compassion, knowledge and continence on you. To serve father and mother is a sacred duty in the world. There cannot be the least doubt in this regard and we have our every sanction behind that. Continue to do that so long it is possible. They, too, are very devoted. May your father and mother have the firm faith and devotion up to the end. They are very good and I have much love for them.

In this age the Master is the true incarnation of God—the true saviour of the religions and a true prophet.

Accept my heartfelt love and blessings to you.

Well-wisher,
Shivananda

GENERATIONS OF YOUTHS

[EDITORIAL]

Youths of the Present: Do the youths of our age stand devalued? It is a burning question all over the world today. In Britain they are branded as angry boys, in America they live in some sort of delicious intoxication and in India they are lawless mobs taking recourse to the democracy of the streets. Everywhere they build up an image of themselves as an isolated unit of behaviour not compatible with the rest of the society. Their social mood is divisive, confusing and disruptive. It is, however, not altogether untrue that the youths of today are not what they had been before in the past. The impulse of the youth is always characterized by its own uniqueness. It is proud and at once afraid of itself; it is shy and sensitive at the same time. This shyness and fear give it a ballast of grace that makes it enduring and worthwhile. The youths of today seem to have been robbed of their much needed ballast of character. But why, one is impelled to ask, these fore-runners of every new epoch in every land have turned into destructive fugitive bands prone to march in the tune of lawlessness? Why, those, who have a hallowed background of aggressive goodness, do become aggressively bad? The problem is not the problem of a few youths here and there but it is one that concerns an entire generation that forms the spearhead of our future world. It is not merely the sophisticated societies of European countries that have been swept into the orgy of this new situation. Even those who were too proud, too rigid, too sacred in their faith and heritage are equally affected by it. Everywhere the youths are tossed wildly in a stormy sea where they feel nothing so acutely as their total lack of seamanship. Prospects of any growing nation cannot but be gloomy when the youths who stand be-

tween the tomb of one world and the cradle of another and thus who form the ultimate shield against any disaster, accept violence as a cult, attempt to sanctify the same by tradition and reason. Yet all these do not constitute the real image of the youths. Prejudice may falsify their true identity but history will never justify any devaluation of the youths in general.

Anatomy of the Youth: The trajectory of each individual is quite different from the other. No two men are alike in taste and temperament. But the anatomy of the youth is quite democratic. Whether in valour or vigour, in vice or virtue they form a biological and psychological fraternity—a blood brotherhood that is well discernible and real. Youths of Shakespeare and the youths of Kālidāsa do not differ much. A disturbed Hamlet or a reckless Faust always makes the same specimen of character. 'Hero worship' is their traditional pursuit, moments of excitement are their eternal quests. In this platform of life all converge and from here all diverge winding their respective courses towards the respective varied ends. It has, therefore, been regarded as a period of vital experiment which, if studied properly, may reveal the following universal facts:

(a) Every youth is a reborn Adam in whom there burns the flame of a great newness. Waking up into a horizon of untasted subjectivity yet not hardened by the experiences of the objective world, he is a dreamy creature ready to join the race of life where each step, he takes, becomes the beginning of hundred different paths.

(b) The guiding spirit of every youth is emotion and not reason which he is to acquire still and, as such the basic ingredient of his life is his volatile imagination. In his flight of roseate fancy he is so often like

Macbeth who tells, 'To know my deed, 't were best not know myself', and, therefore, his mental world is always reverberated by five basic questions—Whence, How, Whither, Wherefore and What.

(c) Optimism or pessimism in its extreme form is the third characteristic of a youth. There is no golden mean, no middle course for him. His hating of business, his love of pleasures, his raising of favourites and trusting them entirely and his pulling them down are all extreme. Either he will make much of anything or make nothing of everything. It is not the imbecility of the old but the immaturity of the young that makes one hurl garlands of bouquets in gay abandon towards one's favourite idol and reject the rest root and branch.

(d) The fourth virtue is the spirit of adventure and this is the natural culmination of all the foregoing three. Youthful impulse fed by volatile imagination and propelled by extreme pessimism or optimism cannot but make young Adam an adventurous Prometheus. Whether in self-immolating sacrifices or in courting the chills of suffering he is, therefore, always dauntless. So he is a hero in the Goethe's and Schillers' worlds of storm and stress, a flagbearer of the French Revolution and a propounder of the novel and new. Instances, however, are not wanting where youthful caprice has mistaken prominence for eminence and accepted the cynical dictum for new truth. Not every youth in British political history has been a Pitt or a Disraeli; not every youth of America has thought and acted in the way of Lincoln or Jefferson. Yet one will hardly deny that the 'thunder view' of youthful greatness always outweighs its mistakes and misadventures.

With their virtues and vices and follies and feelings the youths are a class by themselves and one needs to study them only as youths.

Youths in the Upaniṣads: How will the future history regard these youths of our

day? It all depends upon how we see them. The youth is the wine of the human race. Without these bold rascallions history is timorous and prime; it is sodawater with all the fizz gone. Devoid of their wild fantasy, warm and buoyant presence, human civilization is a humid swamp where all has become turgid. In each period of historical crisis, in every phase of threatening gloom they have led the way. From the days of Upaniṣadic hermitages onwards down to the ages of radical social reforms their daring imagination has bridged every gulf of thought and built every castle of changing reality. Histories, no doubt of a different nature, are there to speak differently of the youth world. Many things have gone down before their drunken fury and wild delirium, tumults of violence and vandalism. On many occasions they have passed from senseless rage to stupid quiet; so often their delirium is followed by abject lethargy. But still what they have created and thought are a legion:

Naciketā is the hallowed name of one Upaniṣadic youth around whom there centres round one of the most brilliant episodes of uncommon daring and rare spiritual adventure. It has been said, as the story goes, that once the King Vājaśravasa was engaged in performing a great sacrificial rite in which he was to give away his all wealth. The presents, however, included some inferior cows that were not worth giving on such an occasion. This set his young but pure and sincere son Naciketā to question his father again and again, 'To whom do you offer me?' And as his father irritatingly replied, 'to Death I offer thee', the boy began to think:

'Among many I rank as belonging to the highest; among many I rank as belonging to the middling. What purpose can there be of Death that my father will get achieved through me?' (*Kaṭha* I. i. 5) This invincible faith in a great destiny led the young boy to embark on a violent voyage that brought him

to the realm of Death where the eternal mystery of life lay enwrapped for ages. The impress of such a great mission overwhelmed the god of Death and he welcomed the blessed enquirer by saying:

'*Namaṣte'astu Brahman svastime'astu—O Brāhmaṇa, let salutations be to you, let there be good to me', (ibid., I. i. 9)*

The other six celebrated enquirers who approached the Sage Pippalāda for the realization of the Supreme Reality in the *Upaniṣad* were no other than six determined youths as Sukesā, Satyakāma, Sauryāyaṇī, Bhārgava, Kausalya and Kabandhī. Their questions were:

(i) 'From what indeed are all things born?'

(ii) 'How many in fact are the deities that sustain a creature? Which among them exhibit this glory? Which again is the chief among them?'

(iii) 'From where is this *Prāṇa* born? How does He come into this body? How does He dwell by dividing Himself? How does He depart?'

(iv) 'Which are the organs that go to sleep in this person? Which keep awake in him?'

(v) 'Which world does he really win thereby, who, among men, intently meditates on *Om* in that wonderful way till death?'

(vi) 'Of that Puruṣa I ask you, "Where does He exist?"' (*Praśna*, I. i, II. i, III. i, IV. i, V. i, VI. i.)

Are not these questions all eternal down the ages?

Another youth who stands ever memorable in the mind of men for his dynamic purity and singular spiritual vision is sixteen years old boy Śuka. Young Śuka is adored and worshipped by all the sages of all times. With the immortal verses of the *Bhāgavata* Śuka will remain immortal in the annals of mankind.

Youths in History: History of the great youths of the world does not become ex-

hausted with the era of the Upaniṣads or the Scriptures. The line has all through been unbroken. It is quite strange that the prophets and reformers of almost all the religions have all sprung up from what we call the rebel and moody groups of youths. Christ courted crucifixion only at the prime of his youth, he was only thirty at the time; St. Paul was the angry young Saul of Tarsus flogging the Christians around him before he had had the revelations of Christ; Prince Siddhārtha began his great renunciation only at the age of twenty-nine; and that wonderful boy philosopher Śaṅkara made his unique discovery of all pervading Brahman only at the age of sixteen and ended his historic career at thirty-two. No matter what the youths of today think or feel, the humanity still digests those few great moments associated with the lives of these giant youths of the past. The world would have remained poorer but for the vitality of these emboldened few.

Genius of youth has been commissioned in every age to rediscover, reinstate and re-install the Supreme truth of history. For such ventures, the scriptures say, one must be 'young, intelligent and strong'. The worn-out and the jaded cannot bear the brunt of any such massive challenge. This genius is not the talent of the experts or the virtuosity of the veterans. 'Genius does what it must, talent does what it can', said the English novelist Bulwer Lytton. It is, to echo the words of Carlyle, 'the transcendental capacity of taking trouble.' To feed its giant appetite one must have new dreams of creativity, new visions of reality on every fitting occasion. Therefore the genius that today paints itself as impulsive, moody and rebellious can emerge, should there be the occasion, as a dignified obedience and exalted freedom to make it worthy of any great cause. Youths have been the same in every age equally ready to receive, grasp and actualize any arduous mission. They have never ceased to be adventurous. Had that been so the history

of the twentieth century would have been different. One can hardly forget the historic role of young Sri Ramakrishna verifying the existence of God at the age of twenty-four. Again, the adventure of a God intoxicated youth came to our rescue when our faith began flickering before the blasts of a new doubt and the jolting of a modern nihilism. He was only twenty-nine when he had attained to the highest truth of all the religions of the world. Scholars and thinkers there were many who formed a wide circle around this great prophet but the bands of youths on whom he put his trust for the dissemination of his epoch-making message were all below their teens. It sounds to be more than a legend that the worldwide Ramakrishna movement of today had been first set in motion by a small band of helpless youths united together in a desolate and deserted house at the monastery of Baranagore, Calcutta after the passing away of their great master. Nothing can be more astonishing as well as reassuring than to know that Swami Vivekananda himself was a suspecting rebel crusading against the prevailing religious beliefs before he could get the magic touch of Sri Ramakrishna. Still it is quite mysterious that Sri Ramakrishna found in that disbelieving rebel his future flagbearer who could far excel even Brahmananda Kesav Chandra Sen, one of the greatest leaders and reformers of the time. Sure of his vision as he was, he would never hesitate to declare the same publicly even before Kesav Chandra and the other leaders: 'Well, if Kesav is possessed of one mark of greatness which has made him famous, Naren has eighteen such marks. In Kesav and Vijay I saw the light of knowledge burning like a candle flame, but in Narendra it was like a blazing sun, dispelling the last vestige of ignorance and delusion.' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*: By His Eastern and Western Disciples, 1955, p. 58) Such an unequal comparison between a young boy of eighteen or nineteen and a

great pioneer thinker of the time could not but be puzzling to anybody and this perplexed Narendranath too: 'Sir', so he said to Sri Ramakrishna, 'why do you say such things! People will think you mad. How can you compare the world-renowned Kesav and the saintly Vijay with an insignificant young student like me?' (ibid.) But then all these are facts that came to happen. Events of next ten years unequivocally proved that Sri Ramakrishna's prophecy about the genius of youth was not empty. The world saw in young Vivekananda the future repository of a new faith. He was only thirty when he rose to speak before the Parliament of Religions in 1893. Youths of Madras were the first to discover this great Vivekananda from out of an unknown, wandering mendicant, think actively of sending him to America and procure money from amongst themselves for the purpose; youths of Calcutta made the historic precedence by according victorious Vivekananda a tumultuous welcome in which they could even draw his carriage in the open streets. Youths all over the world joined in thousands to take up his cause and youths in hundreds still come to dedicate themselves to his ideal as they had come to Buddha, Christ or Socrates. To the youths alone all did leave their great legacy.

Youths as social reformers, national heroes or political leaders are no less important than what they have been in other realms of thought. Pitt, the younger became the Prime minister of England when he was only twenty-two; Robespierre, the great leader of the French Revolution earned his great epithet the 'Incorruptible' at the age of thirty-one; Martin Luther, the leader of the Protestant Reformation was only thirty-six when he first launched his reform movements in Germany; young Mohan Das Gandhi laid the foundation of a great world movement while he was in South Africa and young and impulsive Nehru won the heart of the Indian masses

long before he became their first Prime minister. Hundreds of nameless youths laid down their precious lives for the independence of India and suffered untold sufferings; thousands unhesitatingly threw themselves up before the inhuman ruthlessness of a tyrannical foreign rule.

Youths of the Future: But then why the youths of the present generation appear to be so different? How could the master-builders of other ages stand cocooned in their fantasies and disown their own heritage? Have their all imaginations dried up and impulses frozen altogether? Are these rootless, outrageous timids of the present time represent the specimens of those stalwarts who in the past gave new directions of thought and dream? One will not surely like to believe all these to be so. Immortal youths can never die; history can never prove to be false. Never can the sacred heritage fall to the ground; never is a truth utterly lost. Those, who are inclined today to make an indulgent allowance for lawlessness, are mistaken in their zeal and will excite their own contempt. Those, who in imprudent hurry and in malignity of their passion discard the sacred trust of their predecessors do never represent the real youth world. The installed image of youth in history is being mutilated and shattered today by some lying doctrines that have been vanquished elsewhere only to find refuge in them. But, cause and effect, means and ends always remain interlinked. Every vice, whether detected or not, is always punished; every virtue, whether recognized or not, is bound to be rewarded. Sobriety always springs from the toughness of a trained and disciplined mind and it proves invulnerable while the Goliaths may go down before the real tests of fitness. Sober youths all over the world need to combine themselves today against this present retrograde trends here and there around the youth world. There must be aggressive goodness to make a match with any aggres-

sive badness. Their united and determined attempt alone can halt the present drift and enthrone the sanctity of their private as well as public life. This they can do only by remaking themselves. Imagination, unless it is tempered with reality, is a bad imagination that makes a Parliament bad, an institution devalued and a nation aimless. Spirit of adventure, unless it is invested in some constructive purpose, can only turn into misadventure. Ignorance breeds blind daring and idle impulse, the fruitless stakes. Youthful impulse and imagination lying idle or unutilized can invite only wild unbalances in a society. An uneducated people will not, by force of prohibitory laws, be either temperate or pure; an unevolved nation, if be strong, will not keep peace around but vent its unbridled passions. An uninspired youth cannot be a better soldier, nor an uninspired woman a nobler wife or mother. Even if politics be considered as the art of getting along together, in ruling a country and composing strife, it has to order and harmonize our faculties of imagination, our another vital interior sphere. 'I should like', said a child, 'to be very rich'. 'What for?', asked the mother. 'To pay the national debt', the little child replied. This is the echo of young mind. Therefore this cultivated imagination or this educated impulse is the product which every home requires today before it can have any other consumer or capital goods of necessity and importance. Man-making is the most fundamental of the technologies of nation-making and to this respect the state has a vital role to play.

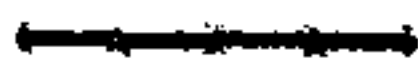
Pericles did truly say, 'States which reward virtues with highest prize are themselves rewarded by the loyalty of their citizens.' The primary function of the state is to generate a spirit of dedication; it has to create instances of self-sacrifice before the youths and pool their impulses for vital national purposes. Those, who can do this, work miracles. Examples in this respect are the two

modern nations—West Germany and Japan. They have proved that a nation becomes great not for its vast territory or the vast stores of natural resources but for the vast capacity of its men having vast reserves of faith, endurance, courage and hope. Germany at the end of the second world war was left shattered, broken and divided; her entire industrial edifice was razed to the ground. But in no time she again built herself anew. West Germany today is the third creditor country in the world and she is much stronger in her industrial potential and more modern in her techniques of production than ever before. Japan has not only survived the shock of the atomic blast but has again been able to regain her lost national vitality within a short period. By disproving every doubt of the pessimists she has again emerged as a major industrial power comparable to any of the powerful modern European nations. What made all these differences? It is all human material. Their violent gusto to rebuild themselves enkindled a revolt against every sort of decorous piety and hollow idealism among the people and agitated their reserves of imagination and emotion in a fashion that led them to a feeling of determination strong enough to recreate a determined future. Remaking of the youths is the first and the last project of a developing nation. They are to be trained to build, to preserve and to assimilate the new and the novel and the process must start from the top and gradually slide down to the bottom of the society. Macaulay once observed in an issue of the *Edinburgh Review*: 'Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties, by leaving capital to find

its own lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment, by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this: the people will assuredly do the rest.' The remark with its all limitations makes a pointed as well as poignant observation on the directive principles of nation-making.

Man-making as the necessary precondition of nation-making was repeatedly emphasized by Swami Vivekananda long before many nations of Asia and Africa became independent. Perhaps his entire message to India could be distilled into these few simple words. Notwithstanding his varied and wide experience of western technology and planning he did choose to make man-making his foremost mission in life; for herein lay the secret of nation-building. Without real men no organization, social, political or religious, can ever grow into existence.

Thus the insinuations that we suffer today are not wholly unwarranted. Youths have not been dead or devalued. As a race they cannot be so. Whatever may have been their collective manifestations here and there, they are what they had been as individuals before. Lifted out of the present boredom they can still shine in new lustre of imagination and aspiration, in massive creativity and robust idealism that will recreate what is our last hope—a Paradise lost. All is at present troubled and cloudy, distracted and full of turbulence, both in India and abroad; but the air may be cleared by this storm, a light and fertility may well follow it.



CRISIS IN EDUCATION

SWAMI TEJASANANDA

We have been witnessing for the last few years almost in every sphere of life,—social, educational, economic and political,—a smouldering discontent erupting very frequently into destructive violence in various ugly forms: Nowhere has it assumed such a serious proportion and dangerous shape as it has done in the field of education,—in schools, colleges and universities. The educational institutions have become the playground of different disruptive forces operating without let or hindrance and thereby spelling disaster for an orderly growth and development of the country as a whole. Not a single day passes without strikes, *hartals*, *bundhs*, *gheraos* etc. called at a moment's notice by some interested parties to paralyze the normal life of the people. Violence and vandalism have become almost the normal feature in all departments of life from the most common man to the wisest of legislators. In view of what is happening in the country, it needs no straining of imagination to infer that the educated younger generation who are *ipso facto* the future hopefuls of the land and the would-be architects of the destiny of the nation, have been switched off, by a peculiar combination of some malevolent forces, from the real orbit which they must follow in the formative period of their lives for their own welfare as also for the good of their collective existence.

There is no denying the fact that, even after the achievement of Independence about nineteen years back, the country is still wallowing in the mud-puddle of stark poverty and appalling illiteracy, in spite of the vigorous efforts initiated by the national Government to liquidate them through a number of well-intentioned Five-Year Plans. It is therefore high time that the leaders of

the country peered deep into the root cause of this malignant malady which is spreading by leaps and bounds from one end of the country to the other, instead of searching for temporary remedial measures to stop the rot. Any tinkering of a superficial character in matters of such vital importance will serve only to aggravate the situation rather than solve the hydra-headed problem. It is not possible to quench the bubbling lava by merely pouring slops into a devastating volcano.

Whatever may be the etiology of this wide-spread discontent and indiscipline, it cannot be gainsaid that education has become the first casualty in the country in this titanic struggle of power-politics. It has been our painful daily experience that students are becoming furious and tumultuous on the slightest pretext and turning schools, colleges, universities and examination halls into a veritable pandemonium. To crown all, the teachers of different categories who are the real custodians of the intellectual and moral interests of the younger generation are boldly strutting public roads with flying placards in hand and rending the air with their loud slogans. It is but natural that the emotionally inflammable student-community who are to shape and mould their lives and activities according to the teachings of their teachers, cannot be a silent witness to the drama that is being enacted by their own educational mentors before their very eyes from day to day. Is it not a fact that, on the younger generation who, after the completion of their academic career, would become the useful citizens of the land, the ultimate responsibility of devoting themselves to the laudable task of improving the social and economic life of their motherland, of educating the dumb masses and

removing the untold distress of the suffering and sunken millions and also of liquidating illiteracy and poverty, principally depends? That such welcome and salutary improvements cannot be effected in the midst of this interminable turmoil and disorder can hardly be over-accentuated. As a matter of fact, normal life and peaceful conditions are the *sine qua non* of a healthy growth and development of all works of a substantial and permanent nature in every State.

Needless to point out that the educational system as is prevalent in India today needs to be re-organized and to be completely freed from politics which has been eating into the vitals of the green youths of the land. They more often than not play into the hands of the wily politicians who use them as cat's-paws to subserve their respective political ends and create intolerable situations in academic circles with the help of these unwary young learners. As a matter of fact, there are too many forces working everywhere to make confusion worse confounded, mislead the unsophisticated boys and girls and make hells of educational institutions which were at one time the nursery of all that was good and beneficial to human society.

Various attempts have hitherto been made to tackle this problem by various Bodies. The Radhakrishnan Commission on University Education in 1948-49, Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education in 1952-53 as also the Conference held on November, 6, 1959, under the auspices of the Jadavpur University and the special Committee appointed by the University Grants Commission in 1961 and similar other Commissions and Conferences, great or small, are of opinion that educational institutions, students and teachers must be kept completely aloof from active politics. Dr. Srimali, quondam Minister of Education, Govt. of India, minced no matters when he openly declared, 'In the ultimate analysis, the present situation is a result of the failure on the part

of the parents to exercise proper control over their wards and of teachers to win the respect, affection and confidence of their students. It is all the more tragic that in many cases, the teachers themselves have been found to instigate students to start agitation. There are also politicians who are always ready to fish in troubled waters and exploit the students for their political ends. I cannot think of more heinous social crime than the teachers instigating their students to indulge in anti-social activities and politicians exploiting them for their selfish ends'. In a similar vein the distinguished educationists who attended the aforesaid Jadavpur Conference emphatically denounced the participation of teachers in politics and rightly suggested, 'College teachers should not contest any political elections, hold any office in the organization of a political party or express any political opinion to students within the college. Moreover, they should play an active role in maintaining discipline and punishing indiscipline. They should take a firm stand individually and collectively when they find their students straying into politics or unacademic conduct For, all of them share the moral responsibility for giving proper training to the pupils placed in their charge.'

Nothing can be more regrettable and tragic than the fact that these timely warnings and salutary suggestions have fallen flat on the unwilling ears of the teaching community with its natural serious consequences as indicated above. In this connexion it is worthwhile to quote in *extenso* some pregnant observations from the 'Report on Standards of University Education' submitted by the Committee appointed in 1961 by the University Grants Commission as referred to above, for an objective investigation of the problems relating to the standards and aims of higher education in Indian universities. The Report says, 'In the present situation in India involving attempts to bring about far-reaching economic and social changes it would be conced-

ed that universities have to lay much stress on development-oriented education. But in doing so, we have to take care *that the personality of the student as a cultured and responsible member of the society and as a constructive citizen of the State is not lost sight of*. . . . One of the essential conditions to be fulfilled in order to transform teaching from imparting information to acquisition of knowledge and learning from mere memorization to training of the mind and sharpening of the intellect, is a consideration of the authentic role of the teacher. *The teacher has to be conceived as a person who can stimulate in the students a genuine desire for scholarship by bringing their minds into living contact with his own*. (Italics are our own)

'First of all we should see that every student who passes out of an Indian university takes with him some understanding of India's cultural heritage, its past achievements and triumphs in the field of art, philosophy, science and so on. . . . This could, perhaps, be best done at the first degree stage where such a study could form a part of a programme of liberal education'.

'In India a wide gulf often separates our students from the life of the common people. If a student who comes out of the university considers that he has little in common with his community, something has certainly gone wrong with his education. We do not, however, mean that the university student should accept the given ethos of his society without criticism or enquiry. Universities in developing countries like India, in fact, have a three-fold functions to discharge. *Firstly*, they have to ensure that they do not appear to be "ivory tower" in relation to the rest of the community, they must reflect and respond, in a genuine way, to the life of the people living around them. *Secondly*, it is mainly through the intellectual and moral leadership of our universities that a tradition-bound and stagnant society is to be transformed into a modern and progressive community. . . .

Thirdly, and most important of all, it should be considered obligatory on the part of the university to make an intensive study of problems that beset its neighbourhood for the purpose of finding practical remedies for them'.

The Report further adds that it should not be forgotten that in the ultimate analysis every university is an intellectual institution, since knowledge knows no boundaries. In the pursuit of truth and excellence to which all universities are committed, there is neither east or west, north or south. It is therefore of the utmost importance that nothing should be done in our universities which would impair their relationship with the great society of scholars and scientists; on the contrary, every effort has to be made to make them active participants in the work of the world community of learning.

From a careful study of what has been quoted above from the Report, it is crystal clear that the university should produce ideal teachers and students who would be in active communion with the cultural heritage and intellectual aspirations of the nation, identify themselves with the sufferings and needs of the country to which they belong, and move with the progress of the time to make the society a dynamic institution. For, unless they become fully aware of the circumstances in which people around them live, they become alienated from social realities and develop attitudes of mind which are not likely to make them useful citizens of the country. No better analysis of the duties and responsibilities and functions of the university and the system of education that is to be imparted in this Welfare State for the well-being of the nation as a whole, can be imagined.

Swami Vivekananda, one of the foremost thinkers of modern times, visualized the great tragedies of Indian life under the British rule. He wanted to rehabilitate the past glories of his motherland through an education which would not merely combine in it the best elements of Eastern and West-

ern culture but would at the same time hold aloft the Indian ideals of devotion, wisdom and morality so that it might meet the national temperament at every point. Religion, he asserted, was the very core of education, and real education, in his opinion, was that which enabled a person to stand on his own legs and helped him to manifest the perfection already in him by a harmonious development of his head, hand and heart. 'Education' said the Swami, '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-building assimilation of ideas.' 'The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 302; Vol. IV, p. 490)

In this connexion it should not also be forgotten that the spirit of Indian culture must vindicate itself through our universities and make itself felt throughout the world inasmuch as the educational institutions are the principal agency in the mobilization of the cultural resources of the country for the supreme purpose of national expansion as also for international peace and goodwill. The ideal of national education should therefore be a living expression of our Indian outlook,—a new construction of Indian genius in tune with the moving forces of the time. Swami Vivekananda had a realistic grasp of the actual need of the country and wanted to reorientate our education in such a way that it might revive the past glories of our life and society and prove to be a fitting instrument for an orderly progress in every sphere of our corporate activity. To realize his dream, he planned to start different types of institutions for the education of our boys and girls on national lines and to build a university on the models of the great ancient universities of Nālandā, Taxilā, Odantapurī

and Vikramśilā with the Belur Math as the Centre in so far as it suited the conditions of modern life. In short, in the opinion of the Swami, a balanced combination of the secular and spiritual training constituted the true economics of education. In other words, the recovery of the old knowledge in its depth and fulness, its re-statement in new forms adapted to the present needs and the practical application of the knowledge so gathered, to the development of a healthy economic life and new social order must constitute the guiding principle of the system of education that should be evolved and given to the people at large for their collective well-being.

But do not the conditions now obtaining in most of our schools, colleges, universities and societies belie and stultify the very basic principles and ideals that must govern the teaching and training of the younger generation? Do the teachers play their responsible roles properly and fulfil the pledges they are to take as custodians of the moral and intellectual interests of the students committed to their charge in their professional career? Do our rulers also fulfil their obligations to meet the legitimate and reasonable demands of the persons concerned and try to keep the sacred seats of learning completely free from the miasma of unhealthy political activities? Are there adequate provisions and suitable opportunities for the proper utilization of the talents and energies of the educated youths in the works of reconstruction and regeneration of the country and for saving thereby the young people from frustration in life? These are some of the big questions that naturally crop up in the minds of the well-wishers of younger generation of the country.

Sister Nivedita, one of the pioneers of female education in India, in her *Hints on National Education* emphatically pointed out, 'We all know that the future of India depends, for us, on education. Not that industry and commerce are unimportant,

but because all things are possible to the educated, and nothing whatever to the uneducated man. We know also that this education, to be of avail, must extend through all degrees, from its lowest and humblest applications upto the highest and most disinterested grades.... We must have education of women, as well as education of men. We must have secular education, as well as religious. And, more important than any of these, we must have education of the people, and for this, we must depend upon ourselves.... If all the people talk the same language, learn to express themselves in the same way, to feed their realization upon the same ideas, if all are trained and equipped to respond in the same way to the same forces, then our unity will stand self-demonstrated, unflinching. We shall have acquired national solidarity, and power of prompt and intelligent action. In this very fact of universal education, the goal will have been achieved, and none could succeed in turning us back.' (pp. 1-2)

In addition to what has been stated above, the following weighty observations of Sister Nivedita especially regarding the education of our Indian womanhood deserve careful consideration. She says in her learned treatise on *Civic and National Ideals* (pp. 59-61):

'In all lands, holiness and strength are the treasures which the race places in the hands of woman to preserve rather than in those of man. A few men here and there become great teachers, but most have to spend their days in toil for the winning of bread. It is in the house that these renew their inspiration and their faith and insight, and the greatness of the home lies in *tapasyā* of the women. The Indian women and mothers do not need to be reminded of how much Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Śaṅkarācārya owed to their mothers. The quiet silent lives of women living in their homes proud only to be faithful, ambitious only to be perfect, have done more to preserve the *Dharma* and cause it to flourish than any

battles that have been fought outside.' In this connexion she further adds, 'Today our country and her *Dharma* are in sore plight and in a special manner she calls on her daughters at this moment to come forward, as those in the ages before to aid her with a great *Śraddhā*. How shall this be done? We are all asking. In the *first place*, let Hindu mothers renew in their sons the thirst for *Brahmacarya*. Without this our nation is shorn of her ancient strength. No country in the world has an ideal of the student life so high as this and if it be allowed to die out of India, where shall the world look to restore it? In *Brahmacarya* is the secret of strength, all greatness. Let every mother determine that her sons shall be great; and *secondly*, can we not cultivate in our children and ourselves a vast compassion? This compassion will make us eager to know the sorrows of all men, the griefs of our land, and this growing knowledge will produce strong workers, working for work's sake, ready to die, if only they may save their country and fellow-men. Let us realize all that our country has done for us,—how she has given birth to food and friends, our beloved ones, and our faith itself. Is she not indeed our Mother? Do we not long to see her once more "*Mahābhārata*"?'

Thus in the foregoing observations, there are illuminating suggestions which serve as most significant and pertinent pointers to the national ideas and ideals on which to re-organize and re-build our educational institutions to counter the malevolent forces that are threatening the very existence of our social and economic edifice. It is however a happy augury that the University authorities as also the Education Departments of the State and the Centre have woke up to the gravity of the situation and are trying to overhaul the existing educational and examination systems so as to arrest their further drifting into the vortex of endless chaos and confusion, and thereby avert the impending *Crisis in Education*.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

Man has two selves, as it were, the apparent self and the real Self. The apparent self is the phenomenal or empirical self, which is subject to the feelings of pleasure and pain, subject to birth and death, the experiencer and the enjoyer of this objective universe. The real Self is known in Sanskrit as the Ātman. Ātman is ever pure, free, divine, unborn and undying, immortal, changeless—one with Brahman. Ātman is described in the Upaniṣads as *Sat-cit-ānanda* — Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. Not that Ātman exists, but it is existence itself; not that it knows, but it is knowledge itself, not that it is blissful, but it is bliss itself.

We read in the *Mundaka Upaniṣad*: 'Like two birds of golden plumage, inseparable companions, the individual self and the immortal Self are perched on the branches of the self-same tree. The former tastes of the sweet and bitter fruits of the tree; the latter tasting of neither, calmly observes'.

'The individual self, deluded by forgetfulness of his identity with the divine Self, bewildered by his ego, grieves and is sad. But when he recognizes the worshipful Lord as his own true Self, and beholds his glory, he grieves no more'.

'When the seer beholds the Effulgent One, the Lord, the Supreme Being, then transcending both good and evil, and freed from impurities, he unites himself with Him'.

We too must 'behold the Effulgent One,' unite ourselves with Him, realize our true being, our divine nature. This must be a direct, immediate experience; ignorance, which keeps us forgetful of our divine nature and causes us to taste the sweet and bitter fruits of the tree of life, is direct and immediate. Only a direct experience of the real Self, attained in *samādhi*, removes this ignorance.

Such is the goal of all that lives and breathes.

The Ātman remains forever pure and unsoiled. Although a gem may remain buried beneath mud for centuries, its lustre is never lost. No matter what you are, or what you may be doing, or how you are living—as a saint or a sinner—your true nature, the indwelling God in you, remains God forever. The saint is a saint in whom God has become unfolded or manifest; a sinner is a sinner so long as God in him remains hidden. There is that well-known saying of Oscar Wilde, 'A saint has a past, a sinner has a future.'

Through the process of evolution each one of us will one day be immersed in the ocean of immortal bliss by manifesting that Godhead which is our very birthright. Patañjali, the Hindu psychologist, explains the Indian theory of evolution by using the illustration of a farmer who needs only to open a sluice gate to a reservoir in order to irrigate his fields. He does not have to fetch his water. It is there already and flows into the fields by the natural force of gravity.

To quote Swami Vivekananda in this connexion, 'Perfection is every man's nature, only it is barred in and prevented from taking its proper course. If any one can take the bar off, it rushes nature.' Thus, perfection has been barred by certain obstacles. When knowledge breaks these bars, then God becomes manifest.

The word 'obstacle' is worth our careful consideration because it introduces an important difference between Hindu and Christian thought. What the Hindus call an obstacle, the Christians would call a 'sin'. By sin a Christian generally means a positive act of disobedience or ingratitude toward God. By God he means God the father, the Reality as it appears within time

and space in the aspect of parent and creator of the universe. When Patañjali speaks of an obstacle, he refers to the negative effect which follows such an act—the turbulent dust cloud of ignorance which arises and obscures the light of the Ātman within us. That is to say, Christian thought emphasizes the offence against Isvara, who is other than ourselves; while Hindu thought emphasizes the offence against our own true nature, which is the Ātman.

The difference is not fundamental, but it is important. The value of the Christian approach is that it heightens our sense of the significance and enormity of sin by relating it to a Being whom we have every reason to love and obey, our Creator and Father. The value of the Hindu approach is that it presents the consequences of sin in their ultimate aspect, which is simply alienation from the Reality within us.

Let us now consider what these obstacles are. 'These obstacles—the causes of man's sufferings—are ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and the desire to cling to life,' Patañjali states. 'To regard the non-eternal as eternal, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasant and the non-Ātman as the Ātman—this is ignorance'.

This ignorance, which hides the true nature of the Ātman, is universal. One may be intellectual, or he may have an encyclopedic knowledge, yet he remains ignorant until he realizes the Ātman; that is to say, until he becomes a knower of Brahman.

Ignorance creates the other obstacles. The central act of ignorance is the identification of the Ātman, which is consciousness itself, with the mind-body—'that which merely reflects consciousness.' Thus arises egoism or the sense of the phenomenal, empirical self.

'At whose behest does the mind think?' is asked in the *Kena Upaniṣad*. 'Who bids the body live? Who makes the tongue speak? Who is that effulgent Being that directs the eye to form and colour and the

ear to sound? The Ātman is the ear of the ear, mind of the mind, speech of the speech. He is also breath of the breath and eye of the eye. Having given up the false identification of the Ātman with the senses and the mind, and knowing the Ātman to be Brahman, the wise become immortal.'

Western philosophy produced two schools of thought with regard to the problem of consciousness—the materialist and the idealist. Consciousness, according to the materialist, is a product in the process, and is not the property of any single substance. Consciousness arises when certain conditions are fulfilled, and is lost when these conditions do not exist. Today, materialists are a rarity.

The idealist believes that consciousness is the property of the mind. But if we accept this proposition as true, how is it that the mind can ever be unconscious? The property of fire is heat. If the heat is extinguished there is no longer fire. So we must therefore conclude that if the mind ceases to be conscious it must therefore cease to exist. Hence, consciousness cannot be the property of the mind.

Modern scientists seem inclined to reject both these hypotheses, and accept the fact that consciousness is present throughout the universe, even though its presence may escape detection by scientific methods. In this, they approach the viewpoint of Vedānta. Vedānta contends that the Ātman is pure consciousness itself, one with Brahman. As already mentioned, identification of the Ātman with the mind-body—'that which reflects consciousness' gives rise to the sense of ego or an individual self. This is the major act of ignorance.

We must relinquish this false identification of the Ātman, and realize that the Ātman is Brahman. This is the supreme goal.

Although it is certainly necessary for us to transcend ego-consciousness in order to attain union with Brahman, this is often

misunderstood. It is not so easy to rid ourselves of the sense of ego. Only when one attains direct, immediate experience of Ātman as Brahman in *samādhi* does the ego drop away. Then, when one comes back from *samādhi* to normal consciousness the sense of ego again arises, but it is only an appearance, like a burnt rope that cannot bind.

However, we need the sense of ego to transcend it. Were it not there, who is there to struggle to attain union with Brahman? Sri Ramakrishna used to say that there are two kinds of ego—the ripe ego and the unripe ego; one is the ego of knowledge—the ego that considers itself a child of God, a devotee of God, the spiritual aspirant that struggles for the union. The unripe ego is that of the egoist, the vain, the selfish, which leads one to greater ignorance and greater bondage. It is this ego from which we must be freed. This unripe ego is also the cause of other obstacles: attachment, aversion, and the desire to cling to life.

The spiritual aspirant must not love the things of this world and remain attached to them. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, people are busy with God's creation, but how few seek to know the Creator. To quote St. John of the Cross in this connexion: 'The more the soul cleaves to created things relying on its own strength, by habit and inclination, the less is it disposed for this union, because it does not completely resign itself into the hands of God, that he may transform it supernaturally.' And the German mystic Jacob Boehme writes: 'Nothing truly but thine own willing, hearing, and seeing do keep thee back from it, and do hinder thee from coming to this super-sensual state. And it is because thou strivest so against that, out of which thou thyself are descended and derived, that thou breakest thyself off with thine own willing from God's willing, and with thine own seeing from God's seeing.'

The desire to cling to life is the most

subtle of the obstacles, and it is felt by all spiritual aspirants. It is instinctive and universal; it is the 'fear of death', itself.

Those who are spiritual aspirants and have been practising meditation for some time eventually reach a point when the mind is about to become absorbed and lose consciousness. But frequently they become afraid and hesitate from plunging into deep meditation. However, through the grace of God, their minds are helplessly drawn by the Divine Magnet and they are blessed with His vision.

God's grace sometimes falls upon the aspirant like thunder, and he feels a terror akin to dying; but within moments this fear leaves him, and he is in ecstasy.

Although all of the enlightened God-men and sages of the world have unequivocally proclaimed the necessity of dissociating ourselves from this surface life, that there is a deeper life to be found in all of us, Vedānta and most of the other Oriental religions have long been accused by Christian spokesmen as 'life-negating.' In turn, they consider their own religion as 'life-affirming.' But they have forgotten the teaching of their own master. Did he not say: 'He who loves this life shall lose it.' Or, again, 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'

The problem before us is: how do we overcome these obstacles? The way in which this is to be accomplished has been likened to the washing of a piece of dirty cloth; first the dirt must be loosened with soap, then washed away with clean water. The mind is like this dirty cloth, stained with the impressions of deeds and thoughts of the past. We must apply soap; that is to say, we must practise certain disciplines to loosen the 'dirt' of the mind; and then wash them away with clear water—the thought of God—through the practice of meditation.

'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God'. This is the whole substance of religion. The main objective of all spiritual disciplines, including the practice of

meditation, is to make the mind pure so that God may be revealed in the shrine of the heart.

Now what are these disciplines? According to Patañjali, 'Austerity, study, and the dedication of the fruits of one's work to God: these are the preliminary steps to *yoga*.'

The English word 'austerity' has a forbidding sound. It is generally understood or misunderstood to mean mortification of the flesh, which eventually degenerates into a perverse cult of self-torture. There is also the mistaken idea amongst some groups of people that mystic visions may arise from excessive fasting or mortification. In a body and mind weakened by such practices visions may occur, but they are only hallucinations and illusions as experienced in delirious states. A healthy mind in a healthy body is required to attain God-vision. To quote the Upaniṣads, 'This Ātman is not to be known by the weak, nor by the thoughtless, nor by those who do not rightly meditate. But by the rightly meditative, the thoughtful and the strong, he is fully known.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* also counsels moderation: '*Yoga* is not for the man who overeats, or for him who sleeps too much, or for the keeper of exaggerated vigils. Let a man be moderate in his eating and his recreation, moderately active, moderate in sleep and wakefulness.'

A Sanskrit word closely allied to the English word 'austerity' is '*tapas*.' *Tapas* means, in its primary sense, that which generates heat or energy. *Tapas* is the practice of conserving energy and directing it toward the goal of union with Brahman. Obviously, in order to do this, we must exercise self-discipline; we must control our physical appetites and passions.

In the *Gītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa has described *tapas* as of three kinds:

'Reverence for the holy spirits, the seers, the teachers and the sages; straightforwardness, harmlessness, physical cleanliness, and

sexual purity—these are the virtues whose practice is called austerity of the body.'

'To speak without ever causing pain to another, to be truthful, to say always what is kind and beneficial, and to study the scriptures regularly—this practice is called austerity of speech'.

'The practice of serenity, sympathy, meditation upon the Ātman, withdrawal of the mind from sense objects and integrity of motive, is called austerity of mind.'

Study here means a regular reading of the Scriptures and other books which concern spiritual life. It also means regular practice of *japa*, the repetition of the holy name of God, or repetition of a prayer.

In the Hindu scriptures we find the phrase, 'to take refuge in his name'. In the Book of Proverbs, (XVIII, 10) we read 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe.' Repetition of God's name should be accompanied by meditation on its meaning. The one process naturally follows upon the other. If we persevere in our repetition, it will inevitably lead us into meditation.

Lastly, comes dedication of the fruits of one's work to God. This is known as *karma-yoga*; the way to union with God through the performance of God-dedicated action. The aspirant's whole life must become one unending ritual, since every action is performed as an offering to God. To quote the *Bhagavad-Gītā*:

Whatever your action,
Food or worship;
Whatever you vow
To the work of the Spirit,
O Son of Kunti,
Lay these also
As offerings before me.

The way to God is not by way of subtle metaphysics or complicated theology. It is by sheer self-giving—dedicating ourselves to God in every way.

As you practise the disciplines, you must also practise meditation regularly. Before

we explain what meditation is, let us point out how a spiritual aspirant passes through different stages of unfoldment.

First, he becomes an inquirer. As he grows interested in discovering God, as there arises the desire for liberation, he approaches a *guru* or a teacher who himself is a knower of God and can show the disciple the way to find Him. He then begins to follow the disciplines as taught by the *guru*. He is now a spiritual aspirant.

As the aspirant struggles to follow the disciplines, various obstacles will arise. According to Patañjali these are often 'sickness, laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, sloth, craving for sense pleasure, false perception, despair caused by failure to concentrate and unsteadiness in concentration.'

These distractions occur because the body and mind naturally resist all unaccustomed disciplines. There are, as it were, two currents flowing in every one of us. There is the surface current flowing towards enjoyment, towards sense pleasure; what the modern psychologist might call, the 'will to live.' And there is another current beneath flowing the opposite way, the desire for inner check, the desire for liberation, in short the yearning for God; what might be called the 'will to die.'

Though both these currents are in every individual, only spiritual aspirants are aware of the current beneath. They aspire to the Infinite, knowing fully there can be no real happiness in the finite. However, old habits are not easily dismissed. There will therefore be relapses; periods of struggle, dryness, and doubt. But these ought not to unduly trouble an aspirant. Conscious or surface feelings, however exalted, are not the only indications of spiritual progress. We may be growing most strongly at a time when our minds seem 'dark and dull.' Whenever we would complain that we were not growing spiritually, my master would urge us to practise and practise and not yield to

sloth. There can be no failure in spiritual life if we continue to struggle.

Struggle and practise the disciplines, and the heart will be purified. The main objective of all spiritual disciplines and struggles, as we have already mentioned, is to achieve purity of heart. We read in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*: 'By learning a man cannot know him, if he does not desist from evil, if he control not his senses, if he quiet not his mind, and practise not meditation. By the purified mind alone Brahman is to be attained;' and in the *Mundaka Upaniṣad*: 'By the pure in heart is He known. The Self exists in man, within the lotus of the heart, and is the master of his life and of his body. With mind illumined by the power of meditation, the wise know Him, the blissful, the immortal.'

I would define purity of heart as the spontaneous tendency of the mind to flow towards God. However, in order for this spontaneity to arise, we need to practise recollection of God as often as we can. My master used to call this practise *sahaja-yoga*, i.e., 'easy' union with Brahman. The most effective way to keep recollection of God is to constantly repeat the *mantra*, the holy name of God which one receives from the *guru*.

Through such practice, the aspirant begins to feel the living presence of God. He becomes convinced that God *is*. Although he has no vision of Him as yet, he has no longer any doubt of His existence, and he feels His living presence within the shrine of his own heart. And with this feeling of the living presence, there is felt a sweetness, a joy in His thought. He then truly arrives at the stage of meditation, which leads to illumined knowledge of Brahman. This state of meditation is described in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*:

'The light of a lamp does not flicker in a windless place: that is the simile which describes a *yogi* of one-pointed mind, who meditates upon the Ātman. When through the practice of *yoga*, the mind ceases its restless movements, and becomes still, he realizes

the Ātman. It satisfies him entirely. Then he knows that infinite happiness which can be realized by the purified heart but is beyond the grasp of the senses.'

Let us conclude with a quotation from the *Kātha Upaniṣad*:

'There are two selves, the apparent self and the real Self. Of these it is the real Self, and He alone, who must be felt as existing. To the man who has felt Him as truly existing He reveals his innermost nature.'

'THE LIVING CHRIST'

MR. ERNEST BRIGGS

The surpassing miracle of the ages of the terrestrial life of man is focussed in the Prophecy, the Coming, and the Witness of The Loveliest Life, the earthly ministry of the Master Jesus—God, who came to earth and lived as mortal man that mortal man at last might live as God.

To all who have felt the impact of that Immortal Spirit as manifested in the world of time and place—Deep calling to the essential deep in man; the significance of that unique manifestation; the pre-eminent mystery of place and time; is not so much that man of man might love the God of God, but that the God of God should compassionately love man . . . that to be at One with mortal man, the Immortal Spirit should have relinquished all aspects, powers, and attributes of Godhead, to suffer human birth, ignominy, derision, and human death, that humankind at last might be as God of God.

The English poet Jean Ingelow has written out of the richness of her pondering of this mystery:

And didst Thou love the race that loved
not Thee?

And didst Thou take to Heaven a
human brow,

Dost plead with man's voice by the
marvellous sea?

Art Thou his Kinsman now?

But even richer, because it is so personal, is the meditation of the American poet John Greenleaf Whittier:

For warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He,
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

The traditional and awesome picture of the Bearded Old Man of the Heavens, utterly unapproachable and far-away, long revered and placated by conventional Christians, needs much revision in the light of personal experience, and in the significance of the supreme revelation as communicated by the physical experience of Divinity. Slowly and surely that picture must give place to the warm, vital, and intimate Presence of the Immortal Spirit that richly friends the Inner Self of each believer through the all-encompassing and tenderest ties of Immortal Love:

I've found a Friend, O such a Friend,
He loved me, ere I knew Him;
He drew me with the cords of Love,
And thus He bound me to Him;
And round my heart still closely twine
Those ties that naught can sever;

For I am His, and He is mine,
For ever, and for ever!

God is Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. . . . It is unfortunate that so far as the progress and the understanding of the majority of Christians are concerned that much of the early imagery and symbolism of the early followers which was taken over from the East without an understanding of its mysticism or significance should have resulted in a Christian hymnody that has done almost as much to hinder the advance of Christianity as has the indifferent masquerading of pseudo-Christianity. Much of this hymnody needs to be scrapped in the light of vital personal experience of the Eternal Spirit. As Gandhi so truly observed in his memorable address at the Asian Conference at Delhi on April 2, 1947, 'The spirit of Christianity degenerated when it went to the West.'

In spite of all that Theologians have said and taught, in spite of all the doctrines and the warring creeds, the supreme evidence of the Eternal Spirit is still, as it has ever been, all that is resultant of the impact and response of the Eternal Spirit upon the spirit that is the Eternal Self of Man. . . . One Thing I Know! . . . the vitality of personal experience that cuts through all theology, through the immanent and imminent interplay of Spirit and spirit. It is this, and this only that has changed the ways of men.

It is unfortunate also that much of the hymnody of the Christian faith is obsessed with the future states of man, for in the days of his earthly ministry the Living Christ placed the accent clearly, and repeatedly upon the essential significance of present living, of present friending, and of present influence and action. . . . 'As a man THINKETH in his heart, SO is he' . . . Man must become his own redeemer, through

the all-pervading and redeeming influence of the Eternal Spirit now. The practising Christian must come to a realization that life is not something to be lived in a far-off heaven in some nebulous and mythical future tricked out with night-gowns, golden harps, gates of jasper and all the other accessories of a traditional celestial state, but, that if living is to be more than a mere physical shelter, and daily sustenance for a tentative body, all must be illuminated, informed, and sustained by the very essence of the Eternal Spirit—Life is Here and Now, in the midst, and of the very warp and woof of Man's humanity.

There is a grave in Jewry, but it is an empty grave, for the Eternal One who walked the dusty roads and the grassy hills of Jewry is transcendental in another Form, no less vital, no less omnipotent, omnipresent, and immanent—closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet . . . as C. Austin Miles has it :

I came to the garden alone, when the
dew is still on the roses,
And the Voice I hear falling on my ear,
the Son of God discloses ;
And He walks with me, and He talks
with me, and He tells me I am His
own ;
And the Joy we share as we tarry there,
none other has ever known.

The mystery of the Eternal Godhead can never be understood nor significantly experienced save by the self of the individual man or woman in the sacredness and silence of the immediate Present.

On my desk, before me as I write, is a small and long treasured gift from a friend. It has within it the power to cut through time and space, and instantly to evoke the immediate presence of the Living Christ. It is a small book, the covers made

of olive-wood from the Mount of Olives. In between the covers are stout pages that carry alternately photographs of various places identified with the earthly ministry of the Master Jesus, and small selections of pressed wild-flowers that have marvelously retained the delicacy of their texture and the original glory of their colouring. There are ferns and grasses also. Blue, red, and white, with here and there a yellow bloom, these are wild-flowers from the very hills once trodden by the Holy Feet of God made Man—the Living Christ—bluebells, poppies, lilies, and other blooms, such as must have touched with their fragrance, their coolness, and their dew the weary dusty feet of the Master Jesus on his earthly pilgrimage.

I take up the little book, and at once I see the whole great panorama of His ways and days; the Immaculate Conception; the gestation time and the angelic visitant; the Virgin Birth; the Silent Years of Growth, Service, and Unfoldment; the eager, questing child, marvelously self-possessed, wise, assured, deferent, and aware, before the Elders of the Synagogue; the humility and the conscientiousness of the village Carpenter; the resonant sureness of the Dedicated Man, superbly conscious of the illimitable power of Truth; the perfect Unity of God and Man as evidenced in His own integral Being; the ardent Preacher; the glowing Prophet; the unassailable Reformer; the transcendent! Revealer,—Himself His own surpassing Evidence; integrity of unwavering purpose in perfect equipoise with an all-encompassing tenderness—Man of Man, and God of God—the Living Christ! And as Jemima Luke has written—

'I think when I read that sweet story of old,

When Jesus was here among men, how
He called little children as lambs to
His fold;

I should like to have been with Him
then;

I wish that His hands had been placed
on my head,

That His arms had been thrown around
me;

And that I might have heard His sweet
Voice, when He said,

'Let the Little Ones come unto Me!'

If the essential Truth of Christianity has any meaning for world of men in all its confusion, trouble and unrest, it must surely mean that the Power and the Presence of the Risen Christ, is the identical Power and Presence of the Living Christ who walked the ways of earth in Palestine. He is One and the Same, His Power is the Same; His Presence is the Same—for there is no change in Him, neither is there any guile, nor diminution. He is the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever!

That small company, gathered together in the Upper Room; at first in fear and trembling because they had seen the passing incident of physical death, then in speculation and hoping trying to believe in an over-wrought woman's garbled story of a 'resurrection'; and finally in the calm assurance of unwavering faith, proved and stabilized, quickened and illumined by the incontestable Presence, the Power, and the Peace of the Living Christ among them in Spirit and in Truth, more vitally than ever before. And then, there were the sharing of the Sacrament; the Forty Days of Companionship, the final Teaching, and the surety of the Promise of the Coming and Abiding of the Holy Ghost; the Ascension, and then, the Perfect Knowledge and the Perfect Truth of Pentecost.... And after that—HE APPEARED IN ANOTHER FORM to each and every one who so desired Him.

And still. He walks the common ways of men, and still. He calls them with the self-same Voice, 'Come unto Me, all ye that

are weary, and are heavyladen, and I will give you rest !

The essence of the Christian faith is as vital and as vivid as that—as simple as that—**THE ALL-PERVADING PRESENCE OF THE LIVING CHRIST :**

Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild restless sea ;
Day by day His sweet voice soundeth,
Saying, 'Christian, follow me !'
As of old, Apostles heard it
By the Galilean Lake,
Turned from home, and toil, and kindred,
Leaving all for His dear sake.

The vital presence of the Living Christ is an unmistakably persuasive one. Those whom the world calls saints have experienced it so overwhelmingly that it has changed the whole tenor of their ways. From the time of Saul on the Damascus Road, down to the present day the presence of the Living Christ has transfigured men, and it shall still do so as long as the human heart endures.

One of the greatest pictures of the Western World is that by the noted English artist Holman Hunt, 'The Light of the World'. It depicts the Risen Christ, the Master Jesus, lantern in hand, knocking gently upon the weather-worn door of an humble earthly dwelling, itself symbolical of an individual man. The profound implication of the picture is that the Living Christ, the Immortal Visitant, permits the usage of man's own free-will ; He enters only at the invitation of the one on whom He calls. There is no forcing of the fragile door, there is no imposition of an imperious Will ; only the gentle knocking, and the calm assurance that His own will hear His Voice ; only the abiding promise that to one who opens widely, even the humblest door, He will come as Friend, and will remain with him—He comes no more

in moments of mortality, but to each and every man He comes in living truth. He is an imminent Presence **AMONG** humanity, He cares for them, He yearns toward them, He joys with them, He inspirits them, He suffers with them, and He grieves with them. How beautifully has the great English mystical poet, F. W. Underhill, expressed His immanence in her memorable lyric, 'Uxbridge Road', one of the great arterial roads of the swarming city of London :

The Western Road goes streaming out to
seek the cleanly wild,
It pours the city's dim desires toward the
undefiled,
It sweeps between the huddled homes
about its eddies grown
To smear the little space between the
city and the sown ;
The torments of that seething tide who
is there who can see ?
There's One Who walked with starry feet
the Western Road by me
Behold ! He lent me as we went the
vision of the seer ;
Behold ! I saw the life of men, the life of
God shine clear ;
I saw the hidden Spirit's thrust ; I saw
the race fulfil
The spiral of its steep ascent, predestined
of the Will.
Yet not unled, but shepherded by One
they may not see—
The One Who walked with starry feet
the Western Road by me !

Different people find the Living Christ in many different ways, for He is all things to all men, Sir Ernest Shackleton found Him in the frozen South, when on that long and hazardous voyage in a rowing boat with two companions, he felt the presence of the Living Christ so strongly that he later said, 'We were **FOUR**, not three !'

The central truth of Christianity is that of the reality and veracity of the many incidents that attest the Resurrection, the Reappearance, and the Personal Communication after death of the Living Christ. If that is denied, if that is weakened, then the whole fabric of Christianity collapses. But the evidence is not only that of the post-crucifixion period, for all the centuries since have witnessed to the Immortal vitality and the timeless immanence of the Living Christ. This is too clear, and too strongly implemented to permit of doubt or question: The SAME Yesterday, Today, and Forever! 'In the Beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was WITH God, and the Logos WAS God!' There you have it in words of the utmost simplicity. . . . a few simple words stammered in a frenzy of revelation by John the Apostle, but Time cannot touch them, nor can doubt detract even one iota of their truth.

When all has been written, by theologians, when all has been said, when all has been done, the sum is external, but it is personal evidence that is paramount; internal, the witness of the Spirit to the spirit. May I be permitted to quote a poem of my own in this respect? :

The play of vine-leaves, shadowed on
the floor,
Half-caught, deceived my eyes until
I thought
That some chance visitor stood at the
door;
Some child, perhaps, reluctant to report
His presence with a knock, and break
the mood
That held me writing in my easy-chair;
So that I called, 'Come in, you don't
intrude;
You'll find some biscuits on the table
there!' . . .
But suddenly, Time stopped its equal
beat

The portal filled with radiance and
love—

So that I faltered, 'Lord, it is not
meet! . . .'

And One came in, and said, 'It is
enough!'

Abashed, I hung my head. . . He raised
it up—

'This day, at your small table I have
come to sup!'

And still He comes, and still He calls us,
even the least, to the vital Kingdom of the
Awakened Spirit. Still He challenges each
and every man by the beauty of His pres-
ence, to greater Being, to greater Vision,
to greater Living, Here and Now.

For every man the taking of a surer
hold of Immortality means a correspond-
ing letting-go of mortality. We relinquish
the lesser that we may gain the Greater.
It is only empty hands that may be filled
by Divine Beneficence. It is only the
aching of the yearning heart that may be
assuaged by the fullness of the compassion
of the Divine. But ever in our littleness
we lose so much, as our hands close ever
more tightly on the transient things of
Time.

And still He comes—the Living Christ—
faithful companion of our silences and soli-
tudes. He comes into our own small room
to share our joys and sorrows, even when
the door is closed and barred, and
silently He compensates for every
loss and sorrow. His Love shines out
before Him, and it makes a way
through every door, through every
barrier. He is great, He is vast, but the
small chamber of the human heart is suffi-
cient for Him. What door however barred,
may keep Him out? What will is there,
however stubborn, however resolute, can
say Him—Nay? For the Golden Key
that shall unlock each and every door of

Life is—Love, and Love and God are synonymous—the Living Christ is LOVE.

The only hunger of humanity is the hunger for the certitude of the Presence of the Living Christ; the only need of humanity is that men and women might discover, and perpetually re-discover the all-satisfying richness of His unwavering companionship :

Earthly friends may fail and leave us,
One day soothe, the next day grieve us ;
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us,
Oh, how He loves !

—Words of the West that are beautifully paralleled in a memorable poem by the great Eastern poet, Rabindranath Tagore—a unifying mood of transcendental rapture in which East and West are indissolubly one :

Have you not heard His silent steps ?
He comes, comes, ever comes !
Every moment and every age, every day,
and every night,
He comes, comes, ever comes....
In sorrow after sorrow it is His steps
that press upon my heart,
And it is the golden touch of His feet
that makes my Joy to shine !

The beauty of His presence is eloquently timeless. May it not also be magnificently placeless ? The vision of the Spirit moves beyond the limitation of the earth. Long, long before the generations of men entered upon an age of Nuclear Fission, the vision of the poet went before them, as the English mystic the great Catholic poet Alice Meynell, surmized His presence upon other spheres than this. In 'Christ in the Universe' she sensed the Living Christ among the stars :

With this ambiguous earth
His dealings have been told us. These
abide :

The signal to a maid, the human birth,
The lesson, and the young man
crucified....

But, in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare together,
hear

A million alien gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.
O, be prepared, my soul !

To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars
unroll

When, in our turn, we show to them a
MAN !

FLOWERS OF SPEECH

PROFESSOR WILLIAM E. HOOKENS

Much as I like Poetry, I am no poet—yet I am in no way handicapped from appreciating poetry. All cannot be poets any more than all can be novelists, and why worry? There is so much to be said and done and if one cannot do a thing that one would like to do, the best thing is to give it up! But then I cannot give up writing on poets and poetry—and I am so taken in with the language of poets that I remember them even though I read them ages ago! And so I fall back on a title of Sir John Squire to express the language of poets and stylists in a way all my own, hoping one day to fall in the line of poets who can compose as they walk. But then it is a dream about which I will ever be dreaming!

Man never invents, he only finds and imitates—and in his findings and imitations there is always a variety! There are daffodils and dahlias of speech with fragrance and colour and meaning! There is Carlyle who (though no poet) wrote in a language of warmth and glow, and his everlasting exclamations and capitalization of words which he borrowed from the Germans, with a punctuation all his own, make him a figure of note. Macaulay, with his antithetical turn of sentences and a flow of a rich stream of words is close to the mystic Carlyle; and there is Browning with his characteristically cacaphonic rhythmic sentences and his obscurity that have become part of him, not forgetting Ruskin who with his happy blending of poetic-prose words makes him a delight for all who love good writing in the Biblical grandeur. Along with these stylists march others, like Joyce and Woolf who bring to words the three-dimensional qualities plus the fourth which is beginning to be common, namely the quality of spaciousness or timeliness.

The writers from the Early Minstrel Singers to the Present Day are a legion and all are with personalities uniquely their own! All that they see, hear and feel is transmuted into the rich ore of experience, made real and alive through the glow of language! A new freedom dawns on them, the freedom of language that comes to a free and open heart playing on a happy, child-like mind. And we see that theirs are words with a new mintage. For they break through the shackles of convention or tradition and go through original and daring paths! The abstract and the concrete, the proper and the common, the noun and the verb so interchange themselves that no foot-rule of syntax or grammar can ever satisfactorily measure the capacities of their word-structures or the architectonic realm of sentences. Take G. M. Hopkins, for example, who goes along unconventional ways, pioneering through the morass of words till he finds a brand-new

language, consecrated to the use of Poetry! And, like Milton, his is the sublime perch from which he never descends and when he does it is with a purpose! There are other poets, before and after Hopkins and they have formed a poetry after their own image, as people have throughout the ages formed their own image of God or Divinity! And naturally the words used are carefully chosen, in keeping with the prestige or dignity of Poetry. Simple though the words are they are in a novel manner and burnish with a vividness all their own. Shades of meanings characterize their writings and reveal the experiences that only poets can bring out. And yet when all is said and done, the work as a whole defy analysis or description. Though second-rate poets can copy the manner or technique, they fall short of the actual thing which is the soul of Poetry. Therefore great writings can never be written twice in the self-same manner by the same writer—and no great writer copies or duplicates himself or his expression. What he does is to express himself in the mood he finds himself in and others as well—and his is therefore an adventure in living because he finds new words to suit the new experiences that he feels! Shakespeare and Milton, therefore, were so inspired by Life's Dramatic Turns that they made their lives as much as their works glow with a new significance, casting away syntax as trappings of a bygone age and stamped their writings with the impress of the age they lived in, in words of memorableness, sense wedded to sound, pleasing and beautiful!

To say that words are things more alive than most things is to utter a truism—and this truism is applicable only to writers who are with words all their lives! Words mean worlds—worlds of experience, and only words that have passed through the form of life can live. Others die the moment they are born, the still-borns that they are! Words that live, as in the Bible or in Shakespeare and the Great Writers, live by their own zeal

and communicative ease ; and we see this in the patterned-sentences of the Great Writers where the rhythm, the symphony, the halo, the aura of suggestion reveal the personality of the authors. We can, therefore, no more remove a comma or a word, anymore than we can a brick from a well-laid building, without showing the damage done! Style is replete in the man as well as the writer, and this revelation shows the soul of writing without which intellectuals would starve. For good writing, like good speech, is the food and drink of those who live by the spirit and see its every manifestation in life. Such writings transport all and sundry through happy realms of thought and imaginings. Words are potent, mesmeric and soothe or placate the troubled mind and heart. Full with the spirit as great writers are, they live by the workings of the spirit—and this means that they themselves are often at a loss how the words so patterned themselves as to form a sentence with a new significance. No man reading them is ever the same—and how can man be the same when he undergoes the revolution from within through the soul-force of words? The beautiful and good things of life are open to all, but only those who know about these good things, think and feel about them and see the transforming changes that take place in them! For the rest words are just words to be bandied about. . .so many a page or in an hour. . .and no wonder those who hear or read them are bored, because the words are so corpse-like. There is no style worth the name. The passage is third-rate. There is substance and meaning all right—but they are so very different from what we would find in a first-rate passage. The words by themselves are known to limp all the way and the reader, after he has gone through the passage once, begins to limp himself! He finds himself befuddled. One word crosses with another, one image with another till the passage as a whole becomes a huge blur! Instead of the delight that one associates

with a first-rate passage, there is sheer boredom because the reading has been so purposeless! But this is not the case when we read the great writers whose words are words, made flesh!

Whether we read Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or Mann's *Buddenbrooks* we see words representing things, experiences. These and other great works are built on the superstructure of words—a million words or more, cemented with the experience of life itself! Mere intellectualism is of no avail. Shaw has this in abundance—but man is not all thought. He has a feeling as well—and this feeling is at the bottom of all life! Shaw and Shakespeare: one lives by thought and thought alone ; the other lives by the spirit which is neither thought nor feeling and yet is a combination of both, arranged in its own way! Poetry and Prose: each has a life all its own, and one is not opposed to the other—and those who see any opposition do so at their own cost of sound living! The words of the great writers are living voices, as it were of the spirit immanent in them, and when we read Chaucer, Kālidāsa or Sadi we see them as human and divine as well. We see the life they have breathed into words and lo! all is near and dear—as though they were our contemporaries! The Spirit of Man dominates the world even when Man is no more! The flowers of speech show no form of decay once the writer has embedded himself in things of the Infinite. It is this infinity that keeps Keats alive as much as Shelley though they had much that was finite in them, including their way of approach to life and people. But then it is given to us not to judge or misjudge others but to live our own lives, in consonance with Truth and Reason and live or die, as it suits our God and Maker! Make therefore no vain effort to live for posterity. But live for Today, Now. . .and live it in the spirit of the Ancients who lived and died for all and yet live in the annals

of history, the selfless men and women that they were! They wanted to create nothing new. . . for how could they, the poor mortals that they were? But, living as they did in communion with the Great God of Heaven and Earth, they brought much to bear on life and manners. Their identity with the Infinite made them Infinite, undying, and

they live like Shelley's Skylark or Wordsworth's Daffodils or Browning's Rainbow with an eternity that is God-given. No man lives by himself but by the Power of the Divine in him . . . and to such are given the flowers of speech . . . as a testament of beauty! All have this but how few know it!

'ALL LIFE IS YOGA'

SRI M. P. PANDIT

It was a usual question.

He is a busy executive whose interest in matters of the Spirit has been growing of late. He has studied Sri Aurobindo literature at considerable length and is keen on achieving whatever is possible by way of Self-realization. He is fully occupied—he explained—with his routine work and the time he could spare for *yoga* is naturally very little. How to divide the time between the two contradictory interests was the question.

The evident answer is that there is no necessity at all to divide the time between the two. The secret, or rather the art, is to make the same time serve for both. It is a simultaneous endeavour. Outer activity, of whatever kind, is not and shall not be separate from the inner. For the whole meaning of this *yoga* is a change of consciousness. Whatever work one does, the quality of it, the effects of it, ultimately depend upon the consciousness in which it is done. The key lies at this base of consciousness. Looked at from this view-point, action is an unrolling of one's consciousness. Both are related, both influence each other and hence shall be taken as one whole. *Yoga* consists in a constant deepening and heightening of the level of One's consciousness; in an incessant purification of the stuff of the consciousness; and exposing it

to the vibrations of a Consciousness higher than one's own. This operation has necessarily to extend all the time, day and night.

Thus in *yoga* there is no such thing as time for *sādhanā* and time for work. They run into each other. Of course, there are special periods of concentration of the upward or the inward effort; they may be called the peak hours of yogic life. The rest of the hours provide the field as it were for the confirmation and the testing of the results achieved during the special concentrated moments. At every minute one is offered opportunities to act in line with the inner ideal or in contradiction to it. Thus at each moment the being has to exert to be on the side of the Divine and what else is this but *yoga*?

The field of action is manifold. It is not merely physical. There are several strands to it: the vital overtones, the emotional complications, the psychological bearings and the subliminal promptings not to speak of echoes from the subconscious. The more one becomes self-aware the more one sees these bewildering elements in one's nature and, if one is earnest, one sees also how precisely the yogic attitude and the yogic impulses are to be brought to bear on each situation. In a sense these periods—when rightly lived—are more pro-

ductive from the point of view of *yoga* than hours of meditation or *japa* or whatever it is.

It is in this sense that Sri Aurobindo has said that All Life is *Yoga*.

In this *Yoga* we begin where we are. Each starts from the position in which he finds himself as a result of his past development. Consequently the *sādhanā* of each is distinctive from that of another. All the same, there are certain broad lines of inner life which are common to all and which embrace both the inner and the outer life. To begin with, the first requirement—in all yogic efforts—is aspiration. It is a seeking, a yearning for the truths of a higher or a deeper life, e.g. purity, dedication, love, harmony etc. all of which are indispensable for any change from the lower into the higher life of the spirit. This aspiration is to be breathed into every activity of the being, on every plane of its movement. For instance, on the physical plane, in the movements of the body, it translates itself into an effort of a purposive gathering of energies, a willed orientation of them Godward and a sustained processing of them in the way of cleansing. This automatically involves the counterpart of aspiration, i.e. rejection. It calls for the rejection of all that is contrary to what is aspired for. In the present context it means naturally a scrupulous avoidance of all dispersion of energies, control of their direction and elimination of all that taints their quality. Now this double operation of aspiration and rejection has necessarily to be applied at every minute of one's life, in every sphere of one's activity. If the flame of aspiration is once lit and fed with ardour and sincerity, every situation offers an opportunity for the *sādhaka* to test for himself the progress he has made and the leeway still to be made up. This is the utility of works or life for *Yoga*.

But the physical is not the only phase of

our existence. There is that side of man which is governed by life-force, the vital part as it is termed in our *Yoga*. The dominating drive of this vital life is desire of self-aggrandizement, self-assertion and self-appropriation. The demand of aspiration is most imperative on this plane of the being. Beginning from the smallest movement, extending to larger and larger fields, this vitiating element of ego and desire has to be relentlessly ejected from the consciousness. One has only to try sincerely to do this and one realizes in no time how difficult a task it is. While the negative aspect of this effort at vital purification is one of rejection, the positive is one of self-dedication and self-surrender to the Divine. Both proceed simultaneously and reinforce each other.

Rendered on a still higher plane of our existence, i.e. the mind, this discipline calls for a wholesale rejection of all mental activity which is not relevant to the upward endeavour. Secondly, it entails a sturdy denial of all thoughts and ideas which tend, if not aim, to weaken the higher aspiration. Negatively, this means an elimination of the whole crowd of useless thoughts, rejection of contrary and inimical suggestions and other mental formations; positively, one has to build up a climate of concentration, harmony and peace in the mind in which atmosphere alone the right kind of thoughts are formed or received and shaped. This too, it will be recognized, is an activity that has to be pursued at every moment of one's life, whether in an office, in a market place or in a prayer room.

All the demarcations or segmentations are on the outside; inside all intermingle, all are one. What is done at one point has its repercussion at every other point. This *Yoga* proceeds upon this basic truth and can be pursued successfully only when life is accepted as co-extensive with *Yoga*.

REASON AND INTUITION IN PHILOSOPHY

(MISS) DHARESHWARI

'It is fairly obvious that the great philosophers admit that the root principles are articles of faith, and not attained by argument. They are not arrived at through the senses, or by the ordinary processes of logical reasoning. Conviction arises only through our realizing them as the common ground of all our knowledge.' (Dr. Radhakrishnan: *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 174)

Reason may be used in different ways and it shows different levels. On the biological plane we can at the most use intelligence, because animal life cannot be considered endowed with reason. The animal intelligence is the ability to utilize past experience. The animal survives by this capacity. Even on animal level intelligence may be contrasted with instinct. Instinctive activity reaches its goal without any process of learning or without any utilization of past experience. But the animal learns and in its learning both instinct and intelligence are at work and the higher the animal is on the scale of evolution the more it is capable to utilize past experience.

When we talk of reason we mean something more than the intellect. It is the capacity to use universal concepts and in this sense man alone can claim reason, without reason he cannot abstract, cannot just forward theories and cannot develop any scientific activity. But reason is also a source of knowledge. We know the controversy between the rationalist and the empiricist, while the rationalist insists that reason alone can be the source of knowledge, the empiricist maintains that experience is the true source of knowledge. This controversy is as old as Plato. But

this is not the only alternative. Intuition is not reason but totally different from it. Now the question arises whether reason excludes intuition or not? Reason may be considered in a higher and in a narrower significance. In a higher significance reason includes intuition but in the narrower significance reason excludes intuition and in this latter restricted significance we may call reason intellect.

Therefore the contrast prevails between intellect and intuition and not between reason and intuition. It is significant to note that in the German Idealism since Kant it is usual to distinguish between understanding and reason. Understanding Kant uses as the theoretical ability which utilizes the sense data and cannot work without the senses. It works with categories and is an activity which is indispensable for theoretical knowledge. But the knowledge gained through understanding is limited in its scope. It is limited to the phenomenal world. Reason on the other hand goes beyond the phenomenal world and through the formation of Ideas it aims at a higher knowledge. God, for example, is the Idea of reason and though His existence cannot be demonstrated reason can lead us to Him as a limiting concept. The same distinction between understanding and reason is maintained by Hegel. But it is only in the Philosophy of Schelling that we find the development of the concept of the Intellectual intuition. It may be noted here that this concept even figures in such a rationalistic system as that of Spinoza. It is also to be observed that these Philosophers by calling intuition intellectual consider intuition not as a negation of reason but as a higher form of

reason. This means again that intuition for these Philosophers is a source of knowledge.

Now when we talk of faith we move in a sphere which is outside the scope of Philosophy. Faith figures in all religions and it is the basis of religious consciousness. Faith is really the belief to which we are committed. Paul Tillich considers faith as associated with man's ultimate concern. He combats the intellectualistic, the emotionalistic and voluntaristic distortions of faith. But anyhow faith cannot be identified with any other activity of human experience. Faith presupposes a form of intuition or what Rudolf Otto has called divination. Faith may be a living faith or just a habit handed down by tradition. The second is not the living faith, faith must be a commitment and it should be sustained by intuitive insight. Here Dr. Radhakrishnan's Philosophy of the spirit can be helpful to us. He openly commits himself to a philosophy of intuition. Professor George P. Conger rightly observed: 'Like Gerald Heard, Radhakrishnan holds that there is an expansion of consciousness. Intuition, is integral experience, the exercise of consciousness as a whole.' Dr. Radhakrishnan himself sums up his philosophy excellently in the following way:

'Man's awareness is broadly speaking, of three kinds, the perceptual, the logical, and the intuitive, *manas*, or the sense-mind, *Vijñāna*, or logical intelligence, and *ānanda*, which for our present purposes, may be defined as spiritual intuition. All three belong to human consciousness. The human mind does not function in fractions. We need not assume that at the sense-level, there is no work of intuition or at the level of intuition there is not the work of intellect. When intuition is defined as integral insight, the suggestion is that the whole mind is at

work in it. Any coherent philosophy should take into account observed data, rational reflection and intuitive insight. All these should be articulated in a systematic way.'

The significance of intuition is emphasized most clearly when we come face to face with the problem of God or the ultimate reality. According to Radhakrishnan 'Knowledge of God is achieved not by intellect alone'. It is remarkable to see that Dr. Radhakrishnan explicitly says not by intellect alone which means that he does not deny to intellect or reason a part of its own in the attainment of knowledge. Intellect has to co-operate with intuition to have access to God or rather it is man as a whole with intellect and imagination, heart and will who has to gain access to the knowledge of God. Dr. Radhakrishnan here gives voice to the characteristic Indian tradition when he says that this knowledge is possible only 'by a life of discipline and austerity.' Dr. Radhakrishnan takes into account the objections of those critics who deny any experience of intuitive knowledge. Intuitive knowledge, he rightly points out, is not the privilege of the few or confined to mysticism. He says 'in aesthetic intuition we have a type of intuitive knowledge, a personal relationship with the object which is essentially different from what is found in intellectual cognition.' Here again we have a knowledge and an association with the object which is direct and intimate. It might lead to complete absorption with the object. The aesthetic theory of empathy is based on this important truth. It means that in aesthetic experience we can feel one with the object. 'By the practice of *Vairāgya* or detachment, the artist rises to the calm of the universal spirit'. This must be the reason why often religion has found art as the best vehicle for its expression. This is especially true for the

Indian forms of artistic and religious expressions. Religion and art are so blended and fused together that the one may stand for the other and it is difficult to see where art ends and religion begins.

In our exposition it is necessary to compare and contrast Dr. Radhakrishnan's concept of intuition with that of Bergson. We know that in modern philosophy Bergson is the most prominent representative of the Philosophy of intuition. Bergson's concept of intuition is more anti-intellectualistic than that of Dr. Radhakrishnan. Whereas Bergson's approach to the problem is biological in the beginning and Metaphysical in the end, Dr. Radhakrishnan's approach is sustained throughout by metaphysical impulse. Dr. Radhakrishnan admits the similarities between his philosophy and that of Bergson as regards the concept of intuition. Only in his last work especially in his *'Two Sources of Morality and Religion'* that Bergson leans more and more towards a mystic attitude. For example he observes that joy would ultimately eclipse pleasure only by the diffusion of mystic intuition and it would follow 'a vision of the life beyond attained through the furtherance of scientific experiment.' Bergson's appeal to intuition is carried on the basis of a thorough going and a radical examination of the limitations of the intellect. But what distinguishes Bergson from Dr. Radhakrishnan is the fact that the Western Philosopher has no conception of eternity. He remains stuck in a philosophy of duration. But Dr. Radhakrishnan's Philosophy of the spirit, true to its mystic heritage is oriented towards eternity, towards a plane where time has no significance. In other words we can also say that Bergson's philosophy has no feeling for the transcendent where as the mystic experience to which Dr. Radhakrishnan often refers is based on the consciousness of the transcendent.

Hence inspite of their similarities the differences between them are more significant. C.E.M. Joad has rightly observed that Dr. Radhakrishnan's account of intuition emphasizes the primary character of intuitional activity. He has also pointed out that this intuition has as much relevance for religious experience as for aesthetic experience and that the main reason why the knowledge of reality must be intuitional is the fact that reality is a whole and its knowledge cannot be piecemeal.

Joad also is fully aware of the difference which separates Dr. Radhakrishnan from Bergson. He also cautions us not to confuse intuition with instinct as the philosophy of Bergson is apt to do. He says 'Intuition is not to be confused with what is commonly called instinct, or with the libido of the psycho-analysts. Intuition succeeds and crowns discursive thought; instinctive activity in the history both of the race and of the individual precedes it. Continuous instinctive activity is that from which man has evolved; continuous intuitive activity is that to which he may hope to aspire.' (*Counter Attack from the East* p. 198)

In the final evaluation it must be observed that Dr. Radhakrishnan fights against all forms of exclusiveness. This has been the characteristic of his thought throughout his life and it is on this denial of exclusiveness that he constructs a philosophy of intuition which does not deny the rights of reason but attempts to complement it and assimilate it. It is the 'integral experience' to which he has persistently clung. As Mr. Robert W. Browning says Dr. Radhakrishnan holds 'to the autonomy of reason with the additional thesis that reason accords the greatest revelatory power to religions and mystical experience'.

To quote Dr. Radhakrishnan's words :

'Just as we have both continuity and discontinuity between matter and life or life and mind, so also we have both continuity and discontinuity between intuitive wisdom and intellectual knowledge. Those who believe that wisdom negates knowledge are as one sided as those who believe that wisdom is nothing more than knowledge. As life appropriates and uses matter, as mind appropriates and uses life, so does spiritual wisdom appropriate and transform intellectual knowledge. Intellect is therefore an indispensable aid to support and clarify spiritual experience.' (*Reply to Critics*, p. 794)

Again 'Intuitive insight assumes the essential unity of the spirit which should never be disintegrated in its various activities. Our activities at their highest level draw their energy from the spiritual unity. We cannot be moral without the use of reason and imagination. We cannot be philosophical without a strain of poetry and strength of conscience. We cannot be artistic if we are not nourished by thought and sustained by moral ideals. Highest art, philosophy, and morality are manifestations of spiritual unity. There is in them a breath of sublimity which lifts us on its strong wing to the universal and eternal; an elevation and expansion which are not present in perceptual and intellectual life'. (*ibid.*, p. 795) The same idea is emphasized more than once.

'When the vedic thinkers, urge that *manana* or logical reflection is an essential preparation for direct insight, when the *Bhagavad-Gītā* urges us to adopt *pariprasna* or cross-examination as a step towards direct experience, they are insisting on a dialectical preparation for the direct experience. The immediacy

of Eastern thinkers is not an unmediated one.' (*ibid.*, p. 794.)

Dr. Radhakrishnan perfectly agrees with Professor Brightman's observation that 'Complete intuition is simply a term for complete reason.' He further says 'Reason and sense are not growths or determinations of intuition. Intuition is open to all men who possess the capacity for its acquisition, and there are ways and methods by which we can prepare for its reception.'

Now it is clear that Dr. Radhakrishnan's vision of the fellowship of the spirit and his pronouncements about world patriotism are the expressions of the same attitude and mind. His idea of religious tolerance is also based on his negation of exclusiveness which is the dominant characteristic of his thought. We might well see some similarity to Hegel. Hegel also tries to overcome one sidedness and exclusiveness by his dialectic but his synthesis was always a limited one, because in his synthesis he could not assimilate the mystic emotional insights and visions. On the other hand Dr. Radhakrishnan's philosophy imbibes in its system all that is living in the philosophies of the East and West and it is truly all inclusive and all embracing. It is therefore to be hoped that his philosophy of intuition will not only yield rich insight on the theoretical level but will also work to awake in man an integral vision of reality which can rise above the divisions of the East and the West and which has lasting significance for the development of mankind. No doubt the civilization of the future will have to take into account intuition, faith and spiritual experience which, as Dr. Radhakrishnan has rightly emphasized, are indispensable to knowledge and life and which really make civilization worth having.

NATIONAL CHARACTER

SRI P. S. JOSHI

Ancient India had a very high reputation for unblemished character. It had within it all the essential characteristics of a true religion. There was a clear line of distinction between the virtue and the vice. The word Aryan connoted nobility of culture and greatness.

The Vedic Age of India represents the era of truth. The visions of the beauty of life in the Vedas are extremely rich in poetic value. The *Rg-Veda* depicts a magnificent picture of the social life of the people, noted for their qualities of truth, greatness, valour, creative fervour and spiritual exaltation. The Aryan sages believed in righteousness, piety and nobility. They followed a life of spiritual quest, commanded respect and shed lustre all around them by their exalted ideal and divine inspiration.

The image of the Vedic Age was indeed exalting. The caste system was not so rigid and the *Rājarsis* were often accepted as *Brahmarşis* in the spiritual field. Inter-caste marriages were conspicuous by their presence in the highest strata of society. Racial assimilation went on merrily without a touch of oppression so common in the case of the Western people. Honest and straight in their dealings, they hardly knew of exploitation. Their spiritual philosophy particularly centred round the conquest of the lower self and reform of the individual. As a consequence, India became the sacred land of civilized humanity with her people as the teachers and leaders of mankind in various spheres of knowledge. Their *dharma* spread quickly throughout Asia and their knowledge reached the countries of Europe and Africa.

India's rich contribution to religious thought, civilization and culture won recognition from all scholars. India was accepted as the cradle of the human race and the

scene of ancient civilization, the successive developments of which were carried into all the parts of the world. Max Müller declared, 'If I were to look over the world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow, in some parts a very paradise on earth, I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the great problems of life and has found solutions of some of them which will deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India.' (*India What It Can Teach Us*) Another scholar, Will Durant, delivered his verdict in identical terms: 'India was the motherland of our race and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages. She was the mother of our philosophy, mother, through Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity, mother through the village communities of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all. (*Story of Civilisation*)

About six hundred years before Christ, Buddha appeared in India and reformed the entire religious order. He ordained the noble Eightfold Path, of Right View, Right Resolve, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Action, Right Recollection, Right Concentration and Right Speech. He prescribed five commands of uprightness: Do not kill; Do not steal; Do not lie; Do not commit adultery; Do not become intoxicated at any time. Buddhism preached humility, kindness and equality and closed the door to animal sacrifice for the propitiation of gods. It denounced race superiority and ordained equality for all men or women, rich or poor, high or low. Buddhism influenced Hinduism considerably no doubt, but in course of time it

became a part of Hinduism. Compassion was the keynote of the Buddhist era. It rose to the historic heights during the days of Aśoka, in his no-war policy, which was advocated in distant lands through his ambassadors. Shocked by the casualties in the war against the Kalinga tribes (100,000 killed, 150,000 deported as written by F. Yeats Brown in his book *Indian Pageant*) and suffering to the millions, Aśoka became a changed man and espoused the doctrine of non-violence towards men and animals. Henceforth there was to be no more war throughout his domains and no cruelty to any living being. He enunciated these principles in fourteen rock edicts and seven inscriptions carved upon pillars some of which read as follows:

The chief conquest is not that by force, but by righteousness.

His Majesty desires: Freedom from harm, Restraint from passion, Impartiality and cheerfulness to all living beings.

The sound of the war drum has become not a call to battle, but a call to righteousness.

My highest duty is the promotion of the good of all.

My sons and great grandsons should not think that a new conquest ought to be made.

Harṣa too followed this tradition of tolerance and renunciation. Indeed there was hardly anything which Gandhiji might not have said during his life time.

During the thousand years after Buddha, India witnessed a glorious period of political, intellectual, religious and artistic regeneration. Fa Hien, the reputed Chinese traveller, travelled all the way to India through countries of Central Asia and North-West India. He found the Indian culture in prominence everywhere. He recorded his experiences and observations of the Buddhist universities and *vihāras* and the religious life. His reference to the character of the

people as a whole is well worth repetition. The people of India, he said, were happy and prosperous. There was little crime and no corporeal punishment by courts. Race discrimination was manifest only in one sphere; the untouchables were the only class who lived apart, went hunting and dealt in flesh.

The Buddhistic era was followed by the Rājput era lasting about five hundred years, in which the Rājputs contributed to the progress of India in all spheres of life. From the eighth to the eleventh century, when the star of Islam shone powerfully in different parts of Africa and Europe, and the Arab armies routed every adversary on the battlefield, the Rājputs defied all the Muslim invaders and halted their march. Even the Rājput women made history by sacrifices in defence of character and national honour. The history of countries in other continents could not be repeated in India. Hinduism faced the challenge with vigour and fortitude. Invaders were either driven away or absorbed in their social order. The Indian culture refused to go into oblivion.

When the Muslims arrived in India, the Hindus were utterly disorganized. Patriotism was conspicuous by its absence. So Akbar exploited their differences and laid the structure of a Moghul empire. But the Moghul edifice tottered to the ground when Aurangzeb split India communally. Shivaji of Maharashtra led a triumphant revolt and made his mark as a shrewd administrator when he established one well-organized state with a cabinet of eight ministers and drafted a code of conduct for state servants. Valiant on the battlefield and shrewd in statesmanship, Shivaji was profoundly spiritual in outlook. The Hindu-Muslim split, however, did not augur well for the future of India. It turned out to be a national peril and was exploited to the full by the nations of the West to serve their own political interests.

These nations differed from the ancient Greeks, Scythians, Romans and Huns, who

had settled in India and became Indians. They presented a contrast in character. At their homelands they were democratic; when they came to India they were autocratic and inhuman. Atrocities were the keynote of Portuguese and the British era was the story of the perpetration of unpardonable crimes.

India was gradually overpowered and suppressed. At this stage it was thought she would never rise again. But before a century was over, the table turned. India recovered her soul and her culture too. The national character, although greatly affected, did not die altogether.

What the foreign rulers intended was to mould the people of India in the western outlook for the purpose of a smooth administration. All these brought a flood of evils in its trail. India could not halt the flow of new idiosyncracies and evils of enslavement. The adverse trends in her moral outlook came to be absolutely inconsistent with her heritage and unhealthy for her reconstruction. This was a rude shock for India but she soon settled down to retrieve the position under the inspiration of gifted leaders in all spheres. And when Gandhiji came on the scene, the groundwork for political and spiritual emancipation was well laid. The only thing required thereafter was the co-ordination and consolidation of forces to lead India to her coveted goal.

This was, however, a colossal task. But Gandhiji faced it with an indomitable will and courage. He evolved new technique in politics and made it a part of his campaign for moral resurgence, for social uplift and economic regeneration. He called upon the people to develop character, resist evil and promote righteousness. He pronounced his abhorrence for intolerance, and untouchability persisting in the social structure of the country. He led not only the struggle for political freedom, but also the struggle for freedom from all vices. The nation responded with alacrity. It witnessed a new

spirit that won a decisive victory. The world greeted the event as the victory of character.

Gandhiji's assassination reminded the world of the poisoning to death of Socrates and the murder of Abraham Lincoln. He was undoubtedly a universalist with a historic mission. He wanted to see humanity rise in spiritual sphere and shine in moral lustre. Non-violence was his contribution to the world-thought for the ennoblement of human understanding.

Sitting at Kasturba's pyre some years ago Gandhiji was heard to whisper, 'I strongly believe thoughts travel, even if they are not expressed in words.' Indeed Gandhiji's ideas have travelled far and wide. The people in Africa saw in Gandhi a torch-bearer of human freedom. Eminent leaders of free Africa like Jomo Kenyatta, Kenneth Kaunda, Hastings Banda, Milton Obote, and Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus and Martin Luther King, the Negro leader of U.S.A. all came to be influenced by the new doctrine. Martin Luther King says that violence is impractical, because the old 'eye for an eye' philosophy ends up in a descending spiral in the destruction of everybody. Nehru too always kept non-violence in front of the leaders of the world and strove hard to restrain them from plunging the world into a nuclear war. The world pacifist movements have been following the Gandhian line in all their moves. Even reputed philosopher Bertrand Russell courted imprisonment for the cause of peace.

We must confess, however, to our dismay, that there has been a shocking revulsion in our national character in recent times. The discipline of the nation has been rudely shaken. The crime has increased and followed the pattern of the West. Selfishness and greed have reached serious proportions. The hunger for material prosperity has almost run amuck, leaving aside all the considerations of benevolence and social justice. All this has run counter to the vision of India's traditional ideal. One is

constrained to feel that we positively erred somewhere. Sardar Patel's comment in 1944 that everything appeared in short supply except corruption, is more true today than ever before. We have been fast growing strikingly indifferent, even heartless to the sufferings around us. Almost all official or non-official institutions suffer from lethargy and complacency. The disintegrating forces, working behind the scenes, hamper the progress of the nation today. We see very little of the refined way of life that would shape the discipline of our future generations. We pay little regard for national integrity and welfare.

All this, of course, should not convey the wrong impression that the worst offenders of the world live in India. We do not fare worse in comparison with many other nations of the world. Our fault is the over-emphasis on past. We do not learn enough. A nation cannot afford to stop work. 'A nation which stopped working', says Bernard Shaw, 'would perish within a fortnight even if every member had saved a million.' It would be a tragedy if the majority of our people looked forward to maximum benefit with minimum exertion. We have also to guard our nation against the danger of unbalanced industrialization. It has played havoc in the moral and spiritual life of the West. Industrialization is a blessing as long as it serves to promote material prosperity of a nation. It becomes an evil when it affects the spiritual life of the people. We have to determine the course of our destiny with due foresight and vision. We should be the last to see the evils of Western social life repeated in India. Let the whole struc-

ture be not sacrificed at the altar of anti-social activities arising out of this new chaotic conditions.

The adverse trends in our national life indicate that all is not well with the nation. These are the symptoms of a century-old chronic disease aggravated by the unsettled conditions in the country. It needs prompt attention by all interested in the future of the nation. Political and social leaders, educationists and religious preachers must make a common front today.

The culture of India asks of her nationals not to blindly imitate the western way of life where spirituality is considered not so important, not to follow that ideology to which religion is reactionary. It is essential, therefore, that we should rebuild our future on the historic heritage of ours.

It is futile to underestimate our failings and boast of the glory and grandeur of the past, when an all-out effort is necessary to exemplify our worthiness in every walk of life. The pre-requisites of maintaining India's historic culture and civilization are the virtues that enrich the character. An ideal and progressive state can never come into being without having exemplary characters. No civilization can survive the ordeal of time without them.

Indians of all ranks, irrespective of faith or creed are to join this task of realizing the common ideal. Moral degeneration of today is India's greatest enemy, and no effort should be spared to get rid of this evil before it eats into the vitality of the nation. India must not, in any case, commit moral suicide.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

With this issue, *Prabuddha Bharata* enters the seventy-second year of its publication. On the occasion of this New Year we offer our cordial greetings to all our readers, contributors, sympathizers and well-wishers and express our sincere gratitude to them for their continued help and co-operation towards the cause of this Journal, a sacred trust handed down to us all by the great Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Tejasananda is the Principal of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira (a residential Three-year Degree College) at Belur, West Bengal. A distinguished monk of the Ramakrishna Order and one of the former editors of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, the Swami has remained associated with the educational activities of the Ramakrishna Mission for a long time and has actively participated in many vital experiments in the field of man-making education as enunciated by Swami Vivekananda. In his learned article 'Crisis in Education' he focuses our attention to the root of the present developing crisis in Indian education and boldly suggests a few remedies in that regard. The article is a significant review on the subject and it is sure to evoke serious thoughts.

Swami Prabhavananda is the Head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, U.S.A. In his article on 'Overcoming Obstacles in Spiritual Life' the Swami deals with certain basic problems

that always beset the path of supreme spiritual realization.

The spirit of Christ is immortal throughout the history of mankind. Mr. Ernest Briggs of Brisbane, Australia describes in his article the undying impress of the spirit of 'The Living Christ' who still lives in the heart of humanity.

In 'Flowers of Speech' Professor William E. Hookens, Head of the Department of English, Sri Nilkanteswar Government Post-Graduate College, Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh makes a brief survey of the essential characteristics of great literature.

In the article 'All Life is Yoga' Sri M. P. Pandit, the well-known scholar and writer of Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry thoughtfully elaborates the idea of *Yoga* as propounded by Sri Aurobindo.

In 'Reason and Intuition in Philosophy' (Miss) Dharehwari, M.A., of Hyderabad studies the unified role of Reason and Intuition with particular reference to the Philosophy of Dr. Radhakrishnan.

A nation is known by the character of its nationals. Sri P. S. Joshi, of Gujarat, surveys in his article 'National Character' the real problems of India today in the perspectives of the past traditions. Sri Joshi, formerly Secretary of the Transval Hindu Seva Samaj, is also the author of the following books: '*Verdict on South Africa*', '*Struggle for Equality*', '*Unrest in South Africa*'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SIMPLE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (ILLUSTRATED). BY BRAHMACHARI AMAL. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, 24 Parganas. Price Rs. 1.50.

This beautifully illustrated monograph on the life of Swami Vivekananda simply and truly told with so much religious ardour by the author is necessarily welcome to the student world for the ship-shaping of young lives in the essential Hindu way. It sets out every main incident in Swami Vivekananda's life, his great compassion, intellectual vigour, devotion to Sri Ramakrishna, his ideals, and also his saintliness.

There has been quite an aberration and even a negation of our ancient Hindu ideals in the modern students' outlook and conduct, consequent upon their having been weaned away from them all by western civilization. Therefore, the students have to be reingrained and necessarily trained into conduct of sacrifice, chastity, discipline, and religious life, all engineered to educate them into the perfect and stalwart stature of Swami Vivekananda's divine personality, which has been a beacon of light, as it were, for future generations and world-welfare.

The book has excellent get-up. It deserves in every way to be prescribed as a text book in secondary schools.

P. SAMA RAO

HINDI

KALYĀNA DHARMĀNKA: The Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pages 700. Price Rs. 7.50.

In keeping with its tradition, the Gita Press has brought out the first issue of its renowned journal *Kalyāna* as a special number. The volume under review contains learned articles on different aspects of religion—mainly the Hindu religion. Among the contributors are such venerable personalities as the Śaṅkarācāryas of Sringeri Math, Govardhan Math, Kanchi Kamakotipeetha, Sarada Math and erudite scholars as Vedamūrti Satvalekar, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Sampurnanand, Pt. Basanta Kumar Chattopadhyaya, Dr. Basudev Saran Agarwal and others. Along with the learned articles, the volume contains instructive anecdotes from the vast Hindu scriptures as also the lives of mythical figures and spiritual personalities. Thus the volume seeks to cater to the needs of the learned as well as the common men. There is valuable matter for children and ladies also. On the whole the volume is worth possessing

and will be found interesting and useful. One, however, only wishes that the Special issue under review could also contain some articles on other major religions of the world. That would have helped its readers with a knowledge of what other religions have to say about God and spirituality. Like its predecessors, the present volume too is replete with a large number of beautiful pictures—tricolour and halftone. The price too is very low, though printing, paper etc. are of quite good standard. The publishers are to be congratulated for the efforts they have put in to bring out the volume.

S.C.

BENGALI

ŚRĪ 'MA' DARŚANA. BY SWAMI NITYATMANANDA (THIRD PART). General Printers & Publishers (Pvt.) Ltd., 119 Dharamtala Street, Calcutta-13. 1965 Bengali Year 1372). Pages 366. Price Rs. 5,

Sri 'Ma' is the pen name of Sri Mahendra, a devout follower of Sri Ramakrishna. He has left for posterity *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathāmṛta*, the valuable repository of the immortal words and sermons of that great and elevated soul. Swami Nityatmananda, a close associate of Sri Mahendra, recorded the day to day conversations of the *Sādhus* with him in his diary. The present important work is the edition of that diary. Two Parts of this work have already appeared and have come to be well received. The present work is the Third Part.

The book is important in many ways. Firstly, it is a useful record of the contemporary society and the persons who came in touch with Sri Mahendra (better known as Mahendra Master). Secondly, the conversation that the *Sādhus* and others had with Sri Mahendra is spiritually deep, morally elevating and philosophically very sound. Thirdly, it contains many talks of Sri Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi not recorded so far in any other book.

Standing between and synthesizing in himself the East and the West, the past and the future, this world and the next, Sri Ramakrishna will always continue to be a unique figure in all history. Any book dealing with his life, philosophy and teachings must always fascinate the masses. The present work has achieved this object very well. The author has rendered signal service to us by the publication of this important and inspiring book.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA PRATISTHAN CALCUTTA

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1964 TO MARCH 1965

This premier General Hospital run by the Ramakrishna Mission has at present 350 beds with more than one third of the total as free. Functioning in a modern way it maintains one well-equipped laboratory, a 500 m.a. X-ray plant, a Deep X-ray unit, one Dental X-ray unit, two Mobile X-ray units, one Electro Cardiogram apparatus, a set of Electrotherapy appliances and an all-electric laundry plant. Besides, there are six air conditioned Operation Theatres with Recovery Wards and a Free Out-patients' department for the treatment of Medical, Surgical, Ophthalmic, E.N.T. and Dental cases. The activities of the institution during the period under review were of the following types:

Antenatal Care: The most important activity of the institution has been the rendering of this antenatal care to thousands of expectant mothers through its indoor and outdoor departments. 1,394 indoor and 22,669 outdoor cases were treated during the period.

Hospital Confinement: The number of Hospital Confinement cases was 5,023 and the daily average of the beds occupied, 113.8. Total number of Obstetric Operations carried on was 2,392.

Gynaecological Cases: Gynaecological cases treated in the indoor and outdoor departments were 604 and 8,849 respectively. 405 major and 408 minor operations were performed duly.

Medical, Surgical, E.N.T., Eye and Dental Cases: Total number of the cases treated in the indoor department was 42,228 of which 1,673 were new. Of the total 41,333 outdoor cases 16,844 were new patients. 619 major and 1,031 minor surgical operations had also to be performed with regard to the various cases.

Child Care: The number of premature babies treated during the year was 407. Cases of babies delivered abnormally, instrumentally or found weak were treated in a separate ward and their number was 1,120.

The Paediatric Section treated in the indoor 540 children cases upto seven years of age. Preventive care to children and following them up for a couple of years were duly carried on by the Postnatal Clinic and the total number of such cases was 6,504.

Training in Nursing and Midwifery: One of the chief aim of the Institution is to provide opportunities to deserving women for training in Nursing and Midwifery in suitable atmosphere. There were

133 trainees on the roll in the Nursing and Midwifery Training during the period; 4 Senior and 29 Auxiliary Nurse-Midwives passed the Final examination of the Training.

Public Health Programme: Practical Public Health training is one of the important aspects of the Nurses' Training Course. Two areas (one urban and one rural) were selected for this purpose. Groups of nurses under the guidance of qualified staff visited 291 urban and 296 rural families in two selected areas, collected necessary data and advised the people on their health. Mothers were given postnatal care and many received free hospital facilities and domiciliary treatment.

Family Welfare Planning Centre: The Family Welfare Planning Centre, functioning at this institution carried on intensive work by conducting outdoor clinics in an area having a population of about 50,000.

Post-Graduate Teaching and Research: The Calcutta University has been good enough to recognize the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan as a unit of the University College of Medicine for Post-Graduate Teaching and Research since 1963. The unit named 'Vivekananda Institute' accommodates Research Laboratories for Pharmacology, Bacteriology and Pathology and provides opportunities to the doctors pursuing Post-Graduate studies for M.O., M.D. and M.S. degrees. A number of doctors remained engaged in researches in different branches of study.

Besides the activities detailed above, a Skin Department came to be added during the period under review. The Cancer work of the hospital was further reorganized under the Department of Oncology. The unit is now equipped for diagnosis and treatment of cancer by surgery, medical and surgical chemotherapy and Deep X-ray therapy.

The period under review reveals the following vital statistics of the Institution:

Deaths among Obstetric cases	..	4 or	0.6 (per thousand)	
Deaths among gynae. cases	..	3 or	5.0	„
Deaths among Medical cases	..	80 or	119.0	„
Deaths among Surgical, E.N.T. and other cases	..	19 or	22.9	„
Deaths among neonatal infants	..	149 or	29.7	„
Deaths among children (Paediatric Sec.)	..	142 or	273.9	„

Abortions and			
Evacuations	..	337 or	52.3 (per thousand)
Still births	..	115 or	22.9

general beds, the construction of a seven-storeyed Hospital Extension Block has already been taken up. The new Block when completed will provide space for additional 100 beds.

Total number of patients treated in the different Departments of the hospital during the period was 88,589. All outdoor cases and over 50 per cent of the total indoor admissions were free of charge. To provide more accommodation for outpatients' Department and Laboratory work and for increasing the number of

The Management of the Institution duly recorded its deep sense of indebtedness and gratitude to the donors, members of staff, benefactors, Central and State government authorities and to the general public for their continued help and co-operation during the period.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DROUGHT RELIEF WORK

IN

BIHAR AND UTTAR PRADESH

AN APPEAL

On account of the unprecedented drought, the people of many parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have been driven to the verge of starvation. The calamity has assumed such a serious proportion that it has to be treated as a national crisis and it is time that the whole country stands as one man by the side of the large number of suffering people and does its utmost to help them tide over these difficult days.

The Ramakrishna Mission has taken up the work of bringing relief to the afflicted people of these two provinces through its different relief centres. Work has already been started in Banda district in Uttar Pradesh and in the districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur in Bihar. Details of work will be published later on.

The Mission's relief work in the flood-affected district of Cachar in Assam is about to be closed. But even before the closure of this work, a heavy responsibility has been taken up in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. We have started the work with our slender resources, but we have full faith in our generous countrymen who have always supported such humanitarian activities of the Mission in times of need in the past.

Any contribution in cash or kind will be accepted and thankfully acknowledged by us at the following addresses. All cheques sent to the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, are to be issued in favour of RAMAKRISHNA MISSION.

1. Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal.
2. Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta-3.
3. Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Gol Park, Calcutta-29.
4. Ramakrishna Mission T. B. Sanatorium, P.O. Ramakrishna Sanatorium, Ranchi, Bihar.
5. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Morabadi, Ranchi-8, Bihar.
6. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna-4, Bihar.
7. Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, P.O. Vidyapith, Deoghar (S.P.), Bihar.
8. Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur-1, Bihar.
9. Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi-1.
10. Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Lucknow, U.P.

Belur Math
December 16, 1966.

Sd/- SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA
General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission

THE HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

The one hundred and fourteenth birthday of Sri Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, falls on Tuesday, the 3rd January, 1967.