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# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

OR

## AWAKENED INDIA



ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI  
HIMALAYAS



# Prabuddha Bharata

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On the way to Sri Amarnath.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXXII

MARCH 1977

No. 3

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

## 'ALL MY SORROW HAS BEEN LIFTED'

(भैरव-सूरफाक्ता)

सब दुःख दूर हइलो  
तोमारे देखि ।  
ए कि अपार करुणा तव !  
प्राण हइलो शीतल विमल सुधाय ॥

All my sorrow has been lifted  
by seeing Thee.  
What boundless grace is Thine!  
My heart has drunk pure nectar  
and is soothed.

सब देखि शून्यमय,  
ना यदि तोमारे पाई,  
चन्द्र, सूर्य, तारागण ज्योति हाराय ॥

When I do not have Thee,  
all things seem empty,  
And the sun and the moon  
and the stars lose their light.

प्राणसखा तोमा सम  
आर केह नाहि,  
प्रेमसिन्धु उथलये स्मरिले तोमाय ॥

O Companion of my soul,  
there is none like Thee ;  
An ocean of love swells within,  
when I remember Thee.

थाको संगे अहरह,  
जीवन कर सनाथ,  
राखो प्रभू जीवने मरणे पदछाये ॥

Stay Thou with me day and night  
that my life may have its lord ;  
And keep me ever in the shadow  
of Thy feet—in life and in death.

—द्विजेन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर

Trans.—Swami Ashokananda

# THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVING

## EDITORIAL

Life has to be lived in its entirety in order to be understood properly. Its ups and downs, ebb and flow, are palpably obvious to every right-thinking hard-working adult. The words of wisdom and discrimination uttered by the sagacious saints and scriptures begin to impress themselves upon our mind only when life experience has taught us the inevitability of suffering and the painful consequences of wrong action. Sooner or later, either the hard way or otherwise, one eager for the pleasures of the world discovers that his own mind has deluded him into certain apparent instinctual attitudes and urges. The mind binds and enslaves the strongest of persons, itself becoming a source of restlessness, anxiety, and frustration. It makes him wander endlessly among the fruits of actions it has caused. In the words of Sri Krishna, 'The turbulent senses, O Son of Kunti, do violently snatch away the mind of even a wise man, striving after perfection.'<sup>1</sup> The importance of living a happy and meaningful life can become reduced to a dreary and disagreeable minimum if and when the mind, over a lengthy period, turns away from enduring spiritual values to the temporary trifles of the world.

To be alive, one has to work with various motivations. There is hardly any work without motive, without gain in view. Intense activity is the hall-mark of modern civilized life and the *sine qua non* of all progress. To the typical moderner, the business of living is synonymous with the profits that accrue from any other commercial proposition, such as enjoyments, pleasures, and comforts of every conceivable description. The logic of life, if not properly toned and tempered by spiritual faith and wisdom,

can degenerate into a mere pursuit of pleasure on a sensate plane. To a gentle reminder regarding the ephemeral character of material wealth and biological satisfactions, expressed in the words, 'Money and power have not made man truly happy,' the shrewd rejoinder from the self-styled votaries of hedonism amounts to saying, 'They may not bring us true happiness, we agree; but they enable us to live comfortably in the midst of our miseries.'

According to a popular legend, it is said that camels at times grow so fond of eating the leaves of a certain thorny plant that notwithstanding the painful bleeding in their mouth caused by the thorns, they keep on eating more and more of the same. Like these camels, there are innumerable persons who remain steeped in their 'painful pleasures' and confine themselves in a narrow shell of fancies, futilities, and miserable maladjustment of their own making. They reduce the importance of their living to a few ego-centric externalities such as power, position, acquisition, and self-expression for gaining attention. They are passive and indifferent to their own progress and development as a result of their slavery to a life of the senses, with no higher or better drive than animal desires, instincts, and urges. In the words of the *Gita*, 'The uncontrolled mind does not guess that the Atman (Divinity, God) is present; How can it meditate? Without meditation, where is peace? Without peace, where is happiness?'<sup>2</sup> The ever-recurring fever of pleasure and pain and other human passions and prejudices can hardly be totally cured or be dispelled for ever. Such pairs of opposites as poverty and wealth, misery and happiness which we see today have also

1. *Bhagavad-Gita*, II, 60.

2. *Ibid.*, II, 66.



been present in ancient times in other forms. Seers of spiritual experience and illumination, who have realized the artless art of right living tell us that the waves of good and evil keep rising and falling in the ocean of life, and that every moment we are trying to live, we are also growing older and decaying.

The tree of life, with its roots and fruits, needs much care, concern, and protection. Disease at the roots can be fatal to the whole tree. True and abiding happiness in life is possible only when spirituality forms its healthy root. Water and manure, in the form of renunciation and service, supplied at the root level, ensure proper nutrition for the whole plant. With the foundation of a firm and strong root, the spreading branches of life's activities and endeavours can safely and securely be expanded in all directions. The leaves, flowers, and fruits of the tree of life are many and varied, and bring us the advantages of shade, beauty, fragrance, sustenance, and support—all of which are essential for survival and success. Changes, improvements, and reforms are always welcome in the outer and external aspects of life. The diseases of the tree can and should be treated and cured. The quality of the fruits can be improved and their quantity augmented. Trimming and pruning, without hurting the tree itself, is a normal periodic routine. So is the case with life, nay, with the entire universe. As Sri Krishna has said: whenever Dharma declines and Adharma (unrighteousness) rises, the Lord incarnates himself among us in every age in order to protect the virtuous, punish the wicked, and re-establish Dharma.<sup>3</sup> The essential inner core of the tree, and the original character of its species have to be maintained and preserved by allowing the tree to grow and flourish in accordance with its own true nature and in an

environment most suited to its fullest and best development.

Why is life said to be complex and difficult like learning to speak a foreign language, which we somehow manage to do, but can never do it well enough to complete satisfaction? In answer, the spiritual teachers of the world say: The cause being there, the results must come—results that are either pleasurable or painful, caused by virtue or vice. Man suffers by his own choice, enjoys or suffers as a result of his own deeds in the present life or in the past. Attached to and bound by one's sense pleasures, while choosing to remain ignorant of and indifferent to the spiritual, ethical, and psychological truths, every individual has always the choice and responsibility to live his life in such a manner and at such a level as to achieve peace of mind, freedom of action, and the joy of living. Gautama Buddha proclaimed to the world centuries ago that men suffer due to their own fault, and not because they are compelled by others to suffer, by saying:

Ho ! Ye who suffer ! know  
 Ye suffer from yourselves.  
 None else compels,  
 None other holds you  
 that ye live and die,  
 And whirl upon the wheel,  
 and hug and kiss  
 Its spokes of agony,  
 Its tire of tears,  
 Its nave of nothingness.<sup>4</sup>

One psychological principle of life is the inevitable interaction of multifarious thoughts, words, and deeds and the consequent interpersonal and intrapersonal concord and discord. We act and react upon one another and every action will have a reaction on ourselves too. A good or bad act will influence the doer as well as others in such a way that it will intensify the tendency to do more and more good or bad respectively. All minds which are in the

3. *Vide Ibid.*, IV, 7-8.

4. *The Light of Asia*, Book VIII.



same tension or similar circumstances will be affected equally by the same thought. The extent to which one's mind will be influenced and affected by another's thought or action will depend upon distance, force of tension and other personality factors on both sides. A thought when forcefully projected creates a similar wave in the atmosphere. Thus there are innumerable thought-waves—good and bad—floating in the atmosphere, waiting to enter into different minds that are ready to receive them. An unfortunate victim of evil thoughts and tendencies is prone to bring down his mind into that low state of tension and vibration so as to be susceptible and vulnerable to the evil thought-waves already travelling in the atmosphere. Being automatically influenced by these, the evil-doer will be goaded on to do more and more evil. It is no wonder that evil begets further evil. Unless good sense and discriminating powers become important in life, it is obviously impossible and futile for the wrong-doer to abstain from doing evil.

Similarly, when a person brings his mind to a state of vibration in unison with the rest of the good thoughts floating in the atmosphere, he will be influenced by the force of these good thought-waves and pulsations, thus intensifying his desire and tendency to do more and more good. It is therefore, important to each one of us to keep our mind free, clear, and open to the good and godly teachings, truths, and traditions. A life of spiritual consecration frees life from the pain of emptiness and crisis. Keeping our mind on God, Truth, and spirituality we can gain more from life and its opportunities than by any other materialistic manner of means. Perfection, a much-desired and most elusive entity, is no doubt the goal of human endeavour. But life is never smooth-flowing or struggle-free so as to be 'perfect' at any stage. When life as a constant struggle ceases to be so, and when the importance of living shifts

from the purely ephemeral sense-bound existence to the realization of God through knowledge (*jnana*), devotion (*bhakti*), action (*karma*), and meditation (*yoga*), the mortal becomes Immortal and the finite becomes Infinite.

An anecdote told by Swami Vivekananda about his exchange of views with the noted American orator Robert Ingersoll reveals pointedly the difference between a limited materialistic view of life and the limitless spiritual view: 'Ingersoll once said to me,' said the Swami, "I believe in making the most out of this world, in squeezing the orange dry, because this world is all we are sure of." I replied, "I know a better way to squeeze the orange of this world than you do; and I get more out of it. I *know* I cannot die, so I am not in a hurry. I know that there is no fear, so I enjoy the squeezing. I can love all men and women. Everyone is God to me. Think of the joy of loving man as God! Squeeze your orange this way and get ten-thousandfold more out of it. Get every single drop!"<sup>5</sup>

By and large, life is filled with gregarious social relations, commitments, and responsibilities. Is this 'social instinct' merely biological to the limit of self-preservation? How can it be so? The urge to love, to serve, to be needed is present in man, apart from other selfish and sensuous implications. Man is not fully happy until or unless he can express love in depth and be satisfied that his sympathy and service are accepted and also duly reciprocated. Life's purpose is best fulfilled, if and when man can strive sincerely to shift his hankering from achievement on the sense plane to the realization of the spiritual treasure within, the true nature of Self or God. 'Blessed is he,' said Pasteur, 'who carries with him a God, an ideal, and obeys it; ideal of art,

5. Eastern and Western Disciples, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda*, 1974, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, pp. 327-28.



ideal of science, ideal of the gospel virtues ; therein lie the springs of great thoughts and great actions ; they all reflect light from the Infinite.' The mechanistic law of the physical universe, where future events are determined by the present conditions, and the present events have been determined by their past, cannot and does not apply to the nobler and less earthly activities of man in the ethical and spiritual levels. The purposive aspirations towards greater love, unity, and universality, though apparently social and selfish in popular concept, are in reality prompted and sustained by spiritual ideals. In the Hindu view of life, legitimate pleasures are not forbidden, social values and improved standards of living are not negated, and the world, being the only place for the time being, is not repudiated. Poverty, backwardness, injustice, and selfishness exist everywhere in the world irrespective of religion, reason, or race. They are the ubiquitous impediments in the path of individual or social progress. To blame religion or spiritual values for these drawbacks of human society is to betray utter ignorance of basic historical, economic, and political factors. On the other hand, a strange type of secular world-view, feeding itself on such pseudonomenclatures as atheism, scepticism, and humanism, is taking hold of men's minds and hearts, foreboding a calamitous future shock for the individual and the race in every land.

The importance of living has to be urgently understood in the light of national and international problems that are increasing in intensity and extensity at an alarming rate. To make the world a better place to live in and to make living in this world a more joyful and meaningful adventure, there is need for a general spiritual rebirth and a return to religious values without having to lose any of the worthwhile benefits gained so far from the arts, the sciences, and other achievements of world culture. Such revival of life values calls for a close

and concerted effort on the part of every nation, big and small, in order to understand, absorb, and assimilate the universal truths and spiritual realizations experienced and expounded by the undisputed saints and prophets of all nations. Let us recall some of these truths and realizations indicative of a vast store-house of spiritual assets that lay stress on the importance of living :

In the Upanishads, which look upon man's life as a constant and continuous spiritual exercise for Self-discovery and Self-realization, the importance of living is conveyed to us through the dynamic exhortation that we should strive to progress from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, and from death to Immortality.

In the *Gita*, we are told that it is important for everyone to look upon life as a spiritual opportunity for uplifting oneself by one's own self, acting more like one's own friend than one's enemy.<sup>6</sup>

In the *Dhammapada*, the importance of living is stressed by drawing our attention to several spiritual goals of life itself : 'Better conquer yourself than a thousand foes. No power on earth can defeat the power of self-control. . . . There is no grander ceremonial than kindness and respect for the sanctity of life.'

Jesus told his disciples the importance of living in the 'Sermon on the Mount,' saying, 'Abide in me, and I in you.'<sup>7</sup> St. Paul expressed the importance of life in the words, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil by good.'<sup>8</sup>

In our own day and age, Sri Ramakrishna reminded us of the importance of living by repeatedly telling us that the goal and purpose of human life is God-realization. 'If you must be mad, let it not be with the

6. *Vide Bhagavad-Gita*, VI, 5.

7. John, 15.4.

8. Rom., 12, 21.



things of the world, but be mad with the love of the Lord.<sup>9</sup>

Calling a truce to all conflicts and confrontation among the followers of different religions and sects, Swami Vivekananda gave forth words of inspiration that form the bed-rock of modern living, and its importance lies in dedicating one's life for fulfilling his words: 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.'<sup>10</sup>

The sages and seers of India long ago discovered and expounded the ideals of a total and complete life for every human being. The attainment of all-round prosperity—moral, social, and material—(*abhyudaya*) and the practice and realization of the supreme spiritual felicity (*nishchreyasa*) are to be combined and pursued without conflict or confusion of life values. The aim of Indian civilization and culture, essentially spiritual in character,—though misunderstood and misinterpreted by the uninformed and the rankly prejudiced—has been to lead man to the Highest Truth, to the superconscious awareness of the Supreme Reality, without overlooking the organic cravings and limitations that the body and mind are heir to, and which can be easily and voluntarily controlled, conquered, and sublimated without harm. Man is rooted in the Spirit; man is divine; Atman is Brahman—is the sum and substance of India's spiritual contribution to the world. The chief means of attainment of this awareness of and identity with the Spirit in all walks of life are: Discrimination, Devotion, and Dedication (*jnana*, *bhakti*, and *karma*). While proper discrimination between what is real and enduring and what is temporal and transient leads to Knowledge, Devotion and

divine love also lead one to the same goal and experience (as the former does). Further, Karma in the form of work and action, including social obligations relevant to one's stage of life and position in society, if and when performed as a Yoga,—in other words, disciplined but unselfish and altruistic action, coupled with philosophic calmness and philanthropic efficiency—leads one to the same goal and experience of perfection and liberation as *jnana* and *bhakti* do.

The result of disciplined action needs a special mention. It makes for good quality, more quantity and productivity, better efficiency, love of creativity, job satisfaction, purity of mind and sincerity of purpose. In addition to these aspects of self-development, the doer of deeds who is able to practise dispassion, detachment from ego-involvement, and conversion of all work into worship, gains immense spiritual benefit inwardly and outwardly. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not helping Him. Cut out this word "help" from your mind. You *worship*. Stand in this reverent attitude to the whole universe.' The synthesis and harmony for which India has always lived, struggled, and stood up is not just a mere eclectic or altruistic system of scientific and social humanism. Of course, like every other great religion of the world that came after it, Hinduism also does extol and encourage acts of service for the amelioration of human and other suffering. The Five great Sacrifices (*pancha maha yajnas*) that are enjoined to be followed as a matter of daily routine are still cherished and observed in Hindu society, more in an individual and personal manner than as an organized group activity. They are Sacrifices in the form of intensely devoted and dedicated Service to: (1) the Divine (*deva yajna*), involving daily spiritual practices; (2) the Saints and Sages (*rishi yajna*), involving

9. *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 1958, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, p. 156 (Teaching No. 349).

10. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, I (1970), p. 24.

daily study of the sacred scriptures and assimilation of their ideals and teachings; (3) one's departed ancestors—manes (*pitri yajna*), involving daily observance of obligatory and grateful ceremonies in loving memory of the departed ones; (4) human beings (*nri yajna*), involving daily humanitarian and charitable acts of compassion and service to neighbours, fellow-men, and the needy; (5) animals (*bhuta yajna*), involving daily feeding and fostering, with love and care, of pets, birds, and beasts. This is more, much more, than an organized ethical programme or humanistic religion of a secular sort. At the bottom of it all, India has strongly implanted a spiritual urge to unite man with the Divine. The underlying unity of the Supreme Spirit within every being creates the essential metaphysical background for human endeavour and motivation.

India does not ignore or abhor matter and material needs that are essential to

happiness. Nor is it necessary to insist that man should live by bread alone or limit his life-purpose to sensate organic gratification. When Sri Ramakrishna told his elder brother that he did not feel any particular interest in 'a mere bread-winning education', he was obviously in favour of the kind of education that should have higher and nobler goals than 'bread-earning'. While man is often prone to aggressive, predatory, and obstinately parochial tendencies, mankind by and large seeks and struggles to believe in and build one world, one united human family. Is fatherhood of God essential for bringing about the Brotherhood of Man? The former is well assured, though least known. The latter is in the process of reconstruction. And to this urgent and important task of reconstruction of humanity, India, ancient by existence, yet modern by choice, has liberally contributed the twin ingredients of synthesis and harmony in their supremely spiritual significance.

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## LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

[ To Mr. F. H. Leggett ]

Thousand Island Park, [ U.S.A. ]

August 1895.

Dear Friend,

I received your note duly.

Very kind of you and noble to ask me to have my own way to London. Many thanks for that. But I am in no hurry for London and moreover *I want to see you married in Paris* and then I go

I will be ready father Leg



[ To : The Editor, *The Light of the East*<sup>1</sup> ]

1896.

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for your kindly sending me several copies of the *Light of the East*. I wish the paper all success.

As you have asked for my suggestion I can make towards improving the paper—I must frankly state that, in my life-long experience in the work, I have always found ‘Occultism’ injurious and weakening to humanity. What we want is strength. We Indians more than any other race want strong and vigorous thought. We have enough of the superfine in all concerns. For centuries we have been stuffed with the mysterious, the result is that our intellectual and spiritual digestion is almost hopelessly impaired and the race has been dragged down to the depths of hopeless imbecility never before or since experienced by any other civilised community. There must be freshness and vigour of thought behind to make a virile race. More than enough to strengthen the whole world exist in the Upanishads. The Advaita is the eternal mine of strength. But it requires to be *applied*. It must first be cleared of the incrustation of scholasticism, and then in all its simplicity, beauty and sublimity be taught over the length and breadth of the land as applied even to the minutest detail of daily life. ‘This is a very large order’, but we must work towards it nevertheless as if it would be accomplished to-morrow. Of one thing I am sure that whoever wants to help his fellow beings through genuine love and unselfishness will work wonders.

Yours truly,  
VIVEKANANDA

---

[ To: Mr. Okakura Kakuzo of Japan ].

The Math, Belur, Howrah Dis., Bengal, India.  
18th June 1901.

Allow me to call you a friend. We must have been such in some past birth. Your cheque for Rs. 300 duly reached me and many thanks for the same.

I am just thinking of going to Japan, but with one thing or another and my precarious health I cannot expedite matters as I wish.

Japan to me is a dream—so beautiful that it haunts one all his life.

With all love & blessings.

VIVEKANANDA

---

<sup>1</sup>. This letter was published in the December 1896 number of the *Light of the East*, a well known monthly journal of those days issued from Calcutta.

[ To: Lala Badri Sah of Almora ]

Darjeeling  
7th April '97.

Dear Lalajee,

Just received your kind invitation through telegram. Perhaps you have already heard that I have been attacked by 'Diabetes', a fell disease.

That unsettled all our plans, and I had to run up to Darjeeling, it being very cool and very good for the disease.

I have felt much better since and the doctors therefore do not want me to move about as that brings about a relapse. If my present state of health continues for a month or two, I think I will be in a condition to come down to the planes and come to Almora to see you all. I am very sorry that I have caused you a good deal of trouble but you see it could not be helped, the body was not under my control.

With all love to yourself and other friends in Almora.

Yours affly,  
VIVEKANANDA

---

[ To: Mr. T. Sukanathan, Colombo<sup>2</sup> ]

Almora  
30th June 1897.

My dear Friend,

The bearer of this note Swami Sivananda is sent to Ceylon as promised by me during my sojourn. He is quite fit for the work entrusted to his care, of course, with your kind help.

I hope you will introduce him to other Ceylon friends.

Yours ever in the Lord,  
VIVEKANANDA

---

<sup>2</sup>. Taken from the facsimile published in the *Vivekananda: The Prophet of the New Age*, published by the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo.



# VIVEKANANDA IN THE NEAR EAST, 1900—I

SWAMI VIDYATMANANDA

There was in the very air of Paris in that summer of 1900 a feeling of excitement and expectation. For the Exposition Universelle Internationale, more than anything else, displayed Western man's technical progress and held out a promise of increasing comfort and never-ending scientific advance. At last, it seemed—and Swami Vivekananda used the phrase, albeit in a disparaging sense—an age of heaven on earth was imminent, thanks naturally to sound principles of individual initiative and expanding economy founded on the existence of a foreign empire.

The newly invented electric light was used extensively at the Exposition; the reflection in the Seine of numerous bulbs was considered breathtaking. At the Palais de la Métallurgie was displayed among other wonders a forty-foot-high electric generator. The American thinker, Henry Adams, a visitor to the Exposition, commented in his *The Education of Henry Adams* that the dynamo marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. Probably he was right. A philosopher much in the mode in the 1970's, Marshall McLuhan, has called the present period the Electrical Age; the aptness of this term few will dispute.

Thus it was possible to construct a subway in Paris, and this was done. The first line of the Paris underground opened on July 19, 1900, some two weeks before Swamiji arrived for his final visit to Europe. The speed and comfort with which they could now move around in their city created a sensation in the minds of the Parisians, who rushed to try the new facility.

Balloon competitions were held during that summer of 1900, and numerous bicycle races. In the village of Gretz near Paris,

Clément Ader was experimenting with the world's first successful airplane. He had already flown his machine from a field adjacent to the property that in 1948 was to become the site of the Centre Védantique Ramakrichna. And the automobile had made its sputtering appearance in the avenues of the French capital. By the summer of 1900 the first traffic accidents had occurred. There was talk of making claxons on cars illegal so that drivers would rely less on sounding warnings and would consequently drive more prudently. It was also proposed for the first time to put matriculation numbers on autos and send roadhogs to prison.

But the old era lingered on through the presence of the horse, which still exerted the power that moved wagons, trams, and private vehicles. In 1900 there were about 100,000 horses in a city of 2,500,000 inhabitants—one horse for every twenty-five residents. Swamiji may have tried the subway, and even an auto, but he surely went about Paris pulled by a horse.<sup>1</sup>

A delirious joy reigned. There were balls and receptions nearly every evening, and 'Venetian nights' on the river. A dinner was given by the City of Paris for all the mayors of France, and 22,000 of them came to dine. Fifty million people visited the Exposition, including many kings, crown princes, and grand dukes; the majority of the high nobility, for reasons best known to themselves, preferred to make the visit incognito. There were eighty-six congresses, one of which was the Congress of the History of Religions, which Swamiji attended.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama, March 1967, p. 134.

2. *Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1969, pp. 108-15.



But Swamiji saw the sensuality behind it all, and also sensed the strong possibility of future war. And sensuality and violence have certainly been the prevailing themes in the West throughout the seventy-five years since. He even foresaw the disillusionment with Science and the concept of Progress that would creep up on Western man, as the bliss they promised proved to contribute unwanted side-effects. Around 1940, Vivekananda's great friend, Josephine MacLeod, told Mme. Drinette Verdier, a French-American devotee, that forty years earlier Swamiji had said to her: 'Europe is a volcano. If India does not come to help her she will blow up.' Whether the advanced nations can keep from blowing themselves up is far from sure. But the widespread support for Eastern ideas of wisdom now current in the West seems to hold out man's best hope of sanity. Less than a century later, the 'solutions' the Exposition promised appear of most dubious worth.

\* \* \*

On Thursday, March 15, 1900, a month in advance of the Exposition's inauguration, *L'Aiglon* (*The Young Eagle*) opened. This is the story of the son of Napoleon and Marie Thérèse, Archduchess of Austria. The boy was called at birth 'King of Rome', but when the fortunes of Napoleon declined he was rechristened Franz, Duke of Reichstadt and was kept at the court of Austria under constant tutelage in Hapsburg traditions. *L'Aiglon* retold the sad history of the prince reveling in the greatness of his lost father, prevented by international considerations from himself contemplating any similar exploits, and dying protestingly of tuberculosis in Vienna at the age of twenty-one. *L'Aiglon* was a drama in six acts, all in verse, by Edmond Rostand, calling for an enormous cast of actors and, before they were suppressed because their hooves made too much noise on the stage, even horses. 'The greatest actress of the cos-

mos', Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, played the touching role of the young eagle that never got a chance to fly. Commenting on this exploit many years later, the French newsmagazine *L'Express* (18-24 August 1969) said: 'And Sarah Bernhardt put over, in her time, the most astonishing impersonation in the history of the theatre. On March 15, 1900, at the age of fifty-six, she made a triumph in portraying a character that could have been her grandson [plate 1].'

As we know from his 'Memoirs of European Travel', Swami Vivekananda saw *L'Aiglon*, was immensely impressed by Mme. Bernhardt's performance, and talked to the actress afterwards. In his 'Memoirs of European Travel' the Swami refers to the huge success of the play, in mentioning the 'bumper houses' and the fact that tickets could be had only by reserving a month in advance and even then paying double the price.<sup>3</sup>

Long ago in *Vedanta and the West*<sup>4</sup> Christopher Isherwood wrote an imaginary description of the encounter, some time in the early autumn of 1900, of Sarah Bernhardt and Swami Vivekananda in the star's dressing room of the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre. Marie Louise Burke has shown<sup>5</sup> that the two were already acquainted, for Swamiji had seen in New York in 1896 Bernhardt's play with an Indian theme: *Izeyl*. The staging had impressed Swamiji: 'A whole Indian street scene on the stage...an exact picture of India.'<sup>6</sup> But he found the story silly, concerning the struggles with their mutual passion of the courtesan *Izeyl* and a young nobleman who in some respects re-

3. *Vide The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (hereafter *Com. Works*), Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, VII, (1972), p. 374.

4. *Vide Vedanta and the West* (Hollywood: Vedanta Society of Southern California), July-August 1943, pp. 117-20.

5. *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1972, p. 113.

6. *Com. Works*, VII, (1969), p. 374.



sembles the prince who was to become Buddha. In his recreation of the meeting, Isherwood comments on the dissimilarity of these two extraordinary personalities—one the world's greatest living illusionist, the other perhaps in his time the world's most qualified spiritual leader (hence one might say, dis-illusionist)—but their similarity in the possession of the quality of personal courage.

\* \* \*

The latest edition of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* contains more than five hundred letters—an average of one written every six days of his professional life. But at least two hundred more letters remain to be published—some for the first time, some in their entirety—from the Boshi Sen collection at Almora. A side of Swamiji's character perhaps heretofore insufficiently appreciated—his tenderness—will be revealed when letters from this collection are printed. Nearly half were addressed to Sister Christine; and these particularly, by their tone and their surprising frequency, reveal a compassionate concern for the welfare of a disciple, heretofore inadequately commented upon.

Christine Greenstidel was a poor school teacher, not particularly talented, incapable of aiding Swamiji in any noteworthy way. But as she says, 'His compassion for the poor and downtrodden, the defeated, was a passion. . . . Even after he left America, he still had great concern for those he left behind, who found life a great struggle. Especially did he feel for "women with men's responsibilities"',<sup>7</sup> of whom, Christine, as the support of her mother, was one.

There had been a distressing mix-up in the autumn of 1899 when Swamiji had proposed to visit Christine in Detroit and failed to do so, then suggested they meet in Cambridge, where she arrived only to find that

he had just left for California. The letters he wrote to her at that time, expressing distress and begging her pardon, reveal to an extent inadequately recognized the tender consideration that existed in Swamiji's character.

And now in Paris on the 23rd of August 1900, he wrote to ask Christine if she was all right. He had spent about a week at her home in Detroit in July just before leaving for Europe; but already, having had only 'one little note' from her in five weeks, he was unquiet (an unpublished letter from the Boshi Sen collection):

6, Place des Etats-Unis, Paris  
23rd August 1900

Dear Christine,

What is the matter with you? Are you ill? Unhappy? What makes you silent? I had only one little note from you in all this time.

I am getting a bit nervous about you, not much. Otherwise I am enjoying this city. Did Mrs. A. P. Huntington [probably Mrs. C. P. Huntington] write you any?

I am well, keeping well as far as it is possible with me.

With love,  
Vivekananda

And this August 23 communication was at least the fifth letter he had written to Christine since having left her. In the Sen collection there are two others of the period. One is dated 9:00 A.M. Friday morning, August 3, written just as he was coming into Le Havre on the *Champagne*, saying that he had had a rough crossing, and would be in Paris that evening. The other (plate 2) is dated August 14, 1900, and is written from the Leggett residence at 6 Place Etats-Unis. Apparently the seal of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission designed in New York a few weeks earlier<sup>8</sup> had already

<sup>8</sup>. Vide M. L. Burke, *Swami Vivekananda: His Second Visit to the West, New Discoveries*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama (hereafter *Second Visit*), p. 674.

<sup>7</sup>. *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1964, pp. 215-16.

been printed on some letterheads, for the August 14 letter is written on a sheet of paper bearing the Ramakrishna Math and Mission seal at the upper left. The letter consists of a brief message followed by a poem of sixteen lines. The poem has been published in the *Complete Works* with a title added: 'Thou Blessed Dream', and the date wrongly given as August 17. A comparison of the original document and the printed text reveals some difference.<sup>9</sup>

14 August 1900  
6, Place des Etats-Unis  
Paris, France

Dear Christine,

I send you a little poem. I am well and must remain well through [throughout?]. It does not pay to be weak. I hope you are well and happy. V.

If things go ill or well  
If joy rebounding spreads the face,  
or sea of sorrow swells  
It is a dream, a play.

A play, we each have part  
Each one to weep or laugh as may  
each one his dress to don  
alternate shine or rain.

Thou dream, O blessed dream  
spread far and near thy veil of haze  
tone down the lines so sharp  
make smooth what roughness seems.

No magic but in thee  
thy touch makes desert bloom to life  
narsh thunder, sweetest song  
fell death, the sweet release.

9. *Vide Com. Works*, VIII (1971), p. 168. This poem was first published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of 1929 (pp. 521-22), from where it appears to have been incorporated in the *Complete Works*. The original document not being available then, the editors had to depend upon the copied version and the date deciphered by the contributor. Necessary corrections are, however, being made in the next edition, from the photostat of the original document, which was made available to us recently by Mrs. Boshi Sen of Almora. We are very much thankful to her for the same.—*Ed.*

A second letter to Christine, again from the Sen collection, written on the same day, acknowledges the receipt of her 'little note'.

6, Place des Etats-Unis  
14th August 1900

Dear Christine,

Your letter from N.Y. reached just now. You must have got mine from France directed to 528 Congress.

Well—it was dreary-funeral like time. Just think what it is to a morbid man like me!

I am going to the exposition, etc. trying to pass time. Had a lecture here. Père Haycynth [sic] the celebrated clergyman here, seems to like me much. Well, well what? Nothing. Only—you are so good—and I am a morbid fool—that is all about it. But 'Mother' she knows best. I have served her through weal or woe. Thy will be done. Well. I have news of my lost brother—He is a great traveller, that is good. So you see the cloud is lifting slowly. My love to your Mother and Sister and to Mrs. Funkey.

With love,  
Vivekananda

Two months later one of the choicest and most intimate letters Swamiji ever wrote was addressed to Christine, his letter in French of October 14. This has been published, as has still another letter to Christine of that period, dated August 28 and containing the well-remembered line: "When the dream is finished and we have left the stage, we will have a hearty laugh at all this—of this I am sure." The October 14 letter contains the famous passage: 'I have found the pearl for which I dived into the ocean of life.' If one compares the very careful handwriting of this letter (it is in the Boshi Sen collection) with the rapid scrawl of many others, one may conclude that Swamiji spent considerable effort on that letter to perfect the French, quite likely copying the final text from a carefully prepared first



draught. The reader is referred to my study of Swamiji's knowledge of the French language in *Prabuddha Bharata*, April 1969 (p. 193). The tenderness and sense of intimacy in the numerous letters to Christine composed at this time show us a Swamiji not always apparent.

There is another unpublished letter in the Sen collection, written to Sara Bull, from which we learn something about Swamiji's thoughts and movements as he prepared to leave Paris and travel to the Near East. Dated October 22, 1900, it suggests that at the end of his Paris stay Swamiji resided at the home of Gerald Nobel, as he had done on his first night in the city two and a half months before.<sup>10</sup> For the letter is headed, 66 Rue Ampère, Nobel's home. Mrs. Frances Leggett says in *Late and Soon* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1968) that Nobel was always generous about meeting visitors to Paris and seeing them off. Also it was Nobel, a long-time resident of Paris, who had pushed the arrangements that made it possible for Swamiji to participate officially in the Congress of the History of Religions. What more considerate gesture could Swamiji have made than to stay with this kind person on his last day or two in the French capital?

In this letter Swamiji speaks clearly of his 'original plan' that his work should be international in character—the only time, as far as I know, that he mentioned this objective so outspokenly. Of course, he often visualized a desired interchange between East and West and he said in a letter to Alasinga Perumal, dated November 20, 1896, from London, that his interests were international and not Indian alone.

It is clear from the October 22, 1900, letter, as from others, that Swamiji expected to return to Europe from the Near East tour

and carry on his work. This was to be in English with an interpreter, as he was to declare later to Christine in yet a third (published) letter dated October 14, 'I have not the time anymore, or the power, to master a new language.'

What happened in the next month to make him change his mind we do not know. Burke has studied this question in her *Second Visit*, pages 752-755. But he need not have been anxious; the international work had already been started and would grow. Mother knew, as he said, 'how to work up my original plan.'

66, Rue Ampère  
22nd Oc. 1900

Dear Mother,

I am sorry to learn you are not well. Hope you will soon be better. Things seem to turn out better for me.

Mr. Maxim of the gun fame is very much interested in me and he wants to put in his book on China and the Chinese something about my work in America. [This was done, although the book was not published until 1913. See *Second Visit*, page 685.] I have not any documents with me; if you have, kindly give them to him. He will come to see you and talk it over with you. Canon Hawes [Haweis] also keeps track of my work in England. So much about that. It may be that Mother will now work up my original plan—of international work—in that case you will find your work of the conferance [sic] has not been in vain.

It seems that after this fall in my health physical and mental, it is going to open out that way—larger and more international work. Mother knows best.

My whole life has been divided into successive depressions and rises—and so I believe is the life of everyone. I am glad rather than not these falls come. I understand it all. Still, I suffer and grumble and rage!! Perhaps that is a part of the cause of the next upheaval.

I think you will be in America by the

10. *Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1967, pp. 129-30.

time we return. If not I will see you in London again. Anyhow adieu for the present. We start day after tomorrow for Egypt etc. and all blessings ever be on you and yours—is as always my prayer.

Your son  
Vivekananda

PS: To Margot my love and I am sure she will succeed. V.

As long as he was in Paris, Swamiji attended the exhibits of the Exposition conscientiously, as in Vienna, Istanbul, Athens, and Cairo, he was faithfully to 'do' the museums.

\* \* \*

The Exposition kept open a week beyond the announced closing, till Monday, November 12. The plaster buildings were already faded, and soon nearly everything would be broken down and carted away: the 'display of wood and rags and whitewashing—just as the whole world is.'<sup>11</sup>

Swamiji escaped what he called this 'big affair' on Wednesday, October 24. With Emma Calvé, who paid his fare, Josephine MacLeod, Jules Bois, and Père Hyacinthe Loyson and his wife, he moved toward the Near East and ultimately home, on the luxury train the *Orient Express*.

In the final chapter of *Second Visit*, pages 741-755, Burke gives a summary of what happened during the days from October 24 to November 26, when Swamiji left Port Tewfick by steamer for India. Port Tewfick, or Tewfik, is the large docking area at the southern terminus of the Suez Canal, some five kilometres from the city of Suez. Ships frequently put in there before moving up the Canal, or after having come down that waterway before moving out into the Gulf of Suez and the Red Sea. Passengers sometimes embarked or disembarked here. In Swamiji's time there was a daily train which left Cairo at 11:30 in the

morning and reached Suez at 18:30, a trip of 148 miles or some 250 kilometres. Swamiji spent from October 30 to about November 10 in Istanbul, from about November 11 to November 13 in and around Athens, and the rest of the time in Cairo and environs. I shall not duplicate the account of this month, but only add to it where research has revealed new facts.

A few years ago (October 11, 1959) the house organ of the French national rail system *La Vie du Rail* published a retrospective number on the *Orient Express* (plate 3). This confirms the interesting description of the train given on page 741 of *Second Visit*. From the magazine article we learn also that before the *Orient Express* was put in service in 1883, long trips in Europe by train were difficult, since passengers had to get down at the frontier of each nation and transfer to the interior service of that nation, on to the next border. But through using the *Orient Express* one could traverse the six countries from France to Turkey without getting down—a marvel for that age—although nationalism still asserted itself, as Swamiji has remarked, through the need to submit to formalities at every frontier (plate 4). By 1900 the journey from Paris to Istanbul took sixty-seven and a half hours. Since the distance was 3,185 kilometres, the train's average speed was about twenty-eight miles or forty-seven kilometres per hour.

The schedule was as follows :

Paris	dep. from Gare de 15Est	19h 14
Vienna	arrival next day	16h 00
Budapest	„	23h 05
Belgrade	„ second day	8h 01
Sofia	„	19h 27
Istanbul	„ third day	11h 00

The train went twice a week, arriving at the terminus on the third morning. The party which left on the 24th (with the exception of the Loysons who went straight through to Istanbul) halted at Vienna, where

11. *Com. Works*, VII, (1969), p. 381.



Swamiji went to the Schrönbrunn Palace to see the actual rooms where the poor Aiglon had lived and died. They caught the following *Orient Express* which left Vienna Sunday evening and arrived in Istanbul on Tuesday, October 30.<sup>12</sup>

We know a good deal about what Swamiji did during the ten or so days he stayed in Istanbul. It is to be believed that he had a good time there, for Istanbul is a city of rich historical interest. Also, Istanbul stands astride two continents—Asia and Europe—like Swamiji himself.

Volume III of the original four-volume *Life of Vivekananda*, published in 1915, summarizes Swamiji's activities in Istanbul. To this we may add the insights gained from entries in Père Hyacinthe Loyson's diary, published in *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1971, pp. 113-25. Emma Calvé in her autobiography and in some unpublished notes which I will present later, amplifies our knowledge of the Istanbul stay. And two unpublished postcards from Swamiji himself give further details.

'The Swami made his stay in Constantinople useful in various ways,' says the *Life*. 'Every centre of interest was visited; he saw the museum, the sarcophagi, the charming scenery from the top of the place where the daily gun was fired [Seraglio Point, crowned by the old palace of the sultans, on the European side of the entrance to the Bosphorus], the foreign quarters, and the old wall within whose compound was the dreadful jail.' These ancient fortifications must have impressed him, for on November 1 he sent a postcard (Sen collection) to Christine at 528 Congress Street, Detroit, picturing the old decayed fortress walls of Istanbul (plate 5). His message was: 'I am having good time here. I hope you also are having in Detroit. Yours Vivekananda.'

The *Life* tells of an exciting boat ride on the Bosphorus with Josephine MacLeod. They were bound for Scutari on the Asian side to pay a call on Père Hyacinthe (plate 7). It seems to have been a disquieting trip; there was too much wind, and the landing was made at the wrong place. In a description given by an American traveller of the same period (*John L. Stoddard's Lectures*, Boston, Balch Brothers Co., 1897) we obtain a first-hand picture of how it must have been.

Making our way to one of the boat stations on the shore we found a multitude of little barges crowded together like logs in a lumberman's boom.... A sail in one of them is quite exciting: first from their lightness, which permits the boatman to send them skimming over the water with exhilarating speed; and also from the fact that they possess no seats or benches, and one must sit on cushions in the bottom of the boat, as motionless as a Chinese idol. If not, a careless movement, or misstep, may give the tourist an impromptu bath among the fishes of the Bosphorus.

'They saw on their way [to Scutari],' the *Life* continues, 'the home of the Sufi monks, who were also healers of disease. Their method was to chant...by swaying backwards and forwards, then dance until they fell into a trance, and in that mystic state they would trample on the body of the diseased persons, and thus effect a cure.'

Whether on that day or another, it is clear that Swamiji saw a demonstration of whirling dervishes. He sent Nivedita a postcard showing dervishes, and Calvé in her autobiography gives a vivid description of their visit to a monastery where they witnessed a ritual of dervishes, ending with this:

I feel dizzy, my heart pounds, I sense a growing sickness, and my companions and I have but one idea, which is to escape as quickly as possible from that hallucinating sight.

<sup>12.</sup> Vide *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1971, p. 121.



The postcard sent to Nivedita (Sen collection) was dated 1 November and addressed to her at 29 Dover Street, Sesame, London. The card shows dervishes and local fish merchants (plate 8). On the postcard, below the illustration, Swamiji wrote :

Dear Margo, the blessings of the howling dervishes go with you. Yours in the Lord, Vivekananda. P. S. All love to Mrs.. Bull. V.

The *Life* states that on the day when they made the perilous boat crossing of the Bosphorus 'he had his meal in the Scutari cemetery, no better place being found.' The great Mohammedan cemetery is situated at Scutari, but I had always been puzzled by this particular decision until I read, again in the travel book by Stoddard, the following enlightening explanation:

Moslem cemeteries are almost invariably shaded by a grove of cypress trees. It was the custom of the Turks when they first came to the Bosphorus, to plant beside each new-made grave a cypress tree. To some extent this admirable custom still prevails. Hence many of their cemeteries, especially in the Asiatic suburb of Scutari, are veritable forests, miles in length, which spread above the dead a canopy of leaves. These, to the Turks, are favourite places for promenades, and even picnics; and on a pleasant day one may see hundreds of them here, walking about beneath the trees as if in a vast cathedral.

The diary of Père Hyacinthe records the fact that on Friday, November 2, he, with Swamiji, Emma Calvé and Jules Bois, attended the selamlik, a weekly Moslem prayer service led by the Sultan. In her autobiography Calvé records the event as having been impressive: massed troops outside the mosque and a big crowd. 'From his carriage the Sultan rises to respond to the cheers of the people. He is not at all handsome, with his anxious face, pallid, his nose like an eagle's beak. He enters the mosque, comes out ten minutes after, sur-

rounded by his ministers, and hastens to his carriage with frightened eyes.'

This was Abdul Hamid II, the last supreme ruler of the Ottoman Empire, who was deposed in 1909. A despot, he had a pathological fear of assassination, so much so in fact that it is not at all sure that the person Swamiji saw was actually the Sultan. Abdul Hamid often sent to the selamlik a substitute whose likeness to his own was uncanny.

Later that same day<sup>13</sup> Swamiji gave a lecture in the chapel of the American College for Girls at Scutari. Further research at Istanbul and at Millau in southern France, Emma Calvé's home base during her adult life, throws more light on this incident.

The American College for Girls was absorbed by Robert College, and the campus at Scutari abandoned in 1914, when the institution moved to the European side of the Bosphorus, at Bedek. The photograph published in connection with 'Swami Vivekananda and Père Hyacinthe Loyson', *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1971, page 119, shows the newer campus, never visited by Swamiji. Through the help of Herbert H. Lane, Alumni Secretary of Robert College, I have now succeeded in obtaining a photo of the building on the Scutari campus—Barton Hall—which contained the school's assembly hall (plate 9), and a photo of the hall, or chapel, itself. These were first published in the spring, 1964, *Alumni Bulletin* of the Istanbul American Colleges. It is undoubtedly here that Swamiji gave his talk on November 2. Barton Hall burned down in 1905.

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By the late 1920's the Nobel Prize winning French author Romain Rolland had become intensely interested in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Several

13. *Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1971, p. 124.



visits from Dhan Gopal Mukerji, whose *The Face of Silence* had already appeared, and who offered to help Rolland find source material, galvanized Rolland into action. As we know, publication of his books *La Vie de Ramakrishna* and *La Vie de Vivekananda*, appearing in 1929, was the outcome.

One of Rolland's most useful sources of information was Josephine MacLeod, who visited the author frequently at his home in Villeneuve in Switzerland in 1927. He encouraged her to recount everything she knew about Swamiji for eventual use in his books.

Rolland set down resumé's of these conversations with Josephine MacLeod in his diary. These entries, along with a great many more on Indian subjects recorded by the author between 1915 and 1943 were brought out in published form in *Inde* (Paris : Editions Albin Michel; 1960) in the original French. Those sections which pertain to Swamiji in the Near East are appropriate for consideration here.

An entry in Rolland's journal related to our present study appears on page 201, set down in 1927:

It is deplorable that on his visit to France in 1900 he didn't meet any really first-class representative of French intellectuality and religious feeling. The people who monopolized him were Jules Bois, Père Hyacinthe, and Emma Calvé. (Despite the fact that Miss MacLeod makes an exception for her, who showed herself sincerely touched by the thought of Vivekananda and paid for him most of the costs of his sojourn in Europe and his return to India from Egypt, where Miss MacLeod visited with him the Great Pyramid.) I find it absurd that Vivekananda should have got that kind of an idea of France.

Rolland allowed himself to publish this thought, somewhat recast, in the text of *La Vie de Vivekananda*:

It is too bad that an observer of the moral life of the Occident as acute as he was, seems to have had in Paris as guides and daily examples of the French character nobody but Père Hyacinthe and Jules Bois.

Bois, Père Hyacinthe Loyson and his American wife, and Emma Calvé, he characterized in a footnote a little farther on in the book as an 'odd retinue for a sannyasin, who had withdrawn far from the world and from life! Perhaps it was his detachment itself that made him more indulgent, or more indifferent.'

From his own point of view, Rolland's criticisms are no doubt justified. And yet we are faced with the fact that Swamiji lodged with Bois for several weeks, during which he wrote in his letter to Christine of October 14, 'we have many great ideas in common and feel happy together.' He shared a compartment with Bois on the *Oriental Express*, mixed with him in Istanbul, sent him through Josephine MacLeod in a letter to her dated December 26, 1900 'all love to dear Jules Bois', and entertained him at Belur Math in 1901.

Swamiji's genuine love for the pitiful Loyson was expressed in his 'Memoirs of European Travel' and testified to by Loyson himself in his diaries.

As for Calvé, although he was surely aware of the tempestuous life she led, Swamiji spoke of her (November 26, 1900) as a 'good lady' and offered her his 'everlasting gratitude and good wishes'. Only six weeks before he died he took the time to write Calvé a beautiful letter of condolence on the death of her father.<sup>14</sup>

But we have sufficient knowledge of what a holy man is, to understand behaviour that Rolland found disturbing. Writers of hagiography would wish away or suppress inconvenient facts, as likely to be misunder-

14. *Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1974, pp. 94-95

stood, likely to mislead the faithful. Scribes and Pharisees are appalled at Christ's eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. But those who know what spirituality is, see such as evidences of equal-mindedness. 'Now I am going to be truly Vivekananda. . . . I was Jesus and I was Judas Iscariot; both my play, my fun.' (Swamiji to Mary Hale, March 28, 1900.) That is how a holy man thinks and acts.

\* \* \*

The subject of Jules Bois (plate 10) has been dealt with in the *Second Visit*, pages 700-706. Burke pictures Bois, as the detailed studies I have made on the writer's life and actions prove him to have been, an uncomfortable character. But I shall add to this published treatment only such additional facts on Bois from my researches in France that are of primary interest.

We see Swamiji happily settled in the writer's Paris apartment in September and October of 1900. But where that apartment was, no one ever knew. I set out to try to find its location.

From the epilogue of Bois' *Visions de l'Inde* (Bois' somewhat imaginative travel book on his 1901 visit to India) one learns that this lodging was located on the Rue Gazan (plate 11). Both Swamiji and Bois spoke of it as facing a park. I found in a Paris directory of 1900, preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Bois' residence listed as 19 Rue Gazan. Rue Gazan runs alongside the Park Montsouris. It seemed clear thus that a correct identification at least of the building in which Bois had stayed and had entertained Swamiji would be easy to make.

The Rue Gazan is at the very southern extremity of Paris, close, in 1900, to an old series of city fortifications; close, today, to the Cité Universitaire, built on land freed when those fortifications were razed.

Picture postcards dating from the turn of the century show that at the time when

Swamiji and his host gazed down upon it, the Park Montsouris looked very much as it looks today. In the epilogue of *Visions de l'Inde* Bois referred to the 'little Switzerland' (plate 12) in the park visible from the flat. This arrangement is still there—an artificial waterfall falling from a miniature crag, forming a small lake.

The opposite side of the Rue Gazan is lined with apartment buildings, mostly constructed recently. Going to number 19, I found a large apartment house with the name of the architect and the date of construction engraved above the entrance: A. Delforge, Architecte, 1908. This was a disappointing discovery. I concluded that the building where Bois and Swamiji had stayed had been demolished shortly after they had lived there and had been replaced by this newer structure.

But I reasoned that some reference to, or perhaps even a photograph of, the former building might exist at the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, and went there to investigate. To my surprise, I discovered that the existing structure at 19 Rue Gazan is the first building to have been erected on that plot of ground. In 1900 the site was vacant.

The mystery of how this could be was cleared up when I discovered that in 1904 there had been a renumbering on the Rue Gazan. What in 1900 had been 19 had become after 1904 and is to this day, number 39.

At 39 Rue Gazan I found a large apartment building dating, I guessed, from the turn of the century. My hopes rose once again that we should, after all, find the flat described so pleasantly by Swamiji in his letter of September 1 to Swami Turiyananda:

...has his room filled with books, and lives in a flat on the fifth floor. And as there are no lifts in this country, as in America, one has to climb up and down.



... There is a beautiful public park round the house.

I made contact with the present owner of 39 Rue Gazan, a M. Derin. He said that the building had been constructed in 1897 by a M. Daveau, from whose widow he had bought it around 1940. M. Derin had heard that Jules Bois had once lived in his building—or rather, that the writer Joris-Karl Huysmans (whose name is much better known than that of Bois) had sometimes visited Bois there. M. Derin referred me to a resident of the building, a M. Coudray, who had lived there ever since the building had been constructed. M. Coudray might be able to provide additional facts.

M. Coudray proved to be a quiet elderly man who lives with his sister in the ground-floor apartment. His family had moved into the building upon its completion, and he had continued to live there, in the very same flat, ever since. In 1900 he had been ten years old. M. Coudray said that he could not recall ever having seen Jules Bois—and he had no recollection of anybody that could have been Swami Vivekananda—but he remembered clearly the day that Bois moved out of the building, probably in 1901 or 1902, because of the astonishing number of books Bois had had. They had been brought down and placed in the hall outside the door of the Coudray apartment, pending the arrival of the mover.

Swami Vivekananda wrote to Swami Turiyananda that the apartment was on the fifth floor; Bois referred in an article he contributed to the *Forum* magazine in 1927 to the balcony from which he and the Swami viewed the Park Montsouris. There are two apartments on the fifth floor of 39 Rue Gazan, each with a balcony facing the Park. Each has a living room, a dining room, and kitchen, and a bathroom. The one to the north has three bedrooms, that to the south, two bedrooms. How to determine which of the two apartments was the one leased to Bois? Concerning this, M.

Coudray could not help me; but he referred me to the daughter of M. Daveau, the original owner, a Mme. Lasserre.

Mme. Lasserre, evidently quite aged, lives in Nimes in the south of France. In answer to my letter she wrote that all she knows is that Bois was the first to occupy whichever apartment it was that he occupied, upon completion of the building by her father; but precisely which flat that had been, she could not say.

And so the trail has stopped there. I have not positively identified the flat in which Swamiji stayed with Bois, but I have narrowed the possibilities down to two.

The occupants of both the fifth-floor apartments at 39 Rue Gazan, intrigued by our search, invited me to photograph the interiors. And this I did. I have photographs of the living and dining rooms, which face the Park Montsouris, of both apartments, and of the Park itself from the balcony of each.

I kept hoping that some clue might present itself that would make identification sure. If only one were equipped with a spiritual Geiger counter, as Sri Chaitanya had been, which allowed him to discover the lost sites of Sri Krishna's lila at Vrindaban! But I found nothing to distinguish the one apartment from the other, except their size. I reason that a single man like Bois would have rented the smaller of the two, the flat toward the south. This two-bedroom flat is now occupied by a young philosophy professor of the University of Vincennes, M. François Regnault.

Swamiji mentioned that there was no elevator. It is the same today at 39 Rue Gazan. To reach the fifth floor one still has to walk up.

In trying to determine when and where Jules Bois was born, I was confronted with astonishing discrepancies. Each encyclopaedia and biographical dictionary consulted gave something different. But the obituary of Bois, published in the *New York*

*Times*, July 3, 1943, stated that the writer was an officer of the Legion of Honour. Inquiries at the Grande Chancellerie of the Legion of Honour in Paris showed that indeed he had been made a chevalier of that body in 1906. The Legion of Honour's dossier relating to Bois, whose data must be presumed to be accurate, gives Bois, as having been born in Marseilles on September 28, 1868. He was the son of a wholesale merchant. His mother was of Spanish origin. His father was forty-eight and his mother forty at the time of his birth.

Bois was in Paris by his early twenties, and the stream of writings on occult subjects which he authored began in 1884. His obituary spoke of his having written forty books.

A picture we have of Bois taken in the early 1900's shows a stoutish looking man, wearing the sombre clothes of the period. His forehead is high, his eyes full of inquiry. The expression of his mouth is obscured by a dark moustache and beard. In 1900 Emma Calvé set down her impression of him, in some unpublished travel notes which we shall examine presently :

He's a nice fellow, sweet, good, obliging, with whom one feels at ease. He's very feminine, a bit like a girl friend in trousers. Much loved by the men and the women of our party.

Bois went to America to live in 1915, where he stayed the rest of his life. An interesting account of his life in America can be read in *Life and the Dream* by Mary Colum (New York : Doubleday, 1947). Mary Colum was an eminent literary critic and the wife of the Irish-American poet Padraic Colum. She and her husband knew Bois intimately for years. Mrs. Colum says that Bois never really adjusted to the

New World, never learned to speak or write English well, and never made any stir there in literary circles. He seemed always a disappointed outsider. Having returned to his Catholic faith, he was critical of Hindu thought.

Through all this, however, Jules Bois seems to have guarded in his heart some devotion towards the guest whom he housed so agreeably on Rue Gazan. In 1925 he contributed an ode ('To A Sage') on Vivekananda to *Prabuddha Bharata* (March, p. 97), in which occur the appellations 'brother' and 'master' and which concludes : 'Hail to You ! My thanks !' In 1936 Bois participated in a celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birth centenary organized by the Vedanta Society of New York. The occasion was a banquet held on March 15 at the Ceylon-India Inn. Swami Bodhananda, a disciple of Vivekananda, and Swami Akhilananda, a disciple of Swami Brahmananda, were present, together with about fifty or sixty guests. A photograph was taken on that occasion, showing Bois seated between the two swamis. The beard and moustache are now smaller, the forehead higher due to receding hair, the eyes still inquiring, but kindly. Bois gave a talk about Vivekananda at the banquet, and it is remembered that he spoke feelingly about the Swami. Swami Pavitrananda, the present head of the Vedanta Society, says that he understands that Bois in his later years was very close to Swami Bodhananda.

Jules Bois died in Manhattan. His funeral was held on July 6, 1943. at the Corpus Christi Catholic Church, 529 W. 121st Street. His body was interred in the Roman Catholic Calvary Cemetery in Queens. His tomb, located in the 'New' Calvary cemetery, Section 55, range 6, plot P, grave 4, remains unmarked to this day.

(To be concluded)



# MEDITATION

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

The supreme goal of meditation, or spiritual life, or life itself, is to attain the highest kind of Samadhi. There are three states of consciousness of which we are aware: waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep; beyond these is The Fourth, Turiya. And that is [Nirvikalpa] Samadhi.

Having attained Nirvikalpa, or the highest Samadhi, Swami Vivekananda wrote a poem in Bengali which may be summarized in English as follows: 'The world disappears, shadow of ego remains. Now the shadow of ego remains in the lower Samadhi. In the highest, that also disappears; what remains, words cannot express and is beyond our thought's compass.'<sup>1</sup> In Savikalpa Samadhi, ego also remains—but who I am, where I am, and what I am is not known.

Nirvikalpa, then, is the supreme goal. And what do those, who come back from that state, see? They see God everywhere. First, as Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) put it, 'All is not, God is.' Then, 'God is all.' My Master, Swami Brahmananda, once told me, 'When I am in that mood, I see God under the cover of so many sheaths: the sheath of a saint, the sheath of an evil man, the sheath of a thief, the sheath of a good man. But I see nothing but God.'

I was arguing once with one of my brother disciples about a metal idol that Sri Ramakrishna would take to the Ganges and treat like a little baby. I made the remark that this was done in Bhavamukha—that is, in a

high spiritual mood. Maharaj [Swami Brahmananda] overheard me and said, 'So you have become omniscient.' I said, 'Do you mean to say that with these physical eyes one can see everything, metal also and idol also, as God?' Then in one sentence he solved the problem by saying, 'Show me the line of demarcation where matter ends and spirit begins.' In our eyes everything is material; for those whose spiritual eye has opened, everything is spiritual—then you see nothing but spirit.

Such spiritual vision is the goal. Swamiji defined religion as 'the unfoldment of divinity already within man.' In other words, there is divinity or God within every one of us; to unfold that divinity is religion. So the first thing for a spiritual aspirant to learn is that divinity is within, here—God is within.

This idea that divinity or the Kingdom of God is within is emphasized in all the religions of the world. Everywhere we find this ideal—not only in Vedanta, but also in Christianity, Islam, Sufism, Buddhism. To quote the Bible, 'Ye are the temples of God and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' 'Neither here nor there, lo, the Kingdom of God is within.' But this truth must be realized. You may go around the world searching for God; you may think, 'If I go to the Himalayas, or to India, or to any cave, I shall find God.' I had always an inclination for practising such austerities, but my Master said, 'No. Find Him here, then you will find Him everywhere. If you do not find Him here, you will find Him nowhere.' And then he added, 'Why do you have to practice austerity? We have done all that for you.'

As Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, 'Unaware of My higher state, as the great

1. The relevant lines of the Bengali song

नाहि सूर्य नाहि ज्योति . . . are:

धीरे धीरे छायादल, महालये प्रवेशिलो,

बहे मात्र 'आमि' 'आमि' . . . एइ धारा अनुक्षण ॥

से धाराओ बद्ध होलो, शून्ये शून्य मिलाइलो,

'अवाङ्मनसोगोचरम्' बोझे प्राण बोझे जार ॥

Lord of beings, fools disregard Me, dwelling in the human form.<sup>2</sup> We cannot live, breathe, think, or act without the presence of the Lord, the Self, within us. In the *Kena Upanishad* we read :

At whose behest does the mind think? Who bids the body live? Who makes the tongue speak? Who is that effulgent Being that directs the eye to form and colour and the ear to sound? The Self is ear of the ear, mind of the mind, speech of the speech. He is also breath of the breath, and eye of the eye. He who realizes the existence of Brahman behind every activity of his being—whether sensing, perceiving, or thinking—he alone gains immortality.<sup>3</sup>

Immortality here means there is no more rebirth—not that the body becomes immortal, but you realize in this very life that you have no death.

Swami Turiyananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, once told me that he went through a period when with every step he took, he felt it was God directing every step. Think of that! But this truth must be realized within one's heart of hearts. Mere talking about it makes no difference. Book learning and repeating like a parrot are nothing.

Vedanta calls the Kingdom of God within by the word Atman. Atman is Brahman. Man is fundamentally the Spirit of God enclosed in the three sheaths: physical, mental, and causal. They all need food. For instance, without food the physical body cannot persist. The mental (or subtle) body also needs food, such as cultural life, art, science—anything of intellectual nature. And the casual body, known also as Anandamaya Kosha, the blissful sheath, also needs food—otherwise it dries up. And what is that body's food? Meditation. Longing for God. Thinking of God. That is the food.

Meditation is possible and becomes easier

when you have love for God. But how can this love grow? One Bengali song says, 'Think and think and think, and love will grow in your heart.'<sup>4</sup> The more you think of God, the more you try to keep your mind in God, the more love will grow in your heart. And the nature of this love, the nature of every love, is divine. That the husband loves the wife, or the wife loves the husband, or the parents love the children—the nature of this love is divine. But again, you have to realize this truth, you have to know it is God you are loving in your husband, and so forth. In the Upanishads there is a story about Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi, his wife. Yajnavalkya was becoming a monk and giving all his wealth to Maitreyi. She asked him, 'You give me all this wealth. Will it give me immortality?' He replied, 'No. It will make you happy in the worldly sense.' Then she said, 'I want that which would give me immortality.' He said, 'You have been my beloved, now I love you the most.' Then he began to teach her: 'Love the husband not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of God dwelling within the husband. The husband must love the wife not for the sake of the wife, but for the sake of God dwelling within the wife. Love your children not as children, but as God dwelling within them.'<sup>5</sup> Swamiji in fun once said, "This "renunciation", does it mean that you should take your husband and drown him in the ocean? Or that the husband should take his wife and drown her in the ocean?"

Now the question may arise: if we are fundamentally the Spirit, or God, why are we not aware of it? In a sense we are all

4. The relevant line of the Bengali song डब डब डब रूपसागरे आमर मन quoted here is: खँज खँज खँज खँजले पाबि हृदयमाभे वृन्दावन ।

5. Vide *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, II, iii, 2-5.

2. *Bhagavad-Gita*, IX, 11.

3. *Kena Upanishad*, I, 1-2.



aware of it, and then again, in a sense we are all seeking God, knowingly or unknowingly. For what is God? First, *Sat*—eternal life. We are all seeking eternal life, but in the physical body generally. Yudhisthira, one of the great Pandavas, was asked, 'What is the greatest wonder of the world?' He said, 'The greatest wonder is that we see people dying every day, but we never think that we shall die.' Next, *Chit*—pure consciousness. We are using consciousness in everything, but we do not know pure consciousness. Then, *Ananda*—bliss. We are seeking bliss in the physical sense; we do not know the great bliss that is within, that blissful Atman. As one psychologist said, the 'urge of God' is within every one of us, but misdirected.

Why is it that we go outward to find God, to get bliss? In the *Katha Upanishad* we read: 'The self-existent made the senses turn outward. Accordingly man looks toward what is without, and sees not what is within. Rare is he who, longing for immortality, shuts his eyes to what is without and beholds the Self.'<sup>6</sup> In this connection I am reminded of an incident in my life. We were about a hundred pilgrims going to visit Kedarnath and Badri-Narayan in the Himalayas, when we all saw the beautiful sunlight in the Himalayas. And what did all the pilgrims do instead of gazing at that beauty? They sat down and meditated: if that beauty outside is so much, how much more beautiful is that within? In this connection the Western philosopher Spinoza says:

For the things which men, to judge by their actions, deem the highest good are riches, fame, or sensual pleasure. Of these the last is followed by satiety and repentance, the other two are never satisfied; the more we have, the more we want; while the love of fame compels us to order our lives by the opinions of others. But if a thing is not loved, no

quarrels will arise concerning it, no sadness will be felt if it perishes, no envy if another has it; in short, no disturbances of the mind. All these spring from the love of that which passes away but the love of a thing eternal and infinite fills the mind wholly with joy and is unmingled with sadness. Therefore it is greatly to be desired and to be sought with all our strength.

That is, we must seek what the Upanishads describe as, 'The eternal amongst the non-eternal, the highest joy, the highest abiding joy amidst the fleeting pleasures of life.'

Now, we must remember that in our search we are only uncovering what is within. As I said, God is already here; spirituality is the unfoldment of that divinity which is already within us. It is not to be accomplished, it is *already* accomplished—only you must take off the covering. For instance, there is a buried treasure which you are walking over all the time—what must you do? Take a shovel and dig, until you get that buried treasure! If somebody says there is oil to be found in a certain place, you may go on digging without finding it; but this other discovery is certain because it is always there. But what is the digging? You have to perform spiritual disciplines. Another objection may arise here: howsoever we may do our spiritual disciplines, they are finite—and how can the finite bring us that which is infinite? To this Shankara replied, 'The obstacles are finite. You have only to remove the obstacles and then the infinite shines. The sun always shining is covered by clouds; one gust of wind, and the obstacles that cover the sun move away.'

These obstacles are called *Avidyā* or ignorance. This ignorance has two functions; one is covering the reality, the Atman, and the other is creating 'something that has no existence—the ego. Try to discover what your ego is. It is just like an onion—you try to find out what is within, peeling one shell after

<sup>6</sup>. *Katha Upanishad*, II, iv, 1.



another, until ultimately you find nothing. So are you this physical body? Are you a character or your so-called individuality? If so, a thief might say, 'I will not give up my thieving because then I shall lose my individuality.' So where is our individuality? It is in the infinite, in God,

From this sense of ego which, as I pointed out, has no reality, there arises attachment, aversion, and clinging to life. We experience attachment to things that give us pleasure and aversion to things that give us pain. And as already mentioned, nobody believes that he will die. This clinging to life is so instinctive, that even those of you who have meditated properly will find that as you are going deep within, you gasp—as if you are losing yourself. But then again, a spiritual man overcomes this instinct.

(Now again, there are two kinds of ego—ego of knowledge and ego of ignorance. Ego of knowledge is that which prompts you to meditate, to long for and think of God. Ego of ignorance is that which takes us away, out into worldly things.)

In order to remove these obstacles we need three important things: human life (which we all have), *mumukshutva*—the desire or longing for the truth of God, and the grace of a Guru (spiritual teacher). And who is the Guru? One who has realized God. Otherwise it will be like the blind leading the blind, both falling into the ditch. So you need the Mahapurusha—that is, a great soul who has realized God. But if you have that longing, that desire, then God himself comes down in human form to teach you. So the most important thing is that longing.

The knowledge of Brahman is to be heard from the lips of a Guru. You may not study any scriptures, or you may study all the scriptures of the world, but that wouldn't give you knowledge of God. It has to come from the lips of a Guru. Scriptures don't give us any directions.

Many times people think that this idea of the Guru is found only in Hinduism, but it is common to all religions. For instance, in the Bible we read: 'A Pharisee named Nicodemus came to Jesus, and Jesus said to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."' (What does it mean to be 'born of water'? Just to be dipped in water? No, it is what we call initiation. Baptism is the same. And to be 'born of the Spirit' is to attain Samadhi; then only can you enter the Kingdom of God.) Nicodemus then asked Jesus. 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.' Then he pointed out this beautiful truth: 'And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.' Remember: no man hath ascended up to heaven had he not come down from heaven. Everyone of us descended from heaven—and where is heaven? Within. Each one of us has the Kingdom of God within, even as the Son of God, Jesus, had heaven within. In other words, the very birthright of man is divinity. Our very nature is divine, otherwise we could not realize that divine Being.

When we were in the presence of my Master, who was the spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna, we felt that God was like a fruit in the palm of our hand, He is so easy to know. And my Master told me, 'Have that self-confidence: others have realized God, why can't I also realize Him?' Jesus said, 'That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' To believe in Him means to have real faith. Before coming to this country I went to 'M', the writer of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and asked him one question, 'What have you gained by going to Sri Rama-



krishna?' He said, 'Faith!'—that unshaken faith that comes after realizing God. As you practice spiritual disciplines, purity of heart will arise and you will see God. Swamiji said that if all the scriptures in the world were drowned but this one sentence from Jesus, religion would live on: 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.'

Now, what are these disciplines? Mainly, we must practice discrimination between the eternal and non-eternal. Everything is in a flux, passing away—today is, tomorrow is not. What is it that stays? Eternal God. But what is this eternal truth? Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Everything has been uttered by the lips of man and therefore soiled—even scriptures. But the truth of God has never been uttered by the lips of man.' Then what are we to do? Meditation, struggles for spiritual life, scriptures—all are within Maya. But Vidya-maya, or ego of knowledge, leads one beyond Maya. If there is no ego how can we meditate? And we have to take the help of symbols. Sri Ramakrishna said God is personal, impersonal, and beyond—but we can only think of Him as personal or impersonal. These are not different, however; Brahman is a vast ocean with floating icebergs (or the Incarnations of God) of different shapes and sizes. You can take Jesus, or Krishna, or Buddha, or Ramakrishna, or Holy Mother—in each one of them is that eternal Reality. Or you can take a spiritual symbol such as OM—this word, the syllable, is Brahman. As Swami Vivekananda said, 'The eternal Vedantic religion opens to mankind an infinite number of doors for ingress to the inner shrine of divinity, and places before humanity an inexhaustible array of ideals, there being in each one of these a manifestation of the Eternal One.'

Now we come to the actual practice of meditation. After the Guru has studied the tendencies of the disciple, he selects a chosen ideal and gives him a mantra

accordingly. The disciple begins to meditate, but like Arjuna he feels:

Restless man's mind is,  
So strongly shaken  
In the grip of the senses:  
Gross and grown hard  
With stubborn desire  
For what is worldly.  
How shall he tame it?  
Truly, I think  
The wind is no wilder.<sup>7</sup>

Sri Krishna answers, 'Yes, Arjuna, the mind is restless, no doubt, and hard to subdue. But it can be brought under control by constant practice, and by the exercise of dispassion.'<sup>8</sup> (My Master [Swami Brahmananda] used to stress this point again and again, saying, 'Practice, practice, practice!')

Sri Krishna discusses the true nature of meditation in the *Gita* :

'The light of a lamp does not flicker in a windless place': that is the simile which describes a yogi of one-pointed mind, who meditates upon the Atman. When, through the practice of yoga, the mind ceases its restless movements, and becomes still, he realizes the Atman. It satisfies him entirely. Then he knows that infinite happiness which can be realized by the purified heart but is beyond the grasp of the senses. He stands firm in this realization. Because of it, he can never again wander from the inmost truth of His being.<sup>9</sup>

Sri Krishna continues :

Utterly quiet,  
Made clean of passion,  
The mind of the yogi  
Knows that Brahman.  
His bliss is the highest.<sup>10</sup>  
Released from evil  
His mind is constant  
In contemplation:  
The way is easy.

7. *Bhagavad-Gita*, VI, 34.

8. *Ibid*, VI, 36.

9. *Ibid*, VI, 19-21.

10. *Ibid*, VI, 27.

Brahman has touched him,  
That bliss is boundless.<sup>11</sup>

His heart is with Brahman,  
His eye in all things  
Sees only Brahman  
Equally present,  
Knows his own Atman,  
In every creature,  
And all creation

Within that Atman.<sup>12</sup>

The spiritual aspirant, however, does not come to this attainment all at once. Grace tangibly felt like a magnet draws you ; then

11. *Ibid*, VI, 28.

12. *Ibid*, VI, 29.

you become a blessing to yourself and all mankind.

In conclusion, I shall quote the great scientist, Albert Einstein:

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the source of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness.

## MISS JOSEPHINE MACLEOD TO MRS. OLE BULL

(A Letter)

Tokyo, 49 San Saki, Yanaka  
October 30, 1901.

Dearest Sara,

Your letter of Sept. 20th from Wimbledon, telling of Dr. Jane's death has just come—I am so, so sorry. It is indeed a page turned in your life's work. You must know ere this that I intend to be in India about X'mas time, though it might be the new year before I am really in the motherland of civilization again. So you will probably not come to Japan before visiting India, but *afterwards*. This we will plan when we meet.

I hope Child Margot's collapse was not as serious as mine. This past week I have been so poorly again, after six months' freedom from distress, that I realize it may take another year to make me equal to any responsibilities. Since Swamiji did not come to Japan Mr. Okakura is thinking of going to India for two months ; but as the [meeting of] Committee of the Restoration of the Old Temples—of which he is the head,—may not take place till early December, if I go on the 30th of November as I planned, he may not be able to accompany me. So I would rather postpone sailing a week or ten days, and have the pleasure and protection of his, and Mr. Hori's company during the three weeks' sea voyage.

Mr. Hori is a young neophyte, who is going to the Math—a fine earnest Japanese, who has led a Brahmachari's life for 7 years.

The Japanese Government gives annually 150,000 yen or \$ 75,000 in our money for restoring the Old Temples, and as this is one of the results of



Mr. Okakura's life's work, and the other the *Bijutsuin* or Fine Arts Hall, that stands for Japanese Evolutionary Art—it is important that he attends this meeting before going to India.

I am going to visit the Hellyers in Kobe about the 20th of November, and they may accompany me as far as Hong Kong to see *Canton* together. If they do this, I will not wait for Mr. Okakura, but continue my sea-voyage, to Madras or Calcutta. 'Hellyer Kobe'—my cable address will find me till December 2nd anyway, in case you have anything to communicate to me.

I am rejoiced Olea is again well. Whom do you think I am going to dine with tonight, *your* Miss Hughes of Cambridge, England, who is here in Japan studying Japanese Education. I wrote and asked her if she was your Miss Hughes, and she wrote she was and I must go to see her at once, nice?

I am glad to hear good news of the Geddes—they are OURS and I love them both. We need them in the Orient—someday.

If we come to Japan together, I should *love* to have this little house together—you and I—who knows?

I hope Margot's school will be established by the time I get to India. Why don't you go on with her now—in November, and with your practical touch, get things somewhat running before I get there? Can't you?

Mr. Okakura is keen to know you and says, he knows, he will like you. He is so gentle—just the thing you like in Dr. Bose.

It is curious. I like the Oriental best—who has no tinge of Westernism—the man who stands for his own evolution—and sees the good in ours.

On Sunday, I had seven Hindu boys for luncheon—also Mr. and Mrs. Oda and son, and Mongolian Monk, in fact about 16 of us, all eating on the floor, a la Hindu, with music and songs—most interesting day from 11 to 7.30.

October 31 :

I had the most charming dinner and evening with Miss Hughes, and she comes to me next Wednesday to lunch to meet Mr. Okakura.

Good-bye.

Heart's love ever to you and Margot.

Jo Jo [ MISS MACLEOD ]

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## THE OCEAN AND THE WAVES

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

In Vedantic scriptures, the metaphor or analogy of the ocean and the waves has been extensively used for the comprehension of Brahman, the highest truth of God. In fact, in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (I. i. 2) one name of Brahman is the ocean, *samudra*. The idea, of course, is not that Brahman is material like the ocean, but rather that with the help of this analogy or symbol our minds

may be expanded and prepared for the comprehension of Brahman as Infinite consciousness. Therefore, even though the ocean is, no doubt, a limited form and concept, it can effectively help us to transcend all other limiting forms and concepts, enabling us to realize that Truth which is ultimately beyond both space and time.

In this connection, Sri Ramakrishna's first

experience of God as the infinite ocean of consciousness is a very appropriate illustration. He began his spiritual life, as we know, by worshipping and meditating upon the personal God, God as a Mother, using the help of the image of Kali. Through constant prayer and meditation his heart's desire for experience became so keen, so intense that finally he was granted the vision by the Mother, but not the vision of a particular, personal form. Instead, he had the experience of the infinite, impersonal ocean of consciousness and bliss, the ocean of Sachchidananda. He had felt that waves of consciousness, like waves in the ocean, were everywhere, rushing towards him and enveloping him. The walls of the shrine where he was worshipping, the image of Mother Kali, the articles of worship before him, and even his own body had all become the waves of consciousness. He was surrounded by the waves of consciousness, just like the onrushing, mountainous waves of a storm-tossed sea, with this difference: the sea, the ocean was not a material ocean. The entire material universe had been transformed into the waves of consciousness, the waves of consciousness dancing upon an infinite ocean of consciousness.

Now, when such an experience becomes full and complete, when everything has become a wave, including the sense of space, time, and individuality, then you experience the ultimate unity. Then you no longer say or feel that there is an ocean of consciousness and there are the waves of consciousness. Your mind then goes to the inexpressible. And this was Sri Ramakrishna's experience. In the beginning, he felt that everything had become the waves of consciousness—the walls, the image, the articles, and his own body—but eventually he transcended even this experience, experiencing what, in Vedantic literature, has been best described as *neti, neti* (not this, not this). The ultimate experience, then, is beyond

mind, beyond speech, and even beyond all sense of individuality. But this ultimate experience should not be confused with the state of dreamless sleep in which there is also no sense of time. There is a vast difference between the two. When you have awakened after dreamless sleep in the morning, the world is the same old world, and you are the same old man, except that your body and nerves are relaxed and refreshed. There is no transformation of your personality, and no new knowledge has come to you. The same old world of multiplicity remains. On the other hand, when you have experienced everything as being but the waves of an infinite ocean of consciousness and when that too at last stops and merges into the inexpressible, indescribable Absolute, then you come back, you awaken with a new knowledge. You feel that everything has been transformed, that everything that was previously experienced as multiplicity is, really speaking, only consciousness. At all times in your heart of hearts, then, you know that everything is really that Infinite. Everything is really God, God as Sat-chit-ananda—infinite reality, consciousness, and bliss. Therefore, that memory, that experience of supreme unity becomes a part of you, transforms you, and adds a new dimension to your personality. You become a seer of God in the highest sense.

Now then, if we can safely sit by the shore of an ocean and watch the delightful play of waves, some great and some small and at the same time enter into a philosophical state of mind, then we can experience a very wonderful train of ideas. When we are in a boat on the ocean during a storm, of course, there is no beauty or philosophy; there is only fear. But if we are safely sitting on the shore, we can easily observe how each wave appears to be different from every other wave and, again, how each wave appears to be different from the ocean. Bringing our minds to a state of analysis and re-



flection, however, we can see that the waves and the ocean are made of the same substance. The waves are not really different from the ocean. The difference is only apparent, based upon the temporary appearance of the wave-state. The real truth of the wave is that it is the ocean. Now, again, if while viewing the waves we become a little creative, we can imagine that two waves that are side by side have personalities and are friends. One wave is wiser. That wave let us say, has Vedantic knowledge;—it is a Vedantic wave! The other friend, though, is an ignorant wave. He has forgotten that the ocean is his home, his source of power, life, and joy. As the two waves are rising together, dancing together, the ignorant wave exclaims, 'I am a forty-foot wave. I look like a mountain. See how beautiful and powerful I am.' But as they are rising, the Vedantic wave is only smiling. Finally, when they both begin to fall, the ignorant wave becomes afraid and begins to cry: 'I am becoming smaller and smaller. I am disappearing!' Then the Vedantic wave very calmly says, 'How foolish you are. Nothing has happened to you. Your real nature is one with the ocean. You are always in and of the ocean. You are the ocean. A temporary form came, and you have become proud of your power and glory, but you are really always one with the infinite power of the ocean. We are simply merging into that infinite power of the ocean where there is no death. We are returning to our real nature. So why should you be afraid?'

In the same manner, a person seeking the impersonal truth of God should first train his mind through the external analysis of this material universe; and then, finally, he should proceed inward to merge with that infinite Truth. These two practices, in fact, have been elaborated in detail in the *Upanishads* to enhance and guide our meditations. When we begin with the analysis of the external, we find, beginning from space-time,

that there is no end to this vast universe. And anything that is happening is happening in space-time. This vast universe is guided by natural laws, and each natural law is obeying strict laws of causation. Similarly, our bodies and minds are a part of this vast, cosmic show, being operated by both physical and psychological laws. The sages of the *Upanishads*, however, have said that our experience of the material universe is not the total experience; it is only a partial experience. If we inquire and probe more deeply into the nature of this material universe, we find that at the back of the gross there are finer and subtler levels of reality. Even modern scientists are approaching this idea when they display interest in the idea of creation. They see so many elements, so many permutations and combinations of elements in this complex universe, and then their minds become engaged in the problems of cosmology, trying to discover a first cause. And this search for a first cause is natural and important for the human mind. It is not a luxury. It is the search for unity, a unity without which we cannot function in life. If, for example, a man feels lonely and lives the life of a vagabond—sometimes sleeping in road-side sheds, sometimes in open fields in a sleeping bag—that man is really miserable. Why? because the sense of unity with others is essential for human growth. There must be some kind of connection with others, a feeling of love and unity. Therefore, if that same man acquires a family, a home, a job, and possessions, then he naturally becomes happier. He says, 'Well, the whole universe may be alien. The sun may not belong to me. That garden may not belong to me. But at least I have this much.' This identification with a part of his environment, then, makes him happier, makes him feel greater than just a small and isolated unit of existence. Thus, there is an inherent tendency in man to expand his personality, to search outside of



himself for unity—unity, if possible, with not only human beings but with plants, animals, rivers, and mountains as well.

Therefore, the sages of the *Upanishads* say that if you are seeking, the highest truth of God, you have to first expand your personality. You must not remain satisfied with experience as it naturally comes to you, for it is only a small phase of reality. If you remain satisfied with just this material universe, you cannot grow spiritually. You may be a very successful scientist, scholar, or businessman, but the problem of your life will not be solved. You will not reach that peace, knowledge, and joy which resolves all your doubts, makes you fearless, and sets you free. So if you are seeking higher and higher truth, you must not accept what is merely coming to you through the instrumentality of your senses. Instead, you have to develop the powers and capabilities of your mind. Through spiritual practice, through concentration and meditation your mind can experience more and more profound intuitions, discovering subtler and subtler levels of reality. Then this manifold universe with its endless varieties of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch resolves itself into subtler and subtler shades of unity. According to the Vedantic scriptures, in fact, this whole universe, including the mind, is first resolved into five elements or *pancha-bhutas*, these elements being the cause of everything else. The first and the most subtle of these five elements is *akasha* or space. And from this fundamental, objective *akasha* by a slow process of evolution and separation comes *vayu* or air; then from *vayu* comes *agni* or energy; then from *agni* comes *apa* or water; and then finally from *apa* comes *prithivi* or matter in the solid state. We should remember, though, that these are all symbolical expressions of actual spiritual experiences. In other words, at one stage the mind perceives this universe as a solid or material universe, but later, as

the mind develops, matter is forgotten, and the universe then appears to be made of only energy. In this way, through objective analysis we experience subtler and subtler levels of reality.

Now, the sages say that at the back of *akasha* or space is consciousness, which, being beyond space as well as time, is also beyond all our normal experiences. Space-time, then, is not final. Behind space-time is the vast impersonal reality of God as Sachchidananda—infinite existence, consciousness, and blessedness. And these three, according to Vedanta, are one. Existence, for example, can never be isolated from consciousness. Whatever you think, feel, or see is enveloped by knowledge. Whether you are seeing or experiencing a tree, a wall, your own body, thoughts, or emotions, you can know for certain that just as these are pieces of existence, they are also pieces of knowledge or consciousness. At the same time, any experience is also bound to bring a sense of joy. For example, if you shut yourself in a dark and sound-proof room for thirty-six hours, you will find yourself becoming very miserable. Why? Because you will miss the joy of seeing and hearing. But as soon as you come out of that room into the light anything that you perceive—whether it be a cat, a dog, a tree, or even something that you do not like—will for that moment be a thing of joy to you. Therefore, if you probe more deeply into experience, you will find that everything has three faces—namely, existence, consciousness, and joy. Every experience is a piece of Sachchidananda.

Here, the analogy and imagery of the ocean is again very helpful. For just as millions of waves arise from the ocean but are really grounded in the ocean, so also everything in this vast universe can be thought of as arising out of the ocean of Sachchidananda, being really grounded in Sachchidananda. Holding to this idea, then, you should imagine during your meditation



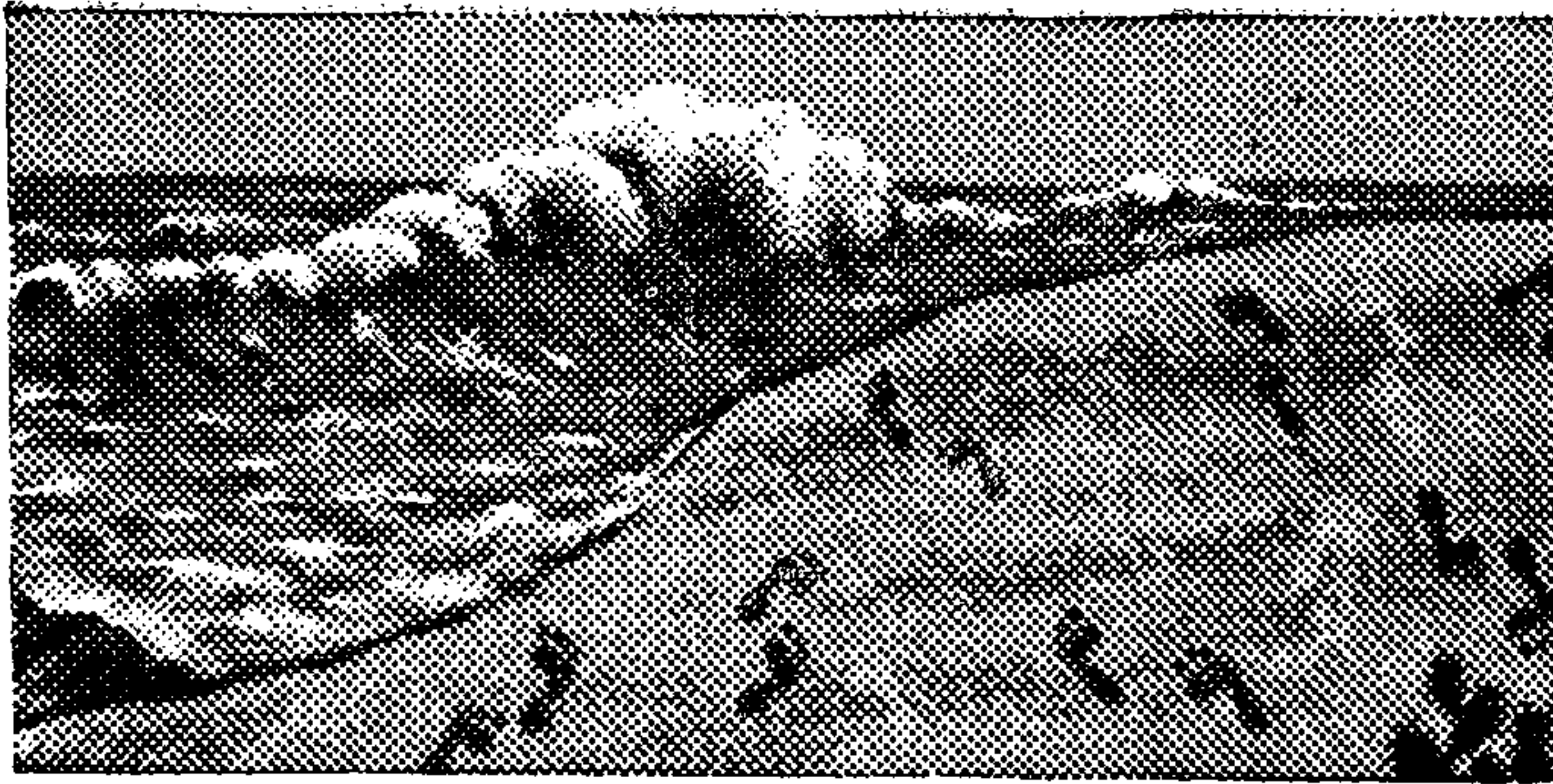
that any idea, any thought or emotion that is arising is really a wave of Sachchidananda. In this way, with this knowledge of unity you can even conquer very terrible and unpleasant thoughts by resolving them into the ocean-like totality of God—God as the infinite, impersonal Sachchidananda. In our normal, everyday life, of course, we experience existence in a piecemeal way, always perceiving differences and dualities, but that is ignorance. If you are trying to reach the Truth, if you are trying to realize the impersonal aspect of God, then you have to practice this idea—that just as millions of waves are really the ocean, so all experiences are the waves of Sachchidananda, are pieces of Sachchidananda. If you can practice this meditation and contemplation, a time will come when all duality will disappear, when even the waves and the ocean will become only the ocean, only Sachchidananda. But then just as it happened to Sri Ramakrishna, the mind will rise still higher. You will reach that state and experience which cannot be described by thought or words—namely, God as He is, God the indescribable Absolute. In other words, all the manifold stages of reality—space-time, matter, energy, and so on—will be resolved into the ultimate Unity, the self-existent, eternal truth of God. When we are ignorant, we isolate ourselves from this great truth. We become petty, proud, and miserable. Seeing only the manifold, we become afraid. But when we understand that we are grounded in Sachchidananda, that we are functioning in that infinite ocean of Brahman, we become proud of our real glory; we become fearless. We will know that even though our little individualities—our bodies, our accomplishments, our possessions—may vanish like waves any moment, still we are one with that infinite ocean of God.

Therefore, the analogy of the ocean and the waves is very significant and helpful, since it takes us to that point from which we

can make that ultimate jump into unity. Everything becomes one. Everything becomes Brahman, the ocean of Sachchidananda. When this experience becomes stable, however, we then are prepared for the final experience—namely, that the infinite ocean or Brahman is not outside but rather inside as the Atman, as our own Self. Each of us then may rightfully claim: 'I am that vast ocean of Sachchidananda.' At this point our spiritual practice takes the form of the meditation on the Atman, the emphasis being directed toward our own personalities, our own true nature—in other words, 'What am I?' Just as we had analyzed and comprehended the external universe through subtler and subtler stages, so also we analyse and comprehend ourselves through successive inward stages—as body, life-energy, mind, and so on—receding back and back, until we find that we are that infinite ocean. That ocean of Sachchidananda is not in time and space. It is Itself: self-evident reality, my soul, my Atman, me. And this vast universe is just a wave. The sun is a wave. The moon is a wave. The solar system is a wave. My body and millions of bodies are just waves. Anything that is heard, seen, felt, or thought, then, is just a projection. Just as any wave is a projection of the ocean, so any experience is a projection of the Self. And I am that Self, that infinite ocean of Sachchidananda. *Aham Brahmasmi*. I am Brahman, as the sages of the *Upanishads* declare. Consequently, through this contemplation, this meditation upon the subjective Truth, the inner Atman, our minds eventually reach that same state that can be reached through the analysis and comprehension of the external universe. In other words, just as we objectively realize that 'everything is Brahman,' so also we subjectively realize that 'everything is me.' Then we become speechless.

(Contd. on page 117)





# HUMAN TRENDS

## A MULTI-CULTURAL AND MULTI-RACIAL BRITAIN

MR. BRIAN G. COOPER

During the past three decades Britain has become a multi-racial society. The settlement in Britain of citizens from the 'New Commonwealth', especially from the Caribbean islands and the Indian sub-continent, and to a lesser extent from the African continent (particularly Kenyan Asians) and Cyprus, as well as smaller but not insignificant migrations from Eastern Europe and Italy in the post-1945 years, have made Britain a multi-religious and multi-cultural society, as well as a multi-racial one. The multi-religious dimension is important to acknowledge, for it is often inadequately grasped both within Britain itself and in other countries. Substantial numbers of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs now live in Britain, adding to the Jewish minority to produce a multi-faith spectrum alongside traditional Christianity; Sikh temples (Gurdwaras), Muslim mosques and Hindu house-temples are no longer a rare occurrence, but can be found in many major British cities; small but significant groups of Asian and African Christians are now present; West Indian churches, particularly Pentecostalist and Methodist ones, now form a major stream of British Christianity; the immigration of Greeks and Cypriots has established Orthodoxy in certain districts of London and elsewhere. In such places as inner Lon-

don, Southall, Bradford, Coventry, Birmingham and Liverpool, the religious scene is many-faceted. Britain today is virtually the only European country with the potential for exploring the possibilities of multi-religious and inter-cultural understanding, within a modern urbanised mass society. It is a veritable microcosm of both the possibilities and the problems of inter-faith contacts within the wider global context of an increasingly multi-ethnic world culture.

No one should have any false optimism about the race relations situation in Britain. Signs of hope and despair co-exist bewilderingly. Many people of ethnic minorities experience no race discrimination at all, others certainly do experience it, or claim to do so. Much discrimination is hard to pinpoint, but racial prejudice is certainly widespread, even if not always overtly expressed. Racist political parties are active, galvanising the major political parties, educational institutions and race relations organisations such as the local Community Relations Councils, into more vigorous action for racial harmony. The 1976 Race Relations Act has greatly strengthened the law in dealing with racial discrimination, and the government-sponsored race and community relations bodies have been reorganised in a



new Commission for Racial Equality with wide-ranging powers and influence. These powers will have to be decisively used to stamp out discrimination in employment, insurance and other fields. Racial stereotypes have yet to be thoroughly expunged from school text-books; West Indian and Indian community leaders have inadequate access to the media; local police forces vary between those who take community relations seriously to the extent of training officers in Indian customs and languages, and those regularly accused of racialism by local immigrant bodies. The most serious race relations problem, tragically highlighted by the Notting Hill Carnival riot in 1976, is the deep alienation of many young West Indians, particularly unemployed ones, from British institutions and values. All of which only adds to the urgency of efforts for good race and cultural relations, at all levels, in contemporary British society. For many signs of hope do exist. Research has shown a lowering of discrimination in significant fields; job promotion for many ethnic minority citizens is becoming easier; major industries recognise the importance of the distinctive contributions in the labour force and the professions of skilled men and women of ethnic minority; English language training schemes in factories are fast developing; it is accepted without question that responsible posts in British health, transport and other services are held by those from the West Indies and Indian sub-continent; there is increasing recognition, in both official and popular circles, that the ideal for multi-racial relations is not a false 'integration' and uniformity, but a common mutual acceptance of differing customs, traditions and practices within a framework of equality before the law.

This recognition occurs within the context of historical awareness. Popular and academic historians alike, their reappraisals communicated through university lectures,

TV programmes and popular magazines, take a much more critical view of Britain's imperial legacy than was the case even two decades ago. The evils of the Slave Trade, of the economic under-development of the Indian sub-continent under the Raj, of the arrogance of imperialism and the humiliations inflicted by colonialism, are widely understood, and taught extensively in the schools. The established British Christian institutions, originally suspicious and even antithetic are now taking the whole range of race and community relations issues, including relations with the Black Churches and non-Christian religions, very seriously. The necessity for inter-faith contact and dialogue is now understood. British educational institutions now seriously question whether their traditional assumptions and values do not implicitly discriminate against the children and young people brought up in ethnic minority cultures which only partially share European values. In the worlds of popular entertainment and the arts, the distinctive contribution of ethnic minority citizens, especially in music and dance, is readily acknowledged. Many very positive features of the British race and community relations situation exist, giving hope for the future, in spite of negative aspects.

From the religious angle, the arrival of the 'new Christians', particularly from the West Indies but also to some extent from Africa and Asia, constitutes a highly significant fact. Some have joined the long-established British Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches. Some attend both these bodies and their own independent churches. But the vast majority, numbering several hundred thousand, meet for worship regularly in their independent congregations. Many are Pentecostalist, others Methodist, others constitute separatist evangelical, Anglo-Catholic or African indigenous Christian congregations. Packed churches of West Indian Christians now flourish in



many of Britain's major industrial cities, and in some districts they form the biggest church. Sometimes, they make close links with the long-established British churches, but often, there is an unfortunate isolation. West Indian choirs and music groups visit Anglican and other churches, but the contacts are still too infrequent. Recently, I talked to a number of Black Church leaders about inter-Christian contacts and race relations in Britain, and was made aware that much needs to be done.

'The Churches in Britain could be a remarkable instrument for improving race relations. Individual churchmen and some congregations are doing a great deal, but overall the churches are largely neglecting their task,' said Rev. Moshe Sephula, senior minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Britain, 'and responsible for its mainly Afro-Caribbean congregation in Camden, inner London. A professional social worker as well as a minister, Sephula strongly believes the old-established British Churches would greatly help inter-racial Christian understanding, and race relations generally, by helping the Black Churches buy their own buildings and train their own leadership.

'We don't want churches requiring expensive upkeep. We do need centres for worship and community care. It saddens me to see churches sold off for factory or office development, in places where West Indian or African Christians could use them. In inner-city areas, many people from overseas suffer great personal distress, often through bereavement, separation from relatives or because city life is so impersonal. Of course, everyone feels such problems, but the West Indian and African needs the comfort and support of his own church, and his own ways of worship, to strengthen him. Also, "white churches" who have black members, should be "raising them up" as leaders and clergy.'

Why do so many West Indian Christians worship separately? Some prefer the more fervent, often pentecostal-style worship, many Black Churches offer. Others attend Anglican or Free Church services first, then go on to their own churches, where the services are longer, and sometimes an all-day programme is laid on—worship, lunch, Sunday school and choral sessions, and afternoon tea, culminating in the evening evangelistic service.

Yet the sad fact is that some who wanted to join our churches, felt rejected when they came. Bishop Malachi Ramsay, of the Shiloh United Church of Christ (Apostolic), commented frankly: 'In the early days of immigration, many West Indian Christians were slighted, treated coldly, and sometimes openly told to worship elsewhere. The situation is much better now, of course, but those wounds will take a long time to heal.' Bishop Ramsay works with Rev. David Douglas, a Black Pentecostal minister in Watford, to promote 'better Christian race relations and better Christian ecumenical relations' through the International Ministerial Council of Great Britain. IMCGB sponsors all kinds of events to bring black and white Christians together, especially 'encounter' days on doctrine, worship, and community relations. IMCGB believes in a 'truly charismatic' approach to healing the wounds of racial and religious division: 'building harmony between people must be a work of the Spirit. Race relations legislation, though important in combating discrimination, can never be enough.' These Black Church leaders strongly believe Christians must come together from different racial and cultural backgrounds, to tackle racial injustices and inequalities. 'Many Black Pentecostalist Christians are descended from the slaves of the last century, and that old master-slave mentality is still present, whenever discrimination occurs. We need this stressed more in the churches. We



need the reality of the Body of Christ. We have "us" and "them", "black" and "white", whereas we should have unity in Christ', Rev. David Douglas declares. Bishop Ramsay reinforces this: 'We need to reconcile Black and White Churches! Let the world know we are brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ!' Certainly the potential for inter-Christian understanding is very considerable, and the coming together of the Churches across racial and cultural divisions will do much for community and race relations in contemporary Britain.

The other most significant religious dimension in inter-cultural relations is the relationship between British Christianity and the minorities representing the major world religions. Awareness of the dangers of racial prejudice and violence has brought Christians, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims together in common action and witness for racial harmony. An awareness, too, of common distastes for the hedonism, consumerism, and secularism of late twentieth century British society unites devotees of the major world religions. Antipathy towards materialism, a concern for the preservation of strong family life, dislike of the commercial exploitation of sexuality, disquiet at the prevalence of divorce and sexual permissiveness, a stress on modesty and manners in social conduct, and an emphasis upon community responsibility rather than selfish individualism, are attitudes and values held in common by many religious believers, whether Christian, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. In the West Indies, under British colonial and missionary influence, many people had a vision of Britain as a deeply religious country of high moral values; the West Indians who migrated to Britain were deeply disappointed to find traditional Christian institutions and values in decline. Most Asians think likewise, from a different religio-cultural background. M. Banton, in his *Racial Minorities*, published in 1972,

writes (pp. 160-61): 'The great majority of Asian immigrants believe English society morally decadent. They are perturbed by the lack of respect children show towards their parents and the failure of the parents to care for members of the grandparental generation. At the core of the sickness which afflicts British culture is, in their view, the weakness of the family, and the fragility of marriage.' Asian religious institutions in Britain have the task, both of maintaining religious and cultural cohesion in a new country and of resisting the attractions, material and hedonistic, that would undermine religious faith. Evidence indicates that upon settling in Britain, some ethnic minority members become more fervent in their religious beliefs, while others—those already weak in their practice—succumb to materialism and alienation from their cultural and religious traditions. Nevertheless, family prayers and similar practices, for the most part vanished even among churchgoing British families, are maintained by devout members of the great Asian religions in Britain today, thus challenging Christians, too. A common reverence for sacred literature binds the Christian and Oriental traditions. Such reverence is often expressed in multi-faith services and religious occasions, when representatives of the major religions in a particular city or area come together to conduct common prayers, readings from the Bible, Koran, Upanishads, Granthasaheb and other works, in united acts of worship and multi-religious presentation. Some ethnic minority religions actually worship in Christian-owned halls: helping the 'new citizens' practice their religion is an important responsibility for the Church. No compromise of fundamental beliefs ever occurs in such inter-religious contacts and encounters, but there does take place a common affirmation of spiritual values over against materialism and hedonism.

The Church of England, through its dio-



cesan chaplains for community relations, is taking relations with the ethnic minority groups very seriously. The British Council of Churches' Race Relations Unit promotes programmes for racial harmony and multi-faith understanding. International bodies such as the World Congress of Faiths, and local organisations such as the Birmingham-based All Faiths for One Race, promote inter-religious understanding through visits to places of worship of the various faiths, dialogue and study sessions, exhibitions and similar events. Religious and cultural elements unite in occasions, music, dance and art. Much of this kind of activity goes on quietly and steadily. Sometimes, publicity is essential—for example, in the aftermath of racial violence and unrest in Southall, Sikh, Catholic and Protestant leaders promoted a procession of witness for racial harmony, with special prayers and worship for peace, with wide coverage of the events in the press. By contrast, in Sheffield, Christian-Muslim contacts have been quietly developed for the past eight years, with joint theological study and religious discussion being linked with concern for community welfare and joint action for community relations, including youth club schemes, hospitality programmes, language teaching and similar activities. The experience of race and community relations in Sheffield has also demonstrated both the need to combat incipient racial and cultural prejudices among white people, and the need to build upon the living traditions of working-class hospitality and neighbourliness in inner-city areas. Educational projects in Asian

cooking, film programmes about the peoples of Asia, and an information service on the religions of Asia, have been held in Sheffield with some measure of success. In many other cities, similar bridges of knowledge and inter-cultural understanding are being built, but not from any standpoint of paternalism. The inter-faith encounters promoted by the Church Missionary Society, special studies by the British Council of Churches, the 1976 Islamic Festival in London, and other special occasions, all help develop the atmosphere for fruitful inter-faith and inter-cultural meeting.

The recognition of the fact of Britain as a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society, is also helping to shape the theological self-understanding of Christianity in Britain. The British Churches overwhelmingly reject any attempt to convert the ethnic minority religious groups to the Christian Faith, in favour of Christian action for harmonious community and inter-racial relations, and the development of inter-faith understanding. The problems remain considerable, and the need for imaginative action more urgent than ever, but significant progress has been made. As Dean Edward Carpenter of Westminster Abbey has declared: 'Christians live alongside members of other faiths and the challenges of an age of transition confront us all. The dialogue between religions is one of the great facts of our day. It poses great problems, cultural, political, and more ultimately in the area of truth statements, but it is rich in promise.'

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(Contd. from page 112)

We go beyond mind and speech. We no longer say, 'I am Sachchidananda.' What I am, I am. That is the highest knowledge of freedom. Therefore, through the analogy of

the ocean and the waves, practiced either objectively or subjectively, we arrive at the same goal—the inexpressible, indescribable Absolute.



# OKAKURA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S DISCIPLES

YASUKO HORIOKA

'It was *India* that was the magnet that drew Mr. Okakura from his seven years absorption in his work of establishing the Bijutsuin.<sup>1</sup> Josephine MacLeod thus wrote to Mrs. Isabella Stewart Gardner of Boston soon after the news of Okakura's death in Japan reached America. The magnetic power, however, that drew Okakura to India was Josephine MacLeod herself. Had it not been for her efforts, Okakura would not have accompanied her to India, and his encounter with Swami Vivekananda would never have taken place. Had it not been for her efforts, Okakura would not have met Sister Nivedita and *The Ideals of the East* would never have been published.

Miss MacLeod came to Japan around March 1901. Regarding the purpose of her visit, she writes in her reminiscences:

Going up the Nile and meeting some charming English people who begged me to go to Japan with them, I had occasion to pass again through India *en route*. Again I saw Swamiji, and he said he would go to Japan if I wrote for him. In Japan I made the acquaintance of Okakura Kakuzo who had founded the fine arts Bijutsuin school of painting in Tokyo. He was very anxious to have Swami come over and be his guest in Japan. But Swami [Vivekananda] refusing to come Mr. Okakura accompanied me to India to meet him.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Stone Ridge, New York, October 13, 1913, Courtesy: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. (Bijutsuin means the Fine Arts Academy of Japan.).

2. *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda* Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1964, p. 247. [The readers are requested to read in this connection two hitherto unpublished letters, published in this issue: (1) Swami Vivekananda to Okakura on p. 88 and (2) Miss Josephine MacLeod to Mrs. Bull on page 107-08.—Ed.]

Okakura's son recalls in his two books on his father that MacLeod and a Josephine M. Hyde of Oakland, California, took lessons from Okakura at his Bijutsuin on the history of Japanese art.<sup>3</sup> As Okakura was away from Tokyo in late April 1901 and Hyde did not reach home in California until October 8, 1902,<sup>4</sup> the lectures must have been given during the period between May and early December 1901 when Okakura and MacLeod left Japan for India accompanied by Hori, a young Buddhist priest of Nara. Although no manuscripts or notes of these lectures are available, it is very likely that they have become a part of *The Ideals of the East*, chapters on Japanese art in particular.

Unlike Swami Vivekananda who declined twice Okakura's invitation to visit Japan, (once when Okakura's invitation and a check for Rs. 300 were sent from Japan, and the second time when he and Oda visited the Swami at Belur [on April 2, 1902]) Okakura accepted MacLeod's invitation to India instantly and with eagerness.

Okakura needed a break very much at that time. He had been under great pressure ever since his forced resignation from dictatorship at the Tokyo School of Art in 1898 due to the anti-Okakura faction. Although Okakura succeeded in establishing the Bijutsuin to help seventeen professors and lecturers who resigned in sympathy, he could not overcome his inner struggle, due to a love affair with Hatsuko, the wife of his

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3. Kazuo Okakura, *Chichi Okakura Tenshin* ('My father, Okakura', Tokyo, 1939. Reprinted in 1971): *Chichi Tenshin o Meguru Hitobito* ('My father Okakura and his Circle', Tokyo, 1943).

4. J. M. Hyde's letter to Kemmochi of Bijutsuin dated Oct. 14, 1902, Courtesy: H. Ogata, Idzura, Japan.



senior, Mr. Kuki, in the Ministry of Education. When Okakura visited Mr. Kuki in Washington, D.C. during his trip to the West in 1886, he asked Okakura to accompany his wife back to Tokyo. Hatsuko, the unhappy and lonesome wife of a fickle husband, fell in love with Okakura. Unable to bear the burden of her forbidden love, Hatsuko soon became insane and was sent to a mental hospital, where she spent the rest of her life until her death in the 1920's. Kuki divorced his sick wife in April 1901 and intentionally misinformed Okakura that she died, which Okakura believed till his death in 1913. Shocked and disturbed by the news, Okakura exiled himself to a mountainside in Japan, leaving notes to Hashimoto and to his secretary at the Bijutsuin. He writes: 'I can no longer bear the burdens of this life and would like to wander after floating clouds and running waters, watching the moon above...' <sup>5</sup> After travelling in India extensively, he added in *The Ideals of the East*:

Asia knows, it is true, nothing of the fierce joys of a time-devouring locomotion, but he has still the far deeper travel-culture of the pilgrimage and the wandering monk. For the Indian ascetic, begging his bread of village housewives, or seated at even-fall beneath some tree, chatting and smoking with the peasant of the district, is the real traveller. To him a countryside does not consist of its natural features alone. It is a nexus of habits and associations, of human elements and traditions, suffused with the tenderness and friendship of one who has shared, if only for a moment, the joys and sorrows of its personal drama. <sup>6</sup>

Surendranath Tagore, the nephew of the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, who travelled with Okakura, writes in his reminiscences :

5. Okakura's letter to Hashimoto, a leading artist of the Bijutsuin, dated April 19.

6. *The Ideals of the East*, Tuttle edition, 1970, p. 237.

But what chiefly remains engraved in my memory is, how smoothly Okakura glided into the landscape of the remote Bengal village where our journey came to its end,—his Taoist robes striking no discordant note in the province of the *aul* and the *baul*. <sup>7</sup>

It was to Surendranath that Okakura spoke about his dream of a pilgrims' colony and asked to act as an interpreter at the interview with the Mohanta at Bodh Gaya. <sup>8</sup>

He had originally come, he told me, simply to make his offering of reverence to the Buddha, but far from being rewarded with peace of mind, he had been sorely distressed at the state of the temple and its ill-kept surroundings. Thereupon he had a vision of little colonies of devotees, hailing from all parts of the world, each housed according to the usage of its own land, all clustering round the temple grounds, contributing colourful variety of vesture and ceremonial to a common ideal of peace and good-will, inspired by the contemplation of the site of the Master's enlightenment. With his proneness to plunge right into the middle of things, nothing would serve Okakura but to make a start on one such colony here and now, with a grant of land obtained from the Mohant, of which his companion, the old priest, would be left in charge till the first batch of pilgrims could be sent along! A mutual friend had arranged for Okakura's

7. 'Kakuzo Okakura', *The Visva Bharati Quarterly*, Vol. II, No. 2, August 1936, pp. 65-72 (New Series pp. 50-60), p. 71 (p. 58).

8. Prior to this visit, Mr. Okakura had visited Bodh Gaya with Swami Vivekananda and Miss MacLeod on the 29th of January 1902, and he met the Mohanta. This time, Okakura had carried with him a letter of Lord Curzon; and he was received as a state guest by the Government Officials at Gaya. A lucid description of this visit by an eyewitness is available in a Bengali book *Swamijir Smriti Sanchayan* by Swami Nirlepananda, (Calcutta: Karuna Prakashani), pp. 49-54.—Ed.



stay in this guest house till the requisite formalities could be put through.<sup>9</sup>

The interview with the Mohanta did not bear fruit, and Okakura's dream, like his other dream of the Oriental Parliament of Religions,<sup>10</sup> remained a dream until many years after his death. The first World Buddhist Conference was held in Colombo in 1950. A Japanese temple was built in Bodh Gaya in 1972 after the temples of Tibet, Thailand and Burma were built.

Surendranath was first introduced to Okakura by Sister Nivedita at the reception given by Mrs. Bull at the American Consulate [Calcutta] in early March 1902.<sup>11</sup> Abanindranath Tagore, an artist and Surendranath's second cousin, was also invited and met Sister Nivedita and Okakura for the first time. Abanindranath recalls of the occasion:

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67 (p. 53). [In this connection, it will be interesting to quote here from the article 'Japan's Fight for Land at Mahabodhi Temple, Gaya' by Sri Kalipada Biswas, published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta) of June 6, 1976. Sri K. Biswas writes: 'The third stage of the movement to secure control over the management of the Mahabodhi Temple by the Japanese Buddhist organization on behalf of the World Buddhists came in 1901-02, when the famous Japanese scholar, artist, and radical thinker Tensin Okakura, first in the company [of] Swami Vivekananda and next with Surendranath Tagore, reopened negotiations with the Mahanto for a plot of about 2 to 3 bighas of land near the Mahabodhi Temple to build a Japanese resthouse for pilgrims. The Mahanto and the district officials were by this time sufficiently alerted and though the parties were welcomed and well received by the Mahanto and his men, their mission was a failure.'—*Ed.*]

10. Cf. Y. Horioka, 'Okakura and Swami Vivekananda', the *Prabuddha Bharata*, Jan. and Mar. 1975.

11. According to Swami Vivekananda's letter to Mrs. Bull, dated February 10, 1902, Mrs. Bull appears to have arrived in Calcutta around February 10.

Hori writes in his diary of March 9, 1902 that Okakura visited him at Belur on this day.

The first time I met Nivedita was as a reception given at the American Consul's in honour of Okakura. With her white flowing gown reaching down to her feet, and a rosary round her neck, she looked like an anchorite hewn out of a piece of white marble. Okakura in all his dignity and majesty and Nivedita with her austere grace, looked like two neighbouring stars shining in the far horizon. It was an unforgettable experience to see these two personalities together.<sup>12</sup>

The friendship between Nivedita and Okakura must have grown as Nivedita corrected Okakura's manuscripts of *The Ideals of the East* and *The Awakening of the East*.<sup>13</sup> Nivedita must have enjoyed reading and correcting Okakura's writings as she herself was working on *The Web of Indian Life*<sup>14</sup> at that time. Moreover, she found in his writings the very same spirit of Swami Vivekananda: 'Awake! Arise!' Nivedita's good friend, Surendranath Tagore particularly was invited to the Okakura's reception held at the American Consulate in March 1902. Surendranath recalls of the occasion:

'What are you thinking of doing for your country?' came his first abrupt question. It took me completely by surprise, for I had no inkling of what I afterwards suspected, that Nivedita, out of her elder-sisterly regard, had charged him to stir us all up.<sup>15</sup>

Since that first meeting, Surendranath and

12. 'Reminiscences' by Abanindranath Tagore Golden Jubilee Number of the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Nov. 1961, pp. 40-48.

13. *The Ideals of the East With Special Reference to the Art of Japan* (London: John Murray, 1903; Tuttle, Tokyo & Vermont, 1970). *The Awakening of the East* (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1939).

14. *The Web of Indian Life* (London: Heinemann, 1904).

15. Reminiscences by S. Tagore, p. 60 (p. 51).



Okakura were together a great deal. When Okakura was in Calcutta between his trips, he worked on his next book, *The Awakening of Japan*.<sup>16</sup> Surendranath recalls:

He is busy writing his next book on the awakening of Asia, at which he works all day, sprawling over a bolster on his bedstead; while we spend wildly exhilarating evenings, sitting round his table, listening to his glowing passages deploring the White Disaster spreading over the East, in its intellectual and spiritual surrender to the Western cult of Mammon. Okakura would invite, nay, insist on our criticism, and appeared gratefully to incorporate such harsher word or blatant epigram as any of us thought fit to suggest.<sup>17</sup>

Surendranath and Okakura travelled together,<sup>18</sup> probably in August 1902. They travelled westwards, 'making little halts on the way to see friends, rather than places.'<sup>19</sup> The Japanese traveller with the message of 'Awake! Arise!' to the Indian youths in 1902 must have been a target of the British police, especially when he was a friend of Sister Nivedita, who had been marked by the British police for her allegedly subversive activities, and of Surendranath Tagore and other young Indian people. Biographers of Sister Nivedita write with one accord about Okakura and Surendranath:

The two men were working jointly with their friends to establish chains of secret societies—to arouse the Hindus' political sense—in the Northern Provinces.

16. *The Awakening of Japan* (New York: The Century Co., 1904).

17. Reminiscences by S. Tagore, p. 68 (p. 54): 'The White Disaster' is Chapter V. of *The Awakening of Japan*.

18. From the letters of Sister Nivedita, dated July 28, 1902, and September 10, 1902 it is revealed that they started on their all India tour on Saturday, August 2, and returned by August 31. Ref: Sankari Prasad Basu, *Letters of Sister Nivedita* (in Press), pp. 488, and 501.—Ed.

19. Reminiscences by S. Tagore, p. 68 (p. 54).

The attempts were premature and failed...<sup>20</sup>

According to reliable sources he took an active part in politics as well and had a hand in organizing secret societies in Northern India with the help of Surendranath Tagore, a nephew of Rabindranath Tagore, and a band of young men under him.<sup>21</sup>

Until the above-mentioned 'reliable sources' will be revealed, the truth about Okakura's involvement in the political activity in India remains unproven. The only Japanese source available on this matter merely suggests the suspicion of the British police on Okakura, but not what he had done politically. Hori records in his diary of December 12, 1902 that two policemen came to search Okakura at Santiniketan twice and inquired about him.<sup>22</sup> W. W. Pearson who accompanied Rabindranath Tagore to Japan in 1916, writes from the late Okakura's summer house in Idzura:

The name of Okakura is probably well known to the readers of the *Modern Review*, so I need not say anything of his life work in Japan and the part he played in the Renaissance movement in Bengal.<sup>23</sup>

Rabindranath Tagore spoke of Okakura to his Japanese audience during his second and third visits.

From him we first came to know that there was such a thing as an Asiatic mind:

Some years ago I had the real meeting with Japan when a great original mind from these shores came in our midst. He was our guest for a long time and he

20. Reymond, *The Dedicated: A Biography of Nivedita* (New York & Toronto: The John Day Co. & Longmans, Green & Co., 1953).

21. Basudha Chakravarty: *Sister Nivedita*, New Delhi: National Book Trust.

22. S. Kasugai, 'India and Japan M', *Bukkyo University Journal*, No. 56, 1972.

23. W. W. Pearson, 'To the Memory of Mr. K. Okakura', *Modern Review*, Calcutta, Vol. 20, No. 5, Nov. 1916, p. 541.



had immense inspiration for the young generation of Bengal in those days which immediately preceded a period of a sudden ebullition of national self-assertion in our country. The voice of the East came from him to our young men. That was a significant fact, a memorable one in my own life. And he asked them to make it their mission in life to give some great expression of the human spirit worthy of the East.... He said that if they could maintain a simple attitude of worshipful mind towards a great eternal idea which is the East, they would be able to summon up the strength to suffer martyrdom in their aspiration for a glorious future.<sup>24</sup>

I agree with Sister Nivedita's biographer in her statement that 'Nivedita's work was very far from being political,'<sup>25</sup> and I believe

<sup>24</sup>. Quoted in Stephen Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West, Tagore and His Critics in Japan, China and India* (Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 38-39.

<sup>25</sup>. Reymond, *The Dedicated*, p. 266.

that the same thing can be said of Okakura. He set sail for home on October 6, 1902. In place of the manuscript of *The Ideals of the East* which he carried with him when he came to India and which had been sent to a London publisher, he carried the unfinished manuscript of his next book, *The Awakening of Japan* and the draft of the speech which he made while in India. The draft was found among his papers and was published posthumously under the title of *The Awakening of the East*.

As soon as he completed *The Awakening of Japan*, he left for Boston to start his new work in the Museum of Arts there. Through Josephine MacLeod, Okakura came to be acquainted not only with Mrs. Bull, and Sister Nivedita, but with the Leggetts, the Thursbys, and Sara Farmer and her Greenacre Conference in Eliot, Maine, where Swami Vivekananda spoke many a time under his favourite tall Lysekloster pine.

## FREE WILL OR PREDESTINATION ?—I

SWAMI ASHOKANANDA

### I

The question of free will or predestination, as you well know, is as old as any philosophy or any religion. Many answers have been given, and I am afraid none of them have been completely satisfactory, partly because the question itself has not been properly stated, and partly because in our present state of understanding we are not in a position to answer it.

My reason for saying the question has not been properly stated is that I think we do not go deep enough in our analysis of man and his action, or in the analysis of the sense of freedom which obviously man feels

in most of his actions. When we think of free will or freedom of action, we are apt to take man as given—'as given' to our common understanding. We know he wants to do many things: Sometimes he has the ability to do them and sometimes he hasn't; sometimes circumstances are favourable, sometimes they are not. When conditions and circumstances are favourable, we consider that he is exercising freedom of will, and when conditions or circumstances are unfavourable, we think that his freedom of will is limited by something either within himself or outside himself, whether it be material or spiritual. Now, to me such an assumption regarding man and his action

seems superficial; therefore any questions asked from such an assumption are bound to be somewhat wrongly stated. So let us see if we can properly analyze the action of man. But first let us consider, in general, the other side of the question—predestination.

What do we mean by predestination? The usual sense of this term—and certainly the sense in which we are using it here—is the theological one: God has determined how every soul should go along his path from eternity to eternity, or at least until a final judgment comes upon him. Everything is already charted out for him. For example, what I shall say the next moment, or what I shall do after this lecture, or tomorrow or a year from now or throughout this life is already fixed. I cannot deviate from my presumed, or predetermined, path; I will not even want to deviate from it. Or if I have such a desire, that also will be predetermined. According to this view, the question of individual freedom does not even arise. If an individual has a sense that he is free, or that he should be free, that is because of his ignorance; there is no such thing as free will at all. This is the doctrine of predestination as various religions have conceived it.

I think certain Christian denominations feel forced to such a conclusion in view of the omnipotence of God. Since He is the ruler and maker of everything, there does not seem to be any scope for man's freedom. Some may say that freedom of will is also given by God to man; but since the scope and limit of that freedom are determined by Him, you really cannot say much for it.

Now, this view, again, seems to me superficial or shortsighted. If I say that God has already decided what I shall do tomorrow morning, I am ascribing to Him the same kind of planning which we ascribe to ourselves, individual men. Consider even the sense of time that is involved in the state-

ment that God has planned my tomorrow. Does God have the sense of time we have? Is it reasonable to think He should have, for example, our sense of past, present, and future? Our sense of the future is of something that we do not know—something that has not yet come into existence. That sense, of course, proceeds from our inadequacy: we are limited to certain circumstances which we consider existent, and because of this limitation we cannot know anything beyond those circumstances. Because of the same limitation, preexistent conditions become nullified. At this moment, for example, I am standing here; some minutes ago I was upstairs. My being upstairs has become a past event because those conditions have changed. If I had remained for half an hour in exactly the same position, without undergoing the slightest change, that half hour would have become one moment of present time. But whenever any changes take place in what I call the existent conditions of my being, at once what we call the past comes into existence, and these changes also spell the future.

Now, can we ascribe these limitations to God? Has He the ignorance which is necessary in order to think of the future as something not yet existent—God, who is omniscient and therefore knows everything every moment? No, we cannot think He has our limited sense of time. So even in consideration of this one simple fact, we find we cannot think that everyone's life has been thought out by God in *our* terms. To imagine that all the events which will take place—where and when and how—have already been determined by God, that He has decided everything for everyone, is just not thinking at all. Well, then, if things are not happening in God's view according to our terms, we cannot speak of His predetermining the events of my life or of your life. We cannot use that language about God.

If you accept this conclusion of mine, then



talking about predestination is just nonsense. Whose predestination? And who has predestined? Another man like me? You see, unconsciously (and even thoughtful people do this), we tend to think of God as a human being: He is more powerful, may be a little more intelligent, a little more autocratic, but otherwise there is very little difference between Him and ourselves. That is the way we think, and that is the way we pose problems to ourselves.

Now, I am not saying that God does not know time as we know it; to say that would create other difficult problems. But when I admit that God is aware of our sense of time, I should add that He would be aware of it just as a father is aware of the workings of his child's mind. Although his mind does not work like the child's, the father, through sympathy, understands the child and can talk the child's language and answer him accordingly. It is quite conceivable that this eternal God has some understanding of our way of spelling things, of the way we perceive reality, which is of course through the time-sense that we now have. But if we *limit* Him to our sense of time, then we at once create innumerable tangles for ourselves. We should always remember that He is timeless and that His perception is not just human perception. He can understand human perceptions, or the perceptions of any other kind of individual, but insofar as He perceives those things, He does so in quite a different way from our way of perceiving. As I have pointed out, ours is a very limited perception which proceeds from ignorance and limitation, and this limitation and ignorance cannot be ascribed to God.

Of course, I don't think that makes things philosophically easier for us, but facts have to be accepted. God is a being whose time-sense we don't know, whose mode of perception is unknown to us, and to whom at the same time we ascribe an understanding of

our ways. How we reconcile these two facts, how we can attribute them to the same being, is, of course, a problem. But I won't wrestle with that now; I shall go on with the topic I wanted to discuss at greater length: the action of man and to what extent it is free.

## II

Now, suppose a desire arises in my mind to do such and such a thing. First, this desire becomes a motive power; then I find that in order to accomplish what I wish, I have the intelligence and ability; next, I find that I have all the necessary external means at my disposal; and eventually I accomplish what I wanted to accomplish. You would probably say it was a free action: The man willed it; he had the intelligence, he had the abilities, he had the outward means, and nothing hampered him. Here was a free man who exercised his free will and accomplished something freely. I think that is the usual way people view an accomplishment. But was the action really free? No, I would say that it was not really free, but I would be justified in making this statement only if I think of man as Vedantists think of him.

Vedantists say that the true man is spirit—bodiless, even mindless. There are, of course, certain philosophical differences between the various schools of Vedanta; but *all* Vedantists accept the principle that the real person is spirit, separate and different from the body, as well as from the mind. They are very insistent about it. Some of you may not accept that view, but if you really face the question of what man is, you will be forced to come to this Vedantic conclusion. I won't go into all the arguments in support of it; it will be enough to point out that the body changes, body is perishable: yet the sense of our selfhood persists without any change. Mind changes, mind also goes into decay, but our sense of selfhood



persists. If these two things—body and mind—were parts of our true self, then with their change our self would lose its identity, which it doesn't. That is enough of an argument; I myself have not found anything—either argument or fact—to contradict it.

So then, when a Vedantist thinks of a person performing any action, he at once recognizes that the true person—the spiritual being who is bodiless and mindless—could function and produce results only because he had surrendered his independence, first to the mind, next to the body, and next to outward things. As Swami Vivekananda said, 'Free will is a misnomer. If it is will, it is not free; and if it is free, then it is not will.' That is just it. When a desire rises within me and becomes insistent, and when I open the way for it, it becomes a strong motive power and at once arranges all the forces within and outside for its self-gratification. There is a surrender there. Even if everything was favourable and I accomplished what I wanted, it was an accomplishment through self-surrender, not through freedom. There was no real freedom about it. It is as though you had been given an opportunity to enter behind the enemy's lines to visit someone in a prison camp. Yes, you have been given a free pass; the guards have not killed you; they have taken you where you want to go. The way has been made easy for you, and you have achieved your objective, but all the time you know you are in enemy territory. You cannot be called free. This is not the country of your freedom.

Now, consider another fact that comes to mind in this connection. Every action proceeds from a sense of want. I know many people have slurred over this whole question. 'Oh, no,' they will say, 'my action is self-expression; it is just a sport. It is just—you know—you know what I mean!' What they mean I don't know. Self-expression or sport? Nothing of the kind! When you compare an action to play, or to self-expression, self-manifestation, you must admit that

behind it there is a tremendous compulsion; and a compulsion cannot by any means be called an expression of your own freedom.

We well know that if a compulsion works within us on a lower plane, we do not call it self-expression, nor do we glorify it as an example of free action. But when a compulsion works on a nobler plane, then at once we think it has a different character. Actually, however, the same process goes on; your nature compels you. Whether a thief feels the urge to steal a certain object or an artist has a great urge to paint a beautiful picture, the compulsion, psychologically speaking, is the same.

Now, I am not giving stealing and creative work the same value; yet in a sense I am, it is true, putting them on the same level. You see, what you have within yourself is so far superior to the greatest creative work you could ever accomplish, that even *that* kind of work I consider a compulsion and a degradation for the soul. From a lower plane of existence, aesthetic accomplishments seem wonderful. From a higher plane, they seem a complete degeneration: you are being forced out of your true being. There is a state in which you enjoy infinite beauty—infinite, infinite, infinite in all directions! When you feel the pulse of that beauty, you find that your body cannot contain much of it. As a matter of fact, if that experience comes upon someone with too much suddenness, most probably that person will not be able to retain his body; it will be shattered to pieces. Or sometimes the mind will give way. Don't think body and mind are always able to contain those revelations. No, it is as though a flood had suddenly swept everything away—houses, whole villages, everything. Now, when you compare such spiritual experience with, say, the joy of aesthetic creation, the latter seems like a terrible degradation. There is a compulsion in aesthetic creation, there is compulsion even in thinking the most profound thoughts. In his true nature man is so far superior to any



of his intellectual findings or his aesthetic expressions that I would describe even his great achievements as actions proceeding from a lack of something within himself, from a sense of want. That sense of want proceeds from his ignorance of his true nature. The man is groping in the dark, and his groping is not even enlightened groping; it, too, proceeds from ignorance. How, then, can you call any action, whether mental or physical, an expression or a play of freedom? You could not call it so.

Of course, many people have said the same thing, though in slightly different language. For example, they have said that everything is governed by natural law, so that when a man thinks or acts he does so according to law, and therefore he cannot say he is acting freely. Whatever he does is determined by law. That is one way of tackling this problem of free will. But I have been trying here to approach it from a study of our own inner being in all its aspects—physical, mental, and so on. From this standpoint we find that our impulse to act rises from ignorance and the process of action itself takes place through bondage, through limitation, through dependence. In fact, the whole thing seems like a travesty of freedom; it cannot be called free in any sense. Well, that smashes freedom of will!

Now, I know that some of you will at once ask me this: "Then, why have we a sense of free will?" Yes, we do have that sense. Whenever we act we feel we are either acting freely or being coerced. There is this illustration: A person feels hungry; so he cooks a dinner and eats it. That is an example of free action. But if he is on a hunger strike and is made to eat, that would be coercion. In short, we sometimes feel we are acting freely, and so you can legitimately ask why we have this sense of freedom. Of course, the answer Vedantists give is that

whatever man does, he can never get rid of his sense of freedom. Even when a person has been imprisoned and must obey his guards or be persecuted by them, even then, he feels a core of freedom within himself. He may not express that freedom in outward action; but inwardly he can at least curse his guards or want to get out of prison or wish he could die. That much freedom he has. Freedom cannot be entirely taken away from man. It seems, therefore, that at the centre of everything man perceives or does, there is an undeniable sense of freedom.

We shall be wrong in thinking that this sense of freedom and the forms or media through which it finds expression are identical. They are not. The sense of freedom stands by itself. Whether it is in harmony with a series of actions, mental or physical, or in conflict with them, in either case it is separate from them. In other words, the sense of freedom belongs to the true Self of man, the Spirit of man, and not to his mind and body. Therefore, when this Self becomes associated with the mind and the body in an action—whether that action is ignorant and wrong or whether it is good—in the core of the whole thing is the sense of freedom. It is like light. If you bring a lamp into a dark room, whatever its light falls upon will be lighted up; the illumination belongs to the light itself and not to the furnishings or the room. Similarly, our own Self imparts to whatever It touches an aura of freedom. That is why, although actions really are determined, there is a sense of freedom about them. That is the way Vedantists explain it.

*(To be concluded)*





## ARNOLD TOYNBEE : CITIZEN OF ONE WORLD

SWAMI SARVESHANANDA

Most readers will be familiar with the name of Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975) as a renowned historian who was notably friendly to Hinduism and the Hindus. But it may come as a surprise to many that this many-sided genius was also a dyed-in-the-wool Britisher, with deep roots in the English traditions, inclining him instinctively towards everything English throughout his long life, even while his encyclopedic mind delved ever deeper into the unifying strands among mankind. It seems inevitable that future historians will rank him high among the Englishmen who helped bring together in peace the world which their ancestors strove valiantly though vainly to unify under one Empire.

We are fortunate in having at hand a disarmingly frank 'Eulogy', written shortly after Toynbee's death by his son Philip—also a well-known writer.<sup>1</sup> As it brilliantly outlines certain facets we have in mind, the following pages will follow it rather closely.

Arnold Toynbee's very first book, soon after World War I, was titled *Turkey and the Western Question*. Thus, and not too

subtly, he 'held up a mirror for the Westerners to look into, and showed them how they appeared to Turks, Arabs and Russians. In the eyes of these (to the Westerners) strange, remote, and slightly comic people, the strains and stresses in . . . "the Middle East" were mainly due to the rivalry there of the major West European powers.' Yet the latter routinely called it the 'Eastern question', complacently exasperated at tiresome troubles in Palestine or Russo-Turkish quarrels about control of the Dardenelles! To the young Toynbee, the obvious question was, 'Tiresome to whom?' And as we shall see, he patiently plugged away at broadening his own viewpoint until *all* such quarrels—while perhaps tiresome in the sense of 'puppies' play', in God's eyes—were to him calls for sympathy, understanding, and help.

His masterpiece, modestly titled *A Study of History*, but requiring forty years of hard labour from 1921, reflects and expands this consuming desire to see things as they *are*. For most people even in our proud enlightenment, 'history' means basically the history of his own land with, perhaps, the rest of the world for back-drop. Just as a New Yorker's 'map' of the U.S.A. depicts Brooklyn to be about as big as the states of Washington and Oregon combined! So, as the younger Toynbee puts it: 'the book

1. 'Arnold Toynbee—A Eulogy': *PHP* Tokyo, Japan, May 1976, pp. 2-10. All subsequent quotations are taken from this article, unless otherwise indicated.



was revolutionary in that it looked at all... civilizations with the same impartial eye. All were of equal interest to my father. All suffered from the same fatal internal flaw which was bound to lead, in the end, to their own self-destruction.' Western Europe had practically limited its study of History to that of the Greeks, Romans, and their descendants; the *Study of History* told them, in effect, that 'the Japanese, the Chinese, the Indians, the Persians, the Hittites, all had histories of their own... People with a history are real people: so, instead of feeling that everyone who lived east of the Suez must be either barbarous, comic, or both, we were encouraged to recognise the full humanity of all men.' No question, thus that Toynbee was 'one of the great broadeners of the Western mind.'

But now, consider—all this was the work of one of 'the most English of Englishmen. Totally rejecting the notion that his country is—must be—the best in the world, he was nevertheless deeply imbued with English attitudes and habits. He sprang from the 'professional middle-class', of doctors, lawyers, army and navy officers and clergymen.' He studied at the most typically English schools up to, and through, Oxford; he centered his studies around the Greek and Latin classics. Indeed he is said to have written poetry more easily in Latin than English; and he proceeded to marry a daughter of the Oxford Professor of Ancient Greek, and began teaching at Oxford as soon as his studies there were completed. And 'this was a background which my father never threw off and never wanted to throw off. However, cosmopolitan his beliefs and attitudes might become, he himself would always remain a highly-educated English gentleman. Much has been said against that species in recent years. It was they, after all, who created and governed the British Empire, and... empires are now out of fashion.' But we have Vivekananda's mature evaluations over and again, of the

paradox of the honest, kindly, God-fearing Englishman *as long as* he stays at home, vs. the same man if he ventures abroad. Some wit remarked that as soon as an Englishman crosses the Channel he becomes an imperialist! And to Vivekananda's penetrating eye, the same Englishmen who had so systematically oppressed his motherland held deep potentialities for good, not only to India's religion but its whole national unification and growth.

In the younger Toynbee's analysis, the worst fault of the English gentleman was his arrogance about his own sort of people and his nation. Yet he was 'taught to be modest about himself, even if he were arrogant about his class and type.' Among his other noted virtues were devotion to his own profession as compared with financial gain: no business-man, however 'English' would gain entrance to this aristocracy of intellect. Here we are inevitably reminded of the virtues of the caste-system, which from India has indeed penetrated all its oppressors. And the elder Toynbee gloried in all these virtues: '... anything but an arrogant man, yet... he too believed that the kind of education he had received was the only genuine education.' So great was his love and respect for the Greek and Roman classics, that later on, his critics would pounce on his 'predominant use of Hellenic... experience'<sup>2</sup>—as if such were a *fault* in one whose most revolutionary thrust, as we have seen, was towards viewing others as we view ourselves!

Further, he was a great traveller: in fact the first insight for his *Study of History* came as he marvelled at scenery from a train heading east for Istanbul.<sup>3</sup> He liked foreign foods, learned from foreign customs, loved and admired many foreign

2. Vide *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1974), Micropaedia, Vol. X, p. 76.

3. Vide *Time*, New York City, Nov. 3, 1975, p. 50.



friends; yet he would always return to England with the sense that he *belonged* there. As his son well observes, 'moral and intellectual beliefs are usually formed by the top of the mind, and . . . our innate loyalties and values lie much deeper down.' Again: 'There have been many famous English expatriates; my father could never have been one of them.' Yet, how happy he would be in the company of some of our great such 'expatriates', from Nivedita and the Seviars, to C. F. Andrews or Krishna Prem!

Here the son's charming 'Eulogy' turns to a few of his father's 'limitations'. Though these appeared mainly in the everyday life of family and friends, it is easy to see that they were an almost necessary compensation for the far-reaching virtues outlined above. Vivekananda once said, 'The great virtues a man has are his especially; his errors are common weaknesses of humanity.'<sup>4</sup> And it often seems that from among these common weaknesses, we each settle on an assortment 'demanded' by our strengths in relation to environment. The man who can rush at the cannon can hardly escape certain forms of callousness; one who rises in politics has to be at least *a bit* free-and-easy with the truth; even the Incarnations of God, we learn, need a little 'alloy' to harden the gold for the wear-and-tear of this life. Thus Philip Toynbee outlines his father's shortcomings as father of young children: his lack of understanding of or even interest in youngsters; the sons who 'attracted his attention largely as nuisances'; his 'exasperation' at their poor showing in studies; the frequent reminders of how expensive it was to bring them up, etc. Generalizing, he concludes that his father perhaps had little insight into parti-

cular minds: ' . . . he seldom saw the trees for the woods. His Olympian eye was fixed so firmly on civilisations that he hadn't the time or energy left to study and understand the people who were closest to him.' Though he dearly loved his many good friends, he tended to 'pigeon-hole' them—' . . . "Frederick, kind but wasteful," or "Dorothy, very strong-minded but . . . ." Once somebody had been put into his or her pigeon-hole there was little hope that he would ever get out of it. Even if "Frederick" had suddenly become unkind and parsimonious, it is doubtful whether my father would have noticed the change. He had, as it were, dealt with this friend once and for all, and felt no need to examine him any further.'

That's just it: ' . . . no need to . . . .' For, to the great historian, where was the time and energy for such commonplace things? True, as the son notes, there *have* been great writers who were also satisfactory fathers; but history is a particularly demanding field. And then to tackle the *whole* of human history, in these days of ever-greater specialization, seems at least a full-time task. Meanwhile, to be a real parent becomes an ever more complex task! At least, for us this example on the grand scale may help us better sympathize with our own friends of the absent-minded-professor type, or the gifted mathematician who can hardly add three and three! Sympathy itself is a rare gift: as Vivekananda said, 'It does not fall to the lot of all to feel for the misery of others.' Hence one whose large sympathies were ever flowing out towards mankind's miseries, may well be excused for having fewer left for his own family.

Further, Toynbee 'proved to be a delightful grandfather to . . . children. They were not his direct responsibility; they would not distract his attention. This enabled him to show them that gentleness and kindness which were so deep a part of his true

4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, Vol. VII (1963), p. 78.



nature.' Again, his own sons began to enjoy their heritage of reciprocal love, now that they had households of their own and were not demanding of his concern. Now at last they could share in the esteem which all others had long been feeling for their father.

Here we may well remind ourselves of the charming relationship between great *sadhus* and children: as Sri Ramakrishna said, they like to have children about them, and *vice versa*. But it is at once obvious that they are very rarely *responsible* for the upbringing of these youngsters; indeed from our worldly viewpoint they seem in quite a similar position to Toynbee's with his grandchildren. Of course, in their case, they have consciously renounced the bondages as well as the joys of family life; but from the few dramatic cases where it seems the Lord thrust 'family' responsibilities on them, it is clear what a burden these were. To be a real parent is well-nigh a fulltime job; so whether it be the call of the Highest or that of the very high, few indeed can wholly combine parenthood with that call.

Back to the positive side, Philip Toynbee stresses especially his father's courtesy—which 'implies a genuine humility and a genuine kindness.' 'His world-wide reputation never went to his head. He never considered himself superior even to the most lowly and undistinguished stranger. Anyone who met the Great Man for the first time was astounded to find a person with no airs and graces, someone who obviously believed that...all men deserve to be treated with equal respect and kindness...have an inner dignity which must be respected.'

Here the son's stress on his father's humility—so crucial in his account of the 'English gentlemen' who built the British Empire—can well be amplified. One must understand that world-wide fame came to the elder Toynbee suddenly and unexpectedly, as result of hard labour for over a quarter-century with little attention and less

praise. In fact it seems this troubled him little if any: later on he was to prove amply that he was more interested in the critics than the praisers! From the former he could learn; from the latter, not so much. Indeed, the very criticism which to us might seem the most vital—that his magnificent sweep of study was possible only by use of 'arbitrary analogies...assumptions...theological premises...'—begins to weaken when viewed in the light of this keen receptive concern for the opinions of others. Nor was it in the least a matter of fear or worry about what they would think of him: in obscurity or in fame, he never pulled his punches.<sup>5</sup> But he just never seemed to be punching at *people*: only at attitudes and tendencies, hoping to help the people that held them. For example, he brought on himself a heavy and persistent storm of abuse<sup>7</sup> by using the term 'fossil (or fossilized relic of) society' in connection with the Jews. Though he hardly anticipated the consequences (having used the same term for present-day Parsees, Jains, Hinayana Buddhists, Nestorian Christians, etc.) and though he paid respectful attention to the enraged critics, he stuck to his guns. Why not? He really rather liked fossils, ... whose characteristic tenacity I admire...<sup>8</sup>; each had a genuine insight, especially in the religious field, but unfortunately the 'potentially universal religion has been turned...into an instrument for keeping alive their distinctive national consciousness as a peculiar people...'<sup>9</sup> And having seen the endless dangers to mankind, in such

5. *Encyclopaedia Britannica, loc., cit.*

6. *Vide A Study of History: Abridgement of Volumes VII-X*, by D. C. Somervell, London: Oxford University Press, 1957, pp. 228-31, for a strikingly picturesque denunciation of 'Colonialism'.

7. *Vide Time, loc., cit.*

8. A. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London: Oxford University Press, Vol. XII (1964), p. 295.

9. *A Study of History*, Vol. XII, p. 294.



beliefs, the historian *had* to expose them.

Then quite abruptly, after the Second World War, fame came upon Toynbee, still labouring hard at the forty-year task of the *Study of History*; ... in the postwar search for international understanding Toynbee suddenly experienced the truth of the Victor Hugo remark about an idea whose time has come. A one-volume abridgment of the first six books of the study sold a phenomenal quarter of a million copies... he had become an international sage, like Einstein, Schweitzer or Bertrand Russell...<sup>10</sup> But from all accounts, the author remained even-minded in praise and blame. We devotees may even be reminded of Shukadeva at the court of King Janaka.

The 'abridgment' above-mentioned is itself a clue to Toynbee's generous humility: begun by D. C. Somervell as a labour of love, it was only mentioned to Toynbee after completion; yet the latter gratefully accepted it and began whole-hearted co-operation in readying it for press. As he says, he enjoyed reading it 'almost as though it were a new book from another hand...'<sup>11</sup> And though modifications were of course agreed upon, he 'made a point of never re-inserting any passage that Mr. Somervell had left out.' (Later a similar abridgement of the next four volumes was done.) Now we all know how hard it is for any author to bear deletion of even a few words of his toiled-over writings; thus to freely permit the wholesale omissions of more than eighty percent of such a Study, exhibits an almost unheard-of detachment. There is a similar instance: soon after Somervell's first volume, another author published *War and Civilization*, entirely from extracts from the *Study of History*. Here again, a lesser man would have bridled at the danger of 'pulling ideas out of context'; but, again,

Toynbee expressed only gratitude and co-operation. As has been well said, the *bigger* a man is, the less he has to worry about 'changes' in what he says or does: always *enough* will remain!

At this point, Toynbee looks *so* big that one may say not only that he enjoyed and respected critics but that he joined them! As he wrote: 'A writer and his critics are really partners in a common endeavour to increase our knowledge and understanding...'<sup>12</sup> And, discussing a favourite charge that he was when discussing 'history' too 'personal' and 'subjective', he smilingly mentions that he went so far as to 'open the bag of tools with which I had done the job...' (i.e., to detail, in print, his own basic presuppositions and prejudices, etc.); whereat some critics 'thanked me for nothing' (happily convinced that *they* knew all about *that*). Still, they 'have given me a mental massage that has loosened the joints and muscles of my mind....'<sup>13</sup>

Philip Toynbee takes up last: 'what my father would certainly have regarded as the most important theme of all... his religious beliefs and practices.' Though at one time he came near joining the Roman Catholic church, and at the time wrote almost like a practising Christian, still his son felt this was 'not natural to him'. His mind was too keen and questioning to accept one single body of dogmas: '...always a questioner... asking himself fundamental questions... never... satisfied with ready-made answers.' As a historian he had had to see that no person or group has a monopoly on the truth; that other religions, 'however different they might appear to be on the surface, shared a common awareness of the deepest truths of all.

'...my father could never have settled happily in any other country than his own.

10. *Time*, loc., cit.

11. *A Study of History*: Abridged single-volume, 1960, p. viii.

12. *A Study of History*, Vol. XII: excerpt on outside cover.

13. *A Study of History*, Vol. XII, pp. 573-5.



Yet...he could worship happily in temples which looked very unlike an English parish church or an English Cathedral. He was a deeply religious man in the sense that he had a deep reverence for the Unknown, a deep belief that there are spiritual realities beyond the reach of our senses.'

We quote these lines partly because they remind us so acutely of that giant among questioners, Swami Vivekananda; and in the very language of the younger Toynbee—who never mentions even one Hindu term or concept by name—is the ring of Swamiji's words. No wonder, then, that Arnold Toynbee was a valued friend of the Ramakrishna movement. And beyond this, as documentation, support and prophecy for the future of all true religion, lies his great survey of all known history, focussing more and more on the part played therein by the religions of man. We know of no such thorough-going study of history up through 'modern' times; certainly none with such solid stress on the spiritual elements therein. Though far above all trace of propaganda, it still was based on at least one 'presupposition': 'the supremely important negative belief...that man is not the highest spiritual presence in the universe.'<sup>14</sup> As he suggests in his preface to *An Historian's Approach to Religion* (1956) '... I had reached a point at which the question "What is our attitude towards Religion?" was calling for an answer too insistently for me to...ignore it any longer.' And he continues that he might have still tried to 'ignore', if the question was only 'personal'; but found that his whole generation was being forced to it by 'the quickening touch of Adversity', much like the 'time of troubles' which his survey of history had shown him to be great stimuli to religious gain. Thus his writings tended more and

more towards the spiritual view of life: somewhat like Gandhi he seems to have been *driven* to religion as the only Answer to the real problems of mankind.

We had the privilege of hearing Toynbee speak only once, and a bit over twelve years ago. But the impact was lasting. At a large public meeting in support of Pope John XXIII's 'Pacem in Terris' Encyclical, after many distinguished speakers had stressed 'practical' means of bringing nations together, Toynbee at once tackled what to him was *the* question. Something like this: 'I think all so far have been barking up the wrong tree. How can there be peace among *nations* until there is peace among *religions*?' Though the text is unfortunately not with us, the basic, nation-shaking point becomes clearer with time. As Vivekananda said, 'Religion is the supreme tie in the uniting of humanity.'<sup>15</sup> It is the only area of man's thought or action where Unity is confidently postulated. Thus, as long as the major religions each claim 'my Unity is the only one', what least hope for unity among nation-groups organized around far less lofty aims?

But it is easy for us to say so; quite another thing when it comes from one whose 'Olympian eye' scans the long panorama of our histories. Even casual browsing through a few of his writings gives breathtaking insights into *possibilities* for human unity through religion, and the practical, time-tested steps towards that—as contrasted frighteningly with the monotonous succession of failures,<sup>16</sup> from earliest times, when socio-political means are trusted. The

(Contd. on page 136)

<sup>15</sup>. *Christ: The Messenger*, Calcutta: Udbodhan Office, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup>. For 'possibilities', vide D. Bhattacharya, 'Arnold Toynbee on Religion' in the *Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture*, March-April 1975. For 'failures' vide passage cited in fn. 6, above.

<sup>14</sup>. A. Toynbee, *Christianity Among the Religions of the World*, New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1957, p. 7.





# ILLUMINATING DIALOGUES FROM INDIAN LORE

## KING MILINDA AND NAGASENA

### *Ethical Requisites For Spiritual Life*

Milinda: What are the characteristics of reasoning and wisdom?

Nagasena: 'Comprehension' is always the sign of reasoning and 'cutting off' that of wisdom.

Milinda: How is 'comprehension' the mark of reasoning, and 'cutting off' that of wisdom? Explain me by giving an example.

Nagasena: All right! Do you know the barley reapers?

Milinda: Yes, Sir.

Nagasena: How do they reap barley?

Milinda: Firstly they grasp the barley plants into a bunch by the left hand, and then cut it off with the sickle by the right hand.

Nagasena: In the same way, O King, a monk grasps his mind by his thinking, and then cuts off his failings by his wisdom. Thus is 'comprehension' the characteristic of reasoning, and 'cutting off' that of wisdom.

Milinda: Well put, Nagasena! Now, what are the other qualities necessary for spiritual life?

Nagasena: O King, other requisites are:

1. Milinda was the Indian name for Menander, the Greek King of Bactria (2nd or 1st century B.C.), and Nagasena was a Buddhist monk, who answers Milinda's questions according to the teachings of the Buddha.

good conduct, faith, perseverance, mindfulness, and meditation.

Milinda: What is the characteristic of good conduct?

Nagasena: Good conduct is the basis of all good merits. For instance: (1) the five moral powers—faith, perseverance, mindfulness, meditation and wisdom; (2) the seven conditions of Arhathood—self-possession, investigation of Dhamma, perseverance, joy, calm, meditation, and equanimity; (3) the path; (4) unbroken memory; (5) the four kinds of right exertions; (6) the four constituent bases of extraordinary powers; (7) the four stages of ecstasy; (8) the eight forms of spiritual emancipation; (9) the four modes of self-concentration; and (10) eight states of intense contemplation. And, O King, all these good conditions will never decrease to him who builds his life on that foundation.

Milinda: Sir, please explain this to me by an illustration.

Nagasena: O King, just as an architect, when he wants to build a city, clears the site of the town first, and then removes all the stumps, thorny bushes and so on, to make it level: and then only he lays out the streets and squares, and crossroads and market places, and thus builds a city; so also a monk develops in him the five moral powers,



and other qualities, by virtue as the basis. For, O King, it has been said by the Blessed one (Buddha): 'Virtue is the basis on which a wise man can mould his heart, and make his wisdom grow. Thus shall an undeceived, strenuous monk unravel all the tangled skein of life.' (*Samyutta Nikaya*, I. iii. 3; VII. i. 6).

This is the basis—like the great earth to men, and this is the root of all increase in goodness. Virtue is the starting-point of all the Buddhas' teachings, on which true bliss depends.

Milinda: Well said, Nagasena! Venerable one, what is the sign of faith?

Nagasena: O King, tranquillization and aspiration.

Milinda: How is tranquillization the sign of faith?

Nagasena: As faith springs up in the heart, Sire, it breaks through the five hindrances—lust, malice, mental sloth, spiritual pride, and doubt—and the heart, free from these hindrances, becomes clear, serene, untroubled.

Milinda: Please explain this to me by an analogy.

Nagasena: O King, just as: when a suzerain king, on the march with his fourfold army, might cross over a small stream, and the water, disturbed by his elephants and cavalry, the chariots and the bowmen, might become fouled, turbid, and muddy; and when he goes on the other side of the stream, he might give command to his attendants, saying: 'Bring me some water, my good men. I would fain drink.' Now suppose, the monarch had a water-clearing gem<sup>2</sup>, and those men, in obedience to the order, were to throw the jewel into the water; then at once all the mud would precipitate itself, and the sandy atoms of shell and bits of water-plants would disappear, and the water would become clear and transparent, and they would then bring some of it to the monarch

to drink. The water is the heart; the royal servants are the monks; the mud, the sandy atoms, and the bits of water-plants are the evil disposition and the water-cleansing gem is 'faith'.

Milinda: And how is aspiration the sign of faith?

Nagasena: In-as-much-as a monk, on perceiving how the hearts of others have been set free, aspires to enter, as it were, by a leap upon the fruit of the first stage, or of the second, or of the third in the Excellent Way, or to gain Arhathood itself, and thus applies himself to the attainment of what he has not yet felt, to the realization of what he has not yet realized,—therefore is it that aspiration is the sign of faith.

Milinda: Please explain this to me by a simile, Sir.

Nagasena: For instance, O King, if a mighty storm were to break upon a mountain top and pour out rain, the water would flow down according to the levels, and after filling up the crevices and chasms and gullies of the hill, would empty itself into the brook below, so that the stream would rush along, overflowing both its banks. Now suppose, a crowd of people, one after the other, were to come up, and being ignorant of the real breadth or depth of the water, were to stand fearful and hesitating on the brink. And suppose, a certain man should arrive, who girds himself firmly and, with a spring, lands himself on the other side. Then the rest of the people, seeing him safe on the other side, would likewise cross. That is the kind of way in which a monk, by faith, aspires to leap, as it were by a bound, into higher things. For this has been said, by the Blessed One, O King, in the *Samyutta Nikaya*; (also found in the *Sutta Nipata*, I. x. 4):

By faith he crosses over the stream,

By earnestness the sea of life;

By steadfastness all grief he stills,

By wisdom is he purified.

<sup>2</sup>. Udakappasādako mani—a magic gem (Alum or any of its compound?).



Milinda: Fine, Nagasena! What is the characteristic of perseverance, Nagasena?

Nagasena: O King, the rendering of support is the sign of perseverance. All those good qualities which it supports do not fall away.

Milinda: Please cite an illustration.

Nagasena: As for example, when a large army has broken up a small one, the king of the latter would call to mind every possible ally and reinforce his small army, and by that means the small army might in its turn break up the large one; similarly, O King, is the rendering of support a mark of perseverance, and all those good qualities which it supports do not fall away. For it has been said by the Blessed One: 'The persevering hearer of the noble truth, O monks, puts away evil and cultivates goodness, puts away that which is wrong, and develops in himself that which is right, and thus does he keep himself pure.'

Milinda: Well said, Nagasena! Now tell me, what is the characteristic of mindfulness?

Nagasena: It is repetition and keeping up, O King.

Milinda: How is repetition the mark of mindfulness?

Nagasena: O King, as mindfulness springs up in his heart, he repeats over the good and evil, right and wrong, slight and important, dark and light qualities, and those that resemble them, saying to himself: 'These are the four modes of keeping oneself ready and mindful; these, the four modes of spiritual effort; these, the four bases of extraordinary powers; these, of mental powers; these, the seven bases of Arhat-hood; these, the eight divisions of the Excellent Way; this is serenity and this insight, this is wisdom and this emancipation.' Thus does a monk follow after those qualities that are desirable, and not after those that are not; thus does he cultivate those which ought to be practised, and not those which

ought not. That is how repetition is the sign of mindfulness.

Milinda: Please give me an example.

Nagasena: It is like the treasurer of an Emperor, who reminds him early and late of his glory, saying: 'O King, so many are thy war elephants, and so many thy horses, thy war chariots and thy bowmen, so much the quantity of thy money, and gold, and wealth; may your Majesty keep yourself in mind thereof.'

Milinda: And how, Sir, is 'keeping up' a mark of mindfulness?

Nagasena: O King, as mindfulness springs up in his heart, he searches out the categories of good qualities and their opposites, saying to himself: 'Such and such are the good qualities, and such the bad ones; such and such are helpful qualities, and such the reverse.' Thus a monk makes what is evil in himself, disappear, and keeps up what is good. That is how 'keeping up' is the sign of mindfulness.

Milinda: Please explain this by an analogy.

Nagasena: It is like the confidential adviser of an Emperor, who instructs him in good and evil, saying: 'these things are bad for the king and these good; these helpful and these the reverse.' And accordingly the Emperor keeps up the good things.

Milinda: Well put, Nagasena! What is the characteristic of meditation?

Nagasena: Being the leader, O King. All good qualities have meditation as their chief, they incline to it, lead up towards it. They are like so many slopes up the side of the mountain of meditation.

Milinda: Please explain this by a simile.

Nagasena: Sire, it is like a king, when he goes down to battle with his army in its fourfold array. The whole army—elephants, cavalry, war-chariots, and bowmen—would have him as their chief, their lines would incline towards him, lead up to him, they would be so many mountain slopes, one



above another, with him as their summit, round him they would all be ranged. And O King, it has been said, by the Blessed One: 'Cultivate in yourself, O Monks, the habit of meditation. He who is established therein knows things as they are really.' (*Samuytta Nikaya*, XXI, 5).

Milinda: Fine, Nagasena! What, Nagasena, is the characteristic of wisdom?

Nagasena: O King, I have already told you, how cutting off, severance, is its mark, but enlightenment is also its another sign.

Milinda: How is enlightenment its sign?

Nagasena: O King, when wisdom springs up in the heart, it dispels the darkness of ignorance, it causes the radiance of knowledge to arise, it makes the light of intelligence to shine forth, and it makes the Noble Truths plain. Thus a monk who is devoted to effort perceives with the clearest wisdom the impermanency (of everything), the suffering (which is inherent in individuality) and so on.

Milinda: Please tell this to me by an illustration.

Nagasena: O King, it is like a lamp, which a man might take into a dark house. When the lamp had been brought in, it would dispel the darkness, cause radiance to arise, and light to shine forth, and make the objects there plainly visible. In the same way wisdom would have such effects in a man, as were just now set forth.

Milinda: Well said, Nagasena! These qualities which are so different, do they bring about one and the same result?

Nagasena: Yes, they do, by putting an end to evil dispositions.

Milinda: How they do, please explain.

Nagasena: They are like the various parts of an army—elephants, cavalry, war chariots, and archers—who all work to achieve one end,—the conquest in battle of the opposing army.

Milinda: Well said, Nagasena!

*Adapted from : The Questions of King Milinda by Br. Karuna Chaitanya.*

(Contd. from page 132)

Hindu tradition holds that the same Goal must ultimately be reached whether one studies outer nature or inner Spirit—if one studies hard enough, well enough. The West, typically, has followed the outer way; the English ideal has perhaps been its culmination. And it remained for a great Englishman to summarize these age-long, agonizing outgoing struggles, and to then point our own steps—along with his own—sharply 'inwards' as the only alternative to mass suicide. Finally, as all the great souls who have begun the inward advance, tell us, it is only then that one can start to glimpse the unity underlying belligerent nations, restless peoples—yet with no least harm to one's devotion to the homeland.

Then at last can they say with Vivekananda, the lover of India *because* lover of all: 'The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my God. India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age...the good of India is my good.'<sup>17</sup> Yet : 'But every day my sight grows clearer. What is India, or England, or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called MAN.'<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup>. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama, Vol IV 1963), p. 480.

<sup>18</sup>. *Com. Works*, Vol. VIII (1971), p. 349.

# HOW TO DEAL WITH OUR MINDS

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Of all the things in the world, man has found his own mind most difficult to deal with. Although much has been spoken and written on this subject from the time immemorial and methods suggested, in every age, man always feels the need of someone to tell him, in the light of the changed conditions of the age, the way of dealing with his mind. In this connection, Swami Vivekananda, the Prophet of the modern age, has said: 'The mind should always go towards God. No other things have any right to withhold it. It should continuously think of God, though this is a very hard task; yet it can be done by persistent practice. What we are now is the result of our past practice. Again, practice makes us what we shall be. So practise the other way; one sort of turning round has brought us this way, turn the other way and get out of it as soon as you can. Thinking of the senses has brought us down here, to cry one moment, to rejoice the next, to be at the mercy of every breeze, slave to everything. This is shameful, and yet we call ourselves spirits. Go the other way, think of God; let the mind not think of any physical or mental enjoyment, but of God alone. . . . Instead of hearing foolish things, we must hear about God; instead of talking foolish words, we must talk of God. Instead of reading foolish books, we must read good ones, which tell of God.'

What Swamiji says is really true. Our own mind on one hand is our friend, and on the other our foe. When it is under our control, it is our friend. When it has control over us, it is our enemy, our foe. Mind is the cause of attaining enlightenment. Mind is the cause of being in bondage to matter. When the mind is perfectly under control, we know what we really are. That

means enlightenment. And when we go the other way, we become slaves, subject to matter and mind. Mind is the cause of our sorrow; mind is the cause of our joy.

With mind we think. Sometimes we can think in our own way, we can give our thoughts a direction. Sometimes we cannot. Sometimes mind gets the upper hand and we are at its mercy. Thoughts come which we do not like, thoughts come which are injurious; but we are helpless, though we are not aware of it. If we study the mind, we know how treacherous it is; how much is our slavery to the mind. But we are not aware of it—most of us.

There are social problems, there are national problems, there are international problems, which upset us. But behind all these are the individual thoughts of different persons. What we call national thought is the outcome of the thinking of a large number of individuals. International problems arise out of the thinking of different nations, just as national problems are the outcome of individual thinking.

It is said that out of the high spiritual aspirations of many individuals in a country or a nation, a saint is produced. In the same way, the anguish of large numbers of oppressed people brings forth a leader, a redeemer, who comes, as it were, out of the blue and makes the impossible possible. He appears all of a sudden, and the nation which for so long remained subject and helpless, becomes powerful. It all comes out of individual thinking. Thoughts are more dangerous than atom bombs. Real explosions come from the mind. If a large number of persons begin to think in a certain way, the outcome can be dangerous, especially to those who are oppressing them. So books are prescribed. Those in power



want to control the thoughts of others. Some governments with particular ideologies try to mould the thoughts of coming generations in a particular way.

Apart from social, national or international problems, we need for our very existence to find out methods of dealing with our minds.

That is our real problem. The problem does not come from outside; it comes from inside, within the depths of our minds. In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Arjuna, the disciple, asks a question which is very important for all of us. The question is simple, but it is so pertinent. 'Led by whom does a person commit wrong? Forcibly, as it were, one is dragged to do things which are wrong.'<sup>1</sup> As St. Paul said, man does that which he does not like to do, and he cannot do what he wants to do. Long before St. Paul we find another person (Duryodhana in the *Mahabharata*) who said the same thing: 'I know what is right, O Lord, but I cannot do that; I know what is wrong, but I cannot withdraw myself from that thing. . . .'<sup>2</sup> That is our real problem, with which we are forced to grapple. Repentance or confessions cannot serve as remedies.

In another passage of the *Gita*, Arjuna makes a confession which is also the common problem of humanity with respect to mind. Arjuna says to his teacher, Sri Krishna, 'You talk of calmness of mind, serenity of thought; but I find it is a hopeless task. Mind is so restless! Mind is wild, powerful and strong. One can control the blowing winds more easily than the mind.'<sup>3</sup> This is our common problem; this is the

real problem. And Arjuna's confession implies the answer. Why are we forced to do things which we do not like to do? Because we have no control over our thoughts. Mind, like a wild horse, leads us to think wildly, and we lose control over ourselves. What is the solution? The solution is to learn how to control the mind, how to be the master of one's mind instead of being its slave.

Mind represents thoughts. Thoughts represent incipient actions. And concrete actions come from incipient actions. It is difficult to control our minds, but to a certain extent we can control our actions. If we think we shall take our dinner at a certain time, very often we succeed. Many actions which we do, we plan and we succeed. We cannot control all our actions; but sometimes, though not very often, we can control them. It is easier in certain respects than to control our thoughts. Therefore to deal with our thoughts we must begin by controlling our actions. We have to do actions. Fortunate are those persons who find good actions to occupy themselves with.

It is said that this modern industrial civilization has created a great problem of leisure. Leisure brings boredom. Someone wrote that boredom is the most costly disease of the modern age. Through labour unions, people want to get shorter working periods. Yes, there is more leisure, but the real problem is how to occupy yourself in that leisure time. If there are two or three holidays together, people are all out on the roads with their cars. And the number of casualties is very, very large. People cannot be quiet. They want the speed of the motor car in their own lives. If the electricity is out of order and, therefore, television cannot be seen for an hour, some persons feel miserable. They do not know how to occupy themselves, so they turn to television. Many problems come nowadays with the abundance of leisure. Many persons have

1. *Bhagavad-Gita* (hereafter, *Gita*), III, 36.

2. The original Sanskrit quotation, which occurs in some versions of the *Pandava Gita*, in part runs thus :

जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्ति-

र्जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः ।

3. *Gita*, VI, 33-34.



not sufficient occupation. It is a blessing to have works to be occupied with.

I have read that Dr. Schweitzer, even at the age of eighty-two, was doing hard manual work. He had many assistants, but he would not allow them to do the work, which he could do. He would say, 'Work is a blessing. Do not rob me of my opportunity to do actions.' As the saying goes, 'An idle brain is the devil's workshop.' No wonder there are so many mental cases nowadays!

To be able to be occupied with works is something. But the work must be good work, the right kind of work, and it must be done in the right spirit. Then through work we can control our thoughts. What is good work and what is bad work? The work that is done with selfish motives is bad work. The work that is done with unselfish motives is good work. As the scriptures say in their metaphysical, abstruse language, you have your ego, your 'I-ness.' The work in which your 'I-ness' predominates is wrong work; the work in which you think you are an instrument in the hands of God—'Not I, but Thou, O Lord'—is good work. Not going so high up in the spiritual atmosphere, in our down-to-earth work, whatever you do for others will give you joy. The more you can do for others, the more you can work with some idealism, with some purpose beyond gross selfishness, the greater will be your joy. Not only joy: it will bring you calmness of mind, placidity of heart. Whatever work is done with some idealism, for a purpose that is not our selfish motive, for others, for the country—that is good work. So it is said, the first stage in religious life is to occupy oneself with good works, works done with a spiritual outlook.

What is meant by working with a spiritual outlook? To do work in such a way that it will give us the knowledge of the Self. What is the knowledge of the Self?

We are not what we feel we are. We feel we are the body and the mind. It is not so. There is something behind the mind—a background against which the mind plays, sometimes good play, sometimes mischief. Beyond body and mind there is the Self. That Self, because it is spiritual essence, is all-pervading. You may call it Brahman, which means infinite; or you may call it God. God is the sum total of all life, the permanent reality behind our ego. The body grows and decays; the mind is fickle, restless, always changing. They cannot be the ultimate reality. Reality is the Self. So what is the spiritual outlook toward work? That attitude by which we can go beyond body and mind consciousness, beyond the body-mind complex. It is a wrong idea that we are body and mind, though we think that way. The body ails and we become perturbed. But there is something behind this body, even behind this mind. So our works should be done in such a way that the consciousness that we are the Self comes uppermost.

One attitude is to do works as a form of worship. Those who believe in God, work for the love of God and not for their selfish enjoyment, not for bodily or mental enjoyment. Why should we work for the love of God? Because that will bring us spiritual unfoldment. We shall be able to go nearer and nearer to the consciousness of the Self or God. That is one attitude.

Some persons who are not so devotional do work with the ideal: 'I am the Self; I am not the body. The senses do work but I am not involved in that work. I am separate; I am Divine.' Spirit is separate from work. The body does work, but not the Spirit. In that way they develop the consciousness that 'I am Divine.'

Or you may do work for work's sake, not for any gross selfish motive. To work for work's sake means to work because you have to work, otherwise the mind will do



mischievous. And if you work with a selfish motive, you suffer. As soon as you work with a selfish motive, there will come competition, hopes and fears, worry about gain and loss, and so on. But if you work simply for work's sake, or with some idealism—serving the country, serving the world, *in humility for your spiritual growth*—that will give you placidity of mind. And if you cultivate that attitude your spiritual outlook will be intensified. Even if you have no spiritual outlook to begin with and you find that you cannot control your mind, if you work in this way, spiritual outlook will grow, spiritual consciousness will come. And when spiritual consciousness comes, your mind gets a direction. From that standpoint, if you know that you are beyond mind, you can control your mind.

As soon as selfishness begins to dwindle, spiritual consciousness comes in the form of placidity of mind. You become placid, you become calm, you get some joy which is quite different from sense pleasure. That joy is much different from what you get by seeing the television or the cinema or a good play. It is altogether different; it is pure, unalloyed. You may get some joy out of television; but the next moment, when it is finished, there is depletion, there is a reaction, and you do not know how to spend the remaining time of the day or night. But by working for others or with a spiritual outlook, you get a kind of joy which you have not experienced before.

To intensify that attitude, it is prescribed to think definitely for the good of all. In the beginning you cannot think of the good of all; it is merely a theory. But when you try to practice, when you try—although you fail—to work for others; then you develop a new outlook, then you can think and pray for the good of all. There is a Buddhist prayer (also a Vedantic prayer): 'May all be happy.' Simply by this prayer—if one prays with heart and soul and not simply mechanically, if one meditates on what it

means to pray for the good of all—one will have calmness; there will be less of hostile feeling within one. If one has enemies, the feeling of enmity toward them will be less and less.

In the same way, if you deliberately try to feel sympathy for those persons who are suffering—it is called *karuna* in Sanskrit—even if you cannot do anything in action, gradually you will develop great sympathy. That will be an antidote for your ego-centricity, for your pride. If you try deliberately to feel happy for those who are successful in life, that will be an antidote for your jealousy and envy. If you try to deliberately to have sympathy for those who fail, gradually you will be less upset by others, you will not find fault with others.

So Buddhist teaching says that you should meditate on these ideas in the morning and try to put them into practice throughout the day. The result will be that you will not be assailed by so many wild thoughts. You will be regulating your thoughts through your actions and through your meditation. In this way, joy will prepare your mind for the direct attempt to control it. These preparations are necessary for real meditation.

What is meant by trying to tackle the mind directly? Mind represents clusters of unadjusted thoughts, wild thoughts, just like in dreams. In dreams, many thoughts come, which we cannot explain; we don't find any logic behind them. In the same way, in our waking mind such thoughts come in a jumbled form and we don't find any logic to them. But if you act with a spiritual motive throughout the day, if you cultivate these virtues, it becomes easier to control the mind. At least there is the background; already you have achieved some serenity of mind, some placidity of outlook. Then you are ready to begin to pray for the knowledge of the Self. Or if you are devotional, if you believe in God, you just pray for more and more devotion, more and more love for Him,



so that you may know the meaning of life.

For prayer and meditation there must be a higher purpose; not simply: 'Let us control our minds so that we can go after all sorts of pleasures.' That is not meditation. Meditation is not simply an antidote for mental derangement, going to a yogi to get some prescription to meditate in such a way that your mind will not give trouble. You cannot meditate that way. Real meditation must have the definite purpose of obtaining the knowledge of the Self or developing love for God.

Unfortunately, many persons make prayer also a commercial affair. They pray for health or prosperity or success in their business. Real prayer is unselfish prayer—unselfish in the sense that it is not for any worldly gain or sense objects. You pray only for the love of God. That is the highest prayer. It is said that the highest love for God is that in which you do not care whether God loves *you* or not; it is your *nature* to love God. Philosophically, it is true, God is our real Self; God is all-pervading. The kingdom of God is within us, but we are not aware of it. We think we are separate, and so we pray to God; but actually there is Oneness. So the best prayer is to pray simply for the love of God. It is not theoretical. We love ourselves most and God is within us. We simply put it in an emotional way. This is prayer.

And there is meditation. Meditation means concentrating on a particular thought. The most important thought is that one is divine: 'I am the Self; I am not body, I am not mind.' This is the essence of meditation. A teacher will give you some formula on which you are to think, you are to meditate; but virtually it means that: 'I am the Self, I am divine.' In meditation, you deal directly with the mind: you give the mind a right direction.

But you will not succeed all at once. There are so many thoughts coming into the mind. All those thoughts represent the past

desires in your life—in this life, or in previous lives, if you believe in reincarnation. Sometimes some unfulfilled past desires come into your mind in this life. Instead of giving importance to them, do not even recognize them. By giving recognition to them you give them life. Instead, try to think of positive things, spiritual things, deliberately. Try to give your thoughts a direction. You will not succeed at once, but continue trying from day to day.

So, in answer to Arjuna's plea that the mind is wild and powerful, more difficult to control than the blowing winds, Sri Krishna declares: 'Yes, Arjuna, the mind is restless, no doubt. But it *can* be brought under control, by constant practice and by the exercise of discrimination.'<sup>4</sup> Practice means to do a thing from day to day. In the beginning you may not succeed; but through practice you will succeed. When you continue for a long time you will find that wild thoughts will be coming less and less. Thoughts will be simplified—so many thoughts will not come. You will be able to think in a particular way, and you will find out the art of controlling other thoughts.

One method is, just to consider all other thoughts to be non-existent. Just like the patches of clouds in the sky, they are floating there, but they will not bring you rain. You consider the thoughts of the Self to be the only real thoughts, and all others to be unreal. In that way, your mind gets a proper direction.

When your mind gets a correct direction, that means you have found out already, unconsciously, how to deal with the mind. When you have some such control over your mind you do not think at random. Hostile thoughts cannot assail you and disturb you; they come and go like clouds, but when you become indifferent to them, they do not affect you. In that way, you get some

4. *Gita*, VI, 35.



degree of control over your mind. That means, you have entered into the real domain of spiritual life.

As you pursue it, more and more control comes. Then you realize what you really are, you realize God. You get the consciousness of God. You realize—actually realize—that you are divine. You are not the body, you are not the mind. You are the Self,—the eternal existence, eternal knowledge and eternal bliss. When you reach that state you are completely safe.

No more can mind give you any trouble.

Buddha said, after getting the Enlightenment: 'Life after life I came and my mind gave me trouble. This time I have found out the secret: I have got the Enlightenment. No more can mind give me any trouble.' When you get that knowledge, it is yours forever. It is eternal knowledge of your real Self, the universal Self. Then mind and body cannot give you any trouble. You are perfectly satisfied within yourself. You have become identified with Bliss.

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## ETHICS OF A MODERN CORPORATION—I

SWAMI RANGANATHA NANDA

Ever since the modern industrial revolution set in, man has been more often discussing only the *economics* of a business or industrial enterprise. But contemporary national and international conditions demand the recognition and appreciation of the *ethics* of such enterprises as well, over and above its obvious economic aspects. This is but the counterpart of the modern political state getting transformed from a mere law and order police state to a welfare state. This distinguished gathering, representing a wide spectrum of management, government, workers, and distinguished citizens, provides a stimulating *milieu* for a discussion of this important theme.

*Modern Industrial Enterprises :  
A Brief History :*

Before the onset of the modern Industrial Revolution in England in the 18th century, all over the world, industry was just a domestic enterprise. That Revolution introduced, for the first time in history, the Factory System of production. In the early

phase of this system, however, there was not much separation of work and worker from home. But the beginning of the present century saw the final separation of home and work, arising from the facilities of rapid transport and large factory establishments. Many modern writers have stressed this as the main cause of the mechanisation and de-humanisation of the worker by modern industry. In the words of George Goyder (*Responsible Worker*, p. 24): 'The world we lost as a result of this Revolution was the world of emotional security based on the home and its human ties.'

Added to this factor was the dominant profit motive of modern industry in the interest of the investor and the shareholder, where the worker became a commodity to be hired and fired in the interests of the profits to the capitalist investor. This dominance of the profit motive in modern industry carried high prestige arising from the stress on it by leading economists from Adam Smith onwards. In the early phase of modern industry, this dominant profit motive, while revolutionising production, with

its competitive aims and methods, also exploited and debased the increasing number of workers who were drawn to it as wage earners.

*The Trade Union Movement :  
A Brief History :*

The modern trade union movement all over the world is the product of the early struggles of industrial workers in England to combine, with a view to resisting this exploitation by the capitalists. In its early phase, this struggle was fierce and long, for the law was against all such moves by the workers to unite against the capitalist. The Combination Act of 1799 made all such moves by workers, such as: calling a meeting or attending a meeting to discuss raising of wages, shortening of hours, the collection or contribution of money for such meetings, or declining to work, offences under the law punishable by imprisonment. These were the dismal conditions under which the efficient modern industrial system progressed.

It took twenty-six years of hard struggle by the workers to win, in 1826, the right to organise themselves within the law. Another fifty years passed before the workers acquired, in 1875, the legal right for collective bargaining. By the end of the Second World War, the Trade Union Movement, in all industrially advanced countries, had become well-established, and workers' rights had become protected by law. These developments were also assisted by the establishment of the proletarian States, through political revolutions, in U.S.S.R. and other countries.

*Profit Motive in Industry : Its Evils :*

The Trade Union Movement was a counter-challenge thrown to the dominant profit motive of the capitalist. That challenge,

however, was also dominated by the same profit motive, but on behalf of the working class. This was sought to be achieved by collective bargaining, which involved also, strikes by the Unions and lock-outs by the Managements, wherever necessary. Such a situation involved also much loss of productivity, detrimental to the society as a whole, the interests of which found very little place in the worker-capitalist confrontation. Such a confrontation did not also permit human values to emerge out of the production process.

Exploitation of man by man is the bitter fruit of the profit motive. By extending that motive as the dominant consideration of the Unions also, the evils of modern industrialism became only enhanced.

At a time when introduction of ethical values in an economic enterprise was but a cry in the wilderness, R. H. Tawney, in his book *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, observed :

A reasonable estimate of economic organisation must allow for the fact that, unless industry is to be paralysed by recurrent revolts on the part of outraged human nature, it must satisfy criteria which are not purely economic.

The *social irresponsibility* of capitalist economics has been expressed vividly by several writers who are advocates of *technology with a human face*. Says E. F. Schumacher, the passionate advocate of technology with a human face and of the importance of a greater stress on intermediate technology for all developing countries like ours, in his thoughtful book *Small is Beautiful*, with its significant sub-title *A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* (pp. 37—40) :

In the current vocabulary of condemnation there are few words as final and conclusive as the word 'uneconomic'. If an activity has been branded as uneconomic, its right to existence is not merely questioned but energetically



denied. . . . Call a thing immoral or ugly, soul-destroying or a degradation of man, a peril to the peace of the world or to the well-being of human generations; so long as you have not shown it to be 'uneconomic', you have not really questioned its right to exist, grow, and prosper. . . .

Something is uneconomic when it fails to earn an adequate profit in terms of money. . . . The judgement of economics in other words, is an extremely *fragmentary* judgement; out of the large number of aspects which in real life have to be seen and judged together before a decision can be taken, economics supplied only one, whether a thing yields a money profit to those who undertake it or not. . . .

It is a great error to assume, for instance, that the methodology of economics is normally applied to determine whether an activity carried on by a group within society yields a profit to society as a whole. . . .

Economics deals with goods and services from the point of view of the market, where willing buyer meets willing seller. . . . The market is the institutionalisation of individualism and non-responsibility. Neither buyer nor seller is responsible for anything but himself. . . .

To be relieved of all responsibility except to oneself, means of course an enormous simplification of business. . . .

In the market place, for practical reasons, innumerable qualitative distinctions which are of vital importance for man and society are suppressed. . . . To the extent that economic thinking is based on the market, it takes the sacredness out of life, because there can be nothing sacred in something that has a price. Not surprisingly, therefore, if economic thinking pervaded the whole of society even simple non-economic values like beauty, health, or cleanliness can survive only if they prove to be 'economic'.

And offering a critique of such a *fragmentary* economic approach and motivation in terms of such non-economic values highly prized by man, Schumacher remarks (*ibid.*, p. 68) :

What is the meaning of democracy, freedom, human dignity, standard of living, self-realisation, fulfilment? Is it a matter of goods or of people? Of course it is a matter of people. But people can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups. Therefore we must learn to think in terms of an articulated structure that can cope with a multiplicity of small-scale units. If economic thinking cannot grasp this, it is useless. If it cannot get beyond its vast abstractions, the national income, the rate of growth, capital/output ratio, input-output analysis, labour-mobility, capital accumulation; if it cannot get beyond all these and make contact with the human realities of poverty, frustration, alienation, despair, breakdown, crime, escapism, stress, congestion, ugliness, and spiritual death, then let us scrap economics and start afresh.

Stating that it is the intrusion of human freedom and responsibility that makes economics metaphysically different from physics, and that all real human problems arise from *antinomy* of order and freedom, Schumacher calls for a blending of both in a healthy business corporation (*ibid.*, p. 234):

Without order, planning, predictability, central control, accountancy, instructions to the underlings, obedience, discipline—without these, nothing fruitful can happen, because everything disintegrates. And yet—without the magnanimity of disorder, the happy abandon, the *entrepreneurship* venturing into the unknown and incalculable, without the risk and the gamble, the creative imagination rushing in where bureaucratic angels fear to tread—without these, life is a mockery and a disgrace.

#### *Need to Make Service Dominant over Profit Motive in Industry :*

In the post-second World War period, there has been deep thinking in various parts of the world on the nature and scope of modern industrial organisation. A wave of disillusionment about all aspects of modern industry and technology had set in,



creating in its wake a wave of humanistic thinking and a re-assessment of the role of both profit-motivated capitalism and trade unionism in human development and fulfilment. Dehumanisation arising from the debasement of work and the worker, by the converting of work into a battle-ground of self-assertion and self-interest, the huge size of modern industrial corporations and their impersonal functioning, and their ruthless drive for technological thoroughness without caring for human cost—all these present serious challenge to human wisdom all over the world. Modern industry has also to face the challenges of all types of environmental pollution affecting human welfare.

To put profit before people is to debase the people, and make the profit so gained dismal, and the work performed increasingly boring and meaningless. Beyond a certain point, a worker cannot find satisfaction by high monetary returns alone. For his spiritual satisfactions, he needs the stimulus of involvement of his heart and mind, along with that of his hands, in his work, and of knowing that what he does is of significance to himself and his fellow humans. In the absence of these, the worker becomes increasingly mechanised and dehumanised. Modern industry distorts the human psyche by breeding the evils of alienation, frustration, and general unfulfilment in millions of working people, and thereby distorts the social situation as well. Work plays a significant part in human development and fulfilment. If a dominant profit motive debases the work and the workers, a dominant service motive elevates both. Service motive can make even a humdrum work pleasant and significant, by spiritually enriching and nourishing the worker inwardly.

### *The Bhagavad-Gītā's Philosophy of Work:*

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is acknowledged to be the longest philosophical poem expounding

the greatest philosophy of work. Work and worker constitute its central theme. The *Gītā* presents work as the means of the *abhyudaya*, material and social welfare, of the worker and, through him, of his society, and of his *niḥśreyasa*, spiritual growth and fulfilment. The latter is the product of the worker's consciousness of his work as *service* conducive to the welfare of society. The *Gītā* also exhorts the worker to gradually rise to the level of viewing such service as *worship*—worship of the Divine in man. This is the famous *buddhi yoga*, *yoga* of enlightened Reason, of the *Gītā*, which Sri Krishna expounds and eulogizes in verses 48 to 51 of its second chapter :

*Yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi  
saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya ;  
Siddhasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā,  
samatvaṁ yoga ucyate—*

Giving up attachment, equal-minded in success and failure, do all work, O Arjuna, established in the *yoga* (of *buddhi*); this evenness of mind is called *yoga*.

*Dūreṇa hyavaraṁ karma  
buddhi-yogāt dhanañjaya ;  
Buddhau śaraṇamanviccha,  
kṛpaṇāḥ phalahetavaḥ—*

Work (prompted by the profit motive and for mere sensate satisfactions) is far inferior, O Arjuna, to (work done under the guidance of) the *yoga* of *buddhi*; resort to (this) *buddhi*; small-minded and short-sighted are they who work (only) for selfish advantage.

*Buddhi-yukto jahātīha  
ubhe sukṛta duṣkṛte ;  
Tasmāt yogāya yujyasva  
yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam—*

The man endowed with *buddhi* (enlightened Reason) goes beyond (the relativity of) both the merit and demerit of all work, in this very life; strive, therefore, to acquire the *yoga* (of *buddhi*); *yoga* is spoken of as dexterity in work.



*Karmajam buddhiyuktā hi  
phalam tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ  
Janmabandhavinirmuktāḥ  
padam gacchantyanāmayam*

Wise people endowed with (the yoga of) *buddhi*, detached from the fruits derived from work, and freed for ever from the bondages of existence, attain to that state of life which is beyond all evil.

Not only workers and managements in industry, but also all politics and administration, will have to imbibe the spirit of this *buddhi yoga*, if mankind is to realise its objective of human development and fulfilment, of a national and international socio-political order based on social justice and social peace, of a polity free from all kinds of exploitation, not merely economic, but also political, intellectual, and religious. That this *buddhi yoga* of the *Gītā* has the power to bring about peace and justice in the world at large was voiced, in the course of one of his speeches, by no less a person than the Secretary General of U.N.O., the late Dr. Hammarskjöld, when he translated and commended the sentiments of the verse 49 (*Gītā*, II, 49) referred to above.

#### *Post-War Reassessment of Capitalism and Trade Unionism :*

The post-war humanistic impulse has led to a reassessment of capitalism by some Western economists and of trade unionism by some West European Marxist thinkers. The trend of this reassessment is in the direction of the replacement of the conflict, centred in the profit motive, by co-operation arising from the service motive. Increasing numbers of communist thinkers in Western Europe have recently started stressing the wisdom of involvement of the workers in, in place of the folly of perpetual conflict with, the industrial enterprise concerned, as the practical way to bring about humanisation of modern industry and tech-

nology. They also stress that producer satisfaction must go hand in hand with consumer or market satisfaction. There has been a similar response from the enlightened section of the capitalist side also, of favouring man, in a system of man in conflict with the machine. Some thinkers refer to this as the *qualitative revolution* to supplement the earlier *quantitative revolution* of the modern industrial technique. Here, for the first time, since 100 years of modern industry, we notice a healthy trend on the part of both capital and labour towards co-operation, so as to secure the progressive adaptation of the modern industrial machine to the human needs of the working people. There is thus a general trend of a greater involvement of the workers and the management within the company, with a view to bringing about progressive change in its structure, functioning and objectives.

Private enterprise, under modern capitalism, is not concerned with what it produces but only with what it gains from production; this constitutes one of the social non-responsibilities of individualism, the ugly face of the tyranny of the profit motive. Man, as a *private individual*, takes interest in non-profit values; he seeks things of utility to enjoy things without utility. But man, as a *businessman*, concerns himself only with economic profits. Hence his social and human non-responsibility. And it is this social non-responsibility that is cut at the roots by the *Gītā* teaching of *buddhi yoga*.

#### *The Socialist Vision:*

The challenge to this capitalistic thought has come from modern socialism of the communist and socialist varieties. The constant and common theme of both types of socialism is the *end of exploitation of man by man*. The main difference between communists and socialists relates to the non-



acceptance, by socialists, of economic determinism and class-war advocated by communists. The socialist vision of a non-exploitative society has been an influence in India for over 100 years, beginning with Swami Vivekananda. In fact, the main socialist ideas have influenced Indian thinking of man and society from the time of the Upaniṣads nearly four thousand years ago. The Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* expound the spiritual equality of man in the light of the one Atman, Divine Self, present in all. The teaching against greed in all the world religions is socialistic in its operation. The *Gītā* gives an ethical orientation to the concept of *yajña*, or sacrifice, in its third chapter (3.13) :

*Bhujate te tvagham pāpā  
ye pacantyātmakāraṇāt.*

Those sinners who cook (and eat) only for themselves, verily, eat only sin.

Swami Vivekananda has described the modern age as the age of the emergence of the Śūdras, of the proletariat. Says he (*Letters of Swami Vivekananda*, 1948 edition, p. 352) :

I am a socialist, not because I think it is a perfect system, but half a loaf is better than no bread.

The other systems have been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried—if for nothing else, for the novelty of the thing. A redistribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having the pains and pleasures. The sum total of good and evil in the world remains ever the same. The yoke will be lifted from shoulder to shoulder by new systems, that is all.

Let every dog have his day in this miserable world, so that after this experience and so-called happiness, they may all come to the Lord and give up this vanity of a world and governments and all other botherations.

Speaking on 'The Future of India' at Madras in 1897, Swami Vivekananda had

said (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Volume III, 1960 edition, pp. 294-297) :

The days of exclusive privileges and exclusive claims are gone, gone for ever from the soil of India, and it is one of the great blessings of the British Rule in India. Even to the Mohammedan Rule we owe that great blessing, the destruction of exclusive privilege.... The duty of every aristocracy is to dig its own grave; and the sooner it does so, the better. The more it delays, the more it will fester, and the worse death it will die.

According to R. P. Masani, Dadabhoy Naoroji, the outstanding economic thinker and political leader of the pre-Gandhian Indian National Congress, had attended the International Socialistic Congress at Amsterdam in 1904 and had cultivated some association with the British Socialists. Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vinoba Bhave, and our present Prime Minister, Srimati Indira Gandhi, apart from hundreds of other thinkers and political leaders, have been advocates of a non-doctrinaire type of socialism for India; they do not equate collectivism with socialism. They are also strong advocates of citizen's freedom. Even the Indian communists, in participating in the democratic parliamentary institutions in India, have abjured the extremist lines of ideologies and programmes. And recently, the European Communist parties have also started abandoning the earlier doctrinaire approaches. The influence of Indian culture and philosophy has softened the rigidities of Marxism in the Indian context, and opened the way for the adoption, by the nation, of a socialism with ethical and human motivations, in tune with the spiritual inheritance of the Indian people.

#### *Socialism and the Indian Constitution*

The Indian Constitution, in its very Preamble, lays down some of the essential democratic and socialistic principles, such



as people's sovereignty, justice, equality, fraternity, liberty, and the dignity of the individual. And during the debates on the Constitution in the Constituent Assembly, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer had said :

The Constitution, while it does not commit the country to any particular form of economic structure or social adjustment, gives ample scope for the future legislatures and future parliament to evolve any economic order and undertake any legislation they choose in public interests.

The Constitution, in its Directive Principles, affords plenty of scope for making India socialistic ; and the impending Amendments to the Constitution, in the light of the above remarks by Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, if adopted by Parliament next month, will give effective expression to the socialistic aspirations of the Indian people.

#### *Freedom Versus Equality :*

The central problem of socialism has been the squaring of the two great urges of man, namely, freedom and equality. In normal circumstances, both cannot co-exist. In the human context, stress on freedom tends to increase inequality, and stress on equality tends to decrease freedom. The French Revolution stressed freedom and the Russian Revolution stressed equality. In the economic sphere, Capitalism upholds freedom and denies equality, while Marxism upholds equality and restricts freedom. India is faced with the challenge of combining these two great values of freedom and equality ; India is striving to usher in socialistic equality in the context of democratic freedom. While doing so, she is encroaching on some peripheral aspects of *Fundamental Rights*, with respects to freedom, only with a view to strengthening and implementing the *Directive Principles* of her Constitution with respect to equality. This is inescapable in the context of a long-established feudal

social system, and in the interests of its early replacement by a democratic social order ; for freedom in a feudal context means only freedom of wealth and monopoly to exploit the weak and the helpless. *But the freedom offered in the Fundamental Rights will shine in all its glory in India after the Directive Principles have achieved a satisfactory measure of levelling up of the common people.* Curtailing of the freedom to exploit others is the surest way to enhance all-round freedom. And freedom is the first condition of growth, proclaims Swami Vivekananda, who also presents this value as the supreme gift of Vedānta.

It is obvious that a mere economic or political approach can never help the nation to effect this union of freedom and equality. It needs a spiritual approach which, fortunately, is available to our people from our philosophers and spiritual teachers, both ancient and modern. The genius for synthesis characteristic of Indian wisdom, when it begins to affect the thinking of our people in a pervasive way, can be expected to make our politics, administration, and society achieve this happy blend of democratic freedom with socialistic equality.

#### *Psycho-Social Evolution and Ethics :*

Nineteenth-century capitalism received its stimulus from the materialism of that century's physics and biology. As presented by Thomas Huxley, collaborator of Darwin : Whereas Ethics means the making of as many as possible fit to survive, biology expounds Evolution as *struggle for existence and survival of the fittest*. Nineteenth-century capitalism translated this in human terms into colonial exploitation and cut-throat competition which, in due course, exploded into the two catastrophic world wars. But just as twentieth-century physics has ceased to be materialistic in the crude sense as understood in the last century, the

revolutionary advances in the science of biology in the twentieth century have made ethics central to Evolution at the human stage.

Speaking on 'The Evolutionary Vision', the late Sir Julian Huxley, the noted biologist, and grandson of Thomas Huxley, gave a spiritual orientation to the evolutionary process (*Evolution after Darwin*, Vol. III, p. 215) :

Man's evolution is not biological but psycho-social. It operates by the mechanism of cultural tradition, which involves the cumulative self-reproduction and self-variation of mental activities and their products. Accordingly, major steps in the human phase of evolution are achieved by breakthroughs to new dominant patterns of mental organisation of knowledge, ideas, and beliefs—ideological instead of physiological or biological organisation.

Discussing, in the light of these revolutionary ideas of twentieth-century biology, the aim of human evolution, or evolution at the human stage, Sir Julian Huxley says (*ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 20) :

In the light of our present knowledge, man's most comprehensive aim is seen not as mere survival, not as numerical increase, not as increased complexity of organisation, or increased control over his environment, but as greater fulfilment—the fuller realisation of more possibilities by human species collectively and more of its component members individually.

And pleading for a scientific study of the scope of this concept of fulfilment, Huxley says (*ibid.*, p. 21) :

Once greater fulfilment is recognised as man's ultimate or dominant aim, we shall need a science of human possibili-

ties to help guide the long course of psycho-social evolution that lies ahead.

India is fortunate to have such a *science of human possibilities* as the central theme of her *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

Capitalism lays stress on quantity. Ethical and spiritual values lay stress on quality. And Huxley, in his lecture on 'The Evolutionary Vision', speaks of *quality* emerging as the criterion of evolution at the human stage, in place of *quantity* which dominated the organic or the pre-human phase of evolution. (*Evolution after Darwin*, Vol. III, p. 257) : 'I spoke of quality. This must be the dominant concept of our new belief-system—quality and richness as against quantity and uniformity.'

Discussing the subject of economic utility in the light of this new belief-system, Huxley says (*ibid.*, p. 259) :

Once we truly believe . . . that man's destiny is to make possible greater fulfilment for human beings and fuller achievement by human societies, utility in the customary sense becomes subordinate. Quantity of material production, of course, is necessary as the basis for the satisfaction of elementary human needs—but only up to a certain degree. More than a certain number of calories or cocktails or TV sets or washing machines per person is not merely unnecessary, but bad. Quantity of material production is a means to a further end, not an end in itself.

And highlighting quality as the dynamics of human evolution, Huxley concludes (*ibid.*, pp. 260—61) :

Thus the evolutionary vision . . . illumines our existence in a simple, but almost overwhelming way. . . . It shows us our destiny and our duty. It shows us mind enthroned above matter, quantity subordinate to quality.

(To be concluded)



# VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF DYNAMIC VEDANTA—I

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Before entering into the details of this subject, let us see what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said about the Swami in his *Discovery of India*. In this famous book he writes: 'Vivekananda, together with his brother-disciples, founded the non-sectarian Ramakrishna Mission of service. Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's prestige, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present. He was a powerful orator in Bengali and English and a graceful writer of Bengali prose and poetry. He was a fine figure of a man, imposing, full of poise and dignity, sure of himself and his mission, and at the same time full of a dynamic and fiery energy and a passion to push India forward. He came as a tonic to the depressed and demoralized Hindu mind and gave it self-reliance and some roots in the past. He attended the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, spent over a year in the U.S.A., travelled across Europe. . . . Wherever he went, he created a minor sensation not only by his presence but by what he said and how he said it. Having seen this Hindu Sannyasin once, it was difficult to forget him or his message. In America he was called the "cyclonic Hindu". He was himself greatly influenced by his travels in western countries; he admired British perseverance and the vitality and spirit of equality of the American people. "America is the best field in the world to carry on my ideas" [he wrote to a friend in India]. But he was not impressed by the manifestations of religion in the West, and his faith in the Indian philosophical and spiritual background became firmer. India, in spite of her degradation, still represented to him the Light.

'He preached the monism of the Advaita philosophy of the Vedanta and was convinced that only this could be the future religion of thinking humanity. For the Vedanta was not only spiritual but rational and in harmony with scientific investigations of external nature.

'He kept away from politics and disapproved of the politicians of his day. But again and again he laid stress of the necessity for liberty and equality and the raising of the masses. "Liberty of thought and action is the only condition of life, of growth and well-being. Where it does not exist, the man, the race, the nation must go." "The only hope of India is from the masses."<sup>1</sup>

Vivekananda wanted to combine Western progress with India's spiritual background: 'Make a European society with India's religion; become an Occidental in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts.' Progressively, Vivekananda grew more international in outlook. For instance, 'Even in politics and sociology, problems that were only national twenty years ago can no longer be solved on national grounds only. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can be solved only when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. . . . In science they are coming every day to a similar broad view of matter. . . .' And again, 'There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in its wake, and it is becoming clearer that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial or national or any narrow grounds. Every idea has to be-

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, London: Meridian Books Limited, (1960), pp. 338-40.



come broad, till it covers the whole world; every aspiration must go on increasing till it has engulfed the whole of humanity, nay, the whole of life, within its scope.' This was Vivekananda's view of the Vedanta philosophy, and from end to end of India he preached: 'I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others, and wherever such an attempt has been made, under false ideas of greatness, policy or holiness, the result has always been disastrous to the secluding one.... the fact of our isolation from all other nations in the world is the cause of our degeneration, and its only remedy is to get back into the current of the rest of the world.'

Most of us—monks of our generation—had not the good fortune of knowing Swami Vivekananda, the greatest of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami died too young, in 1902, before he had completed his fortieth year. Four years after his passing, some of us became deeply interested in the teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. At that time the Indian atmosphere was surcharged with the spirit of nationalism, which was largely inspired by Swami Vivekananda's ideal of service to the God-in-man.

We read the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature voraciously and came to regard Swami Vivekananda as our patriot-saint. The dauntless social worker, the orator by divine right, the cyclonic Hindu, the dynamic Vedantist, the embodiment of strength, renunciation, purity, and service, he became the ideal of our life.

Through our contacts with many of Vivekananda's brother-disciples, each great in his own way, and all united in their love for their Master, we came to have a new conception of Vivekananda. We learned to appreciate him as a spiritual giant, whose qualities were the direct outcome of his deep and varied spiritual realizations.

'Ramakrishna', said these monks, 'was like the silent cloud which gathers the storm, while Vivekananda was like the thundering cloud which spreads the storm. Ramakrishna was the static, and Swami Vivekananda the dynamic aspect of the same Divine Power working for the good of the world.'

Ramakrishna had a vision of his future disciple, before he ever met him, which later on proved to be true. In this vision he saw that Vivekananda—or Narendra as he was called in his student days—had been a great Rishi, or sage, reincarnated for the good of mankind.

Vivekananda was born in Calcutta, in January of 1863. His father was a modern intellectual with very liberal views; his mother typical of the ageless piety and devotion of Hindu womanhood. As a young boy, Narendra was always fearless. He and his playmates used to climb a tree near his home, which their elders claimed to be full of evil spirits who dwelt there. Some of the boys were frightened, but not Narendra. He said, 'My neck would have been broken long ago had there been any demon in this tree.'

In his childhood, he used to play at meditation, losing all outward consciousness. Later, when he was put to school, Narendra showed exceptional intelligence. He joined the gymnasium and became expert in wrestling; also he became proficient in music. His exuberant energy and rare intellectual power made him a leader among his fellow students. He went to a Christian missionary college and became a prodigious reader of philosophy, history and general literature.

One of his professors, in course of reading Wordsworth and trying to explain the ecstatic state of the poet, spoke of Ramakrishna, whom he had perhaps seen. He said, 'If you wish to observe a man in an ecstatic mood, go and visit Ramakrishna.' That was the first time Narendra had ever heard mentioned the name of the man who was to become



his Master; and this was the turning point in Vivekananda's life. The Master received him with great tenderness, for he had been expecting him; and soon he became Ramakrishna's disciple.

The Master had the power to raise young Narendra into exalted spiritual moods. As he described it in later life, the Master's touch could give him a feeling as if the whole universe, together with his individuality, was about to merge in an all-encompassing void. 'What are you doing to me?' the young man asked on one such occasion. On another day, the Master threw him into a superconscious state. 'Who are you?' he asked the young Narendra; 'What is your mission here?' Everything the Master had seen in his vision about this new disciple was then completely verified.

'Do you see light?' Ramakrishna asked him one day. 'Yes sir, before I fall asleep I feel something like a light revolving near my forehead, and in this light I am merged.' He had never thought this strange, supposing that everyone experienced the same thing. He did not know till much later that this was the Divine Light in which the pure soul becomes merged.

Ramakrishna said of him, 'Narendra belongs to that plane of light in which a soul becomes merged in infinite consciousness, waiting for the call to do great good for humanity.'

But the young disciple had his doubts and would be very skeptical at times. One day when Ramakrishna was describing how he felt God in everything, Narendra exclaimed, 'What? You see God in this cup,

God in this table?' The Master then touched him; and instantly he shared Ramakrishna's ecstatic feeling of the presence of the infinite Spirit shining in all surrounding objects. And this experience lasted for several days.

But still Narendra continued to argue with the Master, who usually liked it. One day Ramakrishna said, 'If you do not believe my words, why do you come here?' Quietly Narendra replied, 'I come to see you, sir, not to listen to you.' The Master was pleased with this reply, and a great love continued to develop between teacher and disciple.

Narendra was testing the Master, as the Master tested him. At one period Ramakrishna did not say a word to Narendra for several weeks, when he came to visit him. But the boy continued to come nevertheless. Finally Ramakrishna said to him, 'Why do you continue to come when I am so harsh and indifferent to you? Narendra answered simply, 'Sir, I come here because I love you.' Ramakrishna had become very sensitive to the touch of metal, especially money, because of the impurities connected with it. Narendra could not understand this. One day when the Master was not in his room, he secreted a coin in Ramakrishna's bed. When the Master returned, he found it impossible to take his usual seat on the bed. Narendra watched him carefully and finally told him what he had done. The Master was not angry; instead he said, 'My boy, I am glad to have you test me. Test me as a changer tests a coin.'

*(To be concluded)*

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

**'All My Sorrow Has Been Lifted'** : This is a translation of a Bengali song, composed by Sri Dwijendranath Tagore. It is said that Swami Vivekananda used to sing this song to Sri Ramakrishna. The translator of this song, the late Swami Ashokananda, was the Minister-in-charge of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, U.S.A.

**Importance of Living (The Editorial)** : Though man takes pride in his intelligence, to his surprise he discovers some day that he is being constantly buffeted by nature, and is no better than a 'blinded slave'. Unable to stand the stresses and strains in life, some fail to find any meaning in it. In this editorial an attempt has been made to tell in brief the 'importance of living' in the light of the realizations of the Great Souls, 'to make living in this world a more joyful and meaningful adventure.'

**Letters of Swami Vivekananda** : We are thankful to Swami Prematmananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo, Sri Lanka; Swami Kshamananda of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Kishanpur (Dehra Dun), Sri Sankari Prasad Basu of Calcutta, and Sri Jawaharlal Sah of Almora, for making these letters available to us for publication.

**Vivekananda in the Near East, 1900—I** : With this article, Swami Vidyatmananda of Centre Védantique Ramakrichna, Gretz, France, brings his study on Swami Vivekananda in Europe to a close. His researches have been published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* since 1967, in seven instalments.

In this article, Swami Vidyatmananda has lucidly narrated some hitherto unknown facts about Swami Vivekananda's life in Paris and in the near East; and has told us more about the persons, whom Swamiji had befriended in those days. He has quoted many hitherto unpublished letters of Swamiji, and other useful sources, and made

the article all the more interesting, and valuable for the students of Swamiji's life.

The author acknowledges with thanks the aid of Mrs. Gertrude Emerson Sen, M. Georges Girard, the late Mme. Drinette Verdier, Mme. Jeanne Sully, M. Jean Jalat, Miss Elva Nelson, Mr. John Schlenck, and Marie Louise Burke [alias Gārgī]. Credit for use of illustrations accompanying the present chapter is given to *La Vie du Rail*, *Alumni Bulletin* of the Istanbul American Colleges, *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, and Mrs. Frances Leggett.

**Meditation** : Meditation has become very common these days, especially amongst the educated Indians and the Westerners. We find people, irrespective of their ways of life, feeling restless, if they do not sit for meditation at least for a few minutes during the day. Sincere though, all their efforts will be futile if they do not know the aim and the science of meditation. The late Swami Prabhavananda, the founder and the Ex-Minister-in-charge of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, U.S.A., has very beautifully discussed this subject in his lecture on 'Meditation', reproduced here. Hope it will serve as a guidance to those, who are interested in it.

A translation of this article in Bengali was published in the *Udbodhan*, (Vol. 78, No. 8), a monthly of the Ramakrishna Order, published from Calcutta.

**Miss MacLeod to Mrs. Bull** : This letter of Miss Josephine MacLeod is very significant and interesting as it tells us about Mr. Okakura and his Mission. It is said that Miss MacLeod was in a way instrumental in bringing Mr. Okakura to India. Swamiji had rightly called her 'a lady missionary'.

**The Ocean and the Waves** : The Absolute Truth is beyond human comprehension. All that a man can do is to try to



conceive It according to his own power of imagination and means of understanding. In order to have an idea as to how the One-without-a-second Reality appears as many, the oft-quoted example in the Vedanta Philosophy is that of 'a Ocean and the Waves'. It is just a simile, which can help us in comprehending how the Absolute manifests as many. Swami Shradhananda, the Minister-in-charge of the Vedanta Society of Sacramento, California, U.S.A., has very beautifully pointed out the significance of this simile in the light of the spiritual realization of Sri Ramakrishna.

**A Multi-Cultural and Multi-Racial Britain :** Due to constant immigration from various Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries, Britain has become an inter-mixture of various races, cultures and religions. This has resulted both in creating a crisis for the nation, as well as in developing an inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding in the multi-ethnic Britain. In his masterly treatise Mr. Brian G. Cooper, Head of General Studies, Barking College of Technology, Romford, Essex, England, has very lucidly discussed the good and bad consequences of the multicultural and multi-religious activities going on at present in Britain.

**Okakura and Swami Vivekananda's Disciples :** The name of Mr. Okakura Kakuzo is familiar to the students of Swami Vivekananda's life. He was the Head of the Committee for the Restoration of the Old Temples, founded in Japan. From various sources it is learnt that he had come to India in the year 1902, with the intention of taking over the management of the famous Buddhist Temple at Bodh Gaya, with the help of some influential persons of Calcutta. He had also become interested in Swami Vivekananda and his mission, and had invited Swamiji to Japan to take part in the proposed Congress of Religions. But

Swamiji could not go there due to his ill-health. Mr. Okakura, on coming to India, persuaded Swamiji personally to go to Japan. But Swamiji did not agree on health ground. Mr. Okakura, during his more than six months' stay in India in the year 1902, came in intimate contact with the disciples and friends of Swamiji. In this paper, Mrs. Yasuko Horioka has very nicely narrated the various incidents that took place in India during Mr. Okakura's visit, especially in connection with the Swamiji's disciples. It is needless to say that much more material on this subject is yet awaiting publication.

**Free Will or Predestination?—I :** In this lecture delivered by the late Swami Ashokananda, the Ex-Minister-in-charge of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, at the Old Temple in San Francisco, on December 5, 1952, the Swami has lucidly elaborated on the problem of 'Free Will or Predestination?' Every man feels an urge for freedom within him. The Swami says this is because his 'own Self imparts to whatever It touches an aura of freedom?' The Swami has pointed out that what we call free will is actually not so; as man's actions are normally motivated and directed by various psychological factors functioning in him.

**Arnold Toynbee : Citizen of One World :** In this learned write-up, Swami Sarveshananda has made an attempt to throw light upon the greatness of this broad-minded Englishman, whose 'encyclopaedic mind delved ever deeper into the unifying strands among mankind.' He has also shown the limitations of this world-famous Historian, and thereby held his well-contrasted picture before the readers. The author is thankful to the organizers of the *PHP*, Tokyo, Japan, for their kind permission to quote extensively from their esteemed Journal.



**How to Deal with Our Minds:** While living in this ever changing world, man has to deal with many things carefully and intelligently, in order to pass his life peacefully. But even though the objective world is congenial to him, his mind causes him lot of troubles. So every man, in some way or the other, heartily craves for the peace of mind. He often tries for it in his own way, but fails. In this learned lecture, Swami Pavitrananda, the Head of the Vedanta Society, New York, has very nicely discussed the subject, and suggested the method of successfully dealing with our minds.

**Ethics of a Modern Corporation—I:** The modern world is progressing fast in various ways, of which technological and industrial developments form the major part. Such developments are no doubt initially meant for the good and happiness of man; but in actual practice it is seen that the intoxication of industrial development, and money-making makes the management more and more 'money-minded', and 'the man' is gradually lost sight of. This naturally results into adul-

teration, increase of prices, and such other things, for which common man has to suffer. In order to stop such ethical degradation in these fields, the corporations conducting them need to follow some ethical principles. Swami Ranganathanandaji, President, Ramakrishna Math, Secunderabad, who had an occasion to speak at many Commercial Organizations and conventions, has very thoughtfully deliberated upon this subject in his speech 'Ethics of a Modern Corporation', delivered on 25 July 1976, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Second Slurry Explosives Plant, IDL Chemicals Ltd., Hyderabad.

**Vivekananda's Message of Dynamic Vedanta—I:** Swami Vivekananda is well known for his electrifying oratory, and modern interpretation of the Vedanta Philosophy. In this article, Swami Yatiswarananda, the late Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission gives in brief the life sketch of Swamiji, and the message of dynamic Vedanta, he preached in the West as well in the East.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**WHITEHEAD'S CONCEPT OF GOD:** BY DR. G. SRINIVASAN, Published by Karnatak Book Agency, 13, Kumara Park East, High Ground, Bangalore-560001, 1975, pp. 155, Price: Rs. 15.00.

The concept of God presents a perennial problem to philosophers, theologians and religionists in a way that cannot be solved singularly by any school, or individual. The moment we look at this vast world and the dance of life and mind on it, we are immediately compelled to rush to think of a reality that is behind all these phenomena. The materialistic denial of any spiritual entity within or behind the scene does not satisfy human inquisitiveness. Beginning with the Upanisadic seers and Greek thinkers through the medieval theology to the present day science-

dominated thinking the man has been asking questions that concern a reality that can be called God.

The pluralistic system of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), being the result of his philosophico-scientific endeavour, presents a picture of God that claims to satisfy the men of reason and faith together. For him God is an actual entity concernfully related to the actualities of the world. In His consequent nature He is a sympathetic guide and fellow-sufferer in the struggle for realization of values. Pursuit and realization of values provides a major evidence for God's existence, in Whitehead. According to him, God suffers even evil which is a misuse of freedom. This aspect of God satisfies ethical and moral necessity for Whitehead. God's primordial



nature, when He is eternal, free, complete and without history, satisfies metaphysical necessity.

Dr. G. Srinivasan, in his *Whitehead's Concept of God*, presents a readable account of Whitehead's views concerning God. He compares and contrasts Whitehead's thoughts with traditional philosophers, like Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Hegel and Bradley. He also evaluates Whitehead's notions in the context of Absolute Personalism and Theistic Personalism. In the chapter on Vedānta, the author finds very little similarity between Śankara and Whitehead. But he finds close similarities between Whitehead and other Vedānta thinkers like Rāmānuja, Madhva and in modern age Sri Aurobindo. The last chapter of the book makes an attempt to compare and contrast Whitehead's concept of God with that in Existentialism. This has been claimed to be the first attempt of its kind. Curiously enough, the author takes up mainly the systems of those existentialists who belong to atheistic trend. He finds basic similarities or 'points of agreement' between the systems of Whitehead and the philosophies of Sartre and Heidegger. Of course, the author is conscious of the fact that the difference between the speculative metaphysics of Whitehead and the existentialism of Sartre and Heidegger outweigh their similarities. Perhaps the author's attempt to compare Whitehead's theism with the theistic existentialists could prove more fruitful.

This study of Whitehead's Concept of God is a commendable one. The work, it is hoped, shall be free from printing errors, which are immense, in the next revised edition.

DR. S. P. DUBEY,  
Lecturer,

Dept. of Post-graduate studies,  
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THE CONCEPT OF JIVANMUKTI: BY DR. K. N. NEELAKANTAN ELAYATH. Published by Academic Publications, Trivandrum, 1975, pp. 55.

The world of perfection has always been a matter of great interest to man. This finite being in an imperfect world aspires for the immortality because, perhaps, he is the child of immortality (*amritasya putrah*). But due to ignorance he is not in the know of his real nature. The concept of *jīvanmukti* provides a clue to what may be called the mysterious world of perfection and immortality. The *jīvanmukta* (the realized soul) is the person free from the phenomenal bonds and yet present amongst us to let us know how the

divine world is like. Whether he acts or not, for he need not, his very presence is helpful to the remaining individuals for deriving ideals and inspirations.

The traditional explanation for the continuation of the physical body of the released soul is that the *mukta* has to exhaust the *prārabdha karmas* which cannot be destroyed by knowledge or the grace of God. Though the real bond between man and the world is broken, as the tree remains green for some time even when its roots are dug out, the released soul remains in his physical garb till the *prarabdha karmas* are exhausted. Since the *jīvanmukta* wears the physical gown, he performs certain phenomenal functions without attachment. Such actions of the *jīvanmuktas* provide ideals for religion and society. What he does is for the society, and not for himself, hence he is not bound by those actions. Likewise, any one who does for others is not bound by the fetters of *karma*. When the physical body of the *jīvanmukta* perishes in due course, he is called *videhamukta* by others. But basically there is no difference in these two states. Both are the states of *mukti*.

In his short account of the advaitic concept of *jīvanmukti* Dr. Elayath examines various aspects of the problem of perfection in life and actions of the perfected man. He throws light on several complicated issues on the basis of primary texts of the Vedānta schools. He also tries to compare the traditional view with those in Buddhism and Kant. The information condensed in 55 pages is suggestive of further readings and studies, which might be taken up by the same author or by others.

DR. S. P. DUBEY.

RESIDUAL REMINISCENCES OF RAMANA : BY S. S. COHEN. Pub. : Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, 1975, pp. 40, Price : Rs. 1.50.

Coming as they do from the pen of so well-regarded a devotee as Sri S. S. Cohen, these reminiscences of Bhagavan Ramana strike a personal note with a certain melancholy. The author refers to the last days when the Sage was subjected to surgical treatment against his will and the ordeal he had to bear. There is also an interesting sidelight on the claims of a German baron for an occult relationship with Bhagavan.

M. P. PANDIT,  
Sri Aurobindo Ashrama,  
Pondicherry.



INITIATION INTO YOGA : BY SRI KRISHNA PREM. Rider and Co., London, p. 125, Price : £ 1.95.

In his foreword to this collection of some of the writings of Yogi Krishna Prem, Sri Madhava Asish brings to the fore the rare combination of the humane and at the same time the austere personality of the English professor turned into a Vaishnava mystic. Some of the passages are moving and one learns to admire the humility of the great man that was Krishna Prem. The articles included in this volume throw a good deal of light on spiritual life : the role of the Guru, the fact of the Eternal Guru in every heart, the interference of the mind in the communion with the Inner Voice and the ways in which the mind is to be controlled and conquered, the limitations of austerity as a means for the development of consciousness Godward. He counsels endless patience in sadhana and observes : 'The finest timber comes from the slowest growing trees.' The chapters on the Divine Knowledge which forms part of the heritage of man and waits to be unveiled, the symbolism in which it is expressed in the different traditions, the difference between the death of the body and the transition of the soul are some of the other themes in this practical spiritual treatise.

M. P. PANDIT.

RAMMOHUN ROY AND THE PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION IN INDIA: BY V. C. JOSHI. Published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1975, pp. 234. Price : Rs. 40/-.

In this book there is an Introduction, appendix, a good index and nine chapters written by some distinguished scholars from India, Bangladesh and the U.S.A. on different aspects of the life and work of Rammohun Roy and his times.

Rammohun, 'Raja', scholar, savant, litterateur, social and religious reformer, thinker and what not, most completely occupied the stage in his days and was widely known and respected not only in India, but throughout the world. As an Intellectual and a thinker his articles published in the most famous journals of his days were read with great interest and advantage by erudite scholars in every part of the world. A great scholar of Arabic, Sanskrit, Bengali, English and several other languages, his articles were published in the most learned foreign journals of the nineteenth century.

Rammohun filled the canvas not only of his days, but for all ages. He was truly a giant

among intellectuals, social reformers and workers. No aspect of society, education, administration, religion and philosophy escaped his attention and wide interest. The intellectual and liberal leadership that he provided shall continue to throw its light and warmth for all time to come.

Mr. V. C. Joshi has done a good job in editing this useful and informative collection of essays on the life and work of a scholar and reformer of this magnitude. We recommend this useful book to the reading public without any reserve.

DR. PARESH NATH MUKHERJEE,  
*Head of History Dept.,*  
*D.A.V. College,*  
*Dehra Dun.*

MANU AND MODERN TIMES : BY NITYA NARAIN BANERJEE. Published by Hindutva Publications, A.14 Green Park, New Delhi-110016, 1975, pp. 170. Price: Rs. 21/-.

This book has only one chapter, 'Manu and Modern Times' and two added articles—one entitled 'Hinduism at a Glance' and the other, 'Is Hinduism (And Buddhism) compatible with the Notion of Secularism?' by the famous scholar, Dr. Kewal Motwani.

Mahasabha for five terms, and editor of the magazine produced many Bengali and about half a dozen English books of considerable value, a widely travelled man, a former President of Hindu Mahasabha for five terms, and editor of the magazine *Hindutva*, is well versed in the theme of the book and writes with authority.

He has edited with considerable credit all the eleven chapters of Manu's work and concludes very properly, 'Manu has given the human society a complete blue-print for individual, social, political and spiritual life' (p. 118), and that, therefore, we have no necessity to 'ape the West' (p. 119).

Dr. Motwani's lucid and instructive article finally takes up the important issue, if Hinduism and secularism are compatible. He concludes that they are, since Hinduism stands on and recommends basic and eternal values. It has life-giving force and dynamism not only for the present age, but for all times and situations.

The book is a contribution in the field of knowledge and we recommend it to all.

DR. PARESH NATH MUKHERJEE.



## MALAYALAM

**SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAMRITAM—Vol. II :**  
Translated into Malayalam prose by Swami Siddhinathananda. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Puranattukara, Trichur, 1976, pages 447, + 47, Price: Rs. 25/-.

This volume contains the last three books, (Skandhas), of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and this part is virtually its heart; not only the heart but even the head. The tenth book (Dashama skandha) which describes the thrilling story of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, is in this part. That is why it is said to be the heart of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. It may even be said that without the Dashama Skandha the *Bhagavatam* is like a body without the heart. The story of the Divine play of Sri Krishna is narrated here in 90 chapters, and there is no doubt that Sri Vyasa wrote the *Bhagavatam* mainly to describe this Divine play, because it was the remedy suggested to him by Sri Narada for his mental depression. And it was because he was greatly attracted by this Divine play, that Sri Suka learned the *Bhagavatam* and became inebriated with ecstatic love, in spite of his being a born knower of Brahman.

The *Bhagavatam* is virtually the story of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, the other Incarnations, being more or less His creations, with comparatively limited scope. All of them came for certain specific purposes, but Bhagavan Sri Krishna assumed His blessed and most beautiful form to shower blessings on one and all alike, who approached Him as friend or even as foe.

The spiritual significance of this divine sport of Sri Krishna is what is explained in the eleventh book, i.e., the Ekadasha Skandha. There is a very important episode in this Skandha, where, in response to a request by Vasudeva, Sri Narada is explaining to him what Bhagavata Dharma is. Winding up his explanation Narada advised Vasudeva to look upon Sri Krishna not as his son, but as the Paramatman. There is another equally important or perhaps even more important episode here, where, anxious about the final exit of Sri Krishna, Sri Uddhava (His close associate) is approaching Him with the request that he too be taken along with Him, and Bhagavan is trying to console him in various ways. Bhagavan here explains to Uddhava the gist of the philosophical truths contained in the Sanatana Dharma. This is called the 'Uddhava Gita'.

Even now Bhagavan Sri Krishna is showering His blessing on all who sincerely approach Him through the *Bhagavatam*. This approach is made extremely easy by Swami Siddhinathanandaji through his simple and beautiful *Srimad-Bhāgavatāmritam*. Coming as it is from the facile pen of a real Bhagavata Pundit, who is also the author of the famous *Sri Ramakrishna Vachanamritam*, the *Srimad-Bhagavatāmritam* is bound to evoke even greater interest. It is written in such a simple style, that one and all, even children, can very easily enter into its spirit.

A. KARUNAKARA MENON, B.A.L.T.,  
Rtd. Principal,  
Govt. Training School,  
Cochin, Kerala.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

**RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA  
ASHRAMA, RAIPUR, M.P.**

SHORT REPORT FOR 1975-76

During the year under report, the Ashrama conducted the following activities :

I. *Religious Activities* : (a) A new Temple of Sri Ramakrishna was dedicated on 2-2-76 at an estimated cost of more than Rs. 5 lakhs. Daily morning and evening prayers and Rama-Nama-Samkirtana on Ekadashi days were conducted in the Temple.

(b) 8 public outdoor classes were held (average attendance per class—250).

(c) 33 public indoor classes were held (average attendance per class—300).

(d) 139 public lectures were delivered by the Secretary (average attendance per lecture—1,600).

(e) The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda and other Incarnations were celebrated publicly on a big scale.

II. *Vivekananda Vidyarthi Bhavan* : This is a hostel for college students. During the year under



report, it accommodated 18 deserving students who were keen to be benefited by the Ashrama atmosphere.

III. *Vivekananda Memorial Library* : During the year, 457 volumes were added to the library thus raising the total number of books to 18,989. The number of its paying members stood at 949 on 31st March, 1976. The number of books issued during the year was 32,718.

IV. *Vivekananda Free Reading Room* : The Free Reading Room had 13 dailies and 110 periodicals and journals. About 200 readers used the Reading Room daily.

V. *Vivekananda Charitable Dispensary* :  
(a) *Allopathic Section* : During the year under report, a total of 38,321 cases were treated free, out of which 12,506 cases were new. At present, the Allopathic section runs the following branches: (1) X-Ray Department, (2) E.C.G., (3) Dental, (4) Eye, (5) E.N.T., (6) Orthopaedic, (7) Gynaecology, (8) Paediatrics, (9) Pathological Laboratory, (10) Psychiatry, (11) Injections, and (12) Dispensing.

(b) *Homoeopathic Section* : During the year, a total of 25,216 patients were served by this section. Out of these, 4,091 cases were new.

VI. *Publication Department* : The quarterly Hindi magazine, 'Vivek-Jyoti', started in January 1963, has now entered its fourteenth year of publication. The number of life-members of the magazine rose to 1,056 by the end of March 1976. The number of its annual subscribers was about 4,500.

VII. *Relief Work* : The Ashrama conducted drought relief in Chhattisgarh by conducting 3 Free Feeding Centres and 8 tank-works. A sum of about Rs. 3 lakhs, in cash and kind, was spent on it during the year under report.

VIII. *Cultural Activities* : Lectures, symposia, and debates are organised for socio-cultural education of the public in general and the student-community in particular. Eminent scholars and specialists in the field are invited for the purpose. Days of national importance are celebrated publicly. During the year under report, 9 such programmes were organised.

CENTRE VEDANTIQUE RAMAKRICHNA---  
77220—GRETZ, FRANCE

REPORT : JANUARY-DECEMBER 1976

The year 1976 was a good period for the Centre. The work progressed as usual, and there was a healthy increase in interest.

The weekly lectures at Gretz were given as is customary each Sunday afternoon. Swami Ritajananda spoke twenty times, and Swami Vidyatmananda twenty times. Invited speakers spoke nine times, and three Sundays were devoted to a Bengali film on the life of Sri Ramakrishna. The course on the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna (translation into French with commentaries) was given by Swami Ritajananda every Saturday evening at Gretz.

The number of people attending lectures increased, as did the number of friends coming to stay at the Centre. During the year we celebrated the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Buddha, Sri Krishna, and Swami Vivekananda, as well as Durga Puja, Kali Puja, and Shiva Ratri. The young men of the Centre gave talks in the evening on the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, on the anniversary of birth of these disciples.

During the year Swami Ritajananda visited the German Vedanta group in Fulda, and gave talks in Brussels, Antwerp, Rouen, Antibes, and other cities. Also he participated in the annual retreat sponsored by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre of London.

During the year three Swamis of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna visited Gretz : Swami Bhavyananda, head of the London Centre, Swami Asaktananda, director of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Narendrapur in West Bengal, and Swami Paratparananda, head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama of Buenos Aires. In addition, three Pravrajikas (nuns) of the Sarada Convent of Santa Barbara, California, stayed at Gretz, a few days on their return from a pilgrimage to India.

During the year, we arranged to have two out-of-print books of Swami Siddheswarananda republished : *L'Intuition Métaphysique* (which now includes the long article previously published separately 'La égalité Intemporelle') and *La Méditation selon le Yoga Védanta*.

Our quarterly magazine *Védanta* appeared regularly, pleasing many people. Upon publication, the most recent issue was distributed to 476 readers, of whom 71 live outside France. The number 476 includes paid subscriptions and issues sent to members of the Centre Vedantique Ramakrichna as a part of their membership. About a hundred copies are usually sold in addition individually later.

In September our second annual catalogue of books and religious goods was published, listing material available at the Centre or by correspondence. A large number of catalogues were dis-



tributed. Sales of books, incense, and photos increase from month to month.

The buildings and grounds are kept up by our own efforts, and the electrical and mechanical equipment maintained in order. The big central hall of the first floor of the main house was renewed and repainted. Two bedrooms at the Sarada Mandir have been newly furnished with wash-basins.

The programme of bio-dynamic agriculture has been continued, and has given good results in terms of quantity and quality of produce. Thus we are able to serve fresh and wholesome food to residents and guests from our own garden and orchard. A good amount was also canned or frozen.

During the year the number of active members increased from 146 to 152. We regret to announce the death of one of our members, M. Pierre Laffèche. A disciple of long standing, Mme Germaine Robert, also died during the year.

The next Annual Meeting of Members will be held on Sunday, 13 March 1977, at 2:00 p.m.

New Year's Day is celebrated in the Ramakrishna Mission as an important anniversary. It is the Kalpataru Day—the day when at the commencement of 1886 Sri Ramakrishna specially blessed those who loved him. Hence we shall celebrate this day at Gretz, as is our custom, with a reception for our members.

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THE VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA SOCIETY,  
VIVEKANANDA TEMPLE, 5423 S. HYDE  
PARK BLVD., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60615,  
U.S.A. AND VIVEKANANDA MONASTERY  
AND RETREAT, ROUTE 2, 122nd AVENUE,  
FENNVILLE, GANGES TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN  
49408, U.S.A.

SPIRITUAL LEADER : SWAMI BHASHYANANDA

*The Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago* is a branch of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission with headquarters in Belur Math, India. It was founded in 1930 and incorporated as a non-profit religious organization under the

laws of the state of Illinois in 1938. (For further details, see the booklet *Vedanta in Chicago*.)

The Society maintains a temple, monastery, and guest house in Chicago; and a monastery with retreat facilities in Ganges Township, Michigan. Like other branches of Vedanta in the United States and throughout the world, the Society is an independent, self-sustaining unit under the spiritual guidance of the Ramakrishna Order of India.

*Membership* in the Vivekananda Vedanta Society is open to all who wish to express their appreciation and support of Vedantic teaching and work in America. Additional information and application forms are available upon inquiry at the counter of the Bookshop.

*The Bookshop* is open daily from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. as well as before and after classes and services. Vedantic literature and literature of all the world's major religions can be obtained from the Bookshop. Incense, japa beads, photographs, and other articles which serve as aids to religious experience are also available from the Bookshop. Mail orders are accepted. A catalogue can be obtained at the counter or by mail.

*The Library and Reading Room* containing over three thousand books on Eastern and Western thought and culture is located on the lower level of the Guest House (5407 S. Hyde Park Blvd.). The library is open after classes and services and at other times by appointment. Borrowing privileges are extended to members of the Society.

*The Sunday School* in which the principles of Vedanta are taught, is conducted for children ages two to twelve. The Sunday School classes are held at the time of the Sunday services and meet in Shivananda Hall. Following the Sunday services, the Swami-in-charge gives instruction in chanting and meditation to the children of the Sunday School.

*Interviews* are given by the Swami-in-charge to earnest seekers desiring individual instruction in spiritual practice. Appointments should be made in advance.

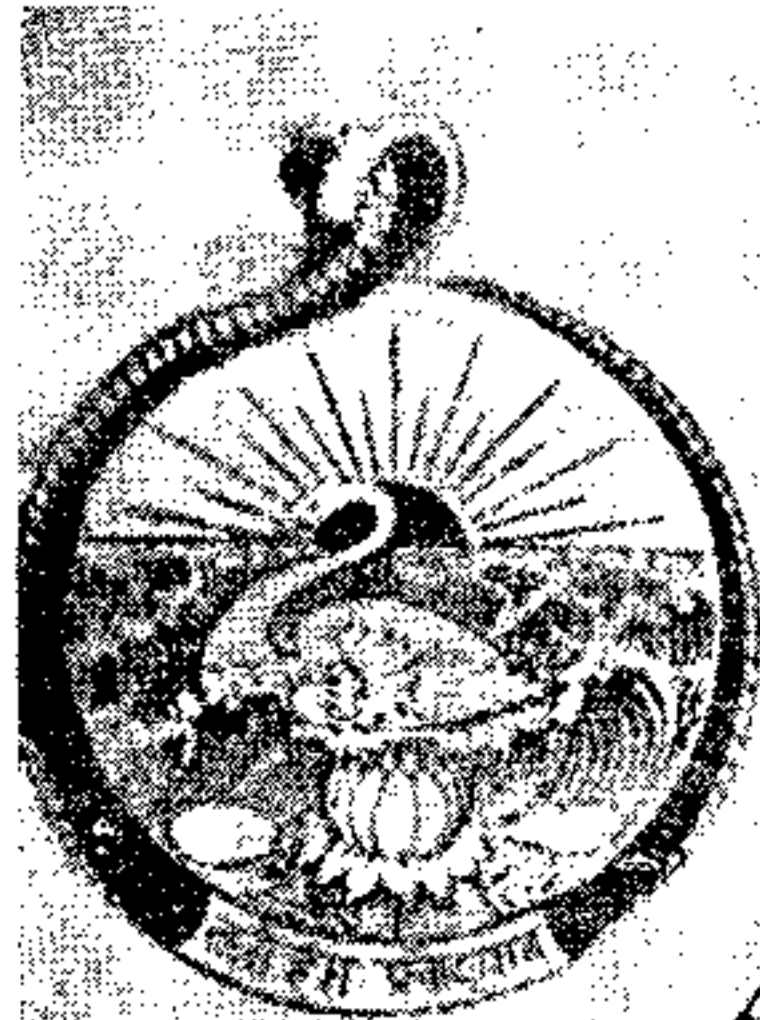
*Meditation* : The Temple is open daily from 8.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. for those who wish to spend some time in silent meditation in the chapel.

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1. Mme. Sarah Bernhardt in the title role of L'Aiglon.



14 August 1900.  
6 Place des Etats Unis  
Paris  
France

Dear Christine I send you a little  
poem. I am well and must remain well  
think. It does not pay to be wealthy.  
I hope you are well and happy. V.

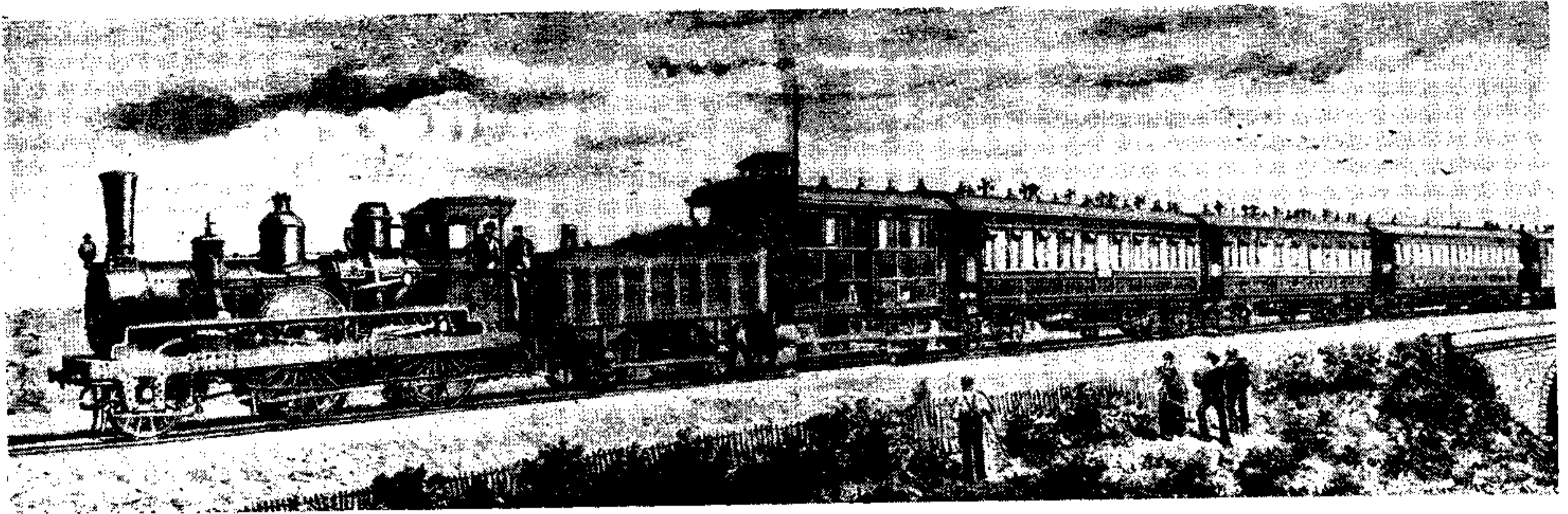
If things go all or well  
If his rebounding speaks the face  
so full of sorrow will  
It is a dream, a play.

A play in each human heart  
Each one to sweep or sweep as may  
dash in his dress to show  
alternate shame or ruin

Then dream a blessed dream  
opines far and near they best of play  
toss down the lines so sharp  
make smooth what rough had been  
his beauty but in thee  
they touch make dust of beloved life  
harsh thoughts, breath being  
fill to the sweet release.

2. Letter to Sister Christine, August 14, 1900, showing the use of the seal of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission.





3. A sketch of the *Orient Express* dating from the inauguration of the train in 1883.

C<sup>ie</sup> INTERNATIONALE DES WAGONS-LITS & DES GRANDS EXPRESS EUROPEENS  
 CHEMINS DE FER DU NORD & DE L'EST DE FRANCE

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 à Vindredi

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**WITHOUT PASSPORT**  
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 LONDON & PARIS TWICE A WEEK  
 Sunday & Wednesday Only  
 For CONSTANTINOPLE  
 On Friday  
 For BUDAPEST

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## ORIENT EXPRESS

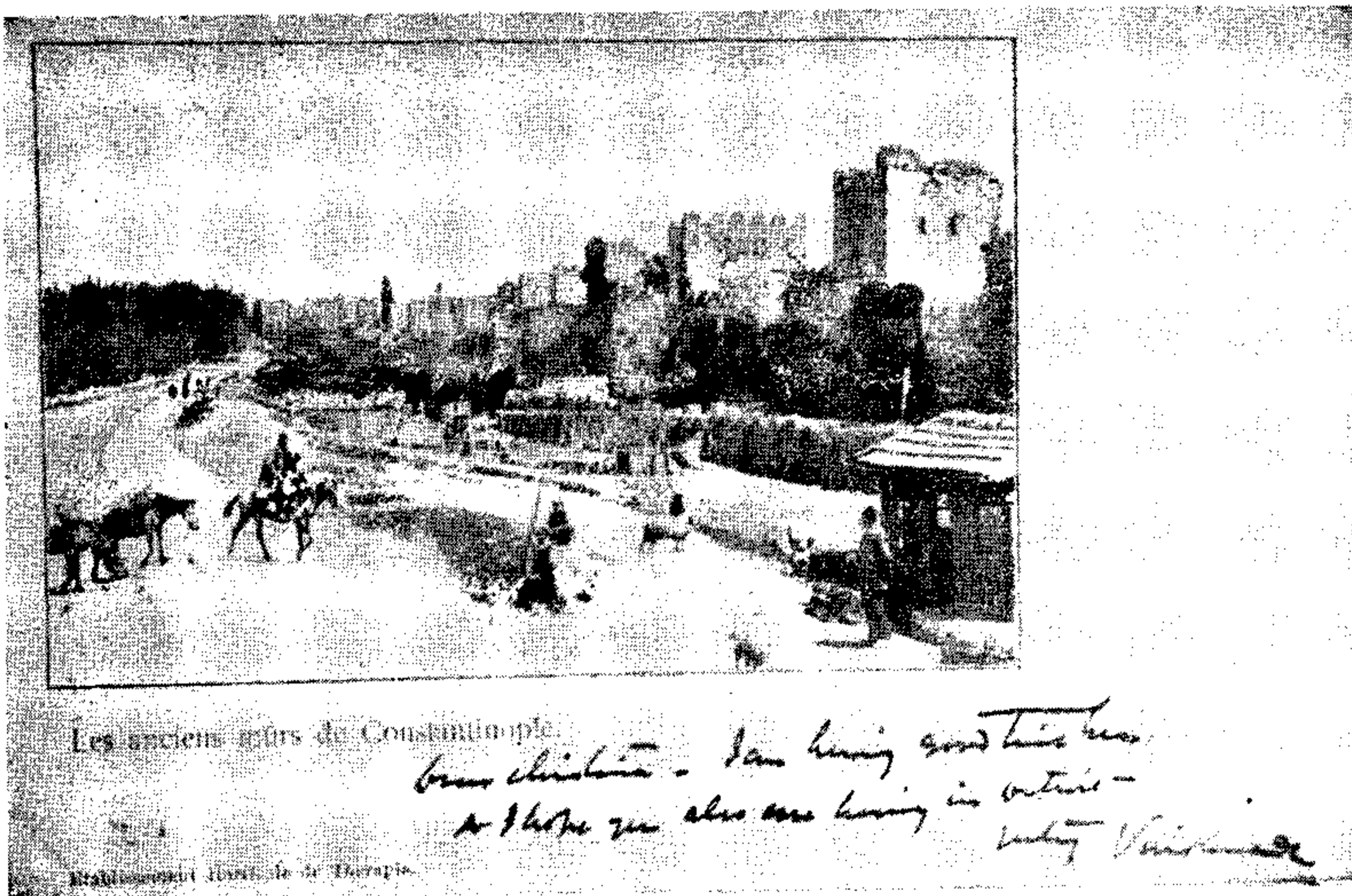
HIVER 1889-90 WINTER 1889-90

Paris	10.00	10.00
Munich	12.00	12.00
Vienna	14.00	14.00
Pesth	16.00	16.00
Bukarest	18.00	18.00
Belgrade	20.00	20.00
Constantinople	22.00	22.00

1889-1900

4. Poster from 1889-1900 showing the route and schedule of the *Orient Express*.





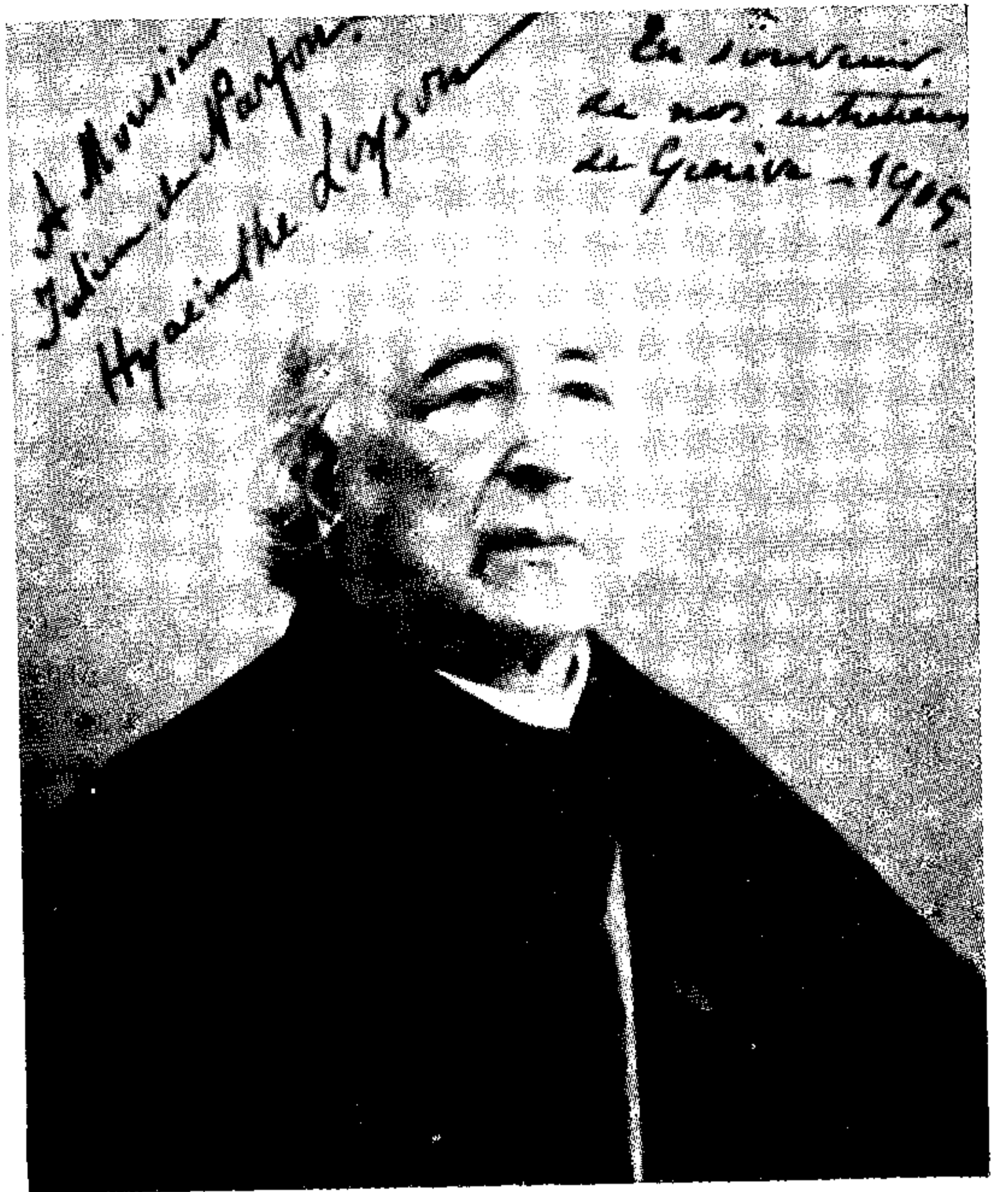
5. Picture postcard addressed to Christine, postmarked at Constantinople, November 1, 1900, showing old city walls.



6. Swami Vivekananda at Constantinople, November 1900.



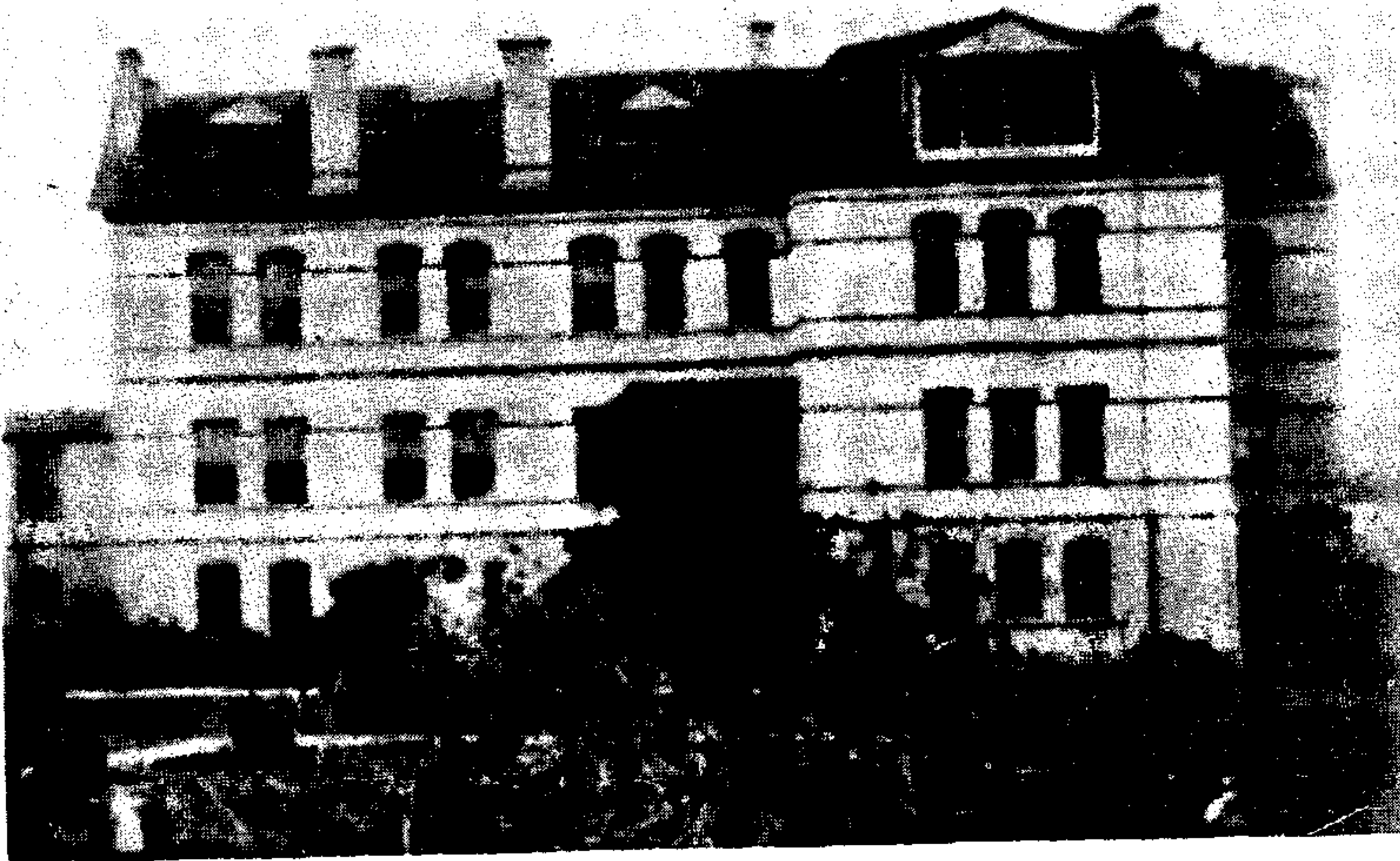
7. Père Hyacinthe Loyson,  
about 1900.



8. Picture postcard addressed to Sister Nivedita, post-marked at Constantinople, November 1, 1900, showing the dervishes and fish merchants.





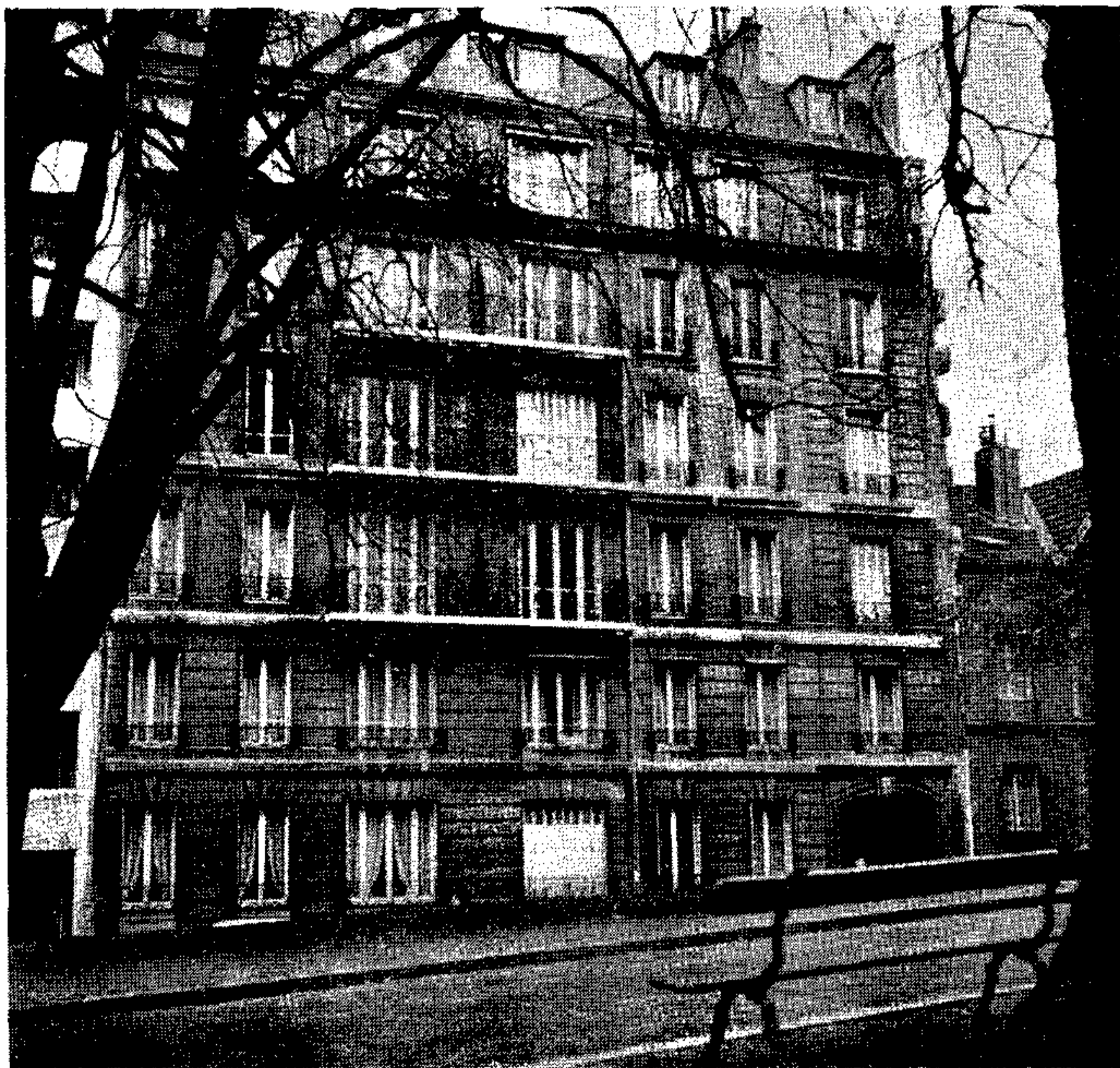


9. Barton Hall, American  
College for Girls, Scutari.



10. Jules Bois, about 1900.





11. 39 Rue Gazan, Paris.  
Jules Bois' apartment  
was on the fifth  
floor.



12. Shown here is the  
'little Switzerland'  
in the park, visible  
from Bois' apart-  
ment.