

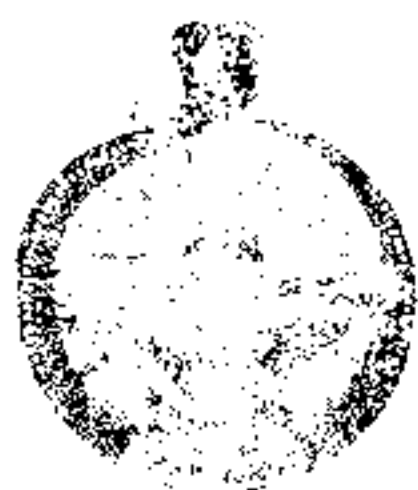
VOL. LXXXII

FEBRUARY 1977

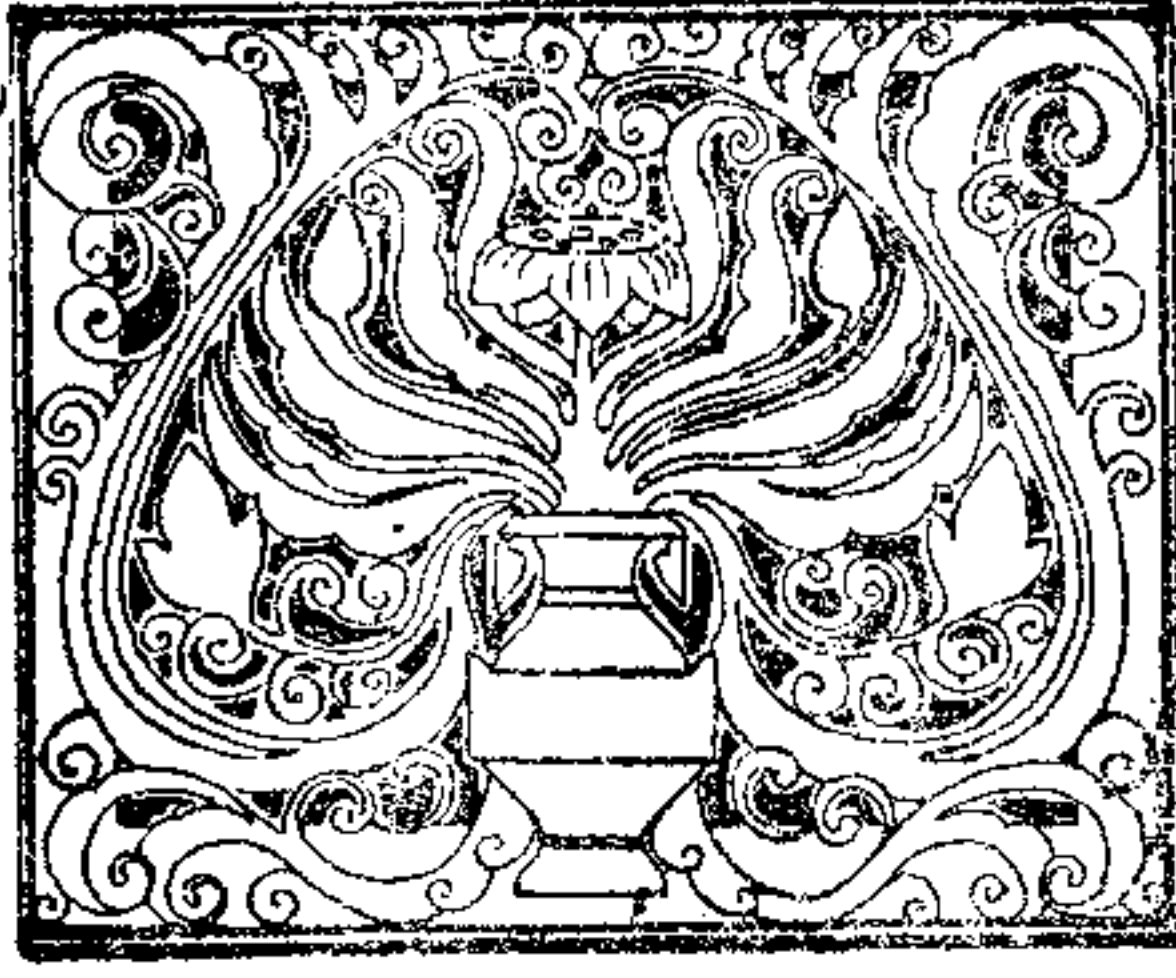
Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI
HIMALAYAS



Editorial Office

P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt Pithoragarh 262524, U.P.

Publication Office

5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700014
Phone : 44-2898



Annual Subscription

India, Nepal &

Bangladesh	Rs. 10.00
Sri Lanka	Rs. 12.00
U.S.A. & Canada	\$ 6.00
Other Countries	£ 2.00

Life Subscription

Rs. 180 \$ 140 £ 40

Single Copy

Rs. 1 40 cents 12 P.

*Information for subscribers,
contributors and publishers
overleaf.*

Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE
RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

FEBRUARY 1977

CONTENTS

Sri Ramakrishna Reminisces	...	...	41
Onward For Ever !	..	...	43
'New Man' of the Age			
— <i>Editorial</i>	...	...	43
Letters of a Saint	...	...	50
Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi—II			
— <i>Mr. A. N. Ray</i>	...	...	51
At the Feet of Swami Akhandananda—XVIII			
— <i>'A Devotee'</i>	...	...	55
Formal Illiteracy of Emperor Akbar			
— <i>Dr. Naresh Kumar Bhatnagar</i>	...	...	58
A New Man			
— <i>Swami Parahitananda</i>	...	...	61
Human Trends : On Progress and Freedom			
— <i>Swami Yogeshananda</i>	...	...	62
Triple Bondage and Triple Liberation :			
Visistadvaita View			
— <i>N. Jayashanmukham</i>	...	...	65
Swami Vivekananda's Discoveries About			
India—IV			
— <i>Swami Bhajanananda</i>	...	...	68
Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Future			
— <i>A Compilation</i>	...	...	71
Notes and Comments	...	...	74
Reviews and Notices	...	...	75
News and Reports	...	...	78

Cover :

*Reflections of Mounts Shwetwana, Thailu,
Sudarsan in a lake in Tapovan ground, Central
Himalayas.*

Courtesy: Reliable Calendar Co.



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXXII

FEBRUARY 1977

No. 2

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA REMINISCES

'What deep love, what ecstatic devotion they (*gopis* or milkmaids of Vrindavan) had for Krishna! Radha painted the picture of Sri Krishna with her own hand, but did not paint His legs lest He should run away to Mathura! I used to sing these songs very often during my boyhood. I could reproduce the whole drama from memory.'

*

'Gangamayi became very fond of me in Vrindavan. She was an old woman [devotee of Krishna] who lived all alone in a hut near the Nidhuvan. Referring to my spiritual condition and ecstasy, she said, "He is the very embodiment of Radha." She addressed me as "Dulali". When with her, I used to forget my food and drink, my bath, and all thoughts of going home. On some days Hriday used to bring food from home and feed me. Gangamayi also would serve me with food prepared by her own hands.'

'Gangamayi used to experience trances. At such times a great crowd would come to see her.'

'I didn't want to leave her and return to Calcutta. Everything was arranged for me to stay with her. . . . All the arrangements had been made when Hriday said: "You have such a weak stomach. Who will look after you?" "Why," said Gangamayi, "I shall look after him. I'll nurse him." As Hriday dragged me by one hand and she by the other, I remembered my mother, who was then living alone here [at Dakshineswar] in the nahabat of the temple garden. I found it impossible to stay away from her, and said to Gangamayi, "No, I must go." I loved the atmosphere of Vrindavan.'

*

'I forgot everything when I went to Vraja [Vrindavan]. I thought I would no more return here. But, a few days later, I remembered my mother. I thought she would be in difficulty—who would look after and serve her in that old age? That thought arose in my mind and made it impossible for me to live there.'

*

'I said to myself: "My devotion to God will take to its wings if I have to worry about my mother. I would rather live with her. Then I shall have peace of mind and be able to meditate on God."'

*

‘Once I thought, “Why should I be one-sided?” Therefore I was initiated into Vaishnavism in Vrindavan and took the garb of a Vaishnava monk. I spent three days practising the Vaishnava discipline. Again at Dakshineswar, I was initiated into the mystery of Rama worship. I painted my forehead with a long mark and put on a string with a diamond round my neck. But after a few days I gave them up.’

*

‘At Vrindavan I myself put on the garb of the Vaishnavas and wore it for fifteen days. I have practised the disciplines of all the paths, each for a few days. Otherwise I should have found no peace of mind. (*Smiling*) I have practised all the disciplines ; I accept all paths. I respect the Saktas, the Vaishnavas, and also the Vedantists. Therefore people of all sects come here. And every one of them thinks that I belong to his school. I also respect the modern Brahmajnanis [the Brahmos].’

*

[Replying to questions about the worth of Vaishnavism and of Sri Chaitanya :]
 ‘I also had that attitude formerly ; I thought, “How could Chaitanya be an incarnation as there was not the slightest mention of it in the *Bhagavata* and other Puranas? The shaven-headed Vaishnavas have set him up to be an incarnation.” I could never believe that. I went to Navadvip with Mathur. I thought that if he were an incarnation, there must linger there a little at least of the manifestation ; I shall understand it when I see it. In order to detect even a little manifestation (of divinity) I took walks hither and thither—to the house of the senior Gosain, to that of the junior Gosain and so on ; but I saw nothing particular anywhere ; everywhere I found a wooden figure [of Sri Chaitanya] standing with its arms raised upward ! I felt dejected to see it. I regretted my going there. Afterwards, I was going to step into the boat for my return trip when I saw a wonderful vision : Two beautiful boys of tender age,—I never saw such a beauty ; they had the complexion of molten gold—each having a halo of light round his head, raising their hands and looking at me, were running towards me through the sky. And I cried out immediately, “There they come, there they [Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda] come.” Scarcely had I uttered these words before they came and entered here (his own body) ; I lost normal consciousness and fell down. I would have fallen into the water but for Hridu who was beside me and caught hold of me. I was shown many such things convincing me of their really being incarnations, the manifestations of the divine power.’

❦

‘Once for a few days, I was out on an excursion with Mathur Babu in his house-boat. We took that trip for a change of air. During that trip we visited Navadvip. One day I saw the boatmen cooking their meal and stood and watched them. Mathur said to me, “What are you doing there?” I replied with a smile, “The boatmen are cooking and their food looks very good.” Mathur felt that I might ask the boatmen to give a portion of their food ; so he said : “Come away ! Come away !”

Compiled by : Swami Sarveshananda

ONWARD FOR EVER !

This is the message of Shri Ramakrishna to the modern world: 'Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches, or temples; they count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man, which is spirituality; and the more this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. Earn that first, acquire that, and criticise no one, for all doctrines and creeds have some good in them. Show by your lives that religion does not mean words, or names, or sects, but that it means spiritual realization. Only those can understand who have felt. Only those who have attained to spirituality can communicate it to others, can be great teachers of Mankind. They alone are the powers of light.

The more such men are produced in a country, the more that country will be raised; and that country where such men absolutely do not exist is simply doomed, nothing can save it. Therefore my Master's message to mankind is: 'Be spiritual and realize truth for yourself.' . . . To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions was the mission of my Master. Other teachers have taught special religions which bear their names, but this great teacher of the nineteenth century made no claim for himself. He left every religion undisturbed because he had realized that in reality they are all part and parcel of the one eternal religion.

Prickhauser

'NEW MAN' OF THE AGE

EDITORIAL

It is a well known fact that every living being is a constantly changing entity. The psycho-physiologists say that man, as he grows from cradle to grave, changes not only anatomically and physiologically, but psychologically as well. Daily new cells are being added to his body, and new neuron-links being formed in the cortex of his brain due to 'learning'. According to them, every man is a new man every moment.

The Vijñānavādi Buddhists also believe that man is a constantly changing entity, as he is made up of a stream of consciousness (ālayavijñāna), containing the seeds of phenomena, both subjective and objective, which is continuously changing. According to their theory also, every man is a new man every moment.

Leaving apart the scientists and the philosophers, the experience of common men also corroborates the ever changing nature of man. Once an interesting incident took place at Calcutta, which throws some light on this phenomenon of nature. Two friends were going for a walk. One said to the other, 'Friend, I have come to my wit's end. I don't understand how I should behave in this world with people. I see that each man is of a particular type.' Adding to his experience, the other friend responded, 'Dear friend, had each man been of a particular type, I would have been saved; I find that each man is of seven, eight types.' Like these two friends, every thoughtful man feels that not only each man is changing from moment to moment and becoming new; but that each man is a new specimen of manhood, due to his hereditary, physical, and environmental differences.

The evolutionists, on the other hand, say that the man of the present age is a new specimen of his species as compared to the man of the past. They also predict that the

man of the future will be still more different morphologically, physiologically, and anatomically than the man of today. According to them, the advent of man on earth was a mysterious phenomenon of nature, because man is a thinking being. He 'is psychically distinguished from all other animals by the entirely new fact that he not only knows, but knows that he knows. In him, for the first time on earth, consciousness has coiled back upon itself to become thought.'¹ Since the stepping of the man on earth, the locus of evolution, which was so far restricted to the biosphere (living forms), has been shifted to the noosphere (mental level).

The humanists say that 'the noosphere is a new stage for a renewed life.' (*ibid.*). Due to the remarkable development of man's thinking faculty, he has become much more superior today than the man of the past. He has invented computers to supplement his brain power, and has achieved some ultra-human powers. The ultra-human being of the humanists is, in their opinion, the new man of today.

Howsoever 'new' a man might be, according to the psychologists and the humanists, he is still a man. He may land a man on the moon due to his ultra-human skill; he may fathom the mysteries of the space, he is still a man subject to stresses and strains, and a plaything of his lower nature. The pre-human being subject to ego, passions, jealousy, hatred and so on, is still in him. Howsoever 'new' he may be biologically or psychologically, he cannot be really called a 'new man' unless the 'old man' in him dies, and spiritually speaking, a 'new man' is born in him. The locus of evolution has to be further shifted from the noosphere to the theosphere (spiritual level), if a man really aspires to be transformed into a new man,—a man-of-God.

God often comes down to the earth to bring about this spiritual evolution in man, to make gods of men; and many fortunate human beings irrespective of their caste, creed, or colour, have so far evolved to that blessed state of new-manhood.

When God comes in a human form, he is a true specimen of new-manhood. Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Sankara, Chaitanya, and others were the men of this type. They were new men, not only spiritually, but physically and psychologically as well. The 'new man' who is the subject of this editorial had even superseded all these new men in his newness. As compared with the Incarnations of the past, this 'new man' has demonstrated in his life many hitherto unheard and unseen spiritual manifestations. Due to his superb spiritual and psychological capacities, their corresponding physiological after-effects were also unique. Although it is beyond us to fathom the depth of his personality, an attempt has been made here to show the newness in him, to some extent.

This 'new man' of the age was born at Kamarpukur in West Bengal (India) on February 18, 1836. His birth, like the birth of other Incarnations, was a divine one (Divyajnanma). He was not born like ordinary human beings due to his Karma, and as a result of man-woman contact. At Gaya, Lord Vishnu (also called Gadadhar) appeared in the dream of his father Khudiram, and told him that he would be born as his son. While her husband Khudiram was away at Gaya, Chandramani had a mystic experience, while she was standing in front of a Shiva temple near her house. About this she said later, 'I suddenly saw a divine effulgence come from the holy image of the great God Shiva, fill the temple and rush towards me in waves. . . . The light engulfed me and swiftly entered into my body, . . . I have the feeling that the light has been in my womb ever since, and that I am preg-

1. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man*, trans. Norman Wenny, Collins: Fontana Books, 1970, p. 307.

nant.² Thus, even the conception of the new man was in a novel way, genetically speaking

And what happened after his birth! When he was born, he was as big as a six months old child. His mother searched for him in her lap soon after his birth, but to her astonishment, he was found crawling in the ashes (cold) of the oven near by. Of course, how could Shiva remain without ashes!

Gradually, he grew into a child of six or seven years in age. At such a young age, once he fell into a trance in the field at the sight of a flight of white cranes flying against a patch of dark clouds. About this he said later, 'That was the first time I completely lost consciousness in ecstasy.'³ Besides this there are two more occasions known when his mind entered the realm of the spirit during his boyhood.

Thinking that Lord Vishnu Himself has come in the form of their child, his parents named him as Gadadhar. As he grew into boyhood, once a strange incident took place in the village. Some scholars had gathered at the house of a Landlord, and they were discussing some knotty scriptural problem. They tried hard, but could not arrive at any satisfactory solution. Gadadhar was standing near by and listening to them. The solution at once flashed in his superhuman brain, on hearing which the scholars were amazed to see his intellectual capacities at such a small age.

As Gadadhar grew older, his elders wanted him to take proper education, so that he may be able to earn his living. They tried to persuade him in this matter; but the boy frankly told them that he did not want to have any bread-winning education. He no doubt had a little primary education at his

village, enough to read and write. He did not want to follow the beaten track—a wonderful boy as he was!

His brother brought him to Calcutta with a view to make him stand on his own legs gradually. Now Gadadhar had entered his early youth. The elder brother was later appointed as a priest in the Kali temple at Dakshineswar. The boy accompanied him there, and was later on given the charge of worship in place of his elder brother.

The boy was very thoughtful. A question arose in his mind that if God really existed, he must be able to see Him. Gadadhar's mind was simple and pure. He very sincerely yearned for realizing God in the form of the Divine Mother Kali, whom he was worshipping. After finishing his worship, he would go to the lonely jungle in the temple compound, and pass his time in meditation. Days passed in this way, but Kali did not make her appearance. He became impatient to realize Her. He felt frustrated, because his efforts had borne no fruits although he had renounced everything for Her sake. The pangs of separation became unbearable to him. One day he decided to end his life. His eyes fell on a sword which was hanging in the temple, and 'like one mad,' he narrated in his later life, 'I ran and caught hold of it, when suddenly I had the wonderful vision of the Mother and fell down unconscious. . . . I had the immediate knowledge of the light that was Mother.'⁴

In this way, he realized the Divine Mother by his novel method; and like the scientists, proved for the world at large the existence of God through his experiment, observation and inference. Now he had no doubt whether God existed or not. His life hereafter was passed in constant communion with the Divine Mother. He had realized beyond doubt that the Divine Mother, he was worshipping, was no more a stone

2. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, trans. Swami Jagadananda, Second Edition, Madras : Sri Ramakrishna Math (hereafter *The Great Master*), p. 36.

3. *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1943, p. 20.

4. *The Great Master*, p. 140.

image, but a conscious entity. He experienced the same consciousness everywhere; about which he later said, 'It was as if houses, doors, temples and all other things vanished altogether; . . . and what I saw was a boundless infinite conscious sea of light!'⁵ Gadadhar's search for truth was genuine and a scientific one; and hereby he had shown that God can be realized, provided the aspirant fulfills the necessary conditions.

Gadadhar was not satisfied by seeing God only in the form of the Divine Mother. He now aspired to have His vision in various forms described in the scriptures, and to practise the disciplines necessary for it as prescribed therein. The Divine Mother fulfilled his aspirations, whenever they arose. Accordingly, teachers qualified in that particular branch of spiritual path came and taught him. Bhairavi Brahmani came and gave him instructions regarding the numerous disciplines mentioned in the Tantras. She was happy to see that her disciple reached the goal of each path in no time. This was indeed a wonderful display of a spiritual miracle, which was then demonstrated at the garden of Dakshineswar—the new man showing his new skills in the spiritual field. About this he later said, 'The Brahmani made me undertake, one by one, all the disciplines prescribed in the main sixty-four Tantras, all difficult to accomplish, in trying to practise which most of the Sadhakas (aspirants) go astray; but all of which I got through by Mother's grace.'⁶

Later on, when he performed the Sadhanas (spiritual disciplines) according to Vedanta under the able guidance of Totapuri, the Guru was surprised to see the rare spiritual calibre of his disciple, who fell into Nirvikalpa Samadhi in a short time. Out of astonishment Totapuri thought, 'Is it indeed true, what I see enacted before me? Has this

great soul actually realized in a day, what I could experience only as a result of forty years of austere Sadhana?'

During the course of twelve years, this wonderful young man performed the Sadhanas of all the principal sects of Hinduism under able teachers, and also practised the disciplines according to Islam and Christianity and realized the ultimate goal of those paths. This is really a very unique phenomenon in the history of religions. Indeed! What must be the psychological capacity of this new man! What must be the spiritual genius of this great Soul! Unfortunately, there is no space enough to scan all the wonders of his life as a Sadhaka; but two incidents may be mentioned for the sake of interest:

When he performed the Sadhana according to the Dasya-bhava (servant and Master attitude) of Vaishnavism, thinking himself as Hanuman (the monkey-god) and Rama as his Master, he passed most of his time on the trees chanting the name of Raghuvir. Due to the intensity of the feeling that he was Hanuman, he later narrated, 'Both my eyes assumed a restless expression like those of the animals of that species, and it is marvellous that the lower end of the backbone lengthened at that time by nearly an inch. . . . In course of time it assumed slowly its previous natural size when the impact of that mood over the mind ceased.'⁷ This is a rare phenomenon indeed. Biologists would be stunned to hear about it. But it took place in the life of this new man.

At another time, when he practised Sadhana according to the Madhura-bhava (attitude of a mistress towards her love) of Vaishnavism, dressing himself like a woman, it was difficult to recognize him as a man. He had become so much attuned in this mood that his body and senses

5. *The Great Master*, p. 141.

6. *The Great Master*, p. 195.

7. *The Great Master*, p. 252.

8. *The Great Master*, p. 158.

naturally functioned like those of women. He had told his disciples later on, 'Blood used to ooze in drops regularly every month [during this period] through the pores of the perineum for three days, like women.'⁹ This was a physiological as well as a spiritual wonder, which shows that he was a new type of human being, who could be a man as well as a woman in the same body. Rightly has one of his disciples written, 'We wonder how these various opposite moods co-existed in him. Who is this multiform (Bahurupi) Master?'¹⁰

Another unique feature of his life was that after learning the secret of a particular path from the teachers, and realizing the goal through it in a short time, the disciple himself had always something to teach them. The disciple becoming the teacher of his teachers is really a unique phenomenon in the spiritual field. This shows that there was something new about him in every respect.

As we have seen, the childhood name of this wonderful boy was Gadadhar, which later became changed to Ramakrishna in his youth. There is, however, a great controversy as to who gave him this name. But that is not our subject here.

Ramakrishna was married in his youth to a little girl named Sarada, who was equally wonderful and pure. Her newness was of a different type. After Shri Ramakrishna had finished all his Sadhanas, Sarada came to stay at Dakshineswar, and lived with him till the last day of his life. One day after her arrival, he worshipped her as a Shodashi Mahavidya (an aspect of the Divine Mother) and surrendered all the fruits of his Sadhanas to her. He always looked upon her as a form of the Divine Mother. Ramakrishna and Sarada have

showed a brilliant example of an ideal householder-cum-sannyasi life. They never had any earthly relation with each other. Even with regard to his married life, he showed something new, and unique to the world.

As days passed by, devotees gathered around him, of whom some were householders and others his would-be apostles— young and pure boys from and round about Calcutta. His Mother had shown him long back that they would come. By this time, this new man had attained such wonderful powers that he could raise anybody's mind to a higher level, and enable him to experience his chosen ideal for some time at least. This he could do either by wish, or by touch or by mere glance. Once he had made the stone image of Kali living for his beloved disciple Narendra, when the latter wanted to beg Her for wealth (which, of course, he could not do).

Renunciation had become a part and parcel of his life. He could not even bear the touch of a metal, consciously or unconsciously. His organs would contract and become stiff, if he happened to touch a metal or a coin even hidden under his bed. He would feel as if a scorpion had stung him. This was a unique feature of his life, unheard and unseen before.

Another speciality of his was that he would always remain in Bhavamukha (on the threshold of the relative and absolute consciousness). After attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi, he was in that state continuously for a period of six months. Externally, he appeared dead to the mortal world. While he was in that state, a sadhu came from somewhere and forced food into his mouth to keep him alive. Then Mother appeared before him and said, 'O, you remain in Bhavamukha!' Since then he used to remain mostly in that state, and his mind would often merge into the Absolute, whenever it got a little stimulus. Ordinary men have gross subject-object consciousness. The

9. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Leelaprasanga*, (Bengali), Sadhaka Bhava, p. 296.

10. *The Great Master*, p. 439.

saints have an illumined subject-object consciousness, which is purer (Sattvika) than the baser (Rajasika and Tamasika) one. Shri Ramakrishna used to come down a little up to the purer one at times. His falling too often into Nirvikalpa Samadhi was a special feature of his own which adds to his newness. Doctors had examined him in this state, and declared that from medical point of view, he was dead.

Sometime in the June or July of 1885, the Master (Shri Ramakrishna) went to a holy place named Panihati, few miles northwards to Dakshineswar. Here he took part in the Kirtans (parties singing devotional songs and dancing) and fell into ecstasy, which changed his whole physiognomy. An eye witness has written: 'We do not remember to have ever seen the divine effulgent beauty which we saw that day in the person of the Master in ecstasy. It is not in human power to describe that wonderful beauty of his divine person. We never imagined before that such change could come on a man's body in the twinkling of an eye under the influence of spiritual emotions. His tall figure as seen by us daily, looked much taller and appeared to be as light as a body seen in a dream. Getting brighter, the light dark colour of his body turned into a fair complexion. . . .'¹¹ Such a transformation of the Master's personality is indeed a unique phenomenon in the religious history of the world.

Towards the end of 1885, the Master fell ill, and his disciples brought him for treatment to the garden-house at Cossipore, a suburb of Calcutta. On the New Year's day in 1886, a miracle happened at the garden-house. The Master had fallen in a state of ecstasy, and blessed by touching many of his householder disciples, as a result of which all of them (except two) had the vision of their own chosen deities in a state of Bhavasamadhi. He had as if be-

come a Kalpataru (wish-fulfilling tree) on this day, and satisfied the spiritual aspirations of his devotees.

Some days later, he had blessed Narendranath by bestowing Nirvikalpa Samadhi to him. He was to be his chief apostle in later life. In the history of Hinduism, this is a rare happening, rather the first of its kind. Blessing Arjuna, Yasoda, Duryodhana and others with the Vishwarupa-darshana (vision of Virāt—the gross cosmic aspect of Brahman) is well known in the life of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, as compared to which bestowing Nirvikalpa Samadhi is something unique and a higher phenomenon in the religious field.

The newness of his message was that after performing Sadhanas of various sects and religions, and realizing the same God through all of them he had declared: 'As many faiths, so many paths (towards God).' He used to say, 'Some address the Reality as Allah, some as God, some as Brahman, some as Kali, and others by such names as Rama, Jesus, Durga or Hari.'¹² In addition to this there are other teachings, which are most original in nature. Like a scientist, he did the practical first and then theorized. This is his newness according to the need of the age.

Swami Vivekananda once had a doubt as to who this mysterious being should be! He had seen his wonderful purity, his grand renunciation, his God-intoxicatedness with a variety of spiritual moods, his often falling into Nirvikalpa Samadhi, his miraculous spiritual power of 'transferring spirituality like a flower,' and raising people's minds, and so on. And the Master had solved his doubt by saying: 'The one [the God] who became Rama and Krishna is (showing his body) in this sheath now, [and that] the spiritual experiences of this (meaning

11. *The Great Master*, p. 825.

12. 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, trans. Swami Nikhilananda, New York: Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, 1942, p. 135.

himself) have gone beyond those recorded in the Vedas and Vedantas.¹³ About him his another disciple has said : 'We have been led to study the unique functioning of his mind, his experiences and activities in comparison with those of great souls like Krishna, Buddha, Sankara, and Chaitanya of India and Jesus and others of other countries. . . . We have been constrained to confess that such an uncommon life in the spiritual world was never seen before.'¹⁴

And after realizing himself the nature of his personality, and the newness of his life and message, his chief apostle had emphatically stated : 'The most compassionate divine Lord has manifested Himself far more fully in this modern age, in the afore-said form of the Incarnation of the age, than He ever assumed in any other age, playing as He has done on the entire gamut of all the spiritual moods and experiences and utilizing to the utmost all arts and sciences. . . . O wise one, take the hint ! . . . This new faith of the age is the fruitful source of all blessings to the world, especially to

India; and Shri Bhagavan Ramakrishna, the founder of this new religion of the age, is the reformed manifestation of the ancient holy founders of the religions of the past. Have faith in it, O man, grasp it !'¹⁵

Thus we have seen in brief the divine birth and the divine life of the new man of the age. He was not only new as regards his spiritual manifestations in his life, but as regards his harmonizing message as well. His disciple has rightly called him Deva-manava, a God-man, the like of whom was never seen, nor ever heard before. About his divine nature, it can be emphatically said : 'The Ramakrishna who was born as the son of Khudiram, is the One who resides in the hearts of all the living beings. It is He again who appears as the whole universe, and the One who is the Transcendental Reality beyond the universe.'¹⁶ Such was the 'new man' of the age.

15. *The Great Master*, p. 326.

16. यो रामकृष्णः क्षुदिराम-पुत्रो
भूतेषु भूतेषु स एव संस्थितः ।
स एव विश्वं निखिलं महान्तं
विश्वस्य पारे च स एव केवलः ॥

13. *The Great Master*, p. 321.

14. *The Great Master*, p. 321.

There is a sentence which I find in Goethe full of meaning in this regard. It must be noted, he says, that belief and unbelief are two opposite principles in human nature. The theme of all human history, so far as we are able to perceive it, is the contest between these two principles. All periods, he goes on to say, in which belief predominates, in which it is the main element, the inspiring principle of action, are distinguished by great soul-stirring, fertile events, and worthy of perpetual remembrance ; and on the other hand, that age is unfertile, unproductive, and intrinsically mean, in which there is no pabulum for the spirit of man, and no one can get nourishment for himself.

— *Carlyle.*

LETTERS OF A SAINT

Math, Belur, Howrah, India
March 29, 1902

My dear Mrs. Janes,

Your kind letter of Jan. 16th was such a comfort. The memory of the dear Doctor will ever be to me a living fountain to draw in inspiration in life's dark and frowning days. The path has not been always of roses since I left you and my dear departed friend, and even now it has improved but little, and often have I thought of him and his steadfast love of duty and truth keep my flagging heart from utter despondency. The world has been blessed and raised higher by his living. Would that there were many like him !

My brother has returned after finishing his studies in England. I am glad to know he has made such favourable impression in you all and especially the loving tribute of dear Marcia. I am sure he would like to send in his cordial regards to you all, had he known, I am writing. He is trying to take up his practice in Calcutta and is well.

I have no objection indeed in your printing my letter. How can I have any, feeling what I do, for our dear friend? I wish only it were not such a poor tribute to the memory of the dear one.

Mrs. Bull is with us for a short visit and has kindly lent all her letters to me to read, giving an account of the service at the studio. I am thankful to have all the details.

The Swami Vivekananda has felt deeply of the loss of your husband. I do not know as he has written you, but he has been seriously ill for a long time and is still under treatment. He feels a little better now but we do not know as [if] he will ever regain his former health. He is suffering from the Bright's disease.

My love to Edith and Marcia please. I am so pleased to hear how the little girl comforted you at Greenacre, May God bless them both !

It is so kind of you to send me the little volume of the Doctor. It will ever be precious to me for the love, which prompted its sending. My thanks to you for the book and the magazine.

It is hard to think you are going back to teaching again. Might be some good will come to you in this even, as the dear doctor used to think of such things, though it seems none the less hard for it to me. My constant prayer therefore is that your path might be made a little smoother and that the dear memory of old days bring such daily comfort and thankfulness in you that you might not feel the thorns in the way. With kindest regards and best wishes, as ever I am,

most truly yours
SARADANANDA.

Math, Belur, Howrah, India
Oct. 18, 1902

My dear Mrs. Janes,

Your kind letter of sympathy, dated Sept. 11 was most welcome. Indeed as you say the passing away of the Swami has been as inspiring and wonderful. He has strengthened us even by his death, though we feel the separation none the less. I send you some more of the press notices.

I am glad to know you have got such a good position in the friend's school and that Edith and Marcia can be with you all the time. My love and blessings to them both.

It is good to know my brother has made such a good impression on you. He is gradually making a good name as a practitioner. Two very difficult cases, which he cured of late has made great impression in the neighbourhood. I am sure he would have sent in his cordial regards to you, had he known, I am writing.

So Mr. Dharmapal is again among you. I hope he will not make as good a name as he did at Greenacre that year.

I might be invited to a Religious Congress in Japan in April next. The Congress will be held amongst the Mahayana Sects of the Buddhists and the different sects of the Hindus. So you see the work of our dear friend Dr. Janes is being taken up to a certain extent by the heathens, whom he loved so well.

Miss Noble (Sister Nivedita) is keeping well. She is now on a lecture tour through western India and has created a good impression everywhere.

With kind regards to you and best wishes as ever, I am,

faithfully yours,
SARADANANDA.

HOLY MOTHER SRI SARADA DEVI—II

MR. A. N. RAY

When Swami Vivekananda decided to go on a long pilgrimage in July 1890, he went to Holy Mother, and asked for her blessings. He said to her, 'I shall come back, if I can return as a man; otherwise, take this to be my last visit.' Holy Mother, startled at his remark, said, 'What are you saying?' Then Swamiji said, 'No, no, I shall return soon by your blessings.' Holy Mother realized the greatness of Swamiji, and saw with her divine eyes his bright future.

Swamiji would fall prostrate at the lotus feet of Holy Mother, while offering saluta-

tion to her. Once he asked Hariprasanna Maharaj (Swami Vijnanananda) to make Pranams (salutations) to Holy Mother. Hariprasanna Maharaj did it by touching her feet. Behind him was standing Swamiji, who said, 'Is that the way of offering Pranams to Mother? Lie prostrate before her, and receive her blessings!'

Of the innumerable devotees who used to come to Holy Mother (Sri Mā), the best illustration is of Nagmahashay. He considered Holy Mother to be the embodiment of a Goddess. Once he came on the Ekdasi day.

Sri Mā had then sat down for her meal. Till then, no male devotees could get her Darshan (interview). They would touch their head on the steps of the house, and offer their Pranams. A maid servant would tell about them to the Mother, and convey her blessings to the devotees. On this particular day when Nagmahashay came to offer his Pranams to Holy Mother, the maid servant rushed to her and said, 'Here is Nagmahashay offering Pranams to you. He is hitting his head on the steps with such a force that his forehead would soon start bleeding. Swami Yogananda is asking him to desist from doing so, but he is paying no heed!' Mother then asked the maid servant to tell Swami Yogananda to send Nagmahashay. Accordingly, Yoganandaji brought Nagmahashay. Mother saw that Nagmahashay's forehead was swollen, and tears were rolling down his eyes. His legs were trembling. He could not even see Holy Mother because of his tears. Holy Mother out of affection, forgetting all her accustomed shyness got hold of Nagmahashay and asked him to take his seat. The only word which Nagmahashay could utter then was 'Mother, Mother!' He appeared to be in a state of madness, but yet he was standing still. Holy Mother wiped his tears, and with her own hand made him eat the food which Holy Mother was to take on the Ekadasi day. Nagmahashay's mind could not be directed towards the food. He could not eat what Mother was giving him. All the time he was uttering 'Mother, Mother', and his hands were touching her feet. The women devotees who were there told Holy Mother that he cannot eat, and therefore he should be asked to leave the place. Holy Mother said, 'No! Let him be a little steady.' She then put her hand on Nagmahashay's head and body and uttered the name of Sri Ramakrishna. Nagmahashay thereby came back to normal consciousness. Then Mother gave him food with her own hands. When he was thus

fed by Mother and when he was going down, he was all the time uttering, 'Nāham Nāham, Tuhu Tuhu.' 'Not I, Not I, (but) Thou, Thou.'

On another occasion, Nagmahashay came to Holy Mother with a basket full of mangoes on his head. The mangoes were of good quality. When he arrived at Mother's house, he would not put down the basket from his head. His intention was, he would make Mother eat the mangoes with his own hands; but he did not speak about it to any one. Swami Yogananda sent news to Mother that Nagmahashay had brought mangoes, but he would not give them to any one. Mother asked the messenger to send Nagmahashay in. He came with the basket on his head, and kept it down on the floor. He started worshipping her lotus feet. Mother saw that Nagmahashay had again become completely oblivious of the external surroundings as before. Mother often used to say, 'It is difficult to find a devotee like Nagmahashay.'

The way Holy Mother gave love and affection to all is unparalleled. The books on Mother's life are full of incidents depicting her unbounded love for the devotees.

A disciple of Holy Mother named Swami Parameshwarananda lives at Jairambati. He is an octogenarian. He came as a young boy to Jairambati and has lived all his life there. The reason is, he always wanted to be, and still wants to be, near Mother. On the very first day he came to her, Mother said to him, 'You are my son, and I am your Mother.' This cord of love binds him with Mother, as thousands and thousands of men and women devotees have been, are, and will be bound to her by the tie of her affection. Mother is described as Bhakta-Janani (the Mother of the devotees). Once Swami Vishveswarananda asked Mother, 'How do you look upon us?' Mother said, 'I look upon you all as Narayana.' He again asked her, 'We are your children. If you look upon us as

Narayana that is not looking upon us as children!' Mother said, 'I look upon you as Narayana, and also as my children.' Many Swamis belonging to the Ramakrishna Order, and the lay devotees, who came in touch with Mother said that when they saw Mother for the first time they felt that they were with their own Mother. When Mother was at Jairambati, there was an old sadhu named Haridas. He would sing Hari Nam on his musical instrument. One morning he came as usual to Mother for some prasad. Mother asked him to take his bath. Afterwards she gave him with affection some puffed rice. Old Haridas was eating and Mother was talking to him and preparing some pans. This was the time of the First World War. There was great scarcity of cloth. Haridas said that he had no cloth to wear. After her bath, Mother had spread her cloth in the sun for drying. It was a new piece of cloth. Mother had used it only for two days. No sooner had Mother heard of the want of cloth from Haridas, than she gave that cloth to him. Haridas became overwhelmed with Mother's kindness and touched the piece of cloth on his head and went back with tears rolling down his cheeks.

One afternoon, a devotee came and asked for some Prasad (food offered to God) from the Mother. The devotee wanted to dry the Prasad in the sun, so that he could take it home. He put it on a plate out in the sun. Mother warned him saying, 'See that crows do not come and touch it.' Later on, the devotee went downstairs and fell asleep. When he woke up, he saw that Mother was keeping a watch on that plate. Then he said with little shyness, 'Mother, you have not taken any rest today.' Mother said, 'No, lest the crows would come, and touch that Prasad which I gave to you, I have been waiting here.'

Mother used to keep the hair of Sri Ramakrishna in a German silver box. Whenever she looked at that box, she would

think of Nivedita because Sister Nivedita had given that box to her. Mother would say, 'Things which my children have given with affection are preserved by me. The price of remembrance is invaluable.' Sister Nivedita had also given a piece of silk shawl to Mother. Years after, the shawl became tattered. But Mother would still preserve it because Sister Nivedita had given it to her.

Ramakrishna Mission is the handiwork of Mother's bounty and blessings on the one hand, and prayer and entreaty to Lord Ramakrishna on the other. Once when Mother was at Bodh Gaya, she prayed to Ramakrishnadev, 'You came. You have done divine miracles, and you have gone away happily. Has everything ended thereby? Then why did you labour and suffer so much? I have seen many monks at Kashi and Vrindavan. They beg to eat and roam about under the shades of trees. I pray that those who will take your name should have nothing to worry about their bread and raiment.' This is how out of Mother's love, the Ramakrishna Math has grown up.

An illustration of Mother's love for the novices joining the Ramakrishna Order is as follows: When a monk at the Koalpara Centre was very strict and rigorous on the residents of the Ashrama, the members of the Ashrama naturally would not like to stay there. Observing their tendency, the Secretary of the Ashrama came to Mother and said, 'Mother, formerly the novices were obedient; but now they do not listen to me. When they go to you or to Sharat Maharaj, you show affection. They also get good food and shelter from you. If you do not give them any room and send them to me, they will be obedient.' Holy Mother was astounded to hear this and said, 'What are you saying! Love is our everything. It is because of love that the universe of the Lord has grown up. How could you come and tell me by way of complaint against my boys?' Just as Holy Mother gave affection, she would equally give the

novices advice in the words of Ramakrishnadev. The advice was : 'You have to adjust yourself and mould yourself with the surroundings. He who endures will find that the Lord is with him.' Mother had firm belief that Ramakrishnadev would Himself preach his ideas through the Mission. Holy Mother would repeat the words of Sri Ramakrishna saying, 'When the southern breeze blows, trees which have substance will become sandal trees. All will become sandal excepting bamboo grove and banana clusters.'

Once on the occasion of the Durga Puja at Jairambati many devotees had come and offered flowers at the feet of Holy Mother. When they all went, Mother called the Brahmacharis and said, 'Bring more flowers. Give flowers in the names of Rakhal, Tarak, Sharat, Khoka, Jogin, Gopal. Give flowers in the names of all my sons who are known and who are not known.' After receiving the flowers with folded hands, Holy Mother looked at the picture of Sri Ramakrishna for a long time and said, 'Let there be good to all in this life and beyond.'

Brahmachari Rashbehari, who later became Swami Arupananda, was engaged in the construction of a new house at Jairambati. One day he went out to a neighbouring village, and could not return for his mid-day meal. It was a winter afternoon. The days were short. He returned a little before sunset. He heard that Mother had not yet taken her food and was waiting for him. In astonishment, he said to her, 'Mother, your health is not good, and you have been on fast till this evening!' Mother said, 'My son, you have not eaten anything. How could I eat?' Could there be greater love than this?

A boy named Rammoy (later Swami Gauriswarananda) was then preparing for his B.A. degree. He used to come to Mother at Jairambati regularly. One afternoon Mother was brushing her teeth, and Rammoy was standing beside her. Nalini Didi

(Mother's niece) all on a sudden said, 'Look aunt, what a nice boy is he ! He has passed Matriculation and Intermediate and is now reading for graduation. His parents are trying to make a man of him by educating him. The boy wants to be a monk. The boy should be thinking of earning to feed his parents.' Mother said, 'What do you understand? They are not crows. They are cuckoos. When they grow up, they know their real mother. They foresake the mother who was fostering them, and fly to their real mother.' This is the foundation of motherly love on which the Mission has been based, and on which the Mission exists for all devotees who have come, and who will come in future.

Mother's love and affection flowed and always flows like the ever flowing Ganga. Sri Ramakrishna had told Sri Ma that a little girl would come and keep her occupied. The little girl who came as Radhu, a niece of Sri Ma, was Yogamaya Herself. After Sri Ma left her mortal coil, a disciple of Sri Ma saw a little girl wearing a red brocade saree in a dream. She told the devotee that she was Radhu. The devotee asked her in dream, 'Are you Radhu?' This little girl replied, 'I am Yogamaya.' Radhu was then ill, and a few days thereafter, she breathed her last.

Mother's daily life, on the one hand, was centred around her relations, devotees, and disciples who were all her children; and on the other Mother's whole being was with Ramakrishnadev. The message that Mother gave to all was fearlessness in the words of the Upanishads. Mother would say, 'What is the fear? Son, always know that the Master is behind you. I am also there. What fear can there be? I am your Mother.' This message was given practical shape by Mother. 'You have come to Mother.' She would say, 'What is the necessity of meditation now? I am doing everything for you all. Now have something to eat and be happy without any worry.' Mother would

impress the necessity of taking the *Ishta Mantra* (name of the chosen deity) in these words: 'Look at that Banyan tree. The seed of the Banyan tree is smaller than the seed of *Lālsāk* (a red leafy vegetable). Out of that little seed a great Banyan tree grows. The name of the Lord is like a small seed. If you have that seed of the Lord's name, gradually you will have devotion, love, emotion, and perception out of that.' Mother would say, 'Mantra and meditation is not all. Devotion is everything. Master is all. He is the Guru. He is the *Ishta*. The Lord cannot be had without love and devotion.'

Once Mother's nephew Shibu, asked her, 'Will you tell me who you are.' Mother said, 'I am your aunt.' Dissatisfied with the answer Shibu stood there. When Mother saw that he was adamant, she said, 'People say, I am Kali.' He then said, 'You are Kali. Is that right?' Mother replied, 'Yes.' Again when people would say, 'You are Mother Jagadamba.' She would say, 'Go away. It is only because the Master out of kindness gave shelter to me that I have survived.' This attitude of self-surrender of Sri Ma shows her complete communion with Sri Ramakrishna. Once, a Swami named Tanmayananda asked Mother, 'If the Master is God, who are you?' Without

waiting for a second Mother replied, 'Who am I? I am also Bhagawati.'

I shall conclude with these words of Swami Premananda: 'Who can really understand the greatness of Holy Mother? We have seen Sri Ramakrishna always God-intoxicated. Mother holds these powers suppressed within herself. Hail Mother! Hail Mother! Hail Mother! the embodiment of Shakti, the Divine Mother! Look at her life, try to understand her. You are all children of the Holy Mother. Try to be worthy of being her children. Then you will find fulfilment. You are Mother's children. Watch and learn. Know that worldly pleasures end in ashes. What great responsibilities you have. Learn to turn your mind toward God and become united with him. Mother has shown you the path. She is the example before your eyes. Know that you have touched the philosopher's stone and have turned into gold. Now it is your duty to turn others into gold. Try to attain that power of spirituality. Be the worthy children of Mother. Always and forever remember that unbounded grace of the Mother in happiness or misery, in good or bad times, in wars and famines. Feel that boundless grace of the merciful Mother. Hail Mother! Hail Mother! Hail Mother!'

(Concluded)

AT THE FEET OF SWAMI AKHANDANANDA¹—XVIII

BY 'A DEVOTEE'

28-1-37 :

Swami Akhandananda was reminiscing: 'Famine relief for about a year in 1897. Then the Orphanage on the roadside for 14 years. Lastly in 1912 our Ashrama of 50 bighas on this land.'

His mind went back to 1886, and after a long interval he said: 'At Cossipore the Master had a vision of a little boy distributing jewels. At first he did not want to

give them away. Later on, he gave them away to the passersby.'

¹. In the last three lines of the XVIIth instalment of this series published in our last issue (p. 13, column 2), the translator suggests the following change in his version: *For*: 'If it were good for that country, I think, I would have plunged into service of those people.' *Read*: 'I, however, think: Had I gone to that country, I would have worked amongst them. There also, I would have plunged like this into service of those people.'—*Ed.*

After some time Baba said to the persons sitting around him on the floor that winter night, 'If you sit on the cold floor, I feel a shivering sensation. If anybody pricks a thorn in his leg, I feel pain. Really, I have felt like this for several years.'

Baba told the story of the 'Loss of the Birkenhead'. The women and the children were allowed to go into the rescue boats and then for want of space, the menfolk sank with the ship singing the national anthem, and then he remarked in conclusion, 'What a discipline!' He went on to tell a story of the boyhood of the Kaiser. He was afraid to touch water and take a bath. His father marked it, and stopped his guard of honour. As a result, the boy used to have a plunge in a pool of water daily. Even the boys can understand, if you touch their self-respect. You can engage them to do some good work by awakening their sense of self-respect.

In reply to a letter from a lady devotee, Baba asked to write to her, 'I feel much pain to hear that you are suffering very much. Always think : I will recover, I am getting well, I am quite well. Our Master used to say, "The poison of a snake ceases to affect us, if we can strongly deny the snake bite."''

For some days, Baba was not keeping well. In reply to someone's question,— How is the condition of your body? Baba replied, 'The body? Oh the body is the first consideration. Then comes the practice of religion and spirituality. The body must be well and fit. That is the root of the four great purposes of life, namely, performance of duties, earning of wealth, fulfilment of desire, and lastly attainment of liberation. But do you know about the unburnt and burnt clay pots in a potter's house? Until the shape of a golden ornament is completed, the mould is necessary. What do you say?'

29-1-37 : *Morning* :

Baba was feeling very weak and was sit-

ting in a kind of grave silence. When somebody asked, how he was feeling, he said, 'What more? Now it's time to turn the eyes. Oh Mother, Tara, Sivasundari (beloved of Siva).'

30-1-37 : *Evening Arati Time* :

One or two devotees were quietly waiting on Baba. Very compassionately he broke the silence just to say, 'Always repeat the Mantra given to you by the Guru.' After another spell of silence, he again said (quoting a song), 'Do everything in a spirit of worship. "While lying down, think that you are bowing down. While sleeping, meditate on the Mother. . . ."'² A fine idea is expressed in the song. After some time Baba got up from the chair. The attendant took him to his bed and he said to him, 'The hands are shivering, the legs are tottering.'

31-1-37 : *Evening* :

Baba called the devotee who was writing down his 'Reminiscences', and told him, 'Finish your evening prayers quickly and come to me at once. My ideas are being written down by you. Is it less than Japam and meditation? This is also His work.' After a long silence he uttered slowly a bit reminiscing, 'Beginning of Sevabrata (the Vow of Service) at Jamnagar, its development at Khetri, and its culmination at Murshidabad.'

1-2-37 :

When the devotees came to make pranams in the morning, Baba frankly told them, 'Yes, the body is very weak.' And then addressing the Master he uttered, 'I am coming my Lord.' Later, he asked his Secretary to write two letters to Bhakti and

². These lines of the Bengali song read as follows :

शयने प्रणाम ज्ञान । निद्राय करो मा के ध्यान ।

Annapurna³ and address them to Colombo, where they were to embark an American-bound ship on February 8.

2-2-37 :

Swamiji's birthday. As the devotees were bowing down to him in the morning, Baba was repeating, 'Victory to the Guru, Victory to Swami Vivekananda.' The Shrine room was full of a divine presence and devotional atmosphere. On the other side of the Ashrama, where Baba was staying, devotees were coming in from Berhampore. At about 12 noon, a lady devotee came with a basket full of fine roses and was about to offer them at the feet of Swami Akhandananda, but he stopped her saying, 'Go and offer the flowers to the Master.' The lady in a very soft but a very determined tone said, 'You are our Master.' The words worked like magic. There was complete change in the attitude of the Swami and he accepted the offering of flowers, and was uttering, 'Thank you, thank you' in a semi-conscious tone. Two attendants were stunned to hear this, for they had read Sri Ramakrishna uttering exactly these words, when some one recognized his divinity. The whole day passed off in an ecstatic mood. Baba did not take any food. In the evening, he was waiting for the light of the Arati to be brought to him. This done he went to bed.

The disciple who cooked his food, came and asked, 'What will you eat tonight?' Baba did not respond. The disciple insisted, 'You have not taken anything today.' Then Baba gave a long list of names of food to be prepared. The disciple went to prepare all the items. Generally, he would call Baba at 9 o'clock. Today he came at 10 but he went back seeing Baba asleep. At 10-30

he came again and called loudly, 'I have brought you food. Won't you take it?' Baba said in mystifying words, 'What will you feed me? I was so long walking with Swamiji in the Heaven. He fed me with nectar. I have no longer hunger or thirst.' The attendant lost his patience and said, 'Tell me whether you will eat or not; otherwise I will take the food away!' At this Baba got up and said, 'Have you prepared all these dishes? All right, bring and I will take them.' The table was arranged. Baba simply put his fingers into the different dishes and touched them with his tongue and said to him, 'I have finished eating; take these away.' The attendants were bewildered by his behaviour, and began to discuss all that had happened during the day, while sitting by the fireside at midnight.

3-2-37 :

Next morning Baba asked the devotees with a smile, 'Did you all get frightened? Oh, that was nothing.' In the afternoon he talked about the education of women, their devotion and quick success in spiritual life. He concluded with a reference to Mirabai.

4-2-37 : *Morning* :

Baba went on adding teaspoonfuls of saccharine to his cup of tea and drank that bitter tea without any remark. That day at 10 o'clock he could not sign the money-order form fully. Somehow he scribbled the letters, A, k, h—one over the other.

At 3 p.m. he said to the engineer, 'Come with the plan for the new guest house.' Accordingly the engineer brought the plan. But when Baba held the blue-print to look at it, his hands began to tremble; and he took leave of the engineer and went to bed.

At 4 p.m. Baba was sitting in the hall in a reclining chair. One or two devotees were sitting near him, and he was telling them, 'Those who are now here with me,

3. Bhakti and Annapurna were the names of two American lady devotees, who had donated large sums of money for the construction of Sri Ramakrishna's temple at the Belur Math.

serving me in various ways, are my own people. They do not want anything. They want me only. Those who do not want anything, they get everything.'

5-2-37 :

Once three persons were asked to go out with a magic lantern from village to village. They left at 8 a.m. Baba, with his eyes wide open, was seeing how they were going. They were very willing to go, but were very meek. Pleased to see them going he remarked, 'See how they are going.' A little later he asked his attendant to bring the manuscripts of his 'Reminiscences' and write down : 'Relief work started at Jamnagar, developed at Khetri, expanded and finalized at Murshidabad.'

Next he wanted to remove his socks, but he could not. When the attendant took off

the socks from his feet, Baba said, 'I want to lie down.' The attendant laid him down to rest and Baba told him, 'Call everyone at 10 a.m.' When everyone came into his room, Baba said, 'I can see your minds clearly, as if I am seeing through a glass case. I bless all those who served me in any way, as well as those who did not serve me, but rather inflicted pain upon me. I bless all those who are near me as well as those who are far away. Bliss be upon all'.

With these words Baba retired to bed.⁴

(Concluded)

4. From this day onward, Baba's health deteriorated gradually. Next day, he was taken to Calcutta by train in that serious condition, in order to arrange for his better treatment. But he entered Mahasamadhi at 3 p.m. on February 7, at the Belur Math.

FORMAL ILLITERACY OF EMPEROR AKBAR

DR. NARESH KUMAR BHATNAGAR

Akbar's life story reads like a fable. Abandoned in a battlefield as an infant, hung from the ramparts of a fort by his uncle to face the guns of his own father, burdened with a shaky kingdom at the age of thirteen, Akbar, although considered as one of the great emperors of the world, was, so far our knowledge goes, not formally educated. Although the adjective Akbar means 'very great' or 'senior',¹ yet the historians have always been admitting the formal illiteracy of Emperor Akbar; and this no doubt surprises the students of Medieval Indian History.

Akbar's infancy had passed in adversity, as his father Humayun had to pass several

years in exile, fighting with his rebellious brothers. Consequently, Akbar's education was neglected, though he was put to schooling at the age of five. The tutor appointed, however, proved incompetent, as he diverted the child's attention towards the art of pigeon flying, rather than learning alphabets. Later on, his successors also tried their best to teach Akbar, but failed. Even Mir Abdul Latif Kazwani, whom Badaoni calls 'a paragon of greatness', and Abul Fazal, 'a man distinguished in science, eloquence, trustworthy and possessed of other noble qualities', failed to interest Akbar in learning the letters.² So Akbar remained illiterate, as he did not apply his mind to reading and writing. In recent years, however,

1. Smith Vincent A., *Akbar : The Great Mogul*, London : Oxford University Press, 1917, p. 11.

2. Shelat J. M., *Akbar*, Vol. I, Bombay : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1964, p. 61.

an attempt³ has been made to prove that he was not completely illiterate. (As for instance, according to M. L. Roy Chowdhury, Akbar was literate.⁴) But the attempt has borne no fruit. Abul Fazal stated that Akbar's 'holy heart and his sacred soul never turned towards external teaching', and Akbar himself says, 'The Prophets were all illiterate.'⁵ Jahangir writes, '... although he [Akbar] was illiterate . . . no one knew him to be illiterate, and he was so well acquainted with the niceties of verse and prose composition that his deficiency was not thought of.'⁶ Father Monserrate and Jesuit Missionaries such as Jerome Xavier and Emmanuel Pinheiro, who remained in touch with Akbar for many years, repeatedly charged him with illiteracy. Du Jerrie says, 'Though he [Akbar] could neither read nor write, he knew everything that took place in this kingdom.'⁷ . . .'

But, when almost all historians opine that though unlettered, Akbar was considerably learned, we do not doubt his learning, but the illiteracy, which requires a solid proof to transform our doubt into a positive belief. Here, however, is a document, marginally illustrated, which may serve as an evidence. This is the front page of the manuscript, the *Zafar Nama* of Timur with illustrations by the famous Persian painter, Ustad Behzad, presented to Akbar by Jamal-ud-din Hussain Anju.⁸ This unique

page was published in *Central Structure of Mughal Empire* by Mr. Ibn Hassan.⁹ This is a unique page for its contents bearing the handwriting of the Emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan as well as the seal of Shah Jahan and of Alamgir. It will be seen from the illustrated photograph that a word 'Furvurdin' (name of a month) near mark (1) was written by Akbar himself as confirmed in the footnote in English of front

His Paintings in the Zafar Nama, London : Messrs. Bernard Quaritch Ltd., (The MS. is in the possession of Mr. R. Garret as appears from the facsimile of the front page of 'Zafar Nama'.) 'Zafar Nama'—'The History of Timur' had been written on Timur's orders in 1401-3 A.D. by Nizam-al-Din Shahi. Calligraphed by the pen of Sher Ali (distinguished for his calligraphy) and decorated with eight miniatures of unparalleled beauty executed by Behzad, it was based on the official records of the reign.

This book 'Zafar Nama' was prized very much by the Mughals and was considered a treasure of the Imperial Library of the Mughals. It was presented to Emperor Akbar at Agra by Mir Jamaluddin Hussain Anju (son of Fakruddin Kashmir, author of Persian Dictionary *Farhang Jahangiri* which he dedicated to Emperor Jahangir in 1605 A.D. He was a descendant of the Sayyads of Shiraz, and came to the Deccan and thence to Agra in 1585 A.D., in the time of Akbar who raised him by degrees to the rank of 3000. In the reign of Jahangir the rank of 4000 was conferred on him with the title of Azd-uddaula.)

The word, 'Furvurdin' (Name of a month) was written by Akbar himself in shan style of calligraphy, revealing the writer's unsteady hand. This fact had been endorsed by Jahangir on the front page of *Zafar Nama* in his own handwriting which runs thus:

'Allah is Great—The book *Zafar Nama* by the pen of Sher Ali and eight miniatures of unparalleled beauty executed by ostad Behzad in his early days (placed) in the Library of His Majesty "Arsh Ashiani" (Akbar) the father of Nuruddin Muhammad (son of Akbar). This word (Furvurdin) is the handwriting of Hadrat "Arsh Ashiani" (Akbar) and Mir Jamaluddin Anju presented it to the Darul Khilafat at Agra.'

⁹. Hasan Ibn.—*Central Structure of Mughal Empire*, London : Oxford University Press, 1936, Facing page 94.

3. Law, N. N., *Promotion of Learning in India During Mohammedan Rule*, By 'Mohammedans', London : Longmans Green, pp. 139-43.

4. *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, March, 1956, pp. 81-89.

5. Fazl Abul., *Ain-e-Akbari*, Vol. III (English Translation by H. S. Jarret), 1896, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, p. 432.

6. *Tuzuk-e-Jahangir or Memoirs of Jahangir*, English Translation by Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge, Delhi : Munshi Ram Manoharlal, 1968, p. 33.

7. Payne, C. H.—*Akbar and the Jesuits*, London ; George Routledge and Sons, 1926, pp. 207-9.

8. Arnold, Sir Thomas Walker, *Behzad and*

page of *Zafar Nama*. Now doubt arises, if it is true that Akbar has written it, then why did all the contemporary authorities including Emperor Jahangir not mention something about Akbar's literacy. On the contrary, they have declared that Akbar was entirely unable either to read or write. In case the word 'Furvurdin' was not written by Akbar himself, then who wrote it? The handwriting differs from other writings on it, which proves that neither Jahangir nor Shah Jahan wrote this word. And it is also certain that in Mughal Period, when the Emperor was head of the state, none less than Emperor could dare to write on this cover page of the *Zafar Nama*. The footnotes¹⁰ of this illustration also indicate that besides Akbar, Jahangir recorded on it the importance, the date and the authenticity of the manuscript, and Shah Jahan ordered it to be kept in his personal library, so that he could study it at times. In this way, this front page of the *Zafar Nama* compels the students of medieval Indian History to keep the problem of Akbar's illiteracy or literacy open for further research. And maybe, some day more solid evidence will come to light in favour of the view that Akbar was not illiterate.

It is no doubt very difficult to accept the view that Akbar was totally illiterate. Because he was a well informed and learned man. In his rich library there were manuscripts written by serious authors concerning Literature, Poetry, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Astronomy, Theology and so on. He was a bibliophile, and a lover of the company of scholars. His memory was very sharp and prodigious. He used to discuss points of philosophy and theology so well that hardly could anyone feel that he

(Contd. on page 67)



The front page of the *Zafar Nama* with the handwriting of the Emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

The front page of the MS. *Zafar Nama* of Timūr, with illustrations by the famous Persian painter, Ustād Behzād, presented to Akbar by Jamāl-ud-din Husain Anjū.

(1) The word 'Furvurdin' as endorsed by Jahāngir, was written by Akbar himself.

(2) *a* and *b*, Jahāngir's handwriting. He records the importance, the date, and the authenticity of the MS.

(3) Shāh Jahān's handwriting. He acknowledges the importance of the MS. and orders it to be kept in his personal library so that he may at times study it.

(4) is Shāh Jahān's seal and (5) that of Alamgir.

This is a unique page for its contents. The illustration is from *Behzad and his Paintings in the Zafar Nama* (Sir T. W. Arnold). The MS. is the possession of Mr. Robert Garret,

10. The English footnotes in the photograph were supplied by Sir T. W. Arnold, from whose work *Behzad and His Paintings in the Zafar Nama*, this photograph was taken by Dr. Ibn Hassan for his work *Central Structure of Mughal Empire*.

नूतन मानुष

एसेछे (एक) नूतन मानुष
देखबि जदि आय चले,
(तांर) विवेक-वैराग्य-भुलि
दुइ काँधे सदा भुले ।
श्रीवदने मा मा वाणी
पड़ि गंगा सलिले,
(बोले) ब्रह्ममयि, गेलो मा दिन
देखा तो नाहि दिले ॥

नास्तिक अज्ञानी नरे
सरल कथाय शिखाले,
जेइ काली सेइ कृष्ण,
नाम भेद एक मूले ॥

एकोआ, वाटर, पानि,
वारि नाम देय जले,
अल्ला, गाँड, ईशा, मुशा,
काली नाम भेदे बोले ॥

दीन, धनी, मानी, ज्ञानी
विचार नाइ जाति कुले,
आपन-हारा पागल-पारा
सरले नेहारिले ॥

दुबाहु तुलिये डाके,
आय रे तोरा आय चले,
तोदेर तरे कृपा करे
बसे आछि विरले ;
जतन करि पारेर तरि
बेँधेछि भवेर कुले ॥

A NEW MAN

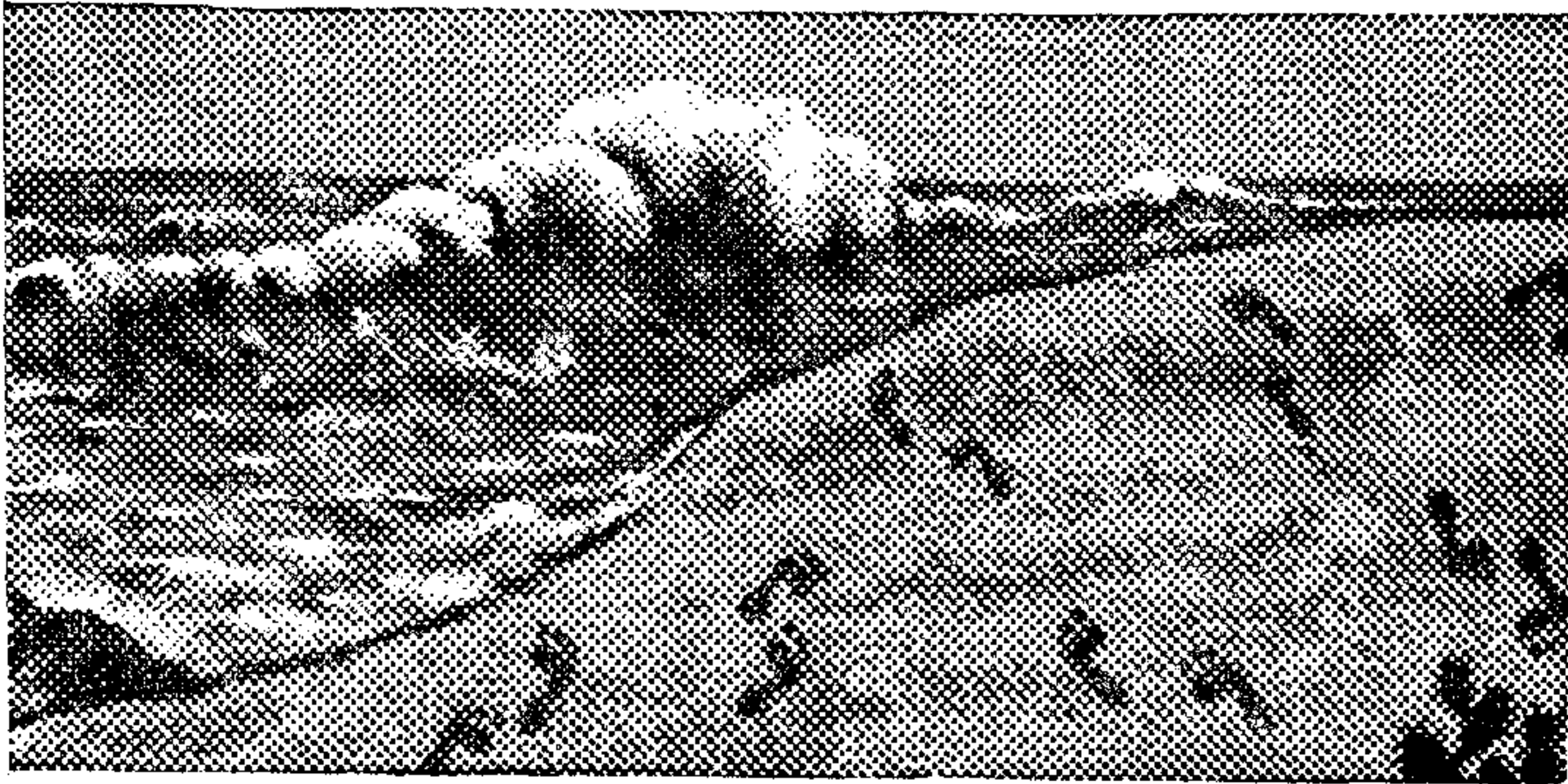
See, a New Man has come :
hasten, friends, if you wish to behold him.
Ever slung from his shoulders are the two
satchels
—dispassion and discrimination.
With 'Ma, Ma !' in his blessed mouth,
he tumbles into Gangā's waters.
'Mother Divine !' he cries ; 'another day
has gone
and thou hast not bestowed on me
the vision of Thee !'

Unbelievers, unlettered, and all,
in simple language he taught them :
'That which is Kali is verily Krishna :
name differs, essence is one.'

Aqua, Water, Pāni, Wāri
—a different name for water the same ;
Allah and God and Jesus,
and Moses and Kali also,
are the various names they utter.'

Honoured and learned, the rich and the poor,
he makes no distinction between them ;
nor looks he to caste or to pedigree either.
Lost to self, completely crazed
—thus he appears to ordinary view.

Raising both hands he calls,
'Come ; oh, come all of you soon.
Out of grace for you I sit here alone.
With care I have tied to the shore of Samsāra
the boat to carry you over.'



HUMAN TRENDS

ON PROGRESS AND FREEDOM

SWAMI YOGESHANANDA

Where is man going? What is he seeking? What is his purpose of life? What are we really looking for? What is the meaning of life? Too many questions, you say. How about some answers? Vedanta always asks questions; but that does not mean it has no answers to offer. Let us hear some.

We are going toward Freedom. Freedom is the simplest, broadest concept—under which we can grasp the goal and meaning of life. Everyone wishes to be free—to feel that he is unlimited, unhampered—but he often mistakes the locus of that freedom, trying to find it in the finite. Not only do we seek Freedom, we also want to be absorbed in it, to be one with it; for Freedom is something which, having once found, one cannot remain apart from.

Is this pursuit universal? Yes, from the least complicated virus, say the Vedantists, up to the most exalted human being, god or angel, all without exception seek this Freedom, aware of it or not. The whole creation is going through this intricate process of evolution for just one purpose: to get out of it, to be free. The virus tries to escape the clutches of the predatory bacterium; the giraffe extends its freedom by lengthening its neck and reaching the higher leaves; the politician seeks office, thinking

freedom means power. All are reading the same message in their respective languages. Sometimes we put it another way; all growth is from inside out; there is *That* at the heart of life, call it what you will, which is latent in each individual and cannot rest until it has completely manifested itself. To do this, it takes life after life, age after age, wearing now the garb of inorganic compounds, tomorrow the form of the amphibian, next dressed as man, finally shining like a Christ, or a Buddha, until at last it wakes up and laughs at the whole thing as a wondrous dream.

Why don't we all know that this is our goal? Granted, the animals might not know about it, but shouldn't intelligent human beings be aware of this? First, we must reply, some are—we call them sages. Where we blindly struggle, they consciously strive toward freedom. Secondly, it is said, there is something, a kind of universal ignorance, which we call *maya*. It is a principle which cannot be fully understood; we cannot, for instance, trace its origin. Like darkness, wherever you wish to examine it, you have to take a light, which chases it away. This gives us the Vedantic definition of knowledge as that powerful corrosive, the presence of which ignorance cannot endure, and it gets dissolved. How *maya* bound us,

so to speak, we do not know, but we do know that we can get out of it. The sages have told us so and have demonstrated it in their lives.

Is each of us, then, going there separately, or is it a co-operative venture?

Probably both. Certainly we are going as individuals. Something called the soul, temporarily having identified itself, through ignorance, with name and form, is struggling to tear off the veils which stand between it and the Reality, is being born and dying again and again, until, reaching the human plane, through the light of intelligence (and the working of grace !), awakening can take place. Like the air-bubbles at the bottom of a kettle of boiling water, each rises through the water to its own liberation. Still, the rise of one tends to stimulate the rise of others ; and given sufficient time, all the water will boil off and everyone be liberated. It is a mistake, however, to think that Vedanta, as we understand it, cares only for the development of the individual and nothing for the well-being of society. India does not, indeed, make the sovereign, independent individual the basic unit of the society, as does the West. She conceives the freedom of man as spiritual more than social. It is the man of self-control, of self-restraint, who is truly free, and not the libertine. The man of virtue, of dispassion, calmness, compassion and service is the *desideratum* of the social structure, and it is for him that the whole of society was supposed to be organized. That structure was a ladder by which one might climb to the heights of spiritual excellence. The movement of the life-force in man was to be upward, so far as possible. The higher-born the man, the greater his social restriction. The old India was an incubator, so to say, for the production of men and women of illumination, persons of paramount character, conduct and courtesy, persons free from the limitations of ignorance and desire, firmly grounded in Self-knowledge. And this is still true today.

What is meant by progress? We in the West, whatever words we may use about ourselves, in practice think that when cars and aeroplanes run faster, our houses are kept hotter, our streets cleaner, our work minimized by a thousand labour-saving devices—then our society is making progress. Very slowly we are learning that progress must show itself in the fruits of the inner life as well. How peaceful has your mind become? How little can you live on? How few are your demands upon others? What care have you taken to set ideals before your children? Have you set them an example in yourself? Is your mind moving daily toward greater renunciation—of possessions, lust, power, ego-claims—all the things Death himself will take away one day in any case? These, according to Vedanta, are the tests of progress. It is with some justification that the Hindu claims his society has endured because in it the highest truths were made practical. This is what makes a society great : its corporate ability to produce men and women who have realized the Truth. Social progress, valuable as it may be in terms of ideals, is, from the highest standpoint a dubious phrase at best. 'Dark light' ; 'hot ice' ; how much reality in them? The world itself is only that : a mixture of the pairs of opposites, ignorance and knowledge, pleasure and pain, health and disease. As we have heard from Swami Vivekananda, we can push the evil around, but never push it 'out'.

Is social work then futile? We have to do work, the *Bhagavad-Gita* says. But all the work we do is ultimately subjective, being for our own benefit. A church once put up on its bulletin board this sign : Wanted : reformers—not of others, but of themselves. Our bondage in ignorance is sustained by our own actions. 'Do not create further illusion', our philosophy tells us, by 'helping' anyone. This is not obscurantism. Think of it this way : every being is really the Spirit, is God Himself, wearing

a name and a form. Can you help God? You can serve Him, yes; that is moral exercise for you, and worship besides. It is the philanthropist, says Swamiji, who must get down on his knees and thank the pauper for allowing him to serve him.

Who can show us the way to this freedom? Who can release us from the many evils that beset us? The answer follows from what has been said. It is those souls we spoke of, who have escaped from *maya's* shadow, who stand now as beacon-lights in the darkness around us—the Christs, Buddhas, Ramakrishnas and Vivekanandas. Only he who has solved his own problem can solve the problems of others, or of humanity in the round. Can ambitious, self-glorifying, passion-ridden, ignorant or presumptuous men propose to lead mankind out of this condition into a better one? Will it happen by chance?

Can a society produce such persons today? If so, how? It *has* in ages past, and so it can today, if it is willing to pay the price. Indian civilization has made its own kind of sacrifices for this; others will perhaps make theirs in different forms, but sacrifice there will have to be. Western society must now ask itself: Can we produce such persons and still go on living this heedless life, according to the one-life theory: eat, drink, and be merry, regarding ourselves as bodies, clever animals who go on building their own superior cages in this human zoo? A society must change its

whole conception of itself, and of its members, in order to produce freed souls. Divinity is lying dormant here in the organism, so to speak. To help it manifest itself, the Guru-system arose, which is the way in which our religion is propagated. In the *varnashrama dharma*, society is so constructed that in the early part of a person's life he is to fulfil the basic longings for economic Security, emotional gratification—having a partner, home and offspring—all under the aegis of righteousness. Then, with life more than half-spent, a man was to withdraw himself from possessions and indulgences, seek solitude, search for a guru, practise spiritual disciplines under his direction, and strive for *moksha*—the freedom, which is his true nature. This was the pattern for individual life and for society. If the genuine spiritual impulse comes, it will not much matter whether a culture uses old patterns or invents new ones.

What is the answer to the special problems of our time—violence, crime, addiction, perversion, slipping standards everywhere? Vedanta says, all growth has to come from within. No lasting benefit can be wrought in a society by forcing upon it patterns from outside. All reforms, which attempt to operate from the top down—whether fascistic, communistic, socialist or capitalist, idealist,—will effect little unless spiritual awakening becomes a commonplace of our culture. This is the cardinal principle of Vedantic thought with regard to man and human trends.

When a man has restrained the turbulent passions of his breast by the power of right judgment, and has spread the garment of soft compassion and sweet contentment over his heart and mind, let him then worship divine serenity within himself.

TRIPLE BONDAGE AND TRIPLE LIBERATION :

A STATEMENT OF THE VISISTADVAITA VIEW*

N. JAYASHANMUKHAM

1. *The Original nature of the soul :*

The Jīva or individual soul, according to Viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified non-dualism), is infinitely small and yet it is infinite in its range. It is infinitely small in so far as it is a substantive consciousness ; its range is infinite in so far as it has an attributive consciousness which is all-pervasive. There is no contradiction between the infinitesimal soul and its all-pervasive consciousness. They are related to each other as a flame and its luminosity. Brahman, like the Jīva, is substantive as well as attributive consciousness. But unlike the soul, Brahman is infinite both as substantive consciousness and attributive consciousness. Though they differ from each other, they are inseparable (*avibhājya*). Through the attributive consciousness, which in both cases is infinite, Brahman and the Jīva are included in each other. Brahman is included in the Jīva as its Atman—*śarīrin* (possessor of the body) ; and the Jīva is included in Brahman as Its body, *śarīra*. As the attributive consciousness is responsible for mutual inclusion, the substantive consciousness accounts for the individuality of each.

2. *The phenomenal condition of the soul :*

The Jīva, which belongs to Brahman, somehow superimposes on itself the idea that it belongs to matter or Prakṛti and 'descends' into the phenomenal condition with a material body. It is now subject to the influence of *avidyā-karman*, the principle which phenomenalizes the non-phenomenal self. When the self is phenomenalized, it is the attributive consciousness that is affected. The substantive consciousness of the self remains pure and unaffected by the influence of *avidyā-karman*. Though we talk of

phenomenalization of the self, we are unable to explain what in the self really predisposes to such a 'fall'. It is said that the operation of *avidyā-karman* is *anādi* or without beginning. It is a frank admission that its origin cannot be explained either temporally or logically. Ramanuja tries to explain it with the help of the analogy of 'a young prince who in his boyish way strays away from his royal father, enters into the huts of wild tribes and identifies himself with them' (*Śrī Bhāṣya*, I.1.4). Ramanuja resorts to the parable because he finds it difficult to offer a rational explanation of the fall of the soul. It is a common problem to all Indian philosophers. All of them admit in one way or other that it is not possible to discover the conditions that are really responsible for the fall of the soul from its original non-phenomenal state. Therefore Ramanuja asks us to look at the problem from the practical rather than from the theoretical point of view. Phenomenalized, the self is bound to the wheel of *samsāra* (relative existence) and the consequent suffering and evil. Hence what is urgently needed is freedom from the ills of *samsāra* and not logical analysis of the cause of *Samsāra*.

* Almost all expositions of Viśiṣṭādvaita seem to overlook one important point. From the point of view of practice, it is insisted that all the three Yogas—Karma, Jñāna, and Bhakti are necessary in so far as they supplement each other. But little thought is given to the need for a *theoretical or metaphysical basis* in the system, which would justify such a combination of three Yogas. Not that the system is lacking that basis. It is present, but in an *implicit* form. It is the scholar's work to bring it to clear light and emphasize its relevance. It is needless to say that here we have addressed ourselves to this very task.

3. *The three knots of bondage :*

Liberation of the soul consists in raising the Jīva out of the present conditions of phenomenal existence and restoring it to the original form of non-phenomenal existence. An analysis of the phenomenal conditions of the self reveals that there are three knots which are responsible for binding the self to the wheel of *samsāra*. In fact the three knots are the three successive levels of operation of *avidyā-karman*, one compounding the mischief of another.

1. The knot of ego-consciousness : It is a condition under which the self imagines itself to be a separate and self-sufficient entity. 2. The knot of body-consciousness : It is an immediate consequence of the first. Here the self believes that it is a material entity subject to all the conditions and limitations of matter. 3. The knot of desire-consciousness : It is a further consequence of the first two knots. Now the Jīva is under the impression that the aim of its active life is to further the values of body-consciousness as well as ego-consciousness. Here the order of knots is presented from the point of view of the phenomenalizing principle. Therefore in dissolving the knots the reverse order is to be followed. By loosening the last knot the second is loosened, and by loosening the second the first is also loosened. When all the three knots are thus loosened, the self is in a position to put an end to the operation of *avidyā-karman* and to get back to its original non-phenomenal condition.

4. *The three steps and three means to liberation :*

Having identified the knots, Viśiṣṭādvaita provides the necessary means to dissolve them. As there are three knots there are three levels of and three means to liberation.

(a) *Liberation from desire-consciousness :* When the self is involved in its activities in

order to fortify the interests of ego-consciousness and body-consciousness, it is bound by desire-consciousness. Karma-Yoga is recommended as the appropriate means to cut this knot. Karma-Yoga consists in doing our actions in a spirit of detachment. In other words, it consists in doing our actions by giving up the idea that the consequences of our actions belong to us. This is known as *niskāma-karma* or *karmaphala-tyāga*. When the idea about the consequences of our actions is effectively removed from our mind, we are liberated from the tendency to fortify the hold of the other two knots. And as a result we become free from desire-consciousness.

(b) *Liberation from body-consciousness :* With the elimination of the first reinforcing factor it becomes easier to deal with the rest of the knots. The next in the order is the knot of body-consciousness. Jñāna-Yoga is the right means to destroy this knot. Jñāna-Yoga consists in gradually separating the self from its false identification with the body through a process of discrimination, *viveka*. To discriminate is to firmly establish the consciousness that the self is above the modes of matter or Prakṛti,—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Already with the elimination of desire-consciousness a sufficient mastery over the influence of the *rajas* has been acquired. Now through the method of *viveka* all the modes of Prakṛti are brought under complete control. As a result, the mind falls silent and the self realizes that it is a conscious entity to which the qualities of matter or material body do not at all belong. This brings about freedom from body-consciousness.

(c) *Liberation from ego-consciousness :* Freedom from body-consciousness immediately leads to self-knowledge—*Ātma-jñāna*. It is indeed a higher form of freedom and realization. But it is not the highest. Because the self is not yet free from the sense

of being a separate and self-sufficient entity. The realization that it is only a Jīvātman housing the Brahman as the supreme Self is yet to come. Bhakti-Yoga is the suitable means to bring about the shift from self-knowledge to God-knowledge—*brahmajñāna*. It consists of constantly remembering that Brahman is the supreme Self of which the finite self is the body or *śarīra*. This is known as *brahmopāsanā*. When remembrance deepens into an uninterrupted process, it expresses itself as devotion or Bhakti. This leads to the rise of God-knowledge in the self, which marks the freedom from ego-consciousness.

The removal of ego-consciousness does not mean the removal of the self itself. On the contrary, the limited view of the self as excluding the supreme Self is removed by a larger view of the self in which Brahman resides as the higher Self—Paramātman. Therefore liberation from ego-consciousness is a liberation from the limited view into the larger view of the self, *brahmajñāna*.

Here we have to note that works (Karma-Yoga), knowledge (Jñāna-Yoga), and devotion (Bhakti-Yoga) supplement each other.

None of them is self-sufficient to bring about complete liberation, liberation from the triple bondage.

5. Embodied life and liberation :

In fact the partial view of the self or ego-consciousness is dissolved in two stages. First, by opening the self to God-consciousness; second, by an actual entry into the world of God, Vaikuntha. As long as the embodied life continues, the self has a direct vision of Brahman. But when the body falls off and the embodied life on earth comes to an end, the self enters into the world of God. Therefore we may say that the ego-consciousness or the partial view of the self is fully and effectively removed only at the fall of the body. This is known as *videha mukti*.

In Vaikuntha the liberated self realizes its oneness with Brahman gradually through: 1. identity of abode (*sālokya*), 2. proximity (*sāmīpya*), 3. similarity of form (*sarūpya*), and 4. intimate union (*sāyujya*). It should be noticed that even at the highest state of union the self does not lose its individuality. It is absorbed, but not annihilated, in God.

(Contd. from page 60)

was illiterate. He might have been illiterate; but he was educated. Because there is a difference between a literate person, and an educated person. Even an illiterate person might be educated, and vice versa.

In the case of Akbar it is difficult to believe that he was not even familiar with the alphabets of his language. How can a person, who learnt many arts in such a masterly fashion, could not learn either to read or write? It no doubt surprises and disappoints all. Possibly, Akbar's contemporaries including Jahangir charged him with illiteracy, as he did not write much;

although he was well familiar with the alphabets. My conclusion is that Akbar as a boy had learnt the rudiments of reading and writing, but he preferred not to use them—perhaps out of choice, or because to read and write badly was worse than not doing so at all. In this connection, the document illustrated on page 60 gives some rays of hope. It leads us to search for more documentary evidence, still undiscovered. So, to call Akbar illiterate appears to be a historical misnomer. This topic is not yet a closed chapter; but it is still open for further research.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S DISCOVERIES ABOUT INDIA—IV

SWAMI BHAJANANANDA

Vedantic Principle No. 2 :

Anubhuti or Direct Intuitive Experience:

Both science and religion are based on experience. But they differ regarding the order of reality and the type of experience dealt with. Science deals with physical objects and sense experience; whereas religion is chiefly concerned with the transcendental Reality (and man's relation to it), and with supersensuous experience (in addition to sense-experience). This supersensuous experience is of the nature of direct intuition and is gained as a result of revelation. The scriptures of the world like the Bible, the Quran and the Upanishads are the records of such revelations about God. Religions other than Hinduism believe that the revelation of God takes place only once; and this had already happened several centuries ago. But Vedanta believes that the Divine reveals Himself repeatedly to sincere and pure souls irrespective of place and time. It is true that the mystics of all religions lay claim to the direct supersensuous experience of God; but in Semitic religions, this experience is not insisted on as a test and criterion of religion, much less as a pre-requisite for salvation. What these religions insist upon is faith in the original revelation. If a Christian or a Mohammedan believes in his scripture and his Prophet and follows His commandments, his salvation is guaranteed. Vedanta also insists upon faith (*Shraddhā*) but it is only as a preliminary working hypothesis. Without direct supersensuous experience of the Reality one cannot get rid of ignorance and attain Liberation, which is the goal of all religions.

It is this insistence on direct experience (verifiable by the individual at supersensuous planes) that make Vedanta resemble modern science. But then, the resemblance ends

there. The main difficulty about the harmony of religion (even if it is Vedanta) and science is the outright and—as it appears to religious thinkers—the mulish rejection by science of the existence of a supersensuous reality and the possibility of its experience. Anything which cannot be known and measured directly or indirectly through instruments lies outside the ken of science. This rejection is caused by its own concept of truth.

To put it briefly, the criterion of truth, insisted on from Aristotle onwards, is its verifiability. What actually this means is, however, a controversial point. According to G. E. Moore and some of the Neo-realists' Correspondence Theory, it means that a statement to be true must correspond with a fact. Since a proposition cannot be compared with a fragment of reality, but only to another proposition, the criterion of truth, according to Rudolf Carnap and some of the Logical Positivists, lies in the coherence of the new proposition with an already accepted proposition. This is the so-called Coherence Theory, which has become an exercise in intellectual sophistry after the researches of Tarski, Godel, and others. According to the Pragmatic Theory of William James, Schiller and Dewey, the criterion of truth is its applicability in practical life. This last theory now seems to be the main practical support of science. Anything is scientific, if it really works.

Now, science is based on the collection of facts, their classification, impersonal judgement upon their interrelationship, and finally experimental demonstration. Of these steps, collection of facts is the most important one. Facts in order to be facts, must be based upon accurate observation, free from human prejudices and deficiencies.

It was once supposed that it was possible to make a 'pure' observation. But as Karl Popper⁵² has shown that this 'pure' observation unalloyed by any prior theorizing is a myth. He has proved that our simplest observations are an inextricable web of inferences and implied hypotheses. To look, to listen, to taste means asking loaded questions. You cannot even start collecting observations unless you first connect them to a problem, or to a purpose. Every observation could be full of errors, and the purpose of experiments is not to verify the truth of anything, but to eliminate errors. Where has this process of error-elimination led the scientists?

The concept of matter has changed from atoms to particles, from particles to waves, and, now, from waves to fields. The latest tendency is to picture an electron as a field and all quantum events as what are called Feynman's World Lines. The principle of verifiability itself has received a severe jolt with the discovery of Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty.

On the other hand, the well known Austrian logician Kurt Godel has shown that complete formalization of the scientific knowledge is impossible. His celebrated theorem states that, if any logical system that includes arithmetic contains a proof of its own consistency, it would also contain one of its own inconsistency. Tarski has shown that if a language is sufficiently rich, as for instance, by including arithmetic within it, then there cannot exist a general criterion of truth. The very term 'Truth' has thus been found difficult to define within the framework of science and Western philosophy.

The main difficulty about the problem of Truth and the meaning lies in the fact that it is inseparable from consciousness. No serious attempts have been made by the

scientists to understand what consciousness is. Scientists generally take consciousness to be a property of the brain cells, and thus call it as a part of the material world. Thoughtful men have protested against this lopsided view of the reality. The well known astro-physicist Arthur Eddington has said, 'That to which truth matters must have a place in reality.' Dr. Radhakrishnan points out, 'What gives value to scientific discoveries is derived from a source other than science itself.'⁵³ What is this source? Can science find this out? To this Max Planck answers:

Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature. And that is because, in the last analysis, we ourselves are part of the mystery we are trying to solve. The most penetrating eye cannot see itself any more than a working instrument can work on itself.⁵⁴

And Einstein has said :

Objective knowledge provides us with the powerful instruments for the achievements of certain ends, but the ultimate goal itself and the longing to reach it must come from another source.⁵⁵

This view of so many enlightened scientists has been very clearly summarized by Lincoln Barnett in his book *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* as follows :

In the evolution of scientific thought, one fact has become impressively clear ; there is no mystery of the physical world which does not point to a mystery beyond itself. . . . For man is enchained by the very condition of his being, his finiteness and involvement in nature. The further he extends his horizons, the more vividly he recognizes the fact that, as the physicist Niels Bohr puts : "We

⁵³. Dr. Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Culture*, Hind Pocket Books, p. 94.

⁵⁴. Max Planck, *Where Science is Going*, trans. James Murphy, London: George Allan & Unwin, Ltd., 1933, p. 217.

⁵⁵. Albert Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, New York : Philosophical Library, 1950, p. 22.

⁵². Byran Maggee, *Popper*, London : Fontana Collins.

are both spectators and actors in the great drama of existence.' Man is thus his own greatest mystery. He does not understand the vast veiled universe into which he has been cast for the reason that he does not understand himself. He comprehends but little of his organic processes and even less of his unique capacity to perceive the world around him, to reason and to dream. Least of all does he understand his noblest and most mysterious faculty: the ability to transcend himself and perceive himself in the act of perception.⁵⁶

It is in this context that the importance of the Vedantic concept of direct intuitive experience looms large. According to Vedanta, the source of existence does not lie in the objects, but in the self of man. Every perception and thought is connected with the 'I'. If there is any 'pure observation' unaffected by preconceived ideas, it is self-intuition. As Shankara points out, a man may doubt anything but not his own self. It is based on this incontrovertible self-evidence (*svatah-prāmānya*) of the Self that Vedanta builds up its great philosophical edifice. Beginning with the empirical self, Vedanta takes man into higher and vaster dimensions of the self until the infinitude of consciousness called Brahman, which is of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, is reached. The technique of achieving this ultimate Reality is called Yoga, of which there are four main types—Karma-Yoga, Raja-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, and Jnana-Yoga. Although some of these techniques are known in other religions as well, Hinduism alone has systematically worked out their details. What is common to all these Yogas is the great importance attached to self-knowledge either as the goal or as a pre-requisite to the attainment of the realization of the ultimate truth. Truth is inseparable from Being or Self, and can be

directly experienced only by an enlargement of consciousness. Swamiji said:

Consciousness is bound by the senses. Beyond that, beyond the senses, men must go in order to arrive at truths of the spiritual world, and there are even now persons who succeed in going beyond the bounds of the senses. These are called Rishis (seers), because they come face to face with spiritual truths.⁵⁷

Another field of human life, where the concept of Anubhuti or direct experience has great importance is man's struggle to overcome sorrow and boredom. One of the services rendered by the school of Western philosophy known as Existentialism is that it focussed the attention of the philosophers to the day-to-day problems of life. According to the existentialist philosophers like Heidegger, Sartre, Camus and others, the chief characteristic of human life is anguish or suffering. Vedanta accepts the empirical truth of this finding, but shows a way out of this to a transcendental state of existence, in which one goes beyond sorrow and experience boundless joy and fulfilment. Unlike other religions which point to a heaven somewhat out there, where one may enjoy unalloyed bliss after death, Vedanta asks us to solve our existential problems right here in this world. According to Vedanta, happiness is the very characteristic of the self of man. It lies neither in the external objects, nor in the mind. The cause of sorrow is the identification of the self with the external objects, or with the mental images. When the self is detached from all these extraneous identifications, it realizes its own inherent bliss. This experience of supersensuous and supramental happiness is the goal of human life. It gives man complete fulfilment and quenches his otherwise insatiable thirst for happiness. This is not a mere theory, as thousands of illumined souls

⁵⁶. Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, New York: The New American Library, Mentor Books, 1950, pp. 126-27.

⁵⁷. *Comp. Works*, Vol. III, p. 253.

have proved, but something that can be directly experienced.

The Vedantic doctrine of Anubhuti (direct experience) has thus a twofold practical application. In the first place, it provides a solution to man's existential problem of sorrow; and secondly, it fulfils man's search for meaning and Truth. It has a great part to play in the alleviation of sorrow, boredom, meaninglessness, agnosticism and atheism in the contemporary world. That was why Swami Vivekananda with so much emphasis proclaimed to the world :

If there is a God we must see Him, if there is a Soul we must perceive it; otherwise it is better not to believe. It is better to be an outspoken atheist than a hypocrite.⁵⁸

Again, Swamiji said :

If there is one universal truth in all religions, I place it here—in realizing God. Ideals and methods may differ, but that is the central point. There may be a thousand different radii, but they all converge to the one centre, and that is the realization of God; something

behind this world of sense, this world of eternal eating and drinking and talking nonsense, this world of false shadows and selfishness. There is that beyond all books, all creeds, beyond the vanities of this world, and it is the realization of God within yourself. A man may believe in all the churches in the world, he may carry in his head all the sacred books ever written, he may baptize himself in all the rivers of the earth, still, if he has no perception of God, I would class him with the rankest atheist.⁵⁹

By this doctrine, Swamiji has taken away the sting from doubt and disbelief characteristic of modern age. Doubt is not necessarily a characteristic of atheism. Vedanta welcomes honest doubt based on a spirit of enquiry. It boldly accepts the challenges of the modern age and invites everyone to embark on an adventure into the spiritual realm. It is this freedom for doubt and experiment and the fascination of spiritual adventure that are attracting more and more sincere people from all over the world to Vedanta.

(To be concluded)

⁵⁸. *Comp. Works*, Vol. I, p. 127.

⁵⁹. *Comp. Works*, Vol. I, pp. 324-5.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON INDIA AND HER FUTURE

(A Compilation)

Holy India :

If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed *Punya Bhumi* (holy land), to be the land to which souls on this earth must come to account for their Karma, the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality—it is India. This

is the motherland of philosophy, of ethics, of sweetness, gentleness, and love. These still exist, and my experience of the world leads me to stand on firm ground and make the bold statement that India is still the first and foremost of all the nations of the world in these respects. The debt which the world owes to our Motherland is immense. If I ask myself what has been the cause of India's greatness, I answer, because we have never conquered. That is our glory. Amongst all races of the world, from the

earliest time in history, India has been called the land of wisdom. For ages India itself has never gone to conquer other nations. Wisdom and philosophy do not want to be carried on floods of blood. Wisdom and philosophy do not march upon bleeding human bodies, do not march with violence but come on the wings of peace and love, and that has always been so.

Indian National Ideals :

The National ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels, and the rest will take care of itself.

Her Future :

Therefore, whether you believe in spirituality or not, for the sake of the national life, you have to get a hold on spirituality and keep to it. Then stretch the other hand out and gain all you can from other races, but everything must be subordinate to that one ideal of life ; and out of that a wonderful, glorious, future India will come—I am sure it is coming—a greater India than ever was. . . . On our work depends the coming of the India of the future. She is there ready waiting. She is only sleeping. Arise, awake, and see her seated here on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was—this motherland of ours. And may He who is the Shiva of the Shaivites, the Vishnu of the Vaishnavites, the Karma of the Karmies, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jina of the Jains, the Jehovah of the Christians and the Jews, the Allah of the Mohammedans, the Lord of every sect, the Brahman of the Vedantists, He the all-pervading, whose glory has been known only in this land—may He help us, may He give strength to us, energy unto us, to carry this idea into practice.

It is will that is the power. It is the man of strong will that throws, as it were, a halo round him and brings all other people to

the same state of vibration as he has in his own mind. Such gigantic men do appear. . . . When a powerful individual appears, his personality infuses his thoughts into us, and many of us come to have the same thoughts, and thus we become powerful. . . . Therefore, to make a great future India, the whole secret lies in organisation, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills.

In the interest of one's own nation is one's own interest ; in the well-being of one's own nation is one's own well-being. Without the co-operation of the many, most works can by no means go on—even self-defence becomes an impossibility. . . . But piercing through the mass of whatever good or evil there may be is seen rising the sure emblem of India's future prosperity—that as the result of action and reaction between her own old national ideals on the one hand, and the newly-introduced strange ideals of foreign nations on the other, she is slowly and gently awakening from her long deep sleep. Mistakes she will make, let her ; there is no harm in that ; in all our actions, errors and mistakes are our only teachers.

Above all, be not inflated with my success or yours. Great works are to be done ; what is this small success in comparison with what is to come? Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy. Rejoice that you are the chosen instruments in His hands.

This is the land of Religion Eternal. The country has fallen, no doubt, but will as surely rise again, and that upheaval will astound the world. The lower the hollows the billows make, the higher and with greater force will they rise again.

India will be raised, not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit ; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love. . . . One vision I see clear as light before me, that the

ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on Her throne—rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim Her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.

I too believe that India will awake again, if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country—bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, down-trodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome, and envious. Then only India will awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance.

Let New India arise—out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains.

A mighty tree produces a beautiful ripe fruit. That fruit falls on the ground, it decays and rots, and out of that decay springs the root and the future tree, perhaps mightier than the first one. This period of decay through which we have passed was all the more necessary. Out of this decay is coming the India of the future; it is sprouting, its first leaves are already out, and a mighty, gigantic tree is here, already beginning to appear.

The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears

to be awaking, and a voice is coming to us—away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were, from peak to peak of the infinite Himalayas, of knowledge, and of love, and of work,—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining in volume as days pass by, and behold, India, this Motherland of ours, the sleeper is awakening! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see that she is awakening, this Motherland of ours, from her deep, long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet. . . . Up, up, the long night is passing, the day is approaching, the wave has arisen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury.

O India! . . . forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate; the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian, and proudly proclaim, "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother." Thou, too, clad with but a rag round thy loins, proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice: The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, . . . India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age.' Say brother: "The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good."

—*Compiled from The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Sri Ramakrishna Reminisces: Swami Sarveshananda has compiled these reminiscences from: 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Pub. by Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1947); and Swami Saradananda: *Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master* (Madras, 1970). References—*Gospel* : No. 1, p. 858 ; No. 8. 2, p. 227 ; No. 3, pp. 548-9 ; No. 4, p. 296 ; No. 5, pp. 313-4 ; No. 6, p. 815 ; No. 8, p. 724. *Great Master*: No. 7, p. 376.

Onward For Ever: The words quoted under this column are from *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, Vol. IV, 1972, p. 187.

The Editorial: As a matter of fact, every man is a new man in some way or the other; and it is more so, when God comes down to the earth in human form. In this editorial the newness of the divine personality of Sri Ramakrishna has been shown from spiritual as well as psycho-physiological point of view. He had surpassed all the previous Incarnations and Saints in his spiritual manifestations. Both, the man and his message are new, and according to the need of the age. These points have been discussed in the editorial at length in the light of various events of Sri Ramakrishna's life.

Letters of a Saint: We are thankful to Swami Bhashyananda of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago; and Mrs. Chas. Lytle of Chicago, for these hitherto unpublished letters.

At the Feet of Swami Akhandananda—XVIII: This series, started from the January 1974 issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, is coming to a close in this issue. It was published in the *Udbodhan*, a Bengali monthly of the Ramakrishna Order under

the name "Bhakter Diary", and was very much liked by the readers. At our request, 'the Devotee', who is an initiated disciple of Swami Akhandananda, has very kindly translated it for our Journal. Hope our readers have found it illuminating and interesting.

Formal Illiteracy of Emperor Akbar: Akbar is well known for his greatness; not only because he was the Emperor of India, but also for the qualities of his heart and head. Some historians believe that he was illiterate, because he could not read or write. The present writer Dr. Naresh Kumar Bhatnagar of Dehra Dun, has tried to show in his research paper that Akbar had learnt the alphabets of his language, but he preferred not to read or write for the fear of getting himself exposed.

A New Man: This is a free translation of the original Bengali song about Sri Ramakrishna composed by Sri Devendranath Majumdar, a householder disciple of the Master. The English rendering has been done by Swami Parahitananda of the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. As the song has been printed here in *devanāgarī* script, the spellings of some words have been given as they are pronounced in the Bengali language, for the convenience of the non-Bengali readers.

On Progress and Freedom: Every living individual craves for freedom, and struggles to attain it by hooks or crooks. In the world, thinkers have their own ideas about 'progress'; and they have their own ways for achieving it. Swami Yogeshananda, of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, U.S.A., in this write-up points out the Vedantic conception of Progress and Freedom, and the Vedantic way of attaining them.

Triple Bondage and Triple Liberation: According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified non-dualism) view, every Jīva is bound by three knots: 1. the knot of ego-consciousness; 2. the knot of body-consciousness; and 3. the knot of desire-consciousness. In order to cut these three knots, there are three different means prescribed by their Acharyas. For instance : Karma-Yoga for cutting asunder the knot number three; Jnana-Yoga for knot number two; and Bhakti-Yoga for the knot number one. Thus liberation of a Jīva takes place in three stages. This view of triple bondage and triple Liberation has been very lucidly described by

Sri N. Jayashanmukham, in this masterly treatise.

Swami Vivekananda's Discoveries About India—IV: Both science and religion aim at the search of the Ultimate Truth; and both believe in 'direct experience' as the best means for realizing that Truth. But their methods, and conceptions differ from one another. The former depends upon the senses as a means for this direct experience, while the latter believes only in the intuitive super-sensuous experience, which demands the transcendence of the realm of senses. Swami Bhajanananda is deliberating on these points mainly, in this part of the treatise.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TEXTBOOK OF YOGA : BY GEORG FEUERSTEIN. Published by Rider & Co., 3 Fitzroy Square, London, W-1, 1975. pp. xiv-178, Price £ 4.25 net. (U.K. only).

This well-produced book aims 'at being as comprehensive as possible without allowing the breadth to encroach on the depth of treatment'. (Preface). Whatever the aim, the author has the frankness to confess, 'The present work is no more than a modest attempt, and whatever is captured on the following pages is merely provisional.' (Preface). The language is pithy and smooth. The speciality of the treatment is that it achieves a kind of survey of the field of study. After a preliminary explanation of terminology, we are given an idea of the different types of Yoga such as Raja-Yoga, Hatha-Yoga, and Integral-Yoga. This is followed by an account of 'fundamental presuppositions of Yoga'. The reviewer feels that the treatment of this (well-expressed) topic is inadequate. We are just told of the universality of suffering and the law of moral causation in terms of rebirth, followed by the concept of emancipation. There is another vital presumption, however, which seems to be here overlooked, namely, that human bondage is due to ignorance. This ignorance is to be removed by enlightening, employing not merely the intellect,

but spiritual perception. This important point which we miss in the author's treatment is in fact the heart of Yoga, conceived either as philosophy or religion.

Following this, we have an extensive survey of Yoga from the pre-historic Indus valley civilization, down to contemporary Yoga such as the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. As the canvas is wide, the individual types and periods can get only sketchy treatment. For instance, contemporary Yoga—including that of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi, Sivananda, Sri Aurobindo, and Anandamayi Ma—is finished off in less than two pages ! This is followed by what is relatively a more complete treatment of the classical Yoga of Patanjali and the commentaries on him. In this section there is considerable elaboration. The work is brought to a close with the two chapters on Tantra and Kundalini Yoga.

The author is correct in his modest claims. We have a good provisional survey, mapping out the area for a fuller and intenser investigation and exposition. He may be right in his observation 'that no thoroughly critical and fully equipped textbook on Yoga can as yet be written.' (Preface). Then it would seem better to have found a more fitting title than *Textbook of Yoga*.

PROF. S. S. RAGHAVACHAR
Retired Professor of Philosophy
University of Mysore,

LONG JOURNEY HOME—A BIOGRAPHY OF MARGARET NOBLE (NIVEDITA): BY BARBARA FOXE. Published by Rider & Co., 3, Fitzroy Square, London, W.1, 1975, pp. 239, illustrated, Price £ 3.25, paperback.

'A picture on a postage stamp is intended to honour its subject. . . .', and one issued in India in 1967 bore the photograph of an English lady 'gazing at us with that remote and non-committal expression so typical of the portraits of the loved and respected dead. . . .'

But, the author adds, 'there was nothing remote or non-committal about Margaret Noble'—whose birth-centenary was commemorated by that stamp.

Without further ado, Barbara Foxe, writer and member of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London, penetrates this conventional picture and brings us a lively and reliable account of the life of this daughter of an Irish clergyman, who became transformed into Sister Nivedita, a Hindu *brahmacharini* (nun-novice), selfless and dynamic worker and champion of all things Indian.

The author prefers the *dramatis personae* to speak for themselves, as their words 'have a vivid immediacy of their own'. Cumbersome footnotes have been dispensed with, in order to make the book more readable. Of special interest is the inclusion of some new material, particularly reminiscences of Sister Nivedita's brother, Richmond Noble, as narrated to the author by his son and daughter.

A difficult subject has been handled admirably: even the dilemma of the paradoxical duality of Nivedita's character, is nicely clarified in the following manner: 'Perhaps there was something stormy in her own nature which responded to the symbolism of Kali; certainly she had no fear of the terrible, and she had seen enough suffering; while the finest side of her own nature was a gentle and motherly one. The two sides of her nature often clashed, and in Kali-worship the clash may have echoed, and resolved for her.' (p. 84). *Long Journey Home* is a penetrating study couched in highly appropriate language. Subtle humour and 'Nivedita-like' dramatic touches show us that Barbara Foxe is thoroughly at home in her role as a biographer.

Though the biography is certainly enhanced by the photographs, those in this book seem somewhat lacking in variety. There is a helpful general Bibliography, a brief Glossary, and a fairly comprehensive Index. The cover design is especially eye-catching, and the blurb on the back cover appealing. While warmly recommend-

ing this book, we express the hope that a moderately-priced Indian edition will be forthcoming.

PRAVRAJKA AJAYAPRANA
President, Sarada Math,
Trivandrum, Kerala.

[The most unique feature of this beautiful biography is that for the first time an English lady has written about Sister Nivedita—a rebel daughter of her own motherland; and that it was published by a London Publisher like the Rider and Company, who are known for their choice publications. This could only happen because India is now a politically independent nation, and having cordial ties with the British Government. During the last two decades, volumes have been written about Nivedita by renowned Indian writers, but more of this literature is available in Bengali and other Indian languages, than in English. Moreover, in their writings, the writers have thrown on her personality, the flood light of the colours they liked most. As a result, some have emphasized the political aspect of her life more, while others her spiritual aspect. We have yet to see Nivedita in bright day light, to have a correct understanding of her brilliant personality. Although Mrs. Barbara Foxe has tried to add novelty to her book by her lucid writing style, and by referring the latest possible publications on Nivedita; more new and interesting information still lies hidden in the womb of time, the publication of which will make the biographers revise their writings, and opinions about this beloved disciple of Swami Vivekananda. We wish this book all success.—Ed.]

SANSKRIT

MULAVIDYA — BHASHYA-VARTIKA — VIRUDDHA: BY S. VITTALA SASTRI, Jayalakshmi-puram, Mysore-12, pages 112+22, Price Rs. 4.00.

Did *mūlāvidya* (original ignorance) have a place in Sankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta? Or, in other words, had the great Acharya accepted it as a part of the non-dualistic Vedanta philosophy of which he was the protagonist and promulgator? This is the perplexing question that has long confronted scholars engaged in the serious study of Advaita Vedanta. The difficulty was enhanced by the fact that even Sri Sankara's well-known disciples and followers who have done a lot in propagating Advaitism by interpreting and elucidating all his important *Bhāshyas* (commentaries) are not agreed in their views on this point; while Padmapada, the author of *Vivarana*,

and Vachaspati Mishra, the author of *Bhāmatī* have accepted *mulavidya*, Sureswaracharya, the author of *Vartika* rejects it outright. And, as might be expected in consequence, the followers of these personages firmly stood for the positions adopted by their respective predecessors.

It is Swami Satchidananda Saraswathi of Holenarasipur (Karnataka State) that in recent years attracted the attention of the scholastic world by undertaking a thorough discussion of the arguments on both sides, and he found himself driven to the conclusion that *mulavidya* never formed a part of Sankara's conception of Advaitic tenets. He has established by convincing arguments that if, following the Vivarana-Bhāmatī way of interpretation, we concede a place for *mulavidya* in Advaitism it will cause serious harm to, and detract woefully from, its pure doctrine in several ways. He has also averred that it is Sureswaracharya's *Vartikam* that is the true exponent of Sankara and hence worthy of being our guide in the matter. Nevertheless the best way for competent students and scholars to ascertain the true position is to make a direct approach to Sankara discarding all intermediaries. In other words, one wishing to possess a true and correct knowledge of the Advaita doctrine should go in for a first hand intelligent and penetrating study of the great philosopher-saint's *Bhāshyas* on the Prasthāna-traya.

According to pure Advaita there is only one entity real and eternal—Brahman which is without qualities, attributes or differentiations, actionless, formless, and changeless, and unconditioned by anything else. Being the one-without-a-second, there is no room for the conception of a second entity alongside of it. 'Advaita' had to be brought in by way of providing some sort of explanation to ordinary human beings (to whom the manifold visible universe is too real to be negated and the ultimate truth of Brahman too subtle to be grasped) for the apparent existence of the phenomenal world. The case is akin to one, trying to convey an idea of the infinite Brahman which is beyond the realm of thought and speech, but being handicapped by the inadequacy of language, is forced to resort to certain subterfuges.

Though Sankara had never wished or liked to deviate an iota from the purely non-dualistic stand of his grand-preceptor, Gaudapadacharya, yet having taken upon himself the task of propagating his philosophy among the common people, he was forced to descend to the lower rungs of the ladder—so to speak—with a view to leading them step by step to the top-most rung of pure Advaitism, and in so doing had to bring

in this *avidya* as a plausible ground of explanation of the relative existence and the phenomenal world cognised by all ordinary human beings. And various other terms like Maya (illusion or delusion), *adhyāsa* (super-imposition), *agrahanam* (non-perception), *anyathgrahanam* (wrong perception) and so on, have also been applied to denote the same idea. But the concept of *avidya* is needed, and has relevance only, in the realm of relative existence and not in that of absolute existence. Forgetting this basic fact the philosophers who came in the wake of Sankara essayed to define and interpret these terms,—all of them more or less synonyms of *avidya*—so as to find for them a permanent niche in the grand edifice of his Advaita Vedanta, thereby leading to all this latter-day welter of confusion, perplexity and controversy. Once it is admitted that there is such a thing as *avidya* inherent in Brahman as the root-cause of the manifested universe, the tendency then is to interpret and explain everything so as to conform to that idea; and this practice has brought about the deplorable plurality of views on the subject.

In the book under notice (which, by the way, has come out as a refutation of another publication entitled "Mūlāvidyā—Supported *Bhāshyas* and *Vartika*" written by one K. Krishna Joyson) Sri Vittala Sastri, Professor of Vedanta in Sri Sankara College, Bangalore has clearly pointed out the ways in which it will be detrimental to the doctrine of Advaita, if we accepted that *mulavidya* is inherent in Brahman, and also the fact that there is no basis anywhere in the *Bhāshyas* or the *Vartika* that would warrant the foisting of such a concept on to the original doctrine. He rightly avers that those who accept the reality of 'Brahman with attributes' thereby come down a step from pure Advaita and get themselves approximated towards the Dwaita position. With a view to indicate this point and also to install the monistic doctrine in its pristine purity on its rightful pedestal, the author first examines and sets out the nature of Sankara's Advaita in sufficient clarity and detail with relevant quotations from the *Bhāshyas* and the *Vārtika* in support of his exposition. Then, after serially enumerating all the points of contention of the opponent (which, by and large, include and embrace the arguments of all previous advocates of *mulavidya*)—one hundred and five in number—he next proceeds systematically and in the same serial order with the refutation and rebuttal of each of them with such convincing logic and wealth of source-quotations that no unbiased reader can any longer afford to remain uncon-

vinced or in doubt as to the true position of *mulavidya* in Non-dualistic Vedanta as promulgated by Sankara. The author's erudition in Sankara's philosophy in all its aspects, and his unfaltering sense of being at-home therein are borne out by every part of the book, which besides furnishing a settlement of the dispute over *mulavidya* is also calculated to clarify or dispel any other prevailing misconceptions about Advaita Vedanta.

SWAMI MRIDANANDA
Ramakrishna Ashrama
Trichur.

THE PILGRIM AND THE GUIDE : By R. N. BOSE. Distributors : Tagore Research Institute. P 2, Lake Road, Calcutta 29. pp. 102: Rs. 15.00.

This work, the third in the series by the author on Gandhian thought and practice, deals largely with the Mahatma's experiments with Brahmacharya. He examines the controversy that raged in circles close to the leader when he underwent a much published self-examination in Noakhali. He states facts and the comments objectively, leaving the reader to judge how far the experiment was justified or uncalled for. There are also chapters on Gandhiji's approach to labour relations and to decentralisation. He is right when he says that Gandhiji believed in what he said. His faith was genuine, though many may question its rightness. When an intimate companion once asked, 'How firm is your faith', he had

replied, 'you shall know when and how I meet my end!' And the author adds: 'When the end came at last, there was no room for doubt.'

M. P. PANDIT
Sri Aurobindo Ashrama
Pondicherry.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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

UNRECORDED CHAPTER OF THE INDIAN MUTINY : BY R. G. WILBERFORCE ; Published by—The Academic Press, Gurgaon, Haryana 122001 ; 1976, pp. xx-234, Price : Rs. 50/-.

THE SOCIALIST THOUGHT OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : BY BENUDHAR PRADHAN ; Published by—The Academic Press, Gurgaon, Haryana 122001 ; 1973, pp. i-xiv-342, Price : Rs. 44/-.

THE ETHNOLOGY, LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND RELIGIONS OF INDIA : BY HERBERT RISLEY, and others ; Published by—The Academic Press, Gurgaon, Haryana 122001 ; 1975, pp. i-iv-190, Price : Rs. 40/-.

TANTRAS : A GENERAL STUDY : BY MANORANJAN BASU ; Published by—Srimati Mira Basu, 50/B, Haldarpara Road, Calcutta 700026 ; 1976, pp. 131, Price : Rs. 22/-.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE—VARANASI

REPORT : APRIL 1975—MARCH 1976

In 1900, Swami Shubhananda started in Varanasi the 'Poor Men's Relief Association', along the lines of his great Guru (Swami Vivekananda's ideal of service to God in man). Though he had a capital of only four annas, the seed-idea germinated, with aid from the generous public and hard work by the devoted monastic helpers. The present name 'Home of Service' was given by Swamiji himself, and the Home was also blessed by Sri Sarada Devi the Holy Mother. As early as 1902 it was formally affiliated to the

Ramakrishna Mission. Now it has grown to a prominent institution whose work may be outlined as follows :

Aims : To render selfless service as purificatory to the mind and thus leading to spiritual realization, looking on all persons as manifestations of the Lord and worshipping them through service.

Besides such medical services, to help the aged, the hungry and the friendless, and especially those lying destitute in the streets, by giving at least food, shelter, and nursing care in the Home. And when the Home is over-filled, to refer the sick to other Hospitals.

To help the poor who are aged, infirm or dis-

abled, with pecuniary relief or clothes, etc., in their homes; and if necessary sheltering them in this Home. And for the destitute who die in the Home, to provide cremation.

General Hospital : This can accommodate 186 patients, with 99 Medical beds, 42 Surgical, 30 'Eye' cases, and 15 Gynaecological. During the present year, 3,086 cases were admitted (1,870 Surgical); average bed-occupancy was 121. 51 of the cases were picked up from the roadside. The Operation Theatres (and Blood-Bank unit) were, of course, available for both in-patients and out-patients; in this year 14,929 operations were done. Among the more major ones, were 303 for Cataract (eye); 105 for abdominal Hernia (5 of these, strangulated); 24 Appendectomies; 7 Gastro-enterostomies, 7 Cholecystectomies, 33 Total Hysterectomies, and 46 Uterine curettages. Laboratories, X-ray and E.C.G. work is outlined below.

Out-patients' Department : Besides general Medical clinics, there are (a) Homoeopathy, (b) E.N.T., (c) Eye, (d) Dental Clinics, plus (e) Clinical and Pathological Laboratory, and (f) X-ray, Electro-therapy, with E.C.G. department. The Homoeopathic section has a clinic at Shivala as well as the one at the Ashrama. In all, these clinics treated in the present year 62,368 new cases and 2,29,239 repeat-visits. Thus daily average attendance was 770.5. Surgical cases totalled 2,523. As clues to the volume of work handled by the Laboratories, we mention 3,522 Complete Blood Counts; 2,293 Sedimentation rates, 3,276 Urinalyses, 1,511 Blood Sugars, 159 Spinal fluid examination. In the X-ray department (like the Laboratories also serving In-patients), 703 Chest films and 121 examinations of G.I. tract were done, among others; 164 E.C.G.'s were taken.

Invalids' Homes : These Homes are—one for men and one for women, with 20 and 25 inmates respectively this year. Most of the men are old retired monks of the Ramakrishna Order, having come after long years of service, to spend their last days in this holy city. The women were helpless, old and poor widows.

Outdoor Relief : Monthly pecuniary help was given to 51 poor invalids and helpless ladies; occasional pecuniary help to 33 other persons, the total expenditure being Rs. 3,246.50. Also 60 cotton blankets worth Rs. 546, and old blankets and garments were distributed to the needy.

Goshala (Dairy) : Though continuing as usual, this Dairy supplies less than half the requirements of the Hospital.

Finances : Expenditures in current year were

Rs. 7,79,794.53, income was Rs. 7,16,470.16. The latter was notably from (a) Fees and charges (approx. Rs. 2,25,000/-), (b) Public Contributions (over Rs. 1,35,000/-), (c) Government Grants (over Rs. 90,000/-), and (d) interest or dividends from investments (approx. Rs. 1,00,000/-). Withal, the accumulated Deficit, increasing this year by Rs. 63,324.37, has reached Rs. 2,30,267.78.

Immediate Needs : Funds for *over-all maintenance* of the hospital, as sharply indicated by the large and growing deficit just noted.

Endowments for beds : as a basic long-term contribution to this problem, endowment of beds is specially needed, only a few being yet covered. Endowment of a single bed is Rs. 30,000/-, but partial endowments of as little as Rs. 5,000/- will perpetuate the memory of a dear one.

Invalids' Homes : Here too, deficit is steadily rising, with sharp price-rises out of proportion to gifts; endowments thus are equally needed.

Outdoor Poor-Relief : Since the help outlined above, though much appreciated, was greatly short of the needs, contributions are strongly solicited.

Staff Quarters : These have become inadequate, as the number of Doctors, Nurses and related staff continues growing; for new quarters, building will require Rs. 5,00,000/-.

Dairy : As indicated above, this needs great expansion. Funds are most urgently wanted to purchase more cows.

Contributions will be received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi, 221001. Donations are exempted from Income Tax.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM—RANCHI

REPORT : APRIL 1975—MARCH 1976

Started in 1951, as a practical application of Sri Ramakrishna's and Swami Vivekananda's ideal of divine worship through service to mankind, this Sanatorium evoked from the first, keen interest among the public and soon became a leading institution in its field. Presently, with 280 beds, it has all the modern facilities for diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis, including major chest surgery; and its After-care Colony is helping rehabilitate the victims of tuberculosis for useful social functioning. On a 282-acre plot of land about 14 Km. from the Ranchi Railway Station, about 2,100 feet above sea-level, the institution has a healthful climate. A large water-reservoir, made from a nearby stream, supplies

50,000 gallons daily; and trees and gardens add to the peaceful atmosphere of the place.

Beds : 270 of these are in the general wards; five are 'cabins' (single-bedded rooms with attached bathroom) and five, 'cottages' (each includes kitchen and room for an attendant). Of the 280 beds, 246 this year were reserved by different public bodies, which paid maintenance charges of their nominees. The Mission maintains for poor patients some beds free of charge, and a few at concessional rates; however, these numbers are very small in proportion to the still-growing need.

Medical Facilities : For the treatment of tuberculosis, modern facilities are here available up to and including surgical procedures like pneumonectomy and lobectomy. Operation Theatre and Recovery Room are air-conditioned. In the well-equipped Pathological Laboratory, all routine procedures as well as bacterial sensitivity tests are done. Of the four X-ray machines, one has attachment for Tomography. The Medical Library contains books and periodicals on diseases of the chest.

Other Facilities : In the Recreation Hall, accommodating 300 people, dramas and film-shows are given for the patients as well as staff; radio programmes are relayed to patients' wards; a patients' Library contains books in Hindi, Bengali, Telegu and English; and periodicals in these languages are supplied to patients; indoor games are available. There is also a library for staff-use.

Review of Work : During the year under review, 859 patients were treated, of whom 246 were already here at the start of the year, the rest being admitted during the year. Of those discharged (tuberculous), 501 were 'improved' or even 'arrested' (as near 'cure' as could be then stated). 28 surgical operations were done including three lobectomies and three thoracoplasties; 2,692 X-rays taken and 23,820 laboratory examinations done. In the Emergency Ward, staff-members and their families, plus a few neighbours, were treated. The Out-patients Department

treated 472 new patients with tuberculosis, with 565 repeat-visits; and 2,596 other patients with 1,855 re-visits.

Free Homoeopathic Dispensary : With the assistance of Messrs. M. Bhattacharrya & Co. of Calcutta, which donates all medicines used, this Dispensary treats general ailments of local people. There were this year 5,456 new cases and 7,727 repeat-visits.

After-care Colony and Rehabilitation Centre : Here 27 ex-patients were accommodated during the year. Of these, six worked in the Tailoring Department, whose Master Tailor is also an ex-patient; six were in the Office, four on the Wards as Nursing Assistants, two in the Electrical and Water-Supply Department, and so on. Further, the Homoeopathic Dispensary was in charge of an ex-patient, and two former patients were workers in the wards.

Recreation Club : Organized for the inmates, this Club conducts the Patients' Library and the indoor games, dramas, film shows, etc.

Dairy Farm : This yields on an average 5½ maunds of milk daily.

Immediate Needs : As noted above, *free* or partly-free *beds* are grossly insufficient for the ever-growing demand; rising prices make the problem even greater. Funds are earnestly solicited: endowment of each free bed requires Rs. 75,000/-. Office-work is presently done in a temporary building; and for the obviously-needed permanent Office-Building, Rs. 1,00,000/- is the estimated cost. The *Dairy* is still inadequate for the six maunds of milk needed daily for the Sanatorium: proper extension will require another Rs. 1,00,000/-.

Contributions should be sent either to: The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal, 711202; or the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium, P.O. Ramakrishna Sanatorium, Ranchi 835-221. All such are exempted from Income Tax.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna will be celebrated on Sunday,
20 February 1977.