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No. 11

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

TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA*

श्रीरामकृष्णोपदेशावलिः ।

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

स्वप्न-मन्त्र-हठ-कृपा-
नित्यत्वादि-विभेदतः ।
सिद्धाः पञ्चविधा ज्ञेयाः
पृथ्वीशोभाविवर्धनाः ॥१॥

स्वप्नकाले यदा कोऽपि
मन्त्रं प्राप्य तु चेतनम् ।
तेनैव सिद्धिमाप्नोति
स्वप्नसिद्धः स उच्यते ॥२॥

गुरुदत्तं शुभं मन्त्रं
सर्वसिद्धिप्रदायकम् ।
यो जप्त्वा सिद्धिमाप्नोति
मन्त्रसिद्धः स एव हि ॥३॥

हठात् पाप्य धनं दीनो
भवेत्तूर्णं धनी यथा ।
दुष्टोऽपि साधुतामेति
सहस्रैव क्वचिद्भुवि ॥४॥

1. Know there to be five types of perfect men who add to the glory of this earth, classified as those perfected : through dream, by repetition of the *mantra*, by mere chance, through the grace of God ; or those who are perfected by their own inherent nature.

2. When a person gets a *mantra* in dream and attains perfection thereby, he is called a *svapna-siddha*.

3. If a person initiated by a guru with a sacred *mantra*, capable of giving all kinds of perfection, attains perfection by its repetition, then he is known as *mantra-siddha*.

4 & 5. As a poor man becomes rich in a trice by suddenly getting some treasure, similarly, in this world even a wicked person by chance may become good and per-

* See *Vidyodaya* (a critical Sanskrit monthly journal), Ed. Hrishikesh Sastri, Bhatpara (24-Parganas, West Bengal): The Oriental Nobility Institute, January 1897, pp. 11-16. The versified Sanskrit rendering is by Swami Ramakrishnananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. The English translation is ours.

दीर्घकालतपस्याभि-
 यत् फलं प्राप्यते नरैः ।
 मुहूर्तेनैव तत्प्राप्य
 हठसिद्धः स जायते ॥५॥

fect in no time. Perfection, which men attain by performing austerities for years, is attained by him in a moment. Such a person is called *haṭha-siddha*.

दीनं हीनं यथा दृष्ट्वा
 धनी कृपापरायणः ।
 तस्यापनयति क्लेशं
 धनदानेन सर्वथा ॥६॥

6 to 8. Just as a rich man eases for ever the hardships of some poor and decrepit person by giving him wealth out of compassion; similarly, seeing some immoral and wicked person, the merciful God makes him the best amongst the good. Then such a worshipful god amongst men becomes known on the earth as *kṛpā-siddha*.

वीक्ष्यं कंचिद् दीनचित्तं
 दुराचारं नरं तथा ।
 करोति सात्त्विकश्रेष्ठं
 गोविन्दो दीनवत्सलः ॥७॥

तस्यैव नरदेवस्य
 सवपूज्यस्य वै तदा ।
 कृपासिद्ध इति ख्याति-
 भवतीह धरातले ॥८॥

कुष्माण्डालाबुवल्लीनां
 यथा फलोदयात् परम् ।
 पुष्पाणि सम्भवन्तीह
 फलानि च ततः परम् ॥९॥

9 to 11. As the pumpkin and bottle-gourd creepers put forth flowers after the growth of the fruits, and after that again grow the fruits; similarly, those who are *nitya-siddhas* are perfect since birth. As a matter of fact, for such who are born perfect, there is no question of any duty. Still, they are seen to practise some spiritual disciplines for the sake of perfection. That is only to show the way to mankind. Such people are called *nitya-siddhas*.

तथा ये नित्यसिद्धास्ते
 जन्मसिद्धा भवन्ति वै ।
 तेषां त्वाजन्मसिद्धानां
 कर्तव्यानीह सन्ति न ॥१०॥

तथापि तेऽनुतिष्ठन्ति
 यानि कर्माणि सिद्धये ।
 तान्येव लोकशिक्षार्थं
 नित्यसिद्धास्त एव ॥११॥

BRAIN, CONSCIOUSNESS AND SUPERCONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE—III

(EDITORIAL)

In the second instalment of this editorial some Eastern and Western concepts of consciousness were studied in brief; and it was told that according to Vedanta the Ātman, the essence of consciousness, manifests as the states of waking, dream and deep sleep, and is the Witness of these three states. The study of consciousness will not be complete unless the states of waking, dream and deep sleep are discussed to some extent.

THE STATES OF WAKING, DREAM AND DEEP SLEEP

Both Eastern and Western thinkers have studied these three states in their own way, and put forth their views. Although their ways of approach are different, it will be interesting to review them here in brief.

Sleep—Western Concepts :

It is a matter of everyone's daily experience that after a day's hard work, one feels a desperate need for rest; and a person generally fulfils this daily need by going to bed at night. Physiologists are of the opinion that man 'spends in sleep the equivalent of more than twenty years of his life.' Consciousness is as if switched off for some time when one goes to sleep, amounting almost to daily death. It has been observed that sleep gives a better type of bodily relief than any other form of rest or drugs. According to some psychologists, the rule of sleep is unique and 'goes well beyond mere bodily rest or relief from the mental cares of waking life.'

The observations of some physiologists show that, due to prolonged mental exertion, the chemistry of the blood and the

transmitter substance of the neuron-synapses is altered in various ways; and due to physical exertion the concentration of lactic acid in the muscles increases. G. Moruzzi says that sleep involves 'almost total inactivation of the brain and of most of the functions in the somatic sphere. It is the nervous system which needs this period of recovery.'³⁴ Sherrington, on the other hand, defines sleep as 'a phase to be thought of less as quietude than restorative activity in what has suffered wear and tear.'³⁵ Some psychologists contradict the view of Sherrington and say that 'sleep of the body is simply a consequence of the existence of a period of blackout in our higher nervous activities. It is simply a consequence of the state of sleep. The aim of sleep, however, is not to provide a period of recuperation for our body nor even for several structures of the central nervous system. This recovery could perfectly well be achieved without sleep.'³⁶ Thus, the opinion of the scientists vary regarding the utility of sleep.

The Physiological Basis of Sleep : Whatever be the cause and utility of sleep, it has been confirmed that the reticular formation in the brainstem has a part to play in causing sleep as well as arousal. The reticular formation is a fine network of interconnected cells, which in a way monitors all the nerves connected with the brain or the body. 'The brainstem net is concerned

³⁴. *Brain and Conscious Experience*, ed. John C. Eccles, New York : Springer-Verlag, 1966, (hereafter *Brain*), p. 346.

³⁵. Sir Charles Sherrington, *Man on His Nature*, 1946, p. 252; quoted in *Brain*, p. 354.

³⁶. *Brain*, p. 377.

with the overall pattern of activity and with inspiring greater effort in various sectors of the brain and the outlying nervous system, as required.³⁷ The reticular formation sends fibres to the cerebral cortex by way of the thalamus, and also receives fibres from the various afferent systems and the cerebral cortex. The upper part of this network is said to be excitatory, while the caudal part is inhibitory in function. Thus the reticular system is not only responsible for arousal, but also for sleep. For instance, the stimulation of the anterior hypothalamus can lead to inhibition of the arousal mechanism and consequently lead to sleep. The details of this mechanism will be discussed later.

Variations in Sleep : Everyone knows by his own experience that there are different kinds of sleep. People are often seen to talk of 'good' or 'poor' sleep, or of 'light' or 'deep' sleep. Physiologists Eugene Aserinsky and N. Kleitman studied the phenomenon of sleep with the help of the electroencephalogram (EEG) and found out that sleep is characterized by rapid eye movements (REM) or non-REM. The readings of the EEG taken of the excited, relaxed, drowsy, asleep and deeply sleeping persons were found to be different.

The phenomenon of sleep has been studied in great detail recently by the neurophysiologists, and causes and remedies for various types of diseases like sleeplessness, talking and walking in sleep, and so on, have been found out.

Sleep—Hindu Concepts :

According to the Yoga philosophy of Patañjali, sleep is one of the five kinds of mental modifications, and is defined as a modification 'which embraces the feeling of

voidness.'³⁸ While commenting on this aphorism Swami Vivekananda says : 'When we awake, we know that we have been sleeping ; we can only have memory of perception. . . . If during sleep, the mind had no waves, it would have no perceptions, positive or negative, and therefore, we would not remember them. The very reason of our remembering sleep is that during sleep there was a certain class of waves in the mind.'³⁹

Vedanta has its own way of describing the phenomenon of sleep ; and like the Western physiologists, the Vedantists also describe it in relation to the nervous system. Hindu medical men (the Āyurvedācāryas) believe that fatigue is the cause of sleep. 'When a man's mind becomes tired working with the objects, it withdraws itself from them, and then the person falls asleep.'⁴⁰ According to Ācārya Śaṅkara, the relation between sleep and the waking state is like the seed and the seedling.⁴¹ In deep sleep, mind enters its causal state temporarily. In this connection, Śaṅkara says, 'In dreamless sleep, when the mind is reduced to its causal state, there exists nothing (for the sleeping person), as is evident from universal experience.'⁴² In his commentary on the *Māṇḍukya-Kārikā*, Ācārya Śaṅkara says : 'Sleep consists in the non-perception of Reality, and that itself is the seed of the birth of the cognition of varieties ; and Prājñā is endued with this sleep that is a causal state.'⁴³

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, in answer

37. Nigel Calder, *The Mind of Man*, London : British Broadcasting Corporation, 1970, (hereafter *Mind*), p. 30.

38. Swami Vivekananda, *Raja-Yoga*, Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama, 1970, p. 125.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Caraka-Sūtrasthāna*, 21.

41. See *Brahma-Sūtras*, III. ii. 9.

42. Ācārya Śaṅkara, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, (hereafter *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*), 171.

43. *Māṇḍukya Kārikā*, I. 13.

to Gārgya's question about deep sleep Ajātaśatru says :

When this being full of consciousness (Vijñānamaya Puruṣa) is thus asleep, it absorbs at that time the functions of the organs through its own consciousness and rests in the Ākāśa (Supreme Self) that is in the heart. When this being absorbs them, it is called Svapiti [he is sleeping]. Then the organ of smell is absorbed, the organ of speech is absorbed, the eye is absorbed, the ear is absorbed, the mind is absorbed. . . . When it [Jīva] becomes fast asleep—when it does not know anything—it comes back along the seventy-two thousand nerves called Hitā, which extend from the heart to the pericardium (the whole body), and remains in the
bc

While commenting on this verse, Ācārya Śaṅkara explains how the soul falls into deep sleep:

Thus it has been said that when there is no particular consciousness, it is the state of profound sleep. By what process does this take place? This is being described: Seventy-two thousand nerves called Hitā, which are the metabolic effects of the food and drink in the body, extend from the heart, that lotus-shaped lump of flesh, to the pericardium, which here means the body; that is, they branch off, covering the whole body like the veins of an Aśvattha [Banyan, Peepal?] leaf. The heart is the seat of the intellect, the internal organ, and the other or external organs are subject to that intellect abiding in the heart. Therefore in accordance with the individual's past actions the intellect in the waking state extends, along those nerves interwoven like a fish-net, the functions of the organs such as the ear to their seats, the outer ear, etc., and then directs them. The individual self pervades the intellect with a reflection of its own manifested consciousness. . . . The self

has no contact with the body in profound sleep. . . .⁴⁵

In his *Brahma-Sūtras*, Vyāsa also corroborates this view saying: 'The absence of that dream (dreamless sleep) takes place in the nerves and the self, as it is known to be so from the Upaniṣads.'⁴⁶ It should be noted, however, that the Vedantists' study of the phenomenon of deep sleep is from the metaphysical point of view, whereas the Western psychologists study it from the psycho-physiological point of view. Hence there is a difference in their interpretations. But the common point in both is that during the state of deep sleep, the activities of the brain are suspended for the time being. The brain is as it were the office of the soul (Jīva), where he works for some period during the day with the assistance of the mind, intellect, vital forces, sense-organs and all; and when he gets tired he returns to his citadel of the heart, along with his office-bearers. It may be said that the soul along with his retinue returns home by way of the vagus nerve to the cardiac plexus and takes rest for some time. While coming down, he as it were locks up the door situated somewhere in the brainstem.

About the homecoming of the soul it is said in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: 'As a hawk or a falcon flying in the sky becomes tired, and stretching its wings, is bound for its nest, so does this soul run for this state, where falling asleep he craves no desires and sees no dreams.'⁴⁷ It is said that in this state the sense-objects merge in the sense-organs, the sense-organs merge in the mind, and the mind merges in the Prāṇa temporarily, and all these take rest

45. Ācārya Śaṅkara's Commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, (hereafter *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Commentary*), II. i. 19.

46. *Brahma-Sūtras*, III. ii. 7-8.

47. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. iii. 19.

44. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II. i. 17, 19.

in the heart along with the soul. That is why during this state, although the functions of the mind are suspended, Prāṇa is active. The flowing of the mind and the Prāṇa through the nerves was known to the Hindu medical men (Āyurvedācāryas). Such nerves are called respectively *mano-vahā* (mind-carrying) and *prāṇavahā* (Prāṇa-carrying) *nāḍis* (nerves). Indian thinkers have given, however, more importance to the heart than to the brain. But in the light of recent researches it appears that the Western and Eastern thinkers should shake hands and rethink in the light of each other's views.

Dreams—Western Concepts:

Everybody is quite familiar with dreams. Amongst philosophers and psychologists there are various views regarding their nature. Some take it as reflection of the Reality, others as the extension of the waking state, or as 'the royal road to the unconscious'. Since time immemorial, men of various religions interpreted dreams in their own way, and many even made some prophecies based upon them. According to Sigmund Freud, dreams reflect the waking experience. He invented his own method for their interpretation, and suggested remedies to his mental patients according to the information collected from their dreams. He was of the opinion that suppressed desires of an individual are released in the dreams when the inhibitory demands of the waking state are diminished. He believed that as the superego (mental censor) functions to some extent in dreams, the desires may not be fulfilled in dreams as the person wants, but in a sort of distorted form. He held that the desires which one fails to satisfy when awake are expressed in dreams in the form of sensory images and scenes. From the contents of the dreams the psychoanalyst can understand

the personal needs of the patient, and suggest the cure accordingly.

Neurophysiological Observations: The neurophysiologists have observed with the help of the electroencephalographs that when a person falls asleep, the electric rhythms of his brain change, but they certainly do not cease. The maximum electric activity is seen in the front portion of the head. In 1958, William Dement observed 'alternating periods of high-voltage, slow beat, and low-voltage, fast beat, in the electric rhythms of sleeping cats.' Dement at first termed the fast-beat phase as 'light sleep', though it turned out to be in fact associated with deeper periods of sleep.

As early as 1953 it was discovered that rapid eye movements (REM) during sleep are a sure indication to prove that the person is dreaming. It was observed that about an hour or so after falling asleep rapid eye movement starts in the sleeping person under the closed eyelids; and it was found that when the subjects were awakened during the REM period, 'they reported vivid dreams 20 out of 27 times.' Now it has been confirmed by experiments that there is an intimate relationship among the rapid eye movement, activated brain waves (EEG) and dream recall. Some more details in this connection will be seen later.

Nigel Calder, while speaking about dreams to the BBC TV audience, said: 'Even as you are dropping off to sleep, hallucinations occur—a meaningless but graphic sequence of images flicker through the consciousness like a series of slides, and sometimes there are feelings of floating that end abruptly in an imagined fall. These hallucinations are a foretaste of the strange mental world we inhabit in our sleep.'⁴⁸

⁴⁸. *Mind*, p. 38.

About dream it can be said that the brain is partially active in this state, whereas in deep sleep, consciousness is completely blocked off. We can say that in this state there is a sort of leakage of the nerve-current through the reticular formation of the brainstem.

Dreams—Hindu Concepts:

In his commentary on the *Yoga-Sūtras* of Patañjali, Vyāsa calls dream a kind of memory (*smṛti*). He makes a differentiation between memories of the waking and the dream states. He says that in dreams memory is strictly based upon imagination (*bhāvitasmartavyā smṛtiḥ*), while in the waking state it is not so.⁴⁹

In his commentary on the *Māṇḍukya-Kārikā*, Ācārya Śaṅkara defines dream as *anyathāgrahaṇam*—mistaking a thing for some other thing, like taking a rope for a snake. Śaṅkara has extensively deliberated on this subject, especially in his commentaries on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Praśna*, and *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣads*.⁵⁰ At one place he says: 'The consciousness of the waking state, though it is a state of mental vibration, is associated with many means, and it appears to be engrossed in external objects, and thus it leaves in the mind the corresponding impressions. Under the impulsion of ignorance, desire and (past) action, the mind, thus possessed of the impressions like a piece of painted canvas, makes its appearance (in the dream state) just as in the waking state, but without any external means.'⁵¹ Thus Śaṅkara is of the opinion that dream is a product of one's

impressions gathered during the waking state.

Madhvācārya also corroborates the view of Śaṅkara saying: 'When the Lord out of His own sweet will reveals to a soul its mental impressions, it is called dream.'⁵²

The Physiological Basis of Dreams: The Vedantists believe that the location of the dream experience is the group of nerves called Hitā, which has been described in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as follows: 'In him are those nerves called Hitā, which are as fine as a hair split into a thousand parts, and filled with white, blue, brown, green and red (serums).'⁵³ In the commentary on this *mantra*, Śaṅkara clarifies the matter, saying:

In him, in this man with a head, hands, etc., are those nerves called Hitā, which are as fine as a hair split into a thousand parts, and they are filled with white, blue, brown, green and red serums. Many and various are the colours of the serums, owing to the intermixture, in various proportions, of nerve matter, bile and phlegm. The subtle body with its seventeen constituents has its seat in these nerves, which have the fineness of the thousandth part of the tip of a hair, are filled with serums, white and so on, and spread all over the body.

All impressions due to the experience of high and low attributes of the relative universe are centred in this. This subtle body, in which the impressions are stored, is transparent like a crystal because of its fineness; but owing to its contact with foreign matter, namely, the serums in the nerves, it undergoes modifications under the influence of past merit and demerit, and manifests itself as impressions in the form of women, chariots, elephants, etc. [in the dream]. ... In short, he conjures at the time,

49. See Vyāsa's Commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtras*, I. 11.

50. See: *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II. i. 18-19; IV. iii. 10-11, 13-20; *Praśna Upaniṣad*, IV. 4; *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad*, 4-5, 10; *Māṇḍukya Kārikā*, I. 14-16, II. 1-5, 9, III. 30, IV. 36-37, 39, 41.

51. *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad*, 4.

52. *Brahma-Sūtras*, Madhvācārya's Commentary, III. ii. 3.

53. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. iii. 20.

i.e., in dreams, when there is no elephant or the like, through the impressions created by ignorance, which have falsely manifested themselves, whatever terrible things such as an elephant he has experienced in the waking state.⁵⁴

Besides this, the Hindu medical men (Āyurvedācāryas) believe that one may see three types of dreams depending upon three different reasons, namely, due to the intensity of impressions, defect in the secretions of the body, and past karma.

The Witness of the Three States :

Although it appears that in deep sleep there is no consciousness, in dream there is partial consciousness, and in the waking state there is full play of consciousness, the Vedantists believe that in all these three states the basic consciousness—the Reality or Ātman—is as it is, and the difference that is perceived is only in its manifestation. Śaṅkara describes the Ātman in the following words : ‘This self-effulgent Ātman which is distinct from the five sheaths, the *Witness of the three states*, the Real, the Changeless, the Untainted, the everlasting Bliss...’⁵⁵ The Reality is said to have four aspects and so four different names—Viśva, Taijasa, Prājña and Turīya. About this Gauḍapāda says in his *Maṇḍukya Kārikā* : ‘Viśva experiences the external things [in the waking state] and is all-pervading; but Taijasa experiences the internal things [in dream]; similarly Prājña is a mass of consciousness [in the deep-sleep state]. It is but the same entity that is thought of in these three ways.’⁵⁶ The Reality as experienced in the super-conscious state is called Turīya. ‘This effulgent Turīya is held to be the all-per-

vasive source of all entities.’⁵⁷ This Reality is said to have three different locations in the body during the three states. For instance : ‘Viśva is met with in the right eye which is his place of experience [in the waking state]. But Taijasa is inside the mind [in the dream state]. Prājña is in the space within the heart [in the deep-sleep state]. In three ways He exists in the body.’⁵⁸ In Śaṅkara’s commentary on the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* also the Reality is said to have the same three abodes in the states of waking, dream and deep sleep.⁵⁹

Thus according to the Vedantic concept, the same Reality, which is of the nature of Absolute Consciousness, is as it were playing in these three states like a big fish. The deep-sleep state is Its abode, and the waking and dream states are the two banks of the river, namely, this world. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* it is said : ‘As a great fish swims to both the banks (of a river), eastern and western, so does this infinite Being move to both these states, the dream and waking.’⁶⁰ This illustration is to show that the basic Consciousness remains unaffected during these three states, the only difference being that in the deep-sleep state It gets no field for manifestation, in dream It gets a partial opportunity, and in the waking state It gets full sway for expression; because the medium through which It expresses Itself, namely, the Prāṇa, mind, sense-organs and nerves (which form the constituent parts of the soul or Jīva) are all finite, and need periodical rest.

(To be continued)

54. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Commentary*, IV. iii. 20.

55. *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 211.

56. *Māṇḍukya Kārikā*, I. 1.

57. *Ibid.*, I. 10.

58. *Ibid.*, I. 2.

59. See *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, I. iii. 12; for another version see *Brahmopaniṣad*, 2.

60. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. iii. 18.

VIVEKANANDA, NIVEDITA, AND TATA'S RESEARCH

SCHEME—II

SANKARI PRASAD BASU

5

Sister Nivedita accompanied Swami Vivekananda to England in the June of 1899, and after passing about a year in the United States and France, stayed there till the end of 1901. From her letters of this period we find how deeply she felt about this scheme. Her behind-the-scene activities for the well-being of India are well known. Here we are presenting the story of one such activity from one of her own letters. When official opposition to the Tata-scheme became almost unscalable, both Mrs. Ole Bull and Nivedita arranged a meeting between Lord Birdwood of the Education Department and Mr. Tata at a dinner for the purpose of influencing the former. In her letter to Dr. and Mrs. Jagadish Chandra Bose, dated November 5, 1900, Nivedita reported the gist of discussion. We can see from the letter that the purpose of the discussion with Lord Birdwood was not only the future of the Tata-scheme but the future of Dr. Bose as well. A part of the letter reads:

... I am really writing to tell you about the luncheon. How pitiable! Sir George Birdwood sat beside Mrs. Bull and discussed art and various questions. She amusingly tried to say the foolish things that were expected—in order to disarm suspicion. I, from across the table, beside a vulgar Scotchman (certain parts of my Karma seem extraordinarily bad!) tried to get the talk turned to India. At this stage Sir George Birdwood was the honest Englishman of wizened, dried-up appearance and somewhat bitter temperament, who owned that we govern India primarily for *our* good—with an amiable attempt to make that good more or less consistent with the wealth and happiness of India, but not as humbugs would make the world believe, for the good of the governed. Our only

duty is to ourselves. 'And the duty of Indians, then?' suggested Mr. Tata. '—Is to themselves'—promptly responded Sir George Birdwood. 'They owe us nothing. But they will never have the sense to see this.'

There was ample discussion also of the way in which Indian appointments are made—the one object of the Secretary of State, from first to last, being '*never to see the man who is appointed*'. The whole thing is done through newspapers and the examiner's letters.'

'And do you not think that such a state of things involve the gravest danger?' I asked.

'It *ought* to do so. It *ought* to do so'—replied Sir George Birdwood—'but I do not for one moment believe that it does. The people of India will never rise against us. They are all vegetarians.'

'I was thinking of dangers to India—not to ourselves'—I replied. And here—if I am not mistaken—he carelessly acquiesced.

All through this part of the lunch, the meanest notes were continually struck. Parsis are of a different race from others. (Why do we not stand boldly by the obnoxious word *Natives*? Here was a man who would not consent to use it—because it created the common bond which it is the English object to destroy.) The Parsi interest is English entirely.

Hindus *only* trust European judges—always pray to be delivered from their fellow countrymen—and so on.

The sweets had arrived before Mr. Tata spoke the word 'University'. By this time I was in despair—seeing that if I left the battle to the others, we could not force Sir George Birdwood to make any statement. I determined to break my pledge of silence—and I asked him at once—

'What form of regulation would you propose, Sir George Birdwood, in order to ensure that as soon as possible the P.G.U. [Post-Graduate University] appointments should be reserved strictly for Indians?'

'I would propose nothing. It would be suicidal to the interests of science to do anything of the sort. The P.G.U. must stand for the interests of *Science*—and that is a world-question—not an Indian problem at all. It must be opened to all the world.'

'And how would you make it open to all the world?'

'By throwing the whole thing, as I keep saying to Mr. Tata, unreservedly into the hands of Government authority.'

'You think, then, that Government in its creation of the S. Kensington Sc. [South Kensington Society] and a Department has shown its power to deal with educational concerns?'

Here followed some interesting discussion relative to 'the dead hand of S. Kensington'—

Again—

'How do you propose then that *candidates should be nominated* (I do not mean appointments made) in order to secure that the P.G.U. serve the science of the whole world?'—N.

'By constituting advisers in all the universities of the world'—G.B.

'—including Calcutta, Madras and Bombay?'

'Certainly not. The Indian universities are already deteriorating—and Calcutta is the worst.'

'But they are completely in Government control!'

'Yes, but they are deteriorating. They would not be safe advisers.'

I turned to Mr. Tata.

'I cannot say Mr. Tata that Sir George Birdwood makes out a strong case for his contention, that you should throw your money into the hands of authorities who have already proved themselves so incompetent!'

At this point Sir George Birdwood saw that he had taken the wrong stand. So he changed his argument, saying—'But there is no *need* to have the Indian universities formally represented. They would be there, on the spot! As a matter of fact they have not turned out one man of pre-eminence in literature, science, or art, these 50 years!' (N.B. I want a list of men who *have* done work of this quality at the Bar, in Medicine, in Sanskrit, in Science [excision] you, of course in mind, but left them to name you. I will not have your name tarred by my mention.) I of course differed from him, and spoke of chances. *Amongst* 20 to 30 men at most who had had the chance of training 2 or 3 had distinguished themselves.

'Yes in a second-rate way. I said pre-eminence.'

'By no means',—quoted [excision] as to recent Brit. Ass. [British Association] Meeting, and remarked that it was Prof. Oliver Lodge himself who had been willing to go into print about it.

'Oh but the sort of test to which I refer would be number of papers read before the R. Soc. [Royal Society].'

'For the first time in its history, the Royal Society offers the whole of its programme from opening till the Xmas holiday, to be filled by the Hindu professor of Physics—However, Sir George, I also am willing to reason about this. Granting that it is desirable, in the interests of pure science, to keep all preference for the Native out of this, are you also willing, and for the [excision] to keep the English out? Let the whole thing consist of Russians, Germans, French and Americans, but admit neither Indian nor English, since self-interest, etc.'

I need not go into the reply. Every now and then, in season and out of season, came the refrain, 'Stop consulting everybody Tata, and give the whole power, and your 30 lakhs, unreservedly into the hands of Ramsay.'

The question of salaries came up, and he declared that Europeans and Natives were paid equally. I denied this.—'Well, in the Civil Service at least'—he said. (Is this true?).

Then he spoke of the 50 years' work of existing Universities with no results in science.

I complained of no science in syllabus, in degrees, in equipment.

He said they had excellent laboratories in Bombay.

I told the Calcutta story, and he said he would like to see it in print, and that if I would write to the *Times* on these questions he would answer me.

Perhaps the least noble of all his arguments dealt with the question of unequal pay.

So and so long ago had talked in this way and some Englishman had said, 'Don't be such a fool. In a few months you'll be getting it yourself, and then you'll like it very well!'

Forgive me for writing you all this. I wanted a record of the conversation. Towards the end of the meal he dubbed something Mr. Tata had said (perhaps, rather seconded me in saying) 'disloyal'. So I had my warning.

Earlier, I had rounded on a similar statement by saying that what I said in the interests of justice, I did not take to be said against my country. And there the whole miserable business rests. I hope it may be my part now to bring the voices of others who are stronger into Mr. Tata's Councils, but that for me I may be left in silence. Otherwise, I may find it difficult to do my 10 years' work. Lovingly to you both,

NIVEDITA

[P.S.] I must add that at the end Sir George

Birdwood sent off fireworks about the future University of Bombay taking the place of the old Alexandria in the world's history—Alexandria, with its murdered Hypatra—the beautiful martyr-saint (if Science could be said to have its saints) of Science.

And this Hypatra was born in Egypt, I said. 'Yes.' 'And her father was born in Egypt—' Then we rose to go.¹²

Nivedita, an inspired angel, did not stop there. She had already made a plan for addressing an appeal to the world celebrities interested in India for giving their views on the Tata-scheme. The ultimate object was to utilize them for creating a powerful movement in India and thus to put pressure upon the government for the acceptance of the scheme. We have got certain very important documents from the

collection of Lizelle Reymond which includes the said 'Appeal' in Nivedita's own handwriting, and another letter, also in her handwriting, signed by the famous American philosopher Dr. William James with his opinion on the scheme. We reproduce below these two documents in succession.

A NATIVE INDIAN POST-GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

To

Dear Sir or Madame,

A Parsi gentleman, Mr. Tata, who is anxious to promote higher education among the Natives of India and especially to encourage scholarship and scientific research, has offered to find a sum of £200,000 for the purpose. The question arises how best the objects in view can be attained.

Mr. Tata has been in communication with the Government of India, and he has appointed an Advisory Committee, to discuss the preliminaries of his scheme.

On this Committee, the European element is, in the opinion of many interested in the success of Mr. Tata's proposals, unduly large. It is felt that his object would in many ways have a better prospect of attainment if he were to be guided by the advice and of opinions of the Educated Native Community.

Mr. Tata, who is himself a merchant, seems to require the assurance that such a course is open to him, and would be a wise one to adopt. Some of his friends,—who are anxious to assist him, and who above all things desire to record his own wish that his generosity should be devoted purely to the advancement of Native learning on National lines,—are aware that he would be largely influenced by the opinion of impartial English people, especially those possessing some knowledge of India.

In order, therefore, to strengthen Mr. Tata's hands in making such arrangements as may best give effect to his intention, the accompanying statement of opinion is being signed by a few influential people and will be forwarded to him in India immediately. Being intended solely to afford Mr. Tata personally the assistance of English advice to which he desires to obtain, it will not commit those signing it to any further active interest in the scheme. If, therefore, you approve of the object in view, you will perhaps

¹². When the *Pioneer*, the mouthpiece of the bureaucrats, insinuated that by Mr. Tata's offer of money to the nation, he really wanted to fix up 'a scheme for a family trust', Nivedita defended his honour by writing a letter to the *Statesman* (1904), which reads in part: '... It happens that in London a couple of years ago I had the opportunity of being present at many of the conferences held regarding the Tata-scheme by members of the India Office and others. ... Mr. Tata offered property to the value of Rs. 30,00,000 to the Nation, ... [which] were supposed at that time to produce an income of Rs. 1,25,000 per annum, I believe. The government at once objected that the property offered by Mr. Tata might decrease in value. It was Mr. Tata's opinion that the reverse would be the case. But in order to satisfy the government, and with the full consent of his own sons he undertook to secure the income in question to the University, in as far as an equal sum, Rs. 30,00,000 otherwise to be left to his family, would serve to do so. That is to say, so far from Mr. Tata's trying to involve the Government of India in a scheme for the benefit of his own children, he is willing to risk starvation for his children in order to secure the benefit to the Nation which he desires to confer upon it.' See *Sister Nivedita's Lectures and Writings*, Calcutta: Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 1975, p. 352.

be good enough to attach your signature to the statement of opinion and return it to

Your obedient servant
MARGARET E. NOBLE

Address:

Miss Noble,
C/o Mrs. Ole Bull,
Messrs. Baring Bros. Bankers,
London.

STATEMENT OF OPINION
TO BE FORWARDED TO J. N. TATA ESQ.

Having read the accompanying statement with regard to Mr. Tata's scheme for promoting higher education in India, I am of opinion that for the attainment of his object he would do well to be guided by the best educated native as distinguished from European opinion.

I am also of opinion that on all the permanent Governing bodies of the Institution, the four communities,—Parsi, Mohammedan, Hindu and European—ought always to be equally represented, no one in excess of any other.

And I feel that the management ought to be conducted entirely on National lines, all guarantees being now secured that Native Students shall have every facility and encouragement at all times to distinguish themselves in Scientific Studies, and to hold the higher posts in the Institution.

(Signed) WM. JAMES

[William James commented :] With doubts as to the permanent wisdom of the second provision.

Nivedita did not rest there. In all probability, she had been writing articles on the scheme in different papers at the time. From her letter to Miss MacLeod dated January 25, 1901, we find that she had sent one such article to Swamiji. She writes: 'Next week we shall send you and the King [Swami Vivekananda] the article on the Tata-scheme which has just come out in Mr. McNeill's papers. Dear Mr. McNeill ! I don't know how to express my pleasure.'

It need not be mentioned that in all these activities, Nivedita had the blessings of Swamiji. At that time she began increasingly to associate herself with the influential political circles in London for the purpose of securing greater advantages for India. As she was an English lady herself, she had an edge over the Indians in this respect. That in later days too, Nivedita evinced lively interest in the Tata-scheme is not difficult to infer. In Nivedita's personal collection of newspaper clippings preserved in the Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta, we find some that relate to the Tata-scheme. Further, the letter that she wrote to Mrs. Ole Bull on April 14, 1904, after the death of Mrs. Tata, speaks of the tender feelings with which she regarded both Mr. Tata and his scheme. The letter reads:

S.K.R. (S. K. Ratcliffe) told me last night that the *Indian Mirror* announces that 'the Government of India has finally rejected Mr. Tata's offer' !!!!!

Mrs. Tata too is just dead. Perhaps the break-up has come and the old man counts no more on the world's stage. Oh I am sorry.

Truly the wrong people live on, and the right people die, and save in our own wills there is no guarantee for the moral order of the world.

These letters and activities of Nivedita are a measure of the reluctance which the government of the day had shown in accepting the scheme. This scheme did not find favour with the government because, as we have said earlier, the alien rulers had always shown hostility to the introduction of any scheme of technical and scientific education in India. Besides, it is also very clear from the newspaper accounts mentioned earlier and also from Nivedita's letters supporting the Tata-plan that the government was reluctant to keep any institution of higher education under Indian management.

But that was precisely what Mr. Tata

aspired for. The real reason behind the governmental shilly-shallying was, obviously, not any want of funds but objection to Indian control and management. On the other hand, it is this aspect of indigenous control and management which earned for the plan so powerful a support from both Vivekananda and Nivedita. Yet, it is astonishing to see that the only comprehensive biography of Mr. Tata (*Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata* by F. R. Harris, 1958) that is with us, sought to create the conviction that it is for want of money that the government was unwilling to support the plan. What an instance of perversion of truth!

In this context it is interesting to quote the following report published on November 19, 1900 in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. It was a despatch from England:

THE GREATEST THING OF THE WEEK IN LONDON

FOR an Indian news-letter the greatest thing of the week in this great metropolis ... centres round a man whose name has not been printed in any London newspaper of later years, although that name is a household word in the mouths of all Indians. I refer to Mr. J. N. Tata, of Bombay, who returns to India next week. Mr. Tata has been in London for a short time in connection with his munificent donation of thirty lakhs of rupees as a beginning for a university of research, and the India Office's interest in the same. It appears to have been found necessary to consult with the Secretary of State for India on various phases of the project. To assist him in the matter Lord George Hamilton has appointed a small Committee of higher officials to confer with Mr. Tata. I believe interviews and consultations are taking place, but, of course, not being present I cannot pretend to know what is passing there at. All I can do is to express the hope that this great project, which owes its being to the large-heartedness and foresightedness of an Indian gentleman, shall remain under (mainly) Indian control. As things are in India, it goes without saying that the authorities must be presented on the governing body of the institution, but, I submit, this representation should

be only a minor extent and as advisers mainly. The more Indian the University becomes, in every respect, the greater its prospects of success. It ought to be overwhelmingly Indian. Better a few mistakes at starting with Indians in charge than a perfect success at the hands of non-Indians,—perfect success, that is, so far as mere administration is concerned; even a qualified success from an Indian point of view is not possible in the alternative respect....

6

In the context of this news and also of Nivedita's letters to the Boses regarding Mr. Tata's sojourn in London in 1900 and his activities there, the following quotation from the work of Mr. Harris, Tata's biographer, must appear a bit too innocuous. He writes:

Meanwhile, as it was Mr. Tata's practice to visit every important exhibition, he spent the summer of 1900 in Europe. After visiting Paris he came to London, and saw Lord George Hamilton. Though the University of Research was discussed, Mr. Tata's projects for the industrial expansion of India received equal attention.¹³

At this time, the government raised the plea for having expert opinion on the subject before taking a final decision. As a result, Mr. Tata had to appoint Mr. Ramsay. It remained, however, no secret to anyone that the real object behind this demand of the government was to play for time. Mr. Harris, no doubt, did much to whitewash the character of the British rulers of the time. Yet, it is from the writings of Mr. Harris himself that we get glimpses of their real nature. About Lord Curzon's criticism of the scheme he wrote: 'The general enthusiasm had been somewhat damped down by the Viceroy's statement that the endowment would benefit but a small num-

13. F. R. Harris, *Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata*, 1958.

ber of persons out of a population of even a province or district.'¹⁴

The top man of the British administrative set up in India, the Viceroy, had already given a cold reception to the scheme on the pretext that it was not likely to benefit too many people. It was the same Viceroy, again, whose advice now persuaded the government of Mysore to cut down its promised annual financial assistance of one lakh rupees to a sum of thirty thousand only ! Mr. Harris writes : 'The only firm offer was that made by the Government of Mysore, though after the death of Sir Sheshadri Iyer the original offer of a lakh of rupees was reduced to Rs. 30,000. The reduction was proposed at the instance of the Viceroy, who still regarded the whole system as too elaborate.'¹⁵

The greatest failure of Mr. Harris as the biographer of Mr. Tata lay in the fact that he deprived Mr. Tata's long and glorious struggle for seeing his scheme implemented its rightful place in the biography, though Mr. J.R.D. Tata in his Preface recommended the book as 'the only connected story of his life'. About Mr. Tata it must be remembered that even the taste of supreme success in his professional career could not bring fullness to life ; and he breathed his last broken-hearted for he could not live to see the fulfilment of his plan.

Again, Mr. Harris has repeatedly claimed that in contemporary India Mr. Tata had the clearest vision and the most progressive mind on the question of the industrialization of his country. If it were a question of translating abstract thought into concrete action the claim would be incontestable. But the claim went further ; for Mr. Harris wanted us to accept Mr. Tata's unrivalled leadership in the world of economic thought

as well. To establish this claim, it would have been fair for Mr. Harris to consider it in the perspective of the Indian economic thinking of that time. But he did nothing of the kind. We have no scope here to discuss it either, but it must be said in the interest of truth that there was at least one man in India at that time whose vision was no less clear, whose views on the economic question were no less progressive, and certainly he was Swami Vivekananda. Mr. Tata perceived it in the course of his conversation with Swamiji ; and precisely for that he wrote to Swamiji craving his support to his educational plan.

Mr. Harris, no doubt, made mention of this letter in his book, although he considered the 'footnote' as the appropriate place for it. And here also the interpretation suffered from distortion. Thus he wrote in the footnote : 'Sir Dorabji Tata is of opinion that his father at that time had little hope of getting the Government of India interested in his scheme. In November 1898, Mr. Tata wrote a letter to the Swami Vivekananda, *adjuring him to rouse the country by a pamphlet relating to educational reform on ascetic lines*, and offering to defray the expenses of publication.'¹⁶

Such an interpretation was absolutely impermissible. It was never the intention of Mr. Tata to urge upon Swamiji to 'rouse the country by writing a pamphlet on educational reform on ascetic lines.' He craved for Swamiji's support for his original scheme and we have already discussed how warmly Swamiji supported it. Mr. Harris acknowledged that Sir Dorabji told him about his father's apprehension that the scheme might not receive acceptance of the Government of India ; Sir Dorabji must have related to him as well the *real reason* behind the government's lack of interest

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

in it! But it is strange that Mr. Harris should have nothing to say on this point. It is certainly permissible to infer that after having disclosed this 'real reason', Sir Dorabji must have proceeded to inform Mr. Harris of the precise manner in which Jamsetji wanted to utilize Swamiji's influence in support of the scheme. But, alas! once again Mr. Harris thought it fit not to expose the bureaucrats.

It is interesting to note how the thoughts of these two men—Swami Vivekananda and Jamsetji Tata—of two totally different worlds found a meeting point. One was a Hindu monk given to a life of renunciation and having the temerity of organizing a 'Sannyasi Sangha' in the very heart of modern India; and the other, a consummate business magnate, owner of a vast fortune and a pioneer in the field of Indian industrialization. Despite these differences, they had a common meeting ground; both wanted to see a prosperous India, both materially and spiritually. A strange fact about Mr. Tata is that he who did not hesitate to part with a large slice of his property for the advancement of science, should have nurtured the conviction that science alone was not enough for unfolding the full potentialities of the human personality. This alone explains why he expressed the desire to include philosophical subjects in the curricula of his proposed university. Lord Curzon did not like this idea.

This balanced attitude towards life and education found its culmination in Swami Vivekananda. Both Vivekananda and Tata agreed that the cultivation of science and industrialization alone could take India along the path of progress; and both had a common belief that if a backward country like India was to do anything spectacular in the field of science, the only way was to raise scientific study to the

plane of devotion; and it is here that men with the dedication of sannyasis had a big role to play.

7

We have spoken of Mr. Tata's balanced attitude and much about Swamiji's views. At this point we propose to present yet another significant fact having bearing on them. It may be recalled that in mid 1893, immediately after reaching the United States, Swamiji told about the need for the monks to establish Industrial Schools. Four years later, in 1897, when Swamiji actually established an 'Order of the monks', what happened to his former idea regarding the Industrial School? Let us see what he wrote into the following two articles taken from the 'objectives' of the Ramakrishna Mission which were drafted by him:

Now the idea is to develop this Math by degrees into a finished University, in which, along with philosophical and religious culture, there will be fully equipped Technical Institute; this would be attended to first. Other branches will be gradually added afterwards.

In Central India, near Hazaribagh and such other districts, there can yet be had fertile, well-watered, healthy land, without much difficulty. We shall have to secure a big plot of land in that region and construct a big technical School, and by degrees Workshops etc.

It was written in 1897. It is clear that Swamiji did not deflect an inch from the ideas he nurtured during his 'Parivrajaka' days.¹⁷ And this explains why he supported the Tata-scheme so avidly.

The second paragraph of the quotation, we must say, is revealing. Swamiji specifically mentioned the names of Madhya Pradesh Hazaribagh, etc. as places suitable for building townships and setting up Technical Schools, Factories and Workshops. The township of Jamshedpur and the Tata-industries which later sprang up there

17. Days of wandering in India before leaving for the West; roughly from mid 1890 to mid 1893.

prove that this desire of the prophet was to a great measure fulfilled.

Our purpose here is not to make much of his prophetic vision. A much-travelled person, Swamiji acquired fair knowledge of the mineral wealth of those regions. Yet we feel inquisitive about the source from which he collected such accurate information. It has been related in Tata's biography that just when he was looking for iron ore and his eyes fell on the Chambal region of M.P., the attention of his son Sir Dorabji and his other colleagues was attracted towards a Survey map prepared by Mr. P. N. Bose in 1887. This map had shown the Durg region of M.P. as very rich in iron ore. When after thorough exploration vast deposits were discovered in that region and it was decided that the Tata Iron & Steel Company would be set up there, the selfsame Mr. P. N. Bose brought to their knowledge the location of new mines in certain areas of Mayurbhanj, on which has grown up the present steel town of Jamshedpur.

Swamiji had spoken of the mineral wealth of M.P. and Hazaribagh region and also of the suitability of those regions as sites for Iron and Steel factories; it seems that in forming these ideas he was guided by survey accounts published in contemporary newspapers or other kindred sources. It is also possible that Swamiji might have had acquaintance with Mr. P. N. Bose, because the latter wrote about the Ramakrishna movement in his book entitled *Indian Civilization under British Rule*, published in 1894 when the movement was just in its formative stage. It is, therefore, our opinion that Mr. Bose had direct contact with the Ramakrishna-circle.

The point we want to emphasize is that, it is true, Swamiji was no Tata; to make money or to go in for business was not the goal of his life. Yet, there is little doubt

that there was hardly anyone in India at that time—not excluding the political leaders—who could know any better the ways which would lead to the material benefit and economic prosperity of the teeming millions of this country.

Swamiji's passion for pure science was most intense; but the increasingly menacing proportions which the food-problem was assuming at the time made him interested in technology. His attraction for science may be traced back to his childhood days. In their reminiscences of his Parivrajaka days not a few writers have testified to his love for science. From the research of Mr. Benishanker Sharma, it is now known how Swamiji used to give the Maharaja of Khetri lessons in Science.

In later days, in many of his speeches on spiritual subjects, it was very common for him to quote various scientific principles and theories by way of illustration or analogy. We know of his friendship with some of the leading scientists of the day, including Nikola Tesla and Dr. J. C. Bose, and their admiration for his teachings. He never regarded religion as opposed to science; his was indeed a scientific religion. So much about his love for pure science. Let us now direct our attention to his desire for applying it to the solution of practical and material problems. Thus, on April 14, 1896, he wrote from New York to Mrs. Bull: 'Here is a curious person who comes to me with a letter from Bombay. He is a practical mechanic and his one idea is to see cutlery and other iron manufactories in this country... I do not know anything about him, but even if he be a rogue, I like very much to foster this sort of adventurous spirit among my countrymen.'¹⁸

18. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, (hereafter *Complete Works*), VI, 1972, p. 361.

Again, on June 5: 'I do not like any one whom I love to become a lawyer, although my father was one. My Master was against it. . . . Our country is full of them ; the universities turn them out by the hundreds. What my nation wants is pluck and scientific genius. So I want Mohin [Swamiji's brother Mahendranath] to be an electrician. Even if he fails in life, still I will have the satisfaction that he strove to become great and really useful to his country.'¹⁹

On April 24, 1897, addressing Miss Sarola Ghosal, Editor of the *Bharati*, on true education for the common man, he wrote: "Then, the greater part of the education to the poor should be given orally, time is not yet ripe for schools. Gradually in these main centres [Ramakrishna Mission Centres] will be taught agriculture, industry, etc., and workshops will be established for the furtherance of arts. To sell the manufactures of those workshops in Europe and America, associations will be started like those already in existence. It will be necessary to start centres for women, exactly like those for men. But you are aware how difficult that is in this country.'²⁰

It sounds strange that Swamiji wanted for women the same type of technical education as for men. On June 20 of the same year, writing about the type of scientific education to be imparted to the monks of Belur Math, he observed : 'Suddhananda writes to say that they are going on with Ruddock's Practice of Medicine or something of that sort. What nonsense do you mean by having such things taught in the class? A set of common apparatus for physics and another for chemistry, an ordinary telescope and a microscope—all these can be had for Rupees 150 to 200. Sashi Babu may give a lecture on practical chemis-

try once a week, and Hariprasanna on physics etc. *And buy all the good scientific books that you can have in Bengali, and have them read.'*²¹

Having found that his directions had not been properly acted upon, on July 11, 1897, he made this oblique comment : 'I have not learnt as yet of the suggestion I made before as to getting a set of chemical and physical apparatus and starting classes in elementary and experimental chemistry and physics, especially in physiology. What about the other suggestion of buying sets of all the scientific books that have been translated into Bengali?'²² These quotations bring home to us his attitude to applied science.

In September 1898, when the Tata-scheme had been first published, it referred to the high regard with which Mr. Tata viewed the material prosperity of Japan. By contrast, the economic backwardness of India became a source of deep distress for him. Mr. Tata visited Japan in 1893 when Swamiji was also there. Naturally, both saw Japan with all the miracles of her scientific development at the same time and discussed it between themselves. Swamiji wrote from Yokohama to his Madras disciples about his views on Japan on July 10, 1893 :

The Japanese seem now to have fully awakened themselves to the necessity of the present times. They have now a thoroughly organized army equipped with guns, which one of their own officers has invented, and which is said to be second to none. Then, they are continually increasing their navy. I have seen a tunnel nearly a mile long, bored by a Japanese engineer.

The match factories are simply a sight to see, and they are bent upon making everything they want in their own country. There is a Japanese line of steamers plying between China and Japan,

19. *Complete Works*, VI, p. 363.

20. *Complete Works*, IV, 1972, p. 485.

21. *Complete Works*, VI, p. 402.

22. *Complete Works*, VII, 1972, p. 507.

which shortly intends running between Bombay and Yokohama. ...

I cannot write what I have in my mind about the Japs in one short letter. Only I want that numbers of our young men should pay a visit to Japan and China every year. Especially to the Japanese, India is still the dreamland of everything high and good.²³

Besides these two Indians, many others evinced great interest in Japan's development. That Japan, an Asian country, should have the audacity to join in a race for economic development with the advanced countries of the West appeared to the Asians quite a startling and exciting phenomenon and instilled into their hearts new hopes for the morrow. Thrilled and awe-struck, they had watched with great eagerness the terrific speed with which a newly awakened Japan was marching along the road to modernization. The subject peoples of Asia in particular felt immense enthusiasm for following the footsteps of Japan. As a result, the sentiment which Swamiji expressed in 1893 now began to pour

through all the newspapers and periodicals in diverse ways and forms soon after.

What kind of attitude was prevalent in India about Japan in those days, may be the subject for a separate article, and Swamiji's ideas about the industrialization of India can also be told in more detail ; but it does not form part of our present discussion. Still we wish to draw the attention of the readers to the editorial of the November 1930 number of the *Prabuddha Bharata* on 'The Economic Views of Swami Vivekananda'. The Editor discusses the subject lucidly in the light of many quotations from Swami's work and concludes : that Swamiji favoured industrialization of India in the modern sense of the term, though he was well aware of the evils of the system ; and that for remedy of those, he prescribed spiritual education. We accept this conclusion of the Editor. The only point we want to add to it is that along with spiritual education Swamiji considered socialism also as a remedy against the evils.

²³. *Complete Works*, V, 1973, pp. 9-10.

(Concluded)

VEDANTA AND RELIGIOUS HARMONY

PROF. LETA JANE LEWIS

The compassionate founders of all the world's great religions wanted their followers to feel and express the same intense love and sympathy for everyone that was the essence of their own natures. Under the inspiration of Godmen like the Buddha and Jesus Christ, religion has always alleviated suffering throughout the world and will always continue to do so. In every religion there are gentle, loving people who have so assimilated the compassion

of its saints and sages that they could not be cruel to anyone. And yet, self-styled religious men and women have done cruel deeds in the names of these very long-suffering men of God who thought nothing of giving their lives to help humanity. Punishment varying from insult to martyrdom has at times been the lot of those whose differing religious persuasions threatened the orthodox. Persons have been thrown to the lions or burned at the

stake because their honest religious convictions and ways of worship inadvertently challenged the beliefs of those in authority. Fortunately, the conflict of religious opinion does not always lead to immediate overt violence. But the silent hurt and resentment which result when one nation contemptuously passes off another nation's sacred religion as mere idolatrous superstition can do far-reaching unseen damage. It can work like a slow poison or like the fire at the end of an unusually long fuse connected to an explosive.

Religious disharmony and its attendant misery stem primarily from the belief some people have that, since only their scriptures contain the literal revealed word of God, their religion must be true and all others false. For this reason they conclude that theirs is the only valid path to salvation. They seem to be unaware that, as Swami Vivekananda explains :

Even if a book were given by God which contained all the truth about religion . . . nobody could understand the book. Take the Bible, for instance, and all the sects that exist amongst Christians ; each one puts its own interpretation upon the same text, and each says that it alone understands that text and all the rest are wrong. So with every religion.¹

In Christianity we have one Bible. It would, therefore, be natural to assume that all of Christendom should be able to get together under one spiritual roof, to accept one set of doctrines and rituals. But it hasn't worked out that way in practice. There are disagreements among the Christian sects with regard to the exact meaning of the last supper and of the

trinity, with regard to the primacy of predestination and free will, to baptism (should it be by total immersion or just be sprinkling?), to the number of valid sacraments, to the relative efficacy of works and grace, and to the use of images in churches.

Dogmatists in any religion who cling to the exact words of their scriptures either ignore or are ignorant of the fact that other religions likewise claim their scriptures to be the divinely inspired truth of God. How, then, can anyone be absolutely sure that his religion's scriptures are the definitive spiritual revelation?

Difference of opinion in religion is in itself normal and natural ; it can even be good. It is relatively harmless unless, as we have already observed, we insist upon the absolutist standpoint that our religion is right and all others wrong. Referring to their scriptures as absolute authority, fanatics maintain that only their rites, rituals and sacraments are spiritually potent. They think that their religion's myths are not myths. They are history. But the myths of other religions are vulgar superstition. Westerners tend to forget that Jesus was not the only divine child supposed to have been born in a manger. Nor was he the only divine child said to have been immaculately conceived. Few occidentals are aware of the Buddhist claim that the Buddha was fathered by the divine spirit rather than by the earthly king whose son he was supposed to be. Nor was Jesus the only son of God whose birth threatened a king. Krishna's parents had to hide him from the wicked king Kamsa, who sought to kill him, just as Joseph and Mary had to hide the baby Jesus from Herod.

Fanatics in all religions would like to convert the entire world. Some rationalize this by insisting that the founder of their religion was the only divine incarnation ever to have been born. But how can this

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama, (hereafter *Complete Works*), II, 1971, p. 363.

logically be? It is a law of nature and common sense that what has happened once can and will happen again given the right conditions. And it stands to reason that the right conditions for the birth of an eternally perfect son of God would occur innumerable times not only on this little world of ours but on the countless worlds appearing and disappearing in infinite time and space.

So Sri Krishna promises in the *Bhagavad-Gita* :

When goodness grows weak,
When evil increases,
I make myself a body.

In every age I come back
To deliver the holy,
To destroy the sin of the sinner,
To establish righteousness.²

As Krishna explains later, the 'I' with which he identifies himself here is not the usual human individuality. Krishna's 'I' is the pure spirit Sachchidananda, which is beyond personal identity and can incarnate in all its perfection at any time or place.

Swami Vivekananda thought it pure arrogance to insist that one's own religious creed is absolutely correct. 'Think', he exclaimed,

of little sects, born within a few hundred years out of fallible human brains, making this arrogant claim of knowledge of the whole of God's infinite truth! Think of the arrogance of it! If it shows anything, it is this, how vain human beings are. And it is no wonder that such claims have always failed, and, by the mercy of the Lord, are always destined to fail.³

There is usually a little egotism involved even in a mild, polite attempt to convert

others, but when proselytizing zeal becomes extreme, it is psychopathic. Believers identify themselves more or less closely with their religion depending upon the firmness of their convictions. Fanatics feel that they *are* their religion. So they would feel powerful and important themselves if it were to take over their society or, better yet, the world. On the other hand, their egos are threatened when the religion with which they identify themselves is challenged.

No one is more fearful of refutation than the absolutists in religion who think that they have the entire truth of God because every word of their scriptures is divine revelation. If a few lines—or even a few words—of their scriptures were proved to be wrong, there would be no guarantee that any part is correct. A house of cards presents the same sort of situation. If one card falls, the entire structure goes. Thus, when Darwin's theory of evolution apparently disproved some passages in the book of Genesis, well-intentioned scientists—Denmark's biologist-author Jens Peter Jacobsen, for instance—rejected the Bible altogether, became atheists, and denied themselves the comfort and solace of their religion. Since all scriptures contain myths like those of Genesis, which are not history and should not be taken literally, the literal interpretation of any scriptures would inevitably lead to problems of authenticity.

Vedanta's teaching that 'truth is one, the sages call it by various names'⁴ has the potentiality of relieving religious tension. Vedanta explains that the great sages, whose messages are the essence of all real religion, knew and taught one truth. They did not find it written in any book. It was not revealed to them through the senses. They experienced it immediately within themselves as Sachchidananda Brahman—

2. *The Song of God*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951, p. 60.

3. *Complete Works*, II, p. 369.

4. *Rg Veda Samhitā*, I. 164. 46.

the absolute Existence, absolute Consciousness and absolute Bliss—which pervades and sustains the universe. Brahman, the Self of all, is known as the Atman in human beings. 'The Atman', Swami Vivekananda said,

does not love, it is love itself. It does not exist, it is existence itself. The Atman loves, exists or knows. Love, itself. It is a mistake to say that the Atman loves, exists or knows. Love, existence and knowledge are not the qualities of the Atman [and of Brahman with which the Atman is identical] but its essence.⁵

The perfect existence, love and knowledge of the Atman must not be confused with their pale reflection as the ordinary existence, love and knowledge of the surface consciousness. The ego, of course, is not the Atman, and the ego's little restricted consciousness cannot be compared with the infinite divine Consciousness. The saints and sages who have realized the Atman tell us that it cannot be described to anyone who has not known it. They say that God's name is silence and that His truth has never been defined by the mouth of man. Even to refer to ultimate Reality as Sachchidananda—absolute Existence, absolute Consciousness and absolute Bliss—is only an approximation. Spiritual truth is beyond thought and beyond words. Therefore, it is foolish to quarrel about the exact meaning of the scriptures or build dogmatic structures upon them. We miss the spirit of religion if we assume, as some sects and some individuals in virtually all of the world's dominant religions do, that we are right and everyone else is wrong.

5. Swami Vivekananda, as quoted in *How to Know God: The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975, p. 122.

Although the holy men and women from whose inspiration these religions grew, knew the same one truth and did their best to convey it to mankind, the religions themselves later developed in such a way that they now teach quite diverse doctrines. A spiritual tower of Babel has arisen because of our limited understanding. We have misinterpreted the words of our saints, sages and divine Incarnations. If we were illumined souls, if we had realized our identity with Brahman, we would not differ. As it is, we are rather like the blind men, who, in one of Sri Ramakrishna's parables, went to see the elephant. The first blind man walked up to the elephant and put his arms around one of its big legs. 'Ah,' he exclaimed, 'an elephant is like a tree.' The second blind man reached out and felt the elephant's broad side. 'An elephant,' he said, 'is like a barn.' The third blind man grabbed the elephant's tail and cried, 'Now I know that an elephant is like a snake.' The fourth blind man found one of the elephant's ears. 'Ah, he reasoned, 'an elephant is like a winnowing basket.' And the fifth blind man, who seized the elephant's trunk, concluded that an elephant is like a rope. On the way home, the blind men quarrelled as violently as some members of the various religions do. It never occurred to any of them that each had felt only part of the elephant and that if they pooled their knowledge, they might arrive at a more accurate idea of an elephant. Similarly, according to Vedanta, none of the world's religions, as we now interpret them, teaches the entire truth of God. No religion is completely right, and none is completely wrong. Each contains a solid kernel of truth, but all are somewhat involved in ignorance. So we should be humble and learn from each other.

The theory of gradual growth over as many lifetimes as are needful to reach

full spiritual knowledge, is central to Vedanta's world-view, according to which all individuals and all religions are on some lower or higher rung of a spiritual ladder leading to illumination. We are climbing in spite of temporary vicissitudes and setbacks and will some day reach the top. As Swami Vivekananda was accustomed to say, progress is from lesser truth to higher truth. He declared that, to quote him :

All of religion is contained in the Vedanta, that is, in the three stages of the Vedanta philosophy, the Dvaita, Vishishtadvaita and Advaita ; one comes after the other. These are the three stages of spiritual growth in man. Each one is necessary. This is the essential of religion : the Vedanta, applied to the various ethnic customs and creeds of India, is Hinduism. The first stage, i.e. Dvaita, applied to the ideas of the ethnic groups of Europe, is Christianity ; as applied to the Semitic groups, Mohammedanism.⁶

Nevertheless, because of individual differences, our paths on the long journey to complete happiness and fulfilment are not exactly the same. In other words, we climb slightly different ladders to the one roof. To quote Swami Vivekananda : 'The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religions, is but one—re-union with God, or, what amounts to the same, with the divinity which is every man's true nature. But while the aim is one, the method of attaining it may vary with the different temperaments of men.'⁷ One spiritual aspirant may want to worship, another to perform unselfish action for the welfare of mankind, another to meditate, and yet another to discriminate between the ego and the Atman. Most will prefer to combine two or more of these disciplines.

The mythology, ritual or religious philosophy which one individual or group accepts more or less unqualifiedly may seem empty and colourless to others.

To illustrate the practical spiritual reason for diversity in religion, Sri Ramakrishna told a parable about a mother who went to the market and bought a large fish. Since she had children of various ages and likes and dislikes, she prepared it in several different ways. For the baby she boiled the fish and mashed it to a fine pulp. She tried it a nice brown for the grade school children, and pickled it for the older ones. So it is with religion. Every one, even the spiritually very young, must have a religion to which he can relate. And we should not be critical of anyone, no matter how primitive his religion seems to us. If, as Swami Prabhavananda used to say, a baby can't say 'Mother' but only 'Muh', the mother doesn't throw the baby out. Knowing that the baby is doing its best to say her name, she takes it in her arms and kisses it. She waits until the baby is older. Then she teaches it to say 'Mother'.

Complete freedom of religious choice is essential in the devotee's selection of his chosen ideal, that embodiment of divinity which he loves most and which is to inspire his spiritual life. Since his relationship with his chosen ideal is to be his life's deepest, most intimate relationship, his choice must be made without compulsion. He should be in a position to choose his ideal as spontaneously and naturally as a young man chooses a bride, and from as large a number of possibilities. He should in no way be limited or restricted. So it is good that the world's religions offer many abstract symbols of divinity and many holy personalities to concentrate upon. And it is also good that the world's religions offer many different ways to worship or otherwise relate to them. Not every spiritual aspirant

6. *Complete Works*, V, 1973, pp. 81-82.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

wants to worship or meditate upon a divine personality. Of those who do, however, some prefer to think of God as Father and worship the Christian God. Others, who think of God as Mother, choose Kali or the Virgin Mary. A bereaved mother might adore the baby Krishna or the baby Jesus. And an active person, who cannot do enough for those he loves, might serve Rama or Jesus with single-hearted devotion.

Because devotion to a specific ideal focuses the mind and heart on a beloved object, it is one of the most rewarding spiritual practices. But unfortunately, it is also one of the chief causes of intolerance. Having little perspective with regard to religion, the beginner may honestly believe that no one rivals his Buddha, his Jesus or his Krishna. He may insist that his is the only valid object of worship and try to win the whole world for it. Such youthful intolerance tends to persist until the devotee grows enough to see that the divine spirit which he adores in his own ideal also lives in other symbols and holy personalities.

Images may help the devotee maintain recollectedness of his chosen ideal. They may be compared to photographs which are pleasant reminders of family and friends. A photograph of one's mother is not one's mother, and an image of the Virgin Mary is not the Virgin Mary. And yet, because they did not realize this simple fact, fanatics in both East and West have raided cathedrals and temples and smashed the images there. They did not know that no one worships a stick or a piece of clay. They did not know that the images represent the formless divine spirit, which can be symbolized in countless ways but never confined anywhere.

After discovering his spiritual ideal, the devotee should meditate on it with one-

pointed devotion, because, if he jumps erratically from one conception of divinity to another, his energy will be dispersed and he will fail to make progress in any direction. There have been very few spiritual geniuses like Sri Ramakrishna who have been able to worship God successfully in a wide variety of ways. After following his own Hindu religion, to the summit of non-dual absorption, Sri Ramakrishna felt, as Swami Nikhilananda writes, 'an unquenchable desire to experience God in various ways.'⁸ Then he turned to Christianity and Islam and realized God through them. To quote Sri Ramakrishna himself :

I have practised all religions—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity—and I have also followed the paths of different Hindu sects. I have found that it is the same God toward whom all are directing their steps, though along different paths. You must try all beliefs and traverse all the different ways once. Wherever I look, I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—Hindus, Mohammedans, Brahmos, Vaishnavas, and the rest. But they never reflect that He who is called Krishna is also called Shiva, and bears the name of the Primal Energy, Jesus and Allah as well—the same Rama with a thousand names. A lake has several ghats. At one the Hindus take water in pitchers and call it *jal*; at another the Mussalmans take water in leather bags and call it *pani*. At a third the Christians call it water. Can we imagine that it is not *jal*, but only *pani* or water? How ridiculous! The substance is One under different names, and everyone is seeking the same substance; only climate, temperament and name create differences. Let each man follow his own path. If he sincerely and ardently wishes to know God, peace be unto him! He will surely realize Him.⁹

8. 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, trans. Swami Nikhilananda, New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, 1952, p. 35.

9. *Ibid.*

By his remarkable spiritual experiences Sri Ramakrishna verified the fact that there have been many sons of God, who were of one spirit, and taught one truth. His great disciple Swami Vivekananda even declared, 'It is my particular fancy that . . . Buddha became Christ. Buddha prophesied, "I will come again in five hundred years," and Christ came here in five hundred years.'¹⁰ Of course, it is only a conjecture that Buddha was reborn as Christ, but it is a significant conjecture in that it illustrates Vedanta's conviction that the many divine Incarnations were perfect embodiments of the one Existence.

Sri Ramakrishna emphatically warned against placing any limitations on the concept of God, whom he knew to be both personal and impersonal, immanent and transcendent. God is formless, but God can also take on form just as water can either remain in its liquid state or freeze into blocks of ice. To Sri Ramakrishna these blocks of ice (water with form) symbolize the divine Incarnations. Sri Ramakrishna could also have said that when water falls as snow, it becomes mixed with impurities from the air and ground. This snow (water with impurities) can be shaped into snowmen, which represent human beings whose identity with Sachchidananda Brahman has been obscured by the impurities of egotism.

The impurities of egotism are the cause of religious intolerance as of most other psychological ills. Instead of recognizing our identity with the Atman, we have more or less identified ourselves with the ego, with the body, the mind and the senses. This materialism has dulled our spiritual sensibilities so that we have often had difficulty seeing the divine either within ourselves or within the world's saints, sages and divine Incarnations. Such spiritual

insensitivity creates dogmatism. Therefore, the remedy for the evil of intolerance, which, unfortunately, springs eternal throughout the world, is the intensification of spiritual practice. If a devotee in Japan were to experience the living presence of the illumined Buddha, he might appreciate a devotee in some distant country who was experiencing the same presence as Christ or Krishna.

Swami Vivekananda expresses this idea forcefully as follows :

I have found it possible in my life to worship all of them [the divine Incarnations], and to be ready for all that are yet to come. A mother recognizes her son in any dress in which he may appear before her ; and if one does not do so, I am sure she is not the mother of that man. Now, as regards those of you that think that you understand Truth and Divinity and God in only one Prophet in the world, and not in any other, naturally, the conclusion which I draw is that you do not understand Divinity in anybody ; . . . If you have really entered the house of the Father, how can you have seen His children and not known them ? And if you do not recognize them, you have not entered the house of the Father. The mother recognizes her child in any dress and knows him however disguised. Recognize all the great spiritual men and women in every age and country, and see that they are not really at variance with one another. Wherever there has been actual religion—this touch of the Divine, the soul coming in direct sense-contact with the Divine—there has always been a broadening of the mind which enables it to see light everywhere.¹¹

Isolation and provincialism contribute their share to religious intolerance. When understood superficially, perhaps through frivolous magazine articles by writers lacking empathy, foreign customs sometimes

10. *Complete Works*, VIII, 1971, p. 180.

11. *Ibid.*, IV, 1972, pp. 125-26.

seem strange and forbidding. Then thorough knowledge becomes a good antidote for intolerance. The intensive study of foreign cultures in general and religions in particular can eliminate half-truths and contribute to international harmony, but only if the student is open-minded. If he begins his study of foreign religions with the assumption that his own is superior to all others, he will not have the intuitive faith necessary to find the deeper meanings hidden within unfamiliar concepts. For best results, the student needs the working assumption that foreign myths and symbols are gold mines waiting for him to dig.

However, the devotee who has assimilated the spirit of his own religion will be incapable of animosity even towards those religions about which he is improperly informed. The devotee who is close to God, who experiences the Buddha consciousness, the Krishna consciousness, or the Christ consciousness with increasing intensity as his spiritual awareness develops, will become filled with their compassion. In the beautiful words of Swami Vivekananda:

When Bhakti has become ripe and has passed into that form which is called the *Supreme* (Para), no more is there any fear of these hideous manifestations of fanaticism; that soul which is overpowered by this higher form of Bhakti is too near the God of love to become an instrument for the diffusion of hatred.¹²

For sincere Vedantists, religious acceptance is not a theory but a fact of life, as Swami Vivekananda points out in the following passage:

Suppose I had a child; I should not teach him any religion, but the practice of concentrating his mind; and just one line of prayer—not prayer in your sense,

but this: 'I meditate on Him who is the Creator of the universe; May He enlighten my mind.' Then, when old enough, he goes about hearing the different philosophies and teachings, till he finds that which seems the truth to him. He then becomes the Shishya or disciple of the Guru (teacher) who is teaching that truth. He may choose to worship Christ or Buddha or Mohammed: we recognize the rights of each of these, and the right of all souls to their own Ishta or chosen way. It is, therefore, quite possible for my son to be a Buddhist, my wife to be a Christian, and myself a Mohammedan at one and the same time with absolute freedom from friction.¹³

Like Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi genuinely accepted all religions as belonging to a single revelation. He saw no contradiction between the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which gave his life its initial inspiration and direction, and the 'Sermon on the Mount'. And he never tired of hearing his two favourite hymns 'Lead Kindly Light' and 'When I Behold the Wondrous Cross'. At his evening prayer meetings he read favourite passages from Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian and other scriptures. Gandhi became a martyr in the cause of religious tolerance.

A Western dramatist, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing has set forth the Vedantic ideal of religious harmony with clarity and conviction in his poetic drama *Nathan der Weise* (*Nathan the Wise*). Although Lessing, who ranks among the foremost intellectuals of the eighteenth century German Enlightenment, had never heard of Vedanta, his fine character and intellect brought him to the discovery of some of Vedanta's fundamental concepts.

Unlike most orthodox Christians of his time and later, Lessing distinguished between the letter and the spirit of the Bible.

12. *Ibid.*, III, 1973, p. 33.

13. *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 254.

He believed that the spirit of religion is in the Bible but not necessarily in any literal interpretation. Also he concluded that the authenticity of the Bible is independent of history. If Jesus had never lived, the inner spirit of Christianity would still exist. He did not believe, however, that Christianity or any other religion has the whole truth of God. None is entirely right or entirely wrong, and all should be respected for the truth they possess. Lessing maintained that each religion teaches as much of absolute truth as human beings at a certain time and place in history were capable of assimilating. Each is a stage in the growth of the religious consciousness and will be transcended by a new religion with a fuller revelation when humanity has evolved to a higher state of spiritual awareness. Even Christianity, Lessing's own religion, possesses only limited truth and will eventually have to yield to an expanded revelation. Since he believed that spiritual growth is a slow process for individuals as well as for religions, Lessing favoured the hypothesis of reincarnation, which permits development to continue beyond this life.

As can be imagined, Lessing's views did not go unchallenged. His unwillingness to accept the literal interpretation of the Bible roused the ire of Chief Pastor Goeze of Hamburg, who entered into a heated theological debate with Lessing through the medium of the press. When Lessing appeared to be winning the victory, lay and ecclesiastical authorities suppressed his already published theological writings and refused to let him publish further on matters of religion without express government permission.

But Lessing was a dramatist, and the stage was still open to him. So as his final answer to Goeze and his supporters, he wrote *Nathan the Wise*, in which he in-

cluded his famous 'Parable of the Three Rings'. The Sultan, Saladin, asks Nathan to tell him which of the three religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, is the true religion and give his reasons. Nathan answers the Sultan with the following parable:

A certain family once possessed an extraordinary ring, set with an exquisite opal and remarkable in design and craftsmanship. This ring had the magic power of giving anyone who wore it, believing in it, such a fine character that he would be beloved of God and man. It was passed on for generations from father to favourite son. Finally the ring came into the possession of a father with three excellent sons whom he loved equally and believed equally deserving of it. Not knowing how else to handle the situation, the father hired a fine jeweler who made two additional rings so like the first that it was impossible to detect the original. Then the father called in his three sons secretly, one at a time, and gave each a ring. All went well until the father died and each son produced his ring with the intention of assuming family leadership. On the incredible discovery that each had a ring, the sons began to quarrel bitterly among themselves and took the matter to a judge. Each explained to the judge that the highest authority, the father, had given him his ring and told him that it was the true ring. But to their dismay the disgusted judge refused to hand down a definite decision with regard to the rings. Instead, he told the three contentious sons that in his opinion none of them had the original, for none was of such noble character as to be beloved of God and man. The judge instructed them to live as if each knew that he was wearing the true ring so that another judge at a much later date might be able to locate the ring by its owner's noble character.

The Mohammedan Sultan was delighted

with this parable and conceived a great liking for the Jew, Nathan, as Nathan did for him. Consequently, they were both very pleased when they learned that they were connected by family ties. Nathan's foster daughter, whom he loved dearly, and the young Christian knight who had rescued her from the fire were discovered

to be the children of the Sultan's beloved deceased brother. By thus uniting Moham-medans, Jews and Christians in one happy, harmonious family, Lessing made the point that we are all members of one family (we are all God's children) and should live together in peace, love and harmony.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA* —XIV

1. To Swami Saradananda

Om Namō Bhagavate Rāmakṛṣṇāya

[Salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna]

[Calcutta]

32 Āṣāḍha.

[15 July 1890.]

My dear Sarat,

I am sorry to learn that Sannyal's¹ habits are as yet not *pucca* [firm]; and what about *brahmacarya* [continence]? I don't understand you. If so, the best thing for you both is to come down and live here. The widow of Mohindra Mookherjey² is trying head and heart to erect a Math for you, and Surendranath Mitra has left another thousand. So that you are very likely soon to get a beautiful place on the river.³ As for all the hardships up there I reserve my own opinions.

It was not at all my intention to come down, only the death of Balaram Bose had made me to have a peep here and go back. If the mountains be so bad, there is more than enough place for me; only I leave Bengal. If one does not suit, another will. So that is my determination. Everyone here will

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

1. Swami Saradananda and Vaikunthanath Sannyal, Swami Vivekananda's brother-disciples, were then practising spiritual disciplines at Almora, a hill-station in Uttar Pradesh, India. Vaikunthanath, who had been a householder previously, had taken Sannyasa during this period and was known as Swami Kripananda.

2. Mahendra Mukhopadhyaya (Mohindra Mookherjey) was a householder-disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and an owner of a flour mill. See 'M', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, trans. Swami Nikhilananda, Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1974, pp. 506-18.

3. During these days Swamiji and his brother-disciples were planning to build a Math on the bank of the Ganga in order to preserve the holy remains of Sri Ramakrishna; and Swamiji was trying his best to collect funds for this purpose. The idea, however, did not materialize till the Belur Math was started on 9 December 1898.

be so glad at your return here, and from your letter I see it would be downright injurious to you if you don't come down. So come down at your earliest opportunity. I leave this place before the letter reaches you, only I don't go to Almora. I have my own plans for the future and they shall be a secret.⁴

As for Sannyal I do not see how I can benefit him. Of course, you are at liberty to hold your own opinion about the *saṅga* [company] here. That I can find places *sudṛśya* and *subhikṣa*⁵ is enough. *Saṅga* is not much, or I think not at all, necessary for me.

Yours, etc.
NARENDRA.

2. To Mrs. Ole Bull

1123 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore,
17 October 1894.

Dear Mrs. Bull,

I could not find time earlier to write you, I was so incessantly knocking about. We had a nice meeting last Sunday at Baltimore and going to have one more next Sunday. Of course, they do not financially help me a bit; but as I promised to help them and like the idea, I speak for them.⁶

In the letters you sent over from India was an address sent over to me from Calcutta by my fellow citizens for my work here, and a number of newspaper cuttings. I will send them on to you later.

Yesterday I went to see Washington and met Mrs. Colville and Miss Young, who were very kind to me.

I am going to speak at Washington again and then will go over to Philadelphia and from there to New York.

Your affectionate Son,
VIVEKANANDA.

4. Some students of Swamiji's life are of the opinion that during these early days, Swamiji did not have any definite plan of work. But in this letter Swamiji clearly says in the July of 1890, 'I have my own plans for the future and they shall be a secret.' So, in our opinion, it cannot be said that Swamiji was without any plan during the early days. He *had* plans, but he had not revealed them to anyone.

5. In Bengali, *sudṛśya* means 'having beautiful scenery', and *subhikṣa* means 'where ample alms are available.'

6. During his first visit to America, Swamiji spoke occasionally for other organizations, both American and Indian. This time he had come 'to Baltimore at the invitation of the Vrooman brothers' who had a project to establish an International University of Religions. Swamiji appreciated the idea and spoke for helping the brothers in their project. Readers should, however, note that the International University project of the Vrooman brothers of Baltimore, and Swamiji's project of the 'Temple Universal' temporarily founded at New York in November 1894, were two entirely different projects.

3. *To Mrs. Ole Bull*⁷

Baranagore Math, Calcutta,
5 May 1897.

Dear Mrs. Bull,

... From what I have seen, my sympathy is rather more for the English church missionaries in India than either the Theosophists or the Buddhists. I am glad that Mr. Dharmapala has become Somebody in America. Here India is a bad place for him—I would advise him to remain in America where he may find a following. There is absolutely no hope for Buddhism in India. Again, please do not be startled with what the Mahabodhi paper or the missionary papers talk. These papers have no more hearing in India than what any peasant talks to his wife in private has, and no more publicity !!! Let me again tell you that India is already Ramakrishna's and for a purified Hinduism. Theosophists, Buddhists, Christians and such ilk may bring money and start papers by the hundreds, but the effect on us is zero absolute. The only Christian missionary that had a welcome was Dr. Barrows, and that was on account of *my letter* !! I don't think I have time to write separately to Dr. Janes. He has been uniformly kind to me. My love eternal and gratitude for him. And although I am very glad for your advice, yet I know what to do here and more else, even in India. I have organized my work here a bit and send you the printed forms later on. My love to Saradananda, for your daughter and granddaughter. May all blessings come on them.

Yours,
VIVEKANANDA.

PS—So glad to know that you and Miss MacLeod intend coming to India. You are very very welcome. I also have a chance to go to Europe as I cannot do any work here for want of funds. It is better I go to England where I have got some now and more chance.

V.

4. *To Lala Badri Sah*⁸

Devaldhar Bagicha,⁹
Thursday, [June 1897?]

Dear Badri Sah,

I have been very sorry to learn that you are not well. It would please me

7. About two thirds of this letter has been published in the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Mayavati : Advaita Ashrama), VII, 1969, pp. 501 to 503. The remaining one third, which starts after 'tried my best', (6th line on p. 503) has been published here.

8. Lala Badri Sah was a landlord and businessman of Almora, who very cordially entertained Swamiji and his brother-disciples during their occasional stays at Almora.

9. When Swamiji visited Almora in the summer of 1897, he was the guest of Lala Badri Sah for about two and a half months. During this period Swamiji stayed mostly at Badri Sah's house in the bazaar, and occasionally retreated to the garden-house of the Sahs at Devaldhar, about twenty miles north of Almora. 'Bagicha' is the Hindi for garden.

very much if you would come down here for a few days, at any rate, with us ; and I am sure it would do you good.

Yours with blessings,
VIVEKANANDA.

5. *To Mrs. Ole Bull*

Dacca,
20 March 1901.

My dear Mother,¹⁰

At last I am in Eastern Bengal.¹¹ This is the first time I am here, and never before knew Bengal was so beautiful. You ought to have seen the rivers here—regular rolling oceans of fresh water ; and everything so green—continual production. The villages are the cleanest and prettiest in all India.

Joe¹² is perhaps by this time in Japan. I received a long and beautiful letter from Margot [Nivedita]. Tell Margot that there has been of late a regular fall of fortune on the Kashmir Raja ; things are all changing to his benefit. Mr. Mookherjey is now Governor of Kashmir. Saradananda had a bad fever. He is well now, but weak. He possibly goes to Darjeeling for a change. Mrs. Banerjey who is at Calcutta is very anxious to take him to the hills. Mohin, my brother, is in India, in Karachi near Bombay, and he corresponds with Saradananda. He writes to say he is going to Burma, China, etc. The traders who lure him have shops in all those places. I am not at all anxious about him. He is a very selfish man.

I have no news from Detroit. I received one letter from Christina some months ago, but I did not reply. Perhaps that may have vexed her.

I am peaceful and calm—and am finding every day the old begging and trudging life is the best for me after all.

Mrs. Sevier I left at Belur. She is guest of Mrs. Banerjey who has rented Nilambar Mookherjey's house on the river (the old Math). She goes very soon to Europe.

Things are going on as is in the nature of things. To me has come renunciation.

With all love,

Ever your Son,
VIVEKANANDA.

PS—All blessings on Margot's work. Mother is leading I am sure.

V.

10. Swami Vivekananda used to address Mrs. Ole Bull as 'Mother'. During this period she was to be in England, helping Sister Nivedita in her work.

11. This part of Bengal is now known as Bangladesh.

12. Miss Josephine MacLeod, an admirer of Swami Vivekananda.

6. *To Romesh Chandra Dutt*¹³

The Math, P.O. Belur,¹⁴
Dist. Howrah, Bengal,
4 April 1901.

Dear Sir,

I am so very glad to learn from a person of your authority of the good work Sister Nivedita is doing in England. I join in earnest prayer with the hopes you entertain of her future services to India by her pen.

I have not the least desire that she should leave her present field of utility and come over to India.

I am under a deep debt of gratitude to you, Sir, for your befriending my child, and hope you will never cease to advise her as to the length of her stay in England and the line of work she ought to undertake.

Her book on Kali has been very popular in India. The debt our Motherland already owes you is immense and we are anxiously waiting the new book of yours.

May all blessings ever attend you and yours is the constant prayer of

Yours humbly,
VIVEKANANDA.

7. *To Mrs. Ole Bull*¹⁵

[The Math, P.O. Belur, Howrah,
March or April 1902?]

Dear Mother,

I am glad Chinnu has arrived. Any hour you like will suit for your coming tomorrow. But it is ferocious heat here from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

I would, therefore, suggest that you start after breakfast and remain the day here and have some Bengali fish lunch, and go back in the evening.

I insist on your taking a cab here and back. A cab to come and go costs quite as much or less than a boat, and there is no change. If the cabby does not understand Belur, tell him to go to a place two miles south of Bally. He must know Bally, and then let him ask his way to the *Math*.

One such drenching and capsizing experience as Mr. Okakura had the other day will unsettle your nerves for days, and we expect such rough weather every evening this month. The land route is nearer, easier, and cheaper from where you are. I have also instructed your servant, the bearer of the letter.

Ever your Son,
VIVEKANANDA.

13. Romesh Chandra Dutt had become acquainted with Sister Nivedita in England, where he was staying after his retirement from the Indian Civil Service.

14. This letter was written from Dacca, which is now the capital of Bangladesh.

15. This letter was written to Mrs. Ole Bull who was then staying with Sister Nivedita, Mr. Okakura and Miss Josephine MacLeod at the American Consulate at Calcutta. She had come to India with Sister Nivedita in the second week of February, and she left Calcutta on April 17, 1902.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH

(A REVIEW ARTICLE)

[The book has been written by Paul Badham and published by the Macmillan Press Ltd., London, in 1976; pages: vii+174; price: £ 8.95.—Ed.]

The title of this book, one in the series 'Library of Philosophy and Religion' for which Professor John Hick has general editorial responsibility, is misleading. Where the reader might justifiably expect a summary study of Christian beliefs about life after death, he will, in fact, find himself engrossed in a fascinating exploration of the foundations of Christian belief in life after death, by examining the ways in which this belief has been given expression, in order to see whether it is tenable today.

In Part I, going back to the pre-New Testament roots of Christian belief Dr. Badham seeks to show that the faith of the Old Testament logically points towards a life beyond death, because it is so sure of an inviolable fellowship with God. While acknowledging that the Old Testament does not attain to any clear vision of the goal, the author contends that this religious faith supplied the real content for the resurrection hope of the New Testament, which is firmly founded on the significance of Jesus' resurrection.

Based on a detailed examination of the New Testament evidence and of first-century thought forms, Badham rejects the once common idea that the resurrection of Jesus involved the corporeal resuscitation of Jesus' body from the tomb. His argument for regarding the resurrection of Jesus as a real event moves the fact of the disciples' faith to the need for some sufficient cause to account for it. Bultmann, of course, would dispute this procedure, maintaining that the rise of the

Easter faith was itself the 'self-attestation of the risen Lord'. The author, however, maintains that it is logically necessary that 'riseness' of Jesus the Lord, be an actual reality, and that this reality should truly attest to his personal aliveness. Taking his cue from B. H. Streeter's *Foundations* and its elaboration in Michael Perry's *The Easter Enigma*, Badham suggests that the appearance of Jesus can be understood as 'veridical hallucinations, telepathically induced in the minds of the disciples by Jesus' surviving soul.' To support this theory the author turns to some of the findings which have been made about such phenomena by the Society for Psychical Research (S.P.R.). He goes on to cite the many cases in the files of the S.P.R. when a percipient 'sees' an apparition of a person at the precise moment when the person is undergoing some traumatic experience. 'This kind of hallucination is called "veridical". It is an hallucination because what is seen is physically not there; it is veridical because it is observed in connexion with a real event outside the percipient's normal knowledge.' In addition to such spontaneous cases the author also cites reports of experimental cases in which the person causes an apparition of himself to be seen by willing it to happen. On the basis of this kind of evidence it is suggested that the post-resurrection apparitions of Jesus, seen by his disciples, 'can best be understood as veridical hallucinations, revealing truthfully the fact of Jesus' continued aliveness to the disciples' minds. I suggest that the source of this

information was Jesus himself, communicating telepathically to his disciples.'

There is, of course, an extremely intimate relationship between a person's interpretation of the New Testament evidence and what he believes to be essential to personal identity, and necessary for personal existence beyond the grave. For example, G.W.H. Lampe rejects a physical interpretation of Jesus' resurrection at least partly because he believes that it is quite impossible for a modern Christian to expect his corpse to be raised to a new life, either at the moment of death or at the end of time. On the other side, W. Pannenberg puts his stress on the empty tomb, insisting that we must rehabilitate the apocalyptic framework of the first century and expect a universal resurrection of the dead at the end of time. Pannenberg believes this to be necessary, at least partly because he holds that the concept of the undying continuation of the soul while the body perishes has become untenable today. These two examples offer an indication that 'the way in which one interprets what the New Testament says about the nature of Jesus' resurrection depends, to a great extent, on the conclusions one comes to on other grounds about the likelihood of a bodily resurrection, and the validity of the concept of the soul.'

In Part II three versions of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, including John Hick's reinterpretation of it as the creation of an exact replica of our present bodies in another space, are considered. The many practical problems facing such hopes are spelled out in exceedingly great detail, often approaching what seems like absurdity, including the difficulty of supposing that because of the ever increasing number of replicas, uninhabited planets would have been evolved for the sole purpose of receiving resurrected or recreated

earth men. Badham notes that the only concept of resurrection which might avoid such problems would be to suppose that individual personalities might receive new and quite different bodies in another mode of being. However, his conclusion is that any theory which postulates some kind of physical continuity between this existence and the next is no longer tenable, and the more sophisticated versions of what bodily resurrection means must logically rely on some concept of a soul to ensure personal continuity. The difficulty here is that modern discoveries about the 'physical basis of personality' and the findings of Old Testament scholarship have combined to suggest that 'resurrection of the body' is not only more biblical than 'immortality of the soul' but it also makes better sense.

In Part III the author defends belief in the soul against contemporary criticism and argues on both empirical and epistemological grounds for Cartesian dualism. He admits that his defence of Cartesianism is very much at odds with most current thinking on the philosophy of mind, *à la*, for example, Gilbert Ryle who argues that Cartesianism implies an unreal disjunction between thought and action and that it entails solipsism. Badham, however, relies on the work of H. D. Lewis, whose detailed and systematic refutation of Ryle's argument in *The Elusive Mind* is seen as a 'death-blow' to Ryle's critique. The author then comes to the conclusion that 'in our present lives the mind or soul is a reality which is both logically and contingently distinct from the body and that indeed, it is only on the assumption of such a distinction that we can formulate a valid theory of knowledge.'

Finally Badham considers the possibility of the immortality of the soul in a purely spiritual existence, and shows that this might prove satisfactory as a fulfilment of

earlier Christian hopes, and accord with the understanding of the biblical data described in the earlier parts of the book. He acknowledges that his argument does not prove that the soul is necessarily immortal; all he wishes to claim for his hypothesis of a purely mental existence and for the hypothesis about re-embodiment in 'heaven' is the possibility to spell out the Christian hope of life after death in ways that are reasonable, in the sense that their possibility can be conceived without having to contradict other well-established beliefs about the world and about human existence.

The argument of the book is boldly conceived and carefully presented well within the parameters of Dr. Badham's concerns and competence as a university teacher specializing in modern Christian theology. However, when the author challenges and seeks to refute several Nobel Prize-winning

scientists in matters relating to their areas of specialization one cannot but wonder about the validity of some of his conclusions, particularly in his critique of the Mind/Brain Identity Theory, the main challenger to any dualistic theory of man.

The appeal of this book will depend in part on its audience; to the more sophisticated reader—well versed in Christian theology and Western philosophy—it will be the subtlety of argument utilizing materials drawn from an extensive range of sources, both in time and space. To the 'layman' the book's value will lie in the clarity and simplicity with which Badham presents his essential points and moves his thesis to its easily understood conclusion.

DR. DAVID C. SCOTT

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Brain, Consciousness and Superconscious Experience—III (Editorial): The states of waking, dream and deep sleep are considered by some thinkers as different stages of consciousness. Both Eastern and Western thinkers have studied these three states in their own way and put forth their views. In this part of the editorial an attempt has been made to study some of these views, although their ways of approach and aims in view are different. It is expected that in future there will be a mutual exchange of findings between the scholars of the East and the West and each will gain from the other.

Vivekananda, Nivedita, and Tata's Research Scheme—II: In the last instalment of this article Sri Sankari Prasad Basu

has shown that Swami Vivekananda's inspiration was behind Tata's Research Scheme for India. In this part, the author beautifully narrates the part played by Sister Nivedita to materialize the scheme. That her role was more direct and vital is known from her hitherto unpublished letters quoted in the article. The author points out that it was due to Swamiji's sympathy for Tata's scheme that Nivedita took so much interest in it. Swamiji had written to Mrs. Ole Bull on June 5, 1896, 'What my nation wants is pluck and scientific genius.' Swamiji's dream was fulfilled to some extent through Tata's scheme, which was later realized as the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore by Tata's sons.

Vedanta and Religious Harmony. In this

article, Professor Leta Jane Lewis of the School of Humanities, California State University, Fresno, U.S.A., points out that 'according to Vedanta, none of the world's religions, as we now interpret them, teaches the entire truth of God. No religion is completely right, and none is completely wrong. Each contains a solid kernel of truth, but all are somewhat involved in ignorance. So we should be humble and learn from each other.' She has made an attempt to show how Vedanta and religious harmony go hand in hand, and how Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and men

like Mahatma Gandhi and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing—a Western dramatist—accepted genuinely the ideal of religious harmony.

Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda—XIV : In this instalment Swamiji's hitherto unpublished letters written to Swami Saradananda, Mrs. Ole Bull, Lala Badri Sah, and Romesh Chandra Dutt are being published with explanatory footnotes. These letters are from Mrs. Boshi Sen's collection, which she has very kindly handed over to the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, W.B.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

CONCEPT OF EQUALITY : BY B. N. GANOULI, Publishers : Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Rashtrapati Nivas, Simla-171 005, 1975, pp. x+128, Price : Rs. 35/-.

The book embodies six lectures delivered by the distinguished author at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, as a visiting Professor. They reconstruct with remarkable scholarship and insight the social philosophy of equality that took shape in nineteenth century India through the leading intellectuals such as Raja Rammohun Roy, Bipin Chandra Pal, Justice Ranade, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Dayananda Saraswati and many other thinkers and writers. These men were undoubtedly influenced by the selective assimilation of the democratic philosophers of the West. The great problem of inequality they had to fight was part of the traditional structure of Hindu society and was also the new creation of the colonial system. The principal forms of inequality were social, political, economic and religious. In the course of this brief but weighty book, the steady and progressive formation of the concept of equality in this bewildering context of forces, old and new, is magnificently traced. The resulting equalitarian ideal does not cut itself off from the basic heritage of India in spite of fruitful adaptation of the contemporaneous philosophies of the West.

The last two lectures are particularly significant. We have a full analysis of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's thesis on 'Samya' and an

enthusiastic presentation of Swami Vivekananda's Vedantic social philosophy. The Swami's passion and messianic idealism are presented with matching force. Let us hear the burning words of Vivekananda through Professor Ganguli. 'No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the neck of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism' (p. 120). The common notion of 'equality of opportunities' is almost superseded in the Swami's message of Neo-Vedanta : 'If there is inequality in nature, still there must be equal chance for all—or if greater for some and less for others—the weaker should be given more chance than the strong' (p. 124). The cool, and interpretative mind of the author liberates itself into unreserved enthusiasm in the company of Swami Vivekananda. It is good to see the teachings of the Swami appraised and extolled at the conclusion of such an austere intellectual investigation.

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MYSTICAL DIMENSIONS OF ISLAM :

BY ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL, Publishers : The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1975, pp. xxii + 506, Price : \$ 14.95.

We find that Islam, one of the world's great religions, has been much misunderstood because

of the preoccupation of the majority of its followers with some of its non-mystical phases and because of its fanatic and violent reactions to other religions, and even to higher mysticism within its own fold. It has often been dubbed a mere social religion, having some social polity and ethics and very little spiritual content.

This scholarly treatise on the 'Mystical Dimensions of Islam', published under the auspices of the University of North Carolina, is an eye-opener to all those holding such uninformed views. The learned author, with her knowledge of several languages—those in which Sufism flourished as also some in which studies on Sufism have been made—and, what is more, her personal and wide-ranging knowledge of Sufi thought and practices, brings her scholarly acumen to bear upon this thorough, deep, comprehensive and systematic study of Sufism in all its aspects.

Sufism is mysticism as expressed in the Islamic tradition. The author, dealing with its historical development, traces its origin to the Koran and the prophetic traditions (*hadīth*) themselves, while acknowledging the influences from other countries (pp. 9-11 and 33-35). The different views are stated; for that matter, as the study itself reveals, Sufism has been shaped to a great extent by non-Arabic cultures like that of Iran in particular, and by the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and Turkey in general. Even among the Arab countries, Iraq and Egypt were the centres of development of Sufi thought and practice and not Arabia. However, the main point for consideration in the study of any field of human development is not whether the ingredients were borrowed, but how each tradition has given them a new shape and expression characteristic of its individuality.

After shedding light on what Sufism is, the author lucidly outlines the historical development of 'classical' Sufism from its early ascetic and orthodox beginnings. There were often clashes between the legalistic and mystic schools, and Manṣūr al-Hallāj and a few others were martyred at the hands of the orthodox because of their highly mystical views which transcended formal religion. Theosophical Sufism, with its emphasis on mystical unity, was developed by Ibn 'Arabī of Spain (1165-1240), a great scholar, and Ibn al-Fāriḍ of Cairo (d. 1235).

The love-mysticism expressed through lyrical poetry was mainly developed in Iran in Persian, and to some extent in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and in Turkey, after the 'classical' period. The contributions of a good number of

Sufi mystics in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, who wrote in Persian, Sindhi, Punjabi, Pashto, Urdu, etc. are treated in a separate chapter. The account is brought up to our own times.

The author describes the Sufi path (*tarīqa*), its various steps and methods of training, in detail. There have been different orders of Sufis with different ideals and differing methods of practice and training, and the great individual Sufi mystics had their own unique way of expression. On the whole one can find here parallels to most of the mystical expressions and goals found in other great religions, besides some of Sufism's own unique conceptions.

The book provides a good Bibliography and four Indexes of Koranic Quotations, Prophetic Traditions, Names and Places, and of Subjects. The printing and get-up are excellent. The book must find a place in the collection of all those who are interested in mysticism in general and Islamic mysticism in particular.

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

Ramakrishna Math, Belur, W.B.

THE GITA—A WORKSHOP ON THE EXPANSION OF SELF: BY I. P. SINGH, Publishers: Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd., 172 Mumbai Marathi Grantha Sangrahalaya Marg, Dadar, Bombay-400 014, 1977, pp. xii + 154, Price: Rs. 30/-.

The book is an excellent treatise that highlights the central theme of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It is not a commentary on the *Gita* in the traditional sense. The author's expositions are simple and clear, orderly and convincing; and his method of treatment is very rational and scientific. He goes straight to a problem, analyses the situation carefully, discusses it and arrives at a conclusion; and then supports his statement by apt quotations from the philosophical systems of the East and the West, and by the latest discoveries of science and parapsychology.

'The central theme of the *Gita*, in my opinion', says the author, 'is an effort on the part of Krishna to help Arjuna to expand his narrow concept of selfhood, so that he could see his real nature, and armed with this knowledge perform his duties in the best possible manner.' Mr. Singh has brought out this idea with learning and ability.

The author has treated the subject under the following heads: the Battlefield, the Crisis of Conviction, the Yoga of Knowledge, the Yoga of Action, the Yoga of Devotion, the Yoga of Integration, and the *Gita* in Everyday Life.

According to the author, the main efficacy of the Gita is to help human beings in their day-to-day life, providing a novel technique of decision-making. He has laid great stress on the path of knowledge, while the paths of action and devotion have received much less attention. His knowledge of science, history, religion and philosophy has found free play in the treatment of the subject. This makes the book scholastic and impressive. His comments on different metaphysical problems, such as the concept of death, self, nature, reality, space, time, causality, karma and rebirth, in the light of recent scientific research are always interesting and often illuminating. They are neither too learned nor too technical, but are designed to bring out the meaning in a form suited to the average understanding.

Undoubtedly, the readers of this book will be impressed by the clarity of thought, and they will grasp the true spirit of the *Gita* as expounded by Mr. Singh. On the whole, we have had much pleasure in going through the book and trust it will help its readers in crystallizing their thoughts and leading a godly life.

The book is nicely printed and got up. There is a Bibliography at the end of each chapter and it contains a short Index as well.

SWAMI SHANTARUPANANDA
Adavaita Ashrama, Calcutta

HIGHER THAN EVEREST: BY MAJOR H. P. S. AHLUWALIA, Publishers: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 5 Ansari Rd., New Delhi-110 002, 1976 (1st 'Bell Books' edition), pp. xi+222, Price : Rs. 6.50.

A mountaineer is an unusual type of person. Since he is after the highest—which tends always to be the loneliness—he practically *has* to be religious. Since his business is so far from 'woman and gold', he *has* to have a large measure of detachment, obviously fortified by the ever-present shadow of sudden death. And since the Big Climbs demand high teamwork and spirit of sacrifice, he *has* to learn to love; as our author puts it (p. 144), 'You can never forget a man who has shared a rope with you.' Again, as our title suggests and the last chapter explains, he *has* to think of 'What next?'; and the author concludes it must be the inner Climb.

Much of this, of course, reminds us of the *kshatriya's* life—minus the booty and the killing. But when one picks up an autobiography of a distinguished mountaineer *and* soldier, who happens also to write well, one is in for a treat. Major Ahluwalia was one of the nine Indians

first atop Mt. Everest; but only four months later, in the brief 1965 Pakistan War, he was shot through the neck, paralysed (for weeks on the verge of death, and only after months of intense treatment able to start using his hands) and his beloved mountains 'lost' to him forever.

But here, as throughout, the author remains a master of understatement. From his boyhood escape (with family) from Lahore in 1947, up through the thrill-packed Everest days, to his agonizing struggles to recover his shattered body, one glimpses countless adventures, dangers, exploits, which a lesser man could easily have glorified: indeed perhaps the only things the author doesn't understate are his own human weaknesses and doubts! Thus, the apex of the story, the last climbs to Everest's summit, carries tremendous impact—when, at last he does admit to 'merciless' winds, cold 'to the very marrow', moving on the edge of 'a straight fall of some 10,000 feet into Tibet', and later, the reaction of acute 'hallucinations' in a brain drained of every drop of energy.

And from start to finish, the story breathes the all-pervading Indian ideals: respect for womanhood, sympathy for all humankind, reverence for all faiths, yet full devotion to one's own.

We may only add that the next edition (this is one of several editions already) might clean up some of the rather frequent typographical errors and perhaps add an Index, since the book is so well stocked with historical backdrops, great friends, great events.

SWAMI SARVESHANANDA
*Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium
Ranchi, Bihar*

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO YOGA: BY SWAMI CHIDANANDA, Publishers: The Divine Life Society, P.O. Shivanandanagar-249 192, Dist. Tehri-Garhwal, U.P., 1977, pp. xvi + 87, Price: Rs. 12/-.

This book illustrates some twenty-eight simple and useful *asanas* (bodily postures) and *pranayamas* (breathing exercises), and also Surya-namaskar, which can generally be practised by all with profit. Under each illustration, the technique of the *asana* and the benefit it confers are stated, with warnings and other instructions where necessary. As the title of the book says, it is really a 'practical guide to Yoga', for here the *asanas* are dovetailed into the general concept of Yoga as a spiritual discipline. These selected *asanas* and the suggested *dhyana* (meditation) at the end seek to bring harmony to the physical, vital and mental aspects of the hu-

man personality in order to help attain poise and stability as a prelude to higher spiritual attainment. The introductory chapters briefly lay down the theoretical framework.

Being the work of Swami Chidananda, the respected President of the Divine Life Society, the booklet is reliable and useful. It is well got up, but the price seems to be very high.

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

DIVINITY OF MAN: By K. S. MANI, Publishers: Ganesh & Co., Madras-600 017, 1976, pp. viii + 80, Price: Rs. 5/-.

This book is based upon the works and teachings of Swami Pratyagatmananda Saraswati, the Guru of the author, who earlier as Professor Pramathanatha Mukhopadhyaya had collaborated with Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) in expounding Tantrik works and philosophy. It attempts to throw light on several basic topics connected with religion and spirituality in a very short compass, the author's aim being to give 'a brief résumé of the Guru's teachings'. The topics dealt with cover God as the Supreme Mother; the Jeeva; the Universe of Matter, Mind, Life; Religions; Karma and Evolution; Sadhana and Meditation; etc. In such a small book one cannot expect an adequate treatment; it is even scrappy. However, one does get flashes of insight. All through the approach is the harmonization of the Tantras and Vedanta. The printing and get-up are good.

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

SANSKRIT

AVADHUTA GITA: TRANSLATED BY SWAMI ASHOKANANDA, Publishers: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 11 Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras 600 004, 1977, pp. vii+167, Price: Ordinary Rs. 6/-, Deluxe Rs. 14/-.

This is a small Vedantic work attributed to the sage Dattatreya, who is considered the supreme Guru of Yogis. An Avadhuta is one who has shaken off all worldly attachments and, always absorbed in the luminous Self, roams about freely, shedding its light to show the path to spiritual aspirants. Dattatreya was such an Avadhuta and this work is his spontaneous song (*gita*), the Song of the Free.

The *Avadhuta Gita* strikes the highest note of non-dualism (Advaita)—the supremacy of the Self, the Ever-Free, which is the sole Existence and is the substratum of all phenomenal appearance. This is not a philosophical treatise establishing the tenets of Advaita, but gives expression to its highest conclusions as realized in the

life of the great Sage, in very expressive Sanskrit verses. This work belongs to the class of the *Astavakra Samhita* and is popular among Advaita Vedantic *sadhakas*.

The work has been translated and annotated ably by the late Swami Ashokananda, who was a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order and the former Minister in charge of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, U.S.A. The transliteration of the Sanskrit verses is given in Roman below the original. It is a welcome addition to the Scriptural Series published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

BENGALI

SRI MA DARSHAN—PART XVI BY SWAMI NITYATMANANDA, Publishers: Sri Ramakrishna Sri Ma Prakashan Trust, 579 Sector 18-B, Chandigarh-160 008, B.S. 1384, pp. v+178, Price: Rs. 8/-.

This is the last volume of *Sri Ma Darshan* in which the conversations of 'M' (Mahendra Nath Gupta, author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*) have been recorded by Swami Nityatmananda. It comprises the material that the publishers could neither include in volume XIV nor in volume XV, as desired by the recorder. In order to satisfy the readers' requests, the publishers finally decided to bring out the unpublished material in a further volume. And those who have read the other volumes in the series will be able to taste better the nectar devotedly served by Swami Nityatmananda in this one.

A short biography of the monk who has resorted the conversations of 'M' and prepared them for publication has been added at the beginning of this final volume, so that readers may know and appreciate that the Swami's sole interest in publishing the series was to strengthen devotion to Sri Ramakrishna among people, and to arouse in them hope and courage to meet their sufferings.

A few letters written by 'M' find place at the end of the book. We feel sure that it will be as heartily received as the previous volumes were.

SWAMI JYOTIRUPANANDA

Ramakrishna Math, Belur, W.B.

PRATYAKSHADARSHIR SMRITIPATE
SWAMI VIJNANANANDA: EDITED AND
COMPILED BY SURESH CHANDRA DAS AND JYOTIRMOY
BASU RAY, Publishers: General Printers &
Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 119 Lenin Sarani,
Calcutta-700 013, B.S. 1384, pp. xii + 372,
Price: Rs. 10/-.

'It is very difficult to know him. He always

keeps himself hidden. But he is a knower of Brahman. He has known the Self and is thus satisfied.' Thus remarked Swami Brahmananda, the spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna, while speaking of his brother-disciple, Swami Vijnanananda.

The title under review is a collection of forty-two memoirs of Swami Vijnanananda Maharaj, the fourth President of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. These are mainly contributions of the senior monks of the Ramakrishna Order and of some disciples and devotees who had the rare privilege of knowing him personally. Besides three anonymous articles, there are two speeches by eminent persons appended at the end of the book, being homages offered on the occasion of the birth centenary of Swami Vijnanananda.

We know of three popular biographies of Swami Vijnanananda, but they are not comprehensive. For 'absorbed as he always was in his own thought, there was an atmosphere of aloofness about him. He would always prefer to be left to himself.' Hence a dearth of biographical material was always felt. According to the editors, 'this is not a biography, but it contains documents for a comprehensive biography.'

The articles are well-written, printing satisfactory. The photographs, though not very well printed, are additional attractions of the publication. A chronological order of the memoirs is suggested; and a hard bound library edition as well as an English edition in future will serve the needs of a wider circle of readers.

DULAL CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY
Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta

AMIYA VANI: COMPILED BY SRI UMAPADA MUKHOPADHYAYA, Publishers: General Printers & Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 119 Lenin Sarani, Calcutta 700 013, B.S. 1384 (enlarged 2nd edition), pp. v + 181, Price: Rs. 6/-.

The volume under review, *Amiya Vani*

(Ambrosial Message) is a compilation of sayings and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and the sixteen monastic disciples including Swami Vivekananda. The Compiler has presented us in a nutshell the extracts of the gospels of the Master and his disciples. The teachings have been classified to some extent.

According to the Preface, the materials of the book have been collected from the entire Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Literature. But specific mention of the source book at the end of each saying would have enhanced the value and authenticity of the publication. At least, a select bibliography of books consulted would be useful to the serious reader.

Besides printing mistakes, which are not very small in number, other points that draw our attention are: (i) Sometimes a very popular saying of the Master has been stated in a different way (e.g. p. 51, no. 18). (ii) In some places the sayings make no clear sense (e.g. p. 8, no. 41; p. 31, no. 3, 5th line; p. 163, no. 13, last line; p. 172, nos. 10 and 12). (iii) We could not find the source of saying no. 9, p. 1. (iv) Mere mention of the titles of the tales and parables in parentheses serves no purpose at all (e.g. p. 4, no. 9; p. 8, no. 37; p. 11, no. 17, etc.). (v) In some of the teachings we notice rather specific differences when these are compared with the *Kathamrita* (e.g. p. 43, no. 6). (vi) The teachings of Swamis Advaitananda, Trigunatitananda, Yogananda and Niranjanananda have been condensed into hardly two pages. Of the two utterances of the last Swami, the second could have been omitted.

However, in spite of these discrepancies, we should be thankful to the compiler and the publisher for this handy and beautiful publication which contains no less a treasure than the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and their worthy monastic disciples. The cover jacket is well printed. Price moderate. We wish wide circulation of the book.

DULAL CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA,
LUCKNOW

REPORT: APRIL 1976—MARCH 1977

The Sevashrama was started in a small way in 1914 for humanitarian work by a band of

young people inspired by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. A plot of land was acquired at Aminabad where its own premises were constructed; and by 1925, its activities having steadily increased, the Sevashrama was affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission. With time its

activities—particularly in the sphere of medical services—greatly expanded, and in January 1967 the Centre at Aminabad was shifted to its present site at Vivekananda Puri, where the Vivekananda Polyclinic has been constructed.

Religious and Cultural Activities: Daily Puja and Aratrika were held in the Shrine. In the Prayer Hall, Bhajans and discourses on religious and philosophical topics were held. Discourses on the *Gita* and *Mundaka Upanishad* were given by the Monk-in-Charge on Sundays. Ramanam and Shyamanam Sankirtans were performed regularly on Ekadashi, Amavasya and Purnamasi days.

As in previous years, the devotees congregated in large numbers on the anniversary celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda, which included Puja, distribution of Prasad and feeding of the poor. Durga Puja was performed as usual with great enthusiasm; The consecrated food was distributed every day to the devotees. Important religious festivals such as Sri Ram Navami, Sri Krishna Janmashthami, Shivaratri and Christmas Eve were also observed in the Ashrama, with special Puja, Havan, Vedic chanting and discourses.

Educational Activities: The educational activities of the Sevashrama are confined mainly to the maintenance of a public Library and a free Reading Room. The Library has a good collection of books on a wide variety of subjects, totalling 14,395 during the year. Eleven dailies and eighty periodicals were received for the Reading Room. Books issued from the Library numbered 20,903.

Medical and Health Activities: The Vivekananda Polyclinic has been providing to the local population extensive modern diagnostic facilities and domiciliary and specialized treatment for all diseases. For a developing country like India, with limited resources and its teeming population, it is hardly feasible to provide adequate coverage of indoor beds for treatment. The Polyclinic has given a new lead in placing emphasis on domiciliary treatment in the Out-patient Departments suited to our economy. It now has also a limited number of beds (100) for treatment of cases which really need hospitalization. The Out-patient Departments remain open for eight hours, providing full facilities for Radiological, Pathological and other investigations and tests. Treatment by Specialists is also available to out-patients. Individual attention is given to patients and the details of medical records are maintained permanently even for out-patients. This system

of working has reduced the pressure on indoor beds—particularly in the Medical Ward.

Drugs and medicines as are available in stock are supplied to patients for a small charge at flat rates. Charges for Pathological, X-Ray and other investigations are also low. Free treatment is given after necessary screening to persons who have no paying capacity. Those who pay do so at subsidized rates.

The following sections were functioning in the Polyclinic during the period: Tubercular Chest Diseases; Non-Tubercular Chest Diseases; General Medicine, including Gastro-intestinal Diseases; Pediatrics; General Surgery; Ear Nose Throat; Orthopaedics; Pathology including Bio-chemistry; Radiology; Physical Medicine including Physiotherapy and Medical Gymnastic; Gynaecology; Maternity; Dentistry, including Dental Prosthesis; Ophthalmology; Homoeopathy; Leprosy; Social Welfare and Patient Guide; Medical Records; Blood Transfusion Unit; Ayurvedic Section.

The total number of cases treated and services rendered in the Out-patient Department during the year stood at 6,48,071; the number of admissions in the Indoor Department was 2,452; the total number of in-patient days stood at 20,331; and the average occupancy of beds was 55 per cent.

Clinical investigations made both in the Out-patient and Indoor Departments, and operations performed in the Indoor, totalled as follows: (i) Investigations: Pathology cases 69,820; X-Ray cases 8,589; Special Investigations (Medical) 546. (ii) Indoor Operations: 527 major and 735 minor.

Future Plans: For the proper development of the Sevashrama in the future, there are several priority demands, fulfilment of which depends upon the availability of funds. These include: (i) at least eight units of residential quarters for the Medical Staff; (ii) a Nurses' Hostel for accommodating fifty to sixty nursing personnel; (iii) reorganization of the Surgical Departments with full equipment; (iv) a scheme for training nurses, compounders and Laboratory and X-Ray Technicians; (v) a new Library building with a Reading Room and Auditorium. It is believed that active co-operation from the public will be available in implementing these future programmes.

Donations may be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Vivekananda Puri, Lucknow-226 007. All donations are exempt from Income-Tax.