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No. 12

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER¹

Our Father
which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
as *it is* in heaven.

Give us this day
our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

ईशप्रार्थना²

(अनुष्टुभ्)

हे तात दयितास्माकं
दुलोके योऽसि संस्थितः ।
भूलोके पावनं दिव्यं
ह्यस्तु ते नाम संततम् ॥१॥
पृथिव्यां तव साम्राज्यं
समायातु जवात्प्रभो ।
तवेच्छा-शासनं चैव
भवत्वत्र यथा दिवि ॥२॥
हे देव करुणाशील
भो ईश सर्वशक्तिमन् ।
देहि प्रतिदिनं भोज्यं
प्रार्थनैषा सदाऽस्ति नः ॥३॥
क्षमस्व ऋणमस्माकं
प्रभो हे करुणाघन ।
यथा हि ऋणग्रस्तानां
ऋणात्कुर्मो विमोचनम् ॥४॥
प्रलोभनेषु नः केषु
मा प्रेरय कदाचन ।
त्रायस्व च महापापात्
नित्यमस्मान् कृपामय ॥५॥
तवैवात्रास्ति साम्राज्यं
महिमाऽपि तवैव च ।
ऐश्वर्यं चाऽपि सामर्थ्यं
तवैवास्तीह शाश्वतम् ॥६॥
इति

1. Vide The Bible, New Testament, St. Matthew, 6:9-13. For Vedantic interpretation of this Prayer, see Swami Prabhavananda's article on 'Lord's Prayer' in this issue. 2. A free versified Sanskrit translation of the 'Lord's Prayer'.

SISTER CHRISTINE : THE DEDICATED—IV

(EDITORIAL)

'Mother's Work' in Collaboration with Nivedita:

After taking the needed rest at Mayavati, and becoming strong in body and fresh in mind, Christina came to Calcutta sometime in early 1903, and joined hands with Nivedita in her work for Indian women and children. Nivedita had reopened the school after her return to India in the February of 1902, by celebrating the Saraswati Puja ; and Swamiji had given her blessings in following words: 'May all powers come unto you! May Mother Herself be your hands and mind! It is immense power—irresistible—that I pray for you, and, if possible, along with it infinite peace!'⁸² And we can assume that Swamiji must have trained, and blessed Christina on similar lines during her short period of association (April-May 1902) with him at the Belur Math before leaving for Mayavati. Nivedita had brought many things for her Kindergarten and Women's School from the West, and Swamiji was happy to see them. He had made a correct choice of persons for his work. He knew, both Nivedita and Christina were familiar with the then prevalent, and the latest methods of teaching.

The Children's School was started first for girls of the locality, and in the first batch the number of students was fifty to begin with, though only twenty-nine students remained by the end of the year. Because Nivedita was busy most of the time with other activities, she had to take the help of one Miss Bett, whom she had brought for this work from England. Later on, Christina gave them a helping

hand ; and gradually took the whole responsibility of the School. On November 2, 1903, Christina, whom we shall hereafter call Sister Christine or only Christine, started a School for women, where adult and needy ladies of the locality came to take training from her in reading, writing, needle-work and so on. A report reads : 'The plan was to secure a carriage for the School and invite the gentle families around to send in their *purdah-nashin* ladies to it between the hours of 12 and 4 in the afternoon, when these ladies were likely to be free from household work.'⁸³ Competent teachers gradually became available to train them, mostly without any remuneration. The classes were held three times a day at 8 a.m., 11 a.m., and 4 p.m. Besides reading, writing and sewing, the curriculum also included 'interpreting of the lives of great religious leaders'. As the number of students went on increasing, a separate section called Pura-stri Vibhaga (a section for the housewives) was started on the Jagaddhatri-Puja day towards the end of 1904, and Sister Christine took immense pains to develop it.

'The House of Sisters':

Needless to say, Sister Christine stayed with Sister Nivedita at 16 Bose Para Lane, Bagh Bazar, Calcutta, after coming from Mayavati. Their residence was, therefore, known as 'The House of Sisters'; and, though different in nature, they lived together for serving the common cause entrusted by their Master. Nivedita was

⁸². *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, Vol. V, 1973, p. 175.*

⁸³. *The Golden Jubilee Souvenir, Calcutta: Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 1952, (hereafter G.J.S.), p. 19.*

of fiery and impatient nature, whereas Christine was calm and patient. In Nivedita's words: 'She is absolutely staunch. She is gentle and clinging, and not too dominant, but she is loyal and sympathetic and generous. Perfect in sweetness, and perfect in trustworthiness, and so large in her views.'⁸⁴ Thus, looking to their temperaments we can call them as 'Sun-didi and Moon-didi' (*didi* means elder sister). One of their students rightly said about them later, that Nivedita was like a father to the students and Christine was like a mother. These two Sisters were working for the School under the able patronage of Swamis Brahmananda and Saradananda. The duty of the Swamis was to collect funds for the School, while the management of the School was looked after mostly by the Sisters. It is a recognized fact that the progress of the Women's Section was specially due to Sister Christine's efforts. In praise of her work Sister Nivedita had written on November 25, 1903 to Miss MacLeod, 'The women's work is a wonderful success. But *she* is *more* wonderful. Her whole time is given up to study, work, and visiting. She lives here, without fuss, without complexity. I look at her and feel that I never knew my own measureless inadequacy before.'⁸⁵

Sister Devamata's Impression :

When Sister Devamata came to Calcutta during the first decade of the present century, Sister Christine had received her cordially at the station and taken her to their School, where she met the Holy Mother. About her impressions regarding the Sisters, she wrote later: 'The real Princi-

pal of the School was Sister Christine. Literary work absorbed Sister Nivedita too profoundly to enable her to take part to any extent in teaching. She was occupied also in assisting the famous Botanist, Dr. J. C. Bose, in preparing a new book on plant life. . . . She never quite forgave me for my lack of interest in politics, which were of consuming concern to her; but it was a friendly feud. Sister Christine had and has an exceptionally unselfish character with a rare spirit of service. Her assistant, Sudhira, was also an unusual girl. She took the charge of the School when Sister Christine was absent. My association with her and with all the older pupils gave me great joy.'⁸⁶

The Role of Swami Saradananda :

One cannot forget the role of Swami Saradananda in the building up of the School started by the Sisters. He was the chief person behind the reopening of the School in early 1902, and the Purā-stri Vibhaga in late 1904. He even wished to go to America in order to collect funds for the School; and after the passing away of Nivedita in 1911, and the departure of Sister Christine to America in 1914, he helped Sister Sudhira in keeping the School running. He was the then Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission; and through him the Mission was always behind the School, right from its inception. In 1918, the School officially became a part and parcel of the Ramakrishna Mission, and remained so until it was transferred to Sri Sarada Math and Ramakrishna Sarada Mission on 9th August 1963.

Burden of the School :

From Sister Devamata's reminiscences,

84. Pravrajika Atmaprana, *Sister Nivedita*, Calcutta : Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 1967, (hereafter *Sister Nivedita*), p. 134.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

86. Sister Devamata, *Days in an Indian Monastery*, La Crescenta : Ananda Ashrama, 1927 (hereafter *Days*), pp. 274, 275.

it is known that the main burden of the School was on the shoulders of Sister Christine, at least till the passing away of Sister Nivedita; and Sister Sudhira, who had joined the School as a teacher in 1906, was her main helpmate; she looked after the School in Christine's absence. Sister Nivedita, apart from editing the books of Dr. Jagadish Chandra Bose, was interested in Indian politics; and some are of the opinion that Swamiji had asked her to do so. But from various sources it is known that Swamiji did not like her taking so much interest in politics, and associating intimately with Mr. Okakura, and some prominent Indian politicians of the time. In this connection, Sister Christine had told a Swami of the Ramakrishna Order: 'Swamiji was to scold Nivedita severely for her political involvements, until, unable to bear more, she begged him to stop. He made it clear that she could not be associated with both the Ramakrishna Math and the political movements of the time. She must decide to give up one or the other. She told him she would think about it; but before she could give him her answer, Swamiji died.'⁸⁷

Contact with Great Indians of the Time :

Because Sister Nivedita was acquainted and closely associated with some great Indians like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, Nilratan Sarkar, Jagadish Chandra Bose (and his wife Lady Abala Bose), Sarojini Naidu, and others Sister Christine also became acquainted with them, even though she played no role whatever in Indian politics. She was very thickly in correspondence with Sri Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who used to like her very much.

⁸⁷. Marie Louise Burke, *Swami Vivekananda: His Second Visit to the West*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1973, p. 725.

The Holy Mother and the Daughters :

It is well known, how the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi loved her *khuki* (daughter) Sister Nivedita, and vice versa. It was due to her that Nivedita returned to India in early 1902. Swamiji had written to her from Dacca on April 4, 1901: 'Of course, you stay in England as long as you think you are working well. Yum [Miss MacLeod] had some talk about you with [Hoily] Mother, and she desired you to come over. Of course, it was only her love and anxiety to see you, that was all; but poor Yum has been much too serious for once; and hence all these letters.'⁸⁸

Sister Christine and Nivedita frequently went to the Udbodhan Office in Bagh Bazar, Calcutta, whenever Holy Mother was there. In the beginning, Christine might not have appreciated the Holy Mother so much. About her, Sister Nivedita had written to Miss MacLeod on February 24, 1904: 'Holy Mother is here at present. . . . Christine cannot understand her that much. I take delight in this, because Christine herself frankly tells me about it; but I am sure, Christine's ideas will not remain like this permanently. Someday she will become most favourite of her [Holy Mother].'⁸⁹ And it did happen accordingly, because during her visit to India, Sister Devamata had observed that Holy Mother 'was genuinely fond of Sister Nivedita, Sister Christine,' and herself. She had also marked that Christine could speak colloquial Bengali quite fluently, while Nivedita could speak chaste Bengali, and that too with some effort. Holy Mother was happy to see them talking Bengali, and

⁸⁸. Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda from Mrs. Boshi Sen's Collection, dt. 4 April 1901.

⁸⁹. Sankari Prasad Basu, *Nivedita Lokamata*, (Bengali), Vol. I, Calcutta: Ananda Publishers, 1968, p. 188.

was satisfied even if she could understand a bit of what they spoke.

But before Christine might have grasped the language, a funny incident took place, when the two Sisters had gone to visit the Holy Mother: At this time Nivedita had some smattering knowledge of the language, and in her broken Bengali she said to the Holy Mother, 'Mother divine, you are our Kali.' Christine also repeated the same, but in English. Hearing it, the Mother said promptly, 'No, my dears, I cannot become Kali or any such deity. In that case I shall have to remain with my tongue protruded all the time.' On hearing her humorous reply, the Sisters said, 'Oh, Mother need not take so much trouble; we would look upon you as our Mother; Shri Ramakrishna is our Shiva.' To this the Mother said, 'That much can somehow be tolerated.'⁹⁰

On another occasion, sometime after the demise of Nivedita, when Sister Christine had been to the Holy Mother with Sister Sudhira, the Mother said to the latter, 'Alas! They two lived together. Now it will be so difficult for her to live alone!' And looking towards Christine she said, 'We ourselves feel so intensely for her; you are bound to feel much more, my dear. What a personality she was!' Saying so the Mother began to shed tears. Then she asked Christine many things about the School.⁹¹ Such was the loving relationship between the Holy Mother and the daughters.

The Boses and the Sisters :

Somehow a very intimate relationship developed between Mr. and Mrs. Jagadish Chandra Bose and the Sisters

⁹⁰. Swami Gambhirananda, *Sri Ma Sarada Devi* (Bengali), 3rd edn., Calcutta: Udbodhan Office, p. 619.

⁹¹. *Ibid.*, p. 502.

(Nivedita and Christine) at Calcutta. So much so that according to Sister Devamata: 'He [Mr. J. C. Bose] spent several hours every day at the School and sometimes lunched there, . . .'⁹² It was Srimati Lavanyaprabha Basu, sister of Sir J. C. Bose, who first came forward to offer her services to the School without any remuneration. According to Sri Boshi Sen, 'It was Lady [Abala] Bose's generous hospitality which mitigated some of the austerities of these Sisters.'⁹³ And if we turn the pages of the Mayavati diary, we find that often with the Boses the Sisters spent their summer vacations at Mayavati. Before the death of Sister Nivedita they visited Mayavati in the summers of 1904, 1907 and 1911. On the last occasion Christine was not in their party as she had come to Mayavati a month earlier. In the summer of 1910, the party had gone on pilgrimage to Kedarnath and Badrinath. The pilgrimage, as a matter of fact, was planned earlier in the summer of 1907; but it was cancelled due to some difficulties. After the passing of Sister Nivedita, the Boses did not forget or neglect Sister Christine. They took her to Mayavati in the summers of 1912 and 1913, and also during the Puja vacations of 1913; and it was on 22 May 1912 that the Boses and Sister Christine participated in the foundation ceremony of the present building of the *Prabuddha Bharata* Office. At times, Sister Christine spent her holidays at the Boses' house in Darjeeling.

Trips Abroad And Nivedita's Death :

On August 15, 1907, Sister Nivedita left for England, and after staying in the West for about two years returned to Calcutta on July 18, 1909. In her absence, Sister Christine managed the School very efficient-

⁹². *Days*, pp. 274-75.

⁹³. *Prabuddha Bharata*, 1930, p. 421.

ly, with the help of Sister Sudhira. In April 1910, Sister Christine went to United States 'for some personal reasons' and returned to India in the beginning of 1911. It is said that after her return, Sister Christine left for Mayavati after a few days due to some misunderstanding that had cropped up between the two Sisters. She reached Mayavati with Frank Alexander on April 13, 1911, via Kathgodam; whereas Dr. and Mrs. Bose, Nivedita, and Arabinda Bose reached there on May 19th. During this visit, Sister Christine told Nivedita that she did not want to stay with her at the 17 Bose Para Lane, and 'was thinking of taking up work at the Brahma Girls' School.'⁹⁴ This must have been a rude shock to Nivedita, in addition to that received due to the death, in the October of 1910, of Mrs. Bull, who was her main financier at that time. To make the situation worse, Mrs. Bull's daughter had made some false charges against Nivedita about the death of her mother. All these shocks no doubt had a bad effect on Nivedita's health. After the School closed for the Puja holidays that year, Nivedita left for Darjeeling to take rest at the Boses' residence, and died there due to illness, on October 13, 1911.

After her death Mrs. J. C. Bose had written to Nivedita's sister (Mrs. Wilson) on October 18, 1911, a long letter about her sister's death. In the same letter she wrote about Christine: 'She [Nivedita] talked of her work all the time. How her School is to continue, and she talked of Christine. She hoped that Christine would direct her work. She would have loved to have Christine with us during her illness, but Christine was at Mayavati, and though she had started, it was too late. Poor Christine!'⁹⁵

⁹⁴. *Sister Nivedita*, p. 286.

⁹⁵. Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda's Friends and Disciples, Mrs. Abala Bose to Mrs. Wilson, dt. 18 October 1911.

And what was the condition of Christine at Mayavati after hearing of Nivedita's death! It can be best known from her letter of October 16, 1911 to Miss MacLeod, in which she wrote: 'O Yum! dear Yum! Isn't it terrible, terrible! I don't know what to do, I feel so bad. It never occurred to me that such a thing could happen. She was always the strong one, while I was always collapsing in Calcutta. I am so utterly unhappy to think that I left her to struggle with the work alone during these terrible summer months in Calcutta. There is always so much to do in 17 Bose Para and some of the work is so trying. The thing that killed her was the will case. There is no doubt whatever about that. When I begged her to stay here [Mayavati] a month or two longer just before she left, she said that she could not bear the solitude, that she must be active and surrounded by people to keep from thinking. So I did not urge it. She looked so ill then that I was very anxious, until the trial ended. After that I thought the danger was over. ... When the telegram came that she was seriously ill, I sent for coolies, packed and was ready to start when the second one came. Mrs. Sevier says that I am to stay here with her now, but I don't know what to do. She sends her love to you.'⁹⁶

Sister Nivedita's Will :

Sister Nivedita was told by a palmist the approximate time of her death, and the shocks she had received towards the end of her life confirmed the same in some way or the other. Knowing of her nearing end, she prepared a will on March 27, 1911, addressing it to the Trustees of the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, India. Regarding Christine she had written in the will :

⁹⁶. *Ibid.*, Sister Christine to Miss MacLeod, dt. 16 October 1911.

'In making this definition, I believe that I am expressing what are the convictions of Sister Christine as well as myself, and giving, to the best of my ability, the definition that would have commended itself to our Guru, the Swami Vivekananda, who laid this task upon us. I assume that as long as Sister Christine lives and can continue to take charge of the work, the Ramakrishna Math will give itself in this matter to carrying out of her wishes. . . .'⁹⁷

Sister Christine soon took up the entire responsibility of the School after Nivedita's death, according to her wishes, and worked hard for its development, so much so that she ruined her own health. She went to America in April 1914 for recouping her health, entrusting the responsibility of the School to Miss Sudhira Bose (Sister Sudhira), and in spite of her wishes could not return earlier than 1924. The School report reads: 'Though desirous of returning soon and eagerly' awaited here by her colleagues, Sister Christine could not return due to the Great War and the Post-war developments. In America she delivered many lectures during this time drawing the attention of the Americans towards the social and educational conditions prevailing in India.'⁹⁸

Ten Years in America :

Sister Christine did not waste her time in America. Soon a group of students gathered around her in Detroit; and she taught them Vedanta Philosophy, and told them about India. She never charged for her lectures. By her own life she showed that the life of a Brahmacharini is possible even in the city like Detroit. Her activities did not miss the eyes of the Detroit papers. They wrote long columns about her in their

papers. Of these days Mr. Boshi Sen writes: 'She gave out her best, never diluted the glorious message of Vedanta. Of these lectures Mrs. Elizabeth King writes: "Her faultless diction, her exquisitely modulated voice, her appearance as of a priestess from some ancient temple made listening an endless joy. Except in her stereoptican [stereoscopic?] lectures in which she taught us to know and to love India, she had only one theme,—best expressed by Sri Krishna in the *Gita*: 'By Me all this world is pervaded in My manifested aspect. Having manifested this entire universe with one fragment of My glory, I remain,'—but given with such wealth of anecdotes and variety of aspects that you found yourself rooted and immovably fixed in that knowledge."⁹⁹

Return to India :

After about ten years' stay in the United States, Sister Christine returned to India in the January of 1924; but she could not actively participate in the School work as before due to her shattered health. Soon after her coming to India she fell ill, and desired to retire from the educational activities for good. It was at this time that Mr. Boshi Sen had the privilege of serving her at his 8 Bose Para Lane house. During summer they used to shift to Almora. In 1927, she started recording her Memoirs, which could not be completed however. Some of these have been published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of 1931 and 1945.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹. *Prabuddha Bharata*, 1930, p. 421.

¹⁰⁰. We hope to publish in near future the remaining part of the 'Memoirs of Sister Christine', which have been so kindly made available to us for publication by Mrs. Boshi Sen of Almora. She has also contributed to our Journal an article on Sister Christine, which mainly deals with the last part of her life in Almora and America. Mrs. Boshi Sen had the privilege of meeting Sister Christine during these years, and inheriting the Sister's treasures in the form of rare archives.

⁹⁷. Miscellaneous Unpublished Letters from Mrs. Boshi Sen's Collection, Nivedita's Will, dt. 27 March 1911.

⁹⁸. *G.J.S.*, p. 27.

Back to America :

In the March of 1928, Sister Christine sailed from Calcutta for America with Mr. Boshi Sen, in order to recuperate her health. This time she stayed for some days at New York, where she used to frequent the Vedanta Society, and deliver lectures there occasionally. Once in a while, she visited her relatives in Detroit. Some time during this period Swami Shivananda had invited her to come to India, and take up the management of the School in her hands. She too wished to pass her last days in holy India, and even her passage was booked for India via Italy to sail on November 1930, but destiny

wished otherwise. Occasionally she spent her days in the beautiful home of her 'dear children' Mr. and Mrs. Glen Overton, on the Miner Lake at Allegan, Michigan, where she once lived in the year 1923, and had named their house as the 'Ashrama'. In her last days, she stayed with one of her friends Mrs. Alice Fuller LeRoy at New York, where the hostess offered her the best possible medical aid, and care. Her final illness lasted only for about a week, and during the last twenty-four hours of her life, she did not speak, though she was conscious. She passed away in the early morning of March 27, 1930. Thus ended the story of a dedicated life.

(Concluded)

THE LORD'S PRAYER : * A VEDANTIC INTERPRETATION

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

Perhaps most people repeat the Lord's Prayer every day of their lives, but this prayer is not as simple as it appears to be. It is aphoristic, and if we take it literally, we do not get its significance. It has such deep meaning behind it that it can be understood only by those who practise spiritual disciplines. Christ therefore taught the Lord's Prayer to a select few, his intimate disciples, who already knew the methods of prayer and meditation. As the disciples heard the prayer, it reminded them step by step of the disciplines.

The Lord's Prayer begins '*Our Father*'. When we come to the teachings of Christ, we find that he emphasized Bhakti-yoga the path of devotion. The impersonal God is too much of an abstraction to be

loved, so Christ taught his disciples to worship God as a personal being. He reiterated the first commandment of the Jews, 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.'¹ In order that we can love God with all our heart, soul and mind, we have to consider Him as our very own. And in order that we can consider Him as our very own, we have to enter into a relationship with Him. Now this idea of entering into a relationship with God has a deep philosophical implication. In every human heart there is the desire to love and be loved, and we try to fulfil that desire in our human relationships. We want the love of a father, a mother, a friend, a sweetheart, but it is really a desire for God and nothing else. That is why ultimately in our human relationships we feel lonesome,

* Reproduced from *Vedanta and the West*, March-April 1953, pp. 37-42.

1. Matthew, 22:37.

in spite of all kinds of love we may have, because we are hugging the shadows.

The great sage Yājñavalkya truly taught his wife Maitreyī: 'The husband loves the wife, not for the sake of the wife, but for the sake of the Self, God, that is in the wife. The wife loves the husband, not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of the Self. The son loves the father and the father loves the son, not for the sake of the father or for the sake of the son, but for the sake of the Self.'² That is the truth we have to recognize. That great love attracts us, but we misread it. And to read that love truly, and to find fulfilment of the desire for love which is within each human heart, is to turn that love towards God, who is love. As there are expressions of love on the human plane, the same expressions of love exist on the divine plane—the love of a child for his father or mother, or of a servant for his master, or of friends, or the affection of a father or mother for the son, or the sweet relationship between husband and wife. Now we find this same idea of different relationships not only in the teachings of the great devotees of India, but in the teachings of this great devotee Christ. In this prayer he teaches us to regard God as our father. As soon as we take this relationship, the awe which separates us is gone. There is no longer the thought that God is great, that He is the Creator of this universe. His creation and His glories do not mean anything to Him. In ignorance we are caught by the glamour of the creation and we forget the Creator. We must approach God in a simple manner because, again, He is simple. Let us regard Him as our own father, immediately there is an intimate relationship. In a simple manner we come into our father's presence. The father loves the son; the son may be wayward,

but the father does not discard him. He continues to love his son. In the same way, whatever we may be, God continues to love and attract us. And this is what Christ teaches when he utters these two words: 'Our Father'.

'Which art'. What proofs are there for God? You find philosophers, theologians, and scientists giving proofs for the existence of God. On the other hand, after you have read all the proofs for the existence of God, you can discard all their logic and arguments by a different logic. Why is it not possible to prove the existence of God by logical reason? Because before you can prove anything you have to exist. You do not need any logic to prove your own existence. And your true being, your self, is no other than God.

When you come to a Christ, or any God-man, the question whether God exists or not does not arise; in his presence all doubts cease. I know from my own experience with holy men that not only could you feel the presence of God in such an atmosphere, but you felt that God could be realized easily, that He was like a fruit in the palm of your hand. In the presence of such illumined souls, who have known and realized God, who have reached their union with God, you feel that 'which art'.

The real proof is not to be had from the scriptures, scriptural authorities, or even from the lips of the teacher. The philosophy of Vedanta has always insisted that God is not an idea, not a conception, but that He is the Reality. He is realizable, and when you realize that truth, when you see that Reality, then you have the real proof. In the Upaniṣads the great sage says: 'I have known that reality, I have gone beyond darkness. You also, having known that truth, go beyond darkness and attain to immortality.'³

2. *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, II.iv.5 and IV.v.6.

3. *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad*, III.8.

'In heaven'. Where do we find God? Where is heaven? Each individual carries both heaven and earth within him. What is earth? Earth is experience of the universe of name and form. We are within ignorance, and in ignorance we see this world appearance, within the bounds of time, space and causation. Psychologically it has been pointed out how the Self within, that pure Consciousness, is covered by ignorance. What is this ignorance? It is the sense of ego, the sense of individuality or separateness, arising from the identification of the Self with the body, mind, or senses. This ignorance has two aspects: It covers the Reality, and it creates something new. So through ignorance the heaven within, the divine Self, remains hidden and there is created instead an earth—a false self—and thus do we experience through the senses this world appearance.

How can we find heaven? Let us look to the teachings of Jesus. 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'⁴ One has to be born in spirit. The moment you are born in spirit you have entered heaven, and there God is. Buddha calls this 'awakening'. He compares earth and heaven, *samsāra* and *nirvāna*, to sleep and awakening. In the Upaniṣads we find more psychological detail about that. We read that there are three states of consciousness, waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. Normally, man dwells within these three states; but there is *turiya*, the Fourth. The three states can be likened to the state of sleep, compared to that awakening, that *turiya*, which is the state of transcendental consciousness. In every individual there is the capacity to be awakened into *turiya*. Transcend the limits of the mind, senses and body, reach the pure Consciousness within, and you are born in spirit and have found heaven.

4. John, 3:3.

'Hallowed be thy name'. There arises a question in the heart of every spiritual aspirant: 'I have not seen God. How can I love him?' And the answer has been given. There is a bridge between the known and the unknown, and in philosophical language this bridge has been called 'the Logos' by the Greeks, 'the Word' by St. John, and 'the Sphota' by the Hindus. In the Gospel according to St. John we read: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'⁵ In the Vedas we read: 'In the beginning was Brahman (God). His second was Word. Word is Brahman.'⁶ In every religion we find a great emphasis laid upon this medium, the Logos, that is one with God. According to yoga psychology the very repetition of the holy name of the Lord leads to illumination. It bridges the chasm between our sense universe and the divine beyond. What the Hindus call *japam*, chanting the name of the Lord, is a great spiritual discipline in itself. Sri Rama-krishna used to say that the holy name is like a rope; hold fast to it, and it will take you to God. With the help of the rope, which is something definite and concrete, we reach the eternal, inexpressible Reality.

'Thy kingdom come'. Christ teaches a great secret here. As you go to pray and meditate, you must try to feel, even in your ignorance, that 'Thy kingdom come'. In other words, feel the presence of God everywhere. It is the universal truth that God is, and if He is, He must be omnipresent. In the Upaniṣads we read, 'Brahman is before, Brahman is behind, Brahman extends to the right, Brahman extends to the

5. John, 1:1.

6. Cf. *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, I.iv.10:

'ब्रह्म वा इदमग्र आसीत्'
Brahmabindu Upaniṣad, 16: 'शब्दाक्षरं परं ब्रह्म'
and *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VI.22: 'शब्दब्रह्म परं च रत्'

left, Brahman is above, Brahman is below, Brahman is all, and Brahman is supreme.'⁷ Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'When you pray to Father, "Oh Father come unto me," you have not yet begun to pray.' And the great seer-philosopher Śaṅkara pointed out that 'Our perception of the universe is a continuous perception of Brahman, though the ignorant is not aware of this.' Indeed, the universe is nothing but Brahman. With physical eyes we see only a physical universe. Transform your physical eyes into the eye of the spirit, and with a tranquil heart see God everywhere. We live, move, and have our being in Him every moment. At least when we go to pray and meditate, let us try to recognize this truth and feel His living presence. Realize in your heart of hearts: 'Thy kingdom come'.

There is a spiritual discipline in Hindu ritualistic worship called the purification of the elements. The principle is that as you sit for worship, you try to feel that the whole universe and with it your body, your mind, your senses, your intellect and your ego are gradually dissolved into the final cause. And that final cause is God. Again try to feel that out of Him comes this whole universe; you are getting, as it were, a new body, a new mind, new senses and a new universe. And you and the whole universe are pure Consciousness; everything is made of spirit. You are God, and you are worshipping God. This is what Christ refers to when he says, 'Thy kingdom come'.

'Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.' At the moment when you see God everywhere, earth and heaven have become united, earth has been transformed into heaven, and it is His will that is done.

One can really do the will of God only after one has known Him. We forget that.

My master [Swami Brahmananda]⁸ told me once that he was always guided by the will of God. I questioned him: 'Do you do the will of God as I may think or feel that I am doing His will, when actually I am only following my own inclinations and attributing them to God's will?' He said, 'No, it is not the same.' Then I asked: 'Do you see Him and then He tells you what to do?' He answered: 'Yes, I see Him, I talk to Him. That is how I know what He wills.' And that is how anyone can do the will of God. When the ego, when the desires and cravings are completely wiped out, then only the will of God reflects upon you.

'Give us this day our daily bread'. This daily bread is divine grace. Our master taught us: 'There is the grace of God, pray that grace may be revealed to you.' And Christ says: 'Give us *this day* our daily bread.' May that grace be revealed unto me, not tomorrow, not after this body is gone, but this moment. It is a great truth to learn that God may be revealed to us at any time. That grace is there; at any moment the screen covering it may be removed. Most of us think that we are weak and impure, that we have to acquire certain merits, that we have to pray and purify ourselves, that we have to be worthy of God, and then alone God can be revealed to us. But it is not possible for a human being through any effort to deserve the grace of God. Does this mean we should not make self-effort? No, self-effort and spiritual disciplines are necessary in order that we may know and believe in His grace.

My master often repeated a saying: 'There is the grace of God, there is the grace of the Guru, there is the grace of the devotees of God, but for the grace of one a man may be ruined. What is that grace of the

7. *Mundaka Upaniṣad*, II.ii.11.

8. Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Order.

one? The grace of our own mind.' Self-effort is the grace of our own mind.

In the words of Sri Ramakrishna: 'The breeze of grace is always blowing. Set sail to it, and you catch that breeze'⁹ In your prayer and meditation you must be ready at every moment to have the revelation of God's grace, but at the same time persevere, have patience, and you are sure to attain that revelation.

'*And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*'. This is a reference to what the Hindus and Buddhists call the law of karma. This law of cause and effect teaches that so long as we live within karma there is no freedom. Within the law of karma, the realm of the relative, there is both good and evil, and we are always making debts. These debts really cannot be paid back. We need only forgiveness, nothing else. Karma is finished when we attain illumination. In other words, it is the knowledge of God, the absolute, that gives us freedom from the law of karma. So the Lord's Prayer says: 'Forgive us our debts'. May we not become entangled in more karma.

Does this mean that we should give up work? No, but let us learn to act, not to pay debt to karma, but as worship to God. When our work is worship, we are no longer within the bounds of karma.

'*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*'. It is difficult to understand how God can lead us into temptation. But is not this whole creation a temptation? In the story of the garden of Eden we read that Adam was made in the image of God. He was warned not to eat of the fruit of one tree. But he did not

heed the warning, and as he ate of the fruit he saw both good and evil. What does that imply? This creation is really God; but we do not see God. We see the creation as the mental or physical universe because Adam, that God within us, has fallen, as it were, and been caught up in the sense of ego. The shadow we hug as ourselves is the ego, and with this ego we see and enjoy this manifested universe through the doors of the senses. So the Lord's Prayer says: 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' Deliver us from the evil of both good and evil, which may sound paradoxical. In this relative world there is good and there is evil, and as such, the world is evil because good is only temporary. It is but another side of the same page; when you take one, you must take the other.

There is a beautiful verse in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* which explains this prayer. 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa says: 'How hard to break through is this My māyā, made of the *guṇas*. But he who takes refuge in Me only shall pass beyond māyā.'¹⁰ This māyā is the creation, and we are caught up in it. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'People love this creation. They do not inquire into the Creator. They are caught in His creation.' If only we can break through this māyā, we shall find God, we shall find that bliss and that freedom. The ego, which has caused this creation in a sense, will disappear, and we shall see God playing everywhere, if only we can take our refuge in Him. Then what will be our experience? '*Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*'

9. Cf. *The Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1938, p. 207, Saying, 679.

10. *Bhagavad-Gītā*, VII.14.

SANKARA'S CONCEPT OF THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

DR. ROBIN GHOSE

Srī Śaṅkara, the chief exponent of Advaita Vedānta, believes that the Absolute Reality or Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. According to him the self (Jīva) and Brahman are identical, as there is no reality anywhere other than Brahman. His philosophy, therefore, is known as Advaita or monism. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, believes that Jīva and Brahman are identical, but in a special sense; and so his philosophy is termed as Viśiṣṭādvaita or qualified monism. Madhva differs from both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, and holds that both Brahman and the Jīva can never be identical; but they are eternally different from each other. His philosophy is termed as Dvaita or dualism.

Jīva and Brahman Identical :

The idea that Brahman is the highest Reality, and is identical with the self was explained very clearly by Uddālaka to his son Śvetaketu in the following lines: 'That which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality (*satya*). That is Ātman (soul). That art thou.'¹ Uddālaka repeats this truth nine times to imprint it on Śvetaketu's mind.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* also we find the same idea expressed: 'In the beginning this world was Brahman. It knew only itself (*ātmānam*): "I am Brahman!" Therefore, it became the All.'²

The highest Reality, according to Śaṅkara, is One-without-a-second; because a Reality

that has second, or which can be experienced as an object, cannot be the highest Reality. The diversities and manifoldness seen in this phenomenal world appear to be real only because of our ignorance. In fact: 'There is on earth no diversity. He gets death after death, who perceives here seeming diversity. As a unity only is It to be looked upon—this indemonstrable, enduring Being.'³ Just as the rope appears as a snake due to illusion, the One-without-a-second Brahman appears as many due to ignorance.

According to Śaṅkara Brahman is Infinite and Eternal. It is *nirguṇa* (devoid of qualities), formless, beginningless, and endless. The concept of Brahman is most beautifully described in the following passage: 'He is unthinkable, formless, unfathomable, concealed, unimpeachable, compact, impenetrable, devoid of qualities, pure, brilliant, enjoying qualities, (*guṇa*), fearful, unproduced, a master Yogi, omniscient, munificent, immeasurable, without beginning or end, illustrious, unborn, intelligent, indescribable, the Creator of all, the soul of all, the enjoyer of all, the lord of all, the inmost being of everything.'⁴

Śaṅkara says, Brahman cannot be described in positive terms. In fact, It is best described through a series of negations. It is said: 'That soul (Ātman) is not this, it is not that (*neti, neti*). It is unseizable, for it is not seized. It is indestructible, for it is not destroyed. It is unattached for it does not attach itself. It is unbound. It does not tremble. It is not injured.'⁵

The Concept of Saccidānanda :

According to Śaṅkara Brahman is of the

1. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. Robert Ernest Hume, Madras: Oxford University Press, 1949, p. 246. (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.viii.7).

2. *Ibid.*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.iv.10. Cf. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, II.i-ii.

3. *Ibid.*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.iv.19-20.

4. *Ibid.*, *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VII.1.

5. *Ibid.*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III.ix.26.

nature of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, i.e. Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. It is Existence (*sat*) because everything else emanates from it. Also, its reality is different from the phenomenal, the temporal and the spatial reality. It is above all. It does not depend upon anything for its existence. The Śruti texts have declared: 'In the beginning . . . this world was just Being (*sat*). . . .'⁶ 'All creatures here . . . have Being as their root, have Being as their home, have Being as support.'⁷ 'This whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality (*satya*). That is Ātman (soul).'⁸ The world, which appears to be real from the practical standpoint, has arisen out of Brahman.

It is Consciousness (*cit*) because the creation is said to be *ikṣāṇa* (reflection) of the real principle. Again, this *sat* is no other than the Soul which is directly perceived by us as a principle of Consciousness.

It is Bliss (*ānanda*), because it is the source of all pleasures. Because of its perfection it is infinite Bliss. As the Śruti text says: '*Yo vai bhūmā tat sukham. . . . Yo vai bhūmā tat amṛtam Brahma*—The Infinite is bliss. . . . The infinite is immortal.'⁹ Brahman is *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*. 'Brahman is *satyam* in that it gives birth to the world, sustains it, impels it and dissolves it in the end. It is *jñānam*, the source of all consciousness here. It is *anantam* as its powers and attributes are unlimited and it transcends time and space.'¹⁰

By giving the conception of *saccidānanda*, Śaṅkara has stated that it too does not explain Brahman in the most correct way, but simply serves as the most suitable way

of explanation. Distinguishing between *svarūpalakṣaṇas* (essential features) and *tatasthalakṣaṇas* (accidental features), Śaṅkara attributes the former to Brahman—being of the nature of Consciousness and Bliss; and the latter (accidental features) to Īśvara. The *upādhis* (limitations) attributed to Brahman are because of man's ignorance of the true nature of Brahman. Its true nature cannot be altered just as the reality of the crystal cannot be changed by red colour of the object associated with it. Therefore, we can say that Brahman is not subject to any modification or change. It has the power of manifesting itself in different forms.

Brahman As the Cause of the World :

Brahman, as we know, is the Absolute Reality according to Śaṅkara. It is the efficient as well as the material cause of the world. The belief that Brahman is the Creator of the world is, according to Śaṅkara, only from the relative point of view (*vyāvahārika dr̥ṣṭi*). This view has led to the conception of *saguna* Brahman or Īśvara in his philosophy. The creation of the world out of Brahman has been very elaborately discussed in several passages of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Māṇḍūkya*, *Chāndogya* and *Aitareya Upaniṣads*. Śaṅkara, in his *Bhāṣya* on *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, has clearly stated that Brahman is the basis of the world. He states that 'if Brahman were absolutely different from the world, and if the Ātman were absolutely different from the states of waking, dreaming and sleeping, then the repudiation of the reality of the world or the three states cannot lead us to the attainment of Truth. We shall then have to embrace nihilism and treat all teachings as purposeless.'¹¹ But here a very pertinent

6. *Ibid.*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.ii.1.

7. *Ibid.*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.viii.4.

8. *Ibid.*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.viii.7.

9. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.xxiii, xxiv.

10. *The Brahma Sutras and Their Principal Commentaries*, Dr. B. N. K. Sharma, Bombay : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, I, 1971, p. 96.

11. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., II, 1927, 582. Cf. Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* on *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, II.7.

question arises as to how this *nirguṇa* Brahman which is devoid of qualities and is formless, helps in creation. When creation is limited by time, space and causation, while Brahman is not, how then does he create?

The answer is : in fact, Brahman does not create, but man out of ignorance feels that way. This ignorance is beginningless and it is this ignorance that creates a spell due to which man perceives a false world as real. The world is a modification of ignorance and is false like a magic creation. This ignorance or *ajñāna* has also been termed as *māyā* by Śaṅkara. The Reality is overshadowed by *māyā* and is made to appear as the creator of a created world. According to Dr. Anima Sengupta, an authority on Indian Philosophy: '*Māyā* covers the real form of Brahman and then by joining together self and not-self creates a fictitious ego sense. The false ego sense (*ādhyāsika ātmā*) enjoys through *antaḥ-karaṇa* (internal organ) the false effect, i.e. the false world of the false *māyā*. When Brahman, through reflection, vitalizes *māyā* and makes it fit for becoming the changeable matrix of the world, lordly powers emerge in the *sāttvika upādhi* which are falsely ascribed to Brahman due to ignorance.'¹² Thus, we find that *saguṇa* Brahman has to be imagined in relation to the creation of the world. Śaṅkara in fact does not totally deny the existence of the world. What he feels is that it is indescribable (*anirvacanīya*). Śaṅkara feels that it is only after one understands the immanence of Brahman that he can soar high to understand Its transcendental reality, because the spiritual evolution is gradual from the lower to the higher. Truth can be realized only through a gradual process of evol-

ution. It cannot come all on a sudden. Rāmānuja, of course, does not reconcile the immanence and transcendence of Brahman like Śaṅkara, but regards the world and the Brahman as separate entities having separate existence. Deussen has very rightly remarked :

'The personification of Brahman as Īśvara, Lord, Ruler, to whom is opposed the world as that which is to be ruled, is expressly limited to the standpoint rooted in Ignorance of worldly action, which has no reality in the highest sense.'¹³

Realization of the Absolute :

Brahman, the Absolute Reality, can be realized after one purifies one's mind through study (*śravaṇa*), reflection (*manana*) and meditation (*nididhyāsana*) and experiences the identity of one's own self with Brahman—*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*. One is then freed from bondage. One has to renounce all the earthly desires and objects of enjoyment. The narrow path of egoism has to be overcome, and the path of a true seeker after truth has to be followed—that alone would help in elevating the self to realize the Infinite Truth. Knowledge, austerity (*tapas*) and chastity (*brahmacārya*) have to be practised for the attainment of the highest Self as preached in the *Muṇḍaka* and *Praśna Upaniṣads*.

Śaṅkara believes that one can reach absolute freedom in this very life (*jīvan-mukti*). In his commentary on the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*,¹⁴ he has stated that when the Jīva realizes the true nature of Ātman, thereby dislodging ignorance (*avidyā*), desire (*kāmanā*) and deeds (*karma*) from his heart, he conquers death and attains liberation. Though he sees the world as it is, he, being

¹². Dr. A. Sengupta, Paper on Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja read at the XXVI International Congress of Orientalists held at Delhi in January 1964.

¹³. Paul Deussen, *The System of the Vedānta*, trans. Charles Johnston, Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1912, p. 459.

¹⁴. Vide Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* on *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, VI.14.

liberated, is neither directly nor indirectly affected by the earthly desires or miseries. This *jīvanmukti* is due to the remnants of the *prārabdha karma*; but one attains *videha-mukti*, when the force of *prārabdha karma* is exhausted, and thereby both the gross and the subtle bodies perish. This liberation according to Śaṅkara does not mean total annihilation but attainment of the state of positive Existence, positive Consciousness, and positive Bliss—which is our own inherent nature.

THE SOUL IN EXILE

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

Understanding the significance of Exile helps us to discern true suffering, which is separation from the Soul. Exile truly experienced leads us to a 'true' deliverance from suffering and brings us to the Kingdom. Exile is the lost Kingdom, that is to say the Kingdom from which we have been temporarily banished.

The etymological meaning of the word 'exile' is: *ex*=outside; *salire* (Latin) = to push. Exile = pushed out of our Kingdom.

It is interesting to note that the word 'exile' is used only eight times in the Old Testament, while the word 'Kingdom' is used one hundred and ten times, the Kingdom being always considered as a privileged place of assembly and of unity. 'Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand,'¹ and thereby, all the feelings of nostalgia for a lost Kingdom, uneasiness from lack of feeling, lack of interest in life, maladjustment to one's surroundings.

Let us consider our lives in the face of this feeling of exile and our longing for the Kingdom.

We have our life, but our true place in the world has to be achieved. If we feel ill at ease, exiled, maladjusted, this does not

mean that life has no meaning. On the contrary, life with all its nostalgia and solitude reveals its depth as soon as we realize that it is an exile. We are exiled or separated from our own certitude; we are separated from the things that we love. The distance between what we are and what we would like to be is constant, but not insurmountable. Take for example the feeling of nostalgia for someone we love. As soon as we look for the origin of this nostalgia we feel closer to that person, the distance becomes shorter, the more we are able to perceive the depth of our relationship with the loved one. The same phenomenon appears when we analyse the feeling of exile. As soon as we examine this feeling of exile, we take the exiled person into ourselves, we become one with that person, in the same way that the thought becomes one with the thinker. We rarely notice the opportune moment during which the thought returns to unity. It is at this moment that the thinker may bring about a change in the thought. For when the thought of exile returns to the thinker, it illuminates in him the area where exile and the Kingdom are mingled, where solitude and solidarity are mingled. To feel alone presupposes a lost solidarity; in the same way that to feel exiled implies a Kingdom from which one has been expelled.

We feel exiled. What is the lost King-

1. Matthew 12:25.

dom? The Kingdom from which we have been banished is our true personality, composed of Body-Soul-Spirit. Our person may be compared to a solar system; the Spirit is the sun, the Soul is the moon, and the body is the earth. The moon does not have light in itself, it receives light from the sun. The Soul is Soul thanks to the light of the Spirit. When this light is lacking, the Soul is in darkness, in exile.

The Soul is an emanation of God-Spirit, of cosmic energy. It is destined to understand itself and to live in harmony with the world. The Soul has a dual role: to be transparent in order to receive the light of the Spirit, and to be capable of storing and radiating that light on the body and on the world. Opaqueness of the Soul caused by self-sufficiency—egotism, for instance—causes a blockage in these two functions, whereas the certitude of being the 'Self', the 'I' (in the declaration, 'I am Brahman') by its spontaneous and immediate deep-rootedness in the being renders the person capable of filling these two roles: transparence, in order to receive the light, and capacity to radiate on the world. The failure of this deep-rootedness in ourselves results in a feeling of exile, but also in missing our place in the world. At this moment the false self looms into the evil emptiness caused by exile. This false self is quite incapable of supporting the burden of life.

Mankind can be divided into two categories :

- (i) Those who accept life and exile while understanding its full meaning; and who thus rehabilitate exile and transform it into the Kingdom;
- (ii) Those who, without understanding its meaning, suffer exile. These are the rebellious, the maladjusted, and in all circumstances, the unhappy.

There are exiles in married life, in family life (relations between parents and children),

exiles in work, even exiles in the priesthood.

Let us try to understand the secret of those who assume exile and rehabilitate it. The 'wise' are our landmarks. They make exile creative, they adapt to all circumstances. He who undertakes the rehabilitation of exile observes that his potential is his Soul, the master of Spirit on earth. The Spirit lavishes on the Soul five faculties and five riches with which to acquire the sovereignty of the Kingdom of the Spirit.

The first faculty is the ability to grasp life as an 'open space', an opening which is basically free and which consequently presents a constant invitation to fill that space by Love and by Action. According to the Upanishad, the first 'fruit' (product) of the Spirit is space, the second, movement. We have life, this means that we have free space; it is for us to fill that space or to leave it empty and to feel exiled. (To feel a lack of 'atmosphere' may come from our own personal atony or incapacity to fill empty space.)

Free space is thus an invitation to fill that space. The desire to furnish space by forms is another faculty. I observe, therefore, that there is space within me, and in this space duality is born. One may interpret the lack of co-operation of those around us by the fact that they are ignorant of their own 'free space' and live happily in their own passivity. The separation-duality thus born leads to the birth of a diversity of forms—light and dark, knowledge and ignorance, good and evil—but in reality we perceive that this duality is neutral it is one and the same energy that transforms itself into divergent forms according to the impulse that we possess. This is the third faculty that the Spirit gives to the Soul.

The power to formulate concepts is the fourth wealth. Thanks to this mental faculty we are able to distinguish between heterogeneous values such as beauty and ugliness, spiritual and material, etc. But

this faculty does not possess the power of decision, the fifth wealth, which is the gift of intuition; the 'Buddhi' or superior reasoning. The faculty of intuition has two sides: one turning outwards, which is concerned with analysis, and the other turning inwards, which synthesizes.

This leads us to consider the potential of the Soul to use these five faculties. The potential inertia-passivity (Tamas) is convertible into dynamism (Rajas) and this itself transforms into light (Sattva). This doctrine, known by the name 'Gunas', breaks down all determinism and finality in the development of the Soul and its destiny.

We can observe four categories of exiles:

1. Exiles in married life,
2. Exiles in family life (relations between parents and children),
3. Exiles in work,
4. Exiles in the priesthood.

Exiles in Married Life :

The feeling of exile in marriage frequently arises from an intellectual, cultural or spiritual disparity between husband and wife, a difference in the purpose of marriage as conceived by one or the other. It is love that unites the couple. But love also implies the freedom to be different from one another and to love that difference. There is an inherent but surmountable disparity between man and woman. This is demonstrated by the theory of *anima* and *animus*. *Anima* is the image of woman that man carries in himself, an image with which he is not in harmony. *Animus* is the image of man that woman carries in herself, an image with which she is not reconciled. In other words, man is both man and woman at the same time. There is a constant and a variable; the variable is changeable. Understanding the constitution of the other with its possibility of controlled variation through love and self-criticism should provide those who are

exiled in marriage with an effective means of overcoming their isolation.

2. *Exiles in Family Life :*

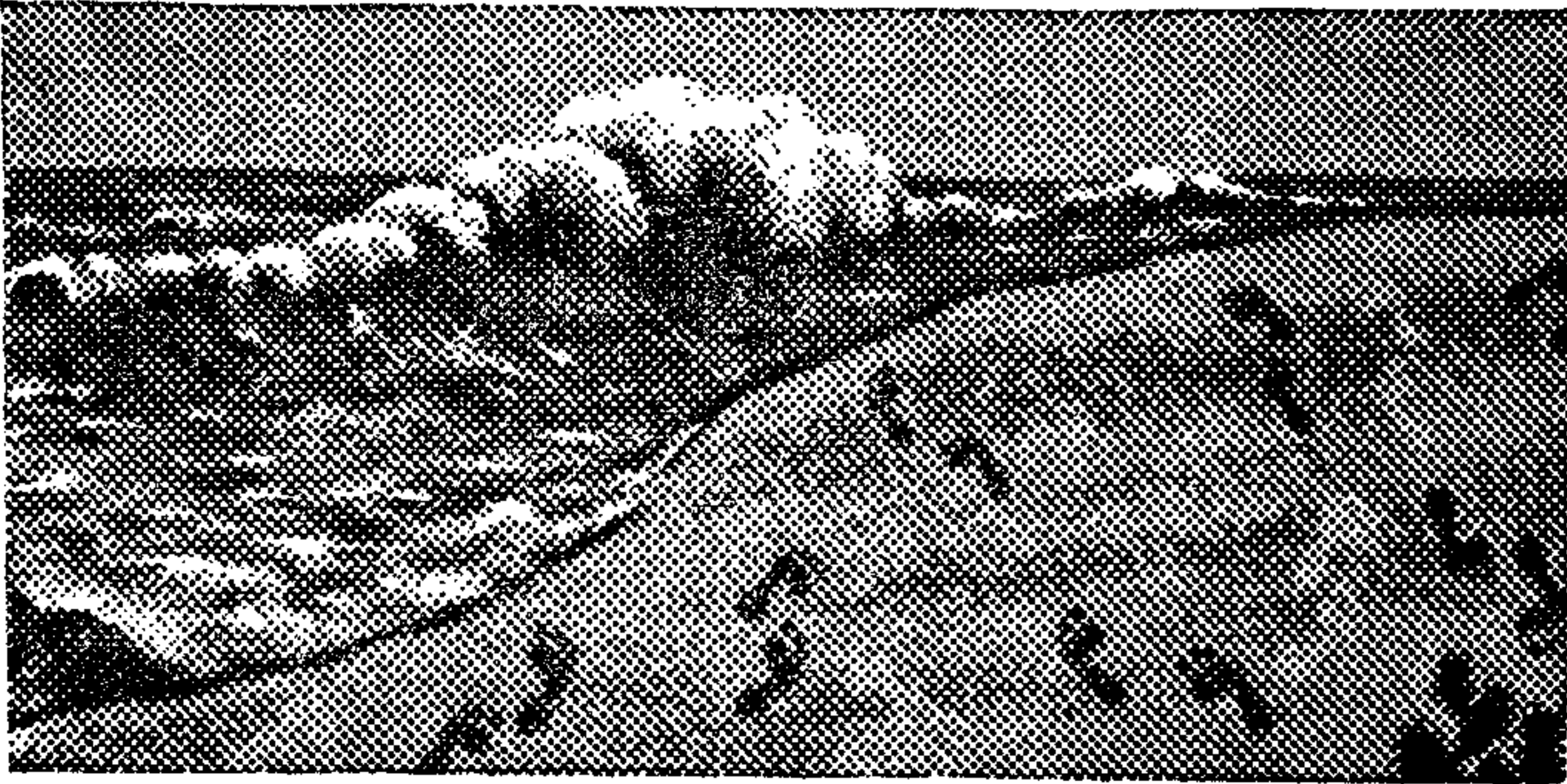
The young exile seeks desperately for independence. Independence, pushed to extreme limits, leads to maladjustment in the family circle. This produces a loss of contact with oneself. The young exile lives in a world of his own imagination. His revolt puts him on the fringe. In the evil emptiness created by the loss of contact with himself arises a false self, which has neither the power to be itself nor the power to act. The only motive is a demanding independence. But the young exile needs love and sympathy. Only by love is it possible to vibrate in him his natural gifts of wonder and innocence (in the best sense of the term, that is to say, to be reborn at each moment) so that he may recover his true creativity.

Parents exiled from their children may perhaps have considered themselves too soon in the 'Kingdom' and have crowned themselves 'Prince' without the agreement of their young subjects. Parental love is the most important nourishment that they can give to their children. This unlimited source of love is within the Being. To love is also to arouse love. The child can thus become himself again, steep himself in the common source, the unity of Self, and enjoy together the recovered Kingdom.

3. *Exiles in Work :*

Exiles in work are numerous. They are the maladjusted in life. Why not use one's space, one's freedom to consider maladjustment as a fact of life, of the human condition. It is neither an evil, nor something imposed, but perhaps a strategy of conscience to evoke in man a creative, a conquering spirit. The human condition is comparable to a square peg in a round hole. It is an attempt to adapt the unadaptable. This

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HUMAN TRENDS

THE PROGRESS OF LIBERAL THOUGHT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EUROPE

DR. PARESH NATH MUKHERJEE

The interesting story of the progress of liberal thought through the ages beginning with the Vedic times, running through Greece, Rome, the development of Christian thought, the trends of the Middle Ages, the illumination of the Reformation and the Renaissance, the outburst of great rationality in the Age of Reason, and finally emerging in the modern age where liberality is in regression, constitutes a very instructive and at the same time interesting study.

Possibly the earliest record of liberalism is to be found in the Vedas. At any rate, toward the beginning when society had not become stereotyped and vested interests had not become sufficiently strong, society was very liberal. Ladies participated in all social functions, and composed verses that found place in our sacred literature. 'Svayamvara' or marriage by choice and consent was there, and ladies were accorded place of respect in house and in society. Slavery on the Indian soil was never so complete and so inhuman as in most other countries. Contrary to the social distinctions brought about by the vested interests and the priestly classes at a later date, the pristine glory and effulgence of early Vedic

civilization regarded all mankind as 'children of immortality'.¹ The Vedic lore exhorted the people to be as egalitarian and democratic as any other society ever did. 'Together walk ye, together speak ye, be ye of the same resolve,'² was a famous Vedic exhortation. So, contrary to what the vested interests made of that society at a later stage, and contrary to the criticism of Mr. S. A. Dange³ and the famous German Indologist, Mr. Alfred Hillebrandt⁴ (notwithstanding the fact that they also contain an element of truth), the Vedic society was on the whole very liberal.

¹. *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad*, II. 5.

². *Rig Veda*, X. 191.2.

³. S. A. Dange, *From Primitive Communism to Slavery*, New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1951, pp. 133-34. He mentions the cases of Madhavi and Galava.

⁴. Alfred Hillebrandt, *Ritual-Literatur Vedische Opfer und Zauber*, ['Ritual Literature, Vedic Sacrifice and Magic'], Publisher: Prof. G. Bühler, p. 1. He writes of Hindu priests who 'zur Befestigung ihrer Herrschaft das Leben des Hindu mit einer Kette von Ceremonien umgab, die seinen Geist in Knechtschaft hielten [for the consolidation of their reign, surrounded the life of the Hindu with a chain of ceremonies which kept his mind in bondage].'

This liberal strain was once again emphasized when the Buddha reformed our society and voiced protest against social injustice and repression that had grown in the meantime. That a liberal society must be based on peace and eschew all violence in every form is an axiomatic truth. The Buddha said, 'Never does hatred cease by hating, it is overcome by love. This is the eternal Law.'⁵ His Eightfold Path and Four Aryan Truths, all point to a liberal middle course, avoiding excess in every form. The religion he preached was: 'Avoid everything sinful, do good, maintain a clean and pure mind. This is the essence of the Buddhist teaching.'⁶ In this age of economic exploitation and oppression when people do not hesitate to adopt every unscrupulous means to further their own selfish ends, how noble and liberal was the teaching of the Buddha! What a lyric of liberalism it was! Plain simple life, avoiding all tortures to the body (asceticism) and doing good acts for their own sake, was the *summum bonum* of the teaching of the Enlightened One. He preached: 'He who neither for his own sake nor for the sake of others desires progeny, wealth or kingdom (i.e. political power), nor desires his own prosperity by unfair means, is the truly good, virtuous and wise man.'⁷ The Enlightened One (Tathāgata) said: 'The steel is corroded by its own rust (i.e. not by any external enemy), so also the acts of the sinner and his excess bring about his own downfall.'⁸ The liberal suggestion was tendered: 'Anger is overcome by love, evil by goodness, poverty by charity and untruth by truth.'⁹ This liberal attitude was rooted in high ethical sense and self-control. The Buddha said, 'One

should be good by the restraint of eye, good by restraint of ear, good by restraint of nose, and good by restraint of tongue.'¹⁰

In the West as well, liberal thought progressed over a long period in spite of its suppression at certain periods. Greece was the fountain-source of liberal thought. When in the sixth century B.C. Thales asked the question, 'From where came water?' and replied, 'From a combination of gases,'¹¹ the answer was extremely modern and dramatically opposite to the mythological explanation. The contribution of Pythagoras in Mathematics, Geometry and in the theory of numbers, as also his famous formula, 'The things are numbers', are valid contributions in their proper spheres as also in the sphere of liberal thought. Xenophone pointed out in a rare liberal spirit that, 'If bulls and lions had hands and if they could paint and produce works of art, they would paint god in the forms of bulls and lions. ... The Ethiopians make their God black.'¹² Protagoras taught that the sole means of knowing is sensation, and that 'man is the measure of all things'. Socrates challenged the established Order with his famous precept, 'Gnothi Seauton',¹³ and that fine analytical and critical process of thinking which is at all times at the root of liberal and scientific thinking. Plato adopted a bold rationalistic method of thinking. For a long period in ancient Greece there was a considerable clash between the Church and liberal thinkers. Xenophone said in the third century B.C. that all gods and goddesses were simply human beings, for he saw in 'Zeus a conqueror, in Athena a warrior-queen, and in Aphrodite a courtesan.' Plutarch pointed out that in different nations

5. *Dhammapada*, 'Yamaka Vagga', 5.

6. *Ibid.*, 'Buddha Vagga', 183.

7. *Ibid.*, 'Pandita Vagga', 84.

8. *Ibid.*, 'Mala Vagga', 240.

9. *Ibid.*, 'Kodha Vagga', 223.

10. *Ibid.*, 'Bhikku Vagga', 360.

11. Abel Rey, *La Jeunesse de la Science Grecque*, Paris, 1933, pp. 30-31.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

13. 'Know thyself'.

the idea of God has differed considerably, and that 'there were gods of the barbarians and gods of the Greeks; gods of the Middle as also gods of the North.'¹⁴ Many a liberal spirit had to face bitter persecution for telling inconvenient and unorthodox truths. Thus, Anaxagoras was literally chased for having said that it was nothing more than a simple earth that we call moon. Protagoras was banished by the lawyers of Athens for having doubted the existence of God. A price was fixed on the head of Diagoras of Melos for scoffing at the mysteries, and Socrates had to drink hemlock on the charge of corrupting the youth of Athens with rational liberal thought. In spite of all this, liberal thought progressed, and about the fifth century B.C. in Greece, some sort of disbelief was widely diffused in the masses. But except the Cynics, there was no other sect that was openly at war with church and religion.

In Rome also liberalism progressed satisfactorily. Lucilius (second century B.C.) mercilessly ridiculed all those who worshipped the images of gods and goddesses. Towards the close of the Republican period incredulity gained much ground. But the majority of liberal thinkers avoided attacking religion publicly. For the greater part it remained an article of luxury reserved for the few élite avoiding public parade of it. Lucretius (96-55 B.C.) explained the universe not by God, but by atoms. As René Pichon has pointed out, it is in the name of science that the poet of atoms (i.e. Lucretius) 'had driven out Divinity from earth.'¹⁵ Lucretius reproaches religion for having driven men on to the paths of crimes, and praised his master Epicurus (342-270 B.C.) for being the man who 'before all others, liberated

man from religion.' Long after his death the Christians with the support of Julian the Apostle (A.D. 331-363) completely destroyed the works of Epicurus. But his immortal fame lives in the admiration of Virgil (70-19 B.C.). 'The pious Virgil' exalted the names of Epicurus and Lucretius and praised them for 'having killed all fears'.¹⁶

Religion, menaced for sometime towards the close of the Republic, took its great revenge under the Empire. But on the whole the Empire was not completely intolerant. Tiberus (42 B.C.-37 A.D.) adopted the liberal dictum: 'It is for gods to avenge the injuries done to gods,'¹⁷ that is, human beings need not worry about religious strifes. Hilaire de Poitiers in the fourth century A.D. declared that there are some who say that God had nothing to do with human affairs and that with a man's death his body and spirit are annihilated; whereas there are others who even denied the existence of God completely.¹⁸ Rational incredulity was well spread among the masses, and in that society people were not offended to read on the tombs epitaphs like: 'I was not, I have been I recollect, I am not, there is no cure for me.'

It is interesting to note that even under Christianity some sort of liberal thought was not altogether absent. But the Roman Emperor, Domitian (A.D. 51-96), executed Clemens and Domitilla for accepting Judaism, and Septime Severe ordered that Roman citizens must not accept 'atheism', that is, among other things Judaism.¹⁹ There was a great difference between the pagans and the Christians. The former respected all gods outside their pantheon; the latter did not respect the

16. Virgil, *Géorgiques*, II, 489.

17. Tacite, *Annal*, I, 73.

18. Hilaire de Poitiers, *Tractat Super Psalmos*, CXLIV, 4 et CXXII, 5.

19. *Spartamente Sever*, I, 25, 9.

14. Gerner et Boulanger, *La Génie Grec dans la Religion*, Paris, 1932, p. 467.

15. René Pichon, *Morceaux Choisis de Lucrece*, Paris, Préface.

gods outside theirs. Diocletian (A.D. 245-305) issued an order that the established cults and laws of the 'old religion must not be criticized by a new religion.'²⁰ However, Antonius Pius (A.D. 138-161) became a protector of the Jews, whereas Philippe passed for a Christian. Thus, there was no persistent persecution and oppression, and the position constantly changed under different rulers. There were surprises too. Under the saintly Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180), Saints Blandin and Pothin were most inhumanly tortured before being put to death in Lyons. And this was done by saintly Marcus Aurelius about whom Tertulien remarked that for the believers he was a protector.²¹

On 13th April 311 Emperor Galere, seriously ill, declared at Nicomedie that he would not persecute the Christians if 'in return of our indulgence they should pray to their gods for our salvation.'²² But in February 313 Emperor Constantine proclaimed the celebrated edict of Milan and granted equality to the Christians and the pagans and liberty of Faith without any conditions.²³ It was indeed a great victory for liberalism.

Again there were many vicissitudes. Liberalism and orthodoxy alternated many times. In A.D. 356 a Roman law laid down: 'We order that at the cost of capital punishment no one should participate in honouring or in offering sacrifices to the idols.'²⁴ In A.D. 399 there was an order 'to destroy the temples'.²⁵ In A.D. 407 an order was issued to 'destroy all altars, and statues associated with a pagan cult'.²⁶

In A.D. 435 an order was issued for the demolition of all 'pagan temples and edifices'.²⁷

As a result of this persecution and narrowness there was natural reaction and heresy, a word which means 'to take a position or stand'.²⁸ They took a stand for the freedom of thought. Gnostics (Agnostics) like Basilide, Isidore, Harmonius and others bitterly attacked some of the dogmas of the Christian Church. The Ebionites criticized the supernatural birth of the Christ. Theodote refused to accept that Jesus, the Christ, was at the same time God and man.

However, it will be a mistake to consider that the heretics were liberal in the modern sense, for like the Christians they accepted a revelation superior to observation and reason. But in as much as they defended the right to interpret revelation in a manner independent of and even opposed to that of the established Church, they did serve in advancing the cause of liberal thinking.

When Christian Church allied itself with the Roman Empire it became at once strong and politically reactionary even though it was not conscious of this development. A law of A.D. 379 declared: 'If the heretics assemble in a private house, that house shall be confiscated, its inmates shall be put to death and their books shall be burnt.'²⁹ It further stated: 'Since the heretics have nothing in common with the rest of mankind, they should be chased out of the entire universe.'³⁰ What a hymn of hate!!! In A.D. 385 Priscilien and his celebrated disciples were decapitated by the orders of Emperor Maxime. In A.D. 408 law prohibited all discussion of religious matters in

20. *Codex George*, XIV, 4.

21. F. Lot, *La Fin du Monde Antique et le Début du Moyen Age*, p. 32.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Codex Theodos*, 16, 10, 6.

25. *Ibid.*, 16, 10, 16.

26. *Ibid.*, 16, 10, 19.

27. *Ibid.*, 16, 10, 25.

28. From the Greek word 'Aireo' which means 'to take'.

29. *Codex Theodos*, 16, 5, 11, 14, 34.

30. *Ibid.*, 16, 5, 17, 18.

a manner contrary to the version of the Church.³¹

This narrow-mindedness was further accentuated in the Middle Ages when force and superstition and not reason reigned supreme. In 1022, Robert, 'the Pious' decided that the heretics must be burnt. How 'pious' indeed!!! During the war against the Albigenses heretics in France, Philip Augustus did not hesitate from committing the most inhuman massacres of innocent men, women and children. The Inquisition disgraced the Christian Church far more than its worst enemies could have possibly done. So, John Wycliffe (1320-1384), a priest and professor of the Oxford University, protested against all this and said that the Pope was not Christ's representative on earth, but an 'anti-Christ', that monasticism was not a true part of Christianity, and that sacraments were without effect if administered by wicked priests, that the Church should be subordinate to the State, and that individual Christians should be guided by what they themselves read in the Bible. The new doctrine of Catharism in Toulouse, Arras and other places, proclaimed itself against Baptism, Sacraments, Real Presence and the Cult of the Saints. At a later period all these developments opened the path of Reformation. Heresy in the Middle Ages was the extreme form of aggressive liberalism. Peter Abelard's 'Sic et Non' (Yes and No) shocked many earnest Christians, as also his principle, 'One should not accept a thing as true because God has said it, but because reason is satisfied.'³² In 1210, The Council of Paris prohibited under pain of excommunication, lecture on Natural Philosophy from the works of Aristotle.

But at this time more than philosophy the progress of science threatened Faith. Roger

Bacon held that reason alone has the power to certify. In 1339, the University of Paris condemned the Occamist doctrine; and in 1346, it was decided that the works of Nicolas d'Autrecourt be burnt. Yet it was clear that the age that saw the birth of a modern mind like that of Roger Bacon must see the end of the Middle Ages. He wrote in those days: 'One may manufacture such vehicles that being drawn not by animals may move at an unlimited speed and with artificial wings strike the air like birds and fly in the air.'³³ Albert de Saxe proposed a new theory of weights. Oresme in the fourth century A.D. had already demonstrated: 'The earth has daily rotational movements, not the sky.' But the fact that the hold of the Church on the life and thought of man was declining, is most clearly evident in the famous reply of the Good Aucassin. When told that if he did not renounce Nicolette, he would lose Paradise, he replied: 'In Paradise? What have I to do there? I do not like to enter that place. ...It is in Hell that I should like to go. Because it is in Hell that all good priests and nobles live. ...provided that I have there Nicolette, my most sweet friend, with me.'³⁴

Although in both Luther and Calvin there were many things contrary to what we should call liberalism in our days, their teaching led to liberalism, even though they might not have desired so. Augustus Comte saw in Reformation 'the first general phase of revolutionary philosophy.'³⁵ Luther unconsciously opened the way to Calvin, and Calvin led to Voltaire. Michel de l'Hospital pointed out, 'The knife is worth little as against the spirit.' A new 'spirit' had come

31. *Ibid.*, 16, 5, 45.

32. *Dictum de la Theologie Catholique Abelard*, (c. 45).

33. *Epistolaire de Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae*, c, IV.

34. *Aucassin et Nicolette*, édit. Michaut, p. 19.

35. 'la premiere phase générale de la philosophie révolutionnaire'.

at long last. This liberal spirit is found in the famous Edict of Nantes signed by Henry IV on April 13, 1598. But this liberal edict was not liberal for those who were neither Catholics nor Protestants. So, a further liberal urge based not on religion (like Reformation) but on intellectuality was necessary, and there was Renaissance. Its watchword was 'humanism'. Science helped this new movement. The discoveries and voyages opened peoples' outlook and range of curiosity. In 1543, the Polish scientist, Copernicus proved that the earth moved round the sun and not vice versa. Even deeply religious-minded men like Montaigne felt that religious dogmatism might be wrong, and so he adopted his celebrated maxim, 'What do I know?'³⁶ Rabelais, however, was not content till he made a direct attack on Church. In his *Gargantua*, a series of daring fanciful tales, he criticized the Church most severely. In the Abbey of Thelme founded by Gargantua, the chief rule was: 'Do as you please.' In the Christian abbey poverty was honoured. In Thelme the rule was: 'Each should be rich.' There was a studied and refined luxury to be seen at Thelme. By the myth of Thelme, Rabelais 'audaciously invites men of the new age to break with the past, to see life no more as a period of trial and some sort of Hell, but as immense hope.'

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries liberal thought progressed considerably. Already the Church had lost the sharpness of its weapons. Pascal wrote that it was futile for the Church to fight against the Copernican theory.³⁷ Descarte wrote, 'The first principle is never to accept a thing as true that I evidently never find to be so.'³⁸ The Jansenites taught, 'See and judge for yourselves' for 'it is not the Bulls (i.e. Papal

Bulls), but the truth of the facts that make the Bulls acceptable.'³⁹ In vain the French police tried to prevent the printing of the *Provinciales* of Pascal, which even Louis XIV himself found delight in reading. Molière in his *Dom Juan ou le festin de Pierre* condemns the hypocrisy of Dom Juan, but approves of Dom Juan's reply: 'I believe neither in God nor in Devil, nor in another life.' When Sganarelle asked him, "Still it is necessary to believe in something. In what do you believe then?" The reply of Dom Juan was one of hilarious atheism, scientific accuracy and mathematical precision: 'I believe that two and two make four, Sganarelle, and that four and four make eight.' Richard Simon in his *Critical Examination of the Bible* gives example of 'incredulity reduced to a method.' As early as 1699, the Duchess of Orleans regretted: 'One no more finds a young man who does not wish to be an atheist.' In a famous lecture in the Collège de France in the eighteenth century Michelet had observed that 'the great age'⁴⁰ had at last dawned when people began to think—it was the liberal age. Although persecution persisted, progress could no more be prevented. It is of course true that Voltaire went to Bastille, Diderot to Vincennes, two volumes of the *Encyclopaedia* were burnt in 1752, *L'Esprit d'Holbach* was burnt, the *Dictionnaire Philosophique* was burnt and Rousseau was compelled to fly from his country in 1762. Yet, it is nevertheless true at the same time that Voltaire's clarion call, 'Ecrasez l'Infame' (crush the infamous) was supremely triumphant. Montesquieu was a liberal Catholic, Diderot was atheist at times, and D'Holbach was atheist at all times and reduced atheism to a system. D'Holbach's *La Contagion Sacrée ou Histoire Naturelle de la Superstition* was

36. 'Que sais-je?'

37. Pascal, *Provinciales*, XVIII.

38. NB. This was the basis of his 'scientific doubt'.

39. Pascal, *Provinciales*, XVIII.

40. 'Le Grand Siècle. Messieurs, je veux dire le xviiiè siècle. . . .'

a frontal attack on religious dogmatism and the orthodox Church. He saw in religion, 'a league formed by some imposters against liberty, welfare and repose of the human species.'⁴¹ To Helvétius 'the sword of intolerance is one of the most cruel plagues of humanity.'⁴² To Voltaire tolerance was part of 'human right', and in his *Traité sur la Tolérance* he pleads, 'I should like to tell you that it is necessary to regard all men as our brothers—What? My brother the Turk? My brother the Chinese? The Jew? The Siamese? Yes, undoubtedly; they are all the children of the same father and creatures of the same God.'⁴³ This was truly the 'Age of Luminaries.'⁴⁴ In 1794, the revolutionary Convention separated the Church from the State. The outbreak of the eighteenth Fructidor (September 4, 1797) was against what they called, 'the danger from the church' ('le péril clérical'). Napoleon—I was himself a liberal thinker in many ways, but in politics he was an opportunist, and said, 'A society can never exist without inequality of fortunes, and inequality of fortunes can never exist without religion.' As First Consul, his Press Bureau under Fouché suppressed books and journals by scores, and it was decided that only such books could be printed in which the 'Government had confidence.'

The Holy Alliance of Czar Alexander—I was an attempt to enthrone religion in politics. But it failed, since the age of religious illiberalism was already over for all practical purposes. On August 15, 1832 Gregory XI in his *Encyclic Mirarivos* denounced what he called 'indifferentism', that is, indifference to religion. He said,

41. D'Holbach. *La Contagion Sacrée ou Histoire Naturelle de la Superstition*.

42. Helvétius, *De l'Homme*, IV, 18.

43. Voltaire, *Traité sur la Tolérance*, VI, et XXII.

44. 'Siècle des Lumières'.

'From this poisonous source of "indifference" flows this false and absurd maxim... the liberty of conscience.' On December 8, 1864 Pope Pius IX in his *Encyclic Quanta Cura* condemned the 'naturalists' and said that 'they do not realize that they are preaching a Liberty of Perdition.' The Church was indeed upset at the progress of liberal thought. On May 5, 1874 Pope Pius IX denounced the 'horrible plague which afflicts human society and which one calls universal suffrage.' It is little surprise that democracy, the most rational polity and the greatest safeguard for liberty and liberal thought, should be a nightmare to the Church and all other forces of reaction. On June 20, 1888 Pope Leon XIII in his *Encyclic Libertas Praestantissimum* said, 'this liberty is (so) contrary to the virtue of religion.' As Joseph de Maistre truly pointed out, the Pope, the Ultra-Montaignes and all orthodox sections saw in the liberty of thought, 'an insurrection against God.'⁴⁵ Augustus Comte expressed the hope that the old religions shall be replaced by the 'Religion of Humanity' (in his 'loi des trois états'⁴⁶). Already in 1835, Strauss had shocked the theologians by his *Life of Jesus*. In 1843, the *Life of Jesus* by Renan went a step further when he remarked that there is no historical proof of the existence of Jesus. Louis Blanc saw in Christ 'the sublime master of the socialists', and to Cabet, Jesus was a 'communist'.

The socialist revolution of 1848 re-established the liberty of thought on a new and more elevated plane. In 1880, Ferry dissolved the Company of the Jesus when Gambetta sounded the warning 'Clericalism

45. 'une insurrection contre Dieu'.

46. 'the law of the three states'. In this law Comte stated that mankind shall progress in three stages: from the theological, through the metaphysical, to the positive state. In fact he said that mankind has already passed from the theological to the metaphysical, and must now pass to the positive state.

(there) is the enemy.' During 1879 to 1886, the Republic responding to the appeal of Jean Mace decided to make primary education free, compulsory and secular. The famous Dreyfus case revealed the undesirable secret affinity between the Church, the army, anti-Semites and other orthodox elements. This revelation gave birth to the famous National Association of Liberal Thinkers. In 1907, Aristide Briand passed a law declaring the liberty of conscience and thought, and withdrew state recognition of all religions.

The zenith of liberalism was reached in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century there has been some regression in this respect. As Ernest Barker has pointed out: 'anti-intellectualism' is 'one of the features of the age.'⁴⁷ Its climax in politics was the advent of Nazism and Fascism, doctrines that Harold Laski refused to accept as philosophically sound,⁴⁸ and it is earnestly hoped that this will be no more than a passing phase.

Einstein's 'relativity' sounded the death-knell to absolutism in every form. When time and space lost absolute value, nothing else could have absolute value any more. Relativity, which is indissolubly associated with liberalism, became finally established in every aspect of the life and thought of mankind. In the famous words of Bachelard science has brought about the 'dematerialization' of 'materialism', and demolished absolutism in every form.⁴⁹ Today the truth that is acceptable to the scientific mind of civilized mankind is a

relative truth. To the Buddhists, Buddhism is the truth; to the Christians, Christianity is the truth; and so on. The fanatical idea of holding fast to one rigid idea and declaring it as the the only truth, or what has been ironically called in French literature as the 'true truth',⁵⁰ that used to be characteristic of the orthodox age, has now at long last been discarded. The idea of a single 'true truth' has been replaced by many relative truths due to the progress of liberal thought. Unlike the past it is now realized that for real progress of mankind it is necessary to treat the differences in thought and idea no more as obstacles to human fraternity. The greater part of all human progress has been the result of this liberal approach. It accepts the supreme necessity of divergences of opinions and in having the courage to do what was at the time of first doing it regarded as scandalous. For this courage Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Condorcet and innumerable liberal souls were persecuted in their own days. But liberal thought triumphed through their sacrifice and bold insight into the future.

If liberal thought could not be crushed in the dark days of the Middle Ages when blind superstition and ruthless tyranny reigned supreme, it has surely a message, and a message of radiant hope for us in the modern age of progress. It is to be hoped that in spite of the dark shadows of wars, political reactions, bureaucratic tyrannies and growth of reactionary militant philosophies in the twentieth century, human spirit shall ultimately triumph and liberalism shall remain on its high pedestal with all its glory and effulgence.

47. Ernest Barker, *Political Thought from 1848 to 1914*, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 248.

48. H. J. Laski, *Reflections on the Revolution of our Times*, p. 114.

49. M. Bachelard, *Le Nouvel Esprit Scientifique*, Paris, 1937. p. 67.

50. 'La Verité Vraie'. (There is considerable criticism of this dogmatic attitude in contemporary French literature).



DR. ANANDA KENTISH COOMARASWAMY

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

There have been few greatmen, who were the epitomes and compendia of wisdom. Among them was Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, a versatile genius, a polyhistor. In the present age, in mad rush after progress many have forgotten the higher values of life; but among those who stood for values was Ananda Coomaraswamy. He was born in Ceylon [Sri Lanka] on 22nd August 1877, in a family that, for generations, had a veritable record in the furtherance of scholarship, administration and the culture of Ceylon. His father Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy Mudaliar was a jurist, a member of the Ceylon Legislative Council, and in addition had the distinction of being the first Knight in Asia, and the first Hindu to be called to the Bar in the reign of queen Victoria. Ananda Coomaraswamy's mother was an English lady, Elizabeth Clay Beeby of Kent. Sir Mutu died when the boy was hardly two years old, and he was brought up in England by his mother.

Educated at Wycliffe College, Springfield, and later at the London University, Coomaraswamy graduated with a B.Sc., and first-class honours in Botany and Geology. He returned to Ceylon in 1903 as Director of the Mineralogical Survey of that country and obtained his Doctor's degree in 1906,

with his dissertation 'Contribution to the Geology of Ceylon'. In 1905 he founded the Ceylon Social Reform Society, and was for some time Editor of the *Ceylon National Review*. With his distinguished cousins he pioneered the Ceylon University movement. He toured India upon the termination of his Directorship, and later returned to England, where he wrote and published his early books. In 1910 he was placed in charge of the United Province Exhibition at Allahabad. Six years later he joined the staff of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Sometime later he was appointed as Fellow for Research in Indian, Persian and Mohammedan art in the same Museum, in which capacity he continued till his death in 1947.

Dr. Coomaraswamy was a master of many tongues, classical and modern. He had acquired a thorough knowledge of English, Sinhalese, Persian, Tamil, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Hindi, Pali, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, German, French and even Icelandic. He was accorded academic recognition which was both extensive and international. The output from his pen was so tremendous in quantity, and so thorough and penetrating in quality, that it would tax the intellects of several average men to comprehend them. He was the author of nearly

one thousand books and articles. Some of his important works are : (1) *Medieval Sinhalese Art* (1906); (2) *Essays in National Idealism* (1909); (3) *The Arts & Crafts of India and Ceylon* (1910); (4) *Rajput Painting* (1916); (5) *The Dance of Siva* (1918); (6) *The History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (1927); (7) *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (1934); (8) *Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in the Indian Theory of Government* (1942); (9) *The Bugbear of Literacy* (1943); (10) *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought* (1946); (11) *Time and Eternity* (1947); (12) *Hinduism and Buddhism*.

To make an analysis of Dr. Coomaraswamy's work is a tough task to say the least. Firstly, the subjects on which he wrote are vast and varied; geology, art, religion, music, philosophy, mythology, philology, sociology, folklore, politics, to state a few. Secondly, his knowledge of languages was incisive, requiring in the reader an equally cultivated understanding. His writings, however brief, have a certain thoroughness of their own. Again in attempting to analyse the works by him, one is forced to quote him often. This cannot be avoided.

To characterize Dr. Coomaraswamy is impossible. He was a traditionalist, a Jnani, who studied and wrote more than any one else on the subject of perennial philosophy. His natural endowments were equally great. He was an integral man endowed with great intelligence, catholicity of vision; and he was tolerant not merely in the sense of refraining from persecution and prohibition, but in the sense of reverence towards many modes of thought. He was above any parochialism, bigotry or temerity, and in spite of his synthetic view he was never a syncretist.

Dr. Coomaraswamy wrote and spoke on a variety of subjects, but was modest enough to say that he had never built up a philos-

ophy of his own, or a school of thought. His works had no copyright; he said, no man could claim a copyright in ideas. Wisdom was always there coexistent with the creation of the universe. Each individual discovered it according to his capacity to comprehend. Nationalism, one of the most powerful forces that has shaped the history of the world, is also a very dangerous ideology. This is because nationalism means different things to different people. Nationalism can create a nation, and it can also destroy civilization itself. Everything depends on how that idea is interpreted, Dr. Coomaraswamy, that great son of Sri Lanka, was also a great Indian nationalist. While Sri Aurobindo Ghosh gave a mystical interpretation to Indian nationalism, and Swami Vivekananda gave a religious interpretation, Dr. Coomaraswamy was the first to give a cultural interpretation to the movement. He said, '...nations are made by artists and by poets, not by traders and politicians.'¹ At a time when aping the West was a fashion, at a time when India had forgotten herself, at a time when Indians, or at least English educated Indians, considered it below themselves to practise the principles of their own culture, Dr. Coomaraswamy, almost alone, was able to maintain the dignity of Indian culture. The battle was not merely for political and economic freedom. It was for spiritual and intellectual freedom, freedom from subjection to an alien ideal. Every nation had its own special theme and nationalism was the path to the exclusive destiny of each nation. He said, in 1906:

'When I survey the life of India during the last 3000 years, and bear in mind her literature, traditions and ideals, the search-

1. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Essays in National Idealism*, Colombo: The Colombo Apothecaries Co. Ltd., 1919, Preface, p. ii.

ings of her philosophers, the work of her artists, and the nobility of the religious they have evolved, and when from these elements, I form in my mind a picture of an ideal earthly life, I confess, it is difficult to imagine a more powerful source of inspiration, and a deeper well of truth to draw upon.

'And yet today our hearts and minds are not moved at the thought of India and her past, and when we think of India's future, our thoughts are degraded by an unworthy scorn of what has gone before, an over-eagerness to have done with all that has made us what we are, an eagerness to change without due reflection, for the sake of change.

'Each nation has its own peculiar talent, its contribution to the glory of the world which it alone can make. We only, in the East, are turning from all that has made us what we are, to become imitations of others. Is it possible, that what has been evolved in one quarter of the globe, can really be fitted to replace what every other quarter has evolved?

'Let it be our endeavour to be faithful to all that is best in our own traditions, and at the same time not be unwilling to learn what others can teach us.'² Thus, the spirit of India had to be free; only then could she contribute her own rightful share to world culture—her Indianness.

Dr. Coomaraswamy was such a trenchant critic of the 'progressive West' that to some he might read like a philosopher of doom. In fact he was against the assumed superiority of the West, and often wrote to point out the baneful influences of the so-called Western culture on the East. The West in its proselytizing fury imposed its culture on the East. To the

gullible oriental all this gilt and tinsel was so attractive, he almost exchanged it for his own tradition. Not that Western culture was inferior or unworthy of being imbibed by the East, but that the Easterner should not be led away from his own traditions. One had first to have a strong grounding in one's own culture, and then alone could one appreciate others' culture. The mania for Westernization has reached so far that Eastern traditions, if any remaining, are all consigned to the obscurity of textbooks in libraries, and museum pieces. Nor have we been Westernized completely. We are a queer mixture of the East and the West. 'The modern world', said Coomaraswamy, 'is impoverished of reality, "entleert" of all meaning, inane and self-destructive concerned with fashion rather than beauty, with news rather than truth and ready for fresh catastrophes.'³ Such a groundless culture added the only elements it could to Eastern inheritance, 'the culture of the magazine and newspaper'. Nor is this all. Some of the major contributions of the Western impact on Eastern culture are: mechanistic and inhuman usury, heavy industry, misery, degradation of work, enslavement of the human person, soil erosion and the atom bomb.

We have characterized Dr. Coomaraswamy as a traditionalist, a term generally misused. Etymologically, tradition is that which is handed down, principles, methods and techniques handed down from generation to generation. These principles are timeless and perennial. A traditionalist thus, is one who interprets all human activity as valid only to the extent that they are based upon the conscious application of perennial principles.

2. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Two Addresses*, Colombo: The Colombo Apothecaries Co. Ltd., 1906, pp. 4-5.

3. A. K. Coomaraswamy, 'For What Heritage and Whom Are the English Speaking Peoples Responsible?' *Kenyon College Addresses*, U.S.A.; Kenyon College, 1946.

Among the great modern expositors of the Perennial Tradition, three may be named: René Guenon, a Frenchman, Fritjof Schuon, a Swiss, and Ananda Coomaraswamy. Of these, Coomaraswamy had made a special study of the subject of art in the Perennial Tradition.

Ananda Coomaraswamy was a linguist of the highest order, and, significantly enough, he characterized literacy as a bugbear. Literacy is not necessarily a characteristic of culture; and wisdom is not connected with the alphabet, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning put it. Wooden legs are useful to men who are maimed, and literacy is a necessity for a proletariat. The written word is necessary only for men who are lazy, for they cannot recollect from memory. For centuries vast bodies of literature were handed down by word of mouth in traditional societies, and writing actually consigned such great literatures to the obscurity of libraries.

We have said that Dr. Coomaraswamy had a catholic vision in regard to religion. Like William Blake, he believed that religion of each nation is derived from its reception of the poetic genius. One of the solutions to the economic and political strife in this crisis-ridden modern world is a proper understanding of its faiths. Religion should never be made to subserve the low economic and political ends, if the consciousness of mankind is not to be arrested in its growth. The rapid progress

of communications has brought men physically nearer to each other, but spiritually man is yet to outgrow his animality.

Religious toleration, as it is commonly understood, connotes 'a refraining from persecution and prohibition suggesting nevertheless, a latent disapproval mingled with a politic leniency.' This is blasphemy. Real religious tolerance means the comprehension of the unity of Godhead and religion. Many have spoken of this, but one person who actually realized this was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Though practically illiterate, he practised spiritual disciplines of various religions, and demonstrated in life that literacy is a bugbear and that all religions, like all cultures, are dialects of the common truth. To quote Sri Ramakrishna: 'The lake has many shores. At one the Hindu draws water in a pitcher, and calls it *jala*, at another the Mussalman in leather bottles, and calls it *pani*, at a third the Christian finds what he calls "water".'⁴ This is the *philosophia perennis*, Sanatana Dharma—the idea that all paths lead to the same goal. Dr. Coomaraswamy achieved through rightly directed scholarship with the requisite humility, what Sri Ramakrishna demonstrated by his mystical experience: the mountain is one, however, there may be many paths leading to the summit.

4. Sri Ramakrishna, quoted by A. K. Coomaraswamy in 'Sri Ramakrishna and Religious Tolerance', *Prabuddha Bharata*, 1936, p. 269.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA* —V

To Sister Christine

24

C/o Dr. Guernsey,
180 West 59th Street,
New York,
12th November 1899.

Christina,

Mrs. Bull has gone to Boston without seeing me. I am with the Guernseys. All today laid up with cold.

Oh, these nasty colds. The doctor here declares my case as entirely one of nervous exhaustion. Even the dyspepsia is entirely nervous.

I will be a few days yet here, and then I don't know where I go. I have a great mind to try health food. As for you, write unreservedly where you like me to be. If you think it best for me to come to Detroit, write or wire on receipt of this. I will come immediately. Only difficulty is now the dyspepsia.

With love to Mrs. Funke,

Ever yours with blessings,
VIVEKANANDA.

PS—If Cambridge is best, say that immediately.

V.

25¹

C/o E. Guernsey, M.D.,
180 West 59th Street,
New York,
15th November 1899.

My dear Christina,

You are right. I will have plenty of time and leisure to test the Battle Creek diet in Cambridge. Here I have been examined by several prominent doctors. I had also my *urine* analyzed. There is at present no sugar or albumen, i.e., the kidney is all right. I am really very well. What little remains is only mental, and requires rest.

Cambridge therefore is the best place.

Mrs. Bull sends me your letter of acceptance. I am glad you accepted. Come as soon as you can to Cambridge. We will have good time of a few weeks at least. I will do some writing and studying. You loaf about and idle. On

* © The President, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math.

1. A few lines from the letter have been published in the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama (hereafter *Complete Works*), VI, 1972, p. 419, wrongly addressed to 'Margot' (Sister Nivedita). They have been reproduced here for the sake of continuity.

the whole I don't think there is any cause for anxiety with my body. This sort of nervous body is just the instrument to play great music at times, and at times moan in darkness. But the peculiarity of such a system is that the organs never get affected.

Well, come soon. I will be in Cambridge in a few days.

With love and blessings,
VIVEKANANDA.

26

21 West 34th Street,
New York,
21st November 1899.

My dear Christina,

Circumstances have so fallen that I have to start for California tomorrow. It is for my physical benefit too—as the doctor says, I had better be off where the severe winter of the North cannot reach.

Well, thus my plans are made and marred. Anyway—come over to Cambridge, when you feel like it. Mrs. Bull will only be too happy to do anything for you, she can.

I hope to stop in Detroit on my way back. The Lord's will—as we say.

Ever yours in the Lord,
VIVEKANANDA.

(Continued from page 498)

observation calls for all that is best in us to enable us to integrate nevertheless, through love, self-criticism and persevarance.

4. *Exiles in the Priesthood :*

Priesthood means giving oneself fully. It is a vocation, not an occupation. A distinction must be made between practice of the priesthood and the priesthood itself. It is the priesthood that illuminates, that transforms the life of him who dedicates himself to it. That which is renounced willingly is added with compound interest to that which remains after the renunciation. The feeling of saturation or lack of interest often arises from a psychological blockage and forgetfulness of an original talent.

In exile we touch two essential points of life: Faith in God, which comes to us in

our exile, and Faith in man, who bears exile. In Hinduism, the alpha and omega of all spirituality is to gain one's own Kingdom (Svarājya) and to maintain interior sovereignty. The holy men at Benares ask themselves each morning these two questions: Is our vision true? Is our kingdom intact?

Life is an exile, but it also includes the Kingdom. Interior division, the loss of self are the threads of life; but by a natural dynamism life reconstructs itself and the exile slips into certitude of self. The Soul exiled in the forest encounters the King (Spirit), who invites him into the stronghold of the Kingdom. The King has seen that his subject has accepted exile and has transformed it into a value. Hitherto disinherited, he returns to the Kingdom to be crowned 'Prince' for ever.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Lord's Prayer : When Jesus Christ gave his famous 'Sermon on the Mount' to the multitudes, he taught them how to pray, saying: 'After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father . . . Amen.' This prayer is regularly offered to the Lord by the devout Christians in their homes as well as in the churches. It is a common practice these days, especially amongst the Indian Christians, to translate the teachings of the Lord Jesus and the ritualistic recitations into Sanskrit. Here is a free versified translation of the 'Lord's Prayer' as an offering at the holy feet of the Lord Jesus in this auspicious Christmas season.

We are thankful to Dr. S. A. Dange, Reader, Dept. of Post-graduate Studies in Sanskrit, University of Bombay, Bombay, for scrutinizing the Sanskrit rendering and giving some valuable suggestions.

Sister Christine : The Dedicated—IV (Editorial) : In this part of the Editorial the role of Sister Christine in serving the mission of her Master has been mainly discussed in the light of authentic, published and unpublished material available on the subject. Sister Christine was one of the pioneers of the present Sister Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta, the Platinum Jubilee of which is being celebrated from the 22nd to 27th of this month. It is therefore, in fitness of the time that her dedicated services be remembered.

The Lord's Prayer—A Vedantic Interpretation : Although this holy prayer from the Bible (Mathew 6:9-13) is recited everyday by the Christians, its meaning is not, however, clear to many. The late Swami Prabhavananda, Ex-Minister in charge of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, is of the opinion: 'It has such deep meaning behind it that it can be understood only by those who

practise spiritual disciplines.' In this article of the Swami, reproduced here from the *Vedanta and the West*, 1953 (pp. 37-42) with the kind permission of the present Minister in charge of the Centre, the Swami lucidly gives a Vedantic interpretation of the 'Lord's Prayer' to reveal its deeper meaning. Another illuminating article of the Swami on this subject, with further details, was published in the *Vedanta and the West*, March-April 1958 (pp. 11-28).

Sankara's Concept of the Absolute Reality : In this article Dr. Robin Ghosh, M. A., Ph. D., of the Patna University, narrates in short Acharya Sankara's Concept of the Absolute Reality in the light of the Upanishads and other authentic books on the subject.

The Soul in Exile : In this article Swami Nityabodhananda, the Minister in charge of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Geneva, Switzerland, tells us that the human soul has been banished from the Kingdom of Heaven, and is suffering in this world in various ways. He also points out that in worldly life as well, men may experience exile; for instance, in married life, in family life, in work or even in the priesthood. But the Swami says, 'In exile we touch two essential points of life: faith in God who comes to us in our exile, and faith in man who bears exile.' Hope our readers will get a new insight through this article.

The Progress of Liberal Thought with Special Reference to Europe : In this learned article, Dr. Paresh Nath Mukherjee, the Head of History Department, D. A. V. College, Dehra Dun, has very lucidly described the 'Progress of Liberal Thought' beginning from the period of Vedas up to modern times. He has, however, deliberated

on this subject with special reference to Europe. The author has shown that in every age an attempt was made by men in power to suppress and eradicate liberal thought, but somehow it never died, and raised its head again. He says, 'If liberal thought could not be crushed in the dark days of the Middle Ages when blind superstition and ruthless tyranny reigned supreme, it has surely a message; and a message of radiant hope for us in the modern age of progress.' Hope our readers will find this article thought-provoking and interesting.

Dr. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy: Just a century ago was born a great intellectual giant, Ananda Coomaraswamy. His centenary is being celebrated by his admirers in India and Sri Lanka at present. In his brilliant article Sri R. Ramakrishnan has very nicely narrated some main aspects of Dr. Coomaraswamy's life. The Coomaraswamys were admirers of Swami

Vivekananda. They had given a public reception to the Swami at Colombo on his return from the West on January 15, 1897. And it is known that Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy was on a holiday in Ceylon at this time. The Coomaraswamys also saw the Swami off at Colombo on the 28th of June 1899, on his way to the West. Swamiji writes about the Coomaraswamys in his 'Memoirs of European Travel': 'Sir Coomaraswamy is the foremost man among the Hindus; his wife is an English lady; and his son is barefooted and wears the sacred ashes on his forehead.' According to S. Durai Raja Singam, 'The "Sir Coomaraswamy" referred to is Hon. Mr. P. Coomaraswamy, the distinguished nephew of Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy. . . .'

Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda—V: In this issue some hitherto unpublished letters of Swami Vivekananda to Sister Christine have been published with explanatory footnotes.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MEDITATION—ITS PROCESS, PRACTICE AND CULMINATION: BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA, Publisher: The Vedanta Society of St. Louis, 205 South Skinker Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63105, U.S.A., 1976, pp. 264, Price: \$8.50.

Swami Satprakashananda's books are always a pleasure and profit to read for they are highly informative and enlightening, and the presentation is limpid, precise and systematic, couched in simple but elegant language. This book on Meditation is no exception. It is really commendable how he has, in such a short compass, dealt with the whole gamut of meditation in its different aspects—both theoretical and practical—from the Vedantic point of view. His treatment of the subject is impressed all through with the stamp of universality characteristic of Vedanta, which is recognized as the science and philosophy of Religion. So the book will be of

great practical use to aspirants of all religions who seek guidance in spiritual practice. It will help them along their own lines, within the framework of their own religion, for here mostly the universal ideas and principles are dealt with, which they can adapt. To the scholars also it will give an insight into the philosophical background of meditation and its aim and purpose. It will enable any intelligent reader to sift the spurious from the genuine teachings on the subject, which is very necessary these days when in large numbers all sorts of clever quacks are setting up Yoga shops to deceive themselves and the gullible.

Being a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order, imbued with the deep and catholic spiritual traditions of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, in the background of the hoary and vast Indian religio-philosophic culture, and with practical experience and insight gained in guiding spiritual

aspirants for nearly forty years as founder-head of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, Swami Satprakashananda is eminently suited to write on the subject of meditation, to which he has brought to bear all his knowledge, capabilities, and acumen. He has supported all his expositions with profound and appropriate quotations from twenty-nine most authoritative works—the scriptures like the Vedas, Upanishads, the *Gita*, the *Brahma-Sutras*, Puranas, Tantras, the works of Maharshis Kapila and Patanjali and Acharya Shankara, and the records of realizations and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, as regards both theory and practice.

The book is in three parts. Appropriately, Part One starts with 'Hymns and Prayers' which are addressed to both the Personal God/Goddess as well as to the Absolute Reality or Truth, for meditations are of both types, and are supplemented by Peace Chants from the Vedas. Next, 'Conducted Meditations', in all eighteen, contain instructions given by the Swami for the guidance of silent meditation to his Western students before his scriptural class. At the outset, the aspirant's mind is imbued with profound ideas on scriptural statements on certain aspects of God or Reality, and then he is led to contemplate and meditate on them with appropriate instructions. Some of the topics for meditations will give an idea: 'The Light of Lights', 'Peace that Passeth Understanding', 'Source of All Delight', 'Thou Art My Sole Guide', 'Thou Art Seated on the Lotus of My Heart', 'The One Source of All', 'The Divine Child' (for Christmas), etc.

The Second Part treats 'Methods of Meditation'. It gives in eleven chapters the philosophic background and the why and what-for of meditation and how to prepare oneself for different types of meditation according to Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Raja-Yoga, and Jnana-Yoga. It shows the part played by prayer, symbols, and the different types of meditations, their intrinsic harmony based on the nature of the mind itself, and how they all lead to the final mystic realization of the non-dual Reality directly or indirectly. The whole exposition displays keen philosophic and psychological insight.

The Appendices, in the Third Part, deal with: (1) 'From Mortality to Immortality'; (2) 'The Location of the Soul in the Body', and (3) 'The Sum and Substance of Advaita Vedanta'. Finally there is a good Index.

A few suggestions: (1) If diacritical marks are used, it will be helpful. (2) On page 45 the reference should be '(Sv. U. IV:1)' instead

of '(Sv. U. IV:11)'. (3) On page 214, 'It (the Maha-Vakya) points to the identity of the individual self with Nirguna Brahman, and *not with Ultimate Reality* beyond thought, beyond word' needs clarification—whether Ultimate Reality is different from Nirguna Brahman; if so, how? Then, when and how, if at all, is it realized? Did not Sri Ramakrishna realize Ultimate Reality?

It is difficult to praise and appraise and point out the merits of this comprehensive book adequately in this short review. However, we recommend that everyone interested in spiritual life should possess it, read it, and assimilate it. The printing and get-up are good and standard. A cheap paperback and an Indian edition of the book will enable it to reach a wide range of people all over the world.

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA,
Acharya,
Probationers' Training Centre,
Belur Math.

THE WAY OF KABBALAH: BY Z'EV BEN SHIMON HALEVI, Publishers: Rider & Company, 3 Fitzroy Square, London W1, England, 1976, pp. 224, Price: £ 4.75.

The mystical Hasidim movement of Judaism arose in Germany in the thirteenth century. About the same time the Kabbalah mysticism, an undercurrent of Judaism for many centuries, came to the surface. Kabbalah means 'Esoteric Wisdom' and it has indeed never been a popular religion. Kabbalah exerted deep influence on the inquisitive minds of European Humanism and was in fact accepted as a link between Judaism and Christianity. Mysticism blossomed anew in the seventeenth century when the Hasidim movement was revived by Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, the famous Baal chen, who made religion an enthusiastic, devotional experience which sees God immanent in all living beings, in all creation. He was the Chaitanya of Judaism. Both Kabbalah and the Hasidim have a great many elements in common with Hinduism apart from such elements which formulate the *philosophia perennis*. So the medieval Kabbalah is known to have given instructions into the methods of meditation very closely akin to the Indian Yoga. It believes in rebirth, in different '*lokas*' in heaven through which the soul must pass; and it has a very clear conception of the God-head being formless and beyond human categories.

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, the author of the

book under review, is a devoted Jew whose life-work consists in making the esoteric tradition of his faith relevant to modern man. His earlier works are also centred on the Kabbalah. His knowledge on the subject is immense, his treatment as thorough as it can be, and both scholarly and spiritually honest; there is no doubt that he is an Initiated One with the authority to speak on the subject.

Quite another question is, whether he does indeed make Kabbalah *relevant* for us. The author attempts to explain the entire expanse of spiritual phenomena by the symbolism of the *Sefirotic Tree*, the Tree of Life. The symbolism of the Tree of Life is, of course, known in all religious traditions; it is used to picture the organic growth of spiritual values and realizations, their organic interdependence and dialectics, and ultimate unification in one single value, realization or phenomenon. As it is true with Sanskrit terminology, the Hebrew names of each branch of the Tree vary according to the scale of meaning applied; yet the principle, the mystical essence of each branch remains; all names of one branch taken together fully express this mystical essence.

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi begins with several extremely technical chapters on the theory of the *Sefirotic Tree*. They are not meant for the aver-

age reader, and mean nothing to the spiritual seeker. In the rest of the book, the author explains certain elements of spirituality, such as the need of a teacher, objective knowledge, methods of training to gain supernatural insights, the three paths of God (namely, the path of action, devotion, and contemplation), the importance of religious communities. These topics are dealt with, with constant reference to the Tree as their unifying factors, but with less of terminology and purely technical explanations. Even then, the book does not make easy reading; it is a real expedition! The reader is advised to leave his particular religious tradition behind and enter into the book with a free and open mind. It is then only that he will come across startling, new insights into the Divine Science. A Christian will find the stories and parables of the Old and New Testaments explained allegorically in a way fresh and new as he has never encountered in Christian exegesis; it is a blow for those who tend to devalue mythology in the Christian religion. The Hindu will find rich material to compare the psychology of the Kabbalah with psychology in the Upanishads, and Kuṇḍalinī Yoga or other Tāntric teachings.

DR. MARTIN KAMPCHEN
Aikiya Alayam, Madras.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE GENERAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

From April 1975—March 1976

[We are presenting here a brief summary of the latest report of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, which will give our readers some information about the activities of these twin organizations. The report was issued by the General Secretary in September 1977.—Ed.]

The Ramakrishna Math and The Ramakrishna Mission

Though Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math, with their respective branches, are distinct legal entities, they are closely related, inasmuch as the Governing Body of the Mission is made up of the Trustees of the Math; the administrative work of the Mission is mostly in the hands of the monks of Ramakrishna Math; and both have their Headquarters at Belur Math. The Math organization is constituted under a Trust with well-defined rules of procedure. The Mission is a registered society. Though both the organizations take up charitable and philanthropic activities, the former lays

emphasis on religion and preaching, while the latter is wedded mainly to welfare service of various kinds. This distinction should be borne in mind, though 'Ramakrishna Mission' is loosely associated by people with Math activities also. It is necessary, moreover, to point out that the appropriation of the name of Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda by any institution does not necessarily imply that it is affiliated either to Ramakrishna Math or to Ramakrishna Mission.

The Math and the Mission own separate funds and keep separate accounts of them. Though both the Math and the Mission receive grants from the Central and State Governments and public bodies

for their social welfare activities, the other activities of the Math are financed from offerings, publications, etc., and the Mission is supported by fees from students, public donations, etc. Both the Math and the Mission funds are annually audited by qualified auditors.

Summary of Activities

The year 1975-76 being free from many obstacles and impediments, that had to be faced in the past, there was unhampered development and co-ordination of the activities all around. Though the political situation in Bangladesh caused many anxieties concerning our activities there, fortunately the problem did not become so serious as was apprehended.

During the year under report a new temple of Sri Ramakrishna was dedicated at Raipur Ashrama and a new building of Shilpavidyalaya was declared open at Saradapitha, Belur. The Headquarters took over the old Industrial School premises for locating some sections of Headquarters' office, accommodating some monastic trainees and providing medical care for the ailing monks. Foundations were laid for a Guest House at Belgharia Students' Home and a new building for the Madras Boys' Schools. The building of the Charitable Dispensary at Purulia Vidyapith was formally inaugurated. A Library with Reading Room was dedicated at Hyderabad Math.

The effort to purchase Swamiji's ancestral home was continued as before with Government's help.

Centres

Excluding the Headquarters at Belur, there were in March 1976, 119 branch centres in all, of which 54 were Mission centres, 21 combined Math and Mission centres, and 44 Math centres. These were regionally distributed as follows: two Mission centres, five combined Math and Mission centres and three Math centres in Bangladesh; one Mission centre each in Burma, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, and France; one Math centre each in Switzerland, England, and Argentina; 12 Math centres in the United States of America; and the remaining 46 Mission centres, 16 combined Math and Mission centres and 26 Math centres (88 in all) in India. The Indian centres were distributed as follows: 29 in West Bengal, 11 in Uttar Pradesh, 12 in Tamil Nadu, seven in Bihar, five in Kerala, four in Karnataka, three each in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Assam, two each in Maharashtra, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh, and one each in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, and Chandigarh. Moreover, attached to the

branch centres there were over twenty sub-centres where monastic workers resided more or less permanently.

Types of Work

Medical Service: The Math and the Mission institutions under this head served the public in general, irrespective of creed, colour or nationality. Prominent of these are the indoor hospitals in Calcutta, Varanasi, Vrindaban, Lucknow, Kan-khal, Trivandrum, and Ranchi. In 1975-76 there were altogether 13 Indoor Hospitals with 1,625 beds which accommodated 41,299 patients, and 77 Outdoor Dispensaries which treated 40,52,963 cases including the old ones. Besides, some centres had provision for emergency or observation indoor wards attached to their dispensaries. The Veterinary section of the Shyamala Tal Sevashrama treated 222 cases. The Sanatorium at Ranchi and the Clinic at New Delhi treated T.B. cases alone, while large sections of Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta, and the hospital at Trivandrum were devoted to maternity and child-welfare work. At Trivandrum there was also a department of Psychiatry. Research on different branches of medical science as also Postgraduate training in D.G.O. and D.C.H. courses were conducted at Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta.

Educational Work: The twin organizations ran, during the period, five Degree Colleges of general education at Madras, Rahara (24-Parganas), Coimbatore, Belur (Howrah), and Narendrapur (24-Parganas) with 4,237 students on their rolls. The last two were wholly residential, and the colleges at Madras and Coimbatore had attached hostels for residing students. In addition, there were three B.Ed. Colleges at Belur, Coimbatore, and Mysore with 395 students, one Basic Training School at Coimbatore with 27 students, one Postgraduate Basic Training College at Rahara with 100 students, four Junior Basic Training Institutes at Rahara, Sarisha and Sargachhi with 318 students, a College for Physical Education, another for Rural Higher Education, an Institute of Commerce and a School of Agriculture with 125, 28, 16 and 113 students respectively at Coimbatore, four Polytechnics at Belur, Belgharia, Madras and Coimbatore with 1,223 students, 8 Junior Technical and Industrial Schools with 538 boys and 13 girls, seven Vocational Training Centres with 252 students, 94 Students' Homes or Hostels, including some orphanages with 9,666 boys and 793 girls, 14 Multipurpose Higher Secondary Schools with 6,410 boys and 515 girls, 26 High, Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools with

12,591 boys and 9,242 girls, 26 Senior Basic and M.E. Schools with 2,769 boys and 1,829 girls, 53 Junior Basic, U.P., and Elementary Schools with 10,826 boys and 7,121 girls, and 97 L.P. and other grades of Schools with 4,546 boys and 2,709 girls. Besides conducting an Institute of Medical Sciences with 13 students, the Seva Pratishthan of Calcutta, and also the Math Hospital at Trivandrum trained nurses and midwives, the total number of trainees being 237. The Institute of Culture in Calcutta conducted a School of Humanistic and Intercultural Studies, a School of Languages for teaching different Indian and foreign languages and a School of World Religions with 65, 1,368 and 121 students respectively. The Ashrama at Narendrapur conducted a Blind Boys' Academy, an Institute of Commerce and a Village-Level Workers' Training Centre with 115, 73 and 225 students respectively. The centre at Ranchi (Morabadi) ran a Training Centre in farming (Divyayan) with 364 students. The Centre at Rahara conducted a Rural Librarianship Training Centre (residential) with 22 students. Thus there were altogether 55,728 boys and 23,277 girls in all the educational institutions run by the Math and the Mission in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Fiji and Mauritius.

Recreational activities: Some of the Math and the Mission centres have been providing scope for recreational, cultural and spiritual activities to youngsters at stated periods outside their school hours. The *Vivekananda Balaka Sangha* of the Bangalore Ashrama has a fine building of its own. At the Mysore Ashrama also a number of boys take advantage of the various kinds of facilities provided for them, and the youth section of the *Janashiksha Mandir*, Belur, is engaged in similar activities.

Work for Women: The organization has ever been conscious of its duties to the women of India. Typical of the work done for them are the Maternity Sections of the Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta and the Hospital at Trivandrum; the Domiciliary and Maternity Clinics at Jalpaiguri and Khetri; the women's sections of the Hospitals at Varanasi and Vrindaban; the attached Invalid Women's Home at Varanasi; the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras; the 'Girls' High Schools at Jamshedpur; the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha and the two Training Schools for nurses in Trivandrum and Calcutta. Moreover, there are special arrangements for women in other hospitals, dispensaries and schools; and some institutions are conducted especially for them. The Madras Math

also conducts a High School and a Primary School for girls.

Rural Uplift and Work among the Labouring and Backward Classes: The twin organizations have all along tried their best to serve the unfortunate countrymen who have fallen back culturally or otherwise. In addition to the more prominent village Ashramas like those at Cherrapunji, Raipur, Sarisha, Ramharipur, Manasadwip, Jayrambati, Kamarpukur, Sargachhi, Along, Narottam Nagar, Coimbatore, Kalady, Trichur and Nattarampalli, a number of rural sub-centres—both permanent and semi-permanent—are run under the branch centres at Belur, Rahara, Sarisha, Tiruvalla, Kankurgachhi (Calcutta), Malda, Ranchi, Narendrapur and Cherrapunji. Of these, special mention may be made of the numerous village sub-centres started for educating the hill tribes in Meghalaya and a farming centre at Ranchi, specially meant for Adivasis and Scheduled Castes. Welfare work of various kinds was done among the Kukis and Mizos by the Silchar Ashrama. Our educational and cultural activities in Arunachal Pradesh are also proving very useful and popular. During the year, the organization ran in the rural and backward areas nine Multipurpose Higher Secondary Schools, four High Schools, 47 Senior Basic, M.E. and U.P. Schools, 45 Primary Schools, 31 night Schools for adults, seven Vocational Training Centres, a Rural Librarianship Training Centre, a Village-Level Workers' Training Centre, a School of Agriculture, a College of Rural Higher Education and an institute for training village youths in farming—with a total of 18,522 students. The organization also conducted 22 Outdoor Dispensaries treating 3,56,748 patients and five Mobile Dispensaries serving 1,10,546 patients, besides running 132 Milk-distribution centres and a number of libraries with three mobile units—all located in the rural and backward areas. In addition to such varied activities, preaching and educative tours with magic lanterns, movie-films and such other means were also undertaken frequently. For the labouring classes in the industrial areas, the Mission conducted several night schools, community centres, etc.

Mass Contact: From the foregoing account it will be evident that the organization's activities are not concentrated in urban areas alone; they are spread over other fields as well. The message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda is steadily spreading in all parts of India, which is evident from the participation of innumerable people during the annual celebrations. The Ashramas and temples also draw thousands of people through-

out the year. Over and above these, there are a number of medical institutions where lakhs of people get free medicines, and thousands are treated in the indoor departments. In the educational institutions also a considerable number of poor students get free education, board, or lodging. The organization is also running a good number of free libraries in the rural areas. The publication centres sometimes sell booklets at nominal price to suit the pocket of the masses.

Spiritual and Cultural Work: Both the Math and the Mission centres laid emphasis on the dissemination of the spiritual and cultural ideals of India, and through various types of activity tried to give a practical shape to the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna that all religions are true. The centres established real points of contact among people of different faiths through public celebrations, meetings, classes, publications, etc. More than 115 Libraries containing vast number of books and journals were conducted by them. Attached to the Libraries, Reading Rooms were maintained in many places. One Sanskrit Chatuspathi was also run. At least ten centres published books on religious subjects and 12 journals in different languages. The Math centres at Mayavati, Baghbazar (Calcutta), Madras, Nagpur, Mysore, Rajkot, Trichur and Bhubaneswar, in particular, have to their credit a considerable number of useful publications. Some of our foreign centres too are publishing valuable books. Special mention should be made of the Institute of Culture, Calcutta, which has been trying to bring together eminent men and women of India and other lands in cultural fellowship. It may not be out of place to tell here of the continuous preaching of Vedanta through classes and lectures for quite a few years now, being carried on by Swami Nihshreyasananda in South Africa (Rhodesia) and East Africa, with Salisbury (35, Rhodes Avenue) as his centre.

Relief and Rehabilitation Work: As usual the Mission undertook relief and rehabilitation work either directly through the Headquarters or in conjunction with some branch centres. Some works were also conducted by the branch centres themselves.

The *Bangladesh Relief and Rehabilitation* was carried on through the branch centres at Dacca, Narayanganj, Bagerhat, Dinajpur, Barisal, Faridpur and Sylhet.

The following relief works were conducted in India :

A. Flood Relief—(1) in Karimganj, by Karimganj Seva Samiti, (2) in Patna and Maner by the Ashramas at Patna and Ranchi (Morabadi),

(3) in Midnapore by Tamluk Sevashrama and Midnapore Ashrama, and (4) in 24-Parganas (South) by Manasadwip Ashrama.

B. Drought Relief—(1) in Purulia by Purulia Vidyapith, and (2) in Orissa by Puri Mission Ashrama.

C. Scarcity Relief—in 24-Parganas by Calcutta Students' Home and Manasadwip Ashrama.

D. Rehabilitation Work—at Maner in Patna district by the Headquarters.

Annual Celebrations: Most of the Math and the Mission centres ceremonially observe the days sanctified by the advent of great saints and prophets. The general features of the celebrations of the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi (the Holy Mother) and Swami Vivekananda are: Special worship, *Homa* (making offerings in the sacred fire), chanting of scriptural texts, *Bhajan* and *Sankirtan* (often in chorus), distribution of *Prasad* (sacramental food) to the devotees, feeding of the poor in large numbers, and lectures by eminent speakers, including the Swamis of the Order. Thus the message of Sri Ramakrishna and his direct associates is steadily spreading, and many young and ardent souls are coming into closer touch with the ideals of the Math and the Mission. In co-operation with the local public, some centres celebrate the more popular Hindu festivals, accounts for these being maintained separately.

Donations: It is hoped, the generous public all over India and abroad, will continue to help the Math and the Mission to respond to the cry of distress, from whichever quarter it may come. All donations to Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission are exempt from Income-tax. Remittances may be addressed to: The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math, P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah, West Bengal 711 202, India; and cheques may be drawn in favour of either 'Ramakrishna Math or Ramakrishna Mission, Belur'.

OBITUARY

Swami PAVITRANANDA PASSES AWAY

We record with deep sorrow the death, in New York, of Swami Pavitranda, Head of the Vedanta Society of New York. He passed away on Friday, 18 November 1977, at 4 a.m., at the age of 81, owing to a stroke resulting from a progressive cerebrovascular disease, from which he had been suffering for the past ten years.

The Swami, an initiated disciple of Swami

Brahmananda, joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1922, at the age of twenty-six; and in the very next year was initiated into monastic vows by Swami Sivananda, second President of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. He had a Master's Degree in English Literature. For a short time after Sannyasa he was deputed to conduct religious classes at Annamalai University, in what was then Madras Presidency. In April 1925 the Swami was posted to Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, in the Himalayas. He was closely and continuously associated with it, and with its publication department in Calcutta, for nearly twenty-four years, until 1948.

Familiarly known as Bhupen Maharaja, the Swami worked for some years as Manager of the Advaita Ashrama publication department; then he became Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* for four years from 1931; and in 1937 he was elected President of Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. He remained in that position until 1948. As President of Advaita Ashrama he worked hard to expand the activities of the publication department, and brought out several new books and compilations. In spite of the post-World War publishing difficulties, he was successful in bringing out the sumptuous Golden Jubilee Number of *Prabuddha Bharata* in 1945. The Swami was elected a trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission in 1947. Two years later he was appointed one of the Assistant Secretaries at headquarters.

In 1951 Swami Pavitrananda was sent over to the United States of America as Head of the Vedanta Society of New York, which was founded by Swami Vivekananda himself. He continued in that post until the last. He carried on Vedanta Work in the West very successfully, and ministered

to a large number of ardent and sincere spiritual aspirants there.

During the last three months the Swami suffered from diarrhoea too, for which he was hospitalized twice; but nothing serious was detected. Of late there had been a steady improvement in his general condition, and he was even looking forward to resuming his normal activities to a certain extent. Even on 17 November, the day previous to his Maha-Samadhi, he had come to the ground floor in the evening for dinner, and afterwards had climbed up unaided to his second-floor room. He was conversing normally and freely with one of his close devotees until 10 p.m.—about six hours before his passing away—and then retired for the night. But the end came unexpectedly and without prolonged suffering.

Swami Pavitrananda was much loved and respected by his brother-monks, by devotees, and by his disciples. He maintained a spirit of independence and aimed at precision and perfection in everything he said or did. He was a good speaker and thoughtful writer. Over several decades he steadily contributed articles to *Prabuddha Bharata* and other periodicals of the Order. He was the author of two short popular books, namely *Modern Man in Search of Religion* and *Common Sense about Yoga*, and the translator into English of the *Siva-Mahimnah-Stotram*—all publications of Advaita Ashrama. He was polite and gentle by nature, easily accessible to young and old; and he scrupulously practised the lofty principles of the monastic life. In him the Ramakrishna Order has lost a very capable, responsible, and much-venerated monk. Our heartfelt sympathies go to all the members of the New York Vedanta Society Congregation who will have sorely felt bereaved by the demise of Swami Pavitrananda.

May his Soul rest in peace!

HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

THE BIRTHDAY OF SRI SARADA DEVI, THE HOLY MOTHER, FALLS ON SUNDAY, 1 JANUARY 1978.