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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Chicago,

June 20, 1894.

Dear Diwanji Saheb,

Your very kind note came today. I am so sorry that I could have caused pain to such a noble heart as yours with my rash and strong words. I bow down to your mild corrections. “Thy son am I, teach me thus bowing.”—*Gîtâ*. But you well know, Diwanji Saheb, it was my love that prompted me to say so. The backbiters, I must tell you, have not indirectly benefited me, on the other hand, injured me immensely in the face of the fact that our Hindu people did not move a finger to tell the Americans that I represented them. Had our people sent some words thanking the American people for their kindness to me and stating that I was representing them? have been telling the American people that I had donned the Sannyasi's garb only in America and that I was a cheat, bare and simple, so far as reception goes. It has no effect on the American nation but so far as helping me with funds goes, it has a terrible effect in making them take off their helping hands from me. And it is one year since I have been here, and not one man of note from India has thought it fit to make the Americans know that I am no *cheat*. There again the missionaries are always seeking for something against me and they are busy picking up anything said against me by the Christian papers of India and publishing it here. Now you must know that the people here know very little of the distinction in India, between the Christian and the Hindu.

Primarily my coming has been to raise funds for an enterprise of my own. Let me tell it all to you again.

The whole difference between the West and the East is in this—they are nations. We are not, i.e. civilization, education here is general, it penetrates into the masses, the higher classes in India and America are the same but the distance is infinite between the lower classes of the two countries. Why was it so easy for the English to conquer India? It was because they are a nation, we are not. When one of our great men dies, we must sit for centuries to have another—they can produce them as fast as they die. When our Diwanji Saheb will pass away (which the Lord may delay long for the good of my country) the nation will see the difficulty at once of filling his place—which is seen even now why they cannot dispense with your services? It is the dearth of great ones. Why so? Because they have such a bigger field of recruiting their great ones, we have so small. A nation of 300 millions has the smallest field of recruiting its great ones compared with nations of 30, 40 or 60 millions, because the number of educated men and women in those nations is so great. Now do not mistake me, my kind friend, this is the great defect in our nation and must be removed. To educate and raise the masses, and thus alone a nation is possible. Our reformers do not see where the wound is, they want to save the nation by marrying the widows; do you think that a nation is saved by the number of husbands its widows get? Nor is our religion to blame, for an idol more or less makes a difference. The whole defect is here, the real nation who live in cottages have forgotten their manhood, their individuality. Trodden under the foot of the Hindu, Mussalman or Christian, they have come to think that they are born to be trodden under the foot of everybody who has money enough in his pocket. They are to be given back their lost individuality. They are to be educated. Whether idols will remain or not, whether widows will have husbands enough or not, whether caste is good or bad, I do not bother myself with such questions. Everyone must work out his own salvation. Our duty is to put chemicals together, the crystallization will come through God's laws. Let us put ideas into their heads, and they will do the rest. Now this means educating the masses. Here are these difficulties. A pauper government cannot, will not do anything, so no help from that quarter.

Even if supposing, we are in a position to open schools in each village free, still the poor boys would better go to the plough to earn their living rather than come to your school. We have neither the money nor can we make them come to education. The problem seems hopeless. I have found a way out. It is this. If the mountain does not come to Mahomed, Mahomed must go to the mountain. If the poor cannot come to education, education must reach them at the plough, in the factory, everywhere. How? You have seen my brethren. Now I can get hundreds of such, all over India, unselfish, good and educated. Let these men go from village to village bringing not only religion to the door of everyone but also education. So I have a nucleus of organizing the widows also as instructors to our women.

Now suppose the villagers after their day's work have come to their village and sitting under a tree or somewhere are smoking and talking the time away. Suppose two of these educated Sannyasis get hold of them there and with a camera throw astronomical or other pictures, scenes from different nations,

histories, etc. Thus with globes, maps, etc.—and all this orally—how much can be done that way, Diwanji? It is not that the eye is the only door of knowledge, the ear can do all the same. So they would have ideas and morality and hope for better. Here our work ends. Let them do the rest. What would make the Sannyasis do this sacrifice, undertake such a task?—religious enthusiasm. Every new religious wave requires a new centre. The old religion can only be revived by a new centre. Hang your dogmas or doctrines, they never pay. It is a character, a life, a centre, a God-man that must lead the way, that must be the centre round which all other elements will gather themselves and then fall like a tidal wave upon the society, carrying all before it, washing away all impurities. Again, a piece of wood can only easily be cut along the grains. So the old Hinduism can only be reformed through Hinduism, and not through the new-fangled reform movements. At the same time the reformers must be able to unite in themselves the culture of both the East and the West. Now do you not think that you have already seen the nucleus of such a great movement, that you have heard the low rumblings of the coming tidal wave? That centre, that God-man to lead was born in India. He was the great Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and round him this band is slowly gathering. They will do the work. Now, Diwanji Maharaj, this requires an organization, money—a little at least to set the wheel in motion. Who would have given us money in India? So, Diwanji Maharaj, I crossed over to America. You may remember I begged all the money from the poor, and the offers of the rich I would not take because they could not understand my ideas. Now lecturing for a year in this country, I could not succeed at all; of course, I have no wants for myself, but for my plan of raising some funds for setting up my work. First, this year is a very bad year in America. Thousands of their poor are without work. Secondly, the missionaries and the . . . try to thwart all my views. Thirdly, a year has rolled by and our countrymen even could not do so much for me as to say to the American people that he is a real Sannyasi and no cheat, and that he represents the Hindu religion. Even this much, the expenditure of a few words, they could not do!!! Bravo! my countrymen!! I love them, Diwanji Saheb. Human help I spurn with my foot. He who has been with me through hills and dales, through deserts or forests, will be with me, I hope, if not some heroic soul would arise sometime or other in India, far abler than me and carry it out. So I have told you all about it. Diwanji, excuse my long letter, my noble friend, one of the few who really feel for me, have real kindness for me. You are at liberty, my friend, to think that I am a dreamer, a visionary, but believe at least that I am sincere to the backbone, and my greatest fault is that I love my country only too, too well. May you and yours be blessed ever and ever, my noble, noble friend, may the shadow of the Almighty ever rest on all those you love. I offer my eternal gratitude to you. My debt to you is immense not only because you are my friend, but because you have all your life served the Lord and your motherland so well.

Ever yours in gratitude,

VIVEKANANDA.

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM

BY THE EDITOR

I

The latest schools of modern psychology seem to be very much interested in symbology, and they realize that human life can hardly exist apart from symbols. Symbols are connected with all our senses and even the things that are beyond our senses are generally expressed by means of symbols. Our daily life and our surroundings offer symbols of universal life and an indwelling spirit. The human language stands for a supreme symbolic representation of our thoughts and sentiments. So it is obvious that our life is replete with symbols of numberless types. Symbols play no mean part in the life and mythology of various races in the world. The religious history of the world shows how the great significance of symbolism has been realized by some of the principal religions.

Of all people the Hindus are, in the language of Sister Nivedita, apparently the most, and at heart the least, idolatrous because the application of their symbols is many-centred, like the fire in opals. Those who speak of the symbols used in their worship as being so many idols or dolls should know the attitude and philosophy of the Hindus towards symbolism. By symbols the Hindus understand the visible signs of the invisible ideas which they represent. They mean by them some definite representations of God under some forms perceptible by the senses. They put their symbols under two heads, namely, Pratikas which mean things more or less satisfactory as substitutes for God, and Pratimâs which

mean images. These two types of symbols indicate those that are placed before a worshipper as the immediate and apparent objects of worship, representative of the invisible God. In the case of Pratikas a worshipper has to join his mind with devotion to those which are not God, taking them to be God. Bâdarâyana has made it clear in his *Brahma-Sûtras* that not in the symbol is the Self to be contemplated, for the worshipper may not view symbols as being the Self. In the Hindu scriptures various Pratikas have been prescribed to different worshippers. Mind, Akâsa, Âditya, and Name are regarded as some of the symbolic representations of God. But the Hindu philosophers with whom the terms God and the Self are synonymous ask people not to attach to symbols the idea of God or the Self. Because we cannot apprehend God or the Self in the symbols on the ground of the worshipper being the same as the symbols. In worship the symbols are to be viewed as God or the Self and not in the reverse way, because it is only by regarding an inferior thing as a superior one that we can advance in spirituality. The goal of a worshipper is to get rid of the idea of differentiation and see God or the Self in everything. Hence the worship of God is to be superinduced on the symbols of God, on account of the exaltation bestowed on the symbols thereby. In the preliminary stages of spiritual growth our mind cannot grasp pure Spirit and so requires before it some definite object. Hence the Hindus not only take the aid of Pratikas as we have said before,

but that of Pratinâs or images also. Now this image worship of the Hindus has been much misunderstood and it has always been a target of indiscriminate criticism. The Hindu images that have been worshipped not only by the ignorant masses but by hosts of philosophers and saints of the highest order for thousands of years are not what they are ordinarily understood to be. To remove the misconception about the image worship of the Hindus, we quote below a significant passage from one of the works of Sir John Woodroffe: "The mind cannot seize pure Spirit any more than (to use the simile of an Indian author) a pair of tongs can seize the air. The mind, however, necessarily has before it some definite object, and one of such objects is the image or emblem. At the same time, the Hindu image is something more than a mere aid to devotion such as is the case in general as regards images in the Catholic ritual. For, by the 'life-giving' (*prâna-pratisthâ*) ceremony the life of the Devatâ or Divinity is invoked into the image. Deity is all-pervading and therefore cannot come or go. The image, like everything else is already an appearance of Deity immanent in it, in the particular form or mould of earth, stone, metal, wood or whatever other substance may be. Therefore, 'invocation' (*Âvâhana*) and 'dismissal' (*Visarjana*) in the Ritual by which the Deity is invoked 'to be present' and bid 'to depart' mean this—that the immanence of Deity in the object of worship is recognized, kept present before, and ultimately released from the mind of the worshipper. In fact, the Deity is there, ritual or no ritual. By the ritual the Deity is not only there in fact, but is so for the consciousness of the worshipper whose mind is transformed into a Divine mould. The Deity does not

move, but the mind of the worshipper does so. It is the particular modification, a *Vritti* of the mind which comes and goes. Personally, I believe that 'Idolatry' in its strictest literal sense is not to be found anywhere." The truth of this statement is well known to all Hindu worshippers.

II

The worship of God by means of the syllable Om has been retained at every stage of religious growth by the Hindus. The syllable has been taken up by almost all the Hindu worshippers and it has been manipulated to mean all the different ideas about God. Round about this syllable various doctrines and philosophies have sprung up simultaneously with numerous religious practices. The Hindus believe that this phenomenal universe is the outcome of an eternal and inexpressible principle known as the Sphota, which is the essential material of all ideas and names. This Sphota is the principle with which God has evolved Himself out as the phenomenal universe. The syllable Om is regarded as the only symbol representative of the Sphota, the manifest as Logos or Word. It may be asked why the Hindus emphasize this syllable only to signify God. While commenting on Patanjali's Yoga aphorisms, especially in the place where Patanjali declares that Om is the manifesting word of God, Swami Vivekananda answers this pertinent question and his arguments are convincing in this connection: "There are hundreds of words for God. One thought is connected with a hundred words; the idea, God is connected with hundreds of words, and each one stands as a symbol for God. Very good. But there must be a generalisation among all these words, some substratum, some

common ground of all these symbols, and that which is the common symbol will be the best, and will really represent them all. In making a sound we use the larynx and the palate as a sounding board. Is there any material sound of which all other sounds must be manifestations, one which is the most natural sound? Om (Aum) is such a sound, the basis of all sounds. The first letter, A, is the root sound, the key, pronounced without touching any part of the tongue or palate; M represents the last sound in the series, being produced by the closed lip, and the U rolls from the very root to the end of the sounding board of the mouth. Thus, Om represents the whole phenomena of sound-producing. As such, it must be the natural symbol, the matrix of all the various sounds. It denotes the whole range and possibility of all the words that can be made." Thus it is obvious why the syllable Om has been held so sacred by the Hindus and has been accepted by so many sects and creeds in India. As we have said before that in the preliminary stages a Hindu worshipper takes the help of material symbols in the forms of the images and the Chakras or geometrical figures representing the ideal, but as he advances, he makes use of the sound-symbols to call up the Divine idea, side by side with material symbols or without them. The sound-symbols are technically known as Mantras which mean to bring in salvation to those who meditate on them. A Mantra is Deity in that form, that is as sound. The Deity and Mantra are therefore one. A Mantra, however, is not a prayer which may be said in any form and in any language that the worshipper chooses. A Mantra does not merely stand for or symbolize the Deity, still less is it a mere conventional label for the Deity. A wor-

shipper has to realize God in and through the Mantra he practises, so the sound-symbols are not merely symbols but more than that.

III

In the recent times of India's religious history, it was Sri Ramakrishna who, more than anybody else, showed in his own life that symbols were not without meaning and that they could be very well used in the path of one's spiritual practices. Dr. Gualtherus H. Mees, in an article published in a recent issue of the *Visva-bharati Quarterly*, observes: "It is one of the supreme achievements of Sri Ramakrishna that he opened the eyes of the 19th and 20th century world to the deep significance of religious symbolism, and that he demonstrated that symbols are not mere empty forms, but partake of divine life in all its fulness." Sri Ramakrishna used to say that as a toy fruit or a toy elephant reminds one of the real fruit and the living animal, so do images worshipped remind one of God who is formless and eternal. Once addressing Keshab Chandra Sen, he said: "Why do these images raise the idea of mud and clay, stone and straw in your mind? Why can you not realize the presence of the eternal, blissful, all-conscious Mother in these forms? Know these images to be concretized forms of the eternal and formless essence of all sentiency." Sri Ramakrishna felt the stone image of Kâli he used to worship, as possessed of consciousness. In his own words we note here some of his experiences which prove the supreme significance of various symbols in one's religious life and its strivings. As regards the image of Kâli he worshipped, he observed: "I actually felt Her breath on my hand. At night when the room

was lighted, I never saw Her divine form cast any shadow on the walls, even though I looked closely. From my own room I could hear Her going to the upper storey of the temple with the delight of a girl, Her anklets jingling. To see if I were not mistaken, I would follow and find Her standing with flowing hair on the balcony of the first floor, looking either at Calcutta or out over the Ganges."

About the metal image of Râmlâlâ or the Child Râma which was given to Sri Ramakrishna by a devotee of Râma, named Jatâdhâri, he said: "I saw Râmlâlâ as vividly as I see you all—now dancing gracefully before me, now springing on my back, or insisting on being taken up in my arms. Sometimes I would hold him on my lap. He would not remain there, but run to the fields in the sun, pluck flowers from thorny bushes, or jump into the Ganges. I would remonstrate saying, 'Don't run in the sun, your feet will get blistered. Don't remain so long in water, you will catch cold and get fever.' But Râmlâlâ would turn a deaf ear. He would fix his beautiful eyes on me and smile, or like a naughty boy, he would go on with his pranks, or pout his lips or make faces at me. Sometimes I would lose my temper and cry, 'Wait, you naughty boy, I am going to beat you black and blue.' I would drag him away, and diverting him with various toys, ask him to play inside the room. But sometimes I lost patience and slapped him. With tearful eyes and trembling lips he would look at me. Oh, what pain I would feel then for having punished him! I would take him in my lap and console him. All these actually happened.

"One day I was going to bathe. Râmlâlâ insisted on accompanying me. I took him with me. But he would

not come out of the water, nor did he heed my remonstrances. Then I got angry, and pressing him under the water said, 'Now play in it as much as you like.' Ah, I saw him struggling for breath. Then repenting of my act I took him up in my arms. Another incident pained me greatly, and I wept bitterly for it. He insisted on having something which I could not supply. To divert him, I gave him some parched rice not well husked. As he was chewing them I found his tender tongue was scratched. The sight was too much for me. I took him on my lap and cried out, 'Mother Kausalyâ used to feed you with cream or butter with the greatest care, and I was so thoughtless as to give you this coarse stuff.'" These two incidents out of Sri Ramakrishna's manifold experiences are sufficient to show how the symbols if worshipped in right earnest and with proper spirit can elevate our spiritual consciousness.

At the time of his early stages of worship Sri Ramakrishna used to think according to the directions of the Hindu scriptures that the sinner in him was burnt, and that he was pure and perfect. Then he did not know that in every one there actually lay hidden a personification of evil that could be destroyed. He began to feel a burning sensation in his body from the beginning of his Sâdhanâ period. Medicines were administered but all proved futile.

Then one day he was practising meditation in the Panchavati grove, when a red-eyed man of black colour came out of his body, reeling as if drunk, and began to walk about in front of him. Shortly after, there emerged from his body another human figure of a placid mien, wearing the ochre robe and holding a trident in his hand. The latter attacked the former and killed him. A few days after that

symbolic vision, Sri Ramakrishna was relieved of the burning sensation which had tormented him for six months. Now the black-coloured man and the Sannyâsin are the symbolic representations of sin and virtue respectively. These representations became actually visible to Sri Ramakrishna and the effect of the vision was no little during the above-mentioned period of his Sâdhanâ.

In the different courses of Sâdhanâ, namely the Tântrik, the Vaishnava, the Vedântic, the Mohammedan, and the Christian Sri Ramakrishna used to adopt the necessary requisites of dress, ritual, and symbols. Now once he underwent a course of Sâdhanâ by constant meditation on the character of Hanumân, the devotee of Râma. Then he began to forget his identity totally and his daily life and style of food resembled those of Hanumân. He did not feign them, they came naturally to him. He used to tie his cloth round the waist, letting a portion of it hang down in the form of a tail, and used to jump from place to place instead of walking. He used to live on fruits and roots only at that time, and those he preferred to eat without peeling. He used to pass then most of his time on trees, calling out in a solemn voice, 'Raghuvir !' His eyes then looked

restless like those of a monkey, and most wonderful of all, his coccyx enlarged by about an inch. On the completion of that course of Sâdhanâ, he gradually resumed the former size of his coccyx. This incident also among many other experiences of a like nature goes to show the effect of symbolism in one's spiritual life.

IV

The different religious symbols have their great significance for those who adopt them according to their temperaments, choices, and needs of their spiritual hankerings. There cannot be any rule as to their acceptance or non-acceptance. Like all veils, symbols bring us visions and at the same time the limiting of visions. Unless and until we can grasp pure Spirit without the help of all masks, symbols are very much useful, because we do not know in what guise the Lord may reveal Himself to us. Besides this, symbols should receive our attention, if we want to know the dreams and imageries of various races in the world. Because, it is only by properly understanding the true significance of religious symbols that we can know many of the valuable thoughts of mankind about God.

THE HOLY MOTHER'S CONVERSATIONS

BY A DISCIPLE

One morning we were sitting by the Mother's cot in the room adjacent to the shrine and holding conversations.

I : Mother, some complain that the works the Sâdhus are doing namely, running Sevâshramas and dispensaries, selling books and keeping accounts etc. are not right. Did Master do any of these? All such works are being

thrown upon the shoulders of those who have joined the *Math* with fresh yearning and enthusiasm. If they are to work, let them worship, repeat the Lord's name, meditate, and sing His praises. Other works bind with desires and lead one astray from God.

Mother : Don't listen to them. If you don't do any work, how will you

keep yourselves occupied day and night? Can anybody meditate and repeat the Lord's name twenty-four hours? They quote Master's example—his case was different. Besides, Mathur used to look after his food and other comforts. You are now getting your food here because you are doing some work. Where else will you turn and beg from door to door for a handful of food? And who again is going to give so much alms to Sâdhus in these days? Don't pay any heed to such talks. Get along as Master leads you.

Once Mani Mallik had been to visit some Sâdhus. Master questioned him, "Well, how did you find the Sâdhus?" "Yes, I had been to them", replied he, "but . . ." "What do you mean", Master asked. Mani Mallik said, "Everybody demanded money." "How much did they want?" replied Master. "At most they might have demanded a pice for hemp or tobacco. You need all manner of delicacies and luxuries. And they want just a pice or so for hemp or tobacco. Should they not want even so much? Do you mean to have all enjoyments for yourselves alone? And should they even deny themselves tobacco worth a pice?"

I: Desire is at the root of enjoyment. If one dwells in a four-storeyed building, but has no cravings, he does not really enjoy. On the other hand if one lives under a tree, but has hankerings, all kinds of enjoyment come in their wake. Master used to say, "Such is the play of the Divine Mother that She makes even the man who has not a soul to call his own in the entire world rear a cat and be tied to the world."

Mother: Yes, that's true. Desire is the root of all. What does it matter if one has given up desires? I have so many things about me, but I never

feel any hankering for them—none at all.

I: What desire can you have? Mother, how shall we get rid of the innumerable, petty cravings which are ever rising in us?

Mother: Those of yours are not really desires. They are nothing. They are ever coming and going due to the freak of the mind. The more they come out the better.

I: I was thinking yesterday, if God does not protect how is it possible to battle with the mind? One desire leaves only to make room for another.

Mother: So long as there is the feeling of the ego, desires will stay. Those desires won't do you any harm. He will protect you. One who has taken His shelter, has resigned oneself to Him forsaking all, one who wants to become good,—if He does not protect such an one, it's all His blame. One should completely depend on Him. Let Him make you good if He so wills or make you sink if He wants otherwise. But then, you must go on doing good deeds. And that too according to the capacity He bestows upon you.

I: Do I have that feeling of resignation? Sometimes I feel a bit resigned, but it passes away. If He Himself does not protect, where is security? Mother, now I think that you are present and if any distress or mishap comes I come and tell it all to you and find solace from your company. Who will protect me afterwards? I can be sure if you have mercy.

Mother: No fear, my child. You have no fear at all. You will never have families, children etc. What fear is there for you? And meanwhile, while I am still alive, you will become disciplined.

I: I sometimes think that if God does not bestow His grace what will it

avail to repeat the Lord's name or to practise austerities. His protection is the only protection.

Mother : No, no, you need have no fear. He will protect you. Don't worry.

BADARAYANA'S VIEWS ABOUT THE NATURE OF FINAL RELEASE

By PROF. ASHOKANATH SHASTRI, VEDANTATIRTHA, M.A., P.R.S.

In one of the previous issues,¹ we have given a brief survey of the different types and stages of Emancipation in Sankara's school of Vedânta. In the present context, we propose to examine Bâdarâyana's own views about the nature of Final Release. He quotes the opinions of two other great Âchâryas, viz.,—Jaimini² and Audulomi.³ Of these two old Seers, the former holds that the jîva becomes invested with the highest attributes belonging to Ishvara; and the latter, on the contrary, maintains that it attains the state of Pure Consciousness unqualified by any attributes which are purely fictitious. Each of the two Masters (Âchâryas), however, regards the views of the other to be absolutely incompatible with his own. If the jîva takes the form of Brahman (endowed with the exalted qualities), it

cannot be Pure Consciousness at the same time; and if it becomes Pure Consciousness, it cannot possess any qualities. Bâdarâyana⁴ comes forward with the olive branch in his hand and effects an easy compromise between the two extreme views of Jaimini and Audulomi. He regards that the exalted qualities are not purely fictitious, but are superimposed on the Absolute by the individuated selves as a matter of religious necessity. Audulomi declines to accept this position, since according to him Pure Consciousness can never be the substratum of ignorance,—the two (Consciousness and ignorance) being, by their very nature, opposed to each other.

Now, to come to the point, we may very naturally ask how Bâdarâyana himself reconciles these two conflicting views. The great Master assures us that Pure Consciousness can certainly be accepted as the substratum of ignorance (ajñâna), inasmuch as it is the consciousness as reflected in *vritti* only that

¹ *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1936, pp. 603—5.

² "Brâhmena Jaiminir upanyâsâdibhyah"—Br. Sû. IV. 4. 5—"By (a nature) like that of Brahman (the soul manifests itself); (thus) Jaimini (opines); on account of reference and the rest (i.e. *vidhi* or injunction, and *vyapadesha* or assertion—mention of the qualities of omniscience and omnipotence)." For these reasons Jaimini, the celebrated teacher of the Pûrva Mîmâmsâ system of Philosophy, thinks that the liberated soul attains the conditioned aspect of Brahman (i.e. Personal Godhood).

³ "Chititanmâtrena tadâtmakatvâd ity Audulomih"—Br. Sû. IV. 4. 6—"By the sole nature of intelligence (the soul manifests itself), as that is its Self (i.e. true nature) thus Audulomi (opines)."

⁴ "Evam apy upanyâsât pûrvabhâvâd avirodham Bâdarâyanah"—Br. Sû. IV. 4. 7,—

"Thus also, on account of the existence of the former (qualities), (admitted) owing to reference and so on, there is absence of contradiction, (as) Bâdarâyana (thinks)." Even though from the absolute point of view the liberated soul is of the nature of Pure Consciousness (i.e. unconditioned Brahman),—yet from the relative standpoint it can be regarded as endowed with the exalted attributes of Ishvara. So the views of Jaimini and Audulomi are not mutually contradictory.

is opposed to ignorance, but *not* so the Pure Consciousness.⁵

As regards the question, whether the released soul, according to Jaimini, will possess all the qualities of Brahman (attributed to It on account of Its association with Mâyâ), a great thinker like Appaya Dîkshita thinks that there is no positive proof that Jaimini seeks to exclude a few special prerogatives (such as those of Creatorship, etc.) from accruing to the released soul. That this is the opinion of Bâdarâyana admits of no doubt. Râmânûja, on the other hand, seeks to father this peculiar doctrine of 'limitations in' Salvation' upon Jaimini also. To serve his purpose, he takes the particular Sûtra Jagadvyâpâravarjam prakaranâd asannihitatvâca" (V. 4. 17) out of its context and reads it with the Sûtra dealing with Jaimini's view. But this is an altogether unwarranted procedure, as it is obvious that the Sûtra (IV. 4. 17) opens a different discourse, and he will be a

⁵ Râmânûja argues that the Advaitin is guilty of self-contradiction, when he says that ignorance is opposed to Consciousness and still works in It. The Advaitin in reply points out that Râmânûja is labouring under a confusion of Pure Consciousness and ordinary knowledge (vrittijñâna). Though in essence knowledge is also Consciousness, yet it materially differs from It in that it is produced by an accredited instrument of knowledge, whereas Pure Consciousness is an eternal Existence. It is on the evidence of experience that we have to conclude that knowledge is opposed to and destructive of ignorance, and not unmodalized Pure Consciousness. On the contrary, the latter is its very proof and foundation. We could have no knowledge of the existence of ignorance unless we were conscious of it. Âchârya Sureshvara very poignantly remarks that this is a case of unpardonable petulance when one contends that ignorance should not rest in Consciousness. Not only ignorance, but the whole empirical world, is seen to be super-imposed on It:

"Akshamâ bhavatah keyam sâdhakatva-prakalpane.

Kim na pashyasi samsâram tatraivâ-jñânakalpita."

—Brihadâraṇyaka-Vârtika, I. 4. 1279.

bold man who will read in it a backward reference. If this had been the intention of Bâdarâyana himself, he could have easily read the Sûtra in question in the context of Jaimini's view.⁶

To conclude, we find that the Sûtra-kâra is fully in favour with the Advaita position that Brahman, as the substratum of Mâyâ, is the Substantive Cause of the world; and that the identity of the individual self with the Impersonal Absolute is the state of Ultimate Release, though the Ishvarahood may be ascribed to it by the rest of the jîvas in bondage.⁷ But we should advert to the necessity of caution in this connection

The postulation of Ishvarahood is only a question of religious necessity. It is rather in the nature of a concession to weaker souls who has not yet received the highest Spiritual Illumination. Per-

⁶ Here Thibaut questions in his Introduction to the translation of Sankara's commentary (S.B.E. Vol. XXXIV, p. xix) on the Brahma-Sûtras that if Bâdarâyana cites Jaimini and Audolomi as his authority on this topic, why does Sankara represent him as criticizing their views elsewhere (i.e. in the Sûtras—I. 4. 21, IV. 3. 12 etc.)? The reply of the Advaitins to the above query would be that even if a portion of one doctrine be supported by some author in one context, other portions of the same doctrine may be repudiated by the same author elsewhere in a different context. There can be no hindring rule that because Bâdarâyana has given a partial support to Jaimini's view in one of his Sûtras (i.e. IV. 4. 5), he should have to stick to this support of Jaimini regarding other topics also. It is for this reason that we find Jaimini's views refuted in several of Bâdarâyana's Sûtras (viz.,—III. 2. 40, III. 4. 2, III. 4. 18, etc.) To be precise,—even in the present context Bâdarâyana does not fully subscribe to the position of Jaimini or Audulomi, but holds that they contain only half truths.

⁷ Cf: The interesting theory of Appaya Dîkshita according to which the *highest form of practical salvation* is the attainment of unqualified identity with Personal Godhead. (Vide, *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1936; and "A critique of Appaya Dîkshita's conception of Moksha"—published in 'Indian Culture', Vol. I, No. 2.)

sonal Godhead has its necessity no doubt, and its justification in what has been called by Kant '*Practical Reason*', though in '*Pure Reason*' it has no *raison d'être*. In the interests of pure thought religion should never be allowed to dictate terms to philosophy. Sankara's

logical mind has never allowed him to confound these two issues, which the muddled logic of Theists has failed to keep apart.⁸

⁸ Appaya Dīkshita has evidently failed to keep the two issues apart, and the result has been a confusion and an aberration.

CHRISTENDOM'S NEED OF CHRIST

BY PROF. GILBERT SLATER

Nineteen hundred years ago the founder of Christian religion was crucified as a criminal in Jerusalem, under the law of the Roman Empire. Within a few centuries afterwards a religion which professed to be what the Christ had preached—had prevailed against all opposition, triumphant over bitter persecution, so completely that the Emperor of the still united Empire—was fain to become a convert in order to maintain his power, and to make 'Christianity' the official religion of all the civilized countries west of Afghanistan.

But what is "Christianity"? Who was Christ? What did he preach?

With regard to the first question little is known beyond dispute. But it is reasonably certain that he came of peasant stock, and probable that he was the son or stepson of the carpenter of Nazareth, a large village in Galilee, the northern province of Palestine, a halting place for travellers from the Mediterranean shore to the upper Jordan valley. His name comes down to us as *Iesous*, which is the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic name pronounced *Yeshua*, according to Hebrew scholars, and which is further altered to *Jesus* in English. It is also practically certain that his followers were convinced that he died on the Cross, and then miraculously came to life again, to sit ever afterwards

on a throne in the sky, as supreme Lord of the Universe; and that the explanation of his whole life and resurrection was that he was an incarnation of the Hebrew God Yahveh (Jahveh or Jehvah), as Krishna of Vishnu. This belief was embodied in creeds which have remained up to the present day official statements of the doctrines of all the great organized Christian Churches, Greek, Roman, Syrian, Anglican, and Protestant. Whether it is true, or whether his supposed appearances to his followers as a living man were illusions, or whether he was taken down from the Cross while actually alive, are much disputed questions with which I am not here concerned. Whether the belief in Jesus' miraculous resurrection was true or mistaken, there can be no doubt that it generated the force that enabled Christianity, starting as a small Jewish sect, to spread and conquer under the guidance of a succession of notable leaders.

Of these first was St. Paul, previously Saul of Tarsus, probably a wealthy young man, since he inherited the status of a Roman citizen, who forsook his possessions to give his life to preaching his own particular version of Christian doctrine to non-Jewish people. His inference from the supposed fact of the Resurrection was that the faithful

followers of Jesus would also ascend into heaven and live in bliss for ever. In his time Christians confidently expected that Jesus would come back to judge all human beings alive or dead, while some at least of those who had known and followed him during his life time were still alive and then the living would enter into bliss without ever dying, and the remainder, with all other dead people, would rise from their tombs, and also enter into everlasting bliss. This was the faith that enabled them to defy the power of the State, so that the sufferings of the Christian martyrs became the seed of the Christian Church.

There was a critical time for the early Church when this expectation was visibly falsified by the course of events, but the danger was warded off by the timely appearance of the book known as the "Gospel according to St. John", which developed and laid stress upon another early Christian belief, which I can only vaguely describe as a belief in the existence among Christians of a spiritual emanation from the Supreme Deity, termed the Holy Ghost, a guide, strengthener and consoler of all faithful Christians, who would be with them at all times, until the second coming of the Incarnate Deity in the person of the Crucified Jesus of Nazareth. This doctrine was also accepted by the whole Church.

So much uniformity of belief did not, however, prevent violent quarrels among believers about minor matters of belief, prosecuted at times with savage cruelty—quarrels which could not be resolved, because they turned on questions on which nobody really knew or could know anything.

When we turn from the question "Who was Christ?" to the question "What did he preach?" the reliable information is sufficiently ample. His

theology was simple. He believed in the existence of a supreme Deity, the Creator of the Earth and its supposed subsidiary satellites, the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, fixed (i.e. time stars), and wandering (i.e. planets). Living, as he did, in what was in his time a fertile and beautiful land, rich in wild flowers and vines, olives and figs, and other fruit trees of numerous varieties, he felt that the attributes of this unnamed deity were rightly indicated by the phrase "Our Father in Heaven", so that his theological doctrine is correctly described as a belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. But he also believed in the existence of a hostile power, whom he termed "the Evil One," named Satan, perpetually at work endeavouring to thwart the goodness of God by corrupting the hearts of men. Exactly what he believed about his own relationship with the Heavenly Father is a matter of dispute but the balance of the available evidence is in favour of the opinion that he believed that he was not merely a son of God in the same sense as all other human beings, but also in some special sense, by virtue of which he was able, better than any other man, to realize his sonship, and interpret the will and nature of the Heavenly Father to his brethren, if any of them would listen to his teaching. The teaching was only slightly and incidentally theological, it was mainly and emphatically ethical, and was embodied in what is known as the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, and certain parables, particularly those known as the Parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Sheep and the Goats, which we have reason to believe come down to us only inappreciably altered from his actual pronouncements either because they were put on record by the hearers in the book known as 2, now lost but

used as a source by Matthew and Luke, in the first and third Gospels, or in the case of parables, because their literary form and poetic quality made them live in men's memories.

The wonderful and unique fact about that teaching is that it is exactly the opposite of what one would infer from observing the practice of the great majority of those who profess themselves to be Christians. Gandhi has told us of his astonishment when after having formed his ideas of the essential features of the Christian religion from his observation of Christians, he read the Sermon on the Mount, and discovered that its doctrine was in harmony with his own belief. Actually Gandhi, though not a Christian, is the foremost living exponent and exemplar of the religion taught by Jesus of Nazareth. Thus Gandhi's doctrine of Ahimsâ was preached by Jesus in such words as these: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who use you despitefully. . . . Give to every one who asks of you . . . as you would that others should do to you, give likewise to them."

He believed that it was his mission to establish on earth the "Kingdom of Heaven", a brotherhood willing to welcome all men, women and children, loving one another, and endeavouring to act in accordance with the will of a Divine Father, who regards all living beings as his children, and pities and cares for them without distinction. The prayer which he taught his disciples to address to their "Father in Heaven", set before them as their first aim in life the establishment of this great Brotherhood, in which men should meet injuries by forgiveness instead of by resentment, and for themselves ask for nothing beyond "daily bread" To those who desired riches, he said that

such a wish was foolish ("Blessed are the poor, woe to you rich") and impious, "You cannot serve God and Mammon". To use a modern phrase he preached voluntary communism, and after his crucifixion his disciples, while still under the sway of his intense personality, made voluntary communism the rule of the little communities which they established, first in Jerusalem, and later in many other cities. Though the rule of absolute community of the good was relaxed, these little communities (called 'Churches') continued to be local organisations for mutual help among their own membership, each also ready to help other churches in times of distress.

These rules of brotherhood and mutual help Jesus made absolute, "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that does the will of my Father who is in Heaven". To those who do not, however active they might be in church affairs he would say "Depart from me, I never knew you".

That the teaching of Jesus is little honoured in reality by so-called Christian nations, and even by the dignitaries of the great organized Christian Churches is a glaring fact, so glaring indeed, that many, whose aims and lives have been mostly in accordance with his, have repudiated Christianity and have been denounced as atheists.

But how did this lamentable divergence come about?

It began about thirty years after the Crucifixion. In A.D. 64 there was a terrible fire in Rome, which destroyed great areas in that city where the fragile huts of the poorer classes were huddled together, and no doubt hundreds of houses of the well-to-do. It was probably accidental, so far as its immediate origin was concerned, but its anterior cause must have been the corruption of the elaborate system of city govern-

ment under the influence of greatly augmented wealth and greed, as the fortunes of the great merchants and money-lenders assembled in the Imperial city were swollen by profits and interests flowing thither from all parts of the overgrown Empire. The populace, homeless and destitute, frantic and revengeful, clamoured for victims. They were found in the new, but rapidly growing community of Christians, whose democratic and communist practices were obnoxious to the corrupt plutocracy. They were accused of having set the city on fire, and allowed no opportunity of defending themselves against the false charge. They were hunted out, and murdered in various ways, notably by being burnt alive, so as to suffer a similar fate to that which they were accused of inflicting on their fellow citizens.

The reaction of this calamity was most disastrous to the spirit of Christianity, Jesus meant his religion to be purely a religion of love; actually, the pressure of this first persecution, followed in succeeding time by many more, converted Christianity into a religion of hate as well as of love, of love to all within its scanty membership, of hatred to the best of those outside. Retaliation in deed was not possible, retaliation in thought was the more savage. Even those who were burnt at the stake could bring themselves to forgive their tortures, but their friends and relatives could not. They set their imaginations to construct even worse tortures for "the wicked"—their immortal souls were to undergo these tortures with no remission, no place for repentance, for ever and ever. And it was the All-loving Heavenly Father who, as they believed, created this hell, and inflicted these horrors, worse than ever man, the cruellest of all living creatures, had ever inflicted on his fellows. The cruelty of

such a God generated similar cruelty in his worshippers. Worse was still to follow. When the Christian Church was split into rival sections, disputing over insoluble questions of theology, each separate sect was ready to prophesy everlasting torment to the adherents of every other sect, and to reserve the expectation of everlasting bliss exclusively for its own adherents. They alone were the Elects, the chosen ones, who ultimately owed their Election to 'Grace', that is, to the special favouritism to them of the all-just, all-powerful, all-loving Father of all!

Under the influence of such teaching, the 'Christian' nations of the west of Europe combined under the impulse of priests to wage the savage wars of the Crusades against the more civilized and humane Mahomedans, and later created an organization for searching out the "unbelievers" such as Jews and Mohammedans, living in their midst, and also the "unorthodox", and put them to death by torture. Thus even in London in the sixteenth century Roman Catholics burnt Protestants at the stake as "heretics", and Protestants hanged the Catholics, and tore out their entrails before they were quite dead, as "traitors".

Even now the doctrine of everlasting hell lingers on poisoning the minds of all who submit to the teaching of the priests. A less rapid but equally disastrous decay ate into the vitality of all the other great ethical doctrines taught by Jesus, that of the need of ceasing to desire superfluous riches, after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. Then it paid to become a nominal Christian, and those who aimed at power and wealth rushed to become converts and intrigued for advancements into positions of authority in the Church

organization. The Empire under pressure of barbarian invaders, split into an Eastern Empire with Constantinople as its capital, which maintained its existence up to 1453, in which the Christian Church retained its material prosperity while becoming spiritually corrupt, and the Western Empire, where the old capital of Rome was captured and ravaged by the "heathen" a thousand years afterwards, and the power of the Emperors dwindled away. There the Church, organized under the Pope of Rome, deemed the Vicar, or Viceroy, of Christ, took up the task of rescuing the remnants of the ancient civilization, and of exercising a spiritual domination over the minds and consciences of the northern invaders.

Here there was a partial and temporary return to the ethical standards of the earliest Christians, and renewed attention was paid to the social teaching of Jesus. It was recognized that both slavery and private property in land were contrary to his spirit but both had become so firmly rooted in the social structure that the Church had to compromise. It made increasing efforts to abolish chattel slavery, arguing that "those whom Christ had bought with his precious blood must not be brought and sold by other men", but permitted, and even made profit, out of the forced labours of poor peasants. It permitted the inequality of the rich and the poor, but preached the necessity of alms giving, and insisted on demanding lives of self-sacrifice, at least to the extent of abstinence from marriage of its priests.

But in proportion as it succeeded in re-establishing the rule of law and order, and trade and manufacture, corruption and decay of spiritual life again made headway. The assumption of responsibility for the revival of civilization by the Papacy, i.e. by the organized Christian clergy, gave it power and authority.

That authority was supported by a new system of spiritual punishment, supplementing the conception of hell, the threat of which could only be used in temporary torments, where every revolt in deed or thought, was visited with its the most extreme cases. This was Purgatory, a place of finely graded appropriate and severe penalty. Purgatory, in the teaching of the Church, became increasingly horrible, but it was the only way to heaven for all but the saintliest Christians.

Responsibility thus brought power, and the possession of power gave the control of wealth, as soon as there was a surplus over the bare necessities of life to be scrambled for. Wealth again produced luxury, and luxury greed. Papal Rome became, like Imperial Rome, the centre to which the tribute of all nations that were under its sway was drawn by an elaborate system of clerical taxation; and Rome again became a city where everything was for sale including the remission of any number of years of Purgatory.

Nemesis came at last. Men's consciences revolted against the corruption of the Church, and their minds against its intellectual tyranny; while its wealth and luxury excited the envy and greed of landowning and mercantile magnates. North of the Alps, the combination of these forces carried through the "Protestant Reformation", which became effective and permanent in establishing new religious organizations, were supported by the princely governments. Horrible religious wars ensued, in which it is estimated that *two-thirds* of the population in Germany alone perished by slaughter, famine, and pestilence.

Whether these new "Protestant Churches" or the Roman "Catholic Church" approximated more in their practice to the teaching of Jesus, is a question which is hotly debated between

the respective adherents, and one on which it is very difficult to form an impartial opinion. England was saved from the worst horrors of the conflict by the policy of Queen Elizabeth and the natural genius for compromise of the English people. The national Church was reorganized on the basis of Royal Supremacy, and on a blending of Catholic or Protestant creeds and ritual. Nevertheless civil war did ensue, in which the more extreme Protestants inspired a revolt of the mercantile classes against the monarchy on the ground that they must not be taxed, however moderately, without the consent of their representatives in Parliament. When the conflict ended at the close of the seventeenth century it became clear that (1) the "Christian" established Church had become in effect a subordinate department of the Government, and (2) whatever that Government might be represented officially as being, or be in form or in popular belief, it was in reality the tool of the plutocracy. It was dominated right through the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth by the wealthy parasitic landlord class, and later, to an increasing degree, by the chieftains of capitalism, manufacturers, traders, bankers, company promoters, proprietors of Newspapers, ship-builders, mutineers and the like, supported by an ever-growing body of small and medium folk living, with little or no labour, on incomes derived from investments.

In the consequence, the nominal Christian Churches in England became in reality the servants of Mammon and not of the Heavenly Father. In words, they declared that Jesus was the all wise, all good, and almighty God but in the mass, treated his recorded teaching as foolish and negligible and altogether inapplicable to actual life, either private or public.

What is true of England in this respect is largely true also of America, Germany, and Western Europe also; with what horrible results became apparent in one war for markets and areas for capitalist expansion and exploitation of another, between "Christian" powers, from the Anglo-French war of the beginning of the eighteenth century upto the Great War of the twentieth, which left behind a legacy of mutual hatred which daily becomes more intense and ominous, and now threatens Europe with a more horrible fate than ever experienced by humanity yet—its wealthy and crowded cities are in imminent danger of being destroyed by explosive and incendiary bombs, their inhabitants murdered wholesale by torturing and poisonous gases, their water supplies destroyed, their food supplies disorganized, so that those who escaped from one death would perish in millions from hunger and thirst.

All this danger would disappear, all this horrible prospect would be transformed into a future of unprecedented health, happiness, and prosperity, if only professed Christians would obey the commands of Christ. These are proved to be the dictates also of honest common sense. There is the easy possibility of every desirable commodity for everybody, if only we are all willing to demand no more than our fair share of the produce of industry in proportion to our needs, and to contribute our fair share of the necessary labour in proportion to our powers, living together, as Jesus would have us live, as brothers, helpful and sympathizing with one another in all fortune, good and bad. *That is Christendom's Need for Christ today.*

What hope is there that Christendom will recognize that need, and at long last follow the leadership of Jesus?

It looks but a slight hope at present,

but we must not forget that among all Christian sects there have been men and women, mostly poor and obscure, who have been willing to devote their lives to the pursuit of genuine Christian ideals, and others also, outside those sects, who have fought with them for social justice and mercy, though they repudiated Christian theology. They refused to call Jesus "Lord, Lord" and are termed atheists and deemed wicked by those who are conspicuous in their attendance in the Churches, like the Pharisees of old, not realizing the application today of the parable of the sheep and the goats, in which Jesus declared that in the last day he would repudiate them, and welcome as comrade those "atheists" who, like Robert Owen a hundred years ago and certain of our fellow citizens today, are striving to "cast down the mighty from their seats, and lift up them of low degree."

Our hope rests upon the fact that while the organized Churches, wealthy

and endowed, and in alliance with nationalistic and plutocratic governments, have betrayed Christ, still hosts of the rank and file of professed Christians are still loyal to his teaching, particularly among the poor and simple. One poor woman who works as a domestic servant next door to me, said a day or two ago, "When I was a child, my mother taught us that religion was trying to help other people". That is true Christianity. The words of Jesus, and his example and personality, still find an echo in many Christian hearts, and still live as a fountain of never-ceasing inspiration. Christendom needs the spirit of Christ, and now while the Archbishops and Bishops deplore what they regard as the decay of religion, it is beginning more fully to realize that need. Therein lies the only hope of its rescue from the perils which the Church's betrayal of Christ has brought upon "Christendom" It must return to Christ.

THE DRAMA OF MANKIND IN ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT

BY RICHARD C. THURNWALD

MAN IN THE GRIP OF AN INSCRUTABLE POWER

An age which is swiftly passing away hoped to discover reliable laws of the world-process from the natural sciences and to construct an exact mechanism of animal-and-plant-life as well as of the cosmos and the atom. It meant to dispense entirely with religion in all its forms. This mentality boasted to have discovered laws of human conduct depending only on materialistic and economic principles, and to be able to direct man's life like a steam engine.

But human life cannot be directed so easily. It is a fundamental fact of all

times that man depends on powers which he cannot hope to control. His existence is due not only to the conditions of his environment, but also to biological factors. Whether we are born as cripples or endowed with brilliant gifts does not depend upon us. Our thoughts and actions are beyond our control. Remember the words: "It thinks within me". Although we mean to "act as we wish", we must not forget that our wishes are brooded in the unconscious depths of our mind. We feel ourselves in the hands of powers which dominate us, and with which we constantly have to deal.

MAN'S BEHAVIOUR IN GROUP-LIFE

In social life the thoughts and actions of many people are entwined. Man lives in aggregations of various forms of complexity, duration and size. The same person participates in a number of these aggregations at the same time as the member of a family, as the unit of a village community, as a trader, as the supporter of a political party, as the citizen of a state.

Man's behaviour differs in different aggregations. In performing his functions a regulated behaviour is required. Such behaviour consists in the observations of rules, of avoidances (taboos) and in carrying out certain duties. These are the results of interactions of individuals, which complement each other and check and limit each other's spheres. The forms of family life, of clans, of kinship groups, of economic organizations, of political chieftainships, and the like—none of these has been consciously invented. Exactly as man evolves new devices, he also produces aggregations and their particular configurations, as the result of his endowment. The moulding of these aggregations does not lie in his conscious or wilful power. He could not intentionally act in a different manner. Otherwise he would cease to be what he is.

If a man is able to express the trend of thought and feeling dominating his group, he acquires prestige and becomes a leader of his community. His decisions, however, are liable to be modified by interference from outstanding persons of his group or from outside. His decisions cannot therefore be regarded as simply expressing his impulses, but are qualified by intelligent deliberations.

The model thinker or the model actor will never be able to pay sufficient attention to the conditions of a great

number of other groups and localities. He will be able to gauge the effects radiating from his actions on many other groups which may be involved in some way or other.

SELF-ASSERTION AND EGO-CENTRICITY

The feeling of reciprocal interdependence between the self-asserting members or groups is generally deeply clouded by their ego-centricity and narrow-mindedness. This is in fact the pest which injects its virus into all aggregations, impedes their smooth functioning, and prevents the establishment of a balance which respects the range of individual and collective egos.

EVIL OF EGO-CENTRICITY IN THE MODERN AGE

The infections produced by ego-centric and narrow-minded attitudes upon nations and groups in our age are well-known.

Quiet times indulge in debauchery and squandering, in prejudices and rigidity of thought, while periods of transition are filled with destruction not only of the obsolete but also of the things of permanent value, and are saturated with fanatic struggles not only for ideas but also for illusions.

Commenting upon happenings of history, we cannot use attributes such as "good" and "bad", and we must not wrap ourselves up in ego-centric sentiments and resentments. We should conceive of man as part of Nature, as expressed and symbolized by the Hindu religion. Man's shortcomings and passions, sufferings and struggles produce in the long run beneficial effects and are like physical exercises which invigorate the system. Periods of decay and degradation lead to resurgence and improved association. Analysis of social life and of history are conducive to the

formation of sound judgments on the events around us. We shall not praise or blame the people around us any more than the sun or the moon, the thunderstorm or the movements of the atom.

THE GREAT DILEMMA

Trying to take a detached view of the social processes, past and present, we bow down in veneration before the superhuman power that directs the fate of man from within as a force active in him and which at the same time permeates everything around him.

Being conscious of this superhuman power we cannot help asserting ourselves in the world. When our life becomes involved in the actions of our neighbours, it may become imperative on us to influence others. If the life of the groups with which our existence is associated is in danger, we shall interpose ourselves. For, the continuation and procreation of our life is bound up with the groups of which we feel ourselves to be a minute part and of which we conceive a limited division by our intellect, on one side, and our ego-centric self-assertion on the other.

CODE OF MORALITY AND RELIGION

Man on his path is always vexed by this dilemma. Out of it the groups have produced moral demands. Not only that, sages have outlined ideals of how man should live and act. These men had disciples and even masses of followers. But even the disciples failed to live up to the ideal of their master. The masses were loath to conform to, even unable to understand, the teaching which they had accepted under the sway of suggestion.

Considering the terrible storms of pathological passion which swept over great portions of mankind from time

to time, it seems deplorable that neither prayer nor moral preaching, nor sacrifice nor meditation could serve as barriers to the flood of destructive mass emotions. On the contrary such eruptions sometimes carried away whatever there were rooted in men as morals and religion. In such moments man himself in the words of Sophocles is awe-inspiring. Our mind will become conscious of being dependent on forces to which we fall an easy prey. It is the more agitating, since in the drama of mankind we are not merely spectators but also actors.

THEORIES AND INTERPRETATIONS

This consciousness of unseen and unknown forces stimulates fantasy and reasoning. It results in an interpretation of these forces and in theories about the manner in which they act on man. Such an interpretation uses symbols of the particular system of culture to which man belongs, and is based on the knowledge of his times. It must use words and concepts which can be communicated to the particular group. Its intellectual means of transmission of ideas are bound up with the manner of thinking and the degree of analysis attained in the particular system of culture.

Such intellectual expressions and symbols can, however, never, adequately explain or describe the superhuman and transhuman powers, their relation to man and their inspiration of man. Interpretations will differ according to civilization, culture and the men aggregated in a society. Why should one school of interpretation decry another? They all essentially mean the same. In fact, translation from one language into another is not sufficient, if not accompanied by rendering the exact meaning of symbols and their esoteric implica-

tions, as only this would convey the fundamental feeling.

THE DRAMA OF MANKIND—ITS RELIGIOUS MEANING

Each race, each nation, exhibits a distinctness of personality and cultural achievement, of behaviour, of social regulations, of morals. In spite of that there is a vast common ground of humanity which tends to a complementary interlocking between groups and individuals.

Neither the universe nor the atom can teach us so much religion as an insight into the drama of mankind, its social adventures at different epochs and in various races and nations. The universe is far and the atom is almost inconceivable, but by human fate we all are touched personally. Environment may do much for a man, but it is the ego which is enigmatic, which contains the abyss of human emotions and passions, which reminds us of the danger on their violent outburst.

Man not only feels that his external fate is not in his hands, but also becomes aware that the reins of his intentions slip out of his hands. He sometimes acts as if driven by a "Daimonion", as Socrates conceived it, by a force acting in himself for good or evil.

Being conscious of all this, men have drawn encouragement from their way of interpreting their particular destiny. Such an interpretation is like a mariner's compass in the sea. It delivers man from the depressive feeling that he is inexorably doomed by a blind fate.

The present age is filled with a hundred social and political problems. Co-operation is needed between groups, communities, nations, and races. Shall we be able to bring it about? Can a "Daimonion" which springs from an understanding of the religious meaning of the drama of mankind be tuned to a reciprocal understanding among the leaders of the various nations in the world today?

A GREAT WESTERN MYSTIC & THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE OF BHAKTI

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

(CONTINUED FROM THE LAST ISSUE)

Although the very nature of this short sketch of Seuse's life and writings prevents us from going into details as to his spiritual practices and instructions, the following should at least be mentioned:—Seuse used to find the practice of solitude and silence of great use, especially so in the case of an aspirant still new to the life of renunciation and self-surrender, and in his autobiography we find these practices described in the following words:—

"Solitude being of so great a benefit to a man beginning the spiritual life, the servant resolved to remain for ten years cut off from all the world in his monastery. Every time he came from table, he shut himself in his cell and stayed there. He did not want to have long talks with men or women, either at the gate or elsewhere, nor did he wish to see them. He put a limit to the range of his vision, beyond which his eyes were not permitted to roam, and this

limit was five feet. He stayed at home all the time, neither wanting to go into the town nor down into the country, being wholly set on cultivating his solitude. . . . Thus though unbound by fetters of iron, he bound himself voluntarily to remain in his cell through all these ten years. But to make his imprisonment easier to bear for himself, he sent for a painter who was to design and draw in chalk pictures of the saintly patriarchs of old with their sayings and other devout subjects calculated to help a suffering man to forbearance in adversity."

And again he says, "The servant felt how something in his innermost drove him to reach out after real peace of heart, and he thought silence might further him in the attainment of this. So he guarded his tongue so well that for thirty years he never broke his silence at table, except for one single time, when, returning from a meeting of the chapter in the company of many brothers, they all had their meal on the boat; that once he broke it."

"Every time he was called to the gate, he sought to practise four things :

(1) To receive every man with great kindness ;

(2) To make but few words ;

(3) To dismiss with consolation ;

(4) To re-enter the monastery with an unburdened mind."

Even these short extracts will show the reader what great value Seuse gave to solitude, the practice of silence and the strict avoidance of all unnecessary words in his own life as in that of all other aspirants.

Before passing on to a few quotations from other writings of his, just one more extract will be given from his "The Life of the Servant," showing the importance he attached to the Holy Name, an idea well-known to India and Indian Bhaktas. It is a pity that space

does not allow of more extracts being given from this work, because in it, considering its autobiographical nature, we find more of his own personal thought than in any other, enabling us to catch glimpses of Seuse the man in his struggle after spiritual realization with its many defeats and ultimate victory.

"Of the Sweet Name of Jesus.

"The servant of Eternal Wisdom once travelled from the uplands down to Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) to our Holy Lady. On his return our Lady appeared to a very holy person and said to her, 'Behold, my child has come and carried the Sweet Name of Jesus far and wide with great devotion, just as His disciples used to do in olden times. And even as they wanted to make all men realise this name through faith, so also it has been his endeavour to rekindle this same name of Jesus in all cold hearts with a new fervour of love. For this he shall get his eternal reward with them.'

"And when this very holy person looked at our Lady, she saw that she was holding a beautiful candle in her hand which was burning so brightly that it lighted the whole world. And our Lady said to that very holy person, 'Behold, this burning candle means the name of Jesus, for He is lighting up all hearts that receive His name with devotion and honour and carry it in themselves with great love and affection. And my son has chosen the servant to kindle many a heart anew in the love of His name, so that it might be borne up to Eternal Bliss.'

Here we find the old teachings of the identity of God with His name and the identity of the Great Soul, in whom everything has become Divine, with the Divine, all clothed in the particular garb of Seuse's time and faith in Christ, and made beautiful and touching by his infinite power of love and self-surrender

to the Will of the Highest. Of this love and unconditional self-surrender we find many an example in his "A Little Book of Love". (*Buechlein der Liebe*). And all such passages, wherever they be found, remind the unbiased student, who is able to approach them with an open mind and to rise above mere name and form to the idea of the Divine irrespective of clime and creed, of Sri Krishna's words when he says in the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* :—

"Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma, and rise of Adharma, then I body Myself forth for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age."

"Fill thy mind with Me, be My devotee, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me; thus having made thy heart steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme Goal, thou shalt come to Me."

"He who does work for Me alone and has Me for his goal, is devoted to Me, is freed from attachment and bears enmity towards no creature, he entereth into Me."

"Whatsoever form any devotee seeks to worship with Sraddhâ, that Sraddhâ of his do I make unwavering."

In the Holy Personality the devotee should see a link between the finite and the Infinite. First he comes to be drawn by the wonderful charm of the personality, and then, through it, he realizes the Infinite. But just as there are innumerable waves rising out of the ocean, so there are innumerable waves rising out of the Infinite Sea of Divinity through all the ages. So long as this fact is not recognised, attempts will always be made at limiting the Divine in Its manifestations, attempts which can never be successful and only help in veiling Its true Infinite Nature and Grace.

Taken in this general and truer sense, the above vision and passage on the sweet name of Jesus contains a great truth for all times and for all men, and we should never forget the fact that in all the Great Ones, whatever be their name, whether Rama or Krishna or Buddha or Christ or Ramakrishna, the little ego had died completely, and what remained was the Divine Essence which is eternally one and the same. And devotion to this Divine Essence in any of Its forms or names brings salvation to man, liberates him from the fetters and illusions of this phenomenal world, although people bound down by the heavy chains of their narrow creeds and crude conceptions may not be able to recognize this great truth and thus remain blind to what is essential in the lives of all the great Saviours and Prophets of mankind.

IV

In his "A Little Book of Love," from which the following passages are taken, Seuse is so filled with Divine emotion and rapture for his Beloved that he again and again breaks forth into verse, singing and describing the glory and infinite love of his Beloved whom he is not able to have near him in the flesh, but whom he can see with the eyes of his 'heart'. Unfortunately, the poetry and sweet cadence of the words in the original are lost in the rendering, and, at best, only a small reflection of them can be caught by the reader.

"What am I, my Beloved, Thou Fulfilment of all my desires, what am I to tell Thee, having become dumb through love? My heart is full of words of love if only my tongue could utter them. What I feel is fathomless. Endless is that which I love, and therefore

wordless that which is in my mind. So, Thou art my King, Thou art my Master, Thou art my Friend, Thou art my Beloved, Thou art my Gladness, Thou art my auspicious Hour, Thou art my joyful Day, Thou art all that may give love and kindness to a heart, and, therefore what need of further words?

Thou art mine,

I am Thine,

and thus it must be for ever and ever. How long shall my tongue remain speechless when all my innermost is calling thus? Or should I be silent, because I cannot have my Beloved near in the flesh? No! Far from it!....."

"Tell me now, my Beloved, how is it that my soul caused me to search so long and ardently for Thee, and that I was never able to find Thee? I sought Thee during the long night amid lusts and the pleasures of this world, finding there but great and heartfelt bitterness, unbroken sadness and grief in human images, and in none of these did I find Thee, Thou purest Truth....."

"In all things didst Thou show me much vexing of spirit, but at Thy will and pleasure Thou hast poured into my heart Thy Light and Thy Truth which before were unknown to me, Thou hast turned towards me and comforted me and hast saved me from the abyss of this world. Let the world and all wrong love leave me. Let the company and friendship which I hitherto gave to the world perish unrequited, for I desire to give myself only to Him Who has saved me and many an other....."

"Thy love, O Beloved, surpasses for me the fair splendour of all women, for all createdness and form is scarcely a symbol, becoming as nought before Thine august Timelessness and Immeasurableness, and really speaking only pointing to Thee, the first Cause of all completeness....."

V

We shall now proceed to some passages from Seuse's "A Little Book of Eternal Wisdom" (*Buechlein der Ewigen Weisheit*) which is one of his most attractive and simple writings in the form of a dialogue between the 'servant' and 'Eternal Wisdom'—

Eternal Wisdom says, "I am the immutable good. I am the same and remain the same. My apparent inequality, however, is caused by the unequal viewpoint of those who, now in sin, now in sinlessness, look upon Me....."

Eternal Wisdom, "He who in life still stands before the lowest shall not ask in the teaching for the highest. I will teach thee what is of benefit to thee....."

The Servant, "Lord, many are the spiritual practices and manifold the forms of life, one so, another so. Many and varied are the paths. Lord, the Scriptures are unfathomable, the teachings without number. Eternal Wisdom, do Thou lead me over the abyss of all these teachings and Scriptures and instruct me in few words to what I should chiefly hold fast on my road to true life."

Eternal Wisdom, "The truest, the most beneficial, the most fruitful teaching which thou mightest gain from all the books, a teaching that opens up all truth to thee in a few words and raises thee to the highest perfection of a pure life is this :

"Keep thyself secluded from all men. Keep thy soul untarnished by all pictures that crowd in upon thee through the senses. Be free of all that might bring suffering and anxiety upon thee and that might tie thee down to earth. Direct thy mind at all times on high in secret and Divine contemplation; and whatever other practices

there may be, such as poverty, fasting, waking and every other austerity, direct them all to this end so far as they are able to further thee in this. Behold, thus wilt thou gain the highest goal of perfection which not one person in a thousand comprehends, stopping as they do at these preliminary practices and thus going astray for long years."

The Servant, "Lord, who can abide for ever in unswerving contemplation of Thy Godhead?"

Eternal Wisdom, "None whose life is of day and time. All this has been told thee that thou mightest know, at what thou shouldst aim, after what thou shouldst strive, and to what thou shouldst turn thy heart and mind in constant yearning. And if ever this vision be taken from thee, thou shouldst feel as if thou hadst been deprived of eternal salvation, and again speedily enter into thee, that the same vision may once more be given to thee. And thou shouldst keep strict watch upon thyself, for when the sight of God is lost to thee, thou art like a sailor from whose grasp the oars have slipped in the mighty swell of the ocean, and who no longer knows whither he shall direct his course. But if thou canst not yet look steadfastly upon this sight of God, then let ceaselessly renewed efforts at communion with God and ever repeated returns to Him lead thee to constancy so far as it is possible."

Eternal Wisdom, "What have I better than Myself? He who possesses his own Love, what more need he ask? He who gives himself, what has he held back? I give Myself to thee and take thee from thyself and unite thee to Myself. What does the sun in all the shining beauty of his radiance bestow upon an unclouded sky? What gift does the rising star of dawn bring to the dark night? Or what ravishing

and entrancing graces does the warmth of summer bestow after the cold and dreary wintertime?"

The Servant, "Alas, Lord, All these bring plentiful gifts!"

Eternal Wisdom, "They do but seem plentiful to thee, because they are visible to thine eyes. Behold, the smallest gift that flows from Me in the Blessed Sacrament is more resplendent in eternity than any brilliance of the visible sun in the sky. It is brighter than any rising star of dawn. It adorns thee more splendidly in everlasting beauty than any summer glory can adorn the kingdom of earth. Or is not My radiant Divinity more brilliant than any sun, My peerless Soul more radiant than any star, My glorified body more gracious than any grace of summer that has come to thee on earth?"

Eternal Wisdom, "Listen, listen, my child, to the faithful teaching of thy faithful Father, open thy soul to it and lock it into the innermost depths of thy heart. Consider who it is that teaches thee thus, and how thoroughly He wishes thee well. Shouldst thou ever become perfect, then be mindful of these teachings, that wherever thou sittest, standest or walkest, thou mayest feel My tongue admonishing thee continually and speaking thus to thee :—

'My child, take thought for thy soul, be pure, be free, and seek God.'

"For thus My words shall soon come to be understood by thee, and thou shalt come to realize what is still deeply hidden from thee."

"To whomsoever the gift of spiritual sight has been vouchsafed, to him there seems no high value in physical sight, for the eyes of the spirit see more vitally and truly."

The Servant, "Lord, there are many who think they will still love Thee while yet clinging to earthly love."

Eternal Wisdom, "This is as impossible as to compress the heavens and shut them up in a tiny nutshell. Such persons strut about using fine words, build upon the wind and construct upon the rainbow. How can the eternal dwell side by side with the temporal, when even one temporal thing cannot endure another? He who would receive the honoured guest worthily, must hold himself apart from every creature, in utter isolation."

The Servant, "Alas, sweet Lord, how completely bewitched must they be not to see this?"

Eternal Wisdom, "They have been struck with deep blindness. They undergo many a hard struggle for pleasures which shall never bring them true delight or perfect joy. Before they obtain one joy, they meet with ten sufferings, and ever as they pursue their lusts they are not satisfied, but are rather goaded on thereby. For hearts without God must needs be in fear and terror of all things. What poor pleasures they obtain prove very bitter, for they are paid for by many troubles. They guard them with great anxiety and lose them with great pain and anger. The world is full of treachery, falsehood, and inconstancy, for when advantages cease, friendship too comes to an end. In short neither true love, nor perfect joy, nor enduring peace of mind were ever found by heart in any created being."

"Whoever desires a Beloved in time, may expect pain mingled with his pleasure. It does not suffice to give Me only some time during the day. He who wants to feel God inwardly, to listen to the silent words of His love and to recognise His hidden thoughts, must abide constantly in his innermost soul. What does the soul expect from outward things when it carries the Kingdom of God hidden in itself?"

The Servant, "Lord, What is this Kingdom of God that lies within the soul?"

Eternal Wisdom, "It is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

VI

The following passages are taken from two of Seuse's sermons which are not included in the oldest copy of his writings. However, there is no doubt as to their authenticity.

"In the Lives of the Fathers it is written that a disciple asked his master how he was to become perfect. He was told to go where the dead lay, blame them awhile and praise them awhile. But it was all one to them. 'And so it should be to thee' said the master. Our loving Lord Christ says, "In the world ye shall have pain and tribulation, but in Me ye shall have peace." (Here Seuse quotes very freely some passages taken from the Gospel of St. John.)

"Man should not do his work in an unreasoning manner from a mere natural inclination like cattle driven by natural instincts, but he should work with will and intent to serve God reasonably and to live reasonably, whether he be eating, sleeping, speaking, keeping silence or whatever else he may have to do on earth; he must suppress all animal inclinations and must work out a reasonable way of praying, thinking and living. Dear Lord, I am eating as unto Thee, not unto myself, sleeping, living, suffering and leaving all things for Thee, not for mine own sake."

"Know now that so long as anything wherein God is not still lives in thee and claims thine attention, so long God does not live in thee....."

"He who searcheth for aught, searcheth not for God. Man's every effort,

first principle and thought shall be in Him, His the glory, His the will, His the loyalty, never our own advantage or delight or our own nearness and reward. Seek Him alone, say with His dear Son, "I seek not mine own glory, but that of my Father." Know that if you are seeking aught beside, you are doing wrong, and are found wanting in something. If a glass, however beautiful it be, has a small hole only the size of the point of a needle, it is not whole. However small the crack may be, it is not whole and perfect....."

VII

"A Little Book of Truth" (*Buechlein der Wahrheit*) from which the following passages are taken has been written under the influence of Meister Eckhart's thought, and one clearly feels that Seuse was hampered and limited by abstract conceptual thinking and speculations which prevented him from giving expression to the fervour of Divine Love that possessed and guided him. Thus he did not reach either the depth of feeling nor the direct appeal to the heart to be found in his other books, neither was he able to rise fully to the heights of Meister Eckhart's speculative thinking. His was not the personality of the Jnani or the philosopher, but that of the Bhakta longing for union with the Divine in a more personal sense through love and self-surrender.

He says, "It is good for all men who want to enter into salvation to know their own original first cause of life, the very foundation of their origin and that of all other created things. For to that they all must finally return."

"Of this primal beginning only this much can be known that all who have ever spoken about truth agree in saying

that there is a something which is absolutely the very first and simplest thing, before which there was nothing. Now Denis has seen this unfathomable being unveiled before his eyes, in its nakedness, and he is in agreement with others when he says the undivided One that is being spoken of remains unnamed, though every name were bestowed on It. For as it is said in the art called 'Logica', the name should describe the nature of the thing named. Now it is certain that the name of that undivided One is endless, unmeasured and never grasped by creaturely intelligence. Thus it is also certain for all learned seekers after God that this incomprehensible being is nameless. That is why Denis says in his book on the Divine Name that God is a non-being or a 'Not'. And this must be understood in this way that all being and the attributes we give it in our creaturely way do not represent its true nature. Whatever is attributed to it for one reason, is again untrue for another and its opposite becomes true. Hence it follows that this being could be called an eternal 'Not', but in spite of that a name must be invented for a thing if one is to speak about it and say how excellent and mighty beyond compare it is....."

"The nature of this self-contained simplicity is its life, and its life its nature. It is a living, essential, self-existent, reasonableness which is self-embracing, lives in itself and is itself alone. Now I cannot express it more clearly. And this being I call Eternal Uncreated Truth, for in it all things are seen as in the first freshness of their youth, at their primal source and eternal beginning. And here the beginning and the end of a truly steady-minded man's life is reached in immersion and in submergence."

"Dost thou not understand that this

mighty self-annihilating plunge into the sea of Nothingness obliterates all differences, this sea being the root of all things?"

"I am still somewhat disturbed by a word that has been said, viz. that even in this life man is able to reach a point at which he knows himself to be one with what is eternal. How can that be?"

A master says, "Eternity is a life that is beyond time and includes all time without any 'before' or 'after'. Whosoever would enter into the eternal 'Not', possesses everything in its entirety and knows no 'before' or 'after'. If any man should enter it to-day, he would not have been there a shorter time than one entering a thousand years ago according to the measure of eternity."

"But this merging awaits man only after his death as the Holy Scripture says?"

"This is true of the eternal and perfect possession, but not of a more or less deep foretaste of that state....."

"The teachers say the soul finds its highest bliss in gathering its whole being and life from God Whom it sees unveiled, and in drawing its entire self, in so far as it is blissful, from the well of this 'Not'. Spoken in the sense of this vision the soul knows neither knowledge, nor love, at that time, nor anything at all, resting wholly and solely in that 'Not' and knowing nothing but pure Being which is God or 'Not'....."

VIII

In his letters of which a few extracts will be given below many beautiful and deeply spiritual passages can be found, for here again it is the voice of the devotee that can make itself heard, not that of the Jnani which, as has been said, was not natural to Seuse. The

following passages are taken from different letters.

"All you who love look at the play of this world. I had embraced a shadow, I had a dream for my husband, I had possessed a phantom! And now, where is the image of this phantom, where the vow of this dream? Even if I had possessed Lady World for a thousand years, where would all that be now? It is all gone in a flash. Parting is natural to thee. I imagined I was holding thee in my arms, but, alas, whither didst thou vanish. Whoever does not desert thee first, will be left by thee, thou Murderess! So then, good-bye, leave me now and for ever! Cheat those who do not know thee, me thou shalt never cheat again!....."

"Neither castles nor towns can protect from suffering. Neither red cloaks nor garments of ermine will pay ransom for suffering. And many a thing may seem whole and sound outwardly, but is mortally wounded within. So even if a man suffers when entering the lists on the side of the Divine, he should not mind. The first clash of arms is painful, but there is no harm in that. In the end a time comes when he will break a lance for sheer pleasure. And thus suffering falls away from us....."

"My child, once I read in the Scriptures a word which I am but beginning to understand :—

" 'Love makes unequal things equal.' That is why Lady Venus is painted blind and without eyes, for she loses her own free will in the beloved. And if this holds good in the case of the perishable love of the world, how much more so in that of spiritual love. For the sake of such a love many a prince has done away with his splendour. Some who were princes in Rome renounced their all and became the servants of the poor, so that they might be like their Divine Beloved, the little

innocent child. Therefore, my child, cast out from your heart the hidden pride of the noble birth of your body and the deceptive faith in your family, where both, till now, have been hiding in blindness under the spiritual garb. Bow down to the little child in the manger in its forlornness that it may raise you up to its eternal glory. Whoever sows scantily, reaps but poorly. Whoever sows abundantly, has a rich harvest. Do this wholly for your own benefit and bow down under the feet of all men as if you were a carpet. The carpet is angry with none, whatever may be done to it, for it is a carpet..."

IX

If we read the writings of the true mystics and study their lives with an open mind in the light of the universal message of Sri Ramakrishna, whatever may be their comparative value and greatness, we shall discover more and more what invaluable treasures have been given to humanity at all times through the infinite grace of the Divine manifesting Itself again and again through all the ages and amongst all peoples in innumerable forms and ways, though ever remaining one.

No doubt, in all the works of these mystics a number of passages are found which are time-bound in spirit and outlook, but, at the same time, Truth shines forth through many a word and saying, shedding its radiance on the gloom of everyday life. In order to realize ourselves the highest Truth we try to learn about the Divine from others. And the safest and most in-

spiring sources of knowledge are the living Scriptures of humanity, i.e. living men who have themselves become truth embodied.

"We all, in some form or other, wittingly or unwittingly,
Travel the dusty road till the light
of the day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on
the world's rim.
We travel from dawn to dusk, till
the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the
rim of the sky."

And we should approach these seekers after God in a spirit of love and reverence and openness to Truth in whatever garb it may appear. Our heart and mind should go out to all of them, irrespective of creed or clime, and we should never forget the debt of gratitude we owe the Great Ones who suffered and lived to bring poor struggling mankind the eternal message of Love and Harmony which it is still very far from realizing or accepting and which would change the face of the earth if realized or accepted. And this debt can only be paid in our own small and imperfect way by trying to follow their instructions and to become better and better instruments in the hands of the Divine Will. For us there should be—

"Only the road and the dawn, the
sun, the wind and the rain,
And the watch-fire under stars, and
sleep, and the road again",
till, some day, we arrive at the one and
only goal of all life :

At-one-ment with the Divine.

A HYMN

BY DR. S. MUKERJI, M.Sc., D.Sc.

Steeped in Mâyâ's 'byss
Thus I guiled my days,
The blinding night is far ahead
Oh ! keep my failing ways.
In the firmament of life
I see thy guiding star,
It twinkles trembles but lo the glow
Is seen from far afar.
Thou art, O Lord, my life and light
This truth alone I know,
I drink thy sweet thy nectar words
Oh ! keep my faith aglow.
Bereft and stranded lowly landed
In life's eternal sea,
Lord, thy helping hand I seek
O Ramakrishna, abide with me.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE SPIRIT OF MODERN SCIENCE

BY PROF. P. S. NAIDU, M.A.

Mahendranath, in his *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, narrates a beautiful story,¹ which reveals very clearly the Great Guru's attitude towards Western Science. Our Divine Master never condemned any true source of knowledge, but at the same time he never hesitated to show up, in his characteristically humorous way, the absurdities and vanities of the materialistic sciences. A friend pays me a visit, and remarks in the course of his conversation with me, "I say, did you hear of the big conflagration in the bazaar yesterday?"

"Is that so?", I reply, and then pick up the day's paper. I scan the columns

of the paper, and find no report of the conflagration. "Look here, my friend ! The newspaper makes no mention of your fire ; so it cannot be true."

"But", retorts my friend in great indignation, "I saw it with my own eyes."

"May be. But your eyes count for nothing. The paper is silent on the matter, hence I cannot believe the story."

This is a beautiful parable. I am the scientist, and the newspaper represents my senses and the apparatus in the laboratory with which I make sense observations. My friend is one who has had an experience of the supersensuous reality. I cannot believe him, because

¹ *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Vol. I, p. 395.

my scientific instruments do not register his experiences. The test tube, the microscope, and the measuring rod are the sacred utensils of the scientist, and the senses are the gods he worships. In spite of its boasted trust in human reason, it must be said to the discomfiture of science, that it is a slave of the senses. The last court of appeal for science is the visual sense.² Anything that cannot be demonstrated to the visual sense, either directly or indirectly, does not exist for the scientist. So, when the scientist condemns some experience as being mystical or mysterious, he simply means that the gross human senses cannot bear witness to it. This is the type of science that Sri Ramakrishna condemned, and, fortunately, this is the type of materialistic science, the beginning of whose end we are witnessing today.

In spite of its materialistic and mechanistic tendencies Western Science makes certain assumptions, whose implications, when carefully thought out, cut at the very foundations of materialism. What electricity is, no scientist is able to tell us. We know only its outward behaviour under certain conditions. What the genes are no one knows; their effects alone are visible to us. Yet we believe that electricity and the genes are tangible realities. But when a similar method of reasoning is adopted in the psychic realm, the scientist cries out, 'Oh! you are mystical and mysterious.' The scientist is intolerant of anything that he cannot shake up in a test tube, photograph through a spectroscope, or examine under a microscope.

Yet, this is only one aspect of European science. There is a deeper and more profound aspect which is finding

expression, slowly but surely, in the writings of contemporary physicists, biologists and psychologists. Eddington,³ Jeans,⁴ Schrodinger⁵ and Parsons⁶ have made 'matter' immaterial; Haldane⁷ and Driesch⁸ have discovered a supra-physical guiding principle in the workings of the sub-nuclear elements of the living cell; Jung⁹ and McDougall¹⁰ have established the hormic nature of the human psyche. The outlook of the most thoughtful physicists, biologists and psychologists at the present day is distinctly non-materialistic, and the profoundest thinkers among them have repudiated the claim of mechanism to be the sole principle of explanation of natural phenomena. The attitude of contemporary science may be summed up in the words (used by their author for a different purpose) of the Rev. Wendell Phillips, "But these things are real. I don't understand them. I don't understand many things; but these things are real. I believe that the Orient is going to show us of the West how real they are. . . . What is matter? What is mind? What is the spirit? We do not know. We are just beginning to find out. . . . There are sixty-four octaves of light. We have just one. Our little pitiful human eyes can see but just one octave.

³ Eddington, Sir Arthur, *New Pathways in Science*, Cambridge, 1935.

⁴ Jeans, Sir James, *New Background of Science*, Cambridge, 1933.

⁵ Schrodinger: *Science and Human Temperament*.

⁶ Parsons, *The Universe of Our Experience*, London, 1933.

⁷ Haldane, *Philosophy of a Biologist*.

⁸ Driesch, H. *History and Theory of Vitalism*, London, 1914.

⁹ Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, London, 1934.

¹⁰ McDougall, W. *Religion and the Sciences of Life*. (Only the relevant works of these prolific writers have been mentioned here. These eminent authors represent the new idealistic trend in contemporary science. Vide also Sullivan's *Contemporary Mind*).

² Vide Sir Arthur Eddington's *Nature of the Physical World*, where he speaks of measurement in science as "pointer-reading."

The photographic plates are sensitive to six of these octaves—and there are sixty-four—”.¹¹ It is these pitiful eyes and photographic plates that science trusts as absolute guides to truth. If we know so little about the physical world, how little then do we know about the spiritual world?

Our object in this article is not mere destructive criticism. We do not wish to show from the life and teachings of Bhagavân Sri Ramakrishna that the modern mind, fed on the half-baked and un-baked conclusions of mechanistic science, is producing a thoroughly absurd scale of values, though that could be done and ought to be done soon. We wish to establish that in our beloved Master's life we find the manifestation of the purest and the most exalted spirit of true science.

The spirit of Science is enshrined, not in its practical achievements, the inventions and the discoveries, which really are so many ugly scars in the face of fair science, not even in the theoretical achievements, but in the method which is the greatest achievement of the human intellect. And Sri Ramakrishna pointed out the sublime heights to which this method could be raised. In the example of his own life, Bhagavân Sri Ramakrishna proved that the hypothetico-deductive method of science could be used for the demonstration of spiritual truths. We have no hesitation in affirming that our Master was the most exalted experimentalist of his day, and for that matter, of all eternity. We should not, however, forget that his experiments were conducted in the spiritual, and not in the material realm.

Partial and incomplete analyses of the method of science were made by Bacon, Mill, Newton and Kepler.¹² But it was

Whewell alone amongst the classical scientists who approached anything like completeness in his analysis of the method pursued by the positive sciences in their search after truth. An exhaustive analysis of the method has been made by two modern writers, Enrique¹³ and Dubs.¹⁴ The main outline of their argument is identical with the position taken by Dewey in his famous little book, 'How We Think'. The method of science, in brief, consists of four stages. The first is the gradual shaping of a problem through careful observation and sifting of evidence, and the formulation of a provisional solution to the problem; the second is the development of the solution, and the reasoning out of its consequences; the third is the experimental verification of the consequences; and the last is the final acceptance, modification, or rejection of the solution suggested at the commencement of the investigation. The mind of the scientific worker is filled with information about the subject in which he is specially interested; so, whenever he is confronted with a novel situation his well-informed mind analyses the complexities of the relationship and suggests an explanation. Sometime ago there appeared in the special engineering supplement of a local newspaper a picture of an amazing piece of machinery. But for the 'legend' at the bottom of the picture the lay reader could not have guessed what it was. It was a part of a huge oil-refining plant consisting of a maze of several hundreds of pipes, valves and stop-cocks. To the mind of the mechanical engineer the picture would suggest the proper meaning. Knowledge and training are necessary to grasp the meaning of a scientific

¹¹ Prabuddha Bharata, June, 1936.

¹² Vide Enrique's account of Inductions in his *Historic Development of Logic* and Dubs' *Rational Induction*.

¹³ Enrique: *Historic Development of Logic*, New York, 1929.

¹⁴ Dubs: *Rational Induction*, Chicago, 1930.

problem. Where there is no knowledge, no doubt arises, and consequently there is no progress. When the scientifically trained mind grasps the situation and locates the difficulty, a tentative solution is immediately suggested. This provisional hypothesis is the starting point for all scientific research. Proceeding on the assumption that his provisional explanation is true, the research worker develops its practical bearings by making use of deductive reasoning. Next comes the crucial stage of actual testing in experience. It is here that the elaborate technique of the laboratory experiment of the scientist plays its important part. All the ingenuity of the trained research student is to be displayed here in inventing novel technique and setting up delicate pieces of apparatus. If the result of the third stage agrees with the conclusions of the second, then the scientist, in great joy, invites others to repeat his experiment and test for themselves the accuracy of his hypothesis. After several such confirmatory and collective tests the hypothesis is accorded the status of a theory.

Sri Ramakrishna employed this hypothetico-deductive method in his realization of Ultimate Reality. We have pointed out that unless one is well informed, one is not competent to undertake scientific research. In the spiritual realm too, this preliminary qualification is absolutely necessary; but such qualification, it must be admitted, is to be obtained, not through any individual effort alone, but as the result of spiritual experiences in the past lives. Sri Ramakrishna possessed this qualification in a pre-eminent degree since he was a divine incarnation. The environment in which he moved was steeped in spirituality. The influence at home was conducive to

spiritual pursuits. Outside the home he moved in very congenial company. Kamarpukur was on the pilgrim route to Puri Jagannath, consequently it was a great meeting place for pilgrims and wandering monks and Sadhus of a high order. Our Master "delighted in spending hour after hour with them, listening to their religious discussions, learning songs from them and joining in their prayers. . . ." "Association with these itinerant monks and listening to their readings from the scriptures inclined the naturally emotional mind of the boy more and more to meditation. So we find him in his boyhood, long before he passed through the terrible asceticism in the Kali temple of Dakshineswar, giving evidence of the transcendental nature of his mind. . . ."¹⁵

With such a fine mind, so delicately in tune with the object of his quest, Sri Ramakrishna began his first observations—the preliminary to his great investigation. He listened to the scriptures with zeal and delved into the *Purânas* with earnestness, identifying himself with the great Heroes and Heroines of old who sought and found God—Radhâ, Sitâ and Hanumân. The songs of Ramaprasad were then well known. Sri Ramakrishna's penetrating eyes saw in them unmistakable evidence of a soul that had 'met God face to face'. While he was thus gathering material, through his penetrating faculty, for the great hypothesis, to the establishment of which he was to devote his whole life, he had on two different occasions, a unique experience of the reality of God. While walking along the rice fields he noticed the magnificent sight of a long line of snow-white cranes against the sombre background of massive rain-clouds. This beautiful sight raised his mind to the dizzy

¹⁵ *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, Mayavati, 1929, pp. 26, 27. (Italics are ours).

heights of supersensuous levels, where he saw who can describe the glimpse he had of Brahman? On another occasion he was called upon to take the part of Siva in the sacred pageant enacted during the holy Sivarâtri Celebrations. We are told that as he stepped on the stage he lost consciousness of the world round him and was so steeped in God-consciousness that 'he seemed the living impersonation of Siva'. When the scientist's mind is intensely concentrated on the object of his research, there comes to him a rare moment of inspiration, when, through a flash of intuition, the relationship between the elements of the analysed complex which he is seeking, is revealed to him during an infinitesimally short interval of time. This intuition is called *Scientific Imagination*. (Imagination and science are considered to be poles apart. Yet we need not quarrel over the name so long as it is admitted that the real source of scientific hypothesis is supra-rational). Newton, Maxwell, Einstein and Heisenberg had these rare moments of intuitive insight, during which they caught the first glimpse of the theories which were to make their names immortal. It must, however, be admitted that the first glimpse, though intensely vivid, yet, is so evanescent and tantalizing that a long and painstaking course of research is necessary to take permanent possession of the truth thus revealed. It has been pointed out that Sri Ramakrishna had two such rare moments of intuitive insight. As the result of these experiences the hypothesis began to take shape in his mind gradually that 'God alone is utterly and absolutely real, everything else is utterly and absolutely unreal.' With a mind illumined by the first rays of supersensuous knowledge, and a heart athirst for a fuller realiza-

tion of God, our Master entered the holy atmosphere of the Dakshineswar temple where the Divine Mother had manifested Herself in the image of Bhavatârani. The moment he took upon himself the ceremonial office of the priest of the Mother, he was seized with a divine frenzy. He was thoroughly convinced that the Divine Mother is real and could be realized by Her devotees in this earthly life. With the formulation of the hypothesis 'God is real as nothing else is real, and He could be realized *here* and *now*' the close of the first stage is reached. As the result of the combined influences of the holy Samskaras that his mind carried with it, of the very congenial and spiritual environment in which he grew up, and of his own study and observation, Sri Ramakrishna came to the conclusion that God is much more real and tangible than the concrete objects of this world, and that a true devotee could 'see' Him and 'talk' to Him.

The second stage was a short and easy one. "If God is real, He should manifest Himself to me. Râmaprasâd, Chaitanya and a host of other devotees had seen Him. So nothing stands in the way of my realizing Him." So argued our Master with the simple faith of a child, but with the burning zeal and persistence of a most devoted scientific investigator.

The third stage is the most remarkable one both for its practical achievements and for the conviction which it brought home to the sceptical minds of the boastful rationalists, of the indubitable certainty of the efficacy of the Yogic Sâdhanâs. Sri Ramakrishna set about to verify the truth of his hypothesis with great earnestness and single-mindedness of purpose. The temple at Dakshineswar, with the dense jungle at Panchavati was his

laboratory. Day after day he persisted in conducting his experiments with such zeal that he often became oblivious of his surroundings and unmindful of his bodily needs. "Mother, Mother" he cried "when wilt Thou reveal Thyself to me?" He spent the nights in the awesome burning *ghat* meditating on the Divine Mother. His one object was to realise for himself the truth, which so many devotees of the type of Râmaprasâd had realized before him. Alone and unaided he conducted his experiments with such severity of mental concentration that he was blessed with the Divine Vision at last. But he was an amateur at spiritual investigations. Through the grace of Mother Kâli, which he enjoyed in a very special degree, he reached his goal in a short time. But the path which he had trodden alone and unaided, had to be retraversed under expert guidance. Just as the research worker is guided in his early investigations by experienced masters of science, so Sri Ramakrishna had to take his training in Sâdhanâ under Bhairavi Brâhmani and Tota Puri, the two adepts who had realized God, the former in the Tantric way and the latter in the Advaitic way. He performed his experiments under their expert guidance, and we are told that it did not take him longer than three days to secure the desired result.

It is necessary to stress at this point the difference in science as well as in religion, between unaided individual investigation and the systematic pursuit of truth under the guidance of experienced men who had attained high levels in the realization of ultimate reality. One of the first tasks, which the research student has to undertake, is to acquaint himself thoroughly with the work done already in the field in which he is going to specialize, and to

place himself under the supervision of a specialist in that field. In the absence of this necessary first step, the student may get lost in his research, and his whole life may be wasted. In the spiritual realm too a *guru* is absolutely necessary, not only to guide the aspirant aright and to give timely encouragement and human sympathy when the *sisya* is depressed by failure, but to impart that dynamic force which alone would lead one to the goal. Our Master took to himself the human *gurus* not so much for his own benefit as to show the right mode of procedure to others striving after realization. He desired to show the importance of the scriptural injunction that every seeker of God should secure first the blessings of a *guru*.

The third stage of experimental verification having been completed, Sri Ramakrishna proceeded to the last and the fourth stage of affirming the hypothesis and raising it to the level of an established fact. When the scientific worker obtains the expected results he is filled with unspeakable *Anandam*. The effusion of his bliss is such that he is eager to make others share in his joy. He publishes his results and the means whereby he attained them, calling upon his brother scientists to verify his conclusions and enjoy the results for themselves. The papers and learned journals broadcast the glad tidings to the intellectual world. In the case of spiritual experiences, no such earthly vehicle is needed for spreading the welcome tidings. It is enough if the adept sits in his cell and sends out pure thought waves of love into the world without. Those whose minds are in tune with these waves will respond immediately, and drawn by an invisible hand they will flock to his abode for enlightenment. After the completion of his Sâdhanâ Sri Ramakrishna used to pace,

in the evenings, on the terrace of the garden-house crying out, 'My children, do come quickly. Oh! How I long for your company!' And they came, the future disciples, drawn by an invisible but irresistible force, first in batches of two and three, then in small groups, and finally in great seething masses of humanity. And like a true and loving *guru* he illumined the hearts of them all. The motley group was composed of men and women of widely differing types of mentality—there were delicate impressionable youths, fiery rebellious boys who believed nothing and questioned the Shâstras with a false zeal born of hollow Western rationalism, thoroughly worldly men steeped in Kâma and Kâanchana, old men who turned to God in their declining days like the voracious meat-eater who turned vegetarian when his teeth fell off—and there were women too, the noblest of their kind. And all were illumined, and all went home convinced of the utter sincerity and exemplary selflessness of Sri Ramakrishna.

"Sir, Is God real? Can I see Him?" asks an enquirer in great haste and expects an immediate answer.

"Yes!", replies our *Guru* with a smile dispelling all doubt, "God is real; I see him as I see you or any other object round about me"

"Could I also see Him as you do?"

"Yes, you could but"; and then there follow some of his most charming and inimitable sayings regarding the qualifications of the seeker after God who would succeed.

"If the intensity of your longing for God is equal to the combined intensities of the longing of a man immersed in water for a breath of fresh air, of the mother for the recovery of her only child in the grips of a deadly illness, of the banished Yaksha for his Yakshini in

the far-off land, in short, if your longing for God is at least a tenth of the longing which Sri Radha had for Sri Krishna, then you will see God."

The chief characteristics of the scientific mind are "1. respect for facts, 2. practical attitude, 3. persistence and patience in following the clue; and 4. intolerance of obscurity, impatience with inadequate evidence and the capacity to suspend judgment." Sri Ramakrishna possessed these characteristics in a pre-eminent degree. Facts, concrete facts, were the objects of his passionate quest. He revelled in the concrete. Abstract, intellectualistic rational studies were repellent to his finely tempered mind. "What is the use of studying a cart-load of books? You should realize truth in your concrete experience." In the next place he was highly critical, never accepting anything until he had thoroughly tested it. He encouraged his disciples to develop a critical attitude. "Prove me", he would say "as you would prove a coin, and then only accept what I say." Of his persistence and patience in following up the clues, we need say nothing. His long and arduous course of Sâdhanâ bears witness to his single-minded pursuit, despite stupendous obstacles, of the goal that he had set for himself. Sri Ramakrishna's mind was the mind of the scientist *par excellence*.

Sri Ramakrishna raised the hypothetico-deductive method of science from the low materialistic level at which it was and is being pursued by the West, to the sublime spiritual heights where it was pressed into service in his Yogic Sâdhanâs. Without any hesitation we may conclude that Bhagavân Sri Ramakrishna is the master experimentalist in the realm of *pure spirit*.

THE TWO BIRDS

BY DAROTHY KRUGER

(The upper bird is God,
The lower bird is the human soul).
Inseparable friends are we
Two birds, upon the self-same tree,
Of self-same plumage, either one
Resplendent as the noon-day sun.
I sit above, immersed in bliss,
The witness of the bird that is
Hopping from bough to bough below,
Forgetting what it lives to know :
Bitter the fruit and sharp the pain
And long before it sings again ;
And then a fruit so sweet, a bit
Startles the throat with song of it.
As need it must, one day it will,
Sated with sorrow, hungry still,
Look up and long to be the calm
Majestic Being that I am,
Who cares for neither good nor sweet

Enjoyments, being joy complete.
And it will think, "Now let me go
And live beside Him," but the glow
Of higher fruit will be so fair,
It will forget why it flew there.
One day, when it is sadly mute,
For having eaten bitter fruit,
It will awake, arise, and find
Itself dissolving in My mind
To be the upper bird who ate
Neither of worldly love nor hate,
Who lived beyond all sense of need,
Beyond the shame of lust and greed ;
And know, the anguished while it seemed
The lower bird, it only dreamed ;
It was the mere reflection of
The golden bird who sat above.
And it will sing in ecstasy,
"I am," "I am," "O, I am He."

THE IDEA OF RELIGION

BY PROF. LEOPOLD VON WIESW

Over all individual religions stands the idea of Religion. It is its tenet that human life has not its last significance and meaning in the frame of this visible and transitory world, but that the aim of this earthly existence lies in a destination beyond it, which our intellect cannot grasp. We know nothing seizable about this destination, we rather are dependent on faith, presentiment, and on a only insufficient interpretation. Such defective interpretations are the contents of the individual religions.

Out of the knowledge of such imperfect certainty of these interpretations the doubt arises whether the transfer-

ence of the essence of human life into a metaphysical realm may not be an error originating from feebleness. Since from haughtiness and selfishness we may not be willing to regard an only earthly and ever imperfect existence as worth living, we may not help inventing an ultramundane significance of being. Therefore, not seldom modern world has a trend to consider as a more dignified conduct to renounce an aim of life which, indeed, may be deeper and nobler than every earthly one, but seems to be too improbable and unintelligible. Today there is a tendency, totally to transfer the significance of human

existence into the earthly world,—indeed, not often into the sphere of the individual man, but mostly into the great social structures, particularly into Nation, People, and Race. It is not necessary, in order to make the individual more unselfish and high-minded, to transfer the essence of existence into the supernatural world; it is so, however, that the great social generation-structures, outlasting millennia, be so constituted that the faith in them evolves the same ethical power as the religions do. The advantage of such a worldly and political conviction, compared with a metaphysical religion, is its greater clarity. From there a greater veracity may arise.

Indeed, today the faith in a supernatural world is not in the same degree superseded by a materialistic individualism (like in the 19th century) as by the deification of social institutions. It is obvious that in this way the individuals are more forced into the service of social tasks and community life than by any other system. The utilization of personal powers for the purposes of State and People makes great progress thereby. However, the disadvantage of this change lies in the fact that all social structures ever remain imperfect and can never engender the sublime power of Divinity. Though we may never totally grasp the whole power of God, we realize that all social institutions, compared with the power of God, remain feeble and transitory. All social struc-

tures cannot be perfected, when they pass themselves off for last values and last aims, but only when they serve as vessels for God's will and when they enjoin themselves a religious mission which cannot be derived from natural forces, but from the manifestations of Religion.

As regards the individual, a purely earthly-social aim may satisfy the intellect for a short while because of the greater seizability of the ends; however, the depreciation of human personality to a mere mean tool, created for the service of earthly social structures, makes him inwardly poor, narrow and hard. Therefore also his social value becomes diminished, and the great social structures, grown to very centres of ethical life, are gradually reduced in efficiency instead of having any development. Even the advantage of greater clarity proves delusive, because the social structures lose their significance when they become self-sufficient.

We shall realize that each interpretation of life (the religious, the social-earthy, and the individualistic-materialistical one) cannot be totally understood by reason and that each of the three attempts cannot be fully clear. We are always dependent on faith and presentiments. It is erroneous to think that we shall gain more clarity by transferring the centre of existence into the realm of earthly social life. We merely become weaker. Vital forces stronger than death issue for ever from Religion.

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

If we want to discuss the personality of a man like Jesus the Christ it only becomes us at the outset to acknowledge our own limitations. We are well aware

of the fact that the towering personality of him who is known as the Son of God, can be valued only by those rare souls who have soared to spiritual

heights where Jesus's consciousness constantly dwelt. But in our humble way we may study his life and draw conclusions according to our own limited capacity. That life we find recorded in the New Testament of the Christian Bible.

All that we know of Jesus, the man, is to be found in the Gospels, and they cover only three years of his active life. About Jesus's spiritual practices, his period of *Sâdhanâ*, we are unfortunately left in entire darkness. Of the man in the making, how he rose step by step to higher spiritual realizations, and of the formation of his character and personality we shall probably never know. We have to be satisfied that records have been kept of Jesus, the teacher, the man who realized his newness with God, the highest attainment the human soul can reach.

Jesus was born of the Jewish race, a race then in a degenerated state through long subjection to a foreign, overbearing people. The Jews had developed what we now call the slave-mentality. The little power they had they abused. They were jealous of one another, intolerant, bigoted, full of false pride, and hypocrisy. There were favourable exceptions, but it was amongst the masses that Jesus walked and preached. He saw the need of reform, the need of cleansing of the heart among the Jews themselves. Political questions Jesus rarely touched on, he wanted to bring his people back to a righteous state of mind and living. He brought no new religion, he wanted to restore the Jewish religion to its erstwhile purity.

Jesus being the son of a common carpenter, the leaders of the race resented his attitude as a teacher. The Jews had their own teachers, the Rabbis, who laid down the laws. He who did not obey their laws was excommuni-

cated. Jesus, socially, had no standing in the community. We can see at once how difficult his position was, how difficult to make himself heard, leave alone obeyed. But manly, fearlessly, resolutely he kept to his task till the very end, convinced that he was right, and that he was only an instrument in the hands of his Father. It was his conviction that he did God's work. This gave him the strength and courage to carry on where all human help failed, where all external conditions were against him.

Jesus had to run counter to many of the established customs of his day. The religion of the Jews, in the hands of the Rabbis, had lost its spiritual significance. It had become a religion of external laws and rules. Everything was regulated by these laws. There was a law for the Sabbath when no work of any kind could be performed. There were laws for eating and drinking, for touching this, and not touching that. Some persons were allowed to enter the synagogue; others not. Jesus rebelled against this. He wanted to give to the law a new interpretation, to spiritualize life. Jesus was therefore compelled to stand out against the customs of his people. He refused to subject himself to the dead level of their habits. It took great courage to do this in the face of criticism, misunderstanding and persecution. But he put himself absolutely in the hands of God to be used anywhere, in any way, regardless of the cost.

From the first, the nature of Jesus's message and the method of his work outraged the orthodox people. He preached a Gospel that was disturbing to the leaders of the society. He interpreted the law in new and startling ways. The old laws, he said, are temporary, not permanent. The time had come that old traditions should be

changed. But the Jews did not want any readjustment. They loved their orthodoxy, their old traditions, and Jesus had to bear the brunt of their hatred, and when the conflict came, he was uncompromising and fearless even of his life.

Jesus was thirty years old when he left his home, and he began to wander over the land like a Sannyâsin to preach his message. Up to this time, he had lived with his mother and relatives, unmarried, engaged in his trade as a carpenter. As a boy he had been taught to read and write, and he had to memorize parts of the scriptures. His mother, being a pious woman, had taught him to pray and to think of God from early childhood. He had been brought up according to Jewish rules. But even as a youth Jesus began to think independently, and his own thought he fortified with prayer. God was to him a Reality, a loving Father who heard his prayers and who settled his doubts. God became, as it were, a companion to him, a loving, wise friend, who guided him, advised him, and instructed him. He had no greater Friend, none who could understand him so well, none so patient to listen to him, so whenever he was in doubt or trouble he would kneel down and talk to God. And that loving friend on the spiritual plane would enfold him in his arms and hold him to his bosom and would converse with him in the sweetest manner. And when Jesus would come to his external senses again he would feel so strong and happy that he would weep from mere joy.

As he grew up and applied himself to his trade, sometimes his mind would suddenly fly to his heavenly Friend and Father, and the tools he was plying would fall from his hands without his knowing it. Then he would stand like a statue, his body rigid, his face shin-

ing with beauty divine. But those who were in the carpenter's shop with him did not understand this. They called him a dreamer, a seer of visions, a worthless fellow who neglected his trade, and when Jesus tried to explain they ridiculed him.

Thus Jesus grew up. When he was thirty years old, he heard of a great preacher, John the Baptist who had lived in the wilderness, and now come to teach the people. Jesus wanted to meet that great saint. He left his home and found the teacher seated near the river surrounded by his disciples. Jesus conversed with John the Baptist and after sometime was initiated. Then he took a bath in the river Jordon and leaving the saint, he went alone to the mountains. There in a cave he prayed and meditated and fasted forty days. There Jesus communed with God, and he knew that the time had come to begin his spiritual labour. So he returned to Nazareth where he had been brought up, preaching on the way and calling upon the people to turn to God and give up their evil ways.

At Nazareth he went on the Sabbath day into the Synagogue, the Jewish temple, and there he read from the Old Testament and preached a sermon.

Hearing his eloquent discourse delivered with spirit and conviction, the people wondered where Jesus, the carpenter's son, had acquired such power of speech. First they were pleased, but when Jesus began to rebuke them for their sins, they became angry. They would not put up with the rebukes of their own townsman who, they thought, was no better than they were, so they got up, took hold of Jesus and drove him out of the city, and when Jesus told them that a prophet is not honoured in his own town, they became so excited because he called himself a prophet that they wanted to

kill him. But in the midst of all this uproar Jesus managed to slip away.

Now he wandered, from place to place, penniless, homeless. At last he came to a lake where fishermen were washing their nets. Jesus talked with them, and when they told him that the whole night they had not caught a single fish, Jesus told them to throw out their net again, and this time the net was filled with fish.

Now one of the fishermen, called Peter, saw in this a miracle, and he at once believed that Jesus was not an ordinary man. Jesus, seeing that Peter had such faith in him, said, "Come, and follow me, and have no fear, for henceforth you will no more catch fish, but you will catch men and bring them to God." At once Peter followed leaving everything behind. Thus Jesus got his first disciple.

Now Jesus moved on with Peter by his side, preaching and healing the sick and performing such great miracles that crowds came to him wherever he halted.

And from among the crowds now and then would come one who wished to follow Jesus and become his disciple. At last twelve disciples were with Jesus constantly.

One day it happened that such a multitude of people came to hear Jesus preach, that it was impossible for Jesus to make himself heard. So he went to the top of a hill, and the people seated on the hill side could hear every word. They listened with great attention. And Jesus said, "Blessed are the humble, for they are dear to God. Blessed are they who hunger to know the Truth, for to them the Truth will be revealed. Blessed are those who show mercy to others, for the Lord will show His mercy to them. Blessed are those who have a pure heart, for they shall see God. And those who love peace, are the true children of God." Thus he spoke, and

many other things. This sermon is now known as The Sermon on the Mount.

His disciples Jesus called 'the salt of earth'. As salt is a most useful and necessary article, so are men who love and serve God most useful on the earth and most necessary to keep society pure and holy. And sometimes he called his disciples 'the light of the world!' And he told them to let their light shine in good works and a life consecrated to God, that others might be attracted to follow their examples.

Jesus was very strict with his disciples. He wanted them to be absolutely pure in thought, word, and deed. He told them that even to look at a woman with lustful thought was a great sin, almost as great as committing the deed. "If your eye offends you," he said, "pluck it out and throw it away, better than you should commit an impure act. And if your hand should sin it is better to cut off your hand than to sin again." Jesus taught his disciples not to resist evil. If some one gives you a blow on the right cheek, turn to him the left cheek also. And when some one asks for something that you possess give it to him; and when he asks you for a favour, do him the favour.

All holy men have preached love. Jesus taught that we should love even our enemies. We should bless those that curse us, and do good to those who try to harm us. "Then," Jesus said, "you are the true children of God." For God makes no distinction. He makes his sun rise on the evil and the good, and He sends rain on the just and on the unjust. If you do all these things, then you will be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

And when you give alms, do it in secret. And when you pray, do it in solitude. And when you fast, make no show of it.

Jesus taught that we should not care

for wealth. "When you have possession," he said, "you will have to look after them." Your mind will be taken from God and go to your possessions. Therefore let good deeds and holy thought be your wealth. You cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve God and mammon, or the world. Do not think much about your body, what you shall eat or drink or put on. Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither do they keep a stock of food. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them all. And are you not better than they?

And why should you think much about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet the greatest king is not as beautifully arrayed as one of these lilies. If God then so clothed the plants, shall He not much more clothe you? Therefore have faith in God. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and live a righteous life, and all these things will come to you.

Jesus taught that we should treat others, as we would like to be treated by them. And we should always be charitable and open-hearted, for he who gives freely purifies his heart; and he who gives shall receive. Do not look at the faults of others, rather look at your own faults and correct them. Thus Jesus gave his moral teachings. "Every tree", he said, "is known by its fruits. By your words and deeds, people will know what is in your heart."

Jesus's sympathy went out to all, even to the greatest sinners. Once it happened that he was invited to take food with a rich man. And when he was in the house, a woman from the city came. She was considered a sinful woman, a prostitute. Now this woman had heard about Jesus, and she wanted his blessings. So she brought

a pot of sweet-smelling ointment, and standing before Jesus began to weep. Then she kneeled down at Jesus's feet weeping, and with her hair she began to wipe his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now the rich man thought, this man, Jesus, is not a prophet, otherwise he would have known the character of the woman and would not have allowed her to touch his feet. But Jesus knew what his host was thinking. So he said to him, "Do you see this woman? When I entered your house you did not give me water to wash my feet. But she washed my feet with tears of repentance, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You did not give me ointment, but she did it. Therefore, because of her great love and faith I say to her, "Woman! your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

There is another story of Jesus's compassion for sinners. In this case it is a woman who has committed adultery, a sin punishable with death. Jesus had spent the night alone in prayer on a mountain. In the early morning he came down to the city and entered the temple. And many people came to him. Then Jesus sat down and began to teach them. While he was teaching there was a great commotion. A woman was dragged into the temple by an infuriated mob. They all talked at the same time, and they used the woman roughly. Then they brought her before Jesus, and said, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Our law says that she should be stoned to death. But what do you say?"

Now these people were not sincere. They were against Jesus, and thought, "if Jesus says different from our law we will catch him and punish him." So Jesus, knowing which was in their

minds, kept silent as if he did not hear them. But the mob kept on asking him. Then Jesus standing up in their midst, said, "You wish to kill this woman by throwing stones on her. Then let he who is without sin himself throw the first stone." And again Jesus turned away from them as if the question was settled. Now the people knowing that they themselves were sinners, felt ashamed and they all, one by one, left the place. Jesus was left alone with the woman. When Jesus saw that the people had all left, he turned to the woman and said, "Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?" And she said, "No man, Lord!" And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you. Go now, but sin no more."

Jesus now began to wander from place to place. Once it happened as he and his disciples went on their way, that a certain man came to him, and said, "Lord, I will follow thee wherever thou goest." But Jesus knew that he was not ready to leave the world and follow the difficult path of renunciation. So he told the man, "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head. To follow me is very difficult. You may live in the world, but do not be of the world."

Jesus knew his own divine nature that the Father had sent him to do his work on earth. He told the Pharisees: "I know whence I came, and whither I go. The Father has sent me. And whither I go, you cannot come. I am from above. I am not of this world. I am the light of the world. If you do my word, then you are my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

And again Jesus said, "I came from God. I came not of myself, He sent

me. He that is of God, hears God's words. I do the work of Him that sent me. I and my Father are one. And He that sees me, sees him that sent me."

We see then that though Jesus possessed all power, he took never any credit to himself. He gave all glory to God from whom all power comes. As Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "I know nothing, it is the divine Mother, She who dwells in this body, that does and speaks through me." So Jesus said, "I can do nothing without my divine Father. He knows and does all things. What He teaches me, that I speak. And when you see me, you see the Father; and when you hear me, you hear His words."

Jesus's surrender to God was so complete, that Jesus the man was no more. It was God Himself in the form of Jesus. The Father had incarnated on earth in the form of His son, Jesus, to teach humanity, to bring salvation to those who longed for freedom.

Jesus told his disciples that the Father Himself loved them, because they loved Jesus, and because they believed that Jesus came out from God. Jesus exclaimed, "O Father, those that are mine are Thine; and those that are Thine are mine. Thou hast given them to me. Make them one, even as we are one. As I am in Thee, and Thou art in me, make them also one in us. I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

This is the perfection Jesus taught; Union with God. He lived in that realization himself, therefore we worship him as one of the avatars of God.

"Seek and ye shall find," Jesus said, "Seek within your own heart, for the kingdom of heaven is within. Knock and it will be opened unto you. Knock at the gate of your heart, for there the Truth is enthroned."

SIVA MAHIMNAH STOTRAM
THE HYMN ON THE GREATNESS OF SIVA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

भवः शर्वो रुद्रः पशुपतिरथोग्रः सह-महां
स्तथा भीमेशानाविति यदभिधानाष्टकमिदम् ।
अमुष्मिन् प्रत्येकं प्रविचरति देव श्रुतिरपि
प्रियायास्मै नाम्ने प्रणिहितनमस्योऽस्मि भवते ॥ २८ ॥

देव Oh Lord भवः Bhava शर्वः Sarva रुद्रः Rudra पशुपतिः Pasupati उग्रः Ugra सहमहान् Mahadeva भीमः Bhima ईशानः Isâna इति (indicating that the list is completed) यत् इदं this अभिधानाष्टकं eightfold name श्रुतिः Veda अपि even प्रत्येकं each प्रविचरति mentions अस्मै that प्रियाय beloved नाम्ने name प्रणिहितनमस्यः अस्मि I salute.

28. Oh Lord, Bhava, Sarva, Rudra, Pasupati, Ugra, Mahâdeva, Bhima, and Isâna—these eight names are mentioned even¹ by the *Vedas*. To these beloved², illuminating³ names I bow down.

¹ *Even etc.*—What to speak of the Smritis and Puranas.

² *Beloved*—Of His one thousand names, these eight, being very important, are dear to Siva.

³ *Illuminating*—expressing Siva.

नमो नेदिष्ठाय प्रियद्व दविष्ठाय च नमो
नमः क्षोदिष्ठाय स्मरहर महिष्ठाय च नमः ।
नमो वर्षिष्ठाय त्रिनयन यविष्ठाय च नमो
नमः सर्वस्मै ते तदिदमति सर्वाय च नमः ॥ २९ ॥

प्रियद्व Oh Lover of forests नेदिष्ठाय living very near मनः my salutation दविष्ठाय च as also living very far away ते to thee नमः my salutation स्मरहर Oh Destroyer of the god of love क्षोदिष्ठाय to the minutest नमः my salutation महिष्ठाय as also to the largest नमः salutation. त्रिनयन Oh Three-eyed One वर्षिष्ठाय to the oldest नमः salutation यविष्ठाय च as also to the youngest नमः salutation सर्वस्मै to all नमः salutation अति सर्वाय transcending all तुभ्यं to Thee तदिदं this नमः salutation.

29. Oh Lover of solitude, my salutation to Thee¹ who art very near² as also very far far³ away. Oh Destroyer of the God

¹ *Thee who art etc.*—This verse indicates the greatness of Siva as in Him all contradictions meet.

² *Near*—because He is the indwelling spirit of all.

³ *Far away*—because beyond mind and speech.

of love, my salutation to Thee who art the minutest⁴ as also the largest.⁵ Oh Three-eyed One my salutation to Thee who art the oldest⁶ as also the youngest.⁷ This my salutation to Thee who art all⁸ as also transcending all.⁹

⁴ *Minutest*—being even in atoms.

⁵ *Largest*—being in large bodies like mountains.

⁶ *Oldest*—existing even before creation.

⁷ *Youngest*—being untouched by infirmities.

⁸ *All*—He is the substratum of all visible and invisible objects.

⁹ *Transcending all*—being beyond mind and speech.

बहुलरजसे विश्वोत्पत्तौ भवाय नमो नमः

प्रबलतमसे तत्संहारे हराय नमो नमः ।

जनसुखकृते सत्त्वोद्विक्तौ मृडाय नमो नमः

प्रमहसि पदे निस्त्रैगुण्ये शिवाय नमो नमः ॥ ३० ॥

विश्वोत्पत्तौ for the creation of the universe बहुलरजसे with excess of Rajas भवाय to Brahmâ नमो नमः salutation ; तत्संहारे for the destruction of that प्रबल तमसे with excess of Tamas हराय to Rudra नमो नमः ; सत्त्वोद्विक्तौ with excess of Sattva जनसुखकृते for giving happiness to the people मृडाय to Vishnu नमो नमः । निस्त्रैगुण्ये beyond the three attributes प्रमहसि effulgent पदे object शिवाय to Siva नमो नमः ।

30. Salutation to Brahmâ in whom Rajas preponderates for the creation of the universe, salutation to Rudra in whom Tamas preponderates for the destruction of the same. Salutation to Vishnu in whom Sattva preponderates for giving¹ happiness to the people. Salutation to Siva who is effulgent and beyond² the three attributes.

¹ *Giving . . . people*—i.e. for the preservation of the universe.

² *Beyond . . . attributes*—Siva is with and without attributes. The three attributes are Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. With Rajas in the form of Brahmâ He creates, with Sattva in the form of Vishnu He preserves, and with Tamas in the form of Rudra He destroys.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In *Religious Symbolism* we have tried to show how symbols have their great significance for those who adopt them according to their tastes and temperaments, although there cannot be any rule as to their acceptance or non-acceptance. . . . Prof. Ashokanath Shastri examines critically *Bâdarâyana's Views about the Nature of Final Release* in his article and proves that the Sutra-

kâra is fully in favour with the Advaita position. . . . Prof. Gilbert Slater belongs to the University of Oxford. *Christendom's Need of Christ* was read at the Parliament of Religions, held in Calcutta last March. . . . *The Drama of Mankind in its Religious Aspect* was written by Mr. Richard C. Thurnwald for the same Parliament of Religions. He points out in the article how the present age is filled with a hundred

social and political problems, the solution of which lies in bringing about co-operation between groups, communities, nations, and races. . . . Mr. Wolfram H. Koch concludes in this issue his article on *A Great Western Mystic and the Universal Message of Bhakti*. . . . *Sri Ramakrishna and the Spirit of Modern Science* contributed by Prof. P. S. Naidu shows how Ramakrishna's mind was one of the scientist *par excellence* and how he was a master experimentalist in the realm of Spirit. Prof. Leopold Von Wiesw belongs to the University of Cologne, Germany. In *The Idea of Religion* he shows how the idea of religion stands over all interpretations of life. . . . Swami Atulananda gives in a nutshell, as it were, *The Teachings of Jesus* as illustrated in his life.

A TIMID MATERIALISM

There is today all the world over a craving for a philosophy of life in which a new creative power may strike root. Civilization alternately passes through two different phases, namely, an age of philosophical reconstruction and a period of intense absorption in the positive sciences and the practical needs of life. Behind every creative epoch of history there is a background of tacit assumptions, a general outlook on life and world, which tinge the endeavours of the men of the period. In process of time old beliefs suffer dissolution in the acids of new knowledge, and men strain out once more toward the undefined and the unknown for a new creed to sustain their practical pursuits. Such a creed need not be articulate. Mostly it is implicit. We are in such an age today, an age of transition, an age of "transvaluation of all values". New knowledge has knocked the bottom out of a self-sufficient materialism

which dates back to the seventeenth century. In the welter of battered beliefs and broken creeds, men of this century are frantically looking for a lodestar of their loyalty. The voices of a naked materialism have receded to the background. But an insidious variant of it is openly claiming the allegiance of man under an alluring name. It is the so-called religious Humanism.

The term Humanism has been applied to a number of movements in different periods of history. We are referring here, of course, to the one which calls itself religious and which belongs in the tradition of Comte's religion of humanity and the philosophical movement of Schiller. It discards all supernaturalistic religions and tries to discover and meet human needs which are confined to this world. It is said to be an attitude toward and a way of making life rich and full and glorious. It aims at an intelligent control of materials, processes, and ideals for human ends. It is to be pointed out also that the humanist does not seek a universally valid cosmic point of view. It is intensely personal and ego-centric.

It is difficult to see how such a creed can hold the allegiance of an adult mind. It claims to be personal, but it does not disdain to impose itself upon others by a display of the negative conclusions and the prejudices of psychological and epistemological investigations. It derides all faiths as unproved illusions and yet calls upon men to place faith on its professions which are grounded upon mere pious wishes. In psychology it nearly believes that the behaviourist has uttered the last word. In philosophy it derives its main inspiration from the epistemological doctrine which has not materially advanced a step further than the skepticism of Hume and the agnosticism of

Spencer. Yet it appears to be sure enough about what constitutes the human ends. Who is to decide between the different cravings and the conflicting aims of individuals? Is our knowledge of the world perfect and clear enough to arrive at a decision with regard to what is the goal and what not of human existence? Further, is it worthwhile to bother about human ends at all? The spirit of man is insistent and persistent in the demand of answers to such queries. No number of sweet phrases and platitudes can stifle it. The task of a real philosophy of religion is to offer something of absolute value, which can be held reasonably, and which need not merely be an object of desire, affection, or faith. Whatever may be the explanation of the world it is certain that this world is not self-explanatory. Ages ago blessed persons have discovered a new way of grasping the meaning of existence and knowing the Real that dwells in the heart of all. Such persons reappear from time to time to steady up the faith of men in the Eternal. Should then modern man continue to beat his head in vain against the cold granite of intellect and refuse to soar on the wings of intuition to the clear vision of the Real?

REAL DEMOCRACY

Ours is pre-eminently an age of disillusionment. Not long ago we beguiled ourselves with the belief that humanity had last arrived at the age of reason and democracy and that it was ever moving upward on an easy gradient of progress. Today observant persons disdain to discourse any more upon the glories of either rationalism or the demos. The inside story of the popular governments of the West has been laid bare. It was otherwise quarter of a century ago. The East in

general and India in particular formed the butt of ridicule for their failure to evolve any form of political democracy. This unqualified generalization was of course far from being true. And these gibes spurred the efforts of zealous pundits who brought out evidences of popular elements in the public administration in ancient and modern India as well as in the other countries of the East. But now we know better. Real democracy neither begins nor ends with politics. It is not also essentially connected with the counting of votes. It is something organic entering into the very being of a people and manifested in every sphere of its life.

How very early the root principles of democracy permeated through the life of the various Eastern peoples, especially the Indian, has been shown by Mr. J. C. Kumarappa in a recent issue of the *Aryan Path*. True democracy, he points out, must be based upon eternal principles. And in a true democracy "society should be so planned as to allow full scope for the development of the individual and yet should establish a relative equality by helping and safeguarding the interests of the weak, thus forming a brotherhood in which no one can exploit another." Such a democracy should be automatic and not imposed from without. To be automatic it has to be assimilated subconsciously by a society. On this basis he distinguishes between two types of democracy, namely, functional and cultural. A functional democracy is predominantly political and takes the form of a government based on widely diffused franchise. It is an institution which can be created almost overnight. A cultural democracy is, on the other hand, the product of millennia during which the basic principles must seep into the very being of a people.

If we make a survey of the races of mankind keeping in mind the real features of a true democracy we shall find that "Western democracies are still at the stage where nations are led by small groups or individuals and where sanctions are based on violence". But very early "India had arrived at a formula which approximated real cultural democracy and the government it had evolved was truly a government of the villagers, by the villagers and for the villagers". The principle of decentralisation was worked out by the Indian people in all walks of life, social, religious, political, and economic. In one respect, however, the Indian and other Eastern democracies have fallen

short of real cultural democracy. They have failed "in so far as they have only reached religious or village units and have not got down to individuals". He very rightly concludes: "When the world advances to a stage where every one functions according to the ideals inculcated and performs his *Swadharma* and the sanctions are based on love and truth then we shall have projected Lincoln's ideal of functional democracy on to the cultural form and obtained a self-acting democracy which will be a government of the person, by the person and for the person, and this, in the aggregate, will materialise into a government of the people, by the people and for the people."

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GOVINDA'S KADCHA: A BLOCK FORGERY. BY B. V. DASGUPTA. *Published by S. N. Dasgupta, 10, Dolaiganj Station Road, Dacca. Pp. 108. Price Re. 1.*

A bitter controversy has been raging for sometime past with regard to the genuineness of the Bengali poem known as *Govinda Das's Kadcha*. The work has acquired a great measure of celebrity from the time of its first publication in 1895 by the late Joy Gopal Goswami. The work professes to be written by a simple, unsophisticated village blacksmith named Govinda who is said to have been the sole companion of Chaitanya during his pilgrimage to the South about 1510-12 A.D. Though it was greeted with open denunciations by a section of the people as soon as it was first published, yet it subsequently won its way to the hearts of a wider public mostly by virtue of its liberal tone free from any sectarian rancour. The controversy, which thus dates back to the nineties of the last century, took an acute turn with the republication of the work in 1926 under the editorship of Dr. Dinesh Ch. Sen from the University of Calcutta. Since then, so far as we are aware, two works have been published seriously challenging the authenticity of the poem.

The book under review is one among them. The author has produced enough evidence, literary, historical, geographical and others, to throw doubt upon the genuineness of the poem. It cannot, however, be said that the ghost of the controversy has been laid once for all. For, apart from the question why the late Goswami, apparently a Vaishnava, cooked up the book in a manner which would irritate the sensitiveness of the Vaishnavas and defeat his very purpose by preparing for it a hostile reception, many other queries remain to be satisfied—queries which demand still more elaborate discussions. Unhappily also, from the start, motives of honest literary criticism have mingled with feelings of religious bitterness to prove the spuriousness of the work. We hope more attention will be paid to this interesting controversy by scholars acquainted with the subject. One thing, however, which the reviewer feels constrained to remark, is that literary criticism is a little different from advocacy in a court of law. The force of the arguments of the author as well as the writer of the Foreword would not have suffered any diminution, if they wrote with more dignity and restraint.

YOGA THE SCIENCE OF HEALTH. BY FELIX GUYOT, *Rider & Co., 33, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. 4. Pp. 191. Price \$5 net.*

As the very name of the book reveals it is a primer on the principles and practice of Hatha Yoga, suitable for Western readers. It elucidates in a straightforward manner some of the psychological and physiological theories which underlie the practice of the Hatha Yoga and gives a few practical instructions with regard to the mode of living, diet and a few of the âsanas (postures) necessary for health and longevity. This rational exposition of the Yoga of physical culture will make a ready appeal to those who are shy of inexplicable mysteries.

A HERMIT IN THE HIMALAYAS. BY PAUL BRUNTON. *B. G. Paul & Co., 12, Francis Joseph Street, Madras. Pp. 322. Price Rs. 3-8*

Here is one more extremely delightful book from the felicitous pen of Mr. Brunton, the author of *A Search in Secret India* and *A Search in Secret Egypt*. He belongs to that small group of Western-born individuals who have come to take a practical interest in the spiritual culture of the East. More than that, fate has condemned him, as he half-seriously puts it, "to become an interpreter of the Sphinx's language; a task delightful enough so long as one keeps one's interpretations to oneself, but disagreeable indeed as soon as one begins to reveal them to a sceptical world." True, Yoga has of late attracted a somewhat wide attention in the West, but the extroverted occidentals have taken to it mostly in the quest of more power. Mr. Brunton, like a few others, has not been drawn by anything so vulgar. A connate spiritual disposition has driven him in search of the real stuff at the cost of no little personal sacrifice.

Last summer he left the hot plains of the South for the mighty Himalayas in order to endeavour to pry into the secrets of the Overself in the still and holy bosom of its rugged chains. Foiled in his attempted journey to Kailâs, "a fit Nemesis for the colour prejudice sins of the white race itself," he turned his head towards the state of Tehri-Garhwal, where the sacred Ganges takes its rise. Here in his lovely retreat he kept a journal in which he entered some of his experiences and reflections on various spiritual and other problems of life. Some of

these have now been committed to the public gaze in the shape of the book under review. His musings are shot through with sincerity and wisdom, and they reveal a true seeker after Truth wrestling with his soul in order to wring from it the peace that dwells at the centre of our being. His gentle humour, easy narrative and thousand and one felicities of expression make the book one which no lover of good literature can afford to ignore. Though, as he remarks, he walks a path of his own both in his way and in his views, yet we can readily agree to much of what he says. Does not every spiritual aspirant, after all, have his own distinctive line of growth? At least Indians are no strangers to this truism. Only one point, however, calls for some comment due to the importance of the subject and a widely prevalent misapprehension of it.

Mr. Brunton, like many modern exponents of mysticism and Yoga, is disposed to believe that celibacy is not a necessary condition for higher spiritual life. A normal life appears to him to be enough foundation for scaling the heights of realization. "Asceticism" he says, "is not attractive to the modern man. My belief is that it is not essential." It is just proper to state at the outset that he does not want to impose his views on others who are naturally fitted for that kind of life, and that he expects in return that nobody should impose theirs on him or on those who feel otherwise. Now, it is not a question of forcing unpalatable food down the throats of all and sundry. Certainly asceticism can not be for all. Ascetics say that. It is, however, quite a different thing when men of the highest realization declare that unless certain conditions are fulfilled, the goal can not be reached. In such matters men would rather prefer to be guided by what a Christ, a Buddha, a Chaitanya, and a Sankara have said. Appeal to the god of modernism has been made throughout history from twentieth century B.C. to twentieth century A.D. In the final analysis it is no more than my-ism. The whole gamut of similar existences has been run over and over again. No great discernment is needed to realize that. Yet, only a few old, simple truths have successfully met the challenge of time while all the varying fashions of ages have gone to the spacious limbo.

The comparison of sex to functions like digestion and speech or sleep is inappropriate. The appeals to certain "psycho-anatomical facts which are not generally known"

are certainly forceful with regard to some and under certain conditions. They are useless if stretched to cover all cases. Even celebrated medical men have rebutted such false generalizations. To quote a modern mystic of profound learning, who still lives and who can not be accused of any ignorance of psychological or physiological facts. "The contrary opinion of which you speak," writes Sri Aurobindo, "may be due to the idea that sex is a natural part of the human vital-physical whole, a necessity like food and sleep, and that its total inhibition may lead to unbalancing and to serious disorders. It is a fact that sex suppressed in outward action but indulged in other way may lead to disorders of the system and brain troubles. That is the root of the medical theory which discourages sexual abstinence. But I have observed that these things happen only when there is either secret indulgence of a perverse kind replacing the normal sexual activity or else an indulgence of it in a kind of subtle vital way by imagination or by an invisible vital interchange of an occult kind,—I do not think harm ever occurs when there is a true spiritual effort at mastery and abstinence. It is now held by many medical men in Europe that sexual abstinence, *if it is genuine*, is beneficial; for the element in the *retas* which serves the sexual act is then changed into its other element which feeds the energies of the system, mental, vital and physical—and that justifies the Indian idea of Brahmacharya, the transformation of *retas* into *ojas* and the raising of its energies upward so that they change into a spiritual force." (*Bases of Yoga*, pp. 176-177).

It is not for all to scale the Everest. Persons with weak lungs and weak hearts do play roulette with death when they venture it. But why water down the ideal? Why dissuade persons with healthy limbs and strong wills from achieving the great triumph of life by denying the objective? Saints who had lived worldly lives before forsook it when the call came from beyond the senses. If sex stood on all fours with hunger and speech why did not they come down to that kind of life again? No saint who had a vision of the most High ever hastened down from the lofty spiritual plane to enjoy the ginger ale of mundane existence. Some sort of spiritual life may be compatible with sex life, but never the highest kind. Higher spiritual life has never been mass handled. There is no point in accusing modern man as specially deficient in this capacity. One very real

danger and difference, however, is there in modern times. There is a widespread tendency today to make religion too easy, to pull down the highest ideals in order to make them suit our puny stature,—an attempt never made with so much knowledge and zeal in any period of antiquity.

SRI MAHARSHI. BY M. S. KAMATH. *The Sunday Times Book Shop, Madras.* Pp. 48. Price As. 8.

This is a very short biography of a saint of an unusually arresting personality, Sri Ramana Maharshi of Arunachala. The second son of Sundaram Aiyar, a pleader at Tiruchuzli, Venkataraman—for that was how the saint was named by his parents—was born in December, 1879. His early years were in no sense remarkable, and they hardly give any promise of the future that lay ahead of him. In 1895, however, a noteworthy event happened. In November of that year he asked a relation of his where he had been. "The reply 'to Arunachala' had a magic effect upon him. Nevertheless, it seemed at the time no more than a stray experience until he chanced to lay hold of a copy of *Periapuranam* a few days later. "That biography of Tamil saints stirred him to the depths; but even those experiences seemed to leave no lasting impression and for all outward purposes, he led a normal life until the middle of July, 1896, when there was a sudden transformation."

A fear of death came upon him all on a sudden; it made him restless and introspective and look within to discover the meaning of death. Introspection revealed the "I" which death could never touch. Thenceforward he became a changed youth. Sometime after he left home without sufficient hint to anybody and travelled to Tiruvannamalai where he tore his cloth, took a small strip for a Kaupinam, and threw away the rest with the sacred thread. His severe Tapasyâ there attracted wide attention. He was found out by an astute accountant, and though his relatives came to take him back home, they had to go back foiled in their purpose. A few years later he was met under unusual circumstances by his first important disciple Kavyakanta Ganapati Sastri, "whose advent proved eventful in a number of ways." It was he who gave the saint the appellation of Ramana Maharshi. By this time his life had become sufficiently known and groups of devotees and disciples attached themselves permanently to him.

Thanks to his admirers and devotees the present life of the saint is now before the public eye. The charm of this great soul with broad and liberal views stands out clearly even from the pages of this scanty biography. The book contains 111 illustrations.

HINDI

KALYAN, VEDANTA ANKA. VOL II, PART 1-2, SRAVAN BHADRAPADA, 1993. *The Gita Press Gorakhpur. Pp. 744. Price Indian Rs. 3. Foreign Rs. 4-4.*

This special number of Kalyan devoted to the exposition of the various schools of Vedânta maintains the standard of excellence of its earlier and valuable special numbers. There are 185 articles which elucidate the doctrines of the different Vedântic schools from the pen of most distinguished scholars. By reason of the reputation of its contributors this volume is sure to form a very valuable addition to that growing literature devoted to the interpretation of Vedânta. The volume also contains a number of poems and

quotations from different religious works. The issue is also profusely illustrated with a large number of one-coloured, bi-coloured and tri-coloured pictures.

BENGALI

SRI SRI MAYER KATHÂ, PART II. PUBLISHED BY SWAMI ATMABODHANANDA, *Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 412. Price Rs. 2.*

This part is a still more valuable work than the earlier and first one. The talks which have been supplied by 28 devotees give very touching and intimate glimpses into the human aspect of the Holy Mother's personality. An introductory life-sketch of Mother written by Swami Arupananda who has been blessed by a fairly long and close association with Mother reveals many interesting facts which did not before appear in print. The book will no doubt be a valuable companion of all the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1936

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, came into existence thirty-six years ago to mitigate the sufferings of the people in various ways. It maintains an indoor hospital and an outdoor dispensary where patients are served free of charge with medicine, diet and treatment during their illness. Besides hospital-work the Sevashrama runs (1) a night school for the benefit of the children of the depressed classes, maintains (2) a library for the workers, the Sâdhus and the Vidyârthis of the locality, (3) a temple for the moral and spiritual growth of the workers and (4) a guest house or Dharamshala for the accommodation of visitors.

During the year under review its activities were as follows:—

Indoor Hospital Relief: The total number of indoor patients was 864 of whom 6 were old cases and 858 new ones. Of these 804 were cured, 46 left during treatment,

11 died and 3 were under treatment at the close of the year.

Outdoor Hospital Relief: The outdoor patients numbered 25,235, of whom 14,378 were repeated cases and 10,857 new ones, the daily average being 68.95.

The Night School had 30 boys on the roll at the end of the year. The library was run as usual.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

REPORT FOR 1936

At the end of the year under review the Sevashrama completed the sixteenth year of its useful existence. The year also saw many improvements in the provision of equipments for major operations, greater facilities for patients attending various wards and clinics, and in the acceleration of the work of the General Wards. The total number of patients treated came up to 89,506, of which 4,083 were indoor patients. The outpatients including both new and old cases amounted to 2,23,252. The total income from

various sources and expenditure during the year were Rs. 70,039-15-9 and Rs. 60,211-8-6 respectively. The high standard of efficiency of the institution has won warm praises from all quarters, and it deserves patronage.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF, ORISSA.

The public are already aware of the great flood havoc in Orissa. On receipt of reports from our Bhubaneswar Branch Centre about the miserable conditions of the people we have already instructed the Local Secretary to organise relief immediately. A sum of Rs. 500 from the Mission Provident Relief Fund has been sent to meet the preliminary expenses. We have started the relief with the meagre funds at our disposal.

Our workers after inspection of the areas in the three thanas of Bhubaneswar, Pipli and Delang, have opened two centres at Delang and Pipli. In the first distribution from Delang on the 14-8-'37 there were 794 recipients from 394 families of 25 villages and the amount of rice distributed was 35 mds. 88 srs. The

report says though the water is slowly subsiding still it is not possible to go to many places. Hundreds of poor villagers, having lost their huts, are passing days on embankments in rains. Help towards hut building will be necessary as soon as the flood completely subsides. Failure of crop is also apprehended and in that case there will be severe scarcity of food. The miserable condition of the unfortunate victims is thus beyond description.

On behalf of these helpless brethren, we appeal to the generous public to contribute their mite and thus save thousands from starvation and death. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged from any of the following addresses:—

(1) The President, The Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

(2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

(SD.) SANKARANANDA,
Ag. Secretary,
Ramakrishna Mission.

18-8-37.

NOTICE

The changed address of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, and that of the Editorial Office, Prabuddha Bharata, is—

P.O. Mayavati, *via* Lohaghat,

Dist. Almora, U.P.

The Telegraph Office is at Lohaghat.

ACTIVITY THROUGH SILENCE*

BY COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING

We are living in an age of more one-sided movements than ever determined the sequence of historical events. This is mainly due to the fact that our remarkable intellectual awakeness makes possible such sharp and complete elaborations of all special views and special movements, as would have been impossible in less awakened ages. Symbolically expressed, in former ages every army-leader used to fight to a great extent with the assistance of auxiliary peoples. The same impulse which impelled innumerable tribes of quite different races and outlook to flock to the banners of Attila and Chengiz Khan, applies also in the same way—in spite of the opposition of ruling dogmatism—to Christianity and Islam striving for power, and it was true even of the impulse of the French Revolution. Today exclusive one-sidedness is supreme everywhere. Hence the singular dynamism, and the singular readiness for war of this age, which characteristic is still further thrown into relief by the fact that today the most dynamic portion of mankind, the Nordic occidentals, are the determining factor of the spirit of the age. Already at the session of the School of Wisdom in 1922 I explained in my lecture *Tension and Rhythm*, (reprinted in *The Recovery of Truth*, London Jonathan Cape) that under the present circumstances extreme onesidedness represents the shortest way to universalism, for an all-encompassing total rhythm and therewith a harmonious co-operation of all vital forces would in the long run necessarily result from the interplay of movements of different kinds. The only other alternative is absolute self-annihilation, and some kind of multiplicity capable of consolidation always survives, as our experience shows, all chaotic conditions. This consideration however does not invalidate the view that for a very long time to come we will have to reckon with the rule of one-sided movements within all societies which have become awakened.

This, however, does not signify that anywhere a single particular one-sidedness does or will exercise all real power. For the polar character of all life demands that to every thesis there is a corresponding anti-thesis organically connected with it. Thus Soviet Russia today lives on the fiction of a bourgeoisie capable of resuscitating itself, although in fact there is no bourgeoisie left today, because without an opponent no agent can act at all. This is shown in a most striking manner at the time when I am writing in September, 1936, in Spain. In none of the opposite camps there is a homogeneous world-view. Yet the gigantic dynamism of the awakening of the Spanish people—for that is the truth of the civil war, and not a battle between the right and the left—implies by itself polarization, so that in the battle clear fronts are mechanically formed even when in outlook there exists no homogeneity at all. And these fronts will remain so long as this awakening endures,—but very probably the opposite poles will in the long run come to represent quite other contents than they do today. Now where in public life a particular movement has secured total victory, the poles are shifted into different dimensions and planes. Thus the true polarity which rules modern Russia, is not that of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and not even that between the orthodox Bolshevism and the continually formed new political oppositions: it is the polarity between mechanistic-unhuman progressivism on the one hand and religiosity on the other, gaining more and more in depth and getting ever stronger. Now the basic polarity of Germany, which even today determines its whole future course and will more and more visibly determine it from year to year, is the polarity ~~between~~ those who fully give themselves up to a particular movement and those who keep silent consciously and from conviction.

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* This article was published in our May issue pp. 265—274. But as the English version of the original German was defective in some places we are giving the correct version by the author.

Thanks to German thoroughness, the one-sidedness in question of every movement is more pronounced in Germany than anywhere else. No nation ever so completely surrendered itself to the promotion of industry as did the German nation after her Bismarckian victories; for to us it was the result of giving up previous aims and not of that elementary impulse to conquer which is the peculiarity of American character. No nation was ever so completely a people in arms as an end in itself as the German nation during the World War. And no nation ever changed so completely after a *débâcle*. And in the same way no rebirth out of a determinate spirit has ever been so complete and total as that of the German people under the sign of the national-socialist movement. Yet the laws of life reign supreme through all prejudices. One-sided stressing of one pole leads to the "constellation",—to use this ancient term of astrology for giving a more concrete meaning to the idea of evolution—of the corresponding opposite pole by its very fact. Thus the victory of the spirit of promoting industry heralded at the same time the rise of social democracy, the exclusiveness of the belief of a Germany-above-everything during the World War likewise strengthened internationalism and defeatism, and the German self-capitulation since Versailles was the breeding ground of national-socialism. Now that the latter has had a total victory and actually comprehends the whole of life under the one sign of battle, there has arisen out of organic necessity, the opposite pole, a deepening of German spirituality which in principle presages the opening up of depths deeper than ever known before. This process however always takes its course in silence, outside the arena. Here we are confronted with the rebirth of the same polarity which for several centuries, from the beginning of our era, kept the forum and catacombs in productive tension.

I say: productive tension, for that was the essential of the relation, and not the rejection of Roman life by the early Christians, and neither the occasional, on the whole, rare, sporadic persecution of Christians by the heathen state. In the dark silence of the catacombs there grew up what the Cæsars expected from further triumphs in open day-light of the imperial spirit. And as the state only tolerated invisible church-life, it thereby only served to encourage it. Sprouting life everywhere requires peace in

the darkness for its growth. In this way grew the Christian spirit irresistibly, till at last it was the Christian spirit which held together the Imperium. Yet the empire had to fall into pieces at last, for the spirit of early Christianity was too contrary to the late Roman. On the other hand, however, the European peoples, after due periods of incubation, bloomed into a life of new splendours within the frame-work of the Christian culture of the Middle Ages. Thus the original catacomb-pole gave rebirth to what in the antique world had risen from the forum. Henceforward the spirit of pagan world-mastery lived on in a repressed state only to be roused again in the day of the Renaissance and to again become a dominant force in all frankness only in our days.

It is essential to realize that between paganism and Christian faith there was no antagonism in the creative depth, but a productive polar tension. Today too, to take a long view of things, there is actually no antagonism between public and vociferous dynamism and still spirituality, but a most beneficent correlation. That it works out so seldom parallel to normal expectations is due principally to our mistaking the true state of things. By this, let it be stated clearly, I do not mean the problem of the Church. How far today the Church is at all still a living force pregnant of future, is a problem which can only be solved in the light of actual events. Personally I do not consider it quite improbable that in the new constellation of forces the Church will prove to be an antiquated forum within which the inner forces of nature will find as little play as in a soldiers' parade. I am thinking of the personal and intimate life, of the culture of the life for itself and of ultimate solitude. Now this life is in no way impeded by the popularity of collectivism and publicity which are the signs of our times: it is being enhanced by the existing tension. For the new style of life *postulates*, as every pole evokes its own opposite, an intensification of the intimate as the proper organic correlative to collectivism and publicity.

It is becoming more and more clear than ever before to ever more thoughtful men that the personal life which is the only source of all spiritual creation is essentially not struggle and strife,—and by emphasizing this point I am revealing in one sentence what is of decisive importance in the polarity which rules our age. Today everything in life is said to be struggle and

man himself a fighter essentially. Out of this conception of life there speaks one of the most remarkable one-sidednesses of all history. Of course it can be said that one fights also with oneself or in one's own self: but even when considered in the most favourable light it must be regarded as a case of inappropriate expression. In true struggles with oneself or with the evils in oneself there comes to light first of all, according to the law discovered by Coué, the law of *converted effort*—the exact opposite of what is aimed at. It is only the calm acceptance of the tragedy of all life or the consciousness of guilt for the evils thus constellated and enhanced in power, that produces as a second stadium what is generally attributed to the fighting in itself. All order of the spirit is an order of inner growth. But man can grow only in so far as he *does not* fight on the plane on which this growth takes place, but opens himself out and lets things happen to him. This thesis is not at all in contradiction to the fact that every great man has grown only on a background of contraries: he grows in fact only then, when while fighting externally, and thus affirming his courage and faith which are the primary expressions of spirit¹ he at the same time takes upon himself his cross, in the original Christian sense, and does not resist evil but strives to conquer it by good,—that is to say, to outgrow it. The attitude of fight can only lead to one possible result: that is war. And it is the most elementary expression of war which is the most positive. On this plane the claim to power of original hunger expresses itself, in its pure state, so to speak; the annihilation of the opponent is honestly striven for. And the risk of one's own life and the readiness to die actually constellate as much spirit as can at all find expression on so elementary a plane. Yet as soon as war is transferred to the plane of the spirit, it begins to work evil, and that more and more in proportion to the intellectual height attained. No one has ever won deep knowledge through argument: whoever discusses intends *a priori* to defend a particular standpoint or to do away with another,—he intends, in other words, to remain essentially what he was. All growth in spirit however is possible only when there is readiness to be changed and transformed,

to increase therewith, and to renounce former standpoints. In the same sense religious wars are essentially anti-religious events for only the lower depths in men can profit by them, and never the spirit. The position is essentially the same, from the standpoint of inwardness, that is to say, the strivings of the spirit, with competitive struggle. It is a sheer mistake to assume that any great work was ever achieved through the spirit of competition. It can of course fire ambition and enhance the vital forces, and victory can rouse the spirit to further achievements. But here we are concerned only with efficiency as such, and a creation of the spirit does essentially not belong to the plane of efficiency. I quite believe that the *agon* (competitive struggle) had a deep significance for the Greeks: but the reason for this lay in their unparalleled greed, envy and cruelty of character.² Only among the Greeks were hate and revenge considered to be legitimate and even regarded as ultimately decisive motives in justifying action. The case of the great creative spirits of Greece was this that they stood remarkably well their desire for victory, which was perhaps due to the fact that to them as Greeks this attitude was such a matter of course that it meant to them no problem at all. Most creative spirits would lose all genuineness, and in the long run also every contact with their own deeper powers, if while creating they were consciously concerned with victory. How true this is, is proved by the hundreds of talents which in course of the last decades spasmodically pursued their creative work because of a single great achievement even though nothing new had attained maturity in them, and then completely degenerated. There is no such thing as ambition on the plane of the spirit. Characterized by numerous complex strata as man is, it is not unusual to find that many creative spirits have also been ambitious and that many instead of being hampered had been rather spurred on by it. But ambition can never be the motive of the spirit itself. In every personal case spirit is absolutely solitary, incomparable with, and without relation to, any collectivity, and concerned in the last analysis only with self-realization. A high culture can flower and thrive only when one's exclusive

¹ See the Chapter "Sorrow" of my work *South American Meditations* (English Edition: London, Jonathan Cape).

² The Greek idea of competitive struggle was entirely devoid of fairness and lacked all generosity towards the weak.

self-realization is recognized to be the highest motive.

The question of inter-relation between efficiency and creativeness is a factor of fundamental importance, and we shall have to deal with it a little more in detail. It has been already implicitly suggested by us that the principle of efficiency is not valid at all on the plane of the pure spirit. Every act of the spirit is of course also a proof of efficiency, and as such it may therefore be appraised in connection with others. But it can never be originated by an effort for achievements. And above all, no creation of the spirit acts true to spirit when considered as an achievement. True to spirit, it acts exclusively as pure spirit-born being, through the latter's unprejudiced and involuntary radiation, free of all intention. That is why every true creation of the spirit has originated without any consciousness of aim. This is true even in the creation of a state: nobody has ever founded a state, to whom the realization of his idea did not mean more than all material benefits to be attained. Even the creator of a state does not create, considered from the view-point of his personal psychology, out of the people nor for the people; he, too, creates solely and wholly out of the spirit in conformity with the laws of spirit, which are quite different from those ruling the forces of the earth. Secondly, there arises out of the activity of every creative spirit this self-evident result, since every person lives and acts within a particular collective to which he belongs with the impersonal parts of his being, that he expresses himself by means of the qualities of that collective and thus bestows on it a part of the perfection achieved in his personal life, on account of which peoples certainly have a right to be proud of the spiritually great ones among their sons. On the other hand, however, it is against the nature of things that the creative spirit, when creating, should think of what belongs to other planes of existence. The only universal symbol of the original attitude of spiritual man is that of the saint. Considered superficially, he would seem to live only for himself, and that in the greatest possible seclusion. But the fact of his mere existence, unconnected with any activity by imperative bonds, brings to the land of the people in which he lives more blessings than all external activity. Precisely the same was

of every poet or painter who has ever at all shown any worth.

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Under these circumstances it is clear that the community out of its own self can do only *one* thing for the genuine spirit: to procure and ensure such conditions of life as correspond to him. The more the community offers him the possibility of feeling himself fully free and to live absolutely without any purpose (in the worldly sense), and to strive after self-realization absolutely untrammelled and without any side-glance, the more does the community do for the spirit and mediate also for itself. It is an unassailable truth that if a Pegasus is once brought under the yoke, however mildly and for however short a time that might be, he loses the quality of a Pegasus. In ancient times this was understood better than today. That is why in religious epochs no army leader ever injured the saint and never demanded military service of the priest. That is why the princes of two states which were actually at war with each other and into whose sphere of operations Confucius with his disciples had by chance arrived, apologized to the sage by saying that due to the unusual circumstances they could not assure him that honourable existence which he obviously deserved. Thus it is that even Frederick the Great permitted absolute freedom of speech to Voltaire, and even in the Russia of Nicholas II Tolstoy was permitted to write what he wished. It is sure that the freedom from economic and political considerations, which is indispensable for the development of the spirit, can now be realized in much better form than ever before. Yet here the norm will have always to consist in a *minimum* of interference: the most important thing that a spiritual man requires to be creative is, as it has always been, feeling, and to be left in peace. Thus I am not at all sure that a generalization of what Maecenas stood for would be truly productive of good. What one may call "Maecenasizing" should indeed take place as soon as a spirit has reached its maturity and therewith begins the period of possible radiation. But it would be harmful to Maecenasize too many spirits, for in that way would be invariably originated a caste of pensioners of the state which is never desirable; and it would be truly a catastrophe if through premature assistance the growing were denied the advantage of

initial difficulties, of which, as is taught by all experience, they are in need, in order to mature in the best possible form. What applies to every man applies also to the spiritual creator, because he too is a man after all; goodwill can mobilize only a part of the inner forces: the deepest and strongest are awakened only by the impact of fate. The decisive consideration which speaks against an all-too-perfect tutoring of the spirit is however this: no body of critics or officials will ever be able to judge rightly new forms of life in the process of growth. Not even the true representatives of spirit belonging to an older generation will be able to judge it properly. On the other hand those who belong to the same generation are on principle without judgment, because they lack the necessary distance. It is in the nature of things that what is truly important should always be misjudged at first, and that particularly in its own land of origin. It is even in the nature of things that a genius should be all the more misunderstood the more there is organized effort for truer understanding. It has to be admitted once for all that man can "do" nothing in this matter; the utmost that can be done by the community for the spirit is to do away with as many discordant hindrances as possible from the path of its development and radiation. And the greatest hindrance of this kind has always been and will ever be non-recognition of the particular laws which rule spiritual life. The authentic incarnator of spirit stands as such fundamentally above all natural ties; he has to go his own peculiar way unmindful of what to public opinion it might appear to be at first. Expressed in the traditional way: truly spiritual man always stands in all essentials beyond good and evil, in so far as these concepts are understood in their social (in contradistinction to their metaphysical) aspect.

Now, there is no arguing with the spirit of the age. That has to live out its full course, and the untruth must get amortized, and if this process appears to be too slow, there is no other alternative but to look upon it as inescapable fatality. Only one consideration can bring solace and that is: according to the law of historical counterpoint,³ the final finding of what is right and true becomes all the more probable, the

³ See the lecture "History as a Tragedy" in *The Recovery of Truth*.

wider are the detours with which the beginning is made. On the other hand it is all the more important that the authentic incarnators of the spirit urged on by inner appeal should realize for themselves what polarity does in reality determine the course of history in spiritual and earthly life, and take their stand and act accordingly. For on this and this alone depends whether or not this turbulent intermediate period will eventually lead to a new and perhaps a higher culture than that of the past 19th century.

This theme is almost inexhaustible, for it is as wide as the world of men who participate in spiritual life. Here I want to deal with that aspect of it only which is defined by the activity through silence. It is one of the most monstrous misunderstandings which can be imagined to think that it is only movement which is of value and that it is only utterance which transmits the spirit. What is at a given time of more importance, doing or leaving, speech or silence, depends on the respective contents of the poles within man. Jesus could indeed truly say: "If I do not speak then even the stones will cry." It was in the age of preachers in the desert. It was indeed true to meaning in satiated and indolent pre-war Germany and in depressed and tired Germany immediately after the war to try and shake up the nation from the spirit and even be, under circumstances, like Menelaus, a "spiritor in battle." At that time, although in various forms, there ruled on the plane of non-spiritual life sloth and inertia. To-day however the great majority not only of the Germans but also of Russians, Italians, Poles, Spaniards, Turks, Greeks etc. have become converted to sonorous dynamism. All these nations have surrendered themselves to the spirit of unrest. It follows from it, however, that this dynamism is exercising less and less influence on the soul. Ever more do people take part in it mechanically, the deeper strata keep more and more aloof from month to month. Another result of this is, in consonance with the law of polarity, that even to-day only the still ones can exercise profound influence, for only they can radiate such forces which from the start are not deflected or mechanized, and which therefore can penetrate to the deepest depth. Thus it is that to-day, more than ever before, on the still ones has devolved the chief responsibility for the future.

By these still ones I certainly do not mean those who only oppose, who keep their mouth closed out of opportunism, and neither the cowards nor the static minds opposed to dynamic action, and not at all those who are tardy and slow out of conscious calculation. Inertia is and will always be the greatest sin against the holy spirit. By the still ones I mean only those who in the full realization of the particular quality of their Spirit and the non-identity of its laws with those of Blood and Earth, consider it to be the mission of their life to represent and stand for the principle of the Spirit in the extremest possible position of polarity and precisely owing to this make it take part in the historical process.

Why is polarization necessary? Because according to the eternal laws of life it is only polarization which can act creatively. This problem I have already dealt with in the fifth Chapter of my *Book of Personal Life*⁴ and particularly in the relevant portion of my *Art of Life*.⁵ Just as only the man can fecundate the woman, so it is with all true creative processes. The necessity of extremism in polarity has been explained by the thoughts expressed at the beginning of this article. In every region and on all planes there dominates the most extreme one-sidedness: under these circumstances spiritual man will only be able to act true to spirit if he uncompromisingly differentiates his own being into a separate entity. Through the same extremism on the other hand it is rendered possible for the spirit not to take an attitude of mere opposition to the positive strivings of the present age. In itself, the attitude of opposition of spirit to the terrestrial forces is always a misunderstanding, for the two belong to altogether different planes and dimensions of existence. But when spiritual and terrestrial forces co-operate with each other on a particular plane, as is the case in all periods of cultural perfection, then it can happen that a particular kind of opposition might be fruitful: in that case only definite incarnated forms of spirit are understood as spirit, and these may rightly fight with other incarnations. Today Spirit stands directly opposed to

Earth, and *vice versa*. There are no significant intermediate and mixed states. In these circumstances opposition against the spirit or against the earth is clearly a complete misunderstanding. In these circumstances there works also in the plane of historical phenomena that primary polarity between the two through which mutual fructification is rendered possible. Therefore if Spirit today solely and wholly concentrates on self and pays allegiance to self alone, then and then alone does it find a firm footing on that plane, on which such fruitful a co-operation with the terrestrial forces might be possible, as was perhaps never witnessed in history.

The specific form of this co-operation on the plane of the spirit is however silence. In this age of extreme external dynamism it can manifestly act only as a counterpoint; for more than ever before, the terrestrial forces today determine both melody and external harmony. Therefore for the true spirit today there can be no question of similar activity as in the case of dynamic external life. It is altogether a mistaken idea to wish to "co-operate" somewhere and "synchronize" elsewhere, for by so doing life is precisely robbed of its possible spiritual components. From this point of view it becomes particularly clear, in what sense and to what extent our age is not inimical to spirituality. Of course its current norms render spiritual activity difficult on the plane where it had been acting in the past centuries; but on the other hand they constellate the peculiar norms of the spirit and its particular modes of being with a force as was hardly ever in evidence in Europe. Thus it is that what is apparently inimical to the spirit really goes to fortify the best and the deepest spirit and draws it out into a deeper and more vital life, though in a new way.—But it is true, that the necessary contraposing has to be worked out more thoroughly than ever before, if it is to bring about what it can. This then brings us finally to the special problem of silence. At the session of the School of Wisdom in Sitges near Barcelona (Spain) I once delivered a discourse on "Rhythmical and Scansioned Silence": such silence meaning in all its aspects on principle the same thing as poetic articulation. Also a poem is distinguished from formless speech essentially in this that much in it is left unsaid, rhythm and metre constituting a positive not-being, which

⁴ Which so far exists only in German. It is not identical with *Problems of Personal Life* (London, Cape).

⁵ The original is in French, but an English edition has been published by Selwyn & Blount Limited, London.

negative is the means of expression proper to the special positives in the contents of poetry. Silence and waiting draw in and out while speech imposes the special meaning which man wants to convey, and impatience implies the demand that the free will or special tempo of the not-I should not be taken into consideration. Now spirit lives exclusively in the dimensions of free will and freely creative imagination. It is impossible to force it, for the result will be its weakening and in the long run total disappearance. There is not one single expression of substantial spirit which does not conform to those norms which made it impossible to the world saviour (Christ) to open the doors of heaven to the thief on the cross, who shut the doors of his soul before him. What is of foremost importance on this plane is not Truth or Right but Voluntariness. To do under pressure what is spiritually right or good furthers the spiritual life in man less than voluntary and independent erring and sinning. It is altogether impossible to compel the spirit for the good, or even to influence it in the slightest degree in that direction. The spirit can only be roused, by awakening its freedom through the right words. For that reason no spiritual guide was ever a dictator. It has never been his purpose to persuade. If he has convinced, he has done it only by setting free and making free; that is, by setting free the personal truth of others. For this reason it is even difficult to formulate fixed directions for spiritual development. For however justly these may be traced: in case they act in the very least in a compulsory way they ultimately mislead and enslave. Strictly speaking a lead in a positive sense can be given only in *one* way: in the way in which the poet canalizes his "sense" through rhythm and metre, so that other waters also can flow in the same direction following their own momentum. But all poetic expression consists more in leaving out and excluding than in utterance. Thus it is that all true spiritual activity corresponds more to the spirit of silence than to the spirit of speech. Thus it is that every speaker acts most by what he does not say, and the exhortation to read between the lines is only a minor special aspect of this. Thus there is nothing higher than suggestion in the sphere of the spirit, for as soon as a line of thought is fully carried out the possibility of free further thinking ceases, and there sets in therewith a soul-

killing mechanization. All this finds however its deepest *raison d'être* in the fact that spirit is essentially free, and that on'y primary respect for its freedom renders it transferable. Every compulsion is fated merely to let loose counter-movements, in which finally the whole of the existing free spirit is incorporated.

In an age of worldwide organization and reckless activity through suggestion it is clear that the living spirit more than ever before can act only through what even externally is neither organization nor suggestion. This is already evident everywhere: the dynamic awakening from outside is being met by ever-increasing obtuseness. The perennial energy which is postulated evokes increasing passivity. Spiritual activity thrives least where it is expected and demanded. Thus precisely the spirit which is destined to infuse with life the new forces of the Earth and therefore organically belongs to the world-revolution, can now be nourished only from another side than was hitherto attempted. This is the side of internal intensification, without any long perspective or side-glance at what is external and not-self with regard to the personal self. It is the side of conscious silence in the middle of clamorous publicity, the side of solitude as opposed to multitude, and the side of self-sufficiency against that of rivalry. Doubtless it is only a few who possess an inner right to the required attitude. But these few only are important. For as *their* attitude only is true to spirit in this age, it is only these few, however insignificant their number may be, on whom depends the whole spiritual destiny of our time. In the present world-constellation it is only they who can connect or link up the spirit as a force with historical events. What is still and silent alone even today already is exercising far-reaching influence, just as all that was light and strength in the Christian era was born in the catacombs, —and would have remained unborn but for them.

I consider it to be of cardinal importance to clearly formulate these truths. It is not being understood as yet that the claim of totalitarianism can be fulfilled only when it recognizes that the antithesis belongs to the thesis and thus is part and parcel of the whole. When a new form of expression is found for the original relation between the Cross and the Eagle, i.e., of what in the

Middle Ages used to be called the spiritual and the temporal weapons. For the two poles can on principle never be brought under *one* common denominator. But then nothing living can ever be brought under a general denominator or understood through it. In this age of mass activity the spiri-

tual destiny of all peoples which aspire to be people of culture, depends upon their understanding more clearly than ever before that unity in a positive sense is possible only above that sphere in which thesis and anti-thesis blindly struggle against each other.
