PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

LOVE

By Christina Albers

O Love, that flows
Through bush and rose,
Whispers through ev'ry tree !
It lingers on the ev'ning breeze
And murmurs over summer seas,
Sweet Mothersoul of Thee.

On field and stream,
Where flowers dream,
Or clouds in masses roll,
On starry height, the waves below,—
Thy Spirit through it all doth flow
And whispers to the soul.

O fair and sweet,
At Thy dear feet
Or on Thy motherbreast,
(As child in mother's warm embrace
Is lulled to sleep in that fond place)
We'll find eternal rest.

SWAMI SUDDHANANDA: IN MEMORIAM

We announce with profound sorrow the passing away of Srimat Swami Suddhananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, on Sunday, the 23rd of October last, at 8-40 a.m. at the Belur Math. For some time past he had been suffering from high blood-pressure, and since Tuesday, the 18th of October, he was attacked with high fever attended with uraemia and hiccup. The attack proved too much for the aged body, and expert doctors' advice and treatment were of no avail. He passed away in the presence of a large number of monks, admirers, and devotees. His funeral rites were performed at the Belur Math premises.

Swami Suddhanandaji's death removes one of the most outstanding figures of the Order and snaps perhaps the most important living link which could be regarded as binding intimately the first generation of the great children of Sri Ramakrishna to the ones that followed. A devoted disciple of the great Swami Vivekananda, in whom the principles laid down by the great Master for the shaping of life and the regulation and governance of the Order were almost incarnate, he was the first to occupy the Presidential chair of the Order after the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. To many younger members of the organization his life and action helped to set the norm for the direction and guidance of the activities of the Mission as well as of their personal lives in accordance with the ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda. And justly enough his great devotion to his master, his long and close association with him as well as his intellectual honesty, sincerity of purpose, extreme clarity of thinking and firm hold on principles which he could contemplate with the utmost dispassion and detachment and for which he could even put up a most vehement fight with the most august personages eminently fitted him for that role. The Ramakrishna Order owes him an unrepayable debt for his invaluable services in connection with the building up of its great tradition and the bequeathing of it to posterity.

Swami Suddhananda belonged to that early group of young men who, inspired by the soul-stirring teachings of Swami Vivekananda, renounced the world and joined the Ramakrishna Order. He was born in 1872 A.D. in Calcutta, his father's name being Ashutosh Chakravarty. Before he took orders, he was known as Sudhir Chandra Chakravarty. An innate slant towards spirituality early inclined him to the study of scriptures and the practice of various kinds of religious exercises. This natural bent for holiness and purity deepened with years till at last a divine nostalgia seized him, which urged him to seek the company of holy men and finally brought him into contact with the followers and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna at Baranagore and Kankurgachhi as early as 1890. Though a brilliant student of the university, before whom lay a promising academic career, the studies lost all flavour for him while he was preparing for the Degree Course. He gave them up soon and gravitated more and more towards the study and practice of spirituality at home.

In 1897 when Swami Vivekananda returned from the West he came into close contact with the Swami and immediately joined the Order. He was

initiated in that very year by the Swamiji. He accompanied his Master in his tour in Western India. He also went on a pilgrimage to Mansarowar in Tibet. During his travels with the Master as well as at the Math he had great opportunities to feel the Master's personality and imbibe his ideas and message. He was dearly loved by the Swami, who would often very affectionately style him as *Khoka* (child). The Master not only had love for the disciple but also had great faith in his qualities and entrusted him with works of utmost importance for the realization and propagation of his ideas.

He was the Swami's amanuensis in drawing up the original rules and regulations of the Order and at the instruction of the Master held classes with a view to introducing his mates and other new recruits to a knowledge of the scriptures. The early diary of the Math, which will always remain an invaluable document, owes its existence largely to his efforts. His services in connection with the translation of almost all the English works of Swami Vivekananda into Bengali, which he discharged in a most creditable manner, constitutes one of his most tangible contributions to the country and the Order. To-day we can realize to some extent how valuable these works have been in spreading the virile message of Swami Vivekananda to the remotest corners of the province of Bengal, how they have inspired and vitalized new movements, and how they have helped many to form the supreme resolution of their lives.

Under most trying conditions which would have scared away many a stout heart, he assisted Swami Trigunatitananda in editing the *Udbodhan*, the Bengali organ of the Ramakrishna Order, when it was started in 899. Subsequently he became its edito. and ably conducted it for about ten years. He became a trustee of the Ramakrishna Math in 1903 and afterwards Joint-Secretary of the Mission. In 1927 he succeeded Swami Saradananda, the first Secretary of the Mission and held that office till 1934. After the passing away of Swami Akhandananda, he became the Vice-President of the Order in March, 1937, and became President in May last on the demise of Swami Vijnanananda.

For a number of years Swami Suddhananda was also closely associated with the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta and the Dacca branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, into both of which he infused a new life by his untiring efforts. He had travelled widely in India and possessed intimate knowledge of the working of most of the centres of the Ramakrishna Order. Wherever he went his artless simplicity and integrity would remove all barriers, and all the inmates of the centre from the most senior ones to the tiro would confide to him their intimate problems, wants, and difficulties. Besides, his habit of clear thinking and close scrutiny as well as his gifted memory always made him a most trustworthy and rich storehouse of information.

Rare and excellent virtues found company in him in a most striking manner. He was an erudite scholar, a clear speaker, a forceful writer, an able teacher, a precise thinker and, above all, a holy person of transparent purity, simplicity, and integrity. Deeply versed in the scriptures, his mastery of the principal Upanishads, the *Gita* and the *Brahma Sutras* was specially remarkable. And in this respect it is not easy to find out his equal. Since the passing away of Swami Vivekananda he was in a great measure responsible for the ideological aspect of the training of the young members of the Order,

and numerous persons had their introduction to the scriptures and the spirit of Swamiji through him. As a teacher he had his uniqueness. He would himself seek out students and organize them into a class. To-day there are very few in the Order, who have not been privileged to read something or other with him.

His intellectual qualities as a man of learning and accomplishment stood out in bold relief. It was a delight to discuss and study with him. He would pursue a word or a passage until it yielded up its last shred of meaning and stood bereft of all obscurities. It was the furthest from him to gloss over anything, and everything he taught was precise, definite, and clear as daylight. The long habit of accurate thinking and intellectual honesty gave him a wonderful insight into the obscure import of words and passages; he would never be drawn astray even for a while from the questions at issue and be lost in a tangle of vain discussions.

Outwardly one may miss in his life what is ordinarily understood to be *tapasya* or religious austerities. He passed most of his days in the whirlpool of intense activities in connection with the Order. But whoever came into touch with him realized that he exemplified in a most remarkable way the principles of Karma-Yoga preached by Swami Vivekananda and that work was worship to him. He did not so much stress the character of the work or its extensiveness; but he would lay all the emphasis he could command upon its quality and intensity. To him the means were as great as the end. Work also revealed the other outstanding traits of his character. He was a bold fighter whose heart never quailed before personalities for the vindication of principles. Alone among his peers, he could challenge with reason combined with respect the decisions of the elders to whom he stood in the position of a disciple. And if it be true to say that only a man free from selfish desires can discuss things with absolute dispassion and weigh arguments justly in the balance of reason without being swayed by extraneous considerations, then surely his was a mind which was purged of personal considerations of all kinds.

Simple and guileless as a child, he was absolutely straight and outspoken in his speech and manners, and far above pretences of all kinds. His outspokenness and disclaimers about personal achievements would appear shocking to some, but those who have tried to rise above shams and to be honestly religious know what precious qualities and tremendous development of character they betokened. Nothing was secret to him as nothing is private to a child, and he would lay bare his most intimate experiences and information to all and sundry. There was nothing of that reserve about him which often surrounds great persons and stands as a barrier between them and the multitude. He could be approached by all without any fear or uneasiness at all times. For this reason there is hardly any other person whose relation to the individual members of the Order have been so intimate and far-flung. His simplicity and integrity inspired a kind of security which disarmed all fears and emboldened all to open their hearts to him, and every one was sure to get his pangs assuaged and his troubles smoothed or solved by his never-failing kindness, sympathy, and counsel. His demise therefore removes a figure to whom one could readily turn for help and guidance in the troubled moments of one's life.

Nature had endowed him with a powerful memory upon which things and events left almost indelible impressions Thanks to this he could relate

with minute detail incidents and happenings which lay remote in time. This gift also made him an almost living history of the Order. Hour after hour he would regale his hearers with elaborate descriptions of the early history of the Math and the incidents in the lives of the great Swamis who went before. Though these do not lend themselves to quantitative measurement, many members of the Order realize how valuable they have been in their comprehension of the unique spirit and tradition of the institution. And to the last he retained in the fullest measure his exceptional keenness and alertness of mind, though time left severe scars on his frail body drooping under the weight of age.

His personal belongings were of the minimum and they barely met his needs. Often his devotees and admirers would present him with gifts which he would rarely use for himself. He would dispose most of them immediately. He had an exceptionally kind heart for the poor, and there are many students and persons who are indebted to him for various kinds of help. If anybody related his need or woe to him and if it lay within his power to help him in any way, his mind could never rest at ease until he found out a means to remove the want or distress. And he never forgot such appeals of the needy. During his last illness a blind lady who had expressed her desire to be initiated by him had to be refused as the illness proved to be serious. On the 20th of October last, as he felt slightly better after a most severe attack which nearly proved fatal, he enquired most eagerly about the lady who had to be turned away. The incident speaks for itself.

We have tried to convey in a feeble manner the greatness of the personality in whom a host of rare virtues combined in a spectacular way. Language is an abstract symbol; the sweetness and charm of a character escapes through its texture, however beautifully it might be woven, even as the glory of a sunset eludes the scientist's cold analysis of the phenomenon. Further, incidents and events acquire deeper and deeper import with the deepening of the experience of the observer. We have represented in the barest way some aspects of a life whose depths lie beyond our sounding. But there can hardly be any doubt that he will ever occupy an important niche in the hall of the notables of the Order, and that his holy life and lofty character will always remain a great source of inspiration to us and to others who are still to come.

Om Santih! Santih!! Santih!!!

RELIGION THE WORLD NEEDS

By the Editor

I

Objectively viewed, every individual appears to our naked vision as distinct from the rest of his species as every other object in the economy of Nature. Everyone has got his own peculiar traits, his own religion, his own line of growth and development. No two persons are alike in their make-up, physical or otherwise. This bewildering variety in the phenomena of life cannot but baffle the scrutiny of even the boldest of intellects, and as such any attempt to find out a golden link of unity in this world of

diversity appears to be almost as unprofitable as a blind pursuit after the *ignis fatuus* of a marshy land. But still to the enlightened vision of seers, this world of multiplicity has yielded all its secrets. They have visualized that there is one persistent Reality,—an abiding Substratum on which the cosmic dance of phenomena has been going on from eternity. They have realized that from the highest to the lowest, from Brahmâ down to the minutest particle of dust, there is but one pervasive Reality, 'through whose fear all elements function,—the fire burns, the sun gives light to the universe, the moon sheds its lustre, the air blows and the Death does its own duty.' It has also been their experience that this world, bereft of its names and forms, is one with Brahman, and that every individual, organic or inorganic, is in essence the same, the apparent difference being due to human ignorance which brings about a dichotomy in what is otherwise a homogeneous entity. This identity in essence of all beings—the identity of the individual with the Universal—is one of the boldest pronouncements of the Vedanta, the crown of Indian philosophy. In this age when scientific investigations are pulverizing the religious beliefs of mankind like masses of porcelain, the finding out of a broad background of unity in the domain of apparently conflicting and heterogeneous religious beliefs of diverse races and beings—a basis on which all men and women, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, can stand in mutual love and fellowship, is one of the most momentous problems of the day. We shall try to see how far the religion of Vedanta can meet the exigency of the situation and furnish a common forum for all types of humanity, however diverse it may be in its racial instincts, national outlook or religious idealism.

II

To the Hindu the various religions of the world are but so many attempts of the human soul to grasp the Infinite, each being determined by the condition of its birth and association. These religions are not contradictory or antagonistic but are various phases of one Eternal Religion applied to different planes of existence and to the opinions of various minds and races. In this world of multiplicity, one single system of thought can hardly fit into the diverse mental make-up of mankind. Every one is born with his own individual fund of ideas and mind-stuff, and naturally it would be an impossible feat to prescribe the same method of approach to the Reality for all and sundry. That is why numerous faiths or systems have come into being to allow all types of minds infinite scope and freedom for their unfoldment according to their respective traits and lines of growth. Had there been no clash or differentiation of thought, had we all to think alike, 'we would be,' in the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'like Egyptian mummies in a museum looking vacantly at one another's face.' Indeed the greater the number of sects in the world, the more the chances of people getting religion: only a fully equipped shop can minister to the needs and demands of different classes of customers. But such a breadth of vision and catholicity of spirit has become a rare commodity on earth at the present age. No day passes without a sect casting aspersion on the faiths of its neighbours or coming into violent clash with the adherents of another religion even on the flimsiest of grounds. This blind fanaticism has been responsible in no small measure for the disintegration of human society, loss of collective peace and security, as well as for the bitterness of feeling between man and man,

between nation and nation. And naturally did Swami Vivekananda declare, "There is nothing that has brought to man more blessings than religion, yet at the same time, there is nothing that has brought more horror than religion. Nothing has brought more peace and love than religion; nothing has engendered fiercer hatred than religion. Nothing has made the brotherhood of man more tangible than religion; nothing has bred more bitter enmity between man and man than religion. Nothing has built more charitable institutions, more hospitals for men, and even for animals, than religion; nothing has deluged the world with more blood than religion." The reason for this rancorous feeling and hatred is not far to seek. Man, born in a particular church, hardly realizes the saving truth that the aim of every religion is to teach its votary to outgrow its external paraphernalia through a natural process of mental evolution. It is indeed good to be born in a church but to die in it is a mark of moral stagnation and lack of spiritual illumination. With the gradual unfoldment of his inner being, the aspirant after Truth must outgrow the limitations of his church, attain to a synthetic vision and view with love and sympathy all the faiths that are extant in the world. Truth is not the monopoly of any particular religion. It is the common heritage of all. The eyes of the spiritually enlightened one are lifted far above the jarring multitude of rites and rituals—above the externals of religion, and get a clear vision of the grand chord of unity underlying the scintillating variety of forms. The realization of this fundamental unity where all contradictions meet in a beautiful synthesis is the ultimate end of religion. It is due to the woeful want of psychic unfoldment and consequent failure to develop the requisite inwardness of vision that people begin to quarrel with one another with all the ferocity of brutes to the eternal shame and disgrace of humanity. But, any attempt to lower the sacred and lofty ideal of religion for all these aberrations of human nature, shows only the critical perversity of those moderners who suffer either from some kind of intellectual obsession or have not even a nodding acquaintance with the scriptures, far less with the fundamentals of spiritual life.

As already said, the multiplicity of faiths in this world of ours is a psychological necessity—and must exist, in spite of ourselves, till the end of time for the good of mankind. But to think that *religions in the plural* are needed only to see the defects of the other and to expose the hollowness of one another betrays the utter lack of wisdom and sanity of the critics. For, man is not a machine and his growth does not depend upon a stereotyped method of spiritual exercise. So it is that the Vedanta accommodates every phase of human thought in its magnificent structure to answer to the spiritual needs of different individuals. It has, after due analysis, generalized all religious ideals and aspirations into three principal systems, *viz.*, dualism, qualified monism and absolute monism, according to the graduated scale of spiritual experiences in the lives of different persons. And in these three systems we find a gradual working up of the human mind towards higher and higher ideals, till everything is merged in that wonderful unity which is reached in the Advaita Vedanta. Thus from the highest flight of the Advaita down to the level of image worship or fetishism, each and all have their rightful place in this monumental edifice of Vedantism. No doubt all the religious systems of the world—those of the Christians, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians and the Hindus, to mention only a few, vary in their tone

and outlook, in external forms and ceremonials; but it is an undeniable fact that all these different faiths when taken together, range from the extreme form of dualism to the highest conception of Absolutism and thus cover the entire gamut of the spiritual experience of humanity. And it is the glory of Vedantism that all this variety of systems embodying the different levels of religious consciousness and experience, stands beautifully harmonized and accommodated within its catholic fold without any harm to the integrity of any system of thought. The Indian Vedantists, therefore, do not find fault with the preceding steps or processes, inasmuch as they hold that man is travelling not from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower truth to higher truth, and these different stages mark only the gradual psychological development of the human soul which reaches the highest pinnacle of perfection in the realization of the oneness of all being.

III

But religion—specially the objective of religion—has been viewed differently by different leaders of thought. Immanuel Kant defines religion as 'recognizing all our duties as divine command', Comte finds it in 'the worship of humanity,' Huxley in 'reverence and love for the Ethical Idea, and the desire to realise that ideal in life,' Mill in 'the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires towards an ideal object recognised as of the highest excellence and as rightly paramount over all selfish objects of desire,' Edward Caird in 'the expression of his (man's) ultimate attitude to the universe, the summed-up meaning and purport of his whole consciousness of things,' and Dr. Martineau in 'a belief in an everlasting God, that is, a Divine mind and will, ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind.' Besides, there are other thinkers such as Seneca, Alexander Bain, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Froude, Carlyle and the like, who have made similar attempts to define religion in their own way. But none has been bold enough to proclaim (as Vedanta has done) that religion is the realization of the identity of the individual soul with the Absolute,—the realization of the oneness of all being, the grandest philosophical thought which has become the practical spirituality of the Indian people. Man, says Swami Vivekananda, is nothing but an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is located in one spot, and God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose centre is everywhere. Man can become like God and acquire control over the whole universe if he multiplies infinitely his centre of self-consciousness. Religion of man is therefore being and becoming: it is realization. It is the infinite expansion of the human ego or individuality until it merges in the Absolute, the Supreme Reality pervading the entire cosmos. India, nay, the whole world stands in need of such a Universal Religion which can satisfy all types of minds and meet the multiple demands of humanity in its gradual ascent from the lowest stage of religious consciousness to the apogee of spiritual realization.

The religion of Vedanta, as already pointed out, possesses elements which can legitimately claim to be the Universal Religion the world needs to-day. Vedantism, unlike other systems of thought, does not depend for its validity upon the life and teachings of any particular prophet or a seer. It is in fact the embodiment of eternal principles that transcend all spatio-temporal relations and changes; whereas the fabric of other faiths is more or less built on the histori-

city of the life of an individual spiritual genius. When the historicity of such a founder is questioned or undermined through a process of investigation, the entire edifice, however grand and sublime, is shaken to its foundation, and eventually crumbles to pieces. There is no gainsaying the fact that it is through universal principles alone, and not through such a personality, that a greater portion of humanity can be united in thought. The God of Vedanta is moreover an impersonal God; but it has a personal God as well, and provides infinite scope for the play of the manifold ideas and emotions of mankind. No other religion in the world furnishes such a brilliant galaxy of incarnations, prophets and seers, and waits for infinitely more, and provides unto every individual such latitude and freedom in the choice of his ideal for his spiritual growth and unfoldment according to the predilection he has for the path either of work, devotion, meditation of knowledge. This universality as reflected in all the varied aspects of the Vedantic thought is the *raison d'etre* of all religious toleration in India. This is indeed the reason why sympathy and catholicity have secured a permanent foothold in the citadel of action in this country. That is why the Hindus build mosques for the Mohammedans and churches for the Christians, and that is why in India religion did never want armies to march before its path and clear its way; for true wisdom and philosophy do not march upon bleeding human bodies but fall like gentle dews silently on the lacerated hearts of mankind to soothe and comfort them. To crown all, even the latest findings of Science are in complete agreement with the rational Gospel of the Vedanta. "The modern researches of the West," says Swami Vivekananda, "have demonstrated through physical means the oneness and solidarity of the whole universe: how physically speaking, you and I, the sun, moon and stars, are but little wavelets in the midst of an infinite ocean of matter ; how Indian psychology demonstrated ages ago that, similarly, both body and mind are but mere names or little wavelets in the ocean of matter, the Samashthi, and how, going one step further, it is also shown in the Vedanta that behind that idea of the unity of the whole show, the real soul is one. There is but one soul throughout the universe, all is but one existence." Thus from the highest spiritual flight of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest scientific discoveries seem like echoes, to the lowest ideas of idolatry and agnosticism, ceremonial worship and atheism, each and all have a place in the religion of Vedanta. The humanity is seeking this new impulse of thought as the universal spiritual pabulum to satisfy the hunger of its soul.

IV

The trend of events in the modern world shows that the civilization of the Occident stands to-day almost on the brink of ruin. The inhuman atrocities that are being perpetrated in the sacred name of religion and culture, the violence and oppression that blacken the annals of every great nation of the world from day to day set us seriously athinking as to whether or not mankind is once again running along the downward curve of evolution. It is time that this universal message of the Vedanta must come, as it did in the past, to the salvage of humanity. Man cannot live by bread alone. Materialism can hardly bring abiding satisfaction to the human soul. It aggravates desires, and multiplies wants and misery, clash and conflict in life and society. Nothing but unending confusion is the offspring of this soul-killing philosophy of the West.

But it is a hopeful sign of the times that already there are found persons shining on the intellectual horizon of the West, who are dreaming of a religious revival—the dawn of a New Faith that would usher in a period of universal peace in the world. "Out of the trouble and tragedy of these times and the confusion before us," says Mr. H. G. Wells, "there may emerge a moral and intellectual revival, a religious revival, of a simplicity and scope to draw together men of alien races and now discrete traditions, into one common and sustained way of living for the world's service. We cannot foretell the scope and power of such a revival; we cannot produce evidence of its onset. The beginnings of such things are never conspicuous. Great movements of the racial soul come at first 'like a thief in the night,' and then suddenly are discovered to be powerful and world-wide. Religious emotion—stripped of corruptions and freed from its last priestly entanglements—may presently blow through life again like a great wind, bursting the doors and flinging open shutters of the individual life, and making many things possible and easy that in these days of exhaustion seem almost difficult to desire." Moreover, he "finds to-day spreading over the surface of human affairs, as patches of sunshine spread and pass over the hillsides upon a windy day in spring, the idea that there is a happiness in self-devotion greater than any personal gratification or triumph, and a life of mankind greater and more important than the sum of all the individual lives within it."

Swami Vivekananda with his characteristic insight into the future proclaimed many years ago that from India such a tide of Universal Religion would sweep over the whole world. "It would be a religion," he said, "which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true divine nature..... It must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite like the God it will preach; and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahmanic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these and still have infinite space for development, which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being." It is but natural that the man whose life will be moulded in the light of such a lofty idealism, shall entertain deepest regard for every faith, and feel no scruple in going to the mosque of a Mohammedan or the church of a Christian. He will delight in taking refuge in Buddha and his Law and sit in meditation with the Hindu in the forest or in the temple to visualize the supreme light of wisdom that illumines the hearts of all. To him the Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, the Avesta, the Holy Granth and all other sacred books are so many pages, and an infinite number of pages yet remain to be unfolded. *This is the religion the world needs*, and nothing else fulfils the manifold needs of mankind than *this Universal Religion of Vedanta*—the crowning glory of human thought which has become vivid as a beacon at the present age. It stands as a living faith embodying the varied aspirations of humanity and furnishes the much needed forum where all religions can meet and shake hands in a spirit of love and fellowship and build up a synthetic culture on the solid foundation of a universal spiritual idealism providing infinite scope and opportunity for the growth of individual

minds according to their distinctive traits and lines of evolution. "May he who is the Brahman of the Hindus, the Ahura-Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jehova of the Jews, the Father-in-Heaven of the Christians, give strength to us to carry out our noble idea! The star arose in the East; it travelled steadily towards the West, sometimes dimmed and sometimes effulgent, till it made a circuit of the world, and now it is again rising on the very horizon of the East...a thousandfold more effulgent than it ever was before." Will the world welcome it and thereby bring to an end the ever-recurring clash and conflict of ideas and ideals once for all?

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

It was Sunday, the 17th of June, 1883. Sri Ramakrishna had rested for a while in his room in the Dakshineswar Temple.

Sri Ramakrishna (to devotees): Why should it (realization) not be possible in the world? But it is very difficult. Janaka and others returned to the world after they had gained Knowledge. Still there was fear! Even the desireless man of the world has reasons to be apprehensive. Janaka cast down his face on seeing the *Bhairavi;* he felt uneasy at the sight of a woman. The *Bhairavi* said, "O Janaka, you do not appear to have gained Knowledge as yet; you still discriminate between man and woman."

However wary you might be, you are sure to be stained a little if you live in a sooty room.

I have noticed the fine mood of the worldly devotees when they are at worship in silk clothes. And the mood persists even up to the time of light meals. After that they are their old selves;—the appearance again of *rajas* and *tamas*.

Devotion springs from *sattva guna*. But there are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* of devotion. The *sattva* of devotion is the pure *sattva*. When one gets this, the mind does not dwell on anything else except God, and it attends to the body only so far as it is necessary for its preservation.

The Paramahamsa is beyond the three *gunas*. The three *gunas* exist in him and yet do not. He is just like a child, not subject to any of the *gunas*. So the Paramahamsas suffer little children to go to them so that they may ascribe their nature to themselves.

The Paramahamsa cannot hoard. But this is not for the worldly persons; they have to husband things for their family.

The Tantrik Devotee: Does the Paramahamsa have any sense of virtue and vice?

Sri Ramakrishna: Keshab Sen asked me the same question. I replied, "If I continue still further, you won't have any following or adherents." Keshab said, "Then, sir, let it go."

Do you know what are virtue and vice? In the state of a Paramahamsa, one sees that He is the inspirer of both the good and the evil tendencies. Are there not sweet and bitter fruits? Some trees bear sweet fruits, some bitter or sour ones. He has created both the sweet mango tree and the sour hogplum tree.

The Tantrik Devotee: Yes sir, one comes across fields of roses in the mountains. The fields stretch as far as the eye goes.

Sri Ramakrishna: The Paramahamsa sees all these as the lordliness of His *mâyâ*,—the real and the unreal; good and evil, sin and virtue. All these relate to very high experiences. There cannot be any following or adherents (for one) in that state.

The Tantrik Devotee: But then, action bears its fruits.

Sri Ramakrishna: That is also true. Good actions yield good fruits and bad actions bad fruits. If you take chillies, won't they taste hot? These are His *Lilâ*, sport.

The Tantrik Devotee: What's then our remedy? Actions must bear their fruits.

Sri Ramakrishna: What, if they do! It is different with His devotees. . . .

Whoever dies in Benares, no matter whether one be a Brahmin or a street-walker, will become Siva.

When the taking of the name of Hari, of Kâli, or of Râma brings tears to eyes, there is no more any need of twilight devotions or mystic syllables. Works fall off; and their fruits do not attach to him. . . .

If one becomes absorbed in Him, no evil desire or sinful tendency can remain.

The Tantrik Devotee: As you have said, "the 'ego of knowledge' remains."

Sri Ramakrishna: The ego of knowledge, of the devotee, of the servant,—the good ego remains. The wicked ego departs (laughter).

The Tantrik Devotee: Sir, we have had many of our doubts removed.

Sri Ramakrishna: All doubts cease when the Atman is realized. Have recourse to the *tamas* of devotion. Say, "What! I have taken the name of Râma, of Kâli, what bondage can I have, and what fruits can works yield me?"

. . . Faith, faith, faith! The Guru told the disciple that Râma had become everything; "That Râma is everywhere." A dog was fleeing after eating the bread. The devotee was calling, "O Râma, do thou wait, and let me put ghee on the bread." So much was the faith in the words of the Guru.

Stupid persons do not have faith; they are always doubting. All doubts do not disappear until the Atman is seen.

He can be quickly realized by means of pure devotion which is without any desire.

The occult powers like *animâ* etc., are desires. Krishna said to Arjuna, "Brother, God cannot be realized if one possesses even one of the occult powers like *animâ* etc.; one can only have a little more power."

The Tantrik Devotee: Sir, why are not Tantrik rites fruitful nowadays?

Sri Ramakrishna: Because they are not complete and are not prompted by devotion, they do not bear fruit.

The Master was drawing the conversation to a close and was saying, "Devotion is the essence; the true devotee has no fear or anxiety. Mother knows everything. The cat seizes the rat in one way, but it holds its young ones differently."

BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJEE

By Bharadwaja

In June, 1838, was born in a village near Calcutta Srijut Bankim Chandra Chatterjee whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year all over Bengal, and outside that province too. To non-Bengalis Bankim Chandra's name is familiar mostly as the composer of the 'Bande Mataram' song—the National Anthem of India. This one song was enough to make him immortal. But he is a great deal more than the composer of the Bande Mataram song. Intellectually he is one of the greatest makers of Young Bengal, and, therefore, of Young India—since it is the spirit of Young Bengal which has widened and transformed itself into the spirit of Young India. The Renaissance and the Reformation, which have originated from the meeting of the East and the West on the soil of India, had their beginnings in Bengal. It is with reference to Renascent Bengal that Gokhale made his famous utterance "What Bengal thinks to-day, the rest of India shall think to-morrow." On the crest of the Renaissance and the Reformation movements in Bengal came Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. He is the prophet of Indian Nationalism.

No one can fully understand Bankim Chandra without an idea of the renaissance movement in Bengal. But there is no space here to deal with that subject. The renaissance gradually brought about the revival of Ancient Indian Culture and a diligent quest of the Spirit. But the immediate effect was an obsession of the West which has not, perhaps, been fully got over yet. The New Learning (*i.e.* Western education) was introduced into Bengal with the founding of the Hindu College in 1817. Those who were brought up in the New Learning had a contempt for everything Oriental and an unquestioning regard for everything Occidental. "They repeated Macaulay's saying that a single shelf of a good European library contains more knowledge than the whole literature of India and Arabia. In their minds Kalidas yielded place to Shakespeare. The ethics of the Râmâyana and the Mahâbhârata were primitive in their eyes. Edgeworth's Tales became the new moral Code. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Geetâ were as nothing by the side of the Bible. . . . Young Bengal had three teachers—first, David Hare, second, Derozio, and third, Macaulay. All of them taught the same lesson, namely, whatever is in the East is bad—whatever is from the West is good. This excessive regard for things Western have long exercised great influence on Bengal's Society" (Pandit Shivanath Shastri).

In the sixties and seventies of the last century we notice the iconoclastic spirit in full action in Bengal. There was a break away from the traditional culture and religion of the Hindus. The force generated by the impact of the West was carrying everything before it; old ideals, customs, manners, religion were all crumbling under its terrible onslaught.

The Renaissance produced immense literary activities. Though the men of the New Learning had almost a superstitious veneration for the English language and literature, still the real geniuses amongst them instinctively took to writing in Bengali. The Bengali language and literature progressed by leaps and

bounds, but an unhealthy spirit was discernible in this field too. To Michæl M. S. Dutt, the representative poet of the literary renaissance, Râvana was the real hero of the Râmâyana—Râma, the man-god of the Hindus, being a pigmy by Râvana's side !

It was out of the qestion to disown the spirit of the West. Young Bengal had drunk the spirit and found it sweet, though intoxicating. The new class of readers could not be satisfied with the old forms and themes of literature; but the obsession of Western ideas would not do either. "Be thou thyself" is the first principle of life. Bankim Chandra proclaimed this principle with all the emphasis at his command. "We must de-anglicise ourselves," said he. "Those Bengalees who write and speak English can be mock Englishmen; but they can never be genuine Bengalees." He had no objection to importing knowledge from the West—he was an ardent worker in that cause. But according to him the imported knowledge must be assimilated and given such form and expression as are easily intelligible to the people. He took this task upon himself and succeeded eminently. He wrote on all possible subjects including socialism and popular science. He borrowed ideas freely from the West; but he always digested and assimilated them so well that when he expounded them in plain Bengali, they never appeared exotic and were easily intelligible to the people who had received no English education.

Bankim Chandra is pre-eminent as a novelist. His novels are not mere stories. As works of art they will ever extort the admiration of men; but many of them were purposely designed to illustrate great truths, and to inspire great ideals. The famous 'Bande Mataram' song occurs in the novel called 'Ananda Math.' Several of Bankim's novels have been translated into English, and the different vernaculars of India. We need not dilate upon them here. Suffice it to say that his novels introduced a new age in the history of Bengali language and literature.

Bankim Chandra the novelist has overshadowed Bankim Chandra the essayist; but the latter is really great and deserves to be read with the greatest care and regard at the present moment. In them we find a harmonious blending of the New Learning with the Old—deep insight, prophetic vision, and overflowing sympathy for the masses. They deserve to be read and re-read by all men, and women who want to know the soul of New India. He wrote on all conceivable subjects—on art, literature, science, history, antiquarian research,—on politics, economics, sociology,—on religion, theology, utilitarianism, positivism. Scattered through all his writings we find the brightest gems of thought. He set the model for Bengali novels, *belles-lettres*, polemical literature, journalism, satires, and what not. He succeeded in every field except poetry, and drama ; but some of his novels have yielded themselves wonderfully well to dramatisation. Wrote he, "Just as coolies first cut the way into deep jungles for generals to enter them with their armies, so have I thrown the way open to all the branches of literature so that the great writers who will come after me may freely enter, and conquer them." His wish has been realised partially, if not fully. Great writers have arisen after him in Bengali literature; but they must all bow down in respect to the great pioneer who opened the way for them in so many directions.

We shall end by saying a few words about Bankim's patriotism and nationalism. But before we do so we should briefly mention the part played by the Moslems in the renaissance movement in Bengal. Lack of knowledge on this

point has caused much misunderstanding, and interested persons have raised the foolish or malicious cry that Bankim Chandra was anti-Moslem. The contribution of the Mussulmans to the 19th century renaissance *in Bengal* is practically nil. The names of the Christians (European and Indian), the Hindus and even atheists are found in the history of that movement; but Moslem names are conspicuous by their absence. It would be absurd to say that the Moslems as a class are devoid of intellectual aspirations. The fact is that the Mussulmans were so anti-British at the time that they could not think of welcoming English education and culture. The Wahabi movement which spread its net from Peshawar to Chittagong, and which preached a crusade against the British Rule in India, was in full swing till about the seventies of the last century. The subject is not mentioned in the text books of history; but the curious reader will find a brief account of the movement, and the means adopted for its suppression in Sir William Hunter's *The Indian Mussalmans* published in 1871. We shall just quote one passage from this book which is relevant to our purpose. "The truth is that our system of public instruction which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries and quickened the inert masses with some of the noble impulses of a nation, is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements, and hateful to the religion, of the Mussalmans...The Bengal Muhammedans refused a system which gave them no advantages over the people whom they had so long ruled, a people whom they hated as idolaters, and despised as a servile race. Religion came to the support of the popular feeling against the innovation, and for long it remained doubtful whether a Mussalman boy could attend our state schools without perdition to his soul... The language of our government schools in Lower Bengal is Hindu, and the masters are Hindus. The Mussalmans with one consent spurned the instructions of idolaters through the medium of the language of idolatry."

A separatist educational policy for the Muslims was evolved from that time, and we do not seem to have seen the end of it yet. Secular and rationalistic culture must be regarded as universal. But from 1871 the theory has been preached, and is even now accepted by many Muslims that the kind of renaissance culture freed from the trammels of theology—which embodied the spirit of Modern Europe, and which was adopted by the Bengali Hindus—was not acceptable to the Indian Mussalmans.

"In the development of Bengali literature," wrote Bankim Chandra, "lies the future hope of the Bengalees." This can only be anathema to those Mussalmans who regard Bengali language and literature as the grossest forms of idolatry. Bankim Chandra's patriotism and nationalism were derived essentially from the spirit of the Renaissance, and were deliberately borrowed from Europe. "The English are the greatest benefactors of India," wrote he. "The English have taught new things to the Aryans (=Hindus —Translator). They have made us see, hear, and understand what we had never before seen, heard, or understood. They have taught us how to walk on roads hitherto unknown to us. Many of these lessons are invaluable. We have mentioned here only two of those precious gems which we have received from the store-house of the English mind, namely, the ideals of liberty, and nationality. The Hindus never knew what these are." It is no wonder that Bankim Chandra speaks only of the Hindus, and addresses himself to Hindu readers ; because the ideals he was preaching could appeal only to

those who had imbibed the spirit of the Renaissance. At the time when he wrote the Mussulmans had made no response to the spirit of the Renaissance —they had deliberately turned their back on it.

That Bankim Chandra's nationalism was conceived in no narrow or sectarian spirit will be apparent from the following quotations. "The love of the motherland that I have been explaining to you is not the same thing as the 'patriotism' of Europe. The essence of European patriotism is to rob other countries to enrich one's own. If a people must enrich their own country, they must do so at the expense of all other peoples. The primitive races of America have become extinct through the onslaught of this cruel patriotism." . . . . . "India will never come to her own unless all her different peoples and religious sects adopt the same ideal, and work in unison." Hundreds of similar passages can be quoted from Bankim Chandra's writings. We hear of the mass-contact movement being sponsored to-day by various political organisations. But just listen to what Bankim Chandra wrote more than half a century ago: "The main defect is that there is no real sympathy between the upper and the lower classes. The educated men of the upper classes do not feel for the sufferings of the poor and the illiterate. The illiterate masses have no share in the joys of the educated, and the rich. This lack of mutual sympathy between the classes and the masses is the greatest hindrance to our national progress." Addressing the English-educated classes and the British Government he writes, "With all your learning what good have you done to the common people? And you British Government—you tell me what benefit Hashim Sheikh and Râmâ Kaivarta (*i.e.*, common peasants—Translator) have derived from your rule? Nothing whatsoever. I say this most emphatically. . . . We are looking to our class interests. But do *we* constitute the whole country? What is *our* number compared with the peasants'? Numerically, *they* are the 'country.' The vast majority of the people are agriculturists. . . . There can be no good to the country unless it be the good of the peasants."

Fierce controversy raged in Bengal regarding the rights of the Zemindars and the tenants before the passing of the famous Tenancy Act of 1885 which for the first time gave effective protection to the ryots. The vocal opinion of the English-educated classes was almost unanimously in favour of the Zemindars. But it was Bankim Chandra Chatterjee who advocated fearlessly the cause of the ryots and exposed the tyranny and maltreatment practised by the Zemindars. He did so in a series of articles written in the most graceful and perspicuous Bengali prose. Even in those days the vast majority of the Mussalmans were peasants, and the Zemindars were almost all of them Hindus. If Bankim Chandra were swayed by narrow communal feelings, his writings would have been of an entirely different nature. With unerring vision, and a life-long experience as Deputy Magistrate, he saw how the judicial system introduced by the British was unsuited to the tradition of this country, and how it was dissipating the business morality of the common people. He condemned the system most severely and without any reservation. Alas! his criticism remains valid even to-day—with, perhaps, added force. In all his writings one can see only the highest regard for truth, and impartiality, and an ardent love for the masses of the people.

Two things are essentially necessary for rousing a fallen nation from age-long slumber. Firstly, the defects of its

character must be ruthlessly exposed ; secondly, a high ideal must be placed before it. Bankim Chandra had the genius and ability to perform both these. In various essays and treatises he exposed all our vices and follies, all the shortcomings of our national character, all the sham and hypocrisy of our life. On the other hand he conjured up the vision of a Future India—far greater, far nobler, and far more prosperous than anything she had ever been in the past.

The ideal of nationalism has come in for much criticism in our times. It has become almost a fashion to decry nationalism. From a commonsense point of view the quarrel is mostly between persons who use the word in different senses. No one need have any sympathy with that narrow and aggressive spirit which seeks the material prosperity of one country at the cost of all other countries. On the other hand, no one should, perhaps, have any quarrel with that kind of nationalism which stands for the expression of the individuality of a people for the highest good of itself and of humanity at large. Bankim Chandra stood for this latter ideal of nationalism. The elements of nationality have defied definition, and enumeration. Community of race, language, religion, and even government is not essential for the making of a nation. Says Renan, "A common memory, and a common ideal—these more than a common blood—make a nation." The different races, and religious sects inhabiting India may not have the same history; but they can all unite into a 'nation' on the basis of a common ideal. It is the immortal glory of Bankim Chandra that he depicted that ideal. The Hindus and the Muslims are the two great communities of India. Amongst Hindus the cult of Mother-worship has been in existence from the earliest times. The finds at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa have proved that it existed even in Pre-Aryan India. The Hindus always say that salvation is at the feet of the Mother. The saying is attributed to Rusul Hajrat Muhammad that 'heaven is at the feet of the mother.' Bankim Chandra conjured up the vision of India as the Mother. Could there be any ideal higher and nobler than this, and one that could move so deeply the hearts of all Indians?

Bande Mataram

THE STORY OF THE INDIAN KING AND THE CORPSE

By Prof. H. Zimmer

(Continued from the last issue)

These twenty-five tales of the ghost in the corpse are like a succession of dreams. And, just as significant dreams are remembered, so these stories linger on in the memory of a people. Gruesome yet lovely, they are powerful enough to be considered again and again, re-dreamed, re-explained. What is it in this king that so enthrals us? What actually happened to him? What does it mean, this fairy-tale of our soul?

A man has given his oath to assume responsibility for a wrong and to do what is asked of him. He does so because he is generous and brave and of a kingly nature throughout; yet, in ceding himself to so dark an enterprise is he not also a trifle rash? For though a great self-confidence possesses him, though he is filled with the conviction

that no great calamity may befall him except as a purposeful destiny, his insight and his circumspection are still dormant. It is upon this lack that fate fastens. Here is the flaw in the coat of mail of each one of us where life may gain a hold and reach into our inner lives.

How strange is the behaviour of this beggar! How inconsiderate to let him come and go so, year in, year out! Yet every day do we not each of us receive from an unknown beggar what seems an unimportant fruit which, heedlessly disregarding, we cast aside with the other commonplaces of our lives? Does not life itself every morning stand before us in ordinary workaday garb like a beggar unannounced, unostentatious, unexacting, waiting with its gift of the day, one day upon the other? We should open this commonest of all gifts, this common fruit from a common tree. We should ask: "What does it hold?" How many there are of such fruits! and in every country how many trees! We ought to know how to open this fruit to-day, and like a secret core extract its other part—the one precious and essential. We should be able to separate this imperishably radiant essence from that part which ripens to fade, which crumbling rots away and soon is in the keeping of death. Continually such fruits are offered us—not only each day, and each successive moment, but our own selves. Are we not each one of us a fruit, like the one in the fable, unable to open our own selves for ourselves, unable to extract from our own outer covering the imperishable brilliant gem which is our own essence? Is not this the eternal daily state of human existence? All that the story tells of the king upon his throne, the silent beggar coming daily to the hall, losing himself amongst so many exacting and ceremonious figures; never revealing his purpose; offering, year in, year out, the same fruit, never complaining, never lingering, only effacing himself and departing, all this are we ourselves. We accept the fruit of our own existence and we find nothing particularly noteworthy about it. Blindly, impassively we take it all for granted and hand it back to the one who waits behind our throne. This one, as a second, third, or fourth ego of our own, administers the treasure that we with such a kingly air distribute, the very thing we live by, the treasure that makes us the great or litttle kings we are. And this other, this "treasurer" of the fable, is he not, too, a replica of our own self, this ego, who, standing behind our kingly self, garners and administers what we give away and waste? Yet he, no more than we, proves what every day so mystically brings; he does not even unlock the door of the treasure-house for so ordinary a gift, but throws it to the others through the window above. Thus for a long time it goes. There is, however, another ego—it may be our eleventh or our twelfth—the ego that we play with when we need a relaxation from our kingly nature, when we wish to forget its attitude of importance, its duties and its privileges—there is our monkey. He does not belong to the throne hall. He is only in the way there; but the wheel of life turns and, turning, mingles in its wisdom all to each and each to all; so even our monkey breaks loose in time, and, escaping from his keepers, he emerges from the inner rooms of our being, from those private apartments where we enjoy ourselves in kingly idleness with our women and our games. Leaping into the midst of the state ceremony, it is he who catches the fruit. Dainty-mouthed curiosity, that quality which seizes upon things and plays with them until they break, thereby discovering their secret,—curiosity and the ordinary desire to destroy and

to consume, these open the fruit at last and find the jewel, but the jewel means nothing to them. Now as the monkey breaks open the fruit, so fate bursts open too. It is as though the seed of all these fruits amongst our treasure, buried deep, as it is, in the soil of our life, suddenly shoots up! The thread that for so long unnoticed by us had begun to be spun, which daily we ourselves had continued to spin with indifference, superficial receiving and thoughtless giving, now this spun thread contracts about us in a knot. Now we feel the presence of something inescapable, to which through sheer neglect we have delivered ourselves. The adventure lies before us. We enter it with unsuspecting self-confidence, and the best of faith. The adventure in its details develops quite differently from what we expected in our thoughtlessness. Is it not natural that it should surprise us in its parts, since in its entirety we allowed it to escape us altogether? Now, apparently in the service of another we find ourselves obliged to fetch a corpse. The living man in search of something dead wanders through the burial-ground, the kingdom of Death. That is a Hell indeed, where all devils and demons are loose, this wandering amid the flames of burning corpses with the smell of hot, decaying flesh in his nostrils through the twice-black night of smoke and darkness, with only a new moon hanging low in the sky. So Dante wanders through the kingdom of the dead in his "Inferno," having "lost the right way." Strange task for a being to fetch a dead body, to cut off the corpse of a hanged man from a tree, to bear the body of a criminal upon his nape! Yet who of us would not welcome such an opportunity once in his life, the opportunity of retrieving something dead; of exhuming secretly by night something buried, something already rotting away while he is surrounded by the howling, flaming orgies of hell? That something thrown away already dead and lost is loaded upon him as a burden apparently in the service of another, yet it is his own,—his burden, heavy upon his own nape, for he is bound to that other in whose service he is involuntarily perhaps, but not without a certain blame, indebted. Now this dead body is not dead; within its lifelessness there is a ghostly life. An uncanny liveliness, a demoniacal insolence speaks out of it, mocking and menacing us. It lays a ghost hand at our throat, and suddenly it is a question of life or death with us. Apparently, in order to make the time pass more quickly as we are engaged in the hideous business, obviously to dupe us, secretly, perhaps, to prove us, the ghost tells us tales and forces us to answer. But if we answer, it escapes, and if we know and are silent it will strangle us. We must be a slave to its whims, and our kingly ego—that ego that could command all to go or to stay, to vanish or to remain, to behave indeed as it wished, this ego is the slave now forced to wander where an extraneous madness commands, to and fro, ever to and fro it must go, back and back again to the gallows of the hanged man, to fetch anew that dead thing, to carry anew that burden.

How endless is this night! How many tales it holds! It seems almost as though time stopped to listen for the pulse of this strange rhythmic wandering through Hell, this Sisyphus damnation. To carry over and over again what always slips from us just as we are about to bring it to the goal. "When shall we be free of this?" we ask, in the midst of this our purgatory of purification. And each time the answer comes: "Find the solution to every question that life puts to you! Split the shell that hides the secret core!" This doom is ours

because of our past thoughtlessness in throwing away our fruits into the treasure-house of our life—these fruits by which we live, yet of whose contents we have not the least knowledge. Tangle upon tangle of events compressed into forms enticing and appealing, threatening and piteous, unfold themselves before our eyes while the ghost upon our nape talks on and on. Pretending jokingly that he wants to amuse us, in order to shorten the timeless hell of our way, he presents his entertainment of complexities and always at the end there is a knot that must be disentangled.

In all confused events there is a core of guilt, a conflict of right and wrong that knows no limitation of time or change, as the jewel lies in the fruit, as guilt and innocence lie in the endless circle of this night of Hell, when the king is entangled in the devil's net of the magician. What we have omitted to do, now we must learn to accomplish—to split confusion, to tear from it the core, to recognize blame, to see reality. Guilt is never obvious but unapparent, intimately interwoven with the tangled design. Who is to blame if the parents die because the fate of their child has broken their hearts? Not the lovers, not their all-clever adviser, but that king who so carelessly believed the outward appearance. This king is like the first king who listens to the tale. Putting aside fruit on fruit, never opening them, is he not like that other king who did not descry the rogue beneath the gown of virtue?

The obvious is only the semblance. Beneath lies something hidden, the real. He who clings to the semblance will become entangled in it before he realizes it. Like a ghostly hell, it will engulf him and pursue him to and fro. Like the corpse in the tale, it will mount his nape and speak to him, mocking him with ghost-laughter because he was unable to choose the real when it stood before him in the daylight. He who is satisfied with the appearance and presumes to consider himself right and whole, hero and king, is at fault. His guilt comes before him in blameless disguise yet with an uncanny demand: a demand which he must heed because of the essence of his being. This seemingly harmless figure leads him into the night that is the exact counterpart of his day and sets him the task, unkingly and impure, of carrying corpses like a Chandâla. The kingly one is obliged to do the work of the lowest pariah amongst his subjects; not only once and for a good and speedy purpose (namely to free himself and to forget what he has undertaken to do in return for gifts underestimated), but again and again, infinitely often, as often as he did not trouble thoroughly to sift the reality; as often as he had disregarded the core of its fruit. Now this fruit must seem to him horrible and bitter, as bitter as this night of hellish torment measured against his kingly day.

Now it is a question of an ordeal. The time for clinging to the outward semblance is over. Being silent against his better judgment costs him his life. He must be entirely himself. He must not enquire of his kingly ego to what place it will all lead. Even if he is a prey to the powers of Hell and perpetually driven to an endless solving of problems, he must not deny the relevance of this destiny and this confusion that pours upon him from the mouth of the ghost.

Reader, this all happened so to your own self in the daylight of your throne, where, chosen as the all-seeing eye of your kingdom, you sat as judge. This confusion is you. As monarch of your kingdom nothing should be far from you. Where you put distance between, you are to blame. Your are exempted from

nothing. Now go the way back and back again! Fetch the corpse of the past from the gallows tree! Listen to the voice of the spectre. No other speaks to you in your night. No other voice save that one can teach you. What mocks and threatens you only through horror and madness can you understand. Are you not yourself the hero of all that the ghost voice tells and the answer to what he asks? All the figures with their dwelling places and their destinies mean you, just as all that unfolds itself before you in your dreams means you, be it word or figure, path or landscape.

This corpse with its spectre that you fetch again and again from the death gallows is something neglected in your past life. Dead, unfulfilled, overlooked, it needs must haunt you till you, in a night of seemingly endless hell, will have satisfied and taken consciously into yourself that which hitherto you had so carelessly disregarded. However, the sincerity and integrity of your kingly mind, your fearless endurance of these unfettered demoniacal powers (full as they are of enigma and deceit, of death and loathsomeness) your willingness in the enterprise will be your Ariadne-thread through the labyrinth of your own night, through the enigma questions of life.

But at the tale's end what a high consolation is in store for him who is true and pure; for him who is able to overcome his kingly ego and force it into the service of his dark wise powers! To what a marvellous end our very faults and deficiencies are allowed to serve! By plunging us into misery and confusion, they further us more perfectly to ourselves and prepare us for a power and a glory whose like we have never dreamed.

Over the undesired but self-imposed adventure, over the burial-ground of our omissions, the path leads to a higher reality that fulfils itself in us. Our very guilt and our failings are wings able to carry us upwards to the highest powers of the world and to the missions these would put on us. But between those high powers and us stands the false ascetic and the mysterious spectre. What is the meaning of those two—this ascetic—what is the hidden core beneath his shell of virtue? This "Rich-in-Patience" who is able to wait with his secret, ever growing, claim on the king's service: this "holy" man with his well-concealed certainty of power over his harmless victim, receiving the much-tormented man at the place where he intends to slay him? It is the king himself who has created him. It is he who has produced him, a counterpart, as it were, to his own blindness. Out of the many possible garbs which destiny always keeps ready for us in which to clothe itself, it had to choose just this one for the king. It is the king who has drawn it toward himself; shaped it out of his one kingly shortcoming—that of not being all-penetrating eye of his realm. Out of that which is unkingly in this king is it created; out of that wherein he was not true to himself, to his real kingliness; being content with only the pompous aspect, the empty symbol of kingship. Therefore he is challenged by the real king as an analogy incarnate of his own blindness.

That inner self which he has failed to be faces him now as counterpart from without, and, by the neglect of years, exaggerated. Just this particular deceitful magician had to encounter this guileless king. Both make a whole. Wherever we look we find our inescapable selves. A part of our 'I' steps pertinently before us. Out of our own darkness it comes, essential, self-produced, spectre, monkey or murderer.

Not only are we our own friends; we are also our own enemies. Mysteriously,

as the spider spins the web in which it lives, we weave the whole of our destiny out of our own selves; but between the ultimate result of the long-spun betrayal of our self and its guileless victim, stands the ghost—only a ghost, no angel or protecting spirit to guide the paces of a child in danger (for the king is no longer an innocent child). He who was thoughtless gains now what he had lacked—thoughtfulness. His now penetrating eye is opened upon new and ever new enigma-questions. The careless, guileless one becomes a match for the perfect hidden one. Now he becomes a real king. Now he recognizes reality. Now he is able to distinguish its background beneath the merging semblance. This makes him master of the semblance. Now he becomes the whole and beats the semblance at its own game of dissembling, for never did the cunning one imagine that the guileless one could become more cunning than he. He who becomes whole and true in himself, as this king became, a real king overpowers the pretence, this shadow of himself that menaces him.

And this ghost in the corpse, this gallows-fruit from the tree? A strange fruit. Who would have imagined that it would hide so talkative a kernel? Each one of us carries upon his shoulder this corpse,—this something past and dead. Yet this putrefying thing is one of our own egos. What number in the rank? Who knows? But one of them it is, a part of our own being.

And the ghost prattling from within it, that too is an 'I' of ours. Behind, beyond the kingly that we consciously consider ourselves to be, he dwells—, and he is the strongest of all. With his ghostly voice he threatens us with approaching death. He sets us conditions and drives us to and fro. Always we are forced to fetch his dead thing for him, just as under the spell of a fixed idea one is compelled to repeat nonsensically, endlessly, some part of one's past. Finally, he tells us what we must do to save ourselves at the last moment from so undeserved a fate. He delivers us from the very unkingly and to which by our tenacity and integrity, with the blind will of our consciousness we are compelled. He suggests to us a simple stratagem, the most simple of all; yet it outwits the devil. So in the end, this ghost who seems so uncanny, as revolting as he is surprising (and how could it be otherwise as he is the essence of all our unfulfilment and neglect, the spectre of our consciously amassed guilt), this same despicable ghost is the saviour that wishes us well. He is the only one in the whole world, the only one in the darkness of our being, who can save us from the evil magic circle. He can save us because we have surrendered ourselves to his will; because we patiently did the tasks that he in scorn and trial laid upon us. He is the wisest of all those parts of ourselves that surround us, and burst out of our being in so many and varied shapes. He seems to know all that has ever happened in far distant realms of kings and beggars, lovers, criminals and women ever new and lovely. With the compelling clarity of dreams, inescapable yet trifling, vague yet exact, the ghost voice draws these figures to us. Noiselessly he lifts them out of the well of the past, where nothing can escape, and casts them loudly on the glassy surface of our consciousness.

The power which forgets nothing, which in its deep wisdom foreknows all, drawing us back by a hint from the abyss toward which we struggle with the consistency of our conscious being, how much stronger is that power than our kingly self!

Now quietly the ghost disappears again. Now once more he drops into

the night of ghouls and of the dead, the night that had cast him out into his own night. There is no way of holding him now; no way of reaching him, just as there was no defence against the arbitrariness of his appearance and behaviour or of his horrible compulsion. Yet this night with its enigmas and its incessant wandering has established a relationship between king and spectre for a moment that is timeless. The two came as near to one another as beings of the blood-warm world. They were interwoven like an 'I' and 'you', forged to each other by the same dangerous doom—that of falling victim to the sorcerer. They save one another, however, and by this mutual saving at the same time they save the world.

The bodily king and the disembodied spectre, world and super-world, the kingly 'I' of daylight and the ghostly voice of our depth-darkness belong together. One cannot exist without the other. Separated, each would be inadequate. They are one living whole. If their actions did not synchronize they would be lost. It is for the king to decide their deeds but the authoritative inspiration for them is whispered to us by the ghost voice of our immaterial world. So one redeems the other. The spectre saves the king from death resulting from the blindness of mere consciousness, while the king saves the spectre from the spell of living on as a spectre condemned to dwell in the corpse of the past. In the process the king sacrifices to the spectre the heart and head of the ascetic. What threatened both of them has been happily overcome. This very part of ourselves which was fatally hostile towards us is sacrificed in a conscious deed of the bodily ego to a supreme inner authority. This authority has decreed the overcoming of that inimical part of ourselves and pointed out the way towards its accomplishment. Thereby the spectre is sundered from the corpse for ever. It is no more a ghost condemned to haunt a dead body. Neither is the king any longer under his spell of wandering back and forth through the night of his being, over the burial-ground and the execution place of his past. The past that had bewitched and threatened them both is squared.

Now, no sooner has the king passed the test of the enigma questions than there comes the marvellous transformation in the ghost. No sooner have the two found one another and united in a mutual self-salvation and in the saving of the world, than he leaves the corpse and the king who carries it. Then with an altered nature he returns again to the corpse. The latter also has undergone a transformation from gallows-fruit to idol amid the magic circle; from something contemptible to something demanding adoration. The abomination has become a god, radiant with power, eloquent with blessing.

Novalis notes in one of his works that it is a "significant factor in many fairy-tales that the moment one impossibility becomes possible, simultaneously another impossibility becomes unexpectedly possible; that the hero in overcoming himself simultaneously overcomes nature. A miracle occurs which grants him the opposite agreeable thing, just as the opposite disagreeable thing has become agreeable to him (i.e., the conditions of a spell, for example the changing of the bear into a prince the moment the bear is loved for his own sake, etc.). Perhaps a like transformation would take place if a man could become fond of the evil in the world. The moment he could bring himself to love illness and pain, the most charming delight would fill his being; the highest positive pleasure would be his." In taking this profound view that a decisive

overcoming gives an essential metamorphosis, Novalis touches upon a very deep part of our psychic possibilities. Just such a transformation takes place in Turandot and in those other images of our soul buried in sleep. Just such a metamorphosis is the meaning of this fairy-tale.

The king takes upon himself both corpse and spectre. He solves the riddle-questions put to him by this spawn of his inner night. Now as he accepts them they become for him idol and saviour; and as they change for him, so he too changes. Even the darkness round him is transformed into dawn, setting him free, glowing with the light from other spheres.

The world, as it operates as space and atmosphere about the king, is again his own ego in three transformations. We are our own world. As it flows from us, it shines upon us and faces us. The pompous throne-hall and all that took place there reflected the kingly consciousness and the weakness of his apathy. The dark burial ground was the rotten core of this brilliant shell. The night through which the king gropes and falters to and fro, spell-bound, threatened with his life, venturing unsuspecting toward a treacherous death, this night is the true face beneath the mask of his pompous day, just as the murderous magician is the true face of the ascetic "Rich-in-Patience". All vanishes, however, into unsubstantiality at the glorious break of a new day, the day on which is opened for the king the superworld of the gods. Change yourself, and you enter a changed world! Whether in the midst of unreal display, under the spell of ghosts and corpses, or chosen to negotiate with the higher spirits, one can never escape from one's self. The world and all the worlds towards Hell and Heaven are our own selves, in ever differently indulged shapes.

Thus the king's way leads from royal earthly pomp through the realm of the dead to the bright glory of power over the spirits. His empty attitude of kingly splendour held and fostered within itself the germ of dreadful death. The inhabitants of the kingdom of Death reached for him with ghostly nearness; but his way was the way of the old mysteries. It led from a half untenable existence (one forfeited to death through the horrors of the tomb and nether world) to a life far removed from death complete and consecrated; and the one who consecrated, the one who decreed the trials, and defined their end was the ghost in the corpse, for the mystagogue, the initiator of our life's mystery-way, he who is able to give us the consecration of regeneration to a perfect life, appears in all manner of masks. To the enlightened person everything he meets is the mask of this wise teacher; everything bears his consecrated countenance. For such a one lies the encircling threshold. Always, however, the mask of the initiator has the features of our need and guilt, and, reflecting the degree of our maturity, it indicates the transformations that should take place in us.

But who of us is that prince so graced by fate that fairies sing of him:

"Were I to yield my thoughts to love
This youth alone my heart should move"

to whom the great "queen of night" herself gives the magic flute that banishes all dangers? Who is so "rich in virtue, discreet and charitable" who "wishes to draw from himself the veil of night, and look upon the shrine of golden day," so that a Sarastro would receive him in the temple halls with the "seven-fold sun-circle of the adepts" on his breast?

Just so the king is led out of the semblance into the reality of his being. Taking upon himself that which was lacking in him, he becomes all-penetrating eye and so a true king, whereas hitherto he had only worn the diadem and sat upon the throne. Now he realizes the whole of life's claim upon him. That is why he receives the sword, "Invincible," which gives him for his own, without the necessity of fighting for it, the whole of the visible world. The spirit-world he is therefore destined to govern also for the intangible sphere completes the tangible, the two making one whole.

Like this king we must become masters over the spirits, for they are in us as well as above us. Everything outside ourselves reflects and mirrors our inner selves as soon as it acquires a meaning and a relation for us. Only as such does it become significant.

(*Concluded*).

THIS IS INDIA

By a Wanderer

I was seized with a wandering spirit. Long cooped up in a city and saddled with dull, monotonous routine works, my heart panted for a life care-free and an atmosphere where I shall be lost in the crowd and therefore in a position to see things and men, as a witness, with dispassion and detachment. So I left instructions to my friends,—"For some weeks my whereabouts shall remain unknown. You need not think of me."

I got into the train at Howrah and in the bustle of the crowd that entered into my compartment I soon forgot all about my past associations. Self-preservation is the best law of nature. I had to be so anxious for a comfortable journey in the face of the struggle that was waged amongst the passengers who were pouring in at every station, that I had no opportunity to think of the past as well as the future—the present was too living for me.

The next morning after leaving Moghal Sarai the train passes over the bridge which overlooks the Ganges and Benares. Thousand eyes are eager to have a view of the sacred city—the spiritual capital of India—and thousand hands are raised with folded palms in reverence! What is there in this ancient city? Why does the mere sight of it stir our emotion so much? People are victims of superstition even in the twentieth century!

* * *

Benares the holy city with its famous temple of Viswanath which attracts hundreds of pilgrims from all over India and that throughout the year! The temple is always crowded. I must not jostle with the crowd, if I want to really feel and enjoy the presence of the great God, Shiva. I must find an opportunity to see Him alone. Would it not be nice if I get up very early in the morning, and be the first person to visit the temple in the day? Yes, that is a nice idea. I got up during the small hours of the morning and walked up, through the dead city, as it were, towards the temple. The bulls are there—some sleeping, some standing listlessly on the foot-path. One or two pilgrims are going perhaps to the Ganges for bath. As I enter the lane leading to the great

temple, I meet with some old ladies, bending under the weight of the age, with brass vessels in their hands, reciting holy texts while going to the temple. I was a fool to think, I could be the first person to enter the temple. Are there not persons, whose piety is much greater than my idle curiosity? I enter the temple. It is still dark. Not many—but some persons are offering worship to the Great Deity. They cannot procure flowers as the men who sell them do not arrive then—but the Ganges water is all that they offer in worship. In that quiet, with all the fervour of their devotion, they are uttering holy texts, bending low before the Deity. The stillness of the place—where one is accustomed to be always in crowd—made the sight of their devotion all the more inspiring. I stand at a distance, raise my hands in adoration—both to the Lord and His devotees, and say to myself, "This is India. What a magnificent sight!"

I must have an experience of the bank of the Ganges now—lying quiet as if at the feet of the great city holding in its bosom the great temple. I turn towards the east and soon reach the river. The sun is still below the horizon. The eastern sky is variegated with colours crimson, white, light dark, etc., indicating the advent of the sun. On the holy river, so early, some are bathing, some are sitting on its bank silent in meditation. Some are returning, perhaps to the temple. The city has not as yet awakened from sleep. There is still silence pervading the atmosphere. And in that silence it seems Nature, devotees and God have become one.

* * *

I am now in the Imperial city of New Delhi, where the British Government have lavished all their resources to make it the best city in the East as far as grandeur is concerned. I see the Viceregal Lodge, I see the Council Chamber, the nice buildings of big officials, well-laid-out long paths, etc. Both in day and in night it looks like a "City belonging to Indra." Here it seems that a new chapter has been opened in the life of Delhi, after the Moghul empire had gone. I go to the old fort to have an idea of the life the great Moghul Emperors lived. Oh, the display of wealth and grandeur and the life of luxury they lived! They cultivated the art of living a luxurious life. It is doubtful if any other people can beat them in this respect. But now? Where are they gone? The whole place seems like the dry bed of a big dead river—sad and desolate. You can picture in your mind's eyes how the palaces and buildings bustled with life a few hundred years back. But nothing could ward off the ravages of Time, much mightier than the mightiest Emperor in the world. I turn back with sadness in my countenance. The remnant of the old grandeur and the show of the present pomp—nothing satisfies me. Are not all these vanity of vanities? And people run after them with so much zeal, determination and earnestness! I go away from the city, and many hundreds of years back. I visit the famous pillar of Asoka whom a great historian styled as the greatest king of the world, one who lived the life of a monk with a throne. My mind travels back to the past as I stand at the foot of the pillar. I am pensive. Was Asoka a visionary, a dreamer? Are the thoughts imprinted on the pillar possible to be carried out in practical life? My host suddenly breaks me from my reverie. He says, "Well, my friend, I have seen many things in Delhi and its neighbourhood. I am here for many years. But of all noteworthy things in Delhi, I like this Asoka's pillar most. Empire after

empire has risen and decayed, kings after kings have come and gone, but this pillar, carrying the great message of love, peace and goodwill to humanity, is still standing. It says, 'Everything has its decay but I live. I am immortal because I bear the highest message the humanity has heard of or could conceive of.' " I uttered no word, but thought within myself, "It is so true !"

* * *

I get into a B.B.C.I. train and turn my eyes towards the west. The day is hot, the sun is scorching. I pass through the desert of Rajputana. But I forget all about heat. The sight of the Aravalli hills and the thought that I am in a land which once saw the activities of Rajput heroes stir my emotion. I am reminded of Padmini, Rana Pratap and a host of others. The world has seen many noted victories. But as far as personal valour is concerned, the Rajput heroes outbeat all warriors in the world. Even in their defeat they have become immortal. Honour preferable to death —that was the idea that went into their very blood. And it is for this reason that they have triumphed over death. They have made a history for themselves.

I am all alone in my compartment. A picture of the Udaipur palace, hung as a Railway advertisement, in my room serves to deepen my emotion. The train comes to the next halting station. An ascetic-looking middle-aged man with white clothes becomes my companion. Soon we become friends, for it does not take long to become intimate when there are only two passengers in a compartment. "Where is your home? May I ask you," I put this question to the gentleman. "I had my home. I married and set up a house. But my wife is long dead. Since then I am like a monk in a householder's garb. I do work, I am a Railway employee. But all my works are dedicated to the Lord. I consider myself really no servant of anybody. I am a servant of God only. All my work is worship." The man became silent,—perhaps to control his emotion. After a while he brought one Sanskrit book of hymns from a basket, and began to pore over it. Amidst the deafening noise of a running train, I felt I was in the depth of Himalayan silence. The man got down in the next station bidding me a kindly goodbye. I missed his company much. I was wondering how sometimes we hear gems of wisdom even from an unexpected quarter or a stray passer-by !

* * *

I have crossed the Indian Peninsula and am on its western side. I enter a Native state in Kathiawar and become the recipient of hospitality from a Maharaja Saheb. I am in the State Guest-house, and everybody is all attention to me. I am taken here and there and shown every object of interest in the town. One official takes fancy to take me to a place, which does not attract the notice of a visitor or tourist so much. I am led to a place like Dharamshala. There I find hundreds of people—men and women—sitting round an enclosure where a man is singing and dancing. I approach the enclosure and find that near a decorated picture of Sri Krishna, the man is singing praises to the Lord along with a party of devotees. The atmosphere is tense, everybody seems absorbed in singing or hearing. I am given to understand that this singing has been going on for the last 24 hours. It was just going to end at the moment I entered the place. I did not expect to have such experience in this distant part of India. In Bengal, under the influence of Chaitanya Movement, this kind of thing happens, but how could it travel to Kathiawar? I lost all idea of dis-

tance between Bengal and Gujarat and felt that spiritually India is one.

In the Guest-house I am in a surrounding where the thoughts of God and religion have no access or are not believed to be encouraged. But every morning I hear low sounds of bells, from down below, as from a temple. "Is there any temple near by?" I enquire. There is no temple near by, I learn, but a bearer of the Guest-house performs the worship of Sri Rama every morning. Next time when the bearer comes, led by idle curiosity, I ask him as to what sort of worship he does in the morning. Poor man has not been, perhaps, asked such a question before; nobody perhaps took any interest in what might be supposed to be an insignificant thing in his life. So he becomes glad beyond measure at my enquiry. In abundance of joy he runs downstairs and brings the picture of Sri Rama which he worships. He wants to hand over the picture to me, so that I can see it more thoroughly. I dare not touch the image which he worships with so much reverence. I bow down my head in adoration and raise both my hands in salutation. Only I think, "This man considers he is insignificant, but how much is his devotion! In the eye of God he is much better than many of us." Really I envy his devotion. The name of the man is Ramji. How appropriate the name!

* * *

I pass on to another State. There I take shelter where some monks live. I have a quiet time excepting when some friends come to the place and I take interest in them. One of them tells me, "After coming so far you must see one thing—you must see how a Jain monk is delivering lectures in the town!" I did not know the local dialect and so I had not much interest in the matter. But the man, seeing my indifference, called up an extra amount of enthusiasm in him and insisted upon my going to the lecture. At last I agreed, for his sake.

It was not so much a hall where the Jain "Muni," as he was called, was lecturing. It was a dilapidated house with roof overhead, but no wall on three sides. About six or seven thousand persons were sitting there. On a raised place some persons dressed only in Dhoti and Chaddar—all white—their lips covered with small pieces of cloth—were seated. One of them—the oldest of the party—was to give discourse. His appearance, calm and dignified, compelled respect. When he began speaking—he talked sitting on an Âsana—the audience was spellbound. I could not follow him, but, for over an hour he talked he gripped my attention so much that I felt I was in meditation. And what was the experience of those who could understand his words! I heard, this was going on for the last three or four weeks. Everyday there would be an audience of six or seven thousand people—receiving a spiritual bath, as it were, in the morning. What was the secret of this phenomenon? The magnetic personality of the speaker or the religious spirit of the audience? Had I not come to this meeting, I would really have missed something unique!

* * *

I am now in Dwarka, the westernmost spiritual citadel of India—Dwarka where Sri Krishna is said to have lived as a king, where there is a temple of Sri Krishna in which Mirabai worshipped, where Sankaracharya founded a Math to signify his spiritual conquest of the great Indian Peninsula. The temple is built on a raised land on the bank of the river Gomati and is on the very shore of the Arabian sea. You come out a few steps and the interminable roaring sea is before you. A magnificent sight!

In India wherever there is a beautiful spot, there is a temple or a monastery. People have taken full advantage of the elevating surroundings. I sit on the sands facing the sea, with the historical temple behind me. I am on the last extremity of India. So many thoughts come to my mind and overpower me. India is a vast country, with a large population which throbs in unison as far as religion is concerned. But politically it is divided against itself. India is a land of extremes. Here you hear of highest spiritual truths and become the daily witness of the abject material degradation of its vast populace. Why this anomaly? Who will save India? A saviour came in days gone by, whose name has become only a memory. Should we not try to make his message living in our personal and national life? Sri Krishna came to save India when it was in a dying condition. Can't India rise again through the message he left behind?

It is evening. I come to the temple. People from Bengal, Madras, Punjab, Gujarat throng in the temple to have a Darshan of the Deity. And how much expectation they have brought with them? How earnest they are in their devotion! Dwarka itself is a piece of barren land, with no attraction. But this temple is sufficient to attract thousands of people from far and near at the cost of untold physical sufferings and hardship. To a hardened sceptic all this may seem to be silly or superstitious. But can he deny that these pilgrimages offer spiritual sustenance to many? If it is true, then blessed is this superstition.

* * *

I come to Prabhas, see the spot where Sri Krishna is said to have passed away, visit the place where he was pierced with the fatal arrow, if we are to believe the legends. I come to the old temple of Somnath which was sacked by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. It is a beautiful spot overlooking the sea. The very sight of it lifts one up above all mundane things. The temple is in a dilapidated condition, still bearing marks of the depredation. But even in its sad condition it does not fail to inspire you. One can pass hours here, forgetting the whole world.

I visit the new temple of Somnath. The actual sanctuary is down below—in an underground cell. To go down one has to pass through deep darkness stumbling upon steps after steps. As I go down, a creeping sensation comes over me. But when the shrine room is reached, it is all light with devotees standing round the image of Shiva in prayerful attitude. Formerly, the shrine room was built under earth to protect it from pillage; now the isolation and solitude of the place serves as an additional help to devotion.

* * *

Coming out of Kathiawar, as I board a broad-gauge train, it seems from an old world I enter a new world. It is early morning. In my compartment there comes a lady. "Is she travelling alone?" I ask the guard. But soon comes her husband to save me from an uncomfortable position. The husband is a very hospitable person and offers me tea—though I am absolutely a stranger. Naturally conversation becomes intimate, and he unburdens his heart to me.

"You see, my wife is there. She (casting a glance at the lady) and others of my family consider me to be crazy. But they don't understand my sufferings. Outwardly I am a happy man. I have got a good position in life. I am above financial difficulties. My family life is happy. But still I find my life disconsolate. Life seems to be a great mystery to me. I cannot break that

mystery and I feel myself miserable. Lately I have become the disciple of a Sankaracharya. I perform my spiritual practices, but still it seems I am far from realizing the truth." The man seemed to be well read in Sanskrit. He began to quote profusely from Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. As he continued the conversation tears came to his eyes. He could not check it. "How much would be the depth of the spiritual yearning of a man," I thought, "who has to shed tears because of it! If his sufferings are so great, is he far from realizing God?"

* * *

I become the guest of a family at Baroda. Both the father and the mother of the family are very religious. The mother spends a good deal of her time in religious practices. She tells me they have a maid-servant—a poor lady—who administers to her reproof now and then for remaining with eyes closed while in meditation. "Why do you shut your eyes, while thinking of God? Is He not present everywhere? Just open your eyes and see Him." This is the contention of the maid-servant. I was surprised beyond measure, and almost shuddered to understand that such words of wisdom came from an illiterate poor maid-servant. They told me that the maid-servant had expressed that she was having the vision of God now and then. But nobody believes her. She is supposed to be deranged in mind. But on enquiry I hear she is very dutiful, comes punctually at her works, and punctiliously finishes everything she is asked to do. Outwardly there is nothing to indicate that there is anything wrong with her. She is a mystery to them. I thought there was nothing mysterious about her, if we could shake off from our mind the idea that because one is poor and unlettered, one cannot realize God. God knows no law. It might be He is more tangible to her than to others. Otherwise how could she speak so intelligently and directly about God?

* * *

I arrive at Bombay in the evening. Just on reaching the place where I thought I should stay, I meet an old man, a fervent devotee of Swami Vivekananda. He says, "In my younger days I did not care for religion or God. I rolled in luxury and wealth. But once I met Swami Vivekananda accidentally. Even then I did not know what he really was. But in my old days the memory of that mighty soul haunts me." The old man stops, choked with emotion. He again continues, "He has revolutionised my whole life—though in late years. Oh, I wish I knew in my younger days that he was such a mighty spiritual wave! Yet—yet I am happy. Did I not meet him? Did he not talk to me? Did he not bless me? Is not that working in me still?" While saying these, he raised his hands in salutation to one whom he only perceived. Everybody about him was silent. I did not dare break that silence or disturb the atmosphere. But I wondered how subtle but sure is the influence of spiritual personalities!

* * *

I am in a furnished room at Poona—the guest of a highly respectable gentleman. It is evening. My luggage etc., are lying on the floor. A boy belonging to the family comes and very politely says that he will have to remove my things to another room, for soon there will be a religious class—a discourse on the *Gitâ*—in that room. The *Gitâ* class is being held weekly for many years in that room. I was so glad to hear that there was such a group of devoted students of the *Gitâ* in a modernised city. I was waiting in the room and rejoicing at the prospect of listening to the *Gitâ*. The first student to arrive at the class is a little girl with a small book—per-

haps Mrs. Besant's *Gitâ*—in hand. This gave me an additional surprise. "Are you really interested in the *Gitâ*?" I asked her. "Yes, I know a little Sanskrit," she replied,—a bit embarrassed at my abrupt question. "For three years I am attending the weekly classes here regularly." For three years, and that regularly, she is coming to the *Gitâ* class! Then she must have tenacity and religious spirit both. Her devotion to the *Gitâ* will not be lip-deep or a mere show. I only rejoiced at the thought that the idea that people do not want religion is a mere myth. There are earnest souls everywhere. They are silent and unassuming. They do not proclaim themselves by blowing trumpets, so you do not meet them. But it is they who living a silent life will keep up religion, to which people proclaiming war against God will turn after having bitter experiences in life. The words rang in my ears for a long time—"For three years I am attending the class here regularly."

* * *

I am in a hill station in Western India. My idea was that hill stations abound in clubs and hotels. But to my astonishment I find myself sheltered in a rest-house attached to an old temple. Now and then—throughout the day—I hear sounds of bell coming from upstairs. "What is that?" I enquire, "any worship upstairs?" I understand some *Bhâgavat* class is going on there. Some family has come here for a temporary stay. But they must take advantage of their holidays for religious training. So they have brought a Pandit who reads the *Bhâgavat* and performs worship in that connection. The class is open to all. I go there and find that in the middle of a big hall an elderly Brahmin is sitting on a platform decorated with flowers and festoons and discoursing on the *Bhâgavat*. A large number of people, belonging to all classes—rich and poor, men and women—are listening to him. I peeped into the room just for idle curiosity, and with no intention of listening to a religious discourse, but such was the influence of the environment that I sat there, in spite of myself for an hour.

There is not much arrangement here for conveyance. Rickshaws are the only conveyance available for the general public. I go about the street, one evening, tired and jaded. A motor car comes blowing its horn. I step aside to the left. But it slows down its pace and stops. A bearer comes and beckons to me. I find that a Maharaja—whom I knew before—is in the car. I get in and go to his palace. In the palace you expect luxury and formality, and it is difficult to feel homely. But "His Highness" can free you from such fears within a few minutes. So I felt no difficulty to be friendly with him. In the course of the conversation it comes out that he spends a good deal of his time in worship and meditation. He says, "People complain that they have no time. But I say I shall cut off time from the best of my works—I mean sleep. I get up at two or three in the morning." I understood he spends most of the morning, till nine or ten, in personal devotions. Sometimes one hears of things which are hard to believe even when there is a direct evidence. A Maharaja—a "Highness"—spending so much of his time in prayer and meditation!

A jail bird is at rest only in a jail. I could not remain away for long. In about two months I am back in Calcutta —a city with its trams, buses, motor-cars and busy traffic. Everything here is running at a breakneck speed. One cannot remain quiet here though one longs to. One is caught in the atmosphere and is dragged in spite of oneself. I am in the whirlpool. It seems the

experiences of the last two months completely wiped away from my mind, as soon as I stepped into the city. No. Now and then the thought comes to me —like a bubble rising on the surface of water from deep down—of the Asoka's pillar raising its head as a protest against the vanities of the world, Ramji's devotion, the temple of Dwarka near the roaring sea, and the tears in the eyes of the man who was outwardly happy, but his longing for the Unknown made him disconsolate.

CULTURAL VALUES OF INDIAN PLASTIC ARTS

By O. C. Gangoly

It is seldom realized even in educated circles in India that Art is another form of *Sâhitya* (साहित्य), a medium of companionship with the thoughts of others and that Craftsmanship is also a mode of thought. In a popular conception of the orbit of Indian Culture, Art and Archaeology has up till now occupied a very significant segment, and the great Continent of Indian Culture is interpreted and identified, not only by laymen, but also by learned men and scholars, as coterminous with Indian Philosophy and Indian Literature. To explode a popular misconception I may be permitted to say that he knows nothing of Indian Culture, who knows only of Indian Philosophy and of Indian Literature, large and expansive as they have been in the map of Indian life and living. I have no desire to belittle the achievements or the dimensions of Indian Philosophy and of Literature but I should like to humbly but respectfully assert that beyond the expansive kingdoms of Philosophy and of Literature, Indian thought has built a much more expansive and rich democracy of an illiterate Culture in fertile flower-lands of Music, in the magnificent mansions of the Arts of Vision and Design, in colourful expanses of intriguing patterns of Painting, in creative inventions of Sculptural Forms, in constructive and imposing forms of Architectural Types, in the refined and developed forms of our Gesture-Language—in the Art of Drama and Dancing, which constitute some of the finest flowers of Indian civilisation, the fragrance and quality of which are in no way inferior to, but which, in some respects, surpass, the achievements of the Indian mind in other fields of cultural activity. In the achievements of Indian mind in its expression in Sculpture, in Painting, in Architecture, in Music and in Dancing, we come face to face with a revelation of a phase of its deepest thoughts, which in the nature of things could not be expressed in the languages of our dictionaries,—through the apparatus of Philology. Indeed, some of the loftiest thoughts of the human mind could only be expressed in a non-literary language, in the rich and variegated dialects of the Visual Arts. In fact in the department of Indian Sculpture, we meet with a remarkable body of plastic expressions which supplement Indian Philosophy as regards the comprehension of the nature and essence of the Divinity. Indian Sculpture has indeed expressed ideas about the nature of the Divinity which are incapable of being put into the language of words. Somewhat analogous has been the contribution of Indian Music, which has surveyed uncharted seas of spiritual thinking and

has touched the shores beyond. The frail craft of Indian Musical Sound, the petty jingle of the *Sitâr* (सेतार) or the soft drones the *Vînâ* (वीणा) can carry one to regions of Eternal Realities, across seas which were not given to the ships of mere speculative philosophy to traverse. The Art of Dance and the Drama and the whole vocabulary of the gesture-language of Indian Dancing are based on an attempt to imitate through the human body super-human or celestial gestures and it is for this reason that Indian Dancing is characteristically related to and made subservient to the attitudinized gestures of the Images of the Gods, which are visualised in Indian Sculpture. Indian Dancing is, fundamentally and characteristically, a piece of prayer spelt out in a highly developed gesture-language and offered to the gods. Dancing, according to old Indian conception, is basically a veritable 'Feast for the Gods'. It is an Art in the service of Divinity, and a Dancer is characteristically a 'Maid of the Gods', a Deva-Dâsî. And if human beings are allowed to partake of this gift to the Gods it is by way of a *prasâda* (प्रसाद) a sacrament endowed by the Grace of God as a remnant of the offering (*naivedya*— नैवेद्य) after it has pleased the gods. This dedication to a divine service has succeeded in freeing the practice of the Art from all the pitfalls and vices of Exhibitionism inherent in an appeal or display of the body addressed to a secular audience or private patrons. Of all the Graphic and Visual Arts, Dancing is least capable of secularising its function for individual amusement, without descending to degrading and dangerous levels. And the fashionable and cheap Exhibition by amateurs under the tempting title of 'Oriental Dancing' that has recently invaded our society, is the most daring insult that has been ever offered to the ideals and basic principles of Indian Art.

Of all the Arts, Indian Dancing calls for a life-long training and an exclusive dedication to the calling of a Dancer, the dedicated life of *natîvritti* (नटीवृत्ति) which it is impossible for most of our so-called modern exponents of the Divine Art to accept or to fulfil. In the history of the practice of Indian Dancing the life of a Dancer meant a life offered to the gods—involving a life of asceticism and renunciation, for the Dancer was married to the gods and could have no private family life. For, theoretically, a body which has been attuned and given up to and dedicated to the service of the divinity, could not be appropriated or desecrated for the amusement of human beings. In a verse of dedicatory Invocation Nandikesvara, the author of a Sanskrit treatise on Dancing, compares Siva to an actor, whose means of expression (*abhinaya* —अभिनय) are gesture, voice, and costume. He reveals himself through the world, the speech of men and the starry firmament:—

"*The monument of whose body* is the world, whose speech the sum of all language, whose jewels are the moon and the stars—to that pure Siva I bow!"

In ancient times, the Visual Arts helped to liberally disseminate the best and finest fruits of culture of the higher strata of society and to descend and filter down to the lowest levels of the illiterate millions of the masses who picked up and absorbed a large dose of knowledge without books and a liberal education without literacy in a manner unknown to any other country in the world. Indeed, recently "Education through the Eyes" has been the slogan of some of the foremost educational exponents in the West and all phases of the Graphic Arts have been laid under contribution in order to help and develop knowledge in all its phases and to build up a culture through the 'Gateways of the Eyes'. The undue emphasis laid on the Literary

Arts has had the dire consequence of cutting us off from a very extensive hemisphere of human Culture. And a man who has gathered all his knowledge from the pages of printed or written books and literary mediums has indeed disowned a moiety or perhaps more than a moiety of his ancestral inheritance. The cry of the hour is primary education and the solution of urgent economic problems. But even the Russian Soviet Republic committed to a comprehensive plan of liquidating illiteracy and of solving the problems of bread and butter has not neglected the claims of the Fine Arts in education and in life. In the various Museums of Antiquity and Archaeology and in a few Art Galleries in India we have indeed valuable assemblage or objects and exhibits of great educational and cultural value, of spiritual power and significance. But in the manner in which they are exhibited mostly un-labelled and un-catalogued and in the stingy way in which they are witheld from access and facilities for study, they, in many cases, remain all but sealed to the public, or to scholars, or to students. This appalling neglect of great instruments of education and apparatus of studies which are locked up in many of our Indian Museums has recently called forth a survey and scrutiny of their conditions by an expert sent out by the Museum Association from London. In a report recently published, the expert has severely commented on the utter lack of any relationship of these valuable educational materials with the teaching imparted in our schools and colleges. It is a matter of great rejoicing and gratification that the University of Calcutta under the initiative of the Vice-Chancellor has started a Museum of Indian Fine Arts, which has been fittingly associated with the name of Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, the most ardent advocate and patron of Indian Culture, that has ever lived in Calcutta. It is to be hoped that it will soon grow into a worthy treasure-house and temple to which ardent worshippers of Indian Art will flock with their devotions and offerings. It is very little known in India that Indian Art as the finest revelation of the Indian mind has for the last few years attracted the attention of connoisseurs in Europe and America. And a group of critically trained European scholars are devoting very assiduous and scientific studies to various phases of Indian Painting and Sculpture and helping to place the study of Indian Art on firm foundation, with scholarly accuracy and sincere sympathy and are helping to spread the fame and reputation of Indian Art and culture in Europe and America, in fact, to place the Art of India on the map of the world's Culture. The studies of the eminent scholars have demonstrated that the productions of Indian Fine Arts, the finest fiowers of Indian Culture, are original and valuable contributions to the total output of man's aesthetic thoughts. For Indian Art is not only a rich and valuable inheritance of the Indians alone but of the entire humanity.

TYAGARAJA—THE MUSICIAN SAINT OF SOUTH INDIA

By Swami Aseshananda

South India has made valuable and solid contributions to the spiritual culture of India. When Hinduism was suffering under the grip of great political convulsions in the middle ages, it is South India that kept the torch of Hindu civilization burning. She was in fact the sole custodian of all that was true and beautiful in the cultural heritage of India for many centuries. The South has produced not only great philosophers and system-builders like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva but also lynx-eyed and capable administrators like Vidyaranya of Vijayanagar. Her contributions in the realm of art, sculpture and painting as well as in the field of music are also remarkable for their richness and variety. The man who infused new vigour into her soul and earned for her a unique place in the domain of music was an humble devotee of Sri Rama, Tyagaraja by name, whose life-story is given in the following lines. Indeed none has been able to exercise such an abiding influence upon the minds of the people of all ranks as Tyagaraja has done through his devotional songs. His Kirtanas are so inspiring and universal in character that they have travelled without let or hindrance from place to place—from the palace of the prince to the hamlet of the peasant, from the shrine of the holy to the busy centres of trade and traffic. He was the greatest and most popular musician of South India. He has composed thousands of songs which have enraptured many hearts, throwing them into divine ecstasy. The sweetness and sublimity of his compositions have earned for him the name of "Sangita-guru." There is nothing higher than music—*gânât parataram nâsti*—was the key-note of his philosophy.

Tyagaraja was born in an orthodox Brahmin family in a village called Tiruvalur in the district of Tanjore. His father, Ramabrahmam, led a simple unassuming life with his wife Shanta for a number of years in their ancestral home. But circumstances forced him to shift permanently to Tiruvarur, a famous place of pilgrimage, which is also called Panchanada, the confluence of five sacred rivers. Tyagaraja was the younger of the two sons, and imbibed all the noble qualities of his God-fearing father. But his elder brother had none of his sterling merits and led a very reproachable life. After the death of their parents, the ancestral home and property were partitioned, and to our musician's share fell only a small house and the tutelary deity, the golden image of Sri Rama. One day, out of jealousy his malicious brother threw away the idol into the river Cauvery. Oh, what a great shock it was when he came to know that the image had gone from him for ever! He was overpowered with grief. Like the Gopees pining for Krishna, Tyagaraja languished for his Beloved and sought every possible spot of the full-flooded Cauvery to find him out. But all was in vain. In the agony of his heart he began to lament, "Where hast thou concealed thyself, my lord, and when shalt thou reveal thyself to me? Without thee my life is forlorn and is no better than a dreary burden." Stung by the pangs of separation he plunged himself in the stream for the sake of his Beloved. By divine grace,

his hand fell upon the image and he lifted it up from the deep bosom of the stream. His joy knew no bounds. He was full of ecstasy to have recovered the idol—the veritable gem of his heart. He gave vent to his feelings in a rapturous strain, "How I have got thee back—so compassionate art thou to your votaries. Is it the excellence of my sweet song that has borne fruit? I know not what. But I have got thee in my grasp and shall cherish thee with sweet affection." He took the deity in procession round the important streets of the town, reciting the marvellous deeds of Sri Rama—the friend of the lowly and the lost.

Unlike his elder brother, Tyagaraja possessed a unique character. He was imbued with the spirit of renunciation and unworldliness. Simple living and noble thinking were the two guiding factors, the sole incentives of his life. He abhorred name and fame, discarded wealth and position only to live a life of purity and serene holiness. Once Saraboji, the then Raja of Tanjore, sent for Tyagaraja to hear from him a few songs which should be specially composed in honour of his royal Highness. The musician refused to go as he was not a man to dance attendance on the rich and stoop down to vain flattery. The messenger tempted him with plenty of gold and property, and argued that it was foolish to let go this rare opportunity. But he was stern and adamant and in sheer contempt retorted, "Fie upon gold and land. Had I considered them precious, I would have long before melted the beautiful image of Rama and enjoyed all the luxuries that pander to the feelings of a worldling. It is not the gold outside but the fascinating charm of the spirit within that has attracted me. I prefer humble worship of my beloved Rama to the piling heaps of glory, earned by pleasing a proud rich or a boasted king." He was a hard ice to be broken, and so the messengers had to bid good-bye without further exchange of words.

Tyagaraja paid no heed to mechanical formulae or dry conventions. His worship consisted not in simple utterance or mere murmuring of a few words but in sincere outpourings from the very depth of his soul. He would rise very early before dawn spread its glimmering light on the eastern horizon. During the major portion of the night he would keep vigils and pass his time in Bhajana and divine contemplation. He was not a man of the ordinary stuff but a being steeped in the waters of life spiritual. He wrote what he saw, he sang what he felt. He was one of those fortunate souls who would soar while they sing and sing while they would soar. His biographers have recorded incidents of his wonderful vision and his communion with the spirit. They have narrated that he would very often converse with the Deity in a state of trance. He attained the highest point of illumination which necessarily broadened his outlook, making it all-absorbing and universal. He broke down the prison-house of bigotry and sectarianism. No doubt, the cherished idol of his heart was Sri Rama but to him, Rama was not a communal God exclusively meant for any particular caste, sect or community, but the infinite Parabrahman, the absolute Principle and Truth of the Upanishads. He made no distinction between one God and another. His views were so broad and liberal that he wrote songs relating to all the principal deities of the Hindu Pantheon, without the least taint of fanaticism. He invoked Ganesha as "Girirâjasuta," Shiva as "Shambho Mahadeva," Krishna as "Prânnâthavirana" and Hanuman as "Pâhirâmaduta" in soul-stirring verses of exquisite melody. To the Divine

Mother he prayed, "O Queen to Chandrakalâdhara, vouchsafe me thy gracious look. I perceive no difference between Rama, Siva and yourself. O Chastiser of death, abandon me not."

God was all in all in his life. The words of Sri Krishna—"Whomsoever I am pleased with, his wealth and possessions I take away"—struck deep into his heart. What an amount of *vairâgyam*, the fiaming fire of dispassion, was burning within his soul! The world with its surging attractions and enchantments could not dupe him and switch him off from his path. It is said that the high-minded and munificent Maharajah of Travancore sent an embassy through his famous violinist Vadivelu entreating him to come to his court and accept the prize-post of the chief musician in his palace which was adorned with a galaxy of reputed musicians. The messenger drew a glowing picture of bright prospects and broached the topic in the following strain, "The Maharaja will honour you with enormous presents and raise you to a distinguished *Padavi* (position of eminence). Gaining the royal favour, your poverty will be no more, wants will be mitigated and your status will be raised." But it was easier to bind a torrential stream than to tempt Tyagaraja with temporal glory or earthly fame. Unperturbed in mind, the saint gave a spirited reply through one of his remarkable Kritis that will never be forgotten as long as music lives in the South. This one song "Padavi Ni Dadbhakli" is enough to immortalise his name. He sang, "The real Padavi is that which inspires unstinted faith in the supreme Lord. That state of mind is truly praiseworthy which falters not, wavers not from its chosen ideal. Who else is entitled to be called a man of position but those who possess pure, unsullied devotion to the Divine Maker? Away with your glory and status. Little do I care for them." Seeing his detachment and the dispassionate fervour of his mind the ambassador took leave with the sorest disappointment. His spirit of renunciation came upon him not as a consequence of despair and defeat but through mature conviction that the world and its profits are paltry and insignificant as bubbles in the sea. One of his songs will clearly state the nature of thoughts that drew him to such a conclusion:

"What availeth endless riches?
Just a handful a man doth eat.
What availeth countless dresses?
Man can wear but one alone;
What availeth the lordship
Of many lands? He can but lie
In a space three cubits long.
What availeth a hundred dishes?
Man can but a mouthful take.
What, if the river should overflow?
The vessel holds not beyond content.
Ah, it availeth not, my mind!
Forget not your beloved Lord."

He has composed many impassioned, soul-stirring songs that stand unparalleled in any literature of the world for their tenderness and pathos, melody and appeal.

"O the breath of my life!
The fruit of my meditation
Thou king of kings!
O the light of my vision,
The flower of my devotion!
I bow unto Thee."

Tyagaraja was a man of solid worth and dynamic personality. He soared high above the dusty plane of servile existence. He adopted a quiet unostentatious life living on the chance gift of the pious householders and in holy communion with his beloved Deity. God was his only support and guide; he needed no help from the outside world to minister to his needs. He required no stimulus from the flattering public to infuse inspiration into life. Unconcern-

ed at the applauses of men, he sang his divine Kritis to please his Divine Maker, which fell like drops of summer to soothe the parched-up souls of agonised humanity.

Time rolled on. Tyagaraja entered on his 88th year. One day he saw a wonderful dream which prognosticated that his end was approaching. It seems that Sri Rama appeared in a vision and informed him that the mission of his life was over, and in the course of ten days he would grant him complete liberation. He instinctively felt the urge for taking *sannyâsa* which the saint did instantaneously. The promised time came, and Tyagaraja sang his last song "Paritapamukhani" and forthwith he entered into Mahasamadhi—the realm of peace and love where light shines for ever. His body was carried with due solemnity and was buried on the left bank of the river Cauvery, with proper rites and ceremonies.

The name of Tyagaraja is a household word in South India. Like the Bhajanas of Tulasidas and Mirabai in the North his "Kritis" are very popular and famous throughout the South. He has rendered an invaluable service to the cause of Indian music by giving stress more on tunes than on words. Before his time, style and diction played the all-important part. It was his rare privilege and unprecedented success to release songs from the iron grip of letters and invest them with beauty, melody and grandeur. Posterity remembers him not only as a musician but as a mystic as well as a saint. Tyagaraja's birth-anniversary has become one of the prominent observances to the music-lovers of the South and every year it is growing in importance and magnitude. Like a brilliant star he is still shining in solitary grandeur to guide weary travellers and to show the real path to the music-loving humanity. His "Kirtanas" are 'Nirabadhisukhada'—productive of unceasing felicity, and heal the wounds of the sorrowful and cheer the hearts of the distressed. May Sri Rama give us true understanding and strength to follow in the wake of truth!

THE SANCTUARY OF THE SOUL

By Eric Hammond

One of the most fascinating, and certainly one of the most helpful, studies in which seekers after Reality can be engaged, is exhibited in the poetic and philosophic plea for the immanence and transcendence of the Divine.

Paul of Tarsus stands forth as the singer of a clear strong note in that happy harmony which accentuates the assurance that the Kingdom of God is within, echoing the tone of Jesus of Nazareth. In the same connection, too, we may quote from among the writings of our own day, a strikingly beautiful and pregnant passage found in the words of Rabindranath Tagore.: "I am uneasy in my heart when I have to leave my accustomed shelter; I forget that there also Thou abidest."

Most beautifully, Y. W. H. Myers caught and conveyed joy and glory in a personal belief in the Personal Presence, interpreting it for us in the following verse:—

"Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand;

Only the Power that is within me feeling
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand."

Scarcely we catch, but for our abiding hope, we can catch; hardly we hear, but for our everlasting peace, we may hear; for the vision and the melody are alike within. May we not also follow Myers in his whole-souled acceptation of the sacred mystery experienced by her whom Christians call the mother of their Lord?

"Thou, with strong prayer and very much entreating,
Wilt be asked, and Thou shalt answer then,
Show the hid heart, beneath creation healing,
Smile with kind eyes and be a man with men."

Assuredly the humble and persistent seeker after Truth may dare to aspire to some reflection of that mysterious and mystic revelation, the discovery of the God within; the awakening to the consciousness of the new creation which is obtaining in men's hearts even now. It is obtaining in the wide world over. It is unlimited by land or by sea, by colour or by creed.

The spirit of the Lord moves upon the face of the water, and deep responds to deep. It manifests itself within the soul of humanity, unhampered by region or by circumstance.

"For," said Paul, "I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

That prevailing love expresses itself apparently in spite of outstanding obstacles of belief, and even of non-belief; of creeds crystallized into fossildom; of faiths over-weighted by superstitious reverence for many lesser gods. These gods were imagined as images of the One God by whose breath alone man and the universes move and have their being.

In Sir Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* we find a fine glimpse of that fact:

"But, sore amazed,
Thrilled, o'erfilled, dazzled and dazed,
Arjuna knelt and bowed his head,
And clasped his palms, and cried, and said,
'Yea! I have seen! I see!
Lord! All is wrapped in Thee!'"

All that is good must come from Him, through Him, Who is all good. The word of the Lord speaks to men of various tongues with that voice which compels a hearing; for it speaks from within.

Mrs. Alice Meynell, in "Poems," writes:

"Thou art the Way,
Hadst Thou been nothing but the goal
I cannot say
If Thou hadst ever met my soul,
I'll not reproach
The road that winds, my feet that err;
Access, approach,
Art Thou; Time, Way and Wayfarer."

Thus each may see, according to his light, the splendid significance of the immanent and transcendent. God may become a fact of faith and of experience; thus may be realized that surpassing mystery, best, perhaps, put in such words as these: "Lo! I am around thee and about thee whenever thou art; but my kingdom, the centre of my dominion, is within thee."

GEORGE RUSSELL AND INDIAN THOUGHT

By Swami Jagadiswarananda

George William Russell, popularly known to the world by his pen-name, AE, was the greatest poet of Ireland. He was also a good artist, a great patriot and, above all, a dynamic mystic of rare calibre. A many-sided personality though he was, the mystic in him was the dominant note of his character. What characterizes his mysticism most is its surprising similarity to Indian thought and, as such, a study of his views is made in the following paragraphs in the light of Vedanta.

George Russell was born in April, 1867, at Largan and educated at Rathmines school, Dublin. He studied art for some time in a school but his academic education did not proceed far like that of Tagore and other celebrities of our time. When his student career was cut short, he entered an accountant's office, but in 1897 he joined the Irish Agricultural Movement and became a successful organizer of Agricultural Societies. From 1904 to 1923 he was the worthy editor of *The Irish Homestead*, an organ of the Agricultural Co-operative Movement. In 1923 he became the able editor of *The Irish Statesman*, in which capacity his mighty pen did much to direct the new literature on national lines. In Celtic Renaissance and in the Revival of Gaelic language and literature he has left a permanent mark in Ireland. In the last decade of his life he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature from the Dublin University in 1929 and passed away in July, 1935.

As a mystic AE has much in common with Hindu thinkers and shares many of their ideas and conceptions of soul, God and universe. "In thought, ideas and visions," writes Mr. Mahesh Chandra, M.A. in his *Study of Modern Irish Literature*,[1] "AE is so like a Hindu seer that it is difficult to keep in mind the fact while studying his works that he is an Irishman. Even there are poems which use Sanskrit words and phrases and the impression created is that of reading splendid transcriptions of Hindu philosophical books or hymns." AE, however, acknowledges gratefully his indebtedness to Hindu scriptures. He told James Stephens who wrote of his passing in *The Observer* (London), July 21, 1935, that he was not originally robust, physically or intellectually, nor of a fundamentally decided character, nor of an especially psychic nature. He made himself a strong and self-reliant man by gradually increasing his interest in the thought and methods of the Vedanta. He held that to meditate on the ideas of the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* and to practise the psychological discipline systematized by Patanjali must astonishingly energize any person and that these ideas and this discipline had transformed him from a shy self-doubting youth into the cheerful courageous personage he suddenly became.

George Russell had deep love and longing for the Orient and Oriental wisdom. He had a soft corner in his heart particularly for India and her spiritual wealth. Mr. Frank O'Connar, the Irish author, who delivered the graveside oration at the funeral of his departed friend, struck a true note when he said that AE saw the light in the East and longed for the East. AE be-

[1] Published in the "Allahabad University Studies," No. 14, 1937.

lieved firmly like Tindall and Rolland, Emerson and Keyserling and a host of other Western savants that spiritual light has always come from the East and will again come from the East. In a letter written on the 17th October, 1922, he pays his loving tribute to India as follows: "I have watched with interest so far as I could, the economic and spiritual movements in India, a country which I regard as a kind of spiritual Fatherland and whose influence on the thought of the world must, I think, grow greater because in no literature there is such a reservoir of divine truth as in the Indian."

Let it not be understood that AE was an upstart or an alien growth on the cultural soil of Ireland. Far from it. AE was in truth the natural offshoot or rather the evolution of ancient Irish heritage. There is a close cultural affinity between Ireland and India. The Celts who were the ancestors of the modern Irish were the first of the Indo-Aryan groups to migrate to Europe from somewhere in Central Asia and it is they who (of all branches that settled in different countries of Europe) have preserved more visible traces of their Asiatic origin. Remarks R. Erskine of Marr, the editor of the *Illustrated Gaelic Annual*, while writing about the Celtic[2] branch of the Aryans and India, "The verbal affinities of Celtic languages with the principal dialects of the Indian peninsula are both numerous and considerable, and, what is more, they contain elements that are fundamental to both." Professor MacBain still recognizes essential Aryan characteristics in the Celtic languages. Some social customs and practices of the Celts are said to be undoubtedly of Eastern origin. "It is curious," says Dr. Douglas Hyde in his account of old Irish literature, "to find the Indian practice of sitting 'dharna' or fasting on a debtor in full force among the Irish as one of the legal forms in which a creditor should proceed to recover his debt." Mr. Mahesh Chandra is of opinion that there is abundant evidence to show that the doctrine of metempsychosis (belief in rebirth) was perfectly familiar to the pagan Irish, as may be seen from the stories of the birth of Chuchulian Etain, the two swine-herds, Conell Cearnach, Tuan Mac Cairill and Aedh Slane. AE who was himself a master of Celtic lore and legends frankly admits that the Earth-world, Mid-world, Heaven-world and God-world spoken of in the Indian scriptures are worlds which the Gaelic ancestors had also knowledge of. He also says that the Celtic myth of Cormac is the same as an Upanishadic myth. But owing to the advent of Christianity, pagan traditions of old Celtic culture were gradually suppressed, and it is the subsequent literary revival that forged a link of cultural continuity between the past and the present literature of Ireland. The Celtic renaissance found its spokesmen in Yeats, Eglinton and most perfectly in AE who may be rightly said to be its best product.

In thought, life and spirit AE fully embodies the ideas and ideals of a practical Vedantist. That is why many of his thoughts are in wonderful agreement with those of India. He was never a visionary but always lived the life of an ideal mystic. As a sincere patriot he took active interest in the welfare of Ireland and played an important role in the regeneration of his country. His contemporary and colleague, Mr. Yeats, writes in his autobiography that AE was, in the eyes of the community, a saint and genius. His friend, John Eglinton, calls him a 'social cement' of the Irish civilization. "AE was really a religious

[2] *Aryan Path*, December, 1937.

teacher and his painting, his poetry, his conversation, all were subservient to that and men watched him with awe and bewilderment."

In youth AE came in contact with the Theosophical Society in Dublin and through it he was led to study the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* and other Indian classics. He was a regular contributor to the *Irish Theosophist* in which his first book, *Homeward Songs*, was serially published. He however cut off his connections with the Society and with a few earnest souls he started the "Hermetic Society" in which, his friend Captain P. G. Bowen writes,[3] the *Bhagavad-Gitâ*, the Upanishads, the Pâtanjal Darsan and other sacred books of India were regularly and seriously studied under his direct guidance. AE conducted the Society with care as long as he lived and was thus instrumental in spreading Indian thought in Ireland both in theory and practice. The Upanishads that were a solace of life to AE as they were to Schopenhauer helped him greatly in removing the doubts and difficulties that beset the path of spiritual life. He writes what he felt after reading the Upanishads:

> "Out of the dusky chambers of the brain
> Flows the Imperial will through dream to dream:
> The fires of the life around it tempt and gleam:
> The knights of the earth fade and wane.
> Passed beyond the deep heart music-filled,
> The kingly Will sits on the ancient throne,
> Wielding the sceptre, fearless, free, alone,
> Knowing in Brahma all it dared and willed."

[3] *Aryan Path*, December, 1935.

Writing about intuition AE says[4] that the grand spiritual tradition of the Aryan ancestors still remains embodied in the Vedas and Upanishads. He suggests to the readers of his writings a study of the divine science as embedded in mystical Indian literature. He was in the habit of comparing and confirming his mystic experiences with the descriptions of the Indian scriptures. He writes:[5] "In the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* where Krishna, the Self of the universe, says, 'I am the A among letters' I find agreement. In other works like *Shivâgama* there is agreement as where it says, 'Meditate upon the fire force with R as its symbol, as being triangular and red.'" Yeats writes: "I sometimes wonder what AE would have been, had he not met in early life those translations of the *Upanishads*."

AE was so much influenced by Hindu ideals that he used to undergo regularly like a Hindu a series of spiritual practices and was fortunately blessed with the visions of the inner world. In the hours of dawn when the nature is calm and quiet and after nightfall when the cares of the daily life are over and perfect peace prevails, the poet retired for communion with the Divine.

AE was therefore a man of meditation and his life was a continuous quest of Ancestral Self, the Oversoul, the Paramâtman of Indian thought. About meditation he observes beautifully in the *Candle of Vision* in the following manner: "In meditation we realize how little of life has been our own. The rumour of revolt that the spirit (in us) will escape the thraldom (of matter) runs through the body. Our whole being becomes vitalized and our inner being grows real to ourselves. We enter into Infinite, the Ultimate Being of us. Meditation is a fiery brooding on that Majestical Self. We imagine ourselves

[4] *Candle of Vision.*
[5] *Ibid.*

into its vastness, we conceive ourselves as mirroring Its infinitude, as moving in all things, as living in all beings, in earth, water, air, fire and ether. We try to know as It knows, to live as It lives. We equal ourselves to It that we may understand It and become It." Like a Vedantist AE defines meditation as the eternal moment when the mortal mind is linked and finally united with the Immortal mind.

By life-long practice of meditation according to the Hindu system AE realized the truths of Vedanta and caught glimpses of his Larger Soul as he confesses in the preface to his *Homeward Songs*: "I know, I am a Spirit, and that I went forth in old times from Self-ancestral to labours yet unaccomplished; but fllled over and again with home-sickness, I made these Homeward Songs by the way." He also acquired occult powers such as foretelling, distant-vision, etc. Such memories of prenatal existence come to those that practise yogic inwardness. Rightly the Upanishadic sages have advised dispassionate souls to close their eyes and look within to recognize their immortal nature. Once AE confided to a friend that he was perhaps in his previous birth a Hindu *yogi*.

A mere child, he dreamt he was a child of Light. He writes in the retrospect of his *Candle of Vision* that when he was 16 or 17 years old he became aware of a Mysterious Life quickening within his life. He thought he was self-begotten. When he was five years of age he read a children's book called *Magic*. This book fascinated him and its teachings lay in his memory until a dozen years later their transcendental significance came home to him when he learnt of the Indian doctrine of Mâyâ. In his poem, entitled *Mâyâ*, he unlike many a Western thinker fully grasps its meaning. His exposition of Mâyâ is as follows:

"The boat drifts in the heart of
heat,
In starry dances plays the light:
Yet I have grown so sudden old
Your laughter sounds afar. I seem,
One who waking tries to hold
A figure that he loved in dream,
And feels it lost beyond recall
The words unconquerable.
The doom is spoken. It may be
That I shall never more forget
In all my thoughts of thee and mine
The Mâyâ wherein life is set.
The wizardry shall still pursue
All things we have found firm and
fair
Till life itself seem frail as dew
Or bubble glittering in the air.
Oh, let us fly
There is some magic in this place
Oh, fly from this enchanted sea."

According to the doctrine of Mâyâ, life is a long dream—as unreal as the dream of the night. AE in one of his mystic visions realized the dream of life as unreal as any day-dream. Doctrines of AE's mysticism are so wonderfully identical with those of Vedanta that his poems look like translations of the utterances of the Hindu sages.

AE believed in the immortality and transmigration of the soul. In his later years he says that, while looking back to the past, he has the vivid sense of a being seeking incarnation, a being stained with dust and confiict of a long travel through time carrying with it myriads of memories and secret wisdom. In the silence of his soul he recognized the incorruptible spiritual nature and the original purity of the soul. In introspective meditation he also realized the undying divine nature of men. His definitions of God and man are beautifully akin to those of Vedanta. He writes:

"These myriad eyes that look on
me are mine;

Wondering beneath them I have found again
The ancient ample moment, the Divine,
The God-root within men."

In a charming poem entitled *Krishna*, he expresses in a remarkable way the spirit of Indian thought. In it he describes Krishna as the King of kings and as the Prince of peace and, to crown all, Krishna is revealed to him as the eternal life within the everlasting living ones. Besides, AE's two poems, *Om* and *Indian Song*, bear the definite stamp of Indian thought.

In conclusion it may be said that the inborn inclination to live the life of the spirit and to have an intimate acquaintance with Indian thought inspired AE to think and write like a Hindu, to live and die like a Hindu. Indeed every true mystic like AE cannot but be a Vedantist, for real mysticism is in essence nothing but Vedanta.

SRI-BHASHYA

By Swami Vireswarananda

Chapter I

Section I

The Great Siddhanta

Advaitin's position refuted

ALL KNOWLEDGE IS OF THE REAL

Those who are learned in the Vedas declare that all knowledge is of real things, of things as they are and that there is nothing like wrong or erroneous knoweldge, for every object contains every other object. Even as the gross elements contain all the three or five subtle elements in their composition and are called earth, water, etc., only according to the predominance of the earth and water element in them, similarly all objects contain all other objects in them, and specially substances which are similar contain portions of each other in their composition. Thus silver exists actually in the composition of the shell and the terms "silver" and "shell" are used according to the predominance of the one or the other element in any object. So when shell is taken for silver what happens is this: Due to some defect in the eye or due to some other cause the silver element in the object is seen and not the shell element in it and the perceiver desires to possess it. Later when the defect is removed, the shell element is seen and he no longer desires it. Thus the perception of silver in the shell is real. The perception in which the shell is predominant sublates the perception in which it is not predominant and there is no sublation of an unreal perception by a real one.

Brahman alone is the creator of everything in this world, be it in the waking or in the dream state. The waking state is experienced by all souls but the dream world is experienced by the dreaming individual alone as it is meant for him alone and is created by the Lord as a fruit of that particular individual's merit or demerit (*Vide* 3.2.1-2). Similarly in the waking state also certain things are created by the Lord as are experienced by all, while certain other things are created in such a way as to be perceived only by particular persons

and to last for a limited time only, and it is this difference between objects of general perception and objects of perception of particular beings, which makes the difference between things sublating and things sublated. Thus all perceptions are real and all knowledge is real and there is nothing like unreal object or wrong knowledge.

SCRIPTURES DO NOT TEACH NESCIENCE

The Nescience of the Advaitins which is neither real nor unreal is not based on scriptural authority. In the text, 'These which are true are covered by what is untrue (*anrita*)' (*Chh.* 8.3.2), quoted by the Advaitins, the word 'untrue' (*anrita*) does not mean unreal or indefinable but is the opposite of what is meant by the word *rita* (true), and *rita* means such actions as do not result in any worldly enjoyment but are helpful only to attain the Lord, *viz.*, "Those enjoying the results of good actions (*rita*)" (*Katha.* 1.3.1). Therefore 'untrue' (*anrita*) means actions which lead to worldly enjoyment and not helpful in attaining the Lord and consequently due to such actions the world of Brahman is hidden to such people—that is what the *Chhândogya* text says. Again, "Though they daily go to the world of Brahman they do not attain Brahman, being carried away by untruth."

The word Mâyâ does not mean unreal or false but that power which is capable of producing wonderful effects. This latter meaning is also accepted. Prakriti also is capable of creating wonderful effects and is therefore called Mâyâ. In the text, "The Lord, the Mâyin, creates through Mâyâ this world and the souls are bound in it by this Mâyâ" (*Svet.* 4.9), the word Mâyâ refers to Prakriti which is the cause of this wonderful creation and the Lord is called Mâyin because He possesses the power and not because of Nescience on His part. It is the *jiva* that is bound by this Mâyâ as the text itself says. Again in "The Lord became many by His Mâyâ" (*Brih.*) the reference is to the Lord's manifold powers. "My Mâyâ is hard to cross" (*Gitâ* 7.14)—here Mâyâ is said to consist of three *gunas* and therefore refers to Prakriti. So it is clear that scriptures (Sruti and Smriti) do not teach a Nescience which is neither real nor unreal. Nor is such an entity taught by the Purânas.

THE TEXT, 'THAT THOU ART' DOES NOT PRODUCE THE KNOWLEDGE OF A NON-DIFFERENTIATED BRAHMAN

It is not true that final release results from the knowledge of a non-differentiated Brahman. Scriptural texts like, "I have known the great Being *resplendent like the sun* and who is beyond this darkness of ignorance; knowing Him alone one attains immortality here—there is no other way to go by" (*Svet.* 3.8), show that Brahman is differentiated and that the knowledge of such a Brahman alone leads to liberation. It has already been shown that even purifying texts like, "Existence, Knowledge, Infinite is Brahman" refer to a differentiated Brahman. Even the co-ordination in the text, 'That thou art' (*Chh.* 6.13.3) does not prove a non-differentiated Brahman. The word 'That' in this text refers to the omniscient Brahman whose desires are true, the First Cause, and That which has been spoken of in the earlier passages: "He thought, 'I shall be many'" etc. (*Chh.* 6.1.3); the 'thou' refers to the *jiva* with the gross matter with which it is connected as the body of the Lord, for the *Chhândogya* text says that He is the Self of everything in the world, both sentient and insentient: "In that all this has its Self" (*Chh.* 6.1.3), and thus the 'thou' is co-ordinated with 'That' and refers to Brahman. Therefore the text

shows that Brahman exists in two modes as the cause of the world and as the *jiva* and this existence of one object in two different conditions is what a co-ordination aims at. If this twofold condition is not accepted then co-ordination would be meaningless, for no idea of difference will be conveyed by the terms and we shall also have to give up the primary meanings of the terms and resort to secondary meanings or implications.

The Advaitins say that just as the sentence, "This is that Devadatta," on account of the contradiction involved in one part of its import, *viz.*, Devadatta as existing in the past and at another place and in the present and here, implies, by abandoning the conflicting portion which has reference to time and place, only the non-conflicting portion, *viz.*, the man Devadatta, similarly "That thou art," on account of the contradiction involved in one part of its import, *viz.*, consciousness characterised by remoteness and immediacy, implies, by abandoning the conflicting portion which has relation to remoteness, immediacy, etc., only absolute Pure Consciousness which is common to both 'That' and 'thou'. But the fact is, here there is no contradiction at all in the sentence, 'This is that Devadatta', for the same person can exist at different times and there is no contradiction in such a perception. Even the perception as existing in different places involves no contradiction since it is connected with different times and does not refer to one moment, for he does not exist at different places at the same moment but at different moments. On the other hand if 'That' refers to non-differentiated Pure Consciousness then it will conflict with the earlier texts, "He thought, 'I shall be many'." Moreover the initial promise "By the knowledge of one everything will be known" will also not be fulfilled, for according to the Advaitins the knowledge of Brahman leads to the knowledge of the universe as *unreal* and these words are unwarranted when it is possible to fulfil the promise without them, that is, by showing that by knowing Brahman all its products are also known and this is possible if we regard Brahman as the Cause and Itself as the Effect, *i.e.*, *as having for* Its body the *jivas* and matter in their subtle condition and also as having these two in their gross state for Its body in the effected state. As the cause and the effect are the same substance, by knowing the cause the effect is also known. Lastly, according to the Advaitin's view, to Brahman which is knowledge itself and is pure will be attributed Nescience and It will be the seat of all the objectionable qualities which are the effects of this Nescience.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In the *Editorial* we have shown that the Religion of Vedanta fulfils all the conditions of a Universal Religion inasmuch as the different levels of religious consciousness and experience stand beautifully harmonized in its catholic fold without any harm to the integrity of any system of thought, and have also pointed out the usefulness of 'the religions in the plural.' In the article on *Bankim Chandra Chatterjee* whose birth-centenary is being celebrated this year throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, Bharadwaja throws abundant

light on a forgotten chapter of the history of Bengal and also dwells upon the splendid contributions of this outstanding literary genius to the growth of nationalism in Bengal and, for the matter of that, in the whole of India. Prof. Heinrich Zimmer, a great Indologist and Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Heidelberg, Germany, concludes his interesting article on *The Story of the Indian King and the Corpse* with a brilliant exposition of the religious and philosophical truths underlying the anecdotes embodied in Somadeva's Kathâsaritsâgara. *This is India* by a Wanderer will enable the readers to have a glimpse into the inner life of the Indian people. In his interesting article on *Cultural Values of Indian Plastic Arts*, Mr. O. C. Gangoly, Editor of the *Rupam*, and a well-known art-critic of Bengal, has brought into bold relief some of the magnificent achievements of the Indian minds in the realm of fine arts and also shown that they constitute original and valuable contributions to the total output of man's æsthetic thought. Swami Aseshananda of the Ramakrishna Mission gives a pen-picture of the life and teachings of a celebrated South Indian Saint in his article on *Tyagaraja —the Musician Saint of South India*. *The Sanctuary of the Soul* by Eric Hammond points out that every aspirant after God-realisation should seek the Kingdom of Heaven in the inmost core of his being where the spirit of the Lord shines undimmed and unhampered by any other forces of life. In his article on *George Russell and Indian Thought*, Swami Jagadiswarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission shows how the writings of this illustrious Irish Poet are abundantly suffused with the mystic thoughts of Vedanta, the crown of Indian philosophy.

PREMIER OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA ON INDIAN CULTURE

Not long ago Swami Adyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission received from General Hertzog, Premier of the Union of South Africa, a very appreciative letter about Indian thought and culture, in acknowledgement of the former's gift of the three volumes of *The Cultural Heritage of India* to the latter. We reproduce the greater part of the letter below for our readers who may find it interesting.

"Dear Mr. Adyananda,

Since receiving your kind gift, the three volumes of "The Cultural Heritage of India," I have been very greatly interested in their contents, and desire to convey to you my hearty appreciation for the fine gift which has brought me into a relationship with Indian thought and culture that has been, and will continue to be to me, a great and exceptional source of information and delight.

"I feel positive that the publication of these volumes will prove to be a great service not only to India but also to the rest of the world, where ignorance of India and Indian culture has been a very great obstacle to the due appreciation of the part played by India and Indians in the civilization and progress of the world.

"I should be greatly indebted to you if you would be so kind as to convey to the members of the Ramakrishna Mission my heartfelt gratitude and thanks for the great gift which will always be a valuable and treasured asset in my library. . . ."

With very kind regards and greetings

I remain

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) J. B. M. Hertzog.

We should mention here that nearly six years ago Swami Adyananda went to the Union of South Africa on an invitation from a group of devoted admirers of the Ramakrishna Mission and its ideals. The Swami stayed in the country for about half a dozen months, and during the sojourn he travelled widely, lectured before learned societies and universities, granted interviews to numerous callers, and met distinguished personalities including General Smuts, who is, by the way, not only a distinguished general and politician but also a noted thinker, widely known in philosophical circles as the author of the theory of Holism, and General Hertzog, the present Premier of the Union, with whom he had intimate talks on various subjects. In his lectures, interviews and meetings the Swami faithfully represented the Indian culture and India's enduring contributions to humanity in the field of religion and philosophy and pointed out the present world's need of a spiritual ideal to rescue it from strife and chaos. His talks and lectures created a deep impression everywhere and awakened in the audiences a real interest in Indian culture.

INDIA AND FUTURE OF HUMANITY

The observations made above lead us to a refiection of a kindred nature. The world to-day is straining out towards a philosophy of life in which a new creative power aiming at peace, harmony, and synthesis may strike root. All the acute thinkers of the present times who dream visions of a world without strife and conflict, cruelty and horror, are daily coming to realize that all programmes of social and humanitarian reform must have reference to, and issue out from, a deep spiritual context. Otherwise reforms desirable in themselves will only lead to undesirable consequences. And with the realization of this truth it is also becoming more and more plain to many that for a philosophy of this type which is living and dynamic and which is to form the basis of a new creative endeavour the world must largely turn to India.

The spiritual ideals of India, representing the experiences of a long line of seers right through her age-long history, are sure to act in no distant time as a mighty leaven in the thought processes of the world, signs of which are already discernible. And the publication of the *Cultural Heritage of India*, which discloses the true genius of Indian culture with great faithfulness, is sure to be of great service in this direction. Towards the end of a very appreciative review of this work in the *Times Literary Supplement*, London, of the 5th of March last, the reviewer made the following weighty observations about Indian genius and India's future role in the history of mankind: "For centuries their (Indians') one great aim has been 'the realization of God'. The book is a revelation of the extent to which they have attained their object and entered into harmony with the Great Spirit of the Universe. And it may well happen that it will be to India, as well as to Palestine, that we shall have to look for the spirit which will unite men in building a kingdom of God upon earth."

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY STUDIES, VOL. XIV. ARTS AND SCIENCE. *Senate House, Allahabad, 1938. Pp. 247+174. Price Rs. 7-8.*

The present volume fully maintains the very high standard of the previous ones, some of which we had the pleasure before of noticing in these pages ; and it contains the following weighty original papers in its Arts and Science sections. (A) Arts Section : (1) A study of Modern Irish Literature with Particular Reference to W. B. Yeats and A.E. (George Russel) in terms of Hindu Philosophy—by Mahes Chandra, M.A.; (2) The Official Block in the Indian Legislature —by M. S. Kamthan ; (3) The Philosophy of the Sâriraka Bhashya—by Shashodhar Datta ; (4) The System of Land-tenure in Ancient India—by P. K. Acharya ; (5) The Handwriting of Tulasidâsa—by Mata Prasad Gupta ; (6) Bankruptcy, in Private International Law—by K. R. R. Sastry. (B) Science Section : (1) Chemical Examination of some of the Indian Medicinal Plants—by Radha Raman Agarwal ; (2) Chemical Examination of the Seeds of Physalis Peruviana or Cape Goose Berry—by Mahadeo Prasad Gupta and Jagraj Behari Lal ; (3) The Chemical Examination of the Fruits of Solanum Xanthiocarpum Schard and Wendle—by Mahadeo Prasad Gupta and Sikhibhusan Dutt ; (4) Constitution of the Seeds of Belpharis Edulis, Pers.—by Jagraj Behari Lal ; (5) Constitution of the Colouring Matter of Nyctanthes Arbortristis —by Jagraj Behari Lal ; (6) Photonitrification and the Influence of Temperature on the Nitrate Formation in the Soil—by S. K. Mukherji ; (8) Photo Ammonification is an Oxidation Process in Soil—by S. K. Mukherji ; (9) Flora of Allahabad—by G. D. Srivastava ; (10) On the Cytoplasmic Inclusions in the Oogenesis of Lepus Cunniculus —by Miss R. Clement, M.Sc.

INDIA THE FOUNTAIN OF PEACE. WITH A FOREWORD BY PROF. P. NATARAJAN, M.A., D. LITT. *Edited and Published by N. Lakshmanan, B. 26, R. S. Puram, Coimbatore (South India). Pp. 168.*

India has a special message for the world and the Indians claim themselves to have solved many knotty problems in a way particularly their own. The passages collected in this book reflect the authoritative opinions of eminent Indians on different subjects, *e.g.*, nationalism or internationalism ; India's contribution to human welfare ; protection of the minorities ; religious toleration ; the question of the untouchables and the Devdasi system ; the modern religious movements in India, etc. These extracts are generally quoted from *The Indian Social Reformer*, which is, according to the editor, not only an advocate of the social reform movement, but also a record of all the events and phases of contemporary life. These passages throw a flood of light on some of the burning questions of the day and point out an underlying synthesis in the divergent elements of Indian life and society.

Though it is a source-book, the quotations are sometimes too short to express the ideas for which they stand. But this book will be useful to the students interested in Indian civilization and culture as it furnishes to them a variety of information through its copious notes and detailed bibliography.

GERMAN

(1) KARMA-YOGA UND BHAKTI-YOGA.

(2) RAJA-YOGA. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. TRANSLATED BY EMMA VON PELET. *Rascher Verlag Zürich—Leipzig. Pp. 258 and 286 respectively.*

Most of the works of Swami Vivekananda have already been done into French, and we notice with great pleasure the appearance of these excellent and superbly produced German translations of the three celebrated works of the Swami, namely, the Karma Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga and the Raja Yoga. We believe they will be welcomed by a large number of German-speaking persons who are eager to penetrate deeper into the broad spirit of Hindu religion and philosophy.

FRENCH

(1) QUELQUE TENDANCES DE LA PHILOSOPHIE HINDOUE MODERNE.

(2) INTRODUCTION A L'ETUDE DES YOGAS HINDOUS. BY JEAN HERBERT. *Dépositaires Généraux. France : Adrien Maisonneuve, 11, Rue Saint-Sulpice, Paris.*

Suisse : Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel. Asie : Bharata Shakti Nilayam, Pondichéry. Autres pays : Union des Imprimeries, Frameries (Belgique). Pp. 22 and 38 respectively.

These two brochures are the reports of two lectures delivered by Mon. Jean Herbert at the Theosophical Society of Paris and at the International Institute of Psychagogie, Geneva, respectively, early in this year. He has attempted in them to convey to his readers in easy, clear, and non-philosophical language, a few broad ideas about the nature and purpose of the yogas and some of the tendencies in the fields of religious and philosophical thinking in modern India. For this purpose he has mainly relied upon the utterances and works of persons like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Mon. Jean Herbert brings to his task not only a fine intelligence but also a deep sympathy, so that the results obtained are noteworthy. The lucid expositions which indicate the author's firm grasp of the Indian standpoint will be of great value to the French readers who are eager to be introduced to these subjects.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

Report for the year 1937

The report of the R. K. Mission Home of Service, Benares for 1937, shows a steady development in its various fields of activity. From a very humble beginning in 1901, this institution has grown to be one of the biggest hospitals managed by the Ramakrishna Mission. There were 145 beds in the Indoor General Hospital. The total number of cases treated during the year was 1,536, of whom 976 were cured and discharged, 150 relieved, 166 discharged otherwise, 105 died and 139 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The daily average of the Indoor cases was 95. The total number of surgical cases was 243 of which 142 were major ones. The Refuge for the aged and invalid men had 25 beds but only 3 permanent inmates were admitted as the beds were not sufficiently provided for. 9 women found their shelter in the Refuge for the aged and invalid women. Special arrangements were made for the treatment of paralytic patients and 20 cases were successfully treated. 150 men and women received food and temporary shelter. The total number of patients treated at the Dispensary of the Home and the Branch Dispensary at Shivalay was 64,420, as against 61,206 of the previous year and the total number of repeated cases was 1,10,776. The daily average attendance in both the dispensaries was 480 and the total number of surgical cases was 1,402. Cash, clothing and other necessaries were also supplied to poor invalids and helpless ladies numbering 203, and occasional help was given to 1,284 persons. The total receipts for the year were Rs. 58,563-5-5 and expenditure Rs. 45,942-14-3.

The Home of Service is badly in need of the following :—

(1) *Invalids' Home for Women :* A building consisting of 30 rooms for housing 50 helpless ladies was constructed at a cost of Rs. 40,000/-. A sum of Rs. 35,000/- was collected for the purpose ; the balance of Rs. 5,000/- and endowment for 50 beds are still necessary.

(2) *Endowment for beds :* The cost of a bed in the Surgical ward is Rs. 4,000/-, in the general wards Rs. 3,000/- and in the invalids' Home Rs. 2,500/-

(3) *Bedding and clothing.*

(4) *T. B. Sanatorium :* Tuberculosis requires careful treatment and nursing, but the poor people of India who generally fall a victim to this disease hardly get these. So the Home of Service has decided to establish a sanatorium at Ranchi for the treatment of these poor and helpless sufferers. This costly undertaking requires at least a lac of rupees for giving a modest start. A sum of Rs. 10,000/- has already been collected and the necessary money is expected from the kind-hearted public.

Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully acknowledged by the Hony. Asst. Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City.

RELIEF WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1935-37

I. RELIEF ACTIVITIES DURING 1935

Damodar Flood Relief in the Burdwan Division

In August 1935, a terrible flood washed away the districts of Burdwan, Hooghly and Bankura. The Mission immediately started relief work and carried it on till the end of the year. In the Hooghly district 1,194 recipients were given 669 mds. and 31 srs. of rice, 22 mds. and 16 srs. of other food stuffs, 647 pieces and 80 yds. of cloth and 50 blankets ; 15 persons were helped with money and 126 huts were built. In the Burdwan district 1,727 recipients got 676 mds. of rice, 14 mds. of other food stuffs and 833 pieces of cloth, and 640 huts were built. In the Bankura district 538 recipients received 66 mds. and 23 srs. of rice, and 131 huts were constructed. The Mission spent Rs. 11,932-7-0 for these relief operations.

Famine Relief Work in Bankura, Bengal

As a result of an acute famine the inhabitants of the Bankura District were on the verge of starvation. So relief work was started and extended over 155 villages, and 734 mds. of rice and 218 pieces of cloth were distributed amongst 1,372 persons. The total expenditure of this work was Rs. 2,382-5-3.

Minor Relief activities

Besides the above large-scale relief operations which were directly conducted from the Headquarters, the Mission undertook the following relief activities of a minor nature through its different branch centres and lay members :—

Cholera Relief at Tamluk, District Midnapur ; Fire Relief at Manyada, District Bankura, at Dhalla, District Birbhum, and at Carpatiya and Kulsara, District Manbhum ; Tornado Relief at Abdalpur and Chakkrishnapur, District 24-Parganas ; Famine Relief at Habigunj, Sylhet and at Bansa, District Burdwan.

The expenditure of these was entirely met from the Ramakrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund.

II. RELIEF ACTIVITIES DURING 1936

West Bengal Famine Relief

Owing to the failure of crops, many districts of Bengal were under the grip of a terrible famine. The Mission organised relief work in 5 districts. In the District of Khulna 2,578 mds. of rice and 945 pieces of cloth were distributed among 2,450 persons. In the Bankura district 440 mds. of rice and 317 pieces of cloth were given to 717 persons from the Joyrambati Centre. In the District of Birbhum 403 mds. of rice and 693 pieces of cloth were distributed among 626 persons. From Mashra in Santhal Parganas 769 recipients were given 248 mds. of rice and 50 pieces of cloth. In the Midnapur district 148 mds. of rice and 416 pieces of cloth were distributed among 247 persons.

Arakan Flood Relief, Burma

In May, 1936, a great part of the Arakan division of Burma was seriously affected by flood. The Rangoon Branch of the Mission started medical and other kinds of relief work, the details of which are published in the Report of the Rangoon Branch.

Malda Flood Relief

Hundreds of villager were rendered homeless owing to a serious flood in the district of Malda, North Bengal. The Mission Centre at Malda started relief immediately and distributed about two hundred maunds of rice and 145 pieces of cloth among a thousand persons.

Cawnpore Flood Relief

The Mission Centre at Cawnpore started relief work in the Unao district of U. P. and relieved many thousands of people. Details are published in the report of the Cawnpore Centre.

Guntur Cyclone Relief

In October, 1936, the Guntur district of the Madras Presidency was badly hit by a cyclone. The Madras branch organized relief work and supplied materials for rebuilding 334 huts. Rice, cloth and looms were also distributed. The total expenditure was Rs. 1,551-11-4.

Small-Pox Relief at Midnapur

In November, 1936, the Midnapur town was overrun by a severe outbreak of Small-Pox. The local Mission Centre immediately started relief work and rendered all possible help to the afflicted persons in the shape of of medicine and diet.

III. Relief Activities during 1937

Flood Relief in Orissa

In August, 1937, the districts of Cuttack and Puri in Orissa were flooded and the people were in great distress. The Bhubaneswar branch of the Mission started relief operations and two Centres were opened at Delang and Pipli. From the Delang Centre 329 mds. and 15 srs. of rice, 1 md. and 20 srs. of salt and 332 pieces of cloth were distributed among 2,848 recipients. At the Pipli Centre 3,596 persons received 540 mds. and 37 srs. of rice and 400 pieces of cloth.

Fire Relief at Narayankhat, District Puri

The Mission conducted fire relief work at Narayankhat and supplied building materials to 19 families. The sum of Rs. 220-5-3 was spent for this work.

Small-Pox Relief at Bankura

An epidemic of Small-Pox broke out in Bankura during the earlier months of 1937. The local Mission Centre started relief work and disinfected many roads and houses, nursed the sick and supplied them with medicine and diet. The total amount spent for this work was Rs. 228-10-0, out of which Rs. 150/- was supplied from the Headquarters.

The statements of accounts of the Ramakrishna Mission show that the total receipts (including Provident Relief Fund) for Damodar Flood and Famine Relief in Hooghly, Burdwan and Bankura from August, 1935 to February, 1936, were Rs. 12,238-1-6 and expenditure was Rs. 11,805-2-3 ; the total receipts for Flood and Famine Relief works in Khulna, Bankura, Birbhum and Malda (Bengal) from May to December, 1936, came up to Rs. 15,124-14-7 and expenditure amounted to Rs. 14,478-5-6 ; and the total receipts (including contributions from the Provident Relief Fund) for Flood Relief Work in Orissa from the 10th August to 18th November, 1937, were Rs. 3,676-8-6 and expenditure was also the same.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASADAN, SALKEA, HOWRAH

Report for the years 1935-37

The following are the activities of this institution :—

(1) A Charitable Dispensary, where 39,378 patients were treated in 1935, 42,301 in 1936 and 41,492 in 1937.
(2) Orphanage and Students' Home, where 17 poor and meritorious school and college students were maintained.
(3) Charity in cash and kind to the needy and deserving persons.
(4) Religious discourses on the Gitâ were held on every Saturday.

The Sevasadan is badly in need of a plot of land with a well-built house, for which at least Rs. 20,000/- is required. Any amount offered by any kind-hearted gentleman will be thankfully received.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION RELIEF WORK

12th Weekly Report

In the week ending 13th October, 122 mds. 37 srs. of rice were distributed among 3,339 recipients of 826 families belonging to 50 villages from the Ramakrishna Mission relief centres at Silna and Nijra in the Gopalgunj Sub-division of the Faridpur District.

In the week ending 16th October, 56 mds. 11 srs. of rice were distributed among 1,078 recipients of 559 families of 20 villages from Sarbangapur, Pareshnathpur and Kedarchandpur centres in the Sadar Sub-division of the Murshidabad District. Malaria relief also is being done.

We shall require nearly Rs. 900/- per week for the relief work in both the areas. We urgently require also a few thousand pieces of cloth for the most needy. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by

(1) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O., Howrah District.
(2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

(Sd.) Swami Madhavananda,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.
20th October, 1938.

SRIMAT SWAMI SUDDHANANDAJI MAHARAJ,

President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, who passed away on Sunday. the 23rd October, 1938.