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CONTENTS

Divine Wisdom	513
Editorial	514
Madhusudana Saraswati on the <i>Bhagavad-Gita</i> Swami Gambhirananda	518
<i>Prabuddha Bharata's</i> Future Role Sister Gargi	522
The Individual and the Supreme Swami Tathagatananda	526
Personality Development Swami Nityasthananda	532
On Beauty: Swami Vivekananda & Rabindranath— A Review of Their Traditional Indian Perspective Dr. Maya Das	539
Ethics in Management Swami Tattvajnanananda	545
Practical Vedanta	551
News & Reports	552
Reviews & Notices	557



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED.

Vol. 100

APRIL 1995

No. 4

Divine Wisdom

SURRENDER TO THE DIVINE

धातर्य दस्मिन् भव ईश जीवास्-
तापत्रयेणोपहता न शर्म ।
आत्मैल्लभन्ते भगवंस्तवाङ्घ्रिच्छायां
सविधामत आश्रयेम ॥

O Father and Lord of all! In this sphere of transmigratory existence, the jivas (individual souls), distressed by the triad of miseries, are not able to attain to the inherent bliss of the Atman unless they seek shelter at Thy feet, which stimulate spiritual illumination. We seek shelter at those feet.

मार्गन्ति यत्ते मुखपद्मनीडैश्छन्दः
सुपर्णैर्ऋषयो विविक्ते ।
यस्याघमर्षोदसरिद्वरायाः पदं पदं
तीर्थपदः प्रपन्नाः ॥

The sages, striving for Thee in solitude along the path of knowledge, resort to the Vedas, which are like birds coming out of their nests constituted of Thy face-lotus. (As the course of birds can guide a person to the

nest, the path of knowledge taught in the Upanishads guides a person to Him.) We devotees, however, seek shelter at Thy holy feet, from which flows the Ganga, the all-purifying stream. (As a stream takes one to its source, the path of devotion and self-surrender taught in the Bhakti scriptures also leads one to the same Lord as the path of Knowledge taught in the Vedas.)

यच्छ्रद्धया श्रुतवत्या च भक्त्या
समृज्यमाने हृदयेऽवधाय ।
ज्ञानेन वैराग्यबलेन धीरा व्रजेम
तत्तेऽङ्घ्रिसरोजपीठम् ॥

We seek shelter at those feet of Thine on which sages of settled understanding meditate with hearts purified by faith and by love generated by the hearing of devotional texts, by which they attain to the highest form of renunciation and intimate knowledge of Thee.

—from the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*

Faith and Self-Surrender

Once a man was walking near the edge of a cliff when he suddenly tripped on something and fell over the side. As he was falling further and further down, his descent was abruptly arrested by a small bush growing out of the side of the cliff. The man was in a terrible state, and he clung to the bush for dear life. Meanwhile the bush, which was not used to bearing the weight of a man, began pulling out from its crack in the cliff. The bottom of the cliff was hundreds of feet below, and there were only sharp, jagged rocks beneath him. In great anxiety, the man started yelling: 'Lord, Lord, help me! O Lord, help me!' Suddenly a loud, booming voice from the sky called out: 'This is the Lord. Do you have faith?' The man was so startled, he almost lost his grip on the bush. Bursting into tears, he replied: 'Oh yes, Lord. I do have faith. I do, I do.' the Lord said, 'Let go.' The man stopped sobbing and looked down. Frozen with fear, he could neither let go nor say another word.

A sudden jerk from the bush, as it started coming out of the cliff, brought the man back to the urgency of his situation, and he again started yelling, 'Lord, help me! Help me!' A few moments later the same voice thundered from the sky, saying: 'This is the Lord. Do you have faith?' The man replied reassuringly, 'Yes, Lord, I do have faith. Again the Lord said, 'Let go.' The man looked down and, in fear, tightened his grip on the bush. This was repeated a third time, and again the Lord commanded 'Let go.' Then the man thought for a moment, looked up towards the sky, and said, 'Lord, isn't there anybody else up there who can help me?'

Faith seems to be such a simple thing, but

is it? Do we really have enough faith to surrender and 'let go'? Yet all religions lay much stress on faith, because it acts as a very powerful force in spiritual life. In one place in the *Gospel* Sri Ramakrishna says, 'God can be realized only through faith.'¹

Of all the religions of the world, Protestant Christianity probably lays the most stress on faith. It has made faith the main support of its religion. The founder of the Protestant movement in Christianity, Martin Luther, spent much time in prayer and in studying the scriptures, and he became convinced that a person could attain heaven after death merely through faith in the redeeming power of Christ. Faith alone was sufficient. Martin Luther also rejected the idea of purgatory (a place where a person atones for his sins before he can enter heaven). As his ideas were considered heresy by the Catholic Church, a split was inevitable, and the Protestant movement began.

Perhaps it is important to discuss here the Christian idea of heaven, because if heaven means a place of enjoyment, as many non-Christians believe, how could it make a person desireless and bring about a state comparable to the Hindu idea of liberation?² According to some Christian theologians, heaven is a return to the original pure state that Adam and Eve lived in before their fall, when they literally

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1. M., *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, translated by Swami Nikhilananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1986), p. 655. [hereafter, *Gospel*]
 2. Śankara, however, would consider this *krama mukti*, gradual liberation.

walked and talked with God. Such a heaven would be more comparable to the Hindu idea of *sāmīpya*, proximity to God, or *sālokya*, living in the same abode as God.³

But how can faith take you there? Christians believe that the whole purpose of Christ's coming was to save human beings from the burden of the sin they had inherited from the fall of Adam and Eve. The Protestants claim that by merely taking refuge in Christ, a person can be freed from the sins of this earthly existence and attain the heavenly realm of Christ after death.⁴

Every human being, whether he believes in religion or not, must face death. On top of that, he does not even know when it will happen. There are different ways a person can react to death. If he still has desires or other strong emotions, he will probably die with a sense of frustration. And if he does not have faith any in religion, or if his faith is weak, he will probably die with a sense of fear. In both these cases, he cannot 'let go'. But if a person has strong faith in his religion and has enough dispassion for the world, then he can die in full trust and surrender to God.

Because Christians do not believe in reincarnation, they feel a greater sense of urgency about the situation. For them there is no such thing as coming back to this world

3. That this is, in fact, what Christians like to believe is confirmed by the popularity of hymns, such as the following, which touch on this 'return to the Garden of Eden' theme. The 'he' in the song refers to Christ.

I come to the garden alone
When the dew is still on the roses....
And he walks with me,
And he talks with me,
And he tells me I am his own....

4. Some Protestant Christians believe that the soul remains in a state of sleep until judgement day, and then attains heaven, while others believe that heaven is attained immediately after death.

to fulfil unfulfilled desires. Moreover, at the time of death they are faced with either eternal heaven or eternal hell. Thus, they have to be ready. In one of his lectures, Swami Vivekananda admired this message of Christ:

He teaches, 'Be ready, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'...Do not delay a moment. Leave nothing for tomorrow. Get ready for the final event, which may overtake you immediately, even now.⁵

But how do Christians get ready? For most Protestant Christians, the only spiritual practices are their daily prayers and attendance at church services. This sounds too easy. What is really at work, however, is that powerful yet subtle force called faith. With every prayer and at every reminder of death, a Christian will think, 'When will I die? Do I have faith in Christ? How fortunate I am that he has saved me.' And with these thoughts also comes the feeling of love for Christ. These ideas work on the subtle layers of the mind, gradually weakening one's desires, ego and will. Then, if these thoughts are strong enough, they become activated before a person dies. At that time the person does not want to think of anything but God and is ready to surrender himself totally. Ultimately, then, it is this surrender that brings about the grace of salvation.

But what about in the Hindu tradition, where there is not such a sense of urgency? A person might be tempted to say, 'Oh well, if you don't succeed this time, try, try again.' True, that opinion is there, and for many people that relieves some of the fear and frustration that goes with the thought of death. Yet there are other people who have had enough. For them, having to be born

5. Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1990), vol. 4, pp. 132-3.

again and again is itself a kind of hell. And some people want God's grace immediately. They don't want to wait. As Swami Vivekananda humorously put it: 'Do not wait to have a harp in heaven and rest by and by. Why not take a harp and begin here? Why wait for heaven? Make it here.'⁶

Hinduism says that you can attain God in this life, without having to wait until you die. But relying on faith alone may not give immediate results. Thus, faith is taken for granted, and there is more emphasis on self-surrender. Probably of all the Hindu traditions, the one that lays the most emphasis on self-surrender, or *prapatti*, is Śrīvaiṣṇavism. According to Śrīvaiṣṇavism, self-surrender is itself a path. And it is a path that cannot be combined with any other spiritual practices, as one must have complete faith that the Lord himself is the sole means to one's liberation.

The example they use is the story of Hanumān and the *Brahmāstra*. Hanumān had come to Lanka in search of Sitā, and after finding her in the Aśoka grove, he went on a rampage, destroying everything in sight. The whole *rākṣasa* army could not stop him or kill him. Finally Rāvaṇ's son Indrajit let loose an invincible divine weapon, the *Brahmāstra*, to bind him. As Patricia Mumme describes it:

But the *Brahmāstra* only works if the user has complete faith in it. When the *rākṣasas* decided to bring in a jute cord to further secure the bound Hanumān, just to be on the safe side, the *Brahmāstra* slipped off. Maṇavālamāuni explains: 'The *Brahmāstra* that had tied him slipped off by itself at the moment another cord was tied on. In the same way, if one who has resorted to this *upāya* [the Lord himself] engages in another *upāya*, [the first] will leave him.'⁷

In this path, then, a person must leave everything in the hands of God, trusting in him totally.

Again, it sounds too simple. After all, who wouldn't like to throw all his burdens and responsibilities on someone else? Girish Ghosh also thought it was easy. When Girish could not promise to do even the simplest spiritual discipline, Sri Ramakrishna went into an ecstatic mood and said: 'So you are unwilling to agree even to this. All right. Give me your power of attorney. Henceforth I will take full responsibility for you. You won't have to do anything at all.'

Girish was relieved. This sounded to his liking, for he understood that Sri Ramakrishna had relieved him of all responsibility for his own spiritual well-being and had made him free. But, in fact, he had made himself Sri Ramakrishna's slave. Complete self-surrender is more binding than the observance of strict disciplines. One day, soon after this, Girish remarked in Sri Ramakrishna's presence, 'I shall do this.' 'No, no,' corrected Sri Ramakrishna. 'You can't talk like that any more. Say, "I shall do this if God wills."' Girish began to understand the mystery of the power of attorney. As time passed he came to realize that he could not perform any action of his own free will. He had to consciously surrender to the Divine Will, and gradually he found that he was forced to think of the Master every moment.⁸

In the later part of his life, Girish once said, referring to Sri Ramakrishna: 'I find that it is not difficult to obey him, love him, or worship him. But indeed it is difficult to

6. Swami Vivekananda, *Inspired Talks* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1993), p. 191-2.

7. Patricia Y. Mumme, 'Rāmāyana Exegesis in

Teṅkalai Śrīvaiṣṇavism', p. 207. In, *Many Rāmāyaṇas*, edited by Paula Richman. (Delhi Oxford University Press, 1992.)

8. Swami Chetanananda, *They Lived With God* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1991), p. 275.

forget him.⁹

But Sri Ramakrishna, as far as we know, gave this as a path only to Girish, because of Girish's strong faith. For most people he recommended spiritual disciplines—and the more intense the better. Yet, in the end, one still has to surrender. Why? What is so special about this surrendering business?

Self-surrender means to surrender one's small self to the Divine Self, and this is done through constant practice, which gradually leads to constant remembrance of God. It is a spiritual discipline in itself. Spiritual disciplines are often called *tapas*, which means 'to burn' or 'to heat.' What burns? Our ego, which is our false identity with this physical world, and also our will—our petty desires, plans, and ambitions. When we practise self-surrender, we consciously do this.

What happens when something is heated? It melts. This is the real surrender. In devotional literature, the state in which such disciplines have fallen away, and one is totally absorbed in the ecstasy of love of God, is often described in poetic terms as melting. For instance, Tirumūlar, one of the Śaiva Nāyanmārs, wrote:

He melts my heart in love
Siva the Lord
Praise him
Many hearts has he melted
Primeval Lord
Seek him
He melts my heart
again and again
Nandi Lord
May he give
to me
in full measure
his love.¹⁰

9. *Ibid.*, p. 290.

10. In, Vidya Dehejia, *Slaves of the Lord* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publ., 1988), pp. 74–5. Mānikkavāchakar and Nammālvār used the word again and again in their

That this is a process of melting¹¹ into something (i.e., into God), and not just melting away, is evident from Madhusūdana Saraswati's description of the *uttama bhakta*, the highest devotee: 'That *bhakta* who has the Lord's form in his completely melted mind [by the practices of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*, etc., related to Bhagavān] is *uttama bhakta*.'¹¹ In other words, through constant remembrance of a particular aspect of God, one's mind takes the form of that aspect and gradually merges into it.¹² The

Continued on page 521)

poems. Nammālvār was also fond of the terms 'fading' and 'wilting' to describe the same state.

11. Madhusūdana Saraswati, *Bhagavad-Bhakti-Rasāyanam*. Quoted in Susmita Pande, *Medieval Bhakti Movement* (Meerut: Kusumanjali Prakashan, 1989.)
12. But what happens if you meditate on *nirguṇa* Brahman (Brahman without attributes)? Here the spiritual aspirant must have firm faith in the *mahāvākya*, 'I am Brahman,' and must fix his mind on that idea alone. Swami Satprakashananda gives a similar description of this melting, or fusing, process: 'Through intense meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on the immutable self with the thought "I am Brahman", the seeker's mind conforms to Brahman. It becomes tranquil and transparent and absorbed in Brahman, but not unified with It, because the veil of *ajñāna* endures....With the eradication of *ajñāna* the mental modification (*Brahmātmākāra-vṛtti*) subsides; then the mind coalesces in Brahman and is suffused with Pure Consciousness, where the seeker's "I"-consciousness merges....In this transcendental experience there is no other; the mind is fused with Brahman, Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss; the order of phenomena disappears altogether.' Swami Satprakashananda, *Methods of Knowledge According to Advaita Vedānta* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1974), pp. 277–8.

Madhusudana Saraswati on the Bhagavad-Gita

SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

(continued from the December issue)

CONTROL OF MIND FOR PEACE

(Arjuna): Is it not that the mind becomes the cause of evil through the activities of the external organs, but, in the case of one whose external organs are under control, there is no harm even if the mind is not brought under control, which is (then) like a snake whose fangs have been extracted? For he becomes self-fulfilled through the mere absence of external efforts. So it has been useless to say, 'becoming concentrated, one should remain seated'.

Anticipating this He states in the (next) two verses that, in the absence of concentratedness, even a man who has his external organs under control gets all evils:

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥

*Dhyāyato viṣayānpuṁsaḥ
saṅgasteṣūpajāyate;
Saṅgāt saṁjāyate kāmaḥ
kāmat krodho'bhijāyate. (2.62)*

*Krodhātbhavati sammohaḥ
sammohātsmṛtivyibhramah;
smṛtibhramśādbuddhināśo
buddhināśātpṛanaśyati. (2.63)*

In the case of a person who dwells on objects, there arises attachment for them. From attachment grows hankering, from hankering springs anger.

From anger follows delusion; from delusion, failure of memory, from failure of memory, the loss of understanding; from the loss of understanding he perishes.

Puṁsaḥ, in the case of a person; who, even when he has his external organs under control, dyāyataḥ, dwells on, mentally thinks again and again of; viṣayān, objects, sound etc; upajāyate, there arises; teṣu, for them, for the objects; saṅgaḥ, attachment, a particular kind of fondness in the form of superimposition of 'goodness' by thinking, 'These are greatly the causes of my happiness'; saṅgāt, from attachment, which is of the nature of an idea of their being causes of happiness; saṁjāyate, grows; kāmaḥ, hankering, a particular kind of thirst in the form, 'May these be mine'. Kāmāt, from hankering, when it is obstructed by something; abhijāyate, springs; krodhaḥ, anger, of the nature of flaring up, in respect of the obstacle against that (hankering); krodhāt, from anger; bhavati, follows; sammohaḥ, delusion, in the form of a want of discrimination as to what is to be done and what is not (to be done); sammohāt, from delusion; smṛti-vibhramah, failure of memory—deviation, going astray from the thought of the meaning of what is taught by the scriptures and the teacher. And smṛti-bhramśāt, from that failure of memory, (follows) loss (nāśa), non-generation—on account of being obstructed by the defect of accumulation of contrary thoughts (viparītabhāvanā)—of understanding (buddhi), of the modifications of the mind in the form of (a certainty about the) non-duality of the Self.

Even when it (understanding) has emerged, it disappears on account of its inability to bear fruit. *Buddhi-nāśāt*, from loss of understanding; *pranaśyati*, one perishes.

One perishes, becomes unfit for all the human goals, as a result of losing the understanding which is a fruit of that (memory). Indeed, in the world, anyone who has become unfit for the human goal is referred to as verily dead. Therefore it has been said, 'he perishes'. Since, thus, even for one who has controlled the external organs there comes great grief in the absence of control of the mind, therefore one should control the mind with great effort. This is the idea. Therefore it has been aptly said, 'Controlling all of them and becoming concentrated, one should remain seated' (2.61).

Having said, 'When the mind is controlled, however, no harm can accrue even if there be absence of control over the external organs', He gives the answer to the question, 'How does he move about', in the (next) eight verses:

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥

Rāgadveṣavīyuktaistu
viṣayānīndriyaiścaraṇ;
Ātmavaśyairvidheyātmā
prasādamadhigacchati. (2.64)

But the self-controlled man, by perceiving objects with the organs which are free from attraction and repulsion and are under his own control, attains serenity.

One who has an uncontrolled mind, he, even having controlled the external organs, becomes deprived of the human goal on account of thinking of objects with a mind polluted by attraction and repulsion.

Tu, but—the word *tu* is used for distin-

guishing from the earlier person—; *vidheya-ātmā*, the self-controlled man, who has his internal organ under control; *caran*, by perceiving; *viṣayān*, the objects, sound etc., which are not prohibited; *īndriyaiḥ*, with the organs, the ear etc.; *ātma-vaśyaiḥ*, which are under the control of his mind, or under his own control, and are free (*vīyukta*) from attraction (*rāga*) and repulsion (*dveṣa*); *adhigacchati*, attains; *prasādam*, serenity, purity of mind, fitness for realizing the supreme Self.

Organs that are impelled by attraction and repulsion become causes of evil. When the mind is in one's control, however, attraction and repulsion do not exist; and when they are absent, there is no activity of the organs under their sway. But the perception of objects—on account of their being unavoidable—does not bring evil, and hence there is no hindrance to purity (of mind). This is the idea. Hereby is set aside this apprehension, 'If even the recollection of objects is harmful, much more so is their enjoyment. In that case, how can it be that one who utilizes the objects to live does not incur evil?' The question, 'How does he move about?', stands answered by saying that he perceives objects through the organs which are under his control.

It has been said that he attains serenity. As to that, it is being said what happens when serenity comes:

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥

Prasāde sarvaduḥkhānām
hānirasyopajāyate;
Prasannacetaso hyāśu
buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate. (2.65)

When there is serenity, there follows eradication of all his sorrows, because the wisdom of one who has a serene mind soon becomes wholly established.

Prasād, when there is serenity of mind, in the form of purity; *upajāyate*, there follows; *hāniḥ*, eradication; *sarva-duḥkhānām*, of all the sorrows, on the personal plane etc., which are manifestations of nescience; *asya*, of this one, of the monk. *Hi*, because; *buddhiḥ*, the Wisdom, in the form of the identity of Brahman and the Self; *prasanna-cetasah*, of the monk who has a serene mind; *āsu*, soon, quickly indeed; *pari-avatiṣṭhate*, becomes established wholly (*pari*), on account of the absence of obstacles such as *viparīta-bhāvanā* etc. Hence, when there is serenity there follows complete steadiness of Wisdom; from that comes the cessation of nescience which is opposed to it; from that results the destruction of all sorrows, the effects of that (nescience). Though there is thus this sequence, still, the statement about (serenity) having the power of destroying all sorrows is made so that one may put in greater effort for serenity. So there is no contradiction.

He (the Lord) confirms this very idea by showing the opposite side:

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

*Nāsti buddhirayuktasya
na cāyuktasya bhāvanā;
Na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir-
aśāntasya kutah sukham. (2.66)*

For one who has not controlled his mind there is no Wisdom, and there is no meditation for the unsteady man. And for an unmeditative man there is no peace. How can there be happiness for one without peace?

Ayuktasya, for one who has not conquered his mind; *na asti*, there is no, there does not arise; *buddhiḥ*, Wisdom, concerning the Self, which grows from deliberation, called *śravaṇa* and *manana*, in the Vedānta. And in the absence of that Wisdom,

ayuktasya, for the unsteady man; *na bhāvanā*, there is no meditation, in the form of absorption (*nididhyāsana*), consisting in a flow of similar ideas, unbroken by dissimilar ideas. In each case 'na, no' is to be connected with 'asti, there is'. *Ca*, and; *abhāvayataḥ*, for one who does not meditate on the Self; there is *na*, no; *śāntiḥ*, peace, in the form of cessation of nescience together with its effects, the realization of the identity of Brahman and the Self, which results from the Upaniṣadic sayings.

Kutah sukham, how can there be happiness, i.e. the bliss of Liberation; *aśāntasya*, for one without peace, devoid of the realization of the Self?

(*Arjuna*:) Why is it that there is no Wisdom for one who has not conquered his mind?

Hence He says:

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥

*Indriyāṇāṃ hi caratām
yanmano'nuvidhīyate;
Tadasya harati prajñām
vāyurnāvamivāmbhasi. (2.67)*

Since, among the wandering organs, that (organ) with regard to which the mind is impelled carries away the Wisdom of this one, as wind (diverts) a boat on the waters,—

Indriyāṇām, among the organs, which are wandering, which are active with regard to their respective objects, which are uncontrolled; *yat*, that (organ), even if it is one; with regard to which (*anu*), *manah*, the mind, is impelled (*vidhīyate*), i.e. becomes active—the verbal Mood here is in the Reflexive Passive—;¹ *tat*, that organ, even though one;

1. Actually, the mind is the *object* of impulsion

which is pursued by the mind, *harati*, carries away; *prajñām*, the Wisdom, concerning the Self, as presented by the scriptures; *asya*, of this one, of the aspirant, or of the mind, because the mind is engrossed in the object of that (organ). The idea is that, since even one of the organs carries away the Wisdom, therefore it goes without saying that all of them do carry (it) away.

The (meaning of the) example is, however, clear. The wind diverts a boat only when it is on water, not when on land. The word *ambhasi* (on the waters) is used to indicate this fact. Thus it is suggested that, even in the case of the object of comparison, the ability of the organ to carry away the Wisdom exists only when there is disturbance—comparable to the waters—in the mind, but not when there is stability—comparable to land—in the mind. *Hi*, since this is so, (therefore)—.

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

*Tasmādyasya mahābāho
nigrhītāni sarvaśah;*

*Indriyānīndriyārthebhyas-
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā. (2.68)*

Therefore, O mighty-armed one, his Wisdom becomes established whose organs, in their totality, are withdrawn from their objects.

Sarvaśah, in their totality, (i.e.) together with the mind. By addressing (Arjuna) as '*mahābāho*, O mighty-armed one', He implies this: 'Since you are capable of subduing all the enemies, you are capable of subduing even the enemy in the form of the organs.' The remaining portion is clear. By the word '*tasya*, his' are referred to successful person and the aspirant, because 'control of the organs' is to be concluded as a characteristic so far as the man of steady Wisdom is concerned, and as a discipline for attaining Wisdom so far as a seeker of Liberation is concerned.

(to be continued)

by the true agent, an individual. But in the construction of the sentence it appears as the nominative.

Faith And Self-Surrender

(Continued from page 517)

Mugala-Upaniṣad also says, 'A person becomes what he worships.'¹³

Sri Ramakrishna used to sing a song that summed up everything:

As is a man's meditation, so is his feeling of love;
As is a man's feeling of love, so is his gain;
And faith is the root of all.
If in the Nectar Lake of Mother Kali's feet
My mind remains immersed,
Of little use are worship, oblations, or sacrifice.¹⁴

13. *Tam yathā yathopāsate tathaiiva bhavati.*

14. *Gospel*, p. 251.

Prabuddha Bharata's Future Role

SISTER GARGI

This is the text of a talk delivered on 7 January 1995, on the occasion of the release of the Centenary Number of the P.B. Gargi (Marie Louise Burke) is the author of the monumental research work on Swamiji, Swami Vivekananda in the West : New Discoveries.

I feel honoured to have been asked to speak on this special occasion. I believe it is a very rare occurrence that a magazine celebrates its hundredth anniversary. It is a tremendous achievement to keep a magazine going for a full century—especially a religious magazine which cannot rely on a steady stream of news for its mills to grind and its writers to embellish every month. Generally, the substance of a religious magazine is gleaned largely from the past. Ancient doctrines and scriptures are viewed and reviewed endlessly, always with an eye to finding some original way of presenting them, of relating them to current trends and modes of life or seeing them afresh with a modern eye and mind. This restyling and adaptation of the old takes knowledge, experience, and thought—none of which are easy to come by. If a religious magazine, or a magazine, devoted essentially to a particular outlook and purporting to uplift the consciousness of its readers is not to become, after a time, a sort of excruciatingly dull religious tract, then extremely hard work is called for from its editors, writers and overall planners. And this is to say nothing of the pressure at every step of an unforgiving deadline, month after month, year after year. Clearly, such demanding work has been going on successfully for almost a hundred years in the Himalayan editorial office of *Prabuddha Bharata*. Hopefully it will go on ad infinitum, for hopefully the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* will continue year after year to read each monthly issue and to feel

uplifted and benefited by it. What else would be the point of so much dedicated labour?

Certainly this was Swamiji's point when, through Alasinga, he started the *Brahmavadin* and, when less than a year later, he encouraged Nanjunda Rao to start *Prabuddha Bharata*, which was (in its beginning) a sort of younger brother to the earlier erudite journal. To intellectually and spiritually benefit the readers of his magazines is, of course, still Swamiji's point. 'I am with you,' he wrote to Dr. Rao at the very beginning, 'and when I am gone, my spirit will work with you.'¹ Needless to say, his spirit is still with all of Dr. Rao's successors, which, also needless to say, is why *Prabuddha Bharata* has lasted one hundred years and will surely last hundreds of years more.

It was not only to offer spiritual and intellectual food to individual readers that Swamiji, fully aware of the difficulties involved, promoted these two journals. His idea, which was commensurate with the magnitude of the work, was to revive and spread the great concepts of Vedanta throughout the nation that had given birth to them and thereby to help bring about India's renaissance. Nor was Swamiji think-

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1992), vol. 5, p. 114.



Sister Gargi



A section of the audience

ing only of India. As he repeatedly wrote to his Madras disciples: 'You must not forget that my interests are *international* and not Indian alone.'² Neither the *Brahmavadin* nor *Prabuddha Bharata* was, in Swamiji's view, just another magazine; they were both to be epoch making—and this throughout the world.

Swamiji, however, was well aware that the time was not ripe at the end of the nineteenth century for either of these magazines to have a large following in the West. I do not know how large and widespread the Western circulation of *Prabuddha Bharata* is today, but, however large it may be, I would suspect that it is confined primarily to those people who are already interested in Vedanta and devoted to the Ramakrishna Order. That is to say, I do not think *Prabuddha Bharata*—any more than other specialized journals—has today a wide appeal in the West.

But I believe it is on the eve of a great future in the Western world. During the last twenty years or so the West has been opening up for such a journal. As you know, there has grown during these years a tremendous interest in matters metaphysical. I am not thinking here of the inter-religious dialogue that is going on; nor am I thinking of what is generally known as the 'New Age'—a popular trend that ranges all the way from serious spiritual thought to UFOs and madness of all varieties. I am thinking, rather, of the supra-religious dialogue, a new open-ended, nonreligious search for Reality. A definite shift in outlook among highly reputable Western philosophers and psychologists is taking place—most particularly, perhaps, among the philosophers of science, mainly of physics. New paradigms are cropping up everywhere in Western countries in an effort to break out

of the rigidities of materialism into those worlds of superconscious reality to which the science of physics recently and unavoidably points.

The days of the Logical Positivists, with their haughty disdain of any statement not capable of proof or disproof by sense perception or reason—those days of shallow empirical thought, which lasted well into the 1950s, have given place to a recognition that there are other means of knowledge open to man. Altered or enhanced states of consciousness that reveal realms of reality totally closed to sense perception, are being recognized as possible to everyone. Consciousness itself is becoming understood as fundamental—and not, as still supposed by many diehard but eminent physicists, as a nonessential by-product of matter, a sort of electrochemical twitching in the brain. This movement toward metaphysical exploration is not fly-by-night; while it is not yet an accepted part of mainstream thought, it is by no means lacking in influence. In America alone, both scholarly and popular journals (many of them beautifully produced) that deal with these new philosophies and psychologies are proliferating. Innumerable books are being published on metaphysical subjects, which fact cannot but lead one to think that there is a great hunger for spiritual sustenance. There is, in short, a new spiritual direction to Western thinking, and however much one may deplore or decry the so-called materialism of the West, so obvious on the surface, no discerning person can ignore the visible and rising trend toward the metaphysical.

Personally, I am convinced that these reachings toward a supersensuous reality are the sproutings of the seeds sown by Swamiji. The twentieth-century revolution in science that has sparked these new philosophies cannot account for the awakening and hunger of the soul. One

2. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

thing, however, that has come to my indignant notice is that in none of the literature on these subjects that I have read is Swamiji or Vedanta ever mentioned—well, hardly ever. True, the Upanishads are quoted now and then to confirm some insight, but more often one reads quotations from the *Tao te Ching*, from Buddhist scriptures, and from Sufi poetry. Aurobindo, Krishnamurti, and an author named Alan Watts are quoted at length, but seldom does one find even a reference to Swami Vivekananda.

Now, I am aware that Swamiji would not care in the least about what I consider to be an outrageous oversight. He would only rejoice that (as he prophesied) a tidal wave of spirituality is beginning to sweep over the world. Nevertheless, he wanted the unifying message of Vedanta to be a strong voice in the chorus of world thought. And indeed an awareness and appreciation of Swamiji's writings and a knowledge of Vedanta would give great impetus to this vital and transforming spiritual wave.

And here, it seems to me, is a vital new role that *Prabuddha Bharata* will be playing in the West in the second century of its life. By relating Vedanta to the philosophical movements that are developing in America, England, and other Western countries, by taking an informed part in them, by convers-

ing with them, and cheering them on *Prabuddha Bharata* will be taking a major part in the new thought-world that is bubbling up everywhere. The journal is no doubt already participating to some extent in these movements, but when it does so to an even greater extent than at present—not by way of aggrandizing Swamiji or Vedanta, or even of emphasizing them, but simply by way of plunging headlong into the current of world thought—then it will be more widely read by the many spiritually minded people who, though not necessarily affiliated with any particular religious organization, abound throughout Western countries. *Prabuddha Bharata* will then take a prominent, nonparochial place among the serious, thought-provoking journals of its kind and contribute enormously to the fruition of this growing spiritual trend.

The Western metaphysical field is today wide open, and in the middle of it is a place crying out to be filled. It seems to me that during the next century *Prabuddha Bharata* will and, if I may say so, certainly should fill that place. Thus I think we are celebrating here not only the completion of one hundred successful years of *Prabuddha Bharata* but the beginning of the next hundred years, during which the journal will have, as Swamiji wanted, an even grander international scope and influence. □

When the Soul-bird at last escapes from the net of the fowler and finds its King, then the apparent distinction of immanent from transcendent being dissolves in the light of the day, and it hears and speaks with a voice that is at once its own and its King's, saying:

I was the Sin that from Myself rebell'd;
I was the remorse that tow'rd Myself compell'd....
Pilgrim, Pilgrimage and Road
Was but Myself toward Myself; and Your
Arrival but Myself at my own door.

—From *Al Beruni's India*

The Individual and the Supreme

SWAMI TATHAGATANANDA

The essential message of Vedanta—the oneness of the Atman (the individual Self) and Brahman (the Divine Soul of the Universe)—is brought out lucidly in this article by Swami Tathagatananda. Our true divine Self, the Atman which is one with Brahman, is eclipsed by the narrow ego. Through disciplines the ego vanishes, the Self shines in its own glory, and man's life becomes blessed.

Swami Tathagatananda, the spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of New York City, is the author of many books and articles on Vedanta and related subjects.

Each of us has two kinds of consciousness: individual and universal. Individual consciousness, or ego, separates us from God and from other beings. This individuality is self-reinforcing; it binds us to our egocentric view of life. When the ego is completely gone, when we become soul-conscious, we realize the supreme truth: the unity of existence.

Even before this complete awakening, a vague sense of a shared consciousness moves us to seek peace, harmony, and fraternity with others. Something within us moves us to think of God and to develop a larger awareness. We cannot rest, feeling we are completely separate from others; part of us wants to break the barriers and be free. In our best moments we see that life is essentially divine; we also feel that we are bound by our ego, unable to express our full divine potential.

We feel helpless because we are not aware of our own divinity. Vedanta boldly proclaims that every living being is essentially divine. The soul of every one is pure, good, beautiful, and blissful. It is infinite and eternal. It is free from all bondage, limitation, and sorrow. It is one with God, the supreme spirit.

only the outer expression. The inner source, God, is free from bondage and beyond all relations. This idea takes deep root in our minds and drives us to seek the experience of oneness. Even partial self-realization makes us aware of our universal nature. We hear the call of our own greater Self, the higher or real Self. We try to respond to this divine call through spiritual disciplines.

The higher Self of the individual is called the *Atman*. Body and mind cover the *Atman*, like a coat, but are not part of it. The body is made of parts; it must fall apart in time. The *Atman* is single, simple, and divine. It is the source of life, the organizing and sustaining Power. Without the *Atman* nothing lives.

The *Kāṭha-Upaniṣad* illustrates the relationship between body, mind, and Self with this analogy: "The body is a chariot. Know the *Atman* as the master of the chariot, *buddhi* (intelligence) as the charioteer, and *manas* (sensing, feeling mind) as the reins.¹ In the next verse, we are told that the five senses are the horses and the objects of sense are the road on which we travel. The senses are higher, or more subtle, than the objects of sense; mind, subtler than the senses; *buddhi*, subtler than the mind; and the *Atman*, subtler than *buddhi*. The

The individual seems finite, but this is

1. 1.3.3.

finer a substance, the harder it is to hold it. The Atman, like space, is subtle, vast, and free; yet it joins itself to a body and mind to experience the world. The Atman wills its own embodiment.

This knowing Self, the cause of our birth in the world, is unborn, immortal, and abiding. It has no cause. It is not affected by death. For our spiritual growth and real well-being, we should know the Atman while we are living. In the Upaniṣads we read:

As a razor stays hidden in its sheath,
as fire lies dormant in wood
so the soul fills the whole body,
even to the tips of the nails.
People do not see the soul directly;
what they see is an imperfect image.

When it breathes it is called prāna,
When it sees it is called vision,
when it hears it is called hearing,
when it thinks it is called mind.
These are names for its functions (karma-nāma);
all are centred in the soul.²

This Atman, as pure awareness, is the eternal witness of all the mind's changes. It is the light of pure consciousness that illumines every mental action. Hence, the Atman is 'known through every pulsation of knowledge and awareness.'³ Śaṅkara's comment on this verse of the *Kena-Upaniṣad* is illuminating:

The Ātman is aware of every mental state.
He sees and knows each one as it flows by.
As he is essentially pure awareness,
We cannot, with our minds,
distinguish him from the mental states,
His reflection is seen by the mental states,
in and through the mental states—
how else could they know him?⁴

Since the Atman is the light of pure con-

sciousness that illumines all mental activities, therefore the affirmation that the Atman is 'known through every pulsation of knowledge and awareness.'⁵ 'This Brahman is immediate and direct. It is the innermost Self of all.'⁶ The Atman that lies in the innermost part of the body (*antarātman*) is dearer than sons, dearer than wealth, dearer than anything else.⁷ 'The husband is dear to one, not because he is the husband; but when one craves (*kāmanā*) for the husband, the husband is dear because of love for the Self (*ātmaprīti*). Wife, son, wealth—everything is desired for our own satisfaction (*ātmaprīti*).⁸ This is one of the most illuminating passages in the Upaniṣads about the nature of our self. It compels us to admit that things are dear to us only to the extent that we see ourselves projected in them. Things become dear to us because the soul is the dearest object of our life.

After expounding this thought-provoking idea, the great Yājñavalkya exhorts his dear wife, 'O Maitreyī, this Atman has to be seen. This Atman has to be heard about, this Atman has to be meditated upon and known. Only then is everything known, because the Atman fills everything—there is nothing else to know.'⁹ The objective world of earthly possessions and enjoyments affords the discriminating student opportunities to seek God. God, the inner Self of all, attracts us through all. This is the real secret of our love for each other.

A sincere seeker, who systematically follows spiritual disciplines, can experience this profound truth. Our experiences and memory demand the unity and unchange-

2. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 1.4.7.
3. *Kena-Upaniṣad*, 2.4.
4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*
6. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 3.4.1.
7. *Ibid.*, 1.4.8.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 2.4.5.

ability of the experiencer, the subject. Only the immortal Atman is the real experiencer, the real subject without any object, or 'objectless subject'. A pure soul, seeking earnestly, can find the Atman. 'Of all things, this Self alone should be realized; one knows everything through it. Just as one can get at (an animal) through its footprints, so can one get at the Self through its footprints in the sands of experience.'¹⁰

Everything that is composed of parts must change. The Atman, simple and not compound, never changes. Incorporeal, it is not tied to anything physical. The Atman is the ever-pure, untainted, eternal witness. It is luminous intelligence, nameless, form-

The objective world of earthly possessions and enjoyments affords the discriminating student opportunities to seek God. God, the inner Self of all, attracts us through all. This is the real secret of our love for each other.

less, and deathless. It appears to be enclosed by the body and the body's adjuncts, the senses. Vital force, mind, buddhi, and ego stand as a bulwark hiding the Atman. When we get rid of body-consciousness, the self-effulgent Atman stands revealed.

The absolute Brahman is 'beyond the range of speech and thought'—we cannot define or limit it as an object of relative experience. Still, the Upaniṣads point to Brahman through its characteristic expressions in the human mind: 'Brahman is Truth, Consciousness, Infinity.'¹¹ 'Brahman is Consciousness, Bliss.'¹² Sri Ramakrishna said of Brahman:

10. *Ibid.*, 1.4.7.

11. *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad*, 2.1.

12. *Brhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 3.9.28.

What Brahman is cannot be described. All things of the world—the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Tantras, the six systems of philosophy—have been defiled, like food that has been touched by the tongue, for they have been read or uttered by the tongue. Only one thing has not been defiled in this way, and that is Brahman. No one has ever been able to say what Brahman is.¹³

While coming out of *samādhi*, Sri Ramakrishna could not utter even the most sacred word 'OM'. He had to come down three levels, as it were, to utter it. But *saguṇa* Brahman, or Cosmic Brahman, or the Personal God immanent in the cosmos, suffers no change. Brahman always remains undifferentiated and infinite. The cosmos is essentially the Absolute Brahman appearing as names and forms.

The Immanent Brahman is all-transcendent. The infinitude of God is in no way affected by His immanence. The Absolute cannot be divided. 'The Personal God is the Absolute looked at through the haze of *Māyā*—ignorance.'¹⁴ Hinduism accepts pure Consciousness as the Ultimate Reality. It is non-dual, non-relational, non-compound, unitary, and universal. It is prior to every form of existence, the starting point of all experiences. It is self-existent and self-luminous. This Reality, in Hindu tradition, is known as Brahman—an entity whose greatness, power, or expansion none can measure. Śaṅkara gives an idea of Brahman in the *Brahma-Sūtras*:

This universe of name and form supports many agents, their actions and

13. Sri 'M.', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, tr. Swami Nikhilananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Myapore, 1985), p. 102.

14. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 8, p. 255.

experiences, and the results of actions. Its space, time, and causation are governed by laws. Human reason cannot grasp the true nature of its creation. The projection, sustenance, and dissolution of this universe can only come from Brahman, the omniscient, omnipotent source.¹⁵

'This universal intelligence,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'is what we call God.'

Again, defining Brahman, Śaṅkara says in his commentary on the *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad*: 'Brahman is defined as the Reality from which beings are never separated—neither during their origin, sustenance, nor dissolution.'¹⁶ The central idea of the Upaniṣads is that Brahman is Atman.¹⁷ In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, Brahman and Atman are not discussed separately; Brahman is always identical with Atman.¹⁸

Brahman or Paramātmān

Jīvātman, the individual soul, is only an 'abridged edition', as it were, of the *Paramātmān*. This has been expounded in the great dictum '*Prajñānam Brahma*': Consciousness manifested as the individual Self is Brahman.¹⁹ Here we get the identity of the individual Self and the Supreme Self, in their essential nature as pure Consciousness, beyond all distinctions. Divine splendour, chained to a body-mind, appears to be finite. With illumination, its true identity is revealed.

The analogy of the wave and the ocean will help us to understand. The wave, limited by its apparent form, is small in comparison with the vast ocean. When the wave loses its individual character and merges with the ocean, it gains its true identity.

As pure and simple water, the wave is always one with the ocean. The wave has no life apart from the ocean. The ocean takes the form of a wave due to *upādhis* (adjuncts).

The experience of finding identity between man and God finds utterance in the words, 'I am Brahman.'²⁰ Jesus articulates the same ancient and eternal truth when he says, 'I and my Father are one.' In one Upaniṣad, *Paramātmān* and *jīvātman*—*Brahman* and *jīva*—have been compared to two birds.²¹ Swami Vivekananda narrates this picturesque parable in his own inimitable way:

Upon the same tree there are two birds, one on the top, the other below. The one on the top is calm, silent, and majestic, immersed in its own glory; the one on the lower branches, eating sweet and bitter fruits by turns, hopping from branch to branch, is becoming happy and miserable by turns. After a time the lower bird eats an exceptionally bitter fruit and gets disgusted and looks up and sees the other bird, that wondrous one of golden plumage, who eats neither sweet nor bitter fruit, who is neither happy nor miserable, but calm, Self-centred, and sees nothing beyond his Self.

The lower bird longs for this condition, but soon forgets it, and again begins to eat the fruits. In a little while, he eats another exceptionally bitter fruit, which makes him feel miserable, and he again looks up, and tries to get nearer to the upper bird. Once more he forgets and after a time he looks up, and so on he goes again and again, until he comes very near to the beautiful bird and sees the reflection of light from his plumage playing around his own body, and he feels a change and seems to melt away; still nearer he comes, and everything about him melts away, and at last he understands this wonderful change. The lower bird was, as it were, only the substantial-looking shadow, the reflection of the higher; he himself was in essence the upper bird all the time. This eating of fruits, sweet and bitter, this

15. 1.1.2.

16. 3.1.1.

17. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 11.5.19.

18. *Ibid.*, 1.4.10.

19. *Aitareya-Upaniṣad*, 3.1.3.

20. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 1.4.10.

21. *R̥g-Veda* 1.164.24; *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*, 3.1.1.2.; *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad*, 4.6.

lower little bird, weeping and happy by turns, was a vain chimera, a dream; all along, the real bird was there above, calm and silent, glorious and majestic, beyond grief, beyond sorrow. The upper bird is God, the Lord of this universe, and the lower bird is the human soul, eating the sweet and bitter fruits of this world. Now and then comes a heavy blow to the soul.

For a time, he stops the eating and goes towards the unknown God, and a flood of light comes. He thinks that this world is a vain shadow. Yet again the senses drag him down, and he begins as before to eat the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. Again an exceptionally hard blow comes. His heart becomes open again to divine light; thus gradually he approaches God, and as he gets nearer and nearer, he finds his old self melting away. When he has come near enough he sees that he is no other than God, and he exclaims, 'He whom I have described to you as the Life of this universe, as present in the atom, and in the suns and moons—He is the basis of our own life, the Soul of our soul. Nay, thou art That.'²²

Paramātman, like the luminous sun, seems to be eclipsed by clouds of ego. When the clouds of ignorance disperse, the ever-bright sun of God shines in the pure heart.

God, when formless, has no gender. Taking the form of a *jīva*, God is seen as male, female, or neuter, depending on the kind of body. The body is a temple of God and God resides in the heart of a *jīva*. Brahman is also called *Ākāśa*. 'The characteristics of subtlety, incorporeality, and all-pervasiveness are common to *Ākāśa* and Brahman.'²³ The sole purpose of life is to realize the Truth through spiritual transformation. The highest Truth, called *Sat*, *Brahman*, *Bhūman*, or *Atman*, is non-dual, all-pervasive, all-inclusive, subtlest,

smallest of the small and greatest of the great. It is hard to think about. Yet common people can approach Brahman because it lives in our heart. We can meditate on Brahman in the small space in our heart.²⁴ The outer sky (*Ākāśa*, *Brahman*) and the small space within (*hṛdayākāśa*, *jīvātman*) are of the same nature. This truth is concisely stated in another *mahāpākya* (great saying): 'This Atman is Brahman.'²⁵

Desire is the root of his painful suffering; he must wake from spiritual slumber by sheer earnestness, through meditation and other spiritual practices. He cannot avoid suffering without freeing his mind of desires.

During deep sleep, we are happy to have a rest from tension and fear, a break from our desires and impulses. In that period of deep sleep we are at one with Brahman, though unconsciously. Although resting on Brahman, the *jīvāman* does not realize oneness with Brahman, pure existence.²⁶ This contact motivates a rare few to study the character of deep sleep and to find the bliss of Brahman behind the joy of sleep. The *jīva* experiences 'vague ignorance, and a mood of bliss' during deep sleep.

The Upaniṣads also discuss how transmigration takes place. 'When a man's death is imminent, the *jīvātman* leaves the body and moves away, guided by the *Paramātman*.'²⁷ The fruits of his good and bad *karma* invariably cling to him, determining his future. Of course, the prevailing thought in his mind at the moment of death sets his immediate course.²⁸

24. *Ibid.*, 8.1.2.

25. *Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad*, 11.

26. *Chāndogya*, 6.8.1-2; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, 4.3.11.

27. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 4.3.35.

28. *Bhagavad-Gītā*, 8.6.

22. Swami Vivekananda: *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, pp 394-6; Cf. vol. 6, p. 25; vol. 3, p. 235; vol. 8, p. 5.

23. *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, 8.14.1.

Man enjoys life according to his deserts; he learns good lessons through experience, Finally, he learns the hard lesson that he is responsible for everything. The Law of Karma does not let him lay responsibility on anyone but himself. In this way, man gains a complete victory over his impulses and approaches the final phase of liberation through good karma. Desire is the root cause of his painful suffering; he must wake from spiritual slumber by sheer earnestness, through meditation and other spiritual practices. He cannot avoid suffering without freeing his mind of desires. The *jīvātman* reveals its pristine glory when completely free from ignorance. It is pure Subject—objectless Consciousness, Bliss. The soul finds its eternal rest in God, the Absolute Reality is Brahman—*Sacchidānanda* (Existence, Consciousness, Bliss).²⁹ Brahman projects this world through its *Māyā-Śakti* (magic power), just for Its own play (*līlā*).

One primary idea has possessed the seers of India from the days of the *Ṛg-Veda*: *jīvātman* and *Paramātman* are one. With intuitive perception, they discovered one unchanging supreme Reality, Brahman, underlying the objective universe.³⁰ The same Brahman, as the immortal Consciousness in man, is called Atman. Brahman and Atman, identical in nature, are the first Prin-

29. *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*, 3.2.2.

30. *Ṛg-Veda*, 10.90, 121–9.

31. Paul Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 86.

ciple.³¹ A superficial view of man cannot reveal his immortal divinity; but over an immeasurably long course of evolution, the individual attains freedom through spiritual transformation. Swami Vivekananda says, 'No books, no scriptures, no science can ever imagine the glory of the Self that appears as man, the most glorious God that ever was, the only God that ever existed, exists, or ever will exist.'³²

Spirituality, according to Vedanta, is a truth to be communicated and verified like science. Sri Ramakrishna vindicated that truth in our age. The Eternal Truth revealed itself to him. He saw with open eyes that God has become everything:

The Divine Mother revealed to me in the Kali temple that it was She who had become everything. She showed me that everything was full of consciousness—the water vessels were consciousness, the door-sill was consciousness, the marble floor was consciousness—all was consciousness.³³

Further, he says: 'Now I see that it is God alone who is moving about in various forms; as a holy man, as a cheat, as a villain,'³⁴ The great saying of Vedanta—'Thou art That'³⁵—stands vindicated. □

32. Vivekananda: *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, p. 250.

33. Sri 'M.', *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 345.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 419.

35. *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, 6.8.7.

Eternal unquestioning Self-surrender to Mother alone can give us peace. Love Her for Herself, without fear or favour. Love Her because you are Her child. See Her in all, good and bad alike. Then alone will come 'sameness', the Bliss Eternal that is Mother Herself, when we realize Her thus. Until then misery will pursue us. Only resting in Mother are we safe.

Swami Vivekananda in the West—New Discoveries, vol. 3, Appendix D

Personality Development

SWAMI NITYASTHANANDA

Our personal development is more important than all other types of development—economic, educational, rural, urban, etc., because all these other kinds of development are undertaken only for the benefit of man. Different factors which influence our development are: our inherited saṁskāras, our environment, work, education, experiences, and especially our Ideal in life.

The spiritual element in us is beyond all other aspects of our personality—physical, mental, and emotional—the author avers. Attuning ourselves to this spiritual centre of our personality, we acquire self-mastery, inner psychological stability, and meaning in life.

Swami Nityasthananda is a monk of our Order, staying at Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore.

Man, the Centre of All Developments

Generally we speak of economic development, educational development, rural development, urban development, and such other kinds of development. We organize conferences to discuss these kinds of development, and governments draw up elaborate plans and spend crores of rupees to achieve them. Rarely is any discussion or conference arranged to discuss human or personality development, though it is most vital. While all other forms of development are for the sake of man, the development of man himself is little thought of. Focussing on other things and neglecting him, the centre, all other endeavours fail to yield their expected positive results. It is like building a beautiful house for a sick man, but without first curing him of his sickness. By the time the house is complete the sick man may die and the house become his tomb. All of these various kinds of development come to naught if we do not pay attention to the moral and spiritual development of man.

Each is Unique

Sometimes we say a particular person has a wonderful, or charismatic, or extraordinary personality. These expressions refer only to the individual's external

appearance, however, and do not necessarily reflect the true personality. Though we say that such and such a person has a political or business personality, this may not be true of the person himself; for his manner of speaking, thinking, or behaviour may be induced by his profession, and so do not necessarily reflect his true self.

Aside from these masks, which are external to personality, each of us has an inner personality which is unique. It is very difficult to understand what actually constitutes this uniqueness, because the factors that contribute to our inner development are innumerable. What is important is the necessity of retaining our individuality and uniqueness. Usually we are subject to different kinds of external influences and keep changing. As a result, our personality becomes unstable. It is mass-hysteria which makes us behave like the mass we are in. We are carried into the mass current without being aware of it. This happens when we lack inner stability.

Parents who impose their thinking and mode of life on their child without allowing him to grow according to his own unique natural tendencies, are making a great mistake. A father who cares for his own individuality respects his child's

individuality too, and allows him to follow his own law of growth. A sense of individuality is not selfishness. Selfishness is a result of possessiveness caused by wrong identification with persons, power, position, and other things of the world. So individuality is the opposite of selfishness.

There is another harmful tendency in man. It is blindly imitating others' way of life, behaviour, culture, ideas, etc. This is a slavish mentality. Blind imitation develops in us an artificial personality which we fondly believe to be a sign of our modernity. Swami Vivekananda says, 'Imitation is not civilization....Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in man.'¹ But, again, this does not mean that we should not learn anything from others. Learning and imitating are vastly different. Swamiji further says: 'We have indeed many things to

As stated earlier, there are many factors that contribute to personality development, either positively or negatively. We can classify them broadly as follows: Samskāras or past-impressions, environment, work, education, experience...

learn from others, yea, that man who refuses to learn is already dead. Learn everything that is good from others. But bring it in, and in your own way, absorb it; do not become others.'² We can explain this process of learning by the example of the digestion of food. Food does not get assimilated into the body in the same form in which we take it in. It gets totally transformed before it is assimilated by the body, assisted by many digestive secretions. In the same manner,

whatever we learn from others must become a part of our own personality through being assimilated by the power of our own rational thinking. Otherwise, undigested ideas harm the growth of personality, just as undigested food does harm to the body. So blind imitation of others is not conducive to the development of a man's character.

Different Factors in the Making-up of Personality

As stated earlier, there are many factors that contribute to personality development, either positively or negatively. We can classify them broadly as follows: *Samskāras* or past-impressions, environment, work, education, experience, and the Ideal in life.

Samskāras: We are born with certain past-impressions, derived from our past lives, which shape our personality as we grow from childhood to maturity. These *samskāras* may be thought of as residues of our experiences in the past—past actions and past thinking, which have accumulated in our unconscious mind and influence our present conscious actions and thinking. Swami Vivekananda says it this way: 'What I am just at this moment is the effect of the sum total of all the impressions of my past life. This is really what we mean by character; each man's character is determined by the sum total of all these [past] impressions.'³

Environment: The environment plays an important role in shaping the personality of a man. One of the world's great thinkers, Will Durant, goes to the extent of saying: 'What *thinks* in man is not he, but the social community of which he is a part.'⁴ This does not, however, mean we should overlook the importance of *samskāras*. If a person lives constantly in a good environment, his good *samskāras* will get strengthened and gradually his bad *samskāras* will be

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), Vol. 3, p. 381.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 54.

4. *The Pleasures of Philosophy*, p. 282.

attenuated. Exactly the reverse process will take place in a bad environment. It is also true that the environment itself will create fresh *samskāras* in man, depending upon his reactions to it.

Work: Work is one of the basic necessities of life, as food is. As the French-Swiss author Henri Frederic Amiel said, 'It is work which give flavour to life.' There is a Sanskrit saying: *Kriyā vihīno na ca yāti dhanyatām*, which means that one who does not work cannot reach blessedness. It is only through work that we can manifest our inner potentialities, capacities, and talents, which is imperative for the proper development of the personality. It is essential that we get the kind of work that will help us bring out our inner potential. If circumstances do not permit this, we must nevertheless patiently try to express ourselves taking advantage of the available opportunities.

Education: Swami Vivekananda defines education as the 'manifestation of the perfection already in man.'⁵ All knowledge, perfection, purity, goodness, and strength are potentially within man and education is the process of making them manifest. Erich Fromm, the great psychologist says, 'Education is identical with helping the child realize his potentialities.'⁶ Education is not just accumulation of knowledge or information (which might even become harmful to ourselves and others); education must be guided by wisdom. It is the *training of the will* that enables man to make use of knowledge to benefit himself and society. That is why Swamiji insisted so much on 'character-building' and 'man-making' education. Education should be oriented more towards shaping the personality of a student than making him a doctor, an engineer, a clerk, or some professional whose only goal will be to earn and amass money, through whatever refined or evil means.

5. *Complete Works*, vol. 4, p. 358.

6. *Man for Himself*, p. 192.

Experience: In life we get different kinds of experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant, which also play a major role in shaping our personality. So Swami Vivekananda said,

As Erich Fromm points out: "The history of mankind is the history of the growing individuation, but it is also the history of the growing freedom."

You will find that misery and happiness are equal factors in the formation of character. Good and evil have an equal share in moulding character. And in some instances, misery is a greater teacher than happiness. In studying the great characters the world has produced, I dare say, in the vast majority of cases it would be found that it was misery that taught more than happiness, it was poverty that taught more than wealth, it was blows that brought *out* their inner fire more than praise.⁷

But we must also know how to learn from our experiences, and as we learn we grow in wisdom. There are three classes of people: the best (*uttama*) who learn from the experiences of others; the mediocre (*madhyama*) who learn after personally undergoing the experiences; and the lowest class (*adhama*) who will never learn, even from personal experience. Let us try at least to be the mediocre type.

Ideal in Life

What ideal we adopt in our life is also very important in moulding our personality. Swami Vivekananda says in his lecture, 'God in Everything', that if a man with an ideal commits a hundred mistakes, the man without an ideal commits a thousand.⁸ Even the worst man, if he takes

7. *Complete Works*, vol. 1, p. 27.

to a higher spiritual ideal, can gradually change his ways and experience a wonderful transformation in his life. In the *Gita*, Sri Krishna says: 'If even a very wicked person worships Me with unswerving devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon does he become righteous and attain eternal peace.'⁹

Work, education and experience—these three can be called *environment*, which represents the present. *Samskāras* represent the *past*, and having an ideal in life refers to the *future*. So past, present and future together mould the personality of man.

Different Elements of Personality

What are the constituent elements of personality? First of all, this personality has a physical frame, consisting of the body and the senses, with its vital forces. Then comes

very little sense of personal identity because the ego is not fully developed in him. As he grows, the sense of 'I' also develops along with the idea of personal identity. So proper development of the ego, which is different from what we generally call 'egotism' (an undesirable characteristic) is a sign of maturity.

As consciousness gradually evolves from dead matter to the matured human being, the sense of individuality also grows. Generally we do not attribute any individuality or personality to material objects. In plants and animals there is a greater evolution of consciousness, but still we do not find clear-cut subjective individuality in them. They do not feel their separate identity, even though all plants and animals are different from one another. It is only in man that we find a definite

Another psychotherapist, M. Scott Peck, in a recently written popular book, The Road Less Travelled, spiritual element in man. In that book he says: 'Spiritual growth is the evolution of an individual... The ultimate goal of spiritual growth is for the individual to become totally, wholly God.'

the mental body, so-called, with its various faculties, such as thinking, feeling, willing, and imagining. Apart from these, there is ego, or 'I'-consciousness, which is referred to as the 'individual soul'. This 'soul' is the coordinating centre or agent of all the functions of the personality system. If the ego does not function properly, there will be lopsidedness in the personality, ultimately resulting in neurosis or insanity. The function of this ego can be compared to the function of the nucleus in the atom, which holds together all the energy particles of the atom. It is this ego that gives the sense of individuality or personal identity to the human personality. This personal identity grows as the ego develops. In a child we find

individuality which grows as he grows, with greater self-awareness. This is the uniqueness of man. The development of personality is commensurate with the growth of the sense of individuality. As Erich Fromm points out: 'The history of mankind is the history of the growing individuation, but it is also the history of the growing freedom.'¹⁰

The Spiritual Element in Man

What is the locus of this 'I'-consciousness? It must be something different from the body and mind-complex, because all these physical and mental components can be objectified—i.e. the body, the senses, feelings, concepts, etc. can be objectively perceived. So the observer of the subject must

8. *Ibid.*, vol.2, p. 144 ff.

9. *Bhagavad-Gita*, 9.30.

10. *Escape from Freedom*, p. 264.

be different from all these; it must be something non-material and non-mental. *Drg-Drśya-Viveka* (An Inquiry into the Nature of the 'Seer' and the 'Seen') makes this point very clear: 'The form is perceived and the eye is its perceiver. It (eye) is perceived and the mind is its perceiver. The mind with its modifications is perceived and the Witness (the Self) is verily the perceiver. But It (the Witness) is not perceived by any other.'¹¹

Vedanta says that this Witness, or the subjective element in us, is spiritual. It is divine Consciousness, for we are conscious of everything else because of its presence. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'Each soul is potentially divine.' The Upaniṣads say, 'The divine Consciousness resides in every being, as butter in milk.'¹²

Nowadays, even western psychologists are recognizing the spiritual dimensions of man. Viktor E. Frankl, the founder of logotherapy says: 'There is not only an instinctual unconscious, there is spiritual unconscious as well.' He further says: '...Thus the spiritual core, and only the spiritual core, warrants and constitutes oneness and wholeness in man.'¹³ Another psychotherapist, M. Scott Peck, in a recently written popular book, *The Road Less Travelled*, emphasized this spiritual element in man. In that book he says: 'Spiritual growth is the evolution of an individual...The ultimate goal of spiritual growth is for the individual to become totally, wholly God.'¹⁴ So, our real personality is spiritual and personality development ultimately means becoming wholly spiritual, raising ourselves above the body-mind complex. We can have greater stability in our personality and greater mastery over ourselves, if we have this spiritual perspective and strive to attain God, even though

we may not be able to achieve the ultimate aim God- or Self-realization in this very life.

Physical and Mental Culture

This spiritual development is preceded by the development of body and mind, the medium through which spirit manifests. We must take care of our body with proper food and recreation, and not indulge in restless activities and reckless sense enjoyment. Mental development involves two things: intellectual culture and emotional balance. The former is the part of the educational training we get and the latter requires development of will-power, which is possible only when we love and respect our own life. This love for life naturally makes us take care of our life properly, with a determined effort; this determination will help us to develop will-power. But this love for life ensues as a result of having found a certain meaning in life.

Another important point to be considered in personality development is having a meaningful relationship with society. No man can remain alone. His life is connected with society at all levels—physical, intellectual, moral, and also spiritual.

Meaningful Life

Living a meaningful life is the most important factor in personality development. As psychologists point out, meaninglessness in life leads to three important psychological maladies: *Depression, aggression and addiction*—a neurosis triad. When man feels that his life is completely meaningless, either for himself or for others, he either kills himself, kills others, or becomes addicted to some intoxicant—alcohol or drugs. Life becomes valuable only when it fulfils certain felt needs, then it has a certain meaning. When it is without meaning or purpose, man does not value it. He becomes irresponsible and wastes it. Addiction is a

11. Verse 1.

12. *Amṛtabindu-upaniṣad*, 20.

13. *The Unconscious God*, p. 24.

14. pp. 282, 303.

form of wasting one's life. Suicide stems from cases of extreme mental depression. If I do not value my life, neither will I value others' lives, and the result is the tendency to aggression and violence. So 'the need for meaning' is really a specific need, not reducible to other needs, and is in greater or smaller degree present in all human beings.¹⁵

What, then really gives meaning to life? Parents find meaning in life from their children. When the children grow up and no longer depend upon their parents, or desert their parents, the life of the parents again becomes devoid of meaning. Money or position also cannot fulfil the inner emptiness of life. A musician may find meaning in life from music. But when he loses his voice or if he is not rightly recognized, he feels depressed and finds his life meaningless. Life is more valuable than anything external, and it can find its meaning only in something which is more valuable than life itself. And what is more valuable than an awareness of the true Divine Self that is the very core of our personality? So it is only genuine spirituality that gives meaning to life. As Sri Ramakrishna says, 'Human life is meant for God-realization.'

Meaningful Relationship with the Society

Another important point to be considered in personality development is having a meaningful relationship with society. No man can remain alone. His life is connected with society at all levels—physical, intellectual, moral, and also spiritual. Society is not merely a collection of individuals, but is rather a cultural organization; and it is man who gives culture to it by developing and expressing his inner capacities, and putting to good use his talents and virtues. Swami Vivekananda says, 'The struggle to *objectify the subject* (italics ours) is the one phenomenon in the

world of which all societies and social forms are various modes and stages.' And again, man grows by absorbing the culture of society. He is both the child and the father of society. So his relationship with society is an essential factor in his personality development. Erich Fromm says: 'The process of living implies two kinds of relatedness to the outside world, that of assimilation and that of socialization.'¹⁶

Social Relationship and Love

Our relationship with others depends upon our attitude towards them, and this in turn depends upon our attitude towards ourselves. If we consider ourselves to be spiritual, and if our aim is spiritual, we naturally tend to regard others also as spiritual and try to help them spiritually, respecting their position and their level of development. This is actually what is meant by love. Love is defined by M. Scott Peck as 'the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's or another's spiritual growth.'¹⁷ So love is not mere emotional attachment to somebody, stemming from selfishness or possessiveness. Generally people want to possess the one whom they love, without allowing him or her to live and grow independently according to his or her personality traits. But this is not real love. Our relationship with society must be based on real love.

The absence of this kind of love breeds selfishness which is the basis of all immoral and corrupt practices in society. It creates a conflict between self-interest and social-interest. Some sacrifice social-interest for the sake of self-interest, and others sacrifice self-interest for social-interest. But if we have a moral and spiritual perspective, this conflict can be resolved, because as a general principle what is really good for the individual must be good for society at large. If I speak

15. *The Unconscious God*, p. 79.

16. *Man for Himself*, p. 113.

17. *The Road Less Travelled*, p. 85.

the truth, I want all others to do the same. But if I am bad, I do not want others to be bad, because others' badness will harm me. If I am a cheat, I hope to be able to cheat all others, but I do not want others to cheat me.

Give-and-Take Attitude

For a meaningful relationship with society there must be a give-and-take attitude amongst the people. Our life must be like a constantly flowing river. It should not be allowed to stagnate. As we receive, so we must give. John C. Cornelius says, '...but wrongly, we tend to overlook the fact that the act of giving is also an act of self-fulfilment.' Even so, indiscriminate giving will have a negative effect. There is a story of a 'giving tree'. Once a penniless poor man went to an apple tree and asked for help. The tree told him to take all its apples and sell them, which he did. He spent all the money and once again went to the tree for help. The tree told him to cut off all its branches and take them. The greedy man cut all the branches and sold them for wood. After some time, when that money was also spent, he went again to the tree begging for help. The tree without any hesitation requested him to cut off its trunk and sell it. The remorseless man followed the suggestion and got a lot of money by selling timber. Soon after spending all the wealth, the man shamelessly came again to beg of the tree. The tree told him, 'I have nothing more to give. You can have some rest by sitting on my stump.' This kind of giving and taking is beneficial neither to the individual nor to society.

Work and Social Relationship

Work links the individual to society. So a proper attitude towards work is essential for the individual if he is to have a meaningful relationship with others. No work is entirely personal, every work has got its social dimensions. A person who is working in an office may think that he is working solely for his own livelihood. But his work has mean-

ing both for the office and also indirectly for society. The work will have its positive or negative effect depending upon how he discharges his duties. This applies more or less to any kind of work we do. So every individual has his responsibility to society. If we do not properly discharge our responsibility we create a hell here for ourselves and for the coming generations. In the *Gita*, Sri Krishna says about selfishness: *...bhuñjate te tvagham pāpā ye pacanty-ātmakāraṇāt*—...those who cook food only for themselves, those sinful ones, eat sin' (3.13). This statement does not refer only to preparing food, but to all kinds of activities. No work is purely personal. Every work is a part of the cosmic wheel of action. As Sri Krishna says: 'He who does not follow here this wheel (of action) thus set revolving, who leads a sinful life and delights in the senses, in vain does he live' (3.16). So this awareness of the cosmic or social dimension of work is very essential for one's meaningful relationship with society.

Primary Social Link

Our relationship with society starts from where we are. If we live in a family, we must first try to develop a meaningful relationship with the other family members, and then gradually we must try to extend our relationship to others. If we cannot live happily with our near and dear ones, our relationship with other people cannot come about genuinely. How much we are loved and respected by the people immediately around us is more important than how popular we are outside. It is rightly said that charity begins at home. Our meaningful relationship with society begins from the home or the organization with which we are associated.

To conclude, we can define human personality as follows: It is a Self-conscious, psycho-physical entity living a meaningful life and having a meaningful relationship with society. □

On Beauty:

Swami Vivekananda & Rabindranath—

A Review of Their Traditional Indian Perspective

DR. MAYA DAS

Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore, Bengal contemporaries, were the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual giants who moulded modern Indian culture. They both, each in his own way, drew on the deep springs of the ancient Indian wisdom in their many-faceted, prodigious activities. The author here discusses the importance of their lives and their work in combating the materialistic, sense-oriented forces that are invading our land and threatening to bring about 'a collapse of human values and relationships.'

Dr. Maya Das, had presented this paper at a National Seminar on 'The Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda' held at the Department of Philosophy and Religion, Viswa Bharati, Shantiniketan, where she works.

Interestingly, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore—one a saint who was also a poet and a musician, and the other a creative writer, an artist, a musician, who was saintly in much of his writing and practice—were not aesthetic theoreticians, although both were concerned with and wrote on the aesthetic values of life. Aesthetics to them was more a matter of insight or vision than a neat academic system of philosophy. Both have spoken of beauty as an integral part of the process of transformation of the human personality from a lower to a higher order. For both of them the notion of beauty was metaphysical or transcendental.

In this paper I have chosen to discuss beauty in the vision of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath, because these two geniuses have had tremendous influence in shaping modern Indian culture. Their aesthetic thoughts and ideas are specially relevant in the context of the present materialistic industrial civilization that degrades man's sensitivity, refinement, dig-

nity, and forces man to identify himself with his means of livelihood and thereby lose his faith in his own inner Self. The present materialist culture has brought in not merely a collapse of human values and relationships, but has made man incapable of experiencing aesthetic delight. Appreciation or experience of beauty requires refinement of human sensibility. Both Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath maintain that the primary function of art is self-refinement, or in traditional Indian terms, *ātmasaṅskṛti*.

Since both Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath have in a broad sense affirmed the traditional Indian view of the experience and expression of beauty, we may begin with a short review of that traditional perspective.

According to the ancient Indian thinkers, man lives and works within the framework of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness—the intellectual, aesthetic, and moral values. These values are enriched by a constant interaction

with one another. The aesthetic value, beauty, is often viewed as an eternal self-subsisting value, because beauty as an 'artistic' object is capable of giving *ānanda*, aesthetic delight, which is known as a 'feeling *par excellence*'. Actually, in the Indian tradition, the very concept of beauty comes from the metaphysical concept of *ānanda*. According to the Upaniṣads the cosmic creation itself is derived from *ānanda* and has its being, life, and sustenance in it.¹ Beauty and Bliss (*ānanda*) are identical to Indian seers.

Making no sharp distinction between art and ethics, aesthetics and metaphysics, traditional Indian intuitive thought affirms that beauty can be known by man intrinsically and positively in the innermost essence of his being. Knowledge and enjoyment are not contradictory terms, but are synonymous in the highest act of transcen-

not speak of a concept of beauty, but rather of a method and a process whereby beauty can be realized. According to them through a disinterested contemplation of beauty in nature and art, the mind can transcend the ego. It should be pointed out that to the Indian philosophers *mokṣa*, true freedom, is the ultimate aim of all human quest. *Mokṣa* is a life of harmony that can be attained by purifying and refining one's natural impulses. The first phase of purification is the culture of emotions. Beauty is the fruit of emotional culture.

According to the ancient Indian aestheticians, beauty is an experience which we enjoy in the presence of some object. Beauty evokes human feelings. Art is artificial beauty as distinguished from natural beauty. Aesthetic delight (*sadyah parānivr̥tti*) and refinement of character being the chief

Unlike Plato, the Upaniṣadic seers do not speak of a concept of beauty, but rather of a method and a process whereby beauty can be realized. According to them through a disinterested contemplation of beauty in nature and art, the mind can transcend the ego.

dence which gives man *mokṣa*, the absolute freedom from phenomenal bondage. The more deeply the self is absorbed in its being and the more conscious it becomes of its own true worth, the more complete is its delight. *Sat*, *cit*, and *ānanda* are the three aspects of the same Reality.

Beauty is not isolated from Truth and Goodness, but exists in harmony with them. The highest good in the philosophy of the Upaniṣads 'is a state of rapture and ecstasy, a condition of *ānanda*, where the creature...becomes one with the Creator or, more accurately, realizes his oneness with Him.'² Unlike Plato, the Upaniṣadic seers do

aim of art, art can be called the conscience of man in the aspect of vision. According to the Indian tradition, while the ultimate aesthetic consciousness is purely contemplative—*brahmāsvādasahodara*—the steps prescribed to achieve it through the artistic process are marked by a high degree of activity. The activity is an intense act of concentration which is *yoga*. *Yoga* is needed for the cultivation of the sensitivity of both the creator and the appreciator of beauty.

In traditional Indian thought, although a thing of beauty at the outset is a matter of the senses, the ensuing realization of beauty is given more prominence. As long as man remains within the boundaries of his senses

1. *Ānandādhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante, ānandena jātāni jīvanti, ānandam prayanty-abhisamviśanti.*—*Taittirīya-Upaniṣad*, 3.6.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1, p. 237.

and is conscious of his aesthetic enjoyment as well as of the object of beauty, he has *aesthetic appreciation*. When he transcends the senses, he has *aesthetic involvement*, and when he is lost within himself and the difference between his senses and the object disappears, he reaches the stage of *aesthetic realization*. It is at this stage that the artist expresses himself in spontaneous creativity. In Indian thought, the aesthetic mode is a composite state of consciousness wherein perception, feeling, and understanding gain new dimensions. It is an experience of the whole of man and not merely of a part of him.

To the traditional Indian artists and aestheticians, art, whether *verbal* (literature) or *visual* (painting, sculpture and architecture) or *performing* (music, dance, drama) has the

stands as a bridge between them. The peculiarity of the aesthetic experience is that it elevates the cognizer to a higher level. The experience of beauty is an intuitive consciousness, a state of being, which in itself is unified and homogeneous (*ekaghana*).

In one of his notes, 'On Art', Swami Vivekananda writes:

True art can be compared to a lily which springs from the ground, is in touch with the ground and yet is quite high above it. So art must be in touch with nature...yet it must be above nature. Art is representing the beautiful. There must be art in everything.³

According to Swami Vivekananda art cannot represent the beautiful if it exclusively

In Swami Vivekananda's vision, beauty is the Supreme Reality and art is its medium. True art cannot be created for 'art's sake' only. The highest merit of art lies in its symbolic expression of the innate unity of the individual and the Divine Self. Beauty is in that symbol.

unique task of embodying the Infinite through finite symbols. This spiritual dimension is generally achieved through the symbols of beauty. Nature produces a vibration in the artist's *will* which is transformed into spiritual *contemplation* and the resultant *enjoyment*. What emerges is the symbol of beauty—a work of art.

Truth, beauty, and goodness are the three values through which the Ultimate Reality is cognized. Usually the discriminating intellectual (*jñāni*) chooses truth, the artist chooses beauty, and the devotee chooses goodness as their respective paths to the ultimate realization. But that does not mean that the intellectual and the devotee do not have a sense of beauty, the aesthetic perspective. Actually their paths are not altogether dissociated. Beauty as a value

imitates physical nature. Drawing a contrast between Greek art and Indian art in this context, he says:

The secret of Greek Art is its imitation of nature even to the minutest details; whereas the secret of Indian Art is to represent the ideal. The energy of the Greek painter is spent in perhaps painting a piece of flesh, and he is so successful that a dog is deluded into taking it to be a real bit of meat and so goes to bite it. Now, what glory is there in merely imitating nature? Why not place an actual bit of flesh before the dog?⁴

3. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 5, pp. 258–9.

4. *Ibid.*

Perhaps Swami Vivekananda is slightly unkind in his assessment of Greek art but his main thesis is that nature must be transcended and the artist must go beyond the limitations of the senses. Only then can art become beautiful. In his theory, a true artist depicts his own spirit through the medium of exterior objects. In fact there is a synthesis of outer and inner layers of consciousness of the artist when he creates his art. The synthesis is possible when a subtle cause is active in all manifestations. A Vedantin, Swami Vivekananda visualizes one divine power at the root of everything. In his view, 'What is beauty in the human face, in the sky, in the stars and in the moon? It is only the partial apprehension of the real, all-embracing divine beauty.'⁵ Like the traditional Indian thinkers, Vivekananda believes that the beauty of the created world is a glimpse of the Supreme Beauty. He links up aesthetic sensitivity with spiritual realization. In his notes 'On Art', he quotes his teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, as saying that

Beauty, according to Rabindranath, is born of man's desire to fraternize with the outer world of life and nature. Through this fraternizing activity man expands his soul and knows himself better.

'without artistic faculty none can be truly spiritual.' In another context he comments, 'What is after all really required of us...is that our thirst after the beautiful should be directed to God.'⁶ What really attracts the artist to a beautiful object is not the arranged material particles, but the play of the divine beauty in them. An artist can also say, as Swami Vivekananda did, 'I cannot tell anything about Thee except that...Thou art beautiful, O Thou art beautiful! Thou art beauty itself.'⁷

5. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 74.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

The realization of beauty in Swamiji's view is identical with *ānanda*, bliss. He says, 'Wherever there is any bliss, even though in the most sensual of things, there is a spark of that Eternal Bliss which is the Lord Himself.'⁸ Delight in this context indicates the transcendence of all inner strain, all selfish desire. It is a point of detachment which is not a passivity. The artist's attitude is said to be one of disinterested contemplation without which neither the creation nor the true appreciation of beauty is possible.

In Swami Vivekananda's vision, beauty is the Supreme Reality and art is its medium. True art cannot be created for 'art's sake' only. The highest merit of art lies in its symbolic expression of the innate unity of the individual and the Divine Self. Beauty is in that symbol.⁹

A transcendentalist in his own view, Rabindranath too speaks of beauty in idioms that strongly remind one of the traditional Indian aestheticians. Some of his ideas

come close to Swami Vivekananda's as well. Beauty, according to Rabindranath, is born of man's desire to fraternize with the outer world of life and nature.¹⁰ Through this fraternizing activity man expands his soul and knows himself better. 'Beauty is but a bridge between matter and Spirit.'¹¹

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 37-50.

10. Prabhas Jiban Chaudhury, 'Tagore on Literature and Aesthetics', *Rabindra Bharati*, 1965, p. 81.

11. Tagore, *The Nexus of Beauty*, 'Angel of Surplus', Ed. Sisirkumar Ghose, p. 66.

A sincere believer of the Upanishadic dictum, '*Ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṃ priyaṃ bhavati*—All things are dear because the Self is in all things', Rabindranath identifies the desire for establishing kinship with others as a kind of self-expression which is not prompted by any worldly gain. It is in this disinterested desire to make all nature one's own and to see one's soul in all, that art is born.

In order to realize our true self we have to move out of our narrow individuality and

flows like a river in spate, and then we know that nothing in the world can be more beautiful.¹²

The ancient Indian aestheticians spoke of the experience of beauty and the experience of bliss as identical. Rabindranath too repeatedly says that the experience of beauty is a joy for ever. This joy, *ānanda*, is different from mere sensuous pleasure. To explain the state of mind needed to experience *ānanda*, Rabindranath says in *Sense of Beauty*, 'For the complete understanding

Rabindranath says in Sense of Beauty, 'For the complete understanding of beauty, it is necessary to cultivate tranquillity, a state that is impossible for a distracted undisciplined mind to attain.' The self-culture that Rabindranath speaks about as a precondition of the appreciation and experience of beauty is not accepted by the sensualist and hedonistic aestheticians.

love all things and beings. Thus the individual self can establish harmony with the universe at large. In Rabindranath's view, when we attain this harmony we can have delight in everything that is beautiful, true and good. Rabindranath calls this 'abundance' of spirit. In fact, harmony and abundance are the two basic concepts of Rabindranath's philosophy of beauty.

Swami Vivekananda has linked up worldly beauty with Divine beauty, and aesthetic sensitivity with spiritual perception. Rabindranath too says that worldly beauty reveals God's majesty in the midst of His creation. This beauty is perceived not merely in the outer object, but also in man's inner nature and in his conduct. In *Sense of Beauty* Rabindranath says:

The beauty of goodness goes far, beyond what the eye can see or the mind know, it invests everything with a little of God. It is because of its nearness that we often fail to see goodness as a form of beauty. But when we do, our whole being over-

of beauty, it is necessary to cultivate tranquillity, a state that is impossible for a distracted undisciplined mind to attain.' The self-culture that Rabindranath speaks about as a precondition of the appreciation and experience of beauty is not accepted by the sensualist and hedonistic aestheticians. Aesthetic self-discipline is not a purely intellectual affair either. The discipline comes rather by way of an intuitive realization of the harmony of the soul with nature. Rabindranath says: 'As beauty draws us gently towards discipline, discipline in its turn deepens our relish of beauty.'¹³ Beauty, in this context, is a spiritual awakening and a divine joy. In his own way, Swamiji too has emphasized this point.

According to the Upanishadic tradition, in the Supreme Realization, truth, bliss and beauty are all one. As a follower of this tradition, Rabindranath repeats the words of the Romantic poet Keats: 'Beauty is Truth,

12. *Ibid.*, *Sense of Beauty*, pp. 56-7.

13. *Ibid.*

Truth Beauty'. To Rabindranath, truth is always self-evident and is beautiful. In his article, 'Sahityer Swarup', he says: 'We get the delight of beauty in truth, only when we realize the latter in our innermost being, not in knowledge; but in conviction. This only is real.'¹⁴ Speaking about this realization of truth, Rabindranath says in 'Sahityer Pathe': 'The day when I first realized this Truth I remembered Keats' words: "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty". That is, the truth that we realize through our heart, mind and soul is beautiful.'¹⁵ The ancient Indian thinkers also said that Truth is realized in intuitive consciousness, and the truth a disciplined mind envisions, is beautiful.

Drawing a contrast between truth and untruth, the beautiful and the ugly, Rabindranath says in 'The Realization of Beauty':

When we say that the beauty is everywhere, we do not mean that the world ugliness should be abolished from our language, just as it would be absurd to say that there is no such thing as untruth. Untruth there certainly is, not in the system of the Universe, but in our power of comprehension, as it negative element. In the same manner, there is ugliness in the distorted expression of

beauty in our life and in our art which comes from our imperfect realization of truth.¹⁶

According to Rabindranath, to accept or express untruth is to go against 'the law of truth', to express ugliness is to go 'counter to eternal law of harmony which is everywhere.'

In the present age of disharmony, when truth, beauty, goodness, and the intellectual, aesthetic, and moral values are hardly considered to be necessary for an integrated framework of life, when the refinement of sensibility is hardly spoken of as a pre-condition for creating and appreciating beauty, when beauty is taken to be matter of the senses, both Swami Vivekananda, who is regarded as the pioneer of the rationalist movement in modern India, and Rabindranath, who had a wide exposure to modern Western aesthetics and art, have looked to the ancient Indian aesthetics for a philosophy of beauty. Both have spoken of beauty as a metaphysical or transcendental experience, which refines our human nature (*ātmasaṅskṛti*). Both link aesthetic sensitivity to spiritual realization. Both regard worldly beauty as a glimpse of the supreme or Divine Beauty. Both consider the experience of beauty as a spiritual awakening and a sublime joy. For both, bliss and beauty are identical. Contemporary aestheticians may not accept their spiritual perspective, but for other thinkers, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath's vision of beauty may open up a dimension sadly lacking in the contemporary world of art. □

14. Prakas Jiban Chaudhury, *Tagore on Literature and Aesthetics, Beauty and Truth*, p. 109.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Tagore, *The Realization of Beauty*, 'Angel of Surplus', Ed. Sisirkumar Ghose, p. 72

Repeating the Vedas and other mantras by which the *sattva* material of the body (i.e. the mind and intellect) becomes purified, is called study, *svādhyāya*.

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, vol 1, p. 190

Ethics in Management

SWAMI TATTWAJNANANANDA

With a view to developing an Indian Philosophy of Management, a number of India's large industrial houses are experimenting with ways of applying Vedanta to the details of administration, production, profitability, etc. The following article—which is the text of a talk delivered last year at a workshop for students of the Masters of Management Studies, University of Bombay—deals with a few key ideas that could form the core of such a philosophy. The author is the Officer-in-Charge of the Ramakrishna Mission Shilpamandira (Polytechnic), Saradapitha, Belur Math.

The art of management is as old as human civilization. It is the what, why, and how of things an administrator does. The Industrial Revolution developed the concept of a manager whose work is to conceive, design, develop, produce, market and deliver products. The primary objectives of management, in the words of Peter Drucker, are: (i) Survival, (ii) Growth for fuller enjoyment, and (iii) Profitability. These objectives created 'go-getter', 'rib-digger' managers looking for productivity, profits, and promotions by hook or by crook. This kind of intelligent utilitarian management brought in 'moral horrors and spiritual agonies', again the in the words of Peter Drucker in his new book, *The New Realities*.

The Japanese (Matsushita and others), learning from American failures in the post-war era, added some values like 'national service through industry', fairness, harmony, cooperation, etc. But once the stage of striving for economic growth is over, purposelessness is driving the Japanese to a similar situation; the number of mental health clinics is on the rise in Tokyo.

Hence in management circles, rethinking has set in to find new strategies for better human response in increasing productivity and profits through introduction of ethical values.

Ethics

Ethics in the West is originally derived from the Greek *ethos*. Ancient Greek philosophy, mostly speculative, aimed at freeing the mind from the bonds of ignorance and tried to remove the fear of the unknown by presenting the world as something accessible to *reason*. Disinterested enquiry itself is ethically good and forms theoretical basis for morality in practical life. After 2000 years of development, the basic principles of Western ethics, judging from human conduct, are: (i) Right, (ii) Good, and (iii) Ought. A *right* action tends to bring about what is *good* for many and a person *ought* to do it. Conscious mental process called *motive*, which includes desire and intentions, with a determination to act—i.e., *willing*, brings in an action. This power of willing depends on habits—i.e., formation of character, where a strong single desire dominates, and must necessarily be related to an ideal. Hence an ideal in life and character are important.

Ideal

Ideal of human life is based on concept of Man. The Western concept of Man, in Judeo-Christian tradition, is 'born sinner'; in Greek tradition, 'political animal'; in socialist thinking, 'social animal'; in techronic America, 'tool-making animal'; in Freud's opinion, 'a biological entity'; and

in the words of Alvin Toffler, 'an economic animal'. Naturally, the Western ideal of man more or less keeps us in the world of animals.

According to Indian sages of yore man is essentially divine and his ultimate ideal (*param-puruṣārtha*) is to unfold the divinity within by controlling nature—internal and external. Biological man, born like an animal, is raised to the level of humanity through education, and raised to the divine level through spiritual training.

Any organism seeks fulfilment. This is the end and aim of all its activities, as maintained in modern biology. In the Upaniṣads we have the beautiful concept of spiritual freedom (*mukti*), and fullness (*pūrṇatva*). Man wants to become integral and experience the delight of freedom—to enlarge the bounds of his awareness and to get complete enlightenment,—*bodhi*, as the Buddha expressed it—, the great aim of human evolution. Education, culture, socio-political processes, religion, business and industry, are meant to increase and enlarge the bounds of human awareness and extend the range and depth of human fulfilment by increasing knowledge and control, not only over the outside world, but also on the deep recesses within ourselves. In the positive sciences, knowledge is power; it is more so in the science of *yoga*, and it is higher in terms of quality.

The ideal of the divinity latent in the human being, the oneness of the universe, and the process of *yoga* were proclaimed successfully to the world by Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions a hundred years ago.

Ātman, or Soul, or Consciousness, is the constant behind the changing body-mind complex. It remains unchanged in the three states of experience: waking, dream, and dreamless sleep, and through birth, growth, and death. It is Brahman, the eternal constant Witness behind the changing nature; It remains unchanged through the day and

night and six seasons. This Ātman (Man) and Brahman (God) are one.

By its very nature Ātman, i.e., real man, is *Sat, Cit, Ānanda* (Existence, Knowledge, Bliss) Absolute, while the apparent man has death, ignorance, and misery. Human evolution is meant to elevate the human mind from its attachment with the apparent to its attainment of the real.

Ethics in India

In the Vedic *Saṁhitās* there is discussion of the cosmic order (*ṛtam*) and man's obligation to the order (*ṛnam*). The Upaniṣads and *Bhagavad-Gītā* developed two concepts on the basis of these: (i) *Dharma*, and (ii) *Karma*. The first, *Dharma*, is the primary principle supporting the universe and is also the philosophical speculation based on empirical experience about the Absolute. Basically it states, what helps man in establishing kinship with fellow creatures is *Good*, and it shows a way to proceed to it. Four *pramānas* or proofs are given about what is *dharma* in the (a) *Śruti*, the Upaniṣads; (b) *Smṛti*, the *Gītā*; (c) *Ācāra*, life and teachings (of men of realization like Sri Ramakrishna); and (d) *Ātmatuṣṭi*, the conscience of a properly disciplined mind, pure and righteous. The second, every action is *karma* and it brings reaction in course of time. A human being who doesn't reach life's fulfilment has to take rebirth. 'As you sow so you reap.' The present is the result of past actions, and the future can be changed by adjusting actions in the present.

Every *karma* leaves *saṁskāra*, an impression on the mind, and secondly brings in a material result (*karma phala*). These two combined seek out a person, 'just as a calf finds its mother amidst a thousand cows' (making experience of the results of *karma* inescapable), so says the *Mahābhārata*. Hence past *karma* and self-effort are considered the two wheels of this chariot, called the body, whose horses are the sense organs; reins, the mind; charioteer, the *buddhi* or intellect; and

owner, the Ātman.

Unless the charioteer, the discriminative intellect, has firm hold on the reins of mind, the restive horses, the five strong senses, will be led astray by the tendencies of nature arising out of the *guṇas* (3 constituents of *prakṛti* or primordial nature). It is important to note that all education and training is meant to raise man from *tamas* (dullness), to *rajas* (activity), to *sattva* (balance), finally enabling him to transcend all three. The Indian ethics of *dharma*, *karma*, and *guṇas* is thus much more comprehensive and includes Right, Good and Ought.

Moral Values and Purusārthas

Based on the above objectives of all education and training, the Indian sages, many of them busy kings, developed a moral code based on universally valid moral virtues:-

1	<i>Dama</i>	self-control
2	<i>Śraddhā</i>	self-respect
3	<i>Svādhyāya</i>	self-effort
4	<i>Satya</i>	truth
5	<i>Asteya</i>	non-stealing
6	<i>Vidyā</i>	knowledge
7	<i>Dhī</i>	wisdom
8	<i>Brahmacarya</i>	sexual purity
9	<i>Ahimsā</i>	non-injury
10	<i>Śauca</i>	cleanliness
11	<i>Akrodha</i>	freedom from anger
12	<i>Sevā</i>	service to all beings

The two secular ideals (*purusārthas*) man pursues—wealth (*artha*) and pleasures (*kāma*)—lead to spiritual freedom and realization (*mokṣa*) if they are subordinated to moral conduct (*dharma*).

Human response development

1. Ego Management Through Self-Control.

The Indian managers are often criticized of usually following two rules of management. Rule number one: Manager is always

right; and rule number two: If he is wrong, refer to rule number one!

However, one has to be objective to be successful when one judges a situation in which one is placed as an observer. Otherwise one is carried away by untrained emotions.

This is achieved through self-control. The senses are powerful horses, but by *maneggiare* (originally meaning to train a horse in his paces) one acquires the power to direct them at one's will. Communion of the intelligence with Cosmic-intelligence through meditation brings purity of *buddhi*, which turns into *medhā*, spiritual perceptivity. It can't take wrong decisions. Sexual purity enables control of passions and turns them to higher emotions like love and concern of all.

'A ruler's sense-conquest is the foundation of his kingdom.' One who controls oneself controls all. Then only regionalism, linguistic bias, caste conflicts and religious tensions will cease.

Rājyasya mūlam śāsakasya indriya-vijayam.—Chāṇakya

'A ruler's sense-conquest is the foundation of his kingdom.' One who controls oneself controls all. Then only regionalism, linguistic bias, caste conflicts and religious tensions will cease.

Ayam nijah paro veti

gaṇanā laghucetasāni

udāra-caritānām tu

vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam.

—Pañcatantra of Viṣṇuśarma, Kathā 3, Ślokā 38.

"Is this person our own, or is he a foe?"—such is the consideration of petty-minded people. In the case of the noble-minded, however, the whole world is (looked upon as) their own family.'

The feeling of me and mine is reducible. Expansion is life; contraction is death. Through proper self-control one gets a chance to expand one's awareness.

2. Self-Respect.

Total Quality Management (TQM) places great emphasis on this quality. The man with self-respect has a clear idea of his Self and is aware—at least intellectually—that the same Self resides in all; hence he respects all. Self-respect gives a dignity to one which should not be confused with prestige, status or privileges. Out of fullness of his heart such a person thinks and acts. When the glass is half empty he looks at the half that is filled, and strives to fill up the rest without passion. He has the conviction of the powers of goodness, he knows his strength and weakness and is not jealous of anyone better than himself. He helps all who are trying to be and do good.

*Sarve yasya vinetārah
sarve paṇḍitamāninaḥ
Sarve mahattvamicchanti
kulam tadavasīdati.*

'That race in which everyone considers himself the leader, everyone regards himself to be wise, and everyone hankers for recognition, goes to ruin.'

Where everyone is a *netā* (leader), everyone is a *paṇḍit*, and all want importance whether they deserve it or not—that race is destined for doom.

A man of self-respect keeps confidence in his own abilities and respects those in others. So he helps others to help themselves. He does not feel that his talents are going unnoticed and that he deserves much more than he is getting. The man of self-respect is wise and humble whereas the creation of modern education is often characterized by knowledge and arrogance going hand in hand. Such a man is clean in

his habits and thought. He is obedient and at the same time independent. Above all he has a sense of the dignity of his own and others' labour.

3. Self-Effort.

Many have the habit of running the show by remote control or by proxy, a very dangerous practice indeed. One who is industrious and courageous, to him comes health, wealth and prosperity; cowards talk of fate.

A man of self-respect keeps confidence in his own abilities and respects those in others. So he helps others to help themselves. He does not feel that his talents are going unnoticed and that he deserves much more than he is getting.

*Udyoginam puruṣasīnhamupaiti lakṣmīḥ
daivam hi daivam iti kāpuruṣāḥ vadanti.
Daivam nihatya kuru pauruṣamātmaśaktyā
yatne kṛte yadi na sidhyati ko'tra doṣaḥ.*

'The Goddess of wealth becomes propitious to the industrious, lion-hearted person. Only cowards say, "Alas! fate, fate." But dismissing fate, act boldly on your own strength. If something fails after putting in effort, what is the harm?'

Self-effort at the right time can change the future. One must exert oneself on every detail. Timing is very important and there is no substitute for coordination of one's own faculties with others' efforts. One who listens well, decides on a goal with proper deliberation and then lets go the goal and concentrates on perfecting the means succeeds. The very presence of such a manager inspires his co-workers. His creativity and dynamism is contagious and he commands respect and motivates everyone. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and alertness

can be acquired through self-effort.

4. Excellence in Work.

...*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam (Gītā, 2.50)*

'Yoga is skill in work.'

A manager ought to be skilled in his work and bring out the best from himself and others. He knows that all movements are non-linear, with regular ups and downs, joys and sorrows, and he keeps his mind cool under all circumstances—in success and in failure:

...*samatvaṁ yoga ucyate (Gītā, 2.48)*

'Evenness [of mind] is called yoga.'

He knows that however pure and fair a person may try to be, he will certainly earn both praise and blame from others, so one must take praise and blame with equanimity.

5. Progressive Attitude.

Modern communication systems and the information explosion has made the world shrink. The manager in today's world ought to think globally, even though he acts locally. Ruthless, indiscriminate exploitation of nature's ecosystems has even endangered life by altering the chemistry of the air we breathe. A manager, while having the ability to judge the fast-emerging socio-technological possibilities of modern life, should also combine with his scientific temper a moral sensitivity in his idea of the world situation and his futuristic vision. Further, he should have a habit of study (*śravaṇa*), the power to think deeply (*manana*), and meditation (*nididhyāsana*).

6. Truth at any Cost.

Truthfulness, alignment in thought, word and deed, commands respect. A will to act on decisions is necessary. Openness in the management process removes suspicions and half the problems are solved.

7. Practise What You Preach.

*Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ
tattadevetaro janāḥ... (Gītā, 3.21)*

'Whatever the superior person does, others follow that.'

The personal and corporate life of a manager both inwardly and outwardly ought to be worth imitating. As a corollary, a manager must face problems squarely and accept both praise and blame. Many a battle was lost due to reluctance of commanders to be in the forefront. *Sirdār* to *sardār*, 'He is a leader who is prepared to sacrifice his head.'

8. Intensity and Pervasiveness of Concern.

In a family, a mother sacrifices her interest for the sake of all family members and in return gets everything. Her *tyāga* (renunciation), not exploitation, earns her the unshakable position of commander of the house. She looks at members as assets to be developed and not liabilities to be controlled. The mother offers her services for the welfare of the whole family without expectation of returns out of her intense and pervasive concern.

Character Building

1. Habit Formation.

The exercise includes giving up bad habits and building up good ones. Never talk of your faults to others, but judge them and carefully remove them.

Will-power is developed only by taking on challenges. There is no substitute for hard work. Building up a strong good character is a laborious process, and patience, perseverance, and purity are needed to carry it out.

Value-based style of managing is the only answer in the long run, and every manager has his discretionary zone for his own experimentation. If one changes oneself he can change his environment.

2. Concentration and Meditation.

The difference between man and man is in the power of concentrating the mind. Daily routine has to be set up for regular

practice of concentration. At the juncture of day and night, in a clean room, on a firm seat, one should sit in a comfortable posture. After simple controlled breathing one should try to concentrate one's mind in the region of the heart (seat of the Ātman), imagining there any object like the Sun, or a light. The fickle and wandering mind has to be made to sit firmly in the region of the heart. As soon as bad thoughts come, good thoughts should counter them. When this concentration gets deeper, mind composes. As day advances, through contact with others it decomposes, so it should be recomposed in the evening so that one can step into other roles in life. The *Aṣṭāṅgayoga* of Patanjali speaks of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇa*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*, the moral training and exercises by which meditation or *dhyāna*, quite a high state of absorption and composure, is attained.

3. Prayers.

In a secular country like India prayers are a private affair and except for the National Anthem all prayers are forbidden in government institutions. However, Vedic prayers offer secular and spiritual benefit and have no parochial religious flavour, as:

*Om, saha nāvavatu,
saha nau bhunaktu
saha vīryam karavāvahai,
tejasvi nāvadhītam astu;
mā vidviṣāvahai.—Sāma-Veda*

'Om, may [He, the Divine Being] protect us and nourish us; may we grow in strength together. May our study be invigorating. May there be no hatred or ill feeling between us.'

and:

*Om, asato mā sadgamaya
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya
mr̥tyormāmṛtam gamaya.—Yajur-Veda*

'Om, From the unreal lead me to the Real,
From darkness to Light,
From death to Immortality.

Prayers attended by all in the corporate family tie all in a higher consciousness, create a feeling of oneness, purify mind and create a holistic atmosphere through their powerful words and rhythm.

4. Company of the Enlightened.

Indian *ethos* directed kings to take advice from men of enlightenment. *Brāhmaṇas* like Chāṇakya are famous for their sound advice in administration. Vidura's advice was unheeded by Dhṛtarāṣṭra and he ended in losing all.

In conclusion, we can see that ethics and morality do not mean blind obedience; nor do they mean merely following *dos* and *don'ts*, but it means every individual's acquiring a capacity for independent thinking and having and utilizing the freedom to take right moral decisions after collecting all the relevant facts and weighing the pros and cons of alternatives. Indian ethics are time-tested and, in the modern age, can introduce a new era in management for productivity and profit. □

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Thou eternally beautiful Lord,
The whole universe is a reflection of
Thy enchanting beauty.

—Kaji Nazrul Islam

Practical Vedanta

AVOID SPECULATION

Uttiya asked the Buddha, 'Monk Gautama, is the world eternal or will it one day perish?'

The Buddha smiled and said, 'Ascetic Uttiya, with your consent, I will not answer that question.'

Uttiya then asked, 'Is the world finite or infinite?'

'I will not answer that question either.'

'Well then, are body and spirit one or two?'

'I will not answer that question either.'

'After you die, will you continue to exist or not?'

'This question too, I will not answer.'

'Or perhaps you hold that after death you will neither continue to exist nor cease to exist?'

'Ascetic Uttiya, I will not answer that question either.'

Uttiya looked confounded. He said, 'Monk Gautama, you have refused to answer every question I've asked. What question will you answer?'

The Buddha replied, 'I only answer questions that pertain directly to the practice of gaining mastery over one's mind and body in order to overcome all sorrows and anxieties.'

'How many people in the world do you think your teaching can save?'

The Buddha sat silently. Ascetic Uttiya said no more.

From the Life of Buddha



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CHICAGO ADDRESS: CONCLUDING CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

II

Netaji Indoor Stadium, Calcutta: Programme 17th and 18th November, 1994

Netaji Indoor Stadium was the site of the continuing centennial celebration which took place on the 17th and 18th of November. More than 12,000 people attended the sessions where again eminent scholars and monks and nuns re-examined Swamiji's contribution to world thought and religion.

Swami Atmasthananda, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, delivered the welcome address. He said that the concept of man is inseparable from the concept of religion. Unfoldment of the spiritual dimension of man is the only aim of human life, and religion is its valid expression. The motivating ideal is, 'Service to Man is worship of God', the full implications of which the world is yet to comprehend and appreciate. Even now, after a hundred years, it is difficult to evaluate Swamiji who was untiring in his love for man for whom he took on the colossal task of shaping the destiny of the modern world.

The benedictory address by revered Srimat Swami Bhuteshanandaji was as simple as it was touching. 'We are meeting here,' he said, 'to complete the series of lectures and arrangements of the great appearance of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago.' He further said that the great movement generated by Swami Vivekananda at his opening Chicago speech is now the property of the world. Swamiji's dream originated in the words of his Master, and the prophetic statement of Sri Ramakrishna—'*Naren Shiksha Dibey*' came true. A new civilization, a new culture, new central thoughts were professed to the world, and Swamiji was the messenger.

Swami Ranganathananda, in his keynote address,

expressed his concern over the erosion of values in the modern world. The profound teachings of the Upanishads answer some of today's most pressing problems. The formula '*Tat Tvam Asi*' found in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* shows man his true spiritual nature.

The Convener, Swami Lokeshwarananda, put forward two questions: 1) Is Swami Vivekananda relevant in the modern world? And 2) What sort of a religious leader was he? He then proceeded to answer the first question by counter-questioning in his customary perceptive way: 'Do we ask the sun whether it is relevant today?' He further said, by way of answer to the second question, that Swamiji had a unique passion for man. He gave strength to the weak, courage to the faint-hearted and hope to humanity. Swamiji visualized the sort of man 'with a big heart!'

Sister Gargi (Marie Louise Burke) was the first speaker in the next session. She gave an address on 'the Ideal Society in Swami Vivekananda's View'. She defined Swami Vivekananda's vision of an ideal society as one comprised of 'ideal prophetic people'. True civilization involves raising the animal man up to the divine. Society is not an end in itself but the means to attain the ultimate goal—a collective means to an individual end. The end must be attained by using righteous means. Society should guarantee equal rights and opportunities to all.

Swami Atmapriyananda, Principal, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Saradapitha, discussed the concept of Hiranyagarbha. The other speakers were Prof.

Vishnu Narayan Namboodiri, Hight Priest, Sree Vallabha Temple, Kerala, Dr. C. Narayan Reddy, formerly Vice-Chancellor, Telugu University, and Adviser to the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh on Telugu Language and Culture, and Dr. Shankar R. Talaghatti, Professor of Indian Moral Philosophy, University of Pune. All of them focussed on the central theme, the manifestation of the divinity of man.

A brief summary of the session was made by the Chairman, Swami Asaktananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, who declared that Swami Vivekananda was a phenomenon of the modern world. Lunch break was announced thereafter.

Under the chairmanship of Prof. C. D. Narasimhaiah, Director, the Literary Criterion Centre for English Studies and Indigenous Arts, Bangalore, the third session began. The subject of discussion was 'Service as a Way of Life'. The first paper was read by Dr. (Miss) Rajlakshmi Varma from Allahabad University. In Dr. Varma's opinion, service can only be called true service when it is deeply rooted in spirituality—understanding the world to be an extension of one's own self. It should be 'Not Me But Thou'. Let the receiver stand up and permit, and the giver bend down and beg.

Swami Muktinathananda of Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, outlined the traits of a person rendering true service as cheerfulness, absence of egotism, and non-attachment. He expressed that the path of Karma Yoga could be adopted by all—believers in God as well as non-believers. The latter could work inspired by the principle of 'work for work's sake', while the believers could offer the fruits of action to the Lord.

Prof. Shiv Shankar Chakraborty, Director, Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur, invited all to participate in the uplift of the backward classes. Such social service programmes should be conducted by individuals with a spiritual outlook. This will remove all barriers and establish interfaith understanding.

Pravrajika Satchitprana of Sarada Math, Dakshin-eswar, said that service should be given in the spirit of

worship, with the feeling that it is a privilege to serve, with a mind that is pure and sincere. The spirit of 'me' and 'mine' should be replaced by 'you' and 'yours'. Man-making and character-building should be the rationale for material well-being.

Prof. Narasimhaiah, a poet, quoted Buddha who said that the world is like a fish in a pond that was drying up. It was Swamiji who rejuvenated the earth by sprinkling his words of grace. He revered Swamiji as a poet, a man of letters, whose English prose is so modern even after a hundred years.

The evening session, featuring reputed vocalists, Pandit Jasraj and Smt. Vani Jairam, was enjoyed by one and all.

The fourth session started on the 18th of November. It focussed on the subject 'Education and Values as Viewed by Swami Vivekananda'. Swami Ranganathananda, in his introductory address, stated that education is a life-long affair. From the very moment of birth, one tries to acquire certain qualities that make one an individual. A sense of dignity, self-respect, character, and a strong will sustain an individual. Real education means growing from a 'Kāchā Āmi' (unripe ego) into a 'Pākā Āmi' (ripe ego).

Dr. V. Venkatachalam, Vice-Chancellor, Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi, was the chairman of the forenoon session. He said that true education is learning and observing—'Sravana, Manana, and Nididhyasana'. All Indians should have an education rooted in the scriptures and literature of India, he added.

Swami Shivamayananda, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Math, advocated the revival of 'Gurukulavasa', with a combination of both the Western and Eastern forms of study, assimilating 'sradha, strength, and fearlessness'. Sradha would inculcate self-reliance; the doctrine of strength and the religion of fearlessness are based on the concept of the 'Atman'. Fear is man's most powerful enemy, and the main cause of degradation.

Pravrajika Prabuddhaprana of Sarada Math,



At Rabindra Sarovar

L to R: Swamis Lokeswaranandaji, Gahananandaji, Ranganathanandaji, Sri Mukul Wasnik, Ms Kiran Bedi, Swamis Jitatmananda and Someswarananda



Dakshineswar, gave a call to the Ramakrishna Order to be the 'Purity Drilling Machine' of modern times. She placed an immense task before the Indian women. It is the demand of the time, she felt, that they are to sacrifice for the forthcoming generation. The bravest and the best are required. 'If we can give our full, we will have our fulfilment,' she proclaimed.

Swami Pramathananda of the Vedanta Society of Toronto, Canada, reminded us of the saying, 'The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.' He pointed to the fact that women are shouldering great responsibility in bringing up their children. Swamiji had immense faith in Indian women, and could foresee their power to work for the good of the nation, if given proper education.

Prof. O. P. N. Calla (ISRO) thought that parents should nurture the total personality of their children. Only then could society improve. India had a mission to pioneer a spiritual regeneration of the world, and in order to do that, education, especially in the villages, is essential.

Dr. N.V.C. Swamy, Director, I.I.T. Madras, humorously narrated the discomfort some parents feel when it is suggested that they give scriptural education to their children. Their worry is that their child might take to monasticism, and thus their worldly hopes would be drowned. A good number of people believe that religious education is meant exclusively for monks and nuns. However, Dr. Swamy suggested that school

education should be four dimensional—Intellectual, Moral, Psychological, and Spiritual.

The fifth and the last session was titled: 'the Role of Religion in Promoting Peace and Harmony'. The speakers were Prof. M.L. Sondhi, Dr. N.N. Panicker, Dr. (Mrs) Kapila Vatsyayana, Dr. A. Pandurangan, and Swami Ishatmananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Port Blair. Swami Ishatmananda ruminated over why Swamiji's opening address at Chicago had received such a warm response. It was because Swamiji, as a 'Knower of Atman', had awakened the Atman in everyone.

The Chairman of this session, Mr. Shivraj Patil, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, true to his renown, spoke briefly but vividly. Religion teaches us to see myself in everyone and everyone in me. 'A revaluation of religions would usher in peace and harmony, eradicate darkness, dispel gloom and prepare the soil for Advaitism,' he said.

Swami Lokeshwarananda then announced the end of the two-day seminar, welcoming everyone to the Public Meeting to be held at the Rabindra Sarovar Stadium on the 20th of November. He concluded his remarks with these words: 'There is no alternative to religion.'

III

The Youth Conference and Public Meeting at Rabindra Sarovar, Calcutta Sunday 20 November

Thirty thousand young men and women occupied the galleries of the beautifully decorated Rabindra Sarovar stadium, Calcutta, the venue of the concluding programme. The function was chaired by Sri Mukul Wasnik, Minister of State, Dept. of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. It started with Vedic chanting by the Brahmacharins of the Training Centre, Belur Math. Ranjana Tibrewal and Swarnabindu Bandyopadhyay, both youth representatives, paid their homage to Swami Vivekananda with short speeches in

English and Bengali respectively.

Swami Jitatmananda, President, Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot, was the first speaker to address the delegates. He said that Swamiji was the son of God and had the electrifying power of words in him. Dr. (Ms) Kiran Bedi, Inspector General of Prisons, New Delhi, then rose to the dais and spoke with her natural and convincing style. The chief note of her speech was that we need a healthy mind in a healthy body, we must take

responsibility for our own actions, and then seek guidance from within. She reminded the audience of the saying, 'Man is the maker of his own destiny.' She was of the opinion that Swamiji's philosophy was a 'commonsense philosophy', and 'had it been adopted and followed over the past years, West Bengal would have been the most progressive state in India.'

Swami Someswarananda, Secretary of our centre at Khetri, the next speaker, spoke in Bengali. With his characteristic free style he demonstrated how the great words of the Upanishads (like *Tat Tvam Asi* or *Aham Brahma Asmi*) can be practised in our everyday life.

Sri Pranabesh Chakraborty, the eminent journalist, advised the youth to look upon crisis as the very presence of God. Once this idea is accepted, God will present Himself as a solution too, he assured. His speech in Bengali was followed by an inspiring Hindi speech by Swami Nikhileswarananda from our centre at Rajkot. After reminding the audience of the oft-quoted words of Swamiji: 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached', the swami proceeded to point out specifically that Swamiji's faith lay in the younger generation and that the goal could be achieved by means of concentration, renunciation, and selflessness.

The Chairman, Sri Mukul Wasnik, invoked the youth to be at the helm of all activities. He proposed that a 'National Youth Festival' involving participants from all corners of the country may be celebrated on a large scale. His proposal was welcomed enthusiastically

by the youth.

Swami Lokeswarananda offered the vote of thanks on behalf of the Celebration Committee in a few words.

Then followed the lunch break, during which Ajay Chakraborty, the eminent vocalist, rendered some of his recently recorded songs as tributes to Swami Vivekananda. A cassette with those songs was also released by him during this period.

The concluding programme that started at 2-30 p.m. was a public meeting with the subject of discussion, 'Swami Vivekananda and India Today'. This was presided over by Swami Lokeswarananda. The other speakers were 1) Swami Satyarupananda, Secretary of our centre at Raipur, who spoke in Hindi; 2) Swami Divyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Centenary College, Rahara, W.B.; he spoke in Bengali; 3) Dr. P. K. Bora, Head of the Deptt. of Civil Engineering in Assam Engineering College; he addressed in English; 4) Dr. Tapas Basu, Deptt. of Bengali, Bangabasi College, Calcutta; his speech was in Bengali; and 5) Dr. Nimai Sadhan Basu, who too spoke in Bengali. Swami Atma-sthananda, General Secretary, then rose to the dais and with a short speech he gladdened the hearts of all. He also offered his heartfelt thanks to all the participants in general and to Swami Lokeswarananda in particular for making the whole programme a grand success. The programme came to an end with the closing song beautifully presented by the choir of the Blind Boys' Academy, Narendrapur, W.B. □

Moral life is lived wither for the sake of the Divine, or for the sake of men in the world. The moral life which is lived for the sake of the Divine is spiritual life; both appar alike in the external form, but in the internal they are altogether different. One saves man, the other does not save him; for he who lives a moral life for the sake of the Divine, is led by the Divine; but he who lives a moral life for the sake of men in the world, is led by himself.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772),
author of *The Worship and Love of God*,
and founder of 'Swedenborgianism'.

Reviews & Notices

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S THOUGHTS IN A VEDANTIC PERSPECTIVE; by Swami Tapasyananda; Publ. President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, 600 004; First Edition 1993; pp. 172 + x; Rs. 15/-.

The book under review is a study of Sri Ramakrishna's thoughts on God, man, the universe, and different aspects of spiritual life, based on his life and teachings. Sri Ramakrishna revealed and demonstrated the transcendental consciousness in his multi-dimensional spiritual life, with the precision of a scientist, unique in the spiritual history of the world. The author, with penetrating intellect, unfolds the inner meaning of the Master's teachings and discovers different phases of the universal dimension in them.

The late Swami Tapasyanandaji, the author, former Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was a great scholar of spiritual eminence. According to him, 'Consciousness is something more than life, but it emerges only in a highly organized combination of living cells, the body.' Thus, beginning with a scientific study of man, he leads us to the deeper vestments of the spirit which ultimately manifests the perfect man.

For knowing the nature and signs of the perfect man, which is the potential of everyone, Sri Ramakrishna described many kinds of *samādhi* in his conversations with devotees. The author has explained the rising of the spiritual current and its passing through the six centres of consciousness till it reaches the seventh, the highest, in the brain (from the Vedantic perspective, its passing through different sheaths or inner vestments of consciousness). He convincingly distinguishes real *samādhi* and pseudo-*samādhi*. By external signs both look alike. Sri Ramakrishna makes it clear. 'In real ecstasy,' the author says, 'one dives into

deeper realms of one's being and becomes perfectly still'; whereas pseudo-ecstasy is like boiling one ounce of milk in a big pan. The pan seems to be full of milk, but remove it from the oven and you will not find a single drop.' Similarly, the explanation of *bhakti*, *jñāna* and *vijñāna*, helping to understand the distinction between the corresponding three types of spiritual persons, is lucid and simple.

Sri Ramakrishna cautioned the devotees and spiritual aspirants to be careful about *kāminī-kānchan*, (lit. woman and gold). The delusion brought on by lust and greed is the cause of all materialism, and that results in bondage. The author's analysis of this vital topic in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna is so sharp that it dispels the subtle traces of lust and greed from one's mind. Even in the abstract, the ideas of enjoyment and acquisition exercise a powerful malign influence on the possessor, who is finally entangled in woman and gold. Thus, he finds the nature of bondage is passion, pride and craving for power. Therefore the author concludes that the quest of spiritual life is to calm these cravings, discover the real nature of the ego, and thus to penetrate the veil of ignorance.

The spiritual values of life necessary to realize God are dealt with, with great emphasis laid on the standard of purity attained by the soul. For Sri Ramakrishna the existence of God is not an intellectual speculation or an acceptance on faith, but an experience of His living presence at all times. The God of Sri Ramakrishna is both an Impersonal and a Personal Being. The Absolute Brahman, which is realized only in *nirvikalpa samādhi*, is experienced through the different states of consciousness with Its inscrutable Power—the Śakti. He calls it the Divine Mother. 'This power of Brahman acquires a unique significance in Sri Ramakrishna's system of thought.' This positive approach to *Māyā-Śakti* gives us insights into the holistic wisdom of the great Master.

The chapter, 'Two High Ways To God'—Jñāna Yoga and Bhakti Yoga, which include the other systems of yogas, helps the aspirant to understand the synthesis of all the yogas manifested in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. The author explores the significance of Sri Ramakrishna's state in *Nitya* and *Līlā*—the transcendental and immanent consciousness in *Bhāvamukha*.

Sri Ramakrishna's capacity to feel an intense urge for God-realization through different faiths and religions is unique in the hagiographical literature of the world. So also his spiritual experiences in the *sādhanas* enjoined by the various scriptures, reflected in his universal teachings. It is clear that these teachings can help us to solve the problems created by religious pluralism.

This book should be read by all who are vitally concerned with spiritual life and thought. It will be invaluable reading for both scholars and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna.

*Swami Brahmasthananda,
Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad*

STAVA BHAJANANJALI: (A collection of Sanskrit hymns, and Hindi and Bengali Bhajans); Publ. Swami Nikhilatmananda, President, Ramakrishna Math, Vijnanananda Marg, Muthigunj, Allahabad, 211 003; First Edition 1993; pp. 22 + 226; Rs. 16/-.

Sri Ramakrishna spoke about *bhajanānanda* through which the devotees receive the grace of God. *Bhajanānanda* is experienced by fervently singing devotional songs and chanting the Vedic hymns. Even reading the *stotras* and *bhajans* composed by enlightened poet-saints elevates the mind to the higher realm of consciousness.

The book under review is a collection of Sanskrit *stotras*, Vedic hymns and devotional songs in Hindi, Bengali and Urdu. It also contains some charming patriotic songs in the three languages, including the Indian national anthem. There are a total of 439 *bhajans* and *stotras*, culled from different sources, to various gods and goddesses, and to the formless aspect of God. Apart from

this, there are also many *stotras* and *bhajans* which have been composed on Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda, in Sanskrit, Bengali and Hindi.

The uniqueness of this book is that many of these devotional songs are translated by Swamis Atmananda, Nikhilatmananda and Vagiswarananda from the original Bengali into Hindi, in the same style as the originals. And they are printed side by side with the originals for the convenience of the reader. It will be appreciated if more of the original Bengali compositions are translated into Hindi. The songs sung by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are also included in this book. Their titles are marked with asterisks in the index. These songs remind us of the melodious singing of Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda) and the spontaneous ecstatic moods of Sri Ramakrishna in the spell of spiritual fervour.

The compiler, Swami Nikhilatmananda, has acknowledged a debt of gratitude to the late Swami Atmanandaji, the Founder-Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Raipur, for inspiring him. The hymns and songs can be sung on all occasions; particularly in the Centres of the Ramakrishna tradition. The book is a welcome addition to devotional literature which helps devotees to commune with God.

Swami Brahmasthananda

TRIBUTES TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AFTER A HUNDRED YEAR (1893-1993), Souvenir; Pub. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna; pp. 84; Price Rs. 10/-

Two great problems always burned in the heart of Vivekananda. Sri Ramakrishna himself had planted them in him. One of these was the objective of bringing into existence the new Order of *sannyasins* and nurturing it. And the other was bringing the power of this new Organization to bear on the regeneration of religious values and spiritual uplift of India and the world.

A few days before his passing away, when he was giving his spiritual powers (*siddhis*) to his young disciple,

Narendranath, Sri Ramakrishna said: 'O Naren, today I have given you my all and have become a fakir, a penniless beggar. My *siddhis* will manifest through you in time. By the force of this power you will do immense good to the world.' A day or two previous to this, the Master had written on a piece of paper: 'Naren will teach others.' Indicating all the young disciples present, he said to Narendra: 'I leave them all in your care. See that they practise spiritual exercises even after my passing away and do not return home.' To the others he had said on an earlier occasion: 'Let no one judge Naren disparagingly'—meaning: to speak slightly of him was as bad as committing *Śivanindā*, blasphemy against Śiva.

For about three years, according to the Master's instruction, Swamiji fanned bright the flame of renunciation in the hearts of his brother disciples. All the time a tremendous restlessness consumed him about how to bring the Divine Lord down to earth to alleviate the sufferings of his countrymen, crushed down by the unspeakable miseries of widespread poverty, sporadic famines, ill-health and ignorance, and on the top of it all, political oppression and social tyranny. To Swamiji, it was as if India's sufferings were his own. Like one possessed or whose soul was afire, he set out roaming across the country to see if he could find a way for India—and himself—to be free. As he wandered from Province to Province, stopping now and then for periods of meditation and spiritual practices, he mixed with people of all the stations of society, and he freely gave himself, his profound wisdom and inspiration, to help others have courage and faith. After all, in his mind it was all the people of India—India united—who would have to bring future spiritual and moral uplift to India and to humanity.

The present volume, *Tributes to Swami Vivekananda*, presents the story in brief of Swamiji's experiences as he travelled in each Province during his almost five years of wanderings. This is in six chapters; two more chapters are devoted to the experience of the World Parliament of Religions 1893, and to a glance at the unique philosophy and teachings of Vivekananda, 'The New

Religion of Vedanta.' as it bears on India's uplift and world spiritual regeneration.

We feel glad to recommend this small souvenir volume just released by the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama. Though brief, its treatment of the subject will inspire people to dive deeper into the Ocean of Swami Vivekananda's life and thought.

S.S., *Mayavati*

MAN AND HIS MIND, By Swami Nihareyananda; Publ. President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, 600 004; First Edition 1993; pp 6 + 342; Rs. 20/-

This is a remarkable book which deals with the power of the human mind and its potentialities to create a better society. The author, Swami Nihareyananda, was a great scholar of spiritual eminence, who did pioneering work in Andhra Pradesh in India, and in Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa to spread the message of Vedanta and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. He was also the editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* from 1957 to 1958, for two years. The present book is a collection of twenty-four editorials written during this period, and is arranged in seven sections. The book reveals the versatile genius, and the depth of his scholarship in the science of Yoga.

Human mind is the reflector of the inner being, and it is the medium to perceive the objective world. Eventually it is the cause of numerous problems, when it is undisciplined and uncontrolled; but it can be a useful channel for spiritual and creative energy when it is properly disciplined and controlled. The author observes that, 'the very purpose of reflection, *manana* or *tapas*, is to approach each problem from all possible angles till every shade of significance becomes clearly impressed on our mind, and our earlier valid conclusions become fully integrated with subsequent extension of knowledge' (p. 133).

With increase in knowledge, our mental vision expands, and through a 'series of novel experiments' one can detect forces which are connected with the inexhaustible

energy called Cosmic *Prāṇa*. The author points out that this Cosmic *Prāṇa* is 'capable of moving the ethical, artistic and spiritual wheels with which every mind is equipped from the beginning.' Such invaluable suggestions are the formulas for rousing and refining the energy within for the graded uplift of the mind and building up our character. With reference to this character energy, the essays, 'Awakening and Grouping of Talents', 'Opening up of Inner Springs', 'Coordinated Insight and Service', and 'Mental Preparation for Efficient Service', throw light on the spiritual perfection which should flow in the service of the people. This leads to self-fulfilment and attainment of the supreme goal of life.

The section, 'Spiritual Ascent Through Art and Worship', reflects the author's aesthetic talent and capacity for finer perception. This convinces the reader that a total blending of art and worship can lead to the transformation of personality, and to a perfect spiritual awareness.

The last section is an illuminating article, 'Attainment, Delight and Non-swerving Self-realization'. The references from the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, *Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā*, *Yoga-Sūtras*, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, and Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *Gītā* and *Kenopaniṣad* give

us some idea about the supreme spiritual perfection in the lives of saints.

The significant value of this remarkable book is its pragmatic approach to the inner quest for perfection. The Swami's views are extremely practical and, as a result, supply a map of mind and consciousness, indicating a graded ascent to the divine. With uniquely original analogies, and remarkably logical—often ruthlessly logical—arguments, the Swami offers a practical guide for the perplexed.

Finally, the outstanding quality of this book is that it retains the authentic flavour of the classical texts in Sanskrit. When one compares the Sanskrit originals given in the references with the translation the Swami has forged to express the subtleties and implications of the originals, one is bound to realize the unique way in which modern psychology gets illumined by insights from Hindu texts. In this sense the book is an invaluable addition to the existing Rama-krishna-Vivekananda-Vedanta Literature.

In short, *Man and His Mind* is a truly indispensable book on two disciplines of inner life: *śravaṇa* and *manana*, which stem from *svādhyāya* or study.

Swami Brahmasthananda

What is practical religion? To get to that state of freedom. And this world, if it helps us on to that goal is all right....Possessions, learning, beauty, everything else—as long as they help us to that goal, they are of practical value. When they have ceased helping us on to that goal of freedom, they are a positive danger.

—'The Practice of Religion',
The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, vol. 4, p. 241.