PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLII *FEBRUARY, 1937* No. 2

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SISTER NIVEDITA

Calcutta,

June 6, 1898

DEAR MRS. H.,

Yesterday was made very sad for us by a telegram towards noon announcing the death of Mr. Goodwin. I was the last who had seen him, he was so good to me that day at Madras, and his goodness was so utterly characteristic of him, the grief of the Hindus who knew him was evident and real. One comfort is that he died at Ootacamund, one of the most beautiful spots on earth, and not at that terrible Madras. But he died a martyr to work and climate, as surely as if it had been plague or typhoid fever that had killed him. There seems to have been no lack or defect in his service and devotion. It was full measure, pressed down, and running over, and the first place amongst the Indian era will be held by an Englishman. Incense and fiowers and beautiful music are the only offerings bright enough for such a life completed.

I am learning a great deal. To begin with, I have begun to acknowledge that Englishwomen are probably more spiritual than Englishmen, but Hindu men are far and away beyond them; that there is a certain definite quality that may be called spirituality; that it is worth having; that the soul may long for God as the heart for human love; that nothing I have ever called nobility and unselfishness was anything but the most feeble and most sordid of qualities compared to the fierce white light of real selflessness. It is strange that it has taken so long to make me see these elementary truths clearly. And at present I see no more. I cannot yet throw any of my past experience of human life

and human relationships overboard. Yet I can see that the Saints fight hard to do so, can they be altogether wrong? At present I am just groping in the dark, asking an opinion here and there and sifting evidence. Some day I hope to have first-hand knowledge, and to give it to others with full security of truth. One thing seems very clear, that psychic and spirit are two utterly different things. I feel, as if the whole realm of the psychic might be at one's command any time and utterly undeniable, and it seems possible to do all these things from the higher standpoint, safely and happily, if he who has realized God finds any reason to will one condition of things rather than another. . . . . .

I am so happy, no words can tell you.

NIVEDITA

A PEEP INTO CONTEMPORARY INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

BY THE EDITOR

I

It is said that the most momentous social phenomenon of our times is the mingling of East and West. If this be true, it would not be too much to say that Indian philosophy has played a great part in effecting a better mutual understanding between the whole mind of East and West. The contribution of India to the philosophical literature of the world has roused a novel interest in speculative philosophy both in Europe and America since the seventies of the nineteenth century. In this connection we place before our readers some of the noteworthy observations made by Professor J. H. Muirhead, general editor of the Library of Philosophy in the Foreword to the recently published volume,* a running survey of which we shall make in the following paragraphs: "For the last sixty years, since Max Müller began the publication of the Sacred Books of the East in 1875, the great scroll of its story has been gradually unrolling itself before their eyes. Within the last few years comprehensive and scholarly histories of Indian philosophy in all its many schools by Professor Das Gupta and Sir S. Radhakrishnan and many monographs and handbooks by less-known writers have been published both in India and in England. Even the slightest acquaintance with these sources is sufficient to convince the reader of the justice of the claims put forward on their behalf, (*Indian Philosophy*, S. Radhakrishnan, Vol. 1, p. 8.) that 'there is hardly any height of spiritual insight or rational philosophy attained in the world that has not its parallel in the vast stretch that lies between the early Vedic seers and the modern Naiyâyikas', who with their analytic and critical methods may be said to stand to the Vedânta in somewhat the same relation as Kant and his followers stand to the great neo-Platonic and Patristic tradition of the West.

"While we may thus well be convinced that Indian thought in the past represents a chapter in the history of the human mind that is full of vital mean-

* *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*. Edited by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead. Published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 375. Price 16s. net.

ing for us and well fitted by its profound sense of a Spiritual Presence brooding over the world of our ordinary experience to wean us from too exclusive occupation either with secular life or with the temporary formulations, in which Western theology has too often sought to imprison religious aspiration, it may still be asked whether in India itself all this exists to-day as a mere tradition or has formed the soil and supplied the seed for fresh developments. It was in the conviction that in present-day philophy there is more than a tradition, and that, owing partly to the inherent genius of the race, partly to a fructifying contact with Western thought, the tree of philosophical knowledge has recently put forth fresh flower and fruit that the idea of this volume as a continuation of the series on Contemporary British and Contemporary American Philosophy, when suggested by an Indian friend, was welcomed by the Editor of the Library of Philosophy."

The volume has in it the contributions by writers representative of Indian thought as Gandhi, Tagore, Swami Abhedananda, Radhakrishnan, Dasgupta, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and others. The essays found therein are all written by philosophers of or about forty-five years of age. They can be divided into two main groups, namely, those in which the writer devotes himself chiefly to the exposition of the great Vedic tradition as he has apprehended it and made it the basis of his own life's work; and those in which the writer has sought to give new interpretations of it, either by making comparisons of it with the Western doctrines allied to it or by treating of modern problems in a way suggested by what he has learned from the West. As it has been rightly pointed out by the general editor, what strikes one is the lively sense of their practical value, contrary to what is generally thought of the remoteness from practice of Indian philosophy. The tone of optimism that prevails in all the contributions and the spirit of tolerance that breathes in their teachings are the two conspicuous features, quite contradictory to the popular views of superficial readers and shallow critics of Indian philosophy.

Since philosophy without religion becomes dry atheism and religion without philosophy runs into superstition, the pioneers of Indian philosophy stressed the practical bearing of philosophy on the problems of life. The modern philosophers of India, whose philosophic view-points the present volume deals with, have more or less followed in the footsteps of their great and ancient predecessors. In order that a general reader may find out a certain background behind the philosophy a particular writer stands for, some little biographical details have been added to it. This has enhanced the value of the book and will undoubtedly leave some impressions of concrete life on the mind of a reader. Because it is not the amount of philosophy and its excellence alone that exercise their beneficent influences on others, but also the background of life which lies behind the philosophy. The former sways the intellect of man, the latter touches his soul.

II.

In the very beginning of the volume we come across a very brief statement of Gandhi's philosophy of life, *e.g.*, his religion, how he is led to it, and what its bearing is on social life. Gandhi frankly confesses that his religion is Hinduism which, for him, is Religion of humanity and includes the best of all the religions known to him. He is being led to his religion through Truth

and Non-violence. Instead of saying God is Truth he says of late that Truth is God, in order to define his religion more fully. The reason he gives for such a change of statement is that denial of God men have known but no denial of Truth. All souls are, according to him, sparks of Truth. God is the sum total of all these sparks. He says that he is being daily led nearer to God by constant prayer. The bearing of the religion he professes has to be seen in a man's daily social contact. So, one must gradually lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life. He believes in the unity of all life, hence social service is, to him, indispensable and should be practised in every department of life.

Tagore terms his religion the religion of an artist or a poet's religion. All that he feels about it is from vision and not from knowledge. He confesses that he cannot satisfactorily answer questions about the problem of evil, or about what happens after death. And yet, as he says, he is sure that there have come moments when his soul has touched the infinite and has become intensely conscious of it through the illumination of joy.

The world is, to Tagore, the play of the Supreme Person revelling in image-making. If a man tries to find out the ingredients of the image, they elude him, they never reveal to him the eternal secret of appearance. "In your effort to capture life as expressed in living tissue, you will find carbon, nitrogen and many other things utterly unlike life, but never life itself. The appearance does not offer any commentary of itself through its material. You may call it *Mâyâ* and pretend to disbelieve it, but the great artist, the *Mâyâvin*, is not hurt. For art is *Mâyâ*, it has no other explanation but that it seems to be what it is. It never tries to conceal its evasiveness, it mocks even its own definition and plays the game of hide-and-seek through its constant flight in changes." The ultimate difference between one object and another is only that of rhythm in the different metres of their situation and circumstance. Behind the scene is present the Artist of rhythm, who imparts an appearance of substance to the unsubstantial. This rhythm, he defines, is the movement generated and regulated by harmonious restriction and is the creative force in the hand of the Artist.

God accepts the limits of His own law, and His play, the world, goes on. The reality of the world lies in its relation to God. The fact that we exist has its truth in the fact that everything else does exist. The *I am* in a man crosses its finitude whenever it deeply realizes itself in the *Thou art*. In this crossing of the limit lies joy, the joy men have in beauty, in love, in greatness. Finally, Tagore proclaims his faith in the everlasting yes and which he terms the faith of an artist in the following way: "I believe that the vision of Paradise is to be seen in the sunlight and the green of the earth, in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human life, even in objects that are seemingly insignificant and unprepossessing. Everywhere in this earth the spirit of Paradise is awake and sending forth its voice. It reaches our inner ear without our knowing it. It tunes our harp of life which sends our aspiration in music beyond the finite, not only in prayers and hopes, but also in temples which are flames of fire in stone, in pictures which are dreams made everlasting, in the dance which is ecstatic meditation in the still centre of movement."

Swami Abhedananda gives us the religion of Vedânta which is also the time-honoured philosophy of India. Of all religions and philosophies, he lays

the greatest emphasis on it because it embraces all the religions and philosophies of the world by accepting their ultimate conclusions, and by classifying them according to their order of merit. To him, the monistic phase of Vedânta is the most sublime of all, as in it lie the solution of the deepest problems of science, philosophy and metaphysics and the final goal of all religions. His outlook on philosophy and religion has been influenced and moulded by his personal contact with Sri Ramakrishna. "In him," observes the Swami, "I found the embodiment of the Absolute Truth of the highest philosophy, as well as of the Universal Religion which underlies all sectarian religions of the world, and became his humble disciple." In another place, he confesses: "From Sri Ramakrishna I learnt that 'Dwaita,' or Dualistic philosophy, leads to the Visista-Advaita philosophy of Râmânuja in search after the Ultimate Truth of the universe, which is one and the absolute (Brahman); and that the search after Truth ends in the realisation of the oneness of the *Jîva* (individual soul), Jagat (World), Isvara (God) in Brahman as taught in the Advaita philosophy of Vedânta; and that they are the different steps in the path of the realisation of the absolute Truth or Brahman."

Prof. K. C. Bhattacharyya presents to the reader an explication of the concept of philosophy which appears to him more important than the discussion of any specific problem of philosophy. The possibility of philosophy as a body of knowledge distinct from science is nowadays called in question, so he indicates his general position by stating wherein he differs from the Kantian view of the subject. He observes: "With regard to the knowability of the self as a metaphysical entity, Kant holds that the self is a necessity of thought and is the object of moral faith, but is not in itself knowable. My position is, on the one hand, that the self is unthinkable and on the other that while actually it is not known and is only an object of faith, though not necessarily only of moral faith, we have to admit the possibility of knowing it without *thinking*, there being a demand, alternative with other spiritual demands, to realise such knowledge." He then elucidates his own interpretation of the entire epistemological question of the meaning of thought and knowledge. He distinguishes four forms or grades of thought, namely, empirical thought, pure objective thought, spiritual thought, and transcendental thought. Then he shows how these forms of theoretic consciousness lead to the three grades of philosophy, e.g., philosophy of the object, philosophy of the subject, and philosophy of truth. He draws a line of demarcation between the philosophy of the object and science. His philosophy of truth may be summarized in his own words: "In religion, there can be no theoretic denial of the subject *I*. In worship, indeed, the subject abnegates itself but the abnegation is there an affair of enjoyed being and not of theory. There is, however, a theoretic consciousness of 'I am nought', of the possibility at any rate of the subject or the individual self being unreal. The denial of the *I* is possible because we already believe that the absolute is. The absolute is not the same as the over-personal reality that is enjoyed in religion. It means what the subject *I* is not, but the reality of religious experience while it is enjoyed and symbolised by *I* does not mean such theoretic negation of *I*. What is called the absolute is a positively believed entity that is only negatively understood. It is an entity that cannot be understood as it is believed, and is speakable only by way

of symbolism. Reality as apprehended in religion is indeed symbolised by *I*, but so far as it is expressed as a self, it is expressed literally. The positive character of the absolute, however, is expressible only by the negation of *I* (or more accurately by 'what I am not') and as such is not literally expressible at all. If then we say that the absolute *is*, we mean by *is* not reality but truth. Reality is enjoyed but truth is not. The consciousness of truth as what is believed in but not understood either in the objective or in the subjective attitude, as not literally speakable at all but speakable only in the purely symbolistic way, is extra-religious or transcendental consciousness."

Prof. G. C. Chatterji advocates common-sense empiricism in his essay written in the volume. He believes that experience is not only the starting-point of philosophy, but in a certain sense is also the criterion and touchstone of every philosophy. "By experience here and elsewhere," observes he, "I mean the actual concrete experience of some finite individual or subject of experience and primarily the philosopher's own and not some Absolute or Universal experience, to the assumption of which he may be led from an analysis and examination of his own experience or by some abstract process of logical construction. Even if such an absolute experience is posited by Philosophy, it is my contention that the starting-point for such an hypothesis is the philosopher's own experience, and the test and criterion of its validity is again his own immediate experience." While explaining at length the nature of experience he speaks of, he confesses that he is neither a subjective nor an objective idealist. He believes that Reality does not consist solely of one's own experience, because his experience itself is sufficient warrant for the belief that there are other realities besides itself. Then he makes it clear that his denial of idealism must not be interpreted as implying any adherence to the doctrine of materialism, because, as he says, "I believe that experience reveals to me in Perception that external nature exists, but that the very variety and richness of this experience also implies a plurality of attributes in objects of nature, which cannot be reduced either to my own ideas or to those of some other mind or minds, nor merely to qualitatively simple atoms behaving in accordance with simple mechanical laws."

To Prof. Chatterji, philosophy is essentially theoretic activity and it is human need and human interest which set the problems which philosophy must attempt to solve, but any consideration of the nature of need or interest, and of what will most satisfy that need, has no bearing upon the actual solution of its problems. Consistently with the philosophy of common-sense empiricism the professor contends that experience brings him in contact with three phases of objective reality, namely, external Nature, other Minds, and Values. He urges that our knowledge of these is the problem of special sciences, which themselves are incomplete, and that their interpretation and synthesis, which is the special task of philosophy must itself be tentative and progressive. By religion, he means the attitude which the individual adopts with regard to the ultimate reality of which he conceives himself to be a part, and with which he is related in all respects of his being, be they cognitive, conative or affective. To him, the objects of philosophy and religion are the same, philosophy gives the theory of Reality while religion responds totally to the same Reality.

Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy writes on the pertinence of philosophy. He

contends that philosophy implies rather the love of wisdom than the love of knowledge. Philosophy is to him a wisdom about knowledge. He defines religion in the sense that it "proceeds from the being in act (*Kâryâvasthâ*) of the First Principle, without regard to its being in potentiality (*Kâranâvasthâ*); while metaphysics treats of the Supreme Identity as an indisseverable unity of potentiality and act, darkness and light, holding that these can also and must also be considered apart when we attempt to understand their operation in identity in It or Him. And so religion assumes an aspect of duality, *viz.* when it postulates a 'primary matter', 'potentiality' or 'non-being' far removed from the actuality of God, and does not take account of the principal presence of this 'primary matter' in, or rather 'of' the First, as its 'nature'."

According to him, religions may and must be many as there are knowers of diverse temperaments. God takes the forms that are imagined by His worshippers and this is why religious beliefs have united men as much as they have divided them. The task of the philosopher should be to control and revise the principles of comparative religion, the true end of which science should be to demonstrate the common metaphysical basis of all religions and the fact that different cultures are fundamentally related to one another. Dr. Coomaraswamy then examines how different kinds of wisdom have considered immortality. "The pertinence of philosophy to the problem of immortality is evident," says he, "inasmuch as wisdom is primarily concerned with immaterial things, and it is evident that material things are not immortal as such (in *esse per se*), nor even from one moment to another, but are continually in flux, and this is undeniable, regardless of whether there may or may not be in such perpetually becoming things some immortal principle. Or to regard the matter from another angle, we may say that whatever, if anything, there may be immortal in phenomenal things must have been so since time began, for to speak of an immortal principle as having become mortal is the same thing as to say it was always mortal." After discussing the problem of immortality from various authoritative sources, the learned doctor arrives at the conclusion that what metaphysics understands by immortality and by eternity implies and demands of every man a total and uncompromising denial of himself and a final mortification, to be dead and buried in the Godhead. And this is what he understands to be the final purport of the First Philosophy.

Dr. Bhagavan Das systematizes his philosophy in the name of Âtma-vidyâ, or the science of the Self. He briefly states his faith as follows: "He is a believer in (1) infinitely countless individual selves or souls; (2) their rebirths, evolution and involution, in and through evolving and involving, integrating and disintegrating, forming and dissolving, material bodies and surroundings; the passing of each self, through all possible experiences, in infinite time, space and motion; in (3) cycles and circles of time and space on all possible scales of duration and extent, in which the processes of rhythmic evolution and involution manifest themselves; in (4) One all-including, all-pervading, ever-complete, timeless, spaceless, Universal Soul or Spirit or Self, which is Absolute and Changeless, which is also identical with and includes within It-self all the countless individual selves, and whose eternally changeless, and yet also ever-changing, Ideation the entire world-process of all souls and bodies is." The reasons for this faith

have been briefly expounded in his paper. According to him, the science of the Self or metaphysical psychology as interpreted by him can help the orderly conduct of the individual life within the social life, and bring material as well as spiritual happiness within the reach of all.

III

Prof. Surendranath Dasgupta in his paper strongly advocates his philosophy of dependent emergence. To sum up in his own words the conclusions he arrives at after a long survey of various problems in philosophical speculations : "The true God is not the God as the architect of the universe, nor the God who tides over our economic difficulties or panders to our vanity by fulfilling our wishes, but it is the God who emerges within in and through our value-sense, pulling us up in and through the emergent ideals and with whom I may feel myself to be united in the deepest bonds of love. The dominance of value in all its forms pre-supposes love, for it is the love for the ideal that leads us to forget our biological encumbrances. Love is to be distinguished from passion by the fact that while the latter is initiated biologically, the former is initiated from a devotedness to the ideal. When a consuming love of this description is once generated, man is raised to Godhood and God to man." According to him, love is the fundamental non-biological relationship which can cement together in a common goal of higher relationship all minds of the past, present and the future. It is only possible if the apperception of value as a self-emergent purpose of the mind-life reigns supreme.

Dr. Hiralal Haldar writes in favour of realistic idealism. According to him, what is real is also ideal and the genuinely ideal must be real. For, as he says, a purely spiritual or psychical world is as much a fiction as a purely material world. The Absolute mind is one but it is not a monadic unity. In it the minds of the things that constitute the world are fused into a single whole or, what is the same thing viewed from the other end, it is pluralised in them. The universal mind is immanent in all things as their inner soul. Finite minds seek to be the infinite that they potentially are. Because, he observes, "The Infinite immanent in them goads them on and does not allow them to rest. Even the shoe-maker wants sovereignty over the whole universe. But self-realisation is not possible in isolation. Only in fellowship and co-operation with one another can human beings move forward towards the goal of life. In their ordinary lines and achievements as finite beings in time they are seldom aware of their greatness, but sooner or later they are bound to be conscious of their true nature, to be united with the source of their being in knowledge and love. God is not without man and man is not without God. The Divine spirit manifested in the community of men and the community of men rooted in the Divine spirit, God in man and man in God—this whole is the Absolute Spirit."

Prof. M. Hiriyanna discusses the problem of truth in his paper. The very notion of relative truth suggests to him the recognition of an absolute standard by which all knowledge is judged and men have to accept such a standard in order to avoid universal scepticism. It is necessary to further define truth, if it should be absolute. "This can be done," says he, "by bringing in the idea of comprehensiveness, when the systematic coherence which is our definition of truth will be perfect." The absolute truth is the goal of epistemology and is entirely impersonal. The

experience of such truth is possible only through a proper development of intuitive power when "there will be nothing that is not immediately known and that no part of what is so known will appear as external."

Sir S. Radhakrishnan dwells at length upon the spirit in man. The spirit in man is life and resists death in all its forms. The life of spirit consists in being free from codes and customs, flesh and blood, and in penetrating into true being. True religion is that which is born of spirit. Dogmas and rites are only the means for bringing about that elevation of the soul which can dispense with them all. To bestow a sacred character on racial traditions is to give a false turn to the life of the spirit. Intellectualism refuses to see the superbeing of God and denies the mystery of religion. It encourages the hardness of belief in rigid definitions and outward forms of the historical process. He observes: "Creative power of the spirit has not yet been seen in its widest scope. It has not yet achieved its full stature. Civilisation is in its infancy, and religion yet in the making. Human progress is to be defined as the process by which society is transformed increasingly in a spiritual way. The world is unfinished and it is the task of religion to go forward with the task of refining it."

Prof. R. D. Ranade traces the evolution of his own thought in his contribution. He confesses that although a perfected system of philosophy he has not been able to make till now, yet he would take certain portions from his own writings to show what line a completely systematized philosophy would take for him. He started with a Pluralistic conception of Spiritual Reality. Then one can see how he thought that a correlation between Indian and European Philosophy was not only possible but necessary in the interest of the development of Philosophy in general; how he sympathized with the doctrine that Relativism failed at God; how he regarded Truth to be One, and its existence to be only in God, while all other things were full of error; how the ontological strain of thought interested him; how he thought that a place must be made for motion and change even within a static philosophy; how Self-consciousness was not only possible, but alone real; how there were ethical and mystical sides to the problem of Self-realization; how intuition was the only faculty by which this Self-realization could be attained; and how, finally, mystical experience had no meaning apart from moral development. These were the problems which affected his thought till 1928. Within recent years since then, he says that a new intellectual vista has been opened out before him and he will place it in future before the philosophical world.

V. Subrahmanya Iyer offers in the volume an Indian view of man's interest in philosophy. According to him, Philosophy is Knowledge that rises above creed and scripture, vision and ecstasy, art and science, its sole object being a complete realization of all that life implies. This is one of the lessons he learnt from his teacher, the late Sri Sacchidânanda Sivâbhinava Narasimha Bhârati Swami of Sringeri. He observes: "Progress in Philosophy does not mean in India the attainment of new concepts of ultimate truth, but the starting, as knowledge advances, at higher levels and the finding of less difficult approaches, if possible, to the *same* peak of *Tattvam*. Lastly, in India the philosopher seeks 'That knowledge which, if attained, makes everything known.' Philosophy is, therefore, not only the 'Science of Sciences' and the 'Art of Arts', but also, as the Indian

philosopher holds, the 'Truth of truth', the 'End of all knowledge'. But this end means also the fulfilment of the purpose of life; for, to him nothing remains unknown, and nothing remains unattained in life. Philosophy in India, therefore, does not subscribe to Fichte's view that 'The kind of philosophy that a man chooses depends upon the kind of man that he is'. This idea of philosophy is *matam*; for it is *matam* that so varies, not *tattvam*." He raises a fundamental issue, e.g., whether knowledge is a means or an end or both in life. He contends that if knowledge be only a means to the attainment of some reality other than knowledge itself, there is no way of ascertaining whether knowledge reveals this beyond all possibility of doubt.

He gives certain conditions which Indian philosophy lays down for the attainment of ultimate truth: (1) To know that there is something more than appearances for one to seek; (2) To eliminate all personal predilections or preconceptions regarding the object of, enquiry; (3) To possess calmness self-restraint and patience, concentration, and an absence of religious bias; (4) To possess the supreme determination to eradicate all doubts and their possibilities and all causes of error and all ignorance. He stresses that the touchstone of philosophy lies in life and not in any intellectual solution of problems.

Prof. A. R. Wadia advocates in his paper pragmatic idealism. "Philosophy as a human pursuit ought to be no barren speculation but an illuminating vision of truth which inevitably prompts to self-culture and social service." This is the cardinal doctrine of his philosophy as summed up by a pupil and a colleague of his and the truth of this statement is fully corroborated by the philosopher.

IV

The essays, interesting and thought-provoking as they are, are more or less based on the Upanishadic ideal, "showing how free and expansive and how capable of accommodating within itself all forms of truth that ideal is." Some of these philosophers of contemporary India have *in toto* reproduced the wisdom of the Upanishadic seers, whereas others have sought to give modern interpretations. Even in the writings which deal with the doctrines of Western philosophy we find that they are very much influenced and coloured by the thoughts of the Vedic seers. Any way, these modern philosophers of India have done full justice to the great legacy that they have inherited from the Rishis of old. The editors of the volume have done a great thing by publishing it and their objects have been crowned with considerable success.

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

At the Belur Math, 19th May, 1913

Question. The other day you said that nothing is gained by restlessness,—that nothing whatever avails until the time arrives. Should one then give up the yearning for realizing God?

Answer. I might have said that in a different context. Restlessness means being fidgety for a day or two under stress of emotion, weeping, and the outward expression of inner feelings. That sort of thing disappears in a day or two, and then one turns away completely from that course in despair and exhaustion.

It is very injurious to give vent to one's inward emotions. That lessens the intensity of devotion. Radhaballabh Goswami, a disciple of Sri Rup Goswami, was one day dancing being overpowered with emotion in the course of worship. Thereupon Sri Rup Goswami forsook him remarking, "You have neglected the service of Lord for the sake of your own self." When Sri Radha appeared to Sri Rup Goswami in a dream and asked him to take back his disciple, Sri Rup Goswami replied, "You are a milkman's daughter. What will you understand of it? Through the grace of the Master I. have learnt how to chastise my disciple." He did not listen to Râdhâ's words even. It won't do in such a case to be beside oneself with joy by quoting the example of Chaitanya Deva. For the last twelve years he lived almost like a mad man. No embodied being is able to endure even a particle of his joy or pang of separation.

Question. Master used to say that if one digs for a well once here and next there one gets water nowhere; one must stick to the same spot. Is that also true for spiritual practice?

Answer. Yes, one must have exactly that steadfastness. If genuine devotion makes any one restless for realizing God then he can never be forgetful of Him even though that does not make him find Him. He goes on calling on Him without flinching even though he does not realize Him in a million incarnations. Man cannot call on God genuinely, for he harbours the idea of barter within him. That is why he despairs if he does not find Him after invoking Him for a little while.

At the Belur Math, December, 1915

Maharaj. Like the current of a river the average man's mind is always flowing downwards—towards lust and gold, name and fame. That tide has to be diverted. The mental flow has to be made constantly Godward. Master's mind always dwelt on the Turiya (the fourth or the super-conscious) plane, he had to drag his mind down forcibly to the world. When he was doing spiritual practices at Panchavati, his mind always dwelt on that plane. Whenever it came down a little anybody who happened to be near thrust into his mouth a mouthful of rice. In this way they used to feed him forcibly perhaps seven to eight mouthfuls of rice in a day.

Always remember Him and take His name. Once such remembrance has grown into a constant habit, one immediately gets absorbed on sitting for meditation; and deeper the meditation, the more is the joy within. Lust and gold will then be felt as truly insipid. One must, therefore, give up absolutely

idle talk and vain thought. Useless thought dissipates strength. The *Upanishads* say, "Give up other thoughts." Always meditate on the Self—this is the way to Liberation. Ramprasad said, "When you lie down think you are prostrating yourself, in sleep imagine yourself as meditating on the Mother. And when you go round the city think that you are walking round the Mother Shyama." The *Gitâ* has also said, "Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me." This is the means of realizing God. Master used to say, "One should never dissipate one's mental energy." That is, one must remember Him and take His name. What an amount of care worldly people take so that money is not spent uselessly; but they are never aware how they are dissipating their mind!

ETERNAL LIFE

(Diary Leaves)

By Prof. Nicholas de Roerich

In his book, "Fear in the face of death in primitive religion", George Fraser brings in the wise words of the Omaha tribe about death: "No one can avoid death, and no one must fear death, since it is unavoidable." Likewise the ancient Mayans calmly said, "I go to rest." If we remember the words of Socrates before his departure, before draining the cup of poison, or the thoughts of Plato about death and even Epicurus, not to speak of the lofty attitude towards this act in the teachings of India, we see the same reasoned wise consciousness about death as about alteration of existence. We see the same consciousness of eternal life which is so clearly enjoined by the sacred Covenants.

Meanwhile, in the confused minds of the West, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries, when negation laid its dark path, we see a sort of animal terror in the face of the natural change of existence. Even recently this could be written about, as the intellectual de Sevigné expressed herself: "Death is so fearful, that I hate life more for the reason that it leads to death, rather than for the thorns with which the path of life is sown." The idea of death poisoned life for Alphonse Daudet, Zola, Goncourt, Maupassant and other apparently fearless and broad thinkers.

At the same time among people living close to nature, the word death is not generally employed. They say "he has departed" or "he has passed away", that he is terminated for this expression of existence. People in contact with nature are in contact with the basic teachings of truth: people, being made natural thinkers, likewise naturally understand the significance of change of being. Fear of death it would seem could arise only in malefactors who darken their consciousness with crimes and intentional wrongdoing. It is fully understood that each traitor fears such a striking change of existence. Indeed within himself he entirely understands that he is being plunged not into non-existence but into some other form of existence. If in his present existence he has overburdened his heart with quantities of dark purposes and actions, then indeed he does not know if it will be easy for him in some conditions un-

known to him. Doing unworthy deeds yesterday, man tries to avoid responsibility for them. Such terror at the unavoidable passage into the unknown world is fully understood by people who have darkened their earthly existence with heinous deeds either material or mental. Surely it is not necessary to repeat again, that thought will be even more potent than word or muscular movement.

Does it not seem strange that, along with criminal beings, certain apparently broad thinkers have also fallen into animal terror before a change of existence? One would like to know if they easily changed their earthly homes. Perhaps too on the earth some of them were not easily moved about. It is well-known that some people believe that they can create and think only in their long occupied domestic environment. Each unusual surrounding already hinders them in expressions of their creativeness. But surely it would seem that precisely diverse impressions and unforeseen experiences and dangers must sharpen thinking, resourcefulness, and boldness. According to courageousness you can form an opinion about many other qualities of a man. But of course courage is tested not by sitting by the stove, but there where conflict is encountered with the elements, with darkness, and with all ignorance.

Each one has had occasion to see people who at the tranquil dinner table employed the boldest speech, but when found face to face with those dangers about which they just now were speaking so bombastically, they showed themselves in a completely different light. Probably if one speaks with these people about death they will generally say, why speak about such terrible subjects. This means that they doubt in the goal-fittedness of the universe, with all the strikingly inspiring changes of existence. Apparently they have heard enough about the fact that everything is found to be in motion. It would seem that the newest discoveries would demonstrate sufficiently the fullness of space, and for all that they are frightened at such a significant and solemn passage into a world new for them. Even for trivial earthly journeys they will make their spiritual wills, not only because they are exceptionally solicitous of someone, but also because by them this act is thought of inseparably with the fear of death.

People, not religious, during thought about death, hasten away from the completion of rituals. When, in their opinion, the danger has passed, they are the first to relate a blasphemous anecdote. In a recent issue of the magazine, *Twentieth Century*, Professor A. R. Badya, among some very interesting opinions about the idcas and realities of the twentieth century, says: "The world is losing the sense of religious values. In its revolt against petrified beliefs and meaningless ceremonies, it falls into the danger of casting out the child along with the bath water. In its suspicion of religions, it is made blind to the meaning and significance of Religion." Thus correctly, the professor judges who is very well-read and is referring carefully to the higher values. In reality, to use the current saying, already many children have been poured out with the bath water. But of course among these lightminded outpourings, humanity has cast out precisely that which could strengthen it in creativeness both mental and material.

He who knows about eternal life by that very fact knows also his joyous responsibility for each action, mental and muscular. In prayers is introduced this great significance of the words "eternal life". He who thinks upon this, understands that life is always

multiform, both in the horizontal and vertical sense. Even according to primary physical laws he understands that each minute everything is altered and never arrives again at the former state. In this movement is contained the greatest creative generosity. And how joyful and beneficent the obligation, to participate according to one's strength in this all-inclusive creativeness!

Rousseau observes: "He who affirms that he meets death calmly and without fear is simply a liar." Why the great writer Rousseau took it upon himself to speak for all humanity is that he himself must be afraid of death. Indeed, this act goes beyond the limits of commonplaceness. Therefore it must be met with a special heart-tranquility. This consciousness will be indeed far from the so-called calmness before the taking of daily food or any everyday action. But precisely in a particular inspired tranquility of the great change of existence will be a very real magnanimity which always goes together with wisdom.

The Apostle said clearly and briefly: "We do not die, but are changed." Here in a few words is contained the attestation of eternal life. And you remember the words of the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* about the invisibly, unchangeableness and eternity of Being. In all ages, in all the ends of the world has eternal life been solemnly and triumphantly confirmed. It means there must have been some unnatural violent frightenings to lead humanity into such an ignorant understanding of the act of change of existence. At the same time people begin to speak about life on other planets about which only recently even notable astronomers merely shrugged their shoulders. We remember, how for such affirmations Flamarion was threatened with loss of scientific standing and with being placed in the class of amateurs. But already now the better scientific authorities refer far more cautiously to such recognitions of eternal life.

Indeed such a basic concept may be perceived only in affirmation. Each ignorant doubt imposes on this clear affirmation well-nigh incurable cleavages. It is deplorable to see, when intelligent thinkers fear death and with that infect the ignorant masses. Why are they not imbued with that luminous knowledge which composed the most ancient wisdom, confirmed by the best thinkers of all ages? In accordance with the best you too arrive at the best.

A WESTERN CRITIC OF INDIAN THOUGHT

By Prof. Sheo Narayan Lal Shrivastava, M.A.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer's new work* is singularly remarkable for the lucidity and candidness with which it presents what an average Westerner honestly feels about the nature and value of Indian Thought. The work may, therefore, well be regarded as a representative declaration; and this, I think, is its chief value. Dr. Schweitzer attempts to give us a genetic account of the growth and evolution of Indian Thought since the time of the Rig-Vedic Hymns down to the day of Ram Mohan Roy,

* *Indian Thought and its Development.* By Albert Schweitzer. Translated by Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell. *Published by Hodder and Strowghton Ltd., London. Pp. 272. Price Rs. 5/- net.*

Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Dayananda, Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Gandhi.

The distinctive characteristic of Indian thought according to Schweitzer is "world and life-negation" which consists in man's "regarding existence as he experiences it in himself and as it is developed in the world as something meaningless and sorrowful, and he resolves accordingly (*a*) to bring life to a standstill in himself by mortifying his will-to-live, and (*b*) to renounce all activity which aims at improvement of the conditions of life in this world. . . . . World and life-negation takes no interest in the world, but regards man's life on earth either merely as a stage-play in which it is his duty to participate, or only as a puzzling pilgrimage through the land of Time to his home in Eternity." (p. 1-2). In contrast to this Western thought is characterized by "world and life-affirmation" which consists in this : ". . . that man regards existence as he experiences it in himself and as it has developed in the world as something of value *per se* and accordingly strives to let it reach perfection in himself, whilst within his own sphere of influence he endeavours to preserve and to further it. . . . . 'World and life-affirmation' unceasingly urges men to serve their fellows, society, the nation, mankind, and indeed all that lives, with their utmost will and in lively hope of realisable progress." (p. 1-2).

Dr. Schweitzer however is not oblivious of the presence of world and life-affirming principles in Indian thought and of the presence of world and life-negating principles in Western thought; but the distinctive feature of each, he thinks, lies in the predominance of one over the other : "Both in Indian and in European thought world and life-affirmation and world and life negation are found side by side : but in Indian thought the latter is the predominant principle and in European the former," (p. 6). World and life-negation, according to the author, is the very breath of Upanishadic mystical philosophy which envisages as the final destiny of man the complete submergence of his individual soul into the Universal Soul, and holds that this consummation is to be brought about by self-suppression and the renunciation of the world. The Sâmkhya, though describing the final destiny of man in terms other than the union of the individual with the Universal Soul (viz. independence of the immaterial Purusha from the material Prakriti), holds common ground with Upanishadic thought in world and life negation. Jainism and Buddhism are also described as "vigorous elemental movements of world and life-negation which had their origin in the fact that men were troubled at heart about the problem of liberation from continuous reincarnation." (p. 75). The Ahimsâ commandment, which figures so prominently in Jainism, originated according to the author, not "from a feeling of compassion, but from the idea of keeping undefiled from the world. It belongs originally to the ethic of becoming more perfect, not to the ethic of action. It was for his own sake, not from a fellow-feeling for other beings, that the pious Indian of those ancient days endeavoured very strictly to carry out the principle of non-activity in his relations to living creatures." (p. 80). The author accuses both Jainism and Buddhism of not insisting upon active love and sympathetic service to men and living beings, but rather seeking deliverance from world and life; and so the ethic of both Buddhism and Jainism remains incomplete. In fact, Dr. Schweitzer nowhere finds a satisfactory ethics in the domain of Indian thought. The Upanishadic mystical philosophy according to him strikes a "supra-

ethical" note. The Buddhistic ethic is altogether an "ethic of thoughts" which has no room for "action" in it. The Buddha, says Dr. Schweitzer "passes by the elementary problem whether ethics can really be limited to non-activity, or whether they must not also enter the domain of action, as if he were smitten with blindness." (p. 109). Dr. Schweitzer puts a very ingenious interpretation upon Buddha's insistence on "right action" as meaning only "avoidance of evil." He makes the marvellous research that in the ethics which the Buddha lays down for the laity there is "not a word of the aid due to the suffering in their need" !

A turning point is however reached in Mahâyâna Buddhism. The Bodhisattva prays, not for his individual redemption, but for the alleviation of the misery of all living creatures in this world as well as in other worlds. He desires not Nirvâna, but to be born again and again into this world to work for the redemption of the world. "For the first time in the thought of mankind, world-view is dominated by the idea of compassion. But this mighty compassion could not develop and exercise its full influence in a natural way. Like the original Buddhism, Mahâyâna Buddhism too is imprisoned in world and life-negation. So that like the former it can really only give its approval to non-activity. Like the former too, it cannot attribute any real importance to the help which goes to alleviate material distress. And like the former again, the only effective act of compassion it can recognise is the diffusion of the knowledge that redemption will be won by denial of the will-to-live. . . . Fundamentally it is nothing other than the compassion in thought which the Buddha made a duty for his monks, only it is raised beyond all bounds." (p. 125-26).

The theoretic basis of this all-consuming compassion in Mahâyâna Buddhism is, according to Dr. Schweitzer's conjecture—for I can only call it a conjecture —is the Buddhistic doctrine of the falsity of the *ego*. All *egos* being alike appearances, there is no boundary line between my *ego* and other *egos;* and this, Dr. Schweitzer thinks is a wrong premise for any ethics of love and compassion. "True ethics presume the absolute difference of one's own *ego* and those of others and accentuate it." (p. 131). Well, does the patriot or the martyr *accentuate* his *ego?* Does the lover *accentuate* his difference from his beloved? Surely, love and compassion argue for *oneness* and not for "absolute difference". In the intensity of love and compassion, we become *aware*, as it were, of our fundamental oneness with other beings and realize the utter *seemingness* of our differences.

The word "Hinduism" acquires with the author a quaint meaning. The application of the word is confined by him to the cult of Bhakti as distinguished from the Upanishadic lore which is described by him as "Brahmanic mysticism". One wonders what the reasons could be for narrowing down like this the applicability of the word Hinduism !

Coming to the *Bhagawad-Gitâ*, the author makes a curious observation. The *Gitâ* according to him "is occupied not only with the general problem of the justification of action, but in addition with the special problem of the admissibility of non-ethical action." (p. 184). I do not think Dr. Schweitzer would find a second man in the world who would agree with him that the *Gitâ* also sanctions a "non-ethical" action. On the other hand the Gitâ makes an eloquent plea to realize the true ethical import of a seemingly non-ethical action, and rise to the occasion accordingly.

An action, that would otherwise be non-ethical, becomes ethical in the highest degree, if it purports to end social wrong and unrighteousness and makes for a better social order. It is on this ground that Sri Krishna exhorts the despondent Arjuna to prepare himself heroically for war even against his own kinsmen. This does not mean that the *Gitâ* sanctions *a non-ethical action as such.*

After dwelling at some length on the emphasis laid on activism by the *Bhagawad-Gitâ*, the author passes on to consider some recent developments in Indian thought brought about by Ram Mohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen, Dayananda Saraswati, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and Sri Aurobindo Ghose. Like every "good" Christian Dr. Schweitzer believes that the note of activism in the thought of these men is "due to the fact that they had become acquainted with, and influenced by, modern European world and life affirmation and the Christian ethic of love." (P. 209). But unlike many others he is candid enough to add that "this stimulus from without only set in motion a process of development which had already begun independently."

Apropos of Swami Vivekananda the author writes: "For us people of the West the great spiritual and ethical personality of Vivekananda is rendered difficult to understand by what appears to us his boundless self-consciousness and by the hard, unjust and contradictory judgments in which he allowed himself to indulge." (p. 221). Dr. Schweitzer contents himself with passing this remark without caring to mention what those 'hard, unjust and contradictory judgments' are! Well, from the glowing tributes which Vivekananda received from many an eminent man in the West, it is manifestly impossible to believe that Dr. Schweitzer is voicing the opinion of the West. Dr. Schweitzer may, but the West *does not*, think of Vivekananda, this way.

The leaders of modern Indian thought, the author tells us—"professed certain opinions without systematically thinking out and defining the world-view which corresponds with those opinions. . . . . they fail to realise that by their profession of the ethic of love in action they cut themselves loose from world and life negation. They think they can give Brahmanic mysticism a fresh interpretation in an ethical and life-affirming sense, just as if a piece of music written in the minor could be changed into the major key. . . . . It is partly because they live under the influence of the auhority of tradition that they are satisfied with compromise instead of really getting to the bottom of the problems of world-view. They do not like to confess to themselves that they are the representatives of intuitions and convictions which had not yet found expression when the Upanishads and other sacred books were composed. So that is why they endeavour to find their ideas in the ancient texts. But the only way they can succeed in this is by using all their skill in reading meanings into them which are not really there. The sufferings of the New Testament at the hands of its interpreters are certainly not trifling. But the sufferings of the Vedic hymns and the Upanishads are far, far worse." (Pp. 228-25).

The thought of Mahatma Gandhi who "wants to change the economic conditions that are at the root of poverty" is according to our author "just like that of a Modern European." (As if none but a European wants to better the economic conditions of his country!) The same European inspiration he is anxious to make out in Rabindranath Tagore: "It is a weakness in Tagore

that he tries to proclaim his world and life-affirming ethical mysticism as ancient Indian wisdom. He will not admit that Indian thought has gone through a process of development. . . . . Tagore gets the evidence that his ethical world and life affirmation is contained in the Vedic writings by setting forth certain world and life-affirming sentences of the *Upanishads* in such a way that they describe God as the loving creator of a Universe filled with wonderful harmony and tell of the joyous self-devotion of man to Him and to his work. He does not allow their due to the powerful passages of the Upanishads which describe the Brahman as pure Being without any qualities and treat of union with Him in renunciation of the world and in non-activity." (Pp. 241-42)

In the last chapter, the author makes a clumsy attempt to set in contrast the Indian and the Western modes of thinking. I say 'clumsy' for Dr. Schweitzer indulges in palpably contradictory statements. In one place we find him saying, "Western thought *is not* governed like mystical thought by the idea that the one thing needful is the spiritual union of man with Infinite Being" (p. 253); and at the very next page complacently declaring that "in Western thought there *is* mysticism of a similar nature to and no less valuable than the mysticism in Indian thought." (*Italics mine*). Why this swinging in a seasaw? For, the author is unwilling to admit that Western thought is lacking anything which Indian thought possesses.

In concluding the book, the author talks of two kinds of mysticism, "the one kind resulting from the assumption that the world-spirit and the spirit of man are identical, and the other of ethical origin." This latter kind of mysticism is styled by him "ethical mysticism." From the very meagre explanation given, it is hard to make out what the author means by this new kind of mysticism which, in his opinion, should replace the mysticism of identity. So far as I have understood him, the author seems to mean by 'ethical mysticism' experiencing union with the world-spirit "in the devotion of service to other life" (i.e. other living beings). If this is all that ethical mysticism is, it is nothing new. It is already there in Indian thought. *The Bhagawad-Gitâ* says, "Rishis, their sins destroyed, their spell of dualities removed, their selves controlled, *engaged in the welfare of all living beings*, obtain the Peace of the Eternal." (G. 5. 25).

That man *can* attain the Goal through action is emphatically and unequivocally declared by the *Bhagawad-Gitâ*: "By performing action without attachment, man verily reacheth the Supreme." (G. 3. 19). "Janaka and others indeed attained to perfection by action; then *having an eye to the welfare of the world also*, thou shouldst perform action." (G. 3. 20). Dr. Schweitzer seems to think that Indian thought insists on non-activity as the *sine qua non* of spiritual redemption. The hollowness of this position could no better have been refuted than in the vigorous words of the *Gitâ*: "Man attains not action-lessness by withdrawl from activity; nor by mere non-activity does he rise to perfection." (G. 3. 4).

Dr. Schweitzer complains about the lack of humanistic ethics in the sacred writings of ancient India, that is, the *Samhitâs*, *Brâhmanas* and the *Upanishads*. I should like to draw his attention to the illuminating article on "Ethics in Brâhmanical Literature," contributed by Prof. M. Winternitz to the *Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Number* of *Prabuddha Bharata* issued in February, 1936. In the course of this article Prof. Winternitz observes: "The Upanishads are far more concerned with

metaphysical doctrines than with ethics. For the ethics of Brahmanism we should turn to the *Smriti*, the Great Epic and the law-books, rather than to the *Sruti* (Samhitâs, Brâhmanas and Upanishads)." "However" he tells us, "it would be wrong to think that moral teaching is entirely absent in the Veda." He makes pertinent mention of *Rita* in the Rik-Samhitas, which means the moral order of the Universe. The worshipper of Varuna prays: "If we have done any wrong to a play-fellow or a brother, or friend, or comrade, to the neighbour *or a stranger*, O Varuna, remove from us the guilt." (*Rigveda* 5, 85, 7). Regarding the obligations of man to his fellow-men, Prof. Winternitz draws pointed attention to a hymn in the *Rigveda* where it is said of a rich man who does not give from his wealth to the poor that "He eats alone, and he alone is guilty." (Rv. 10. 117). I do not think any one who has even a cursory acquiantance with the Hindu ways of life and thinking, needs to be informed of the Hindu ideals of generosity to the guests and the needy. The *Mahâ-Bhârata* teems with luminous stories and anecdotes in this connection. The '*Atithi*' whom the Hindu is taught to respect as God Himself does not mean only 'guest' in the European sense, but any needy person who comes to our doors. The inclusion of *Nriyajña* in the *Pancha-Mahâ-yajñas* brings out clearly the realisation of man's indebtedness to his society or fellowmen. The *Bhagawad-Gitâ* puts forth an eloquent plea for every man doing his *Swadharma* which means nothing but the sum of duties and obligations, which is due to a man towards his society by virtue of his particular station in the social order. Of course, one's *Swadharma* was determined, in the age of the Gitâ, by the caste to which he belonged; but the system of caste, howsoever degenerate and defunct it may be today, was meant by its originators for the upkeep and solidarity of society. By assigning separate functions to different classes of society, the institution of caste was intended to be conducive to efficiency and specialization and to avoid confusion and competition. Each caste was to stick to its assigned function for the upkeep of the social whole. Such a scheme undoubtedly has its evil consequences owing to its over-simplicity and disregard of *individual* endowments, but it *did aim at* social stability and welfare. It is for us now to retain the spirit and change the form.

So, the presence of humanistic and activistic ethics cannot be denied in Indian thought.

But Dr. Schweizer's misgivings have taken deeper roots: How could such ethics be reconciled with the view of 'world and life-negation' which according to him is the key-note in the symphony of Indian thought? Is Indian thought world and life-negating? Well, Dr. Schweitzer *does* confess that there are world and life-affirming passages in the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*, and so it is unnecessary for us to cite such passages here. Have the Hindus always regarded existence as "meaningless and sorrowful" and have they attempted "to bring life to a standstill?" Then how could India produce such exquisite art and literature, music and sculpture? And how could India become the motherland of so many positive sciences? Surely, the history of India does not testify to "life-negation" being the essential characterstic of the Hindu outlook.

It appears to me that what lends plausibility to the view that Indian thought is world and life-negating is the Vedântic doctrine of the 'unreality' of the world. The world is Mâyâ and

Brahman is the sole Reality. It is the inadequate understanding of this that is the fruitful source of many a mistake. It is here that European students of Indian thought fumble and go astray. If we want to be fair in our appreciation of Indian thought, we should be very clear on this point.

It is often forgotten that the world is 'unreal' according to Vedânta in a relativistic sense, that is, judged by the criterion of Absolute Reality. The absolutely Real is self-luminous and self-evidencing, immutable and foundational; the external world of our sense-experience is not self-evidencing but evidenced to the consciousness that knows it, is a mass of uninterrupted mutations and has a dependent reality. The Absolute is *unconditioned* and self-complete *at every point of its being;* the world and everything therein is *conditioned* by space, time, and causation. Consequently, Vedânta refuses to ascribe *as much* reality to the world as to the Absolute. The world is *less* real than the Absolute, but not on that account the baseless fabric of a vision and a dream. It is not illusion or hallucination in the ordinary sense.

Samkara distinguishes four orders of reality *prâtibhâsika* (the merely illusory), *swâpnika* (the dream world), *vyâvahârika* (the standing reality of waking experience), and the *pâramârthika* (the Absolute Reality of intuitional experience). He accords a higher reality to the *vyâvahârika jagat* than the *prâtibhâsika* or the *swâpnika* but a lesser reality to it than the *pâramârthika*. The world is 'unreal' only at the level of highest intuitional experience (*paramârtha-dristi*) and not at the level of *our* rational experience. Intuitional experience gives us the Real *per se*, the Real in its original unity, homogeneity and self-completeness; rational experience gives us the Real as cast into the space-time-causation mould and thereby split up into a manifold of separatized, conditioned existents. So long as we are at the rational level of experience, we cannot treat the world simply as a fancy of the mind, but will have to regard it as an order of *external* reality with Brahman as its *Âsraya* or support. This is the standpoint of Samkara, the most illustrious expositor of the Vedânta. He was far from being a subjectivist or a mentalist. A student of Samkara will recall to his mind his strong polemic against the mentalistic idealism (*vijñâna-vâda*) of the Baudhas. When the *Upanishads* speak of the One abiding Real and the absence of the manifold, (Dr. Schweitzer should remember) they are speaking from the giddy heights of *parmârtha-dristi* and *not negating the world at the rational level of our waking experience.* So a sweeping condemnation of Indian thought as world and life-negating is as unjust as it is false.

There is nothing in Indian thought *properly understood* to support Dr. Schweitzer's thesis; nor it is borne out by positive historical facts pertaining to the ages during which the source-books of Indian thought were written or compiled. The modern historical researches like those of the Mohenjo Daro Excavation and the Greater Indian Society should be an eye-opener to those who have the hardihood to hazard an opinion on the Indian out-look on life. The inadequate understanding of the Mâyâ doctrine and the popular *vulgarization* of it is often at the root of a faulty criticism of Indian thought. Nor is there any justification for connecting the present-day social wrongs in the Indian life to the religious or philosophical thought of India. Who could say that Indian thought *justifies* untouchability in the face of such passages as: "Sages look equally

on a Brâhmana adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and one who eats dog's flesh[1]?" (G. 5. 18). The truth is that everywhere under the sun, there are wide differences between principles and practices. Hatred between man and man is by no means a crime confined to India. George Bernard Shaw when asked at Bombay what he thought of the untouchables of India, gave the pertinent reply: "I have enough of them in my own country." If India has caste prejudices, the West has colour prejudices and race prejudices. Evil has no geographical boundaries.

In closing, I shall say a word about the alleged "supra-ethical" character of Indian thought. About the same kind of confusion exhibits itself here as that which we found to underlie the Mâyâ doctrine. The *Upanishads* unequivocally declare that moral perfectibility is the very *sine qua non* of reaching the Goal (Self-realization) and that nothing will avail without it. The *Katha-Upanishad* (2. 24) says: "Not he who has not turned away from evil conduct, not he who is not tranquil, not he who is not concentrated, not he whose mind is not at peace, can obtain Him (the Self) even by knowledge." Ethics counts foremost in the Vedântic culture and that is why the late Prof. Max Müller remarked that ethics is in the beginning, the middle, and the end of the Vedântic system. The Buddha gave all his emphasis on the ethical transformation of life and considered metaphysical wrangling to be of no avail.

[1] The original word is *swapâka* which literally means "one who cooks (for food) dog's flesh". Sometimes this word is translated as 'outcaste' which does not appear to me to be a correct rendering.

But there is a difference between the man who has not reached the goal and is on the way to it, and the man who has reached the goal or realized his identity with the transcendental Self. The former is one who is still within the domain of causation and therefore subject also to moral causation (i.e., the effects of good and evil deeds), and the latter is installed in *transcendental freedom* and therefore above all causation. Karma or causation has no hold over him (*Kshîyantê châsya karmâni*). In this sense he is beyond good and evil. He has passed from the sphere of moral *struggle* to that of transcendental quiescence. As sailing along the current one reaches beyond it, so also taking the line of moral perfectibility man goes beyond the moral struggle and realizes his *eternal* freedom. This is what the *Upanishads* teach. There is nothing in all this to suggest that morality is useless or can be done away with.

One thing more and I shall have done. India will always be grateful to the West for what she has learnt from it and gained from her contact with it. But we can only deplore the tendency to explain everything good in modern Indian life and thought by saying that it is due to the influence of Western thought or Christianity. I believe it will strike as bizarre to every reader of Dr. Schweitzer's book that Tagore's "doctrine of Soul-in-all-things is no longer that of the Upanishads, but that of a mode of thought under the influence of modern natural science." (P. 248). I wonder if modern natural science gives us any inkling of a "Soul-in-all-things!" But, then, how else should a critic *discover* the influence of Western thought on Indian?

THE INNER DYARCHY

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Philosophy is the science of sciences and deals with the whole of human experience while they deal with fractions thereof. It unifies them and shows the larger unity of which they form interrelated parts. But in recent times it became a highborn science of sciences and parted company with religion. From that date its downfall began. Hegel said: "Philosophy is not a wisdom of the world but cognition of the non-worldly. . . . Thus Religion and Philosophy coincide." But it is just this coincidence that was broken by recent Western philosophy with disastrous results. Philosophy in the West has not only broken with religion but is mocking Hinduism for not effecting a divorce between philosophy and religion in India.

Is it right to say that philosophy and religion have or should have different aims and that "the salvation of the soul is the end of religion while the discovery of truth is the object of philosophy." As Goethe says, we must know the Truth and the Truth will make us free. Sir S. Radhakrishnan says that religion is dogmatic, is a product of poetry and fancy, and appeals to symbols, while philosophy is critical, logical, and conceptional. This again is looking at both from a wrong angle of vision. Both adopt a critical as well as constructive method. Both need the aid of imagination which is of the essence of poetry and yet know that their values are different from the values of poetry. Both need the aid of logic and reason as well as of faith.

If at all there is an element of difference between them, it is that the revealed religions take their stand on one or another revelation whereas Philosophy stands on its own legs. But Religion which is a sense of the infinite in the finite cannot be radically different from Philosophy which is a search for the infinite in the finite. Both call to their aid Reason and Intuition. But while Religion stresses Intuition rather than Reason, Philosophy stresses Reason rather than Intuition. Religion is the dynamic movement of the entire mind including understanding and will and emotion and intuition. Philosophy is the critical forward movement of the intellect alone to construct and present a self-consistent view of reality based on the entirety of human experience including therein both subjective as well as objective experience. Philosophy is a theory of pure being but it is a flower that must ripen into the fruit of the realization of being in religion. Philosophy is the prose of thought, and religion, as Newman urges, is the poetry of thought. We want a religious philosophy and a philosophical religion.

In the West the absence of a belief in the doctrine of Karma has made philosophy irreligious and religion unphilosophical. It is easy to cry down the doctrine of Karma as fatalism. But how can doing be fatalism? Fatalism is non-doing. The doctrine of Karma has at least as much reference to the present and the future Karma as to the past Karma. If we have been floating down the current, we can swim

up the current. But what has happened in the West in recent times? H. G. Wells talks about a finite God wrestling with evil like ourselves. This God is a growing God—a God of becoming. Dr. Mc Taggert says that if there be a God he must be a non-omnipotent, non-creative God, wrestling with evil with different degrees of success and failure. This is much worse than the old theory of God and Satan or of Ormuzd and Ahriman, because then there was at least no doubt about the omniscience and omnipotence and omnicreativeness of God. James thinks that 'God himself may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity.'' This a distillation from our democratic ideas which gauge the strength of a political party from the number of votes cast for it! We are thus in the heyday of the philosophy of becoming, the philosophy of utilitarianism, the philosophy of struggle.

FRAY JUAN DE LOS ANGELES AND HIS WRITINGS

By Wolfram H. Koch

In that path of Bhakti which India would call 'Madhura Bhâva' the two outstanding examples in Spanish Mysticism are St. John of the Cross and Juan de los Angles. They both followed and taught something very much akin to the Indian conception of the highest form of Bhakti, taking God as their Beloved and Husband,—a path that is generally less stressed and encouraged in Western Mysticism that the other one which India would call 'Dâsya Bhâva', where the aspirant takes the attitude of the servant towards his Lord and Master. Both St. John of the Cross as well as Juan de los Angeles knew its inherent dangers for all who had not yet become purified of the dross of earthly loves and succeeded in getting rid of their body-consciousness, and both being expert psychologists took great care in showing the many pitfalls on this way to Divine Union, and warning the aspirant of the greatest dangers. Both possessed that particular fire and impetuosity of the Southerner of which scarcely a trace is to be found in the writings of their German brothers, and which produced such wonderfully intense and glowing works as 'The Living Flame of Love' and 'The Ascent of Mount Carmel', and also the lurid glare of the stake and the Great Inquisitor bent in perfect sincerity of conviction on saving heretic souls from eternal damnation by punishing them and making them suffer in time. These mystics wished to be inebriated with the love of God, to become entranced by the unspeakable charm and beauty of their Dear One, and to lose all worldly desires and lower affections by being filled with that one and supreme desire for their Beloved and its consummation in the union with Him.

The realizations and aspirations of these Western mystics, it is true, still belong to the plane of subject-object relations and consciousness, not to that of the ultimate mergence in the One as is the case in the highest Vedântic Samâdhi. They would probably not have cared overmuch for that even, preferring 'tasting sugar to becoming sugar' in that very intense and out-and-out personal feeling of theirs so strong in all Westerners. There is no doubt, however, that the attainment of such a

state of communion with the Divine as theirs, although maintaining the subject-object relation, is already something very sublime and only given to few people at any time.

It is to be greatly regretted that in modern days many extremely coarse and materialistic interpretations have been given to their raptures of Divine Love and states of ecstasies, so that their writings have almost lost their value and deeper meaning for the average reader who looks upon them with derision, and sometimes even with a feeling very much akin to disgust. Speaking of the wonderful relation between Sri Krishna and the Gopis, Swami Vivekananda once said, " . . . that most marvellous passage of his life, the most difficult to understand, and which none ought to attempt to understand until he has become perfectly chaste and pure, that most marvellous expansion of love, allegorised and expressed in that beautiful play at Brindaban, which none can understand but he who has become mad with, and drunk deep of, the cup of love." And what holds good in the case of the Gopis of Brindaban and their passionate love for Sri Krishna, holds good, in its own way, in the case of these mystics and their raptures of love also. We should be very chary of overhasty criticism and first analyse our own minds carefully to find out if the impurities attributed to them are not really ours, hindering us to understand the real purport and meaning of their love.

Little is known of the life of Juan de los Angeles. As a true follower of St. Francis he was as self-effacing as possible although many honours and high offices were thrust on him. Juan Martinez, as he was called before becoming a monk, was probably born in the village of La Corchuela near Oropesa in the bishopric of Avila in the year 1536. Nothing definite is known of his studies and education before he became a Franciscan. He may have taken his Matriculation at Alcala at the age of seventeen. Apparently his parents had great hopes in him, wishing him to become the support of his. family by following an ecclesiastical career, but Juanite was not a plant that could ever take root in the world with all its distractions and inconstancy. The only thing he thought of, even at that age, seems to have been how to rid himself of the temptations and dangers of worldly existence and how to find a safe haven from where he might help also others in the difficulties and troubles of their lives. So he decided to enter the Order of the Minorites that had grown in strength and lustre through the unceasing efforts of St. John of the Cross, his compatriot and contemporary.

It is not known where he passed his novitiate, but probably he did so in San Miguel de Plasencia. It is also unknown at what age Juan Martinez became a monk, what he did during the first years, where he studied, which lecturers explained to him the intricacies of the philosophies in which he became so well grounded, how many years he dedicated to purely scholastic tasks and in what monasteries he stayed. It is supposed that he became a monk before the year 1572, taking the name of Juan de los Angeles (John of the Angeles), because he has given us some intimate reminiscences of San Pedro de Alcantara who died in that year.

He is known to have written verse before beginning any of those prose works which were to become the foundation-stones of his fame. It was always his favourite occupation to note down, whenever he could, whatever tended to elevate the soul and to make it move towards true devotion, whatever helped in breaking some worldly illusion or brought about some deep and last-

ing disillusionment regarding worldly matters and relations.

While still young he became famous as a conventual preacher and as a lecturer in theology. For some years he filled a provincial post, then he went to Sevilla and Lisbon, became a Superior, left for France and Italy for the meeting of the General Chapter of the Franciscans which was to be held on the eve of Whitsuntide 1599. He visited the sanctuaries of Rome, Assisi, the monastery of our Lady at Loretto and the most famous cities of France and Italy, the General Chapter having been postponed until the eve of Whitsuntide 1600.

By his travels his knowledge of the world was greatly enriched, and his desire to serve God and all human souls thereby all the more increased after his return to Spain. In 1601 he was elected Provincial Minister. He then became the confessor of and preacher to Empress Mary of Austria and Philip II as well as that of the Carmelite nuns at Madrid. These honours roused the jealousy of some fellow-monks, and even if it is true that the effects of their blame and censure did not go so far as to have him imprisoned as they did in the case of Fray Luis de Leon, nor so far as to keep him all his life secluded in some out-of-the-way corner as in the case of Fray Diego de Estella, the injury done to him was grave and unjust.

Juan de los Angeles possessed exceptional literary gifts with which he combined great humility and a heart overflowing with love. The honours that were continually bestowed on him by the members of the imperial family in the later years of his life in no way succeeded in undermining his simplicity, true Franciscan poverty and extreme humbleness of spirit. There is a charming little story that tells us of his father's coming to hear one of his sermons preached before the sovereigns and attended by the whole court. One day, it is said, while Juan de los Angeles was preaching to an illustrious and aristocratic audience listening spellbound to the wealth of lucid ideas and the beauty of his language, a man in ragged peasant's clothes entered the church. On seeing him, the preacher at once stopped his sermon and said from the pulpit, "Gentlemen, this good old man you see coming here is my father; be pleased to make room for him, for he comes to hear me."

Small and simple as this little story is, it is highly typical of Juan de los Angeles. He was no hollow weaver of words or self-conscious actor in the pulpit, but he succeeded in making people love the truth he taught in his sermons for the very reason that what he preached rose up from the very depths of his heart and was given with infinite kindness, sweetness and power of persuasion. So one of his countrymen, Juan de Molina, said of him, "He preached the Gospel of God with living words and the heart of an apostle."

The straightforwardness and sincerity of his character made him an enemy of all empty flowery words and descriptions. When the book of one of his brethren was attacked for the poverty and dryness of its style, he wrote full of indignation, "What is the use of dressing the teachings in the garb of smooth and polished words? They will say, 'To please the ear, to satisfy the intellect, to draw the will and, moreover, to present Truth with greater sweetness to the heart; for what is simple and plain easily wearies and annoys and therefore is of less benefit.' But judged by this standard the Scriptures do not merit the appreciation they enjoy because of the plainness with which the Holy Ghost dictated them.

If I say this, I do not mean to condemn what is wellcomposed, wellordered, and said and written harmoniously. Well-seasoned and well-cooked dishes stimulate and give appetite even to those who have overeaten themselves and are hauseated. No, I am but blaming the vicious exaggeration that centres all the studies and efforts of the preacher on the words and not on the substance of things."

Being himself a man of strong poetic feeling, he made use of many a telling image and simile, and did not despise them when put in the right place and manner, as can be seen from the following passages.

Telling the story of the Virgin's visit to Her cousin, Fray Juan very poetically describes Her journey as the first holy procession of Christ and says,—

"O ! the fair splendour of these blessed hills bathed in the effulgent light of the Sun of Justice, Christ, enclosed in that sovereign and transparent lantern of the Virginal Womb ! The trees and bushes bowed low in awe and reverence while the monstrance of the Divine Sacrament passed by. But, alas ! Holy Virgin, this did not free Thee from the weariness of the journey, nor did God wish to spare Thee this travail, in order that Thou mightest become the advocate of all that are tired, and mightest pray for them. . . . ."

And somewhere else he says,

"What reasonable man is there, tell me, who, on hearing a harp being played sweetly, does not realize that some musician of great skill and cleverness is playing it, and that it of itself does not produce such perfect music and harmony ?

"For if thou wouldst but listen attentively to the finely attuned harmony that all creatures produce amongst themselves, thou wilt realize them to be the most sweetly tuned strings of the harp of the universe and thou shouldst know that there is a Supreme Player, infinitely wise, infinitely mighty and of infinite goodness. The heavens sing and tell of the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims who He is. Day is the tongue speaking of His Divine Greatness, and Night calls us to contemplation of Him. . . ."

All such passages are typical of Juan de los Angeles as an artist with a great talent for vivid poetic expression. These mystics of the Golden Age of the Spanish language always knew how to combine this genius for literary expression with the purely mystical side of their natures, but Juan de los Angeles almost excels them all in sweetness and harmony.

He died 73 years old in the convent of the 'Royal Discalced' (Descalzas Reales) in Madrid in the year 1609.

Coming to his writings, we shall first take up his 'Triumphs of the Love of God' and 'Dialogues on the Conquest of the Spiritual and Secret Kingdom of God'. He himself calls this work most useful and beneficial for all kinds of persons, especially for such as desire to unite themselves to God through contemplation. By 'contemplation' was generally understood a state higher than that of meditation, or as Fray Diego de Estella puts it in his *Treatise on the Vanity of the World* : "He who has meditation thinks of God with an effort and with difficulty, whereas he who has contemplation, having practised more, has created the habit and now thinks of the same Lord with greater facility and sweetness."

In the preface to the *Triumphs* Juan de los Angeles says, "A further reason (i.e. for writing this treatise), and one that to me does not seem of small importance, was my seeing that every good and treasure of man and all his riches is love—if it be good ; and his

perdition and misery—if it be bad. For good love makes him virtuous, and bad love vicious. This being the case, it clearly follows that virtue is nothing but good love, and vice but bad love. From this I conclude that he who possesses the true science of love possesses the science of all good and evil of man, of all his vices and virtues, of his happiness as well as of his perdition, and he who ignores this must make himself ignorant of all manner of good and evil that concerns man. My intent was strengthened further-more by seeing the common opinion of all wise men to be that, without love, there naturally is no happiness, and that love must needs precede happiness and open the way for it, being, as it were, its very beginning. And if this be true, which it is, it is only reasonable to stress love, so that with it, and with naught else, every good teaching be begun. . . . ."

"Charity is faith when we believe, hope when we have confidence, strength when we are victorious, forbearance when we suffer adversity without a murmur, compassion when we take pity on our fellow-man, generosity when we give alms, humility when we humble our vain understanding, justice when we give everybody what is his without prejudicing anyone. In short, Charity is all virtues and makes all the works of the others its very own. What is there that Charity cannot accomplish? What can it not dare? What can it not vanquish? What can it not grasp? Of all strong things the strongest is Love. Of all sweet and mild things the sweetest and mildest is Love. Everything serves Charity. Everything pays its tribute to Charity. Everything recognizes its vassalage to Charity. Charity holds all offices. It is not only the queen of all virtues, but also of all the gifts of God, the greatest. Were God to give me everything He possesses, denying me Charity, He would deny Himself, for He can be possessed and enjoyed only through love, and the possession of love is God Himself. Thus love makes God become mine and makes Him my possession and heritage. If I have all things but be wanting in Charity, God is neither my own, nor can I enjoy Him, for all enjoyment of Him and Love are one. . . . ."

Thus Juan de los Angeles would gladly give up all other virtues: wisdom, chastity, purity, humility, forbearance, all of them, if he be only permitted to keep Charity and hold on to Charity which he considers to be the greatest and sublimest of all, and of which all others are but the servants and handmaidens doing their work through it alone. For him the greatest grace of God is to grant the aspirant the gift of real unconditional devotion and Divine Love, without which communion and union with Him cannot be enjoyed.

In many places of the introduction he paints the effects and raptures of this Divine Love in glowing colours, always starting from and coming back to the same point, viz. that Love is the greatest of all Divine Graces, greater than any other virtue or deed, and the best, or as he says, 'the only' means of attaining true union with the Divine.

So he says, "First I thought of entitling this book 'The Way of the Heart' (Via Afectiva), for in it is shown how the soul, when well purified and dried of the moisture of sins, through penitence and mortification, and well illumined through the practice of meditation, has to walk along the path of loving and inflamed desires to meet the kiss of her Spouse and the closest and sweetest embraces of her God. But intending not to repel readers by this exquisite and little known title, as they might think it less promising (the subject

being too lofty to be communicated and taught), and so as not to make them avoid reading and having it, I resolved to give it the following title: 'Triumphs of the Love of God' (Triunfos del amor de Dios). And, really speaking it is a duel and a wrestling of Love in which God wrestles with the soul, and the soul with God, and in which they alternately wound themselves, imprison themselves, and make themselves fall into a swoon and die. The soul melts away, becomes inebriated, goes out of herself, transforms herself into her Spouse, and makes herself one with Him, which is what is principally required. This path is called by St. Denis 'Mystic Theology' which is the same as Secret Wisdom through which real knowledge of all sciences is gained. . . ."

And he goes on to say, "Through this unitive wisdom of Love, Charity is inflamed, kindled and perfected, for God, being a consuming fire, expels and banishes all coldness from the traveller approaching Him through the expansion of Love more intimately and longing for union with him, . . ."

"The intimacy of the soul is its simplest essence, stamped with the image of God. Certain of the saints have called it 'the centre', others 'intimacy', other the 'apex of the spirit', others 'mind', St. Augustine the Great and the most modern writers speak of it as the soul's 'depth', because it is the most interior and secret place of all, where no images of created things may enter, but only, as has been said, that of the Creator. The deepest hush and the deepest silence are here, for no form of created thing can reach this centre, and in respect of it we are godlike or divine,—so like, indeed, to God Himself that wisdom calls us gods. This empty, void, and formless state of intimacy is raised above all created things, above all feelings and powers of the soul; it transcends all time and place, and the soul remains in perpetual union and unity with God Who is its beginning. . . ."

And somewhere else, speaking of the waters of life, he says, "Didst thou drink but one drop thou wouldst no longer thirst after vain things nor after creatures which pass away, but rather after God alone and His love, in which the more thou dost grow the greater will be thy progress in Divine Union; and the closer thy union with God and the deeper thy absorption in Him, the more clearly wilt thou know Him, and knowing Him, with the greater ardour love Him. This is the aim of all our practices and labours. . . . ."

"Three things make a man indrawn and spiritual: The first is a mind empty of all pictures; the second spiritual wisdom in love; the third to feel the inner union with God. From these everyone believing or dreaming himself to be spiritual (for in many this must but be a dream) can see whether he be so in reality. He who desires to hold his mind empty of pictures or idle imaginations should know that he is not permitted to possess any thing of this world with inordinate love, nor to attach himself to any creature with a voluntary inclination and affection, nor to hold familiar converse, for all intercourse and love, the real cause of which is not God, infect and taint the mind of man with pictures and imaginations that have their origin and beginning from the flesh and not from God. For this reason I admonish thee (if really thou desirest to be a spiritual man) to give a letter of separation to all lustful love, so that, in this manner, thou mayest attach thyself to God alone, possessing and enjoying Him solely and wholly. And be assured that by the

very fact of thy doing so sincerely and truthfully, all idle pictures and all inordinate love for creatures shall be thrown out of thy mind and banished therefrom, the very possession of God liberating and exempting thee from all such things. . . ."

"Contemplation is accompanied by —or better said—ordinarily makes three things precede it as its handmaidens to make a way for it, viz. reading, meditation and prayer. Reading seeks, meditation finds, prayer pleads and contemplation enjoys. Reading puts the solid food in the mouth, meditation ruminates and breaks it, prayer gains favour, and contemplation is the very essence of sweetness which brings recreation and delight to the heart. Reading occupies itself with the bark, meditation with the marrow, prayer with desire and petition or with anxious entreaty, and contemplation with the sweetness of enjoyment attained. . . ."

"The altar, on which the fire of Divine Love must never be lacking is our own heart. Should it happen that it becomes lukewarm and weak in the night of negligence or temptation, it should be blown into a fiame again the next morning, with the firewood of holy and pious thoughts that excite and kindle love. For if our inner newness that grows old through our talks during the day, is not fed and nourished with this firewood, we shall soon see the love of God disappear completely and watch the fire of devotion die in us. But if we kindle it carefully in the morning by adding new firewood, we shall remain ablaze with devotion all day long, having made a holocaust of our own self-seeking will and burnt everything that contradicts or works against that of the Divine. . . ."

The following passages taken from the last chapter of the 'Triumphs' will show Fray Juan de los Angeles as a passionate lover of God, describing Divine Love in the glowing terms and expressions generally used in ordinary human love and human relations:

"To what other end was man created, destined, called, invited, drawn, ravished, if not for the conjugal embraces and kisses of God?" he asks. And again singing the glories of Love, he says, "God is like a centre of Love to which the gravity of this very Love carries all creatures. So worthy of love is He that, in their several ways, all sensible and insensible creatures love Him. What are the natural inclinations of things but love by which they are carried to God? Only through their imperfections do they fail to attain the highest uncreated Good, and thus they delay and detain themselves in created good which is but a part of the highest Good. What is gravity in a stone but love for its own centre? What is lightness in fire but love for its own sphere? That which all things desire is called Absolute Good, and thus the natural appetite which is in them may, in a certain respect, be called love; although, as we said before, owing to its imperfection, insensible Nature cannot reach that immutable Good, which is God, which man and angel can. . . ."

All his works abound in similar passages, showing how preoccupied he was with making devotees realize the supreme importance of Divine Love as a means to reach the Divine and lead a higher and purer life culminating in union with Him.

When reading his instructions one is often reminded of Sri Ramakrishna's advice to some devotees to give all human passions a Godward turn, not to suppress them, but to sublimate them and to make conscious use of them for attaining the end of spiritual life and directing all the lower energies to higher channels. In the case of

mystics like St. John of the Cross and Juan de los Angeles knowledge of this truth and the effective means in the process of sublimation of one's desires may not have been fully known, but, consciously or unconsciously, their very experiences made them show the earnest devotee the possibility of this form of sublimation which proves to be so fruitful in many cases. So he says:

"All things are in God in the highest degree. Hence it follows that if the proud and haughty seek honour, the covetous and ambitious riches, the idle quiet and rest, the gluttonous and lustful, pleasures and enjoyments, they would all find them better and to their greater advantage than in any creature, without sin and any admixture of imperfection, if they but centred their love on God and sought them all in Him alone, for all pleasureable and delightful things are eminently in Him. If we but enjoyed the Divine Consolations and the gifts of the Spirit, how we should then not go to the acorns like swine! But forgetting our own true nourishment we suffer the hunger of dogs, and our soul is dry like an empty honeycomb and exhausted with thirst. . . ."

"St. Augustine said eloquently that love was the gravity of his soul, and he was being carried whithersoever it carried him. The true place of the stone is the centre, and the centre of our soul is God. Ah, if we who are endowed with reason did but copy the irrational and insentient stones! A thing of wonder is it indeed to see a rock dislodged from a high mountain: with what fury and noise, with what great speed does it fall to the place that is furnished for its rest! Everything it meets on its downward way it shatters and breaks, and without once staying in its course it passes to its centre. Here, O my soul, here shalt thou rest, as the fire rests in its sphere, as the stone at its centre, for otherwhere from here there is no rest! Therefore seek it not, as thou shalt not find it. The arm that is dislocated from its place and joint cannot be without pain and disquiet; neither so can the soul apart from God. If upon this matter I took the witnessing words of lovers of the world and of the things that are in it, what tragedies and what bitterness would they not recount to me? And, in truth, all creatures, as it were, buffet us and cast us from them with great outrage, so that it seems as if they are crying to us aloud: 'Ye puny little men, why do ye tie yourselves to us that are not the good ye seek or ought to seek? Go upon your way, seek your centre and resting place, for in us there is none, nor can there be.' It is a great miracle, an awful miracle, a devilish miracle that men should cease from loving God and not journey ever towards Him with great swiftness and lightness as to their true Centre, permitting themselves to be delayed at times by obstacles not greater than straws, or, at other times, even where there are none. . . ."

"Alas, that I am wandering so gladly among creatures to get a few drops of turbid water which not only do not quench my thirst, but rather excite and inflame it the more, while I leave that crystalline and eternal source of all Good where alone my thirst may be quenched, and where the hunger that my soul suffers for its true and everlasting Good may be satisfied. . . ."

"If created life is pleasant, how much more so would be the Creative Essence? If 'made' life is pleasureable, how much more would that be which made all things? If the science of created beings is worthy to be loved, how much more so would be that of things un-

created? This highest Good is all Substance, and the others are no more than accidental. This is the simple and essential Good, the rest is so only through participation and accident. . . ."

"Fortunate is he who has sought solitude fleeing from all multiplicity, as Plato said, or as the prophet said, he who put his entire will in the law of God, and whose thoughts uniformly belonged to it day and night, for such a man would be called and would really be an indrawn man and would pray without rovings and wanderings of the mind which generally trouble those who follow the practice of collected prayer only from habit, turning to it as a person turns to a painful and unavoidable task. . . ."

"Disciple, 'This collectedness, is it something supernatural or possible for anyone who would apply himself to it?'

"Master, 'With the grace of God we can collect ourselves in the manner thou hast been told, this being a divided work in which both the hand of God and ours is found. Without Divine favour, as is well known, we cannot even hold a single holy thought, but with it everything is possible for us. I say it is necessary for man to help himself and to do all he possibly can for his part with the certitude that God will not keep His part of the work unfulfilled. . . .'

"Sometimes bodily solitude is of great benefit, and for that reason Christ fled to it when he desired to pray freely and undisturbed. Even the company of the good usually is an impediment to the collectedness of the soul, especially so in the case of beginners and men not yet perfect. He is solitary who does not think of any single worldly thing, nor is proud of honours in his levity, nor full of anxiety and swoons away in adversity and dishonour; he who is disturbed and dismayed by all changes and vicissitudes of life, is not solitary, even while living in solitude. He who loves God really and truly, need not seek God outside himself, for whoever seeks Him, shall always find Him inside himself."

And at the end of his 'Dialogues on the Conquest of the Spiritual and Secret Kingdom of God' Fray Juan touches upon the important point that true collectedness is something positive, not as is sometimes brought forward, the stopping of all and every thought by the process of trying to think nothing at all, allowing the mind to fall to a lower level of consciousness. If this were the case, he says, those who are in deep dreamless sleep or in a swoon would be the most perfect of collected souls. No doubt, for beginners he finds it necessary to still their minds and rid them, as far as possible, of all distracting thoughts and worldly images, so that they may come to God devoid of all idle imaginations and without those vain distractions and pictures that usually find a dominant place in the thoughts of the worldly-minded. And this banishing of all disturbing thoughts is very necessary for perfecting true collectedness, but this does not mean becoming inert or lifeless like stocks or stones or dulled. It is true, that in the case of the perfect man his mind and senses have become so controlled and stilled that he does not think or feel where or in what state he is, but is absorbed, as it were, in what he realizes in the depths of his soul, but this state is very very different from falling below the level of consciousness. It is, on the contrary, a state of heightened and quickened awareness, not that lower form of passivity brought about

by dulling one's consciousness and making one's mind merely a blank.

We shall now proceed to some passages taken from other writings of Fray Juan de los Angeles. Everything he says is but a variation on his one and only *leitmotiv* : Love,—always coming back to the principal theme and key like those wonderful musical structures—the fugues of Bach and Handel —built on just a few notes, but never lacking in variety and freshness. And just as in these fugues the characteristics of the theme and all its possibilities are more and more brought to light through all the variations it is made to undergo, so in his work also a clearer light is shed on the meaning and nature of Love through them.

The following passages are taken from the 'Manual of Perfect Life' (*Manual de la vida perfecta*), a continuation of the 'Conquest of the Spiritual and Secret Kingdom of God,' in which Fray Juan dwells on the practical side of collected prayer, contemplation and all the other spiritual practices through which, in his eyes, a sincere aspirant has to pass.

"*Disciple* : 'Often and on many occasions thou speakest of pure spirit and of mental practice, yet I do not succeed in understanding fully what is pure spirit, nor the form which mental practice has to adopt.'

"*Master* : 'I am truly astonished at thy question, my son, concerning such clear things forming the principal part of this book. Be, therefore, attentive, for I am going to show thee both with so great a clarity that in no way wilt thou henceforth ever ignore them. Leaving mental practice aside for some later discussion, I desire thee to know that thou canst set to work in one of four manners. The first is purely of the body; the second a mixture of body and spirit; the third purely spiritual; the fourth supernatural. These are, as it were, four stages or steps to perfection. The first prepares thee for the second, the second for the third, and this again for the fourth. Sometimes it happens also that they become mixed, so that things belonging to the highest can be found in the lowest, and in the highest, things of the lowest. And this is not inconvenient, but, at times, and on certain occasions, necessary. I call the first step purely of the body, because all the practices pertaining to it are based on bodily things, being meant to punish, subdue and humble the flesh and sensuality through fasting, waking, sleeping in hard and simple beds, avoiding unnecessary words and idle gossip, guarding ourselves from making friends, especially with women, from whose sight and from the thought of whom we are to flee as from the fire of tar if we really desire to profit by this path. The Wise Man says, 'Man goeth after woman straight way as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strikes through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare and knoweth not that it is for his life. Hearken unto me now therefore, O Ye Children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded : yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.' (Proverbs) Yes, he who is wise, will flee from her, and the fool will get himself entangled in her meshes and be a prisoner in her mire. Above all I ask thee to watch the intention of all thy work and thy words, for if in this there be any carelessness or crookedness, the whole work will be crooked, and dirty and loathsome in the eyes of God. . . ."

He very often denounces worldly

women in the above way, and one is more than once reminded, while reading his works, of such passages as in Sri Krishna and Uddhava where the Avadhuta tells the King :

"The man of uncontrolled senses, seeing women, the enchantment created by the Lord—and being tempted by their blandishments, falls into abysmal darkness, like the moth into the fire."

"The foolish man who, with his vision blinded, is tempted by such illusive creations as women, gold, ornaments, apparel and the like, considering them as objects of enjoyment, is destroyed like the moth."

After having fully discussed the purely bodily state and the practices pertaining to it, Fray Juan goes on to give a detailed description of the second step, in which the bodily and the spiritual elements are mixed, and shows a very deep psychological knowledge of man and his motive forces. Then he comes to the third step which he calls the purely spiritual state, drawing a very marked and rather curious distinction between what he calls spiritual and what he calls supernatural, not to be found in Indian Yoga. After dwelling on the great dangers of mixing sensuality and spirit and of overstraining head and heart through too forced and violent attempts at contemplation, he says :

"Thou shouldst know that spiritual sentiments are wholly and essentially different from sensual ones, and are known by their effects. One is the inflaming of the body, heart, breast and temples accompanied by a diminution of intellectual light. It begins with true light which the spirit feels, but after passing part of that on to sensuality, the bodily parts begin to become inflamed, and the spiritual sentiments begin to grow cooler and cooler and thus get spoiled, till they are consumed and come to an end, as has already been said. In truly spiritual men who separate what is of value from what is low, who keep themselves pure from sensuality, these sentiments begin with true light of the understanding which goes on growing and increasing with the expansion and growth of the spiritual vision in which they begin. And it continues working and producing living works in the soul which are: reformation of actions, desire for time to be given to mental prayer, quiet, sweet and dispassionate love which draws the soul of the contemplative, taking his little fears from him and slowly planting in his very depths confidence in God and hopes of reaching perfection, with a clear understanding that the soul of itself cannot work anything of great profit, and with a feeling of Divine favour of which it can searcely tell from where and which way it has come. The heart is filled with a high appreciation for spiritual things which are not seen, but in which it has faith, and which unveil themselves more and more day by day, so that it no longer feels or understands how outside of them there can be anything worth appreciating . . . ."

There is a beautiful passage in his 'Spiritual Struggle between God and the Soul' (*Lucha Espiritual entre Dios y el alma*), speaking of the transforming power of Love and its effects on the lover :

"Love and Will transform themselves and become transmuted into the beloved object. He who loves, and that which is loved, these two are made one through the virtue of Love. Which union or transformation is not natural or violent, nor painful, but free, sweet to the will and of great delight. And so strong and intimate is it, that it cannot be undone by any other power, for Love and Will thus persevere in their very nature . . ."

"The power of love transforms itself into that which is loved. If it loves earth, it is of the earth earthly; if it loves the Divine, it is of Divinity Divine. So much nobility does it possess as can be found in that which is loved. And every time it loves any other than God, it is made inferior to itself and loses its nobility, for our will recognizes only God as immediately superior to itself, and by loving Him alone it rises above itself, improves itself and surpasses all other creatures in so far as the love it cherishes is surpassing; to which Divine Love alone, our love and will are rightly given. . . ."

Here one is reminded of the beautiful words of Sri Krishna when he says in the *Bhagavad-Gita* :—

"Occupy thy mind with Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me, thou shalt reach Myself; truly do I promise thee, for thou art dear to Me. Relinquishing all Dharmas take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not."

In his 'Considerations on the Song of Songs' (*Consideraciones sobre el Cantar de los Cantares*), Fray Juan says in the introduction, showing the practical purpose of all his writings :

"As regards prayer and contemplation I expand most when occasion offers, for I wish that this book may come into the possession of spiritual people whom I set often in the right ways, and give admirable documentary aids to their desire, if such they have, to make progress in mystic theology and communion with God, through the practices of free, fruitive and seraphic love, which is the foundation of these Songs."

These 'Considerations' form a volume of more than 500 pages by themselves, and it is impossible to do them justice by quoting only some extracts or passages chosen at random. There is no doubt, however, that Fray Juan finds in the Song of Songs a subject after his own heart and thus rises to the greatest poetic heights to be found in his work.

We shall end our quotations by giving two extracts from a dialogue where Fray Juan speaks of the necessity of freedom of spirit and of prayer and its effects. Speaking of the necessary freedom of spirit, he says :

"He who loses this freedom loses more than the value of earth or heaven, or of any other creature, or of all created things. For what do they all profit me, if my heart is bound to them, or to the very least of them, so that I cannot turn it and raise it freely to the Creator?"

And on being asked about the conditions for effective prayer, he says :

"The first and foremost is purity of heart, without which we are neither fit nor disposed to receive the workings of Divine Grace, by which means our heart is linked to God, and there is wrought in us perfect self-denial and mortification of the passions and affections of man. And here I add that perfect self-denial and total self-surrender of ourselves to God, by which means we rise above ourselves and are emptied of all our properties, surrendering ourseves in all things to the will of God, is the secret of the highest perfection, of grace and glory. Love of self, alas!, how much harm to souls is done by thee! So long as this dwells in us it is for ever causing vice to spring up, and bringing forth evil thoughts, and exciting wrong inclinations and vain desires: which things separate us from God, stain our souls and harm our inward peace, so that love of self is the greatest obstacle that can be found to spiritual progress. . ."

Unfortunately space does not alow us to give anything but very scrappy and disconnected selections from Fray

Juan's writings which can in no way be exhaustive. The careful reader, however, may now and then catch a glimpse of the thought-world of this great Bhakta of Spain, who sincerely tried to follow Christ and his great teacher St. Francis, compelled by the overwhelming power of love in him which inspired so many of the great Franciscans, driving them out into the world to preach the secret of a care-free spirit resting in the Divine through the miracle of 'Naughting'.

Of them, too, might be said :

"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, O Pândava."

And now we shall end this short and fragmentary sketch with Fray Juan's own words :

"All the things that are in the world call and incite us to seek God so as to unite ourseves to Him, for in Him alone is our quietude, and the peace and calm of our heart. He is the centre of our soul, the goal of all our desires, and the true sphere of our love."

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE VEDAS

By Swami Prabhavananda

Peace Chant

May my speech be united with the mind and may my mind be united with the speech.

O Thou Self-luminous (Brahman), may Thy Light shine forth in me (by removing the veil of ignorance).

Do Thou reveal the spirit of the Vedas unto me.

May the truth of the Vedas never forsake me.

May I seek day and night (to realize) what I learn from my study. May I speak the truth (Brahman).

May I speak the truth.

May It (Brahman) protect me .

May It protect my teacher.

Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.

The Rig Veda

I

Origin of the Vedas

With the important exceptions of Buddhism and Jainism, all schools of Indian philosophy and all sects of Indian religion recognize in the *Vedas* their origin and final authority. This is true even of all those sects and schools which have arisen in modern times. What is known as Hinduism or Hindu Philosophy is in reality a misnomer ; it should be properly called the Vedic religion, which is also the universally accepted religion and philosophy of modern India known as Vedânta.

Even beyond the other scriptures of the world, the *Vedas* make a special claim to be divine in their origin. Whereas, the *Bible*, the *Koran*, and other revelations of the word of God owe their sacred authority either to divine inspiration or to delivery of the sacred message through an angel or other special messenger from God unto certain chosen persons, the *Vedas* are said to be Apaurusheya, or simply divine in their origin. They are themselves authority, being the knowledge of God.

This mysterious distinction between the Indo-Aryan scriptures and other

divine revelations needs some elucidation.

"Yo vedebhyo akhilam jagat nirmame."—"God created the whole universe out of the knowledge of the *Vedas*" (That is to say, the knowledge of the *Vedas* comes even before creation.) In these words of Sâyanâchârya, the learned commentator on the *Vedas*, is expressed the universal belief regarding them. So the attempt to discover the date of the origin of the *Vedas* is like trying to discover the origin of the knowledge of God, or of God Himself. The search for the beginning of Vedic literature is similar to the search for the origin of the universe. While it is true that the universe has undergone an evolution from primitive forms through successive stages to its present stage of development, the *Vedas* are themselves a completed development.

Indian philosophers are of course believers in the theory of evolution. They were in fact evolutionists long before the word evolution meant anything to the Western world. But they insisted that evolution implies involution, which means that the present universe is only one of a series of universes existing in past time, and that there can therefore be no beginning to creation. So to the Indian mind creation is without beginning and without end. Every Brahmin boy repeats daily this Vedic prayer, "The sun and the moon the Lord created like the suns and the moons of previous cycles."

What a Hindu means when he declares that the *Vedas* are eternal is not that the particular books which contain the scriptures have lasted from the beginning of time. Just as creation is infinite and eternal, without beginning and without end, so is the knowledge of God; and this knowledge is what is meant by the *Vedas*. At the beginning of a cycle this knowledge is made manifest, to return when the cycle ends to its minute form. It is mere sophistry to claim that these books, the Indo-Aryan scriptures are eternal; but rather eternal are the great laws of God discovered and recorded in these books by the Rishis, the seers of thought who have lived close to God in every age. They discovered these spiritual laws by directly perceiving them while in a transcendental state of consciousness. And these truths can be perceived again and again at all times and in all ages through this same means. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "Of all the Scriptures of the world, it is the Vedas alone that declare that even the study of the Vedas is secondary. The real study is that 'by which we realize the unchangeable'."

In the Purusha Sukta from the *Rig Veda* we read about the origin of the *Vedas*:

"The gods then performed a mental sacrificial rite meditating on the transcendental Purusha as the sacrifice itself. From that sacrifice which is the Purusha (the transcendental Being) came out Rik, Sama, and Yaju (the different *Vedas*)."

Another passage from the *Vedas*, in the *Satapatha Brâhmana*, reads, "As clouds of smoke come out from a damp wood on fire, so have the *Vedas* come out like breath from the Supreme Being." According to tradition, Brahmâ (the Creator in the Hindu Trinity) first received the knowledge contained in the *Vedas*, and from Brahmâ it descended to the Rishis, who were born in the beginning of each cycle. At the beginning of a cycle Rishis are born with the full knowledge which they had attained through a high state of

evolution in previous cycles; they are therefore the special messengers of God for the transmission of knowledge of Him through the great cycles of creation.

So it is the belief of all Hindus that in the very earliest stage of each cycle of creation, there are born on earth highly endowed as well as primitive peoples, and through these highly endowed people religion first enters the world. This belief in full intellectual and spiritual maturity without the necessity of a gradual unfoldment of powers distinguishes the Hindu theory of the origin of religion from that held by Western scholars that religion has evolved from primitive forms of nature worship and fetish ritual. The Hindu theory of evolution is one of a continuous birth of worlds in an infinite series with the knowledge of God descending throughout the entire process.

We may readily understand therefore how impossible it is to fix any date for the origin of Vedic knowledge. The extant records as revealed in the Indo-Aryan scriptures are accepted as of divine origin, and they may be called, without fear of contradiction, the earliest spiritual records in our present world. They are not primitive in their ideas and conceptions of spiritual life; on the contrary they contain the true lofty metaphysical and spiritual ideas which have inspired saints and philosophers from earliest times and which continue to be the source of modern Indian spiritual life.

It is true that we can discover in the *Vedas* ideas apparently primitive resting beside the highest spiritual inspiration. That is because these Scriptures represent the intellectual gropings of primitive men as well as the most advanced conceptions of Deity and spiritual power. There are present in these books both higher and lower forms of thought, just as today religious teaching conforms to the capacity of those who would receive it. The *Vedas* reveal both genuine inspiration on the part of a few divinely gifted men and a slow fumbling search for spiritual consolation on the part of a great many others.

II

Legendary Account of the Origin of the Vedas

Traditional Indian legends give the following account of the beginning of Vedic literature.

Once upon a time, before the historic account of man, Brahmâ, the first-born of God, was meditating upon the Supreme Brahman when through His grace there was manifested within the shrine of His heart the eternal Word Om (the Logos), the seed of all knowledge and of all thought.[1] There were also manifest one by one all the sounds of the different alphabets. Through these alphabets there became known unto Brahmâ the knowledge of the *Vedas*. In order to spread this knowledge throughout the world, he taught it to his disciples Marichi, Atri, Angiras, and other Rishis. In this way the *Vedas* became known to all humanity.

After many cycles came Dwâpara Yuga (perhaps the Copper Age). The Lord Nârâyana incarnated himself as the son of the Rishi Parâsara and Mother Satyavati, taking the name Krishna-Dvaipâyna. To give the *Vedas* greater simplicity, he compiled and divided them into the four *Vedas*, the

[1] *Cf.* the Platonic philosophy of Logos—the identity of word and thought. See also the Gospel according to St. John—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Rik, the Sama, the Yaju, and the Atharva, and taught each of them to his four chief disciples, Paila, Vaisampâyana, Jaimini, and Sumantu, who in turn taught the *Vedas* to their disciples.[2]

An interesting legend is told about *Yajur Veda* and its teacher, Vaisampâyana, who taught his many disciples. On a certain occasion many Rishis met together for a conference at which it was desired that all Rishis should be present. "Whoever fails to attend", they announced, "will commit a great sin, equal to that of killing a Brâhmana." Now the great Rishi Vaisampâyana failed to attend, and as a consequence the curse of all the Rishis fell upon him. In order to expiate the sin he requested his disciples to practise austerities. One disciple, however, Yâgnavalkya by name, said, "Master, how can you expiate your sin by the austerities of these thy worthless disciples? I am the one amongst them who can bring good unto thee by my practices." At this the master grew angry saying, "How dare you? I do not wish such a hot-headed and egotistical disciple as you. Give back what you have learned from me and be off."

So the egotist Yâgnavalkya cast from him what he had learned and went forth. The other Rishis, not enduring this insult to their knowledge, assumed the forms of tittiri birds and gathered up the knowledge that had just been ejected and taught it to their own disciples. And this knowledge was henceforth known as *Krishna-Yajur Veda* and the branch Taittiriya.

Now Yâgnavalkya, having cast out knowledge of the *Vedas*, felt how empty he was as he realized what a very beast a man becomes without any Vedic knowledge. Where then might he find a teacher? And it came to him that the Sun God is never separated from the *Vedas*; for in the morning he is adorned with the *Rik Veda*, at noon with the *Yajur Veda*, and in the evening with the *Sam Veda*. And so, accepting the Sun God as his teacher, Yâgnavalkya prayed to him for knowledge. The Sun God, pleased with the devotion of his new votary, taught him the *Vedas*. This particular branch of knowledge was henceforth known as *Sukla-Yajur Veda*. Yâgnavalkya then taught it to his disciples.

According to tradition, none can study the *Vedas* without a teacher. "Approach a teacher," it is said in the *Vedas*, "being 'samitpâni' " with humility and a spirit of service. Only thus can the spirit of the *Vedas* be revealed.

The following hymn from the *Satapatha Brâhmana tells* of the good effects of such study :

"The study and teaching of the Vedas are pleasing indeed.
He who follows this attains concentrated mind,
He does not become a slave to his passions;
His desires come true, and he rests happily,
Verily does he become a healer of his own self.
Self-controlled, devoted, with well-cultivated mind,
He attains fame and does good to the world."

[2] In India there still live Brahmanas claiming to be descendants of these Vedic Seers. And they are followers of one or another of the *Vedas*.

III

Import of the Teachings of the Four Vedas

Indian philosophers differ in bnt minor details as to what the *Vedas* teach. We may, therefore, safely say that they give the knowledge of Brahman and impose work as a means to that knowledge. When through work (and by work is meant sacrificial rites as well as selfless labour) our hearts are purified, we become fit to inquire into the highest knowledge of Brahman.

The *Vedas* are accordingly divided into two parts—Karma Kânda, devoted to work, and Jnâna Kânda, devoted to knowledge. The *Upanishads*, the latter part of the *Vedas* (also called Vedânta, meaning "the end of the *Vedas*) comprise the part given over to knowledge.

The Karma Kânda may be roughly divided into three parts : (*a*) the Mantras or hymns addressed in adoration of Brahman or God in His various aspects; a collection of these hymns being called Samhitâ; (*b*) the Brâhmanas, written in prose describing the sacrificial rites and including precepts and religious duties; and (*c*) the Âranyakas or forest treatises which supplant the external rituals with symbolic meditations.

Professor Deussen has declared that this division of the *Vedas* is based on the principle of Âshrama life in India. According to Vedic teachings, man's life has four stages. First is Brahmacharya, or student life, when a boy lives with his teacher and receives both religious and secular instruction. The youth is trained in self-control and acquires such virtues as chastity, truthfulness, faith, and self-surrender. The next stage is Gârhastya, or married life. The chief injunction in this stage is to practise the ritualistic sacrifices as explained in the Brâhmanas. At the stage of retirement, or Vânaprastha, he is no longer required to adhere to ritualism, but is enjoined to follow the Âranyakas or symbolic meditation. Finally he enters upon the life of renunciation, in which he is bound neither by work nor desire, but is dedicated wholly to acquiring the knowledge of Brahman.

Thus the general plan of life as taught in the *Vedas* is, successively, student life, married life, the life of retirement, and the life of renunciation. Each of these periods of a man's mortal existence has its special duties and observances, though it is also true that through a special rule of conduct a student may enter immediately into a life of renunciation without passing through the two intermediate stages of probation.

Through the institution of monasticism a man may enter early the life of renunciation. When one enters a monastery, he passes through a Vedic ritual the while he meditates upon the truths of the *Upanishads*. According to Vedic teaching this monastic life is the highest stage a man may attain. Modern India retains this ideal, and there are not wanting today men highly trained in Western science and literature who are willing to assume these monastic vows. Thus the influence of the *Vedas* has been perpetuated through all ages.

Parenthetically it may be said that the daily life and conduct of the people of India even today are guided by the injunctions of the *Vedas*. This is particularly true of the ceremonies connected with birth, marriage, and death. In the words of Professor Das Gupta, "The laws which regulate the social, legal, domestic, and religious customs and rites of the Hindus even to the present day are said to be but mere systematized memories of old Vedic teachings and are held to be obligatory on their authority." Every Brahmin repeats

thrice daily the Vedic prayer called the Gâyatri mantra, which is a verse in the *Rik Veda*.[3]

(a)

THE SAMHITAS

The Samhitâs form the first division of the work portion of the *Vedas*. They are collections of hymns snng in praise of the devas, or gods, the bright ones. These devas are quite numerons in early Vedic literature,—Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Parjanya, and many others. They appear to be mythological figures representing the forces of nature, though again each one of them in time is exalted and sublimated by the highest epithet of Godhead—that He is infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, sees the hearts of all beings. Indra, for example, one of the popular Vedic gods, possesses a body, is very strong, wears golden armour, and descends to earth where he lives and eats with his votaries, fights their enemies, overcomes the demons, and establishes his rule in heaven and upon earth. Another hymn tells how the whole universe exists in Indra, who is omnipotent and omnipresent. So also with Varuna, god of the air with control over the waters, who at another time is called omnipresent and omnipotent.

A hymn from the *Atharva Veda* addressed to the God Varuna[4] gives utterance to this sublimation of God :

The mighty Lord on high our deeds,
as if at hand, espies;
The gods know all men do, though
men would fain their acts disguise.
Whoever stands, whoever moves, or
Steals from place to place,
Or hides him in the secret cell—the
Gods his movements trace.
Wherever two together plot, and
deem they are alone,
King Varuna is there, a third, and
all their schemes are known.
This earth is his, to him belong
these vast and boundless skies;
Both seas within him rest, and yet
in that small pool he lies.
Whoever far beyond the sky should
think his way to wing,
He could not there elude the grasp
of Varuna the King.
His spies, descending from the
skies, glide all the world around;
Their thousand eyes all scanning
sweep to earth's remotest bound.
Whatever exists in heaven and earth
Whate'er beyond the skies,
Before the eyes of Varuna, the King,
unfolded lies.
The ceaseless winkings all he counts
of mortals' eyes.
He wields this universal frame,
as gamester throws his dice.

We thus find in the *Vedas* a peculiar situation. While there is evidence that the outlook of primitive man, with his nature worship and his polytheism, is present, and hymns are addressed to many gods; yet each of them is at times sublimated into a single universal conception which possesses the character of the infinite, personal God of the universe. So does polytheism merge into a monotheistic, though still anthropomorphic, view of a creator. Professor Max Müller designates this process as *Henotheism*.

[3] "Om bhurh, bhubah, swah, tat savitur varenyam, bhargodevosya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayât Om."
"May we meditate on the effulgent Light (or power) of Him who is worshipful, and who has given birth to all worlds. May He direct the rays of our intelligence towards the path of good."

[4] Translation by Muir.

The real explanation of this phenomenon, however, is to be found in the *Rik-Veda*, "and it is a grand explanation," declares Swami Vivekananda, "one that has given the theme to all subsequent thoughts in India, and one that will be the theme of the whole world of religions—*Ekam sat viprah bahudhâ vadanti*—They call Indra, Mitra, Varuna—That which exists is One : Sages call It by various names."

Extraordinary results followed in India from this verse, for in it we find the germ of a universal religion. For this reason India has never known either religious fanaticism or wars in the name of the gods. Through all the ages India has sought the truth in every religion; not only does she tolerate other religions but she has an active sympathy for faiths not her own. Sri Ramakrishna in the modern age echoes this truth of universality when he says: "There is but one God, but endless are His names and endless the aspects in which He may be regarded. Call Him by any name and worship Him in any aspect that pleases you, you are sure to find Him. So many religions, so many paths to reach the same truth. You will advance yourself in whatever way you may meditate upon Him or recite His holy name. The cake made with sugarcandy will taste equally sweet whether it be held straight or obliquely when you eat it."

Western Vedic scholars in explaining the *Vedas* are not ready to give up their theory of a gradual evolution of the conception of Godhead from simple nature-worship through personification of the powers of nature to henotheism and the higher conception of monotheism. Whatever may have been the historical *popular* development of religious ideas, a Hindu brought up in the Vedic tradition, finds no difficulty in realizing that even the earliest Vedic seers were also worshipping the one God under various names; for they knew that infinite is God and infinite are His expressions. Indra, Varuna, Mitra are as it were so many doors through which to penetrate into the Inner Being of the One Existence. Ishtam, the chosen Ideal of Deity, is to a Hindu worshipper both the Supreme Being and He in whom the other gods reside.

The famous hymn to Hiranyagarbha in the *Rik Veda* (X, 21) gives expression to the conception of a Supreme Being.

"Before the universe became manifest, there was manifest Hiranyagarbha. He being manifest became the one lord of the manifested universe. He held within Himself the invisible world, the sky and this earth. Unto Him who is Ka[5] we offer our sacrifice.

He who is the purifier of our hearts, He who is the giver of strength, whose command all beings together with the gods revere, whose shadow is immortality as well as mortality—unto Him, who is Ka, we offer our sacrifice.[6]

The Vedic seers, however, did not stop with the concept of a personal God. They realized that whether they con-

[5] In the original Sanskrit there is the word Ka-smai at the end of each verse. Professor Max Müller has translated the word "who is the god to whom we should offer our sacrifice?" And he has entitled the hymn, *Hymn to the Unknown God*. But Sâyana mentioned above, renders the word differently. He declares that *Ka* means unknown ; that is, whose true being remains unknown and unknowable. Secondly, *Ka* denotes the one who *desired* the creation or manifestation of the universe. Third, the word means one who is *the source of happiness*. Thus these three renderings of the last sentence are possible:

1. Unto Him whose being is unknown and unknowable we offer our sacrifice.
2. Unto Him who desired that this universe be created we offer our sacrifice.
3. Unto Him who is the source of happiness we offer our sacrifice.

[6] We have translated the above following the commentary of Sâyana.

ceived Him as a God of revenge or of justice, as a benevolent Creator loving His creatures, or as Ritasya Gopa, the keeper and dispenser of physical and moral laws and order, He yet remained an anthropomorphic God. So these bold Vedic thinkers are found asking, "Who has seen the first born, when he that had uo bones (form and personality) bore him that has bones? Where is the life, the blood, the self of the universe? Who went to ask of any who knew?" Swami Vivekananda remarks of the Vedic seers, "The monotheistic idea was much too human for them, although they gave it such descriptions as 'the whole universe rests on Him', and 'Thou art the keeper of all hearts'. The Hindus were bold, to their great credit be it said, bold thinkers in all their ideas, so bold that one spark of their thought frightens the so-called bold thinkers of the present-day world."

A creator, a ruler of the universe is not his own explanation; and a God who is but an architect does not satisfy man's insistent urge to understand Him. So the Vedic seers continued to question, and so we discover in various Vedic hymns answers formulated and poetically rendered. The following sublime hymn[7] is such an answer:

"Then there was neither existence nor non-existence; the worlds were not, nor the sky, nor anything beyond. Were there any of the subtle elements which by their appearance cover the reality behind? Where would they exist? And for whose experience? Was there the deep fathomless abyss of water?

"Then there was neither death nor deathlessness. Nor was there the knowledge of the distinction between night and day. That One, the source of light, existed without motion of life. It existed united as one with its Power (Mâyâ). Other than It, there was nothing.

"In the beginning there existed gloom hidden in gloom. This universe then remained undistinguished from its cause. This universe which lay hidden in gloom though it remained undistinguished became manifested by the power of *tapas* (the will of that one—the source of life and existence).

"Because in the heart there existed the seed continued from the cycle of the previous universe there arose the will. And the sages searching within themselves found the manifested existence hidden in the unmanifest.

"Who in reality knows and who can truly say how this creation came into existence and from what cause? Even the devas were born after the creation came into existence. Hence who can know the cause of this universe?

"The source from which the universe sprang, that alone can sustain it, none else. That One, the Lord of the universe, dwelling in Its own being, undefiled as the sky above, alone knows the truth of Its own creation, none else.[8]

Sâyana, the great commentator, states that in this hymn is brought out the truth that God is the efficient as well as the material cause of the universe. Here also is the advanced hypothesis that the universe, without beginning or end, alternates between the phases of potentiality and expression. This hymn is the source and authority for a great deal of later philosophical speculation.

We have already seen that the Vedic seers did not rest with the concept of a monotheistic God. God in this hymn is

[7] Rik-Veda.

[8] We have translated it following the commentary of Sâyana.

described as *Tad Ekam*—That One neither masculine nor feminine but neuter—That.

Another hymn, the famous Purusha Sukta in the *Rik Veda*, attempts to express the inexpressible nature of the Infinite Impersonal Absolute Truth.

"The Universal Being (the Purusha) has infinite heads, un-numbered eyes, and un-numbered feet. Enveloping the universe on every side, He existeth transcending it. All this is He, what has been and what shall be. He is the lord of immortality. Though He has become all this, He is not all this in reality. For verily is He transcendental. The whole series of universes (the past, present, and future) express His glory and power, but indeed He transcends His own glory. All beings of the universe form as it were a fraction of His Being. But the rest of His being is self-luminous and unchangeable. He who is beyond all predicates existeth as the relative universe. That part of His being coming within relativity becomes extended as sentient and insentient beings. From the part of Him was born the body of the universe. Out of it were born the gods, the earth, and men."[9]

In this hymn a definite rejection of pantheism is made in the words, "Though He has become all this, He is not all this in reality. For verily is he transcendental."

But the conception of a personal God still persists in spite of the acceptance of an impersonal Absolute Ideal of Godhead. The truth is that the infinite names, forms, attributes and expressions of God are but different ways of viewing a single truth—That One Existence. "*Ekam sat viprah bahudhâ vadanti*—Truth is one; sages call It by various names." Absolute is too much of an abstraction to be loved or worshipped or meditated upon. It is to be realized by being or becoming, and the process of realization is worship and meditation upon That in Its personal aspect. "Personal God is the reading," declares Swami Vivekananda, "of the Impersonal by the human mind." A Hindu, when taught to love and worship God, loves and worships Him as Personal-Impersonal.

In this connection, Max Müller says pertinently:

"Whatever is the age when the collection of our Rig-Veda-Samhita was finished, it was before the age when the conviction was formed that there is but One, One Being, neither male or female, a Being raised high above all the conditions and limitations of personality and of human nature, and nevertheless the Being that was really meant by all such names as Indra, Agni, Mâtariswan, nay even by the name of Prajâpati, lord of creatures. In fact the Vedic poets had arrived at a conception of the Godhead which was reached once more by some of the Christian philosophers of Alexandria, but which even at present is beyond the reach of many who call themselves Christians."

The Brahmanas

The second part of the work portion of the *Vedas* is called the Brâhmanas. They are written in prose, and lay special emphasis upon sacrifices and sacrificial rites. "*Brâhmanah vividishanti yajnena dânena.*" "When the heart becomes purified by the performance of sacrifices, there arises the hunger for the knowledge of Brahman." Thus is acknowledged the need for the observance of sacrifices and the ceremonials and rites of religion. But it is

[9] We have translated the hymn following the commentary of Sâyana.

also true that at times undue importance was laid upon these rites as well as on the chanting of the words of the *Vedas;* so much so that the sacrifices themselves often took the place of a living religion—a circumstance that occurs in the development of all religious institutions.

When such a contingency exists, prayer or supplication before the object of worship becomes unnecessary; the performance of elaborate and fixed sacrifices will *force* the gods to grant one's desires. Professor Das Gupta rightly believes that in these sacrificial rites is to be found the germ of the law of Karma, which the Hindu lawgiver Manu subsequently systematized philosophically in his code of laws. "Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow. As thou dost sow, so wilt thou reap."[10]

This hardening of the institutional parts of religion in time exalted the power of the priests, and it was in opposition to this externalizing and crystallizing of what should remain living symbols of deeper truths behind appearance, and also in opposition to the tyranny of a rising priesthood, that Buddha rose in revolt. The *Bhagavad-Gitâ* also condemns the tendency to attribute undue importance to ritualistic sacrifices.

Apart from their consideration of ritualism, the Brâhmanas lay emphasis upon duties and conduct. "Side by side with its insistence on the outer," writes S. Radhakrishnan, "there was also the emphasis on inner purity. Truth, godliness, honour to parents, kindness to animals, love of man, abstinence from theft, murder and adultery, were inculcated as the essentials of a good life." We find also certain injunctions which everyone must follow. The Brâhmanas declare that we owe debts both to the world and to God, and certain duties must be done as repayment of these debts. Five of these debts are named: (1) to the gods; (2) to the Rishis or seers; (3) to the pitris or manes; (4) to men; and (5) to the lower creation. Our debt to the gods we repay by observing the sacrifices; to the seers by feeling devotion in our hearts for their greatness; to the manes by praying for them; to men by feeling love and sympathy and doing kind deeds; and to the lower creation by offering them food and drink. When we partake of our daily meal, we must offer parts of it every day to gods, manes, men and animals as we repeat our daily prayers. These are *debts* and must be paid. No merit is therefore acquired by virtue of payment, for if we do not pay we degenerate below the worth of a human being. These duties and this conduct as enjoined in the Brâhmanas must not be performed from ulterior selfish motives but for the sake of purity of heart and right living.

The Âranyakas

The third part of the *Vedas,* the Âranyakas, regards the rites as explained in the Brâhmanas as true symbols for meditation, with a far greater stress laid upon retiring within one's own self than upon the intrinsic value of outer exercises. Swami Vivekananda explains the change in these words:

"Thus we find that the minds of these ancient Aryan thinkers had begun a new theme. They found out that in the external world no search would give an answer to their question. So they fell back upon this other method, and according to this, they were taught that these desires of the senses, desire for ceremonials and externalities, have

[10] *Cf.* "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. Ch. 6, V. 7.

caused a veil to come between themselves and the truth, and that this cannot be removed by any ceremonial. . . . They seem to declare,—look not for the truth in any forms of religion; it is here in the human soul, the miracle of all miracles—in the human soul, the emporium of all knowledge, the mine of all existence—and they found out step by step that that which is external is but a dull reflection at best of that which is inside. . . . Just at first it was a search after the devas, the bright ones, and then it was the origin of the universe, and the very same search is getting another name more philosophical, clearer—the unity of all things—'Knowing which everything else becomes known.' "[11]

[11] *The Complete Works*—Vol. 1, p. 854-855.

SIVA MAHIMNAH STOTRAM

OR

THE HYMN ON THE GREATNESS OF SIVA

By Swami Pavitrananda

किमीहः किंकायः स खलु किमुपायस्त्रिभुवनं
किमाधारो धाता सृजति किमुपादान इति च ।
अतर्क्यैश्वर्य्ये त्वय्यनवसरदुःस्थो हतधियः
कुतर्कोऽयं कांश्चिन्मुखरयति मोहाय जगतः ॥ ५ ॥

खलु Indeed **सः धाता** that creator **किमीहः** with what desire **किंकायः** with what body **किमुपायः** with what instruments **किमाधारः** with what support **किमुपादानः** with what materials **त्रिभुवनं** three worlds **सृजति** creates **इति च** of this nature **अतर्क्यैश्वर्य्ये** whose Divine nature is beyond the reach of reasoning **त्वयि** with regard to Thee **अनवसरदुःस्थः** though having no scope for **अयं** such **कुतर्कः** argumentation **जगतः** of people **मोहाय** for delusion **कांश्चित्** some **हतधियः** wrong-headed persons **मुखरयति** makes vociferous.

5. To[1] fulfil what desire, having what body, with what instruments, support and materials does that creator indeed create the three worlds?—this kind of vain argumentation with regard to Thee whose Divine nature is beyond the reach of intellect makes the perverted[2] vociferous to the delusion of mankind.

[1] *To fulfil etc.*—When a man does anything, he has a definite purpose; he can work because he has a physical body; and while making anything he needs three things—some instruments, some materials, and a support. Ignorant people want to see these conditions fulfilled in the God's act of creation. But such expectations are idle, for God is God—He cannot be judged by any human standard.

[2] *The perverted*—The atheists referred to in the previous Sloka. Their wrong thinking is due to their being under the sway of Mâyâ.

अजन्मानो लोकाः किमवयववन्तोऽपि जगता-
मधिष्ठातारं किं भवविधिरनादृत्य भवति ।
अनीशो वा कुर्य्याद् भुवनजनने कः परिकरं
यतो मन्दास्त्वां प्रत्यमरवर संशेरत इमे ॥ ६ ॥

अमरवर O Lord of gods **अवयववन्तोऽपि** though having body **लोकाः** the worlds **अजन्मानः** birthless **किं** whether ? **जगतां** of the worlds **भवविधिः** creation **अधिष्ठातारं** creator **अनादृत्य** without **भवति** becomes **किं** whether ? **भुवनजनने** in the creation of the worlds **अनीशः** except God **कः वा** who else **परिकरं** attempt **कुर्य्यात्** can make ? **यतः** because **इमे** these **मन्दाः** fools (**अतः** therefore) **त्वां प्रति** with regard to Thee **संशेरत** raise doubt.

6. O Lord of gods, can the worlds be without origin though[1] they have bodies? Is the creation of the worlds (possible) without a creator? Who else but God can begin the creation of the worlds? Because they are fools, they raise doubt as regards Thy existence.

[1] *Though . . . bodies*—Whatever has a body must have origin.

त्रयी सांख्यं योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति
प्रभिन्ने प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।
रुचीनाम् वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥ ७ ॥

त्रयी The three Vedas **सांख्यं** Sâmkhya **योगः** Yoga **पशुपतिमतं** the doctrine of Pasupati **वैष्णवं** the Vaishnava doctrine **इति** these **प्रभिन्ने** different **प्रस्थाने** paths (**सति** being) **इदम्** this path **परं** best **अदः** that path **पथ्यं** proper **इति च** thus **रुचीनाम्** of temperaments **वैचित्र्यात्** due to difference **ऋजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां नृणां** of people following different paths—straight or crooked **पयसां** of waters **अर्णवः** ocean **इव** like **त्वं** Thou **एकः** one **गम्यः** goal **असि** art.

7. There are different paths (of realization) as enjoined by the three[1] Vedas, Sâmkhya,[2] Yoga,[3] Pâsupata[4] doctrine and Vaishnava[5] Sâstras. Persons following different paths—straight or crooked—according as they consider that this path is best or that one is proper due to the difference in temperaments, reach Thee[6] alone just as rivers enter the ocean.

[1] *Three Vedas*—Rik, Sama, and Yajus.

[2] *Sâmkhya*—as propounded by Kapila.

[3] *Yoga*—as propounded by Patanjali.

[4] *Pâsupata doctrine*—which says that Pasupati or Siva is the creator of the world and that liberation can be had by meditating on Him.

[5] *Vaishnava Sâstras*—such as Nârada Pancharâtra which inculcate the worship of Vâsudeva or Sri Krishna.

[6] *Thee alone*—Paths are different, but all are unanimous that God alone is the goal.

महोक्षः खट्वाङ्गं परशुरजिनं भस्म फणिनः
कपालञ्चेतीयत्तव वरद तन्त्रोपकरणम् ।
सुरास्तान्तामृद्धिं दधति तु भवद्भ्रूप्रणिहितां
न हि स्वात्मारामं विषयमृगतृष्णा भ्रमयति ॥ ८ ॥

वरद O giver of boons **महोक्षः** great bull **खट्वाङ्गं** leg of a bedstead **परशुः** axe **अजिनं** the tiger-skin **भस्मः** ashes **फणिनः** snakes **कपालं** a human skull **च** and **इति** this **तव** Thy **तन्त्रोपकरणं** principal possesions, **तु** though **सुराः** gods **भवद्-भ्रूप्रणिहितां** given by the casting of eyes **तां तां** those **ऋद्धिं** treasures **दधति** enjoy **हि** indeed **विषयमृगतृष्णा** the mirage of sense-objects **स्वात्मारामं** one whose delight is in the Self **न** not **भ्रमयति** deludes.

8. O Giver of boons, a great bull,[1] a wooden club, an axe, a tiger-skin, ashes, a human skull and the like—these are Thy sole possessions, though[2] by the mere casting of eyes Thou gave to gods great treasures which they enjoy. Indeed,[3] the mirage of sense-objects cannot delude one whose delight is in the Self.

[1] *Bull etc.*—Bull is used for riding. The club and the axe serve as weapons. Tiger-skin is the substitute for cloth. Ashes are used for besmearing the body with. Snakes are a sort of ornaments to His body. Human skulls serve the purpose of drinking cups.

[2] *Though etc.*—His style of living is abjectly poor, though at His mere wish gods possess infinite treasures.

[3] *Indeed etc.*—The reason why He lives so poorly is that sense-objects have no attraction for one whose delight is in the Self.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

. . . We have made in the Editorial a general survey of *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* edited by Sir S. Radhakrishnan and Prof. J. H. Muirhead. In it, our readers will have a bird's eye-view of the philosophical doctrines upheld by some eminent Indian philosophers of the day. . . . *Spiritual Talks of Swami Brahmananda* contains, in this issue, some valuable hints for spiritual life. . . . *Eternal life* by Prof. Nicholas de Roerich is thought-provoking and also illuminating. . . . Prof. Sheo Narayan Lal Shrivastava answers Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the author of *Indian Thought and its Development*, who raises some unjustifiable points in his analyses of Indian thought. . . . Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri is well known as a writer on philosophy and Indian culture. *The Inner Dyarchy* advocates the need of a religious philosophy and a philosophical religion. . . . Wolfram H. Koch gives us an interesting account of *Fray Juan De Los Angeles and his writings*. In it, our readers will find how a Western mystic realizes in his life the Indian conception of Madhura Bhâva, the highest form of Bhakti. . . . *The Philosophy of the Vedas* by Swami Prabhavananda deals mainly with the origin of the *Vedas*, the import of the

teachings of the *Vedas*, and an account of the philosophy of the Samhitâs, the Brâhmanas, and the Âranyakas.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN INDIA

A good deal of what goes by the name of Christian missionary activity has long been suspect in India. Some recent happenings tend only to confirm the suspicion. Soon after Dr. Ambedkar startled the world by his stunt the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Picket in England referred publicly to the millions in India who were only waiting for an opportunity to satisfy their spiritual hunger by embracing Christianity. No one knows where their holinesses found evidence of such a hunger. The circumstances of such an unthinking utterance do not point to a worthy inspiration. In India the threat appeared to have infused fresh energy into the activity of the missionaries who began increasingly to flirt with the Harijan community with a view to winning the latter's allegiance to their official creed. To gain their end they do not hesitate to enforce their spiritual arguments with various kinds of subtle temptations to which palsied limbs and paralysed intellects are heir. The way most of the missionaries are working here has become quite a serious problem. Doubtless, certain sections of the people derive some amount of good socially from their activities. But it is more than counterbalanced in a hundred ways. In general the effect of their activities has been to cut away sections of the people from the moorings of their indigenous culture, to alienate their sympathies for their neighbours, society, and country and to make them ape the habits and manners of an alien culture. There is much truth in the gibe that Christianity means 'Europeanity'. We have long felt that India needs to be taught no religion by the missionaries and that if they are to be of any help to India from the social standpoint they must radically change the method and spirit of their work. They must make absolutely no mental reservations in what they outwardly profess. In this conection we give below portions of answers by Gandhiji to questions about the Christian missions in India in an issue of *Harijan* with which we find ourselves in complete agreement.

Answering to a query whether he saw any reason for Christian workers in the West to come here Gandhiji replied, "In the manner in which they are working there would seem to be no room for them. Quite unconsciously they do harm to themselves and so to us . . . . They do harm to those amongst whom they work and those amongst whom they do not work, i.e. the harm is done to the whole of India. They present a Christianity of their belief but not the message of Jesus as I understand it. . . . " Asked if there could not be a different approach free from such defects he answered, " . . . . That can only happen if there are no mental reservations. If you come to give education, you must give it after the Indian pattern. You should sympathetically study our institutions and suggest improvements. But you come with preconceived notions and seek to destroy. If people from the West came on Indian terms, they would supply a felt want. When Americans come and ask me what service they could render, I tell them : 'If you dangle your millions before us, you will make beggars of us and demoralize us.' But in one thing I do not mind being a beggar. I would beg of you your scientific talent. You can ask your engineers and agricultural experts to place their services at our disposal. They must not come to

us as our lords and masters but as volunteer workers. A paid servant would throw up his job any day, but a volunteer worker could not do so. If such come the more the merrier. A Mysore engineer (who is a Pole) has sent me a box of hand-made tools made to suit village requirements. Supposing an engineer of that character comes and studies our tools and our cottage machines and suggests improvements in them, he would be of great service. If you do this kind of work in a religious spirit you will have derived the message of Jesus."

SCIENTISTS KICK AT THEIR OWN CHILD

Some have wondered whether Dr. Einstein did not present the spectacle of kicking a dead horse when, at the last convocation of the New York University, he attacked the type of reasoning that has led to the formulation of the Nietzscheian doctrine of *Vebermensch* and the Bernhardi school of military philosophy that still dominate some countries. The analogy between the jungle and communal life is said to have been beaten down often enough. But is the horse really dead after all? On the contrary it seems to be more alive than ever both as a theory and as a fact. One needs only to remember the missions 'to civilize,' the 'heroic conceptions of life' and the covert assumptions behind a host of activities reminiscent of the law of the jungle.

In a vein similar to that of Dr. Einstein Professor Julian Huxley asked at the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science whether the aim of evolution should not be "to let the mammal die within us, so as the more effectively to permit the man to live." The extension of the Darwinian principles of competition and survival of the fittest, he said, was anachronistic and belonged to a ruthless past. The tiger and the ape within us are the vestiges of a past struggle and not the harbingers of what we may become.

If now a few scientists find themselves disposed to kick at their own child they do so from a sense of value for which they are unable to find any justification in their science. Thomas Huxley failed to discover any explanation of the feelings of love and compassion in man in the Darwinian formulæ. The earlier Darwinians, however, in their eagerness for an all-embracing law assimilated the man to the animal and thus produced a philosophy which excused the nourishment of the worst traits of humanity as its real assets. If staunch Darwinians are now inclined to separate part of man from the animal and to look upon his humane qualities as the promise of a new evolution it is a sign either of their unreasonableness or their willingness to recognize a higher approach to truth than mere science. For, in so far as they adhere to the higher values and yet are unable to account for them, they talk without authority and without effect. No man can in the long run continue to pay homage to illusory ideas which are grounded in mere pious wishes. Such a situation can only be avoided if they openly recognize other means of arriving at true knowledge than those of sense-organs and reasoning. It is only when values are grasped as expressions of intuited realities and intuition is regarded as an authentic approach to the heart of reality that the allegiance of man can be turned away from the goals of flesh.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE NEW EVOLUTION. THE NEW EVOLUTION OF MAN SERIES—Bk. I. By Narayana Kausika. N. G. V. Aiyer. Nemmara (Cochin), S. India. Pp. 171. Price Indian. Re. 1-8 as. Foreign 3s. 6d.

The work under review is the first of a contemplated series entitled 'The New Evolution of Man Series' whose object is to present "the philosophy of the new way of life for humanity for its progress towards the right ends of life", and to outline a plan of social and political organization for the realization of those ends. The first book aims to set out broadly only the theoretical basis and the philosophical background of the 'new civilization' to come. It contains a point of view that does not strike as novel. In the new evolution the objective knowledge of science has to be subordinated to the higher ends of life which are revealed in the subjective experiences of humanity. The supreme values that our rarer insights reveal must dictate the employment of power that science endows us with. Today mankind in possession of this power is like a child who has been given an extremely dangerous weapon to toy with and who does not know its right use. The fundamental postulate of this view evolution is the unity of all existence. The desires and instincts of man have to be slowly trained and sublimated for the realization of this end. The goal is set both for the individual and society. Such an ideal naturally involves a revaluation of current values. The present social and political organizations have, therefore, to be revolutionized. The society of the future must for the benefit of all assume some such shape which the leaders of the early Indian community tried to give to their own and which, perhaps, Plato dreamed in his *Republic*. In the political and economic sphere a type of liberal socialism or a curbed capitalism must take the place of present anarchic economic conditions. The author eyes with disfavour the political and economic shibboleths of equality.

The author is inclined to find support for his postulate of new evolution from the data of certain sciences. For this purpose he employs ample quotations from the writings of scientists like William McDougall, Eddington, Taylor, and others. But the voices of science are discordant today, and it is premature to assert that certain hypotheses shadow to us the image of reality which man contacts in moments of deeper contemplation.

THE SIDDHÂNTALESASANGRAHA OF APPAYYA DIKSITA. VOL. I. Edited with an English translation. By S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, *Department of Indian Philosophy, University of Madras. Pp. 413. Price Rs. 5.*

The *Siddhântalesasangraha* is one of the earliest works of the celebrated Indian philosopher, Appayya Dikshita. The book was written by the author at a comparatively early stage of his mental development. It shows undoubtedly his mastery of the varieties of Advaita doctrine but exhibits very little of his own genius, except in the discussion of Sarvamukti at the end of the fourth chapter. The doctrine of Sarvamukti or Universal Salvation is clearly advocated by the author and it is in the light of this doctrine that he discards certain other views pertaining to Advaita philosophy. The value of this book, the merits of and the difficulties in the doctrine of Sarvamukti have been discussed at length by the learned translator in the Introductory portion of the present volume. They give a critical survey of many important questions concerning Advaita doctrines and as such will be found highly interesting and informative to a general reader. The translator has taken pains in preparing an exhaustive analytical table of the contents in the four chapters of the book. It will help one in having a bird's-eye view of all the discussions found in them. The translation has been done in good English with very useful notes on important and difficult topics in which readers may expect some hints as well as references. The translator has earned the gratitude of the English-reading public by doing full justice to the task he has chosen for the spread of Indian philosophy in original Sanskrit. The printing, paper, and get-up of the book deserve all praise.

Bengali

SURYAMUKHI. By Dilip Kumar Roy. Gurudas Chattopadhyaya & Sons. 203-1-1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. 442. Price Rs. 3.

This new publication of Srijut Roy more than sustains the reputation he already

enjoys as a poet who combines genuine poetic inspiration with high literary skill. This book of poems is divided principally into three sections. The first consists of poetical versions of a few parables of Ramakrishna, the second of certain letters in verse and the third of lyrics. The appendix contains a number of thoughtful letters in English on religious and philosophical subjects written by Sri Aurobindo, Krishnaprem, Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, Sister Raihana, and the author. There are also a few translations of poems by A. E., Aurobindo, and others.

A poet like Srijut Roy who weaves in delicate forms the thoughts that well up from the depths of his devotional heart is not a common enough sight today in Bengal. But what specially distinguishes him from those with whom he shares his designation is his recognition of the limitations of a mere poet. He believes that the grandeur and immensity of the vision which a mystic and a seer possess far exceeds that of an earth-bound poet whose glimpses of the True and the Beautiful in rare moments of poetical insight are faulty and at best partial. This belief finds a most artistic expression in the dramatic lyric entitled "The Seer and the Poet". It is difficult to over-emphasize the point today when Truth and Beauty are in danger of being fully equated with a mere poetic vision. Real poetic vision may partake of the mystic spirit and realization to a certain extent but it falls far short of a mystic's *knowledge*.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on Sunday, the 14th March.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Adra

The Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was observed here in a befitting manner in September last.

About 2,000 poor persons were fed and 200 pieces of new cloth were distributed.

Competitions in recitations and essay-writing were held and medals and prizes were awarded to the winners at a public meeting, held under the presidency of Mr. N. Senapati, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum.

Swami Nirlepanandaji of Belur Math, N. Ahmed, Dist. Medical Officer, Gaya, and Mr. Moses of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Calcutta, gave short speeches on the occasion.

Baniyachong

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary was celebrated at Baniyachong. A public meeting was held in this connection at No. 5 and 6 Zaminderi Kachari Bari, Mr. Jogendra Mohan Palit, Manager of No. 1 Zaminderi Estate, presiding. Swami Gopeswarananda and Swami Chandikananda, among others, spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. This was followed by a well-attended ladies' meeting. Other prominent features of the celebration were the feeding of the poor, offering of Puja to the Master and the organization of a boat procession.

Narkeldanga

Mr. B. C. Chatterjee, Bar-at-Law, M.L.C., who presided over a largely attended meeting at the Sir Gooroodas Institute Hall, Narkeldanga, under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary celebrations, delivered a highly illuminating speech.

"Sri Ramakrishna" he said, "appeared as a protest against the contemporary sceptical spirit of the age. It was Sri Ramakrishna who showed that religious experience is not a myth and that the eternal truths of scriptures are not to be shelved aside as fantasies".

Swami Sundarananda and Mr. Sundara Sarma then addressed the audience.

Kamarpukur and Joyrambati

The quiet villages of Kamarpukur and Joyrambati were the scenes of great human activity in January last when more than half a lac pilgrims, hailing from different parts of the country, such as Bombay, Assam, South India, C.P., U.P., Behar and Orissa assembled there to pay their homage to Sri Ramkrishna and the Holy Mother at their birth-places. The pilgrimage was

undertaken in pursuance of the general scheme of the celebration of Sri Ramkrishna Centenary.

As usual, special puja, bhoga, kirtan and kathakatha were held with great solemnity.

The next day, another celebration was organized by the local people in co-operation with those of neighbouring villages of Hooghly district. The feeding of the poor and a public meeting were two of the main features of the second day's celebration. More than one thousand poor were fed.

At the public meeting which was presided over by Sj. Pramatha Nath Roy, the Head Master of a neighbouring High School, Swami Sambudhananda and others spoke.

At Joyrambati, special huts were erected round a giant banyan tree for the accommodation of pilgrims. A life size photo of the Master tastefully decorated by the students of the Ramkrishna Mission Industrial School was placed in the middle.

In the morning special puja was offered at the Matri Mandir which was followed by kirtan and bhajan. At about 11 A.M. a great public meeting was held at which Sj. Barada Prasanna Roy, a retired Sub-Judge, who had the privilege of meeting the Master, in his life-time, presided. The meeting was addressed by, among others, Dr. Satish Ch. Chatterjee, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., Swami Jnanatmananda, Swami Sambhudhananda and Sj. Girindranath Sarkar. A Sanskrit Pandit of the locality read a Sanskrit Stotra composed by himself for the occasion.

The meeting was followed by a mass feeding of Naranarayanas in which about twelve thousand people participated and which brought the function to a close.

The Exhibition in Calcutta

The Ramakrishna Centenary Committee organizes an Exhibition from the 1st of this month. The Exhibition is expected to be a very important medium for the display of all that creative India has to show from the Mohenjo-Daro times until our own days. Among other things the Exhibition will demonstrate that the spiritual messages of Ramakrishna, the prophet of modern India, are synthetic enough to comprise, on the one hand, the activities in the domain of arts, crafts, industries as well as domestic and worldly life generally and, on the other hand, the ideals of self-control, zelf-sacrifice, and social service. The Exhibition will seek to illustrate Indian Culture in its historic developments and in all its phases. It will be of an All-India character representing the different races and religions. It will be composed in the main of illustrative materials, old paintings, diagrams, photographs, statues, relics, etc.

A special Pavilion will be set apart to illustrate the evolution of Indian arts and letters embracing the different schools of literature, architecture, scripture and painting as well as music. The religious institutions of the Indian people also will receive special recognition.

In connection with the diverse aspects of modern life, while emphasis will be laid on handicrafts and hand-made products, a section shall be devoted to the new phases of modern Indian industries planned and carried out by Indians with Indian capital and labour.

There will be a special Ladies' section to exhibit the contributions which Indian women have made to the development of Indian civilisation. In this section, women's contribution to Indian culture in the past, as well as women's activity in modern life will likewise be illustrated by suitable exhibits and also by specimens of weaving, embroidery, paintings, alpanas, and other handicrafts.

PUBLIC RECEPTION TO SWAMI VIJOYANANDA

A public reception was given to Swami Vijayananda on the 26th of January, 1937 by the citizens of Calcutta at the Albert Hall, as a mark of their warm appreciation of the service he has rendered to the cause of Vedanta in South America. The meeting was held under the presidency of Maharaja Srish Chandra Nandi of Kashimbazar and was largely attended by the public which included Sir Harisankar Paul, the Mayor and other distinguished persons of the city. In reply to the address of welcome the Swami conveyed his grateful thanks to the public for the honour they had shown him and gave a graphic and inspiring account of his manifold experiences in the foreign land in the fulfilment of the mission for which he was deputed to Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina, by the Ramkrishna Mission. The President spoke very feelingly on the occasion and the meeting terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to all by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar.