# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

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## BRAHMA'S PRAYER TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

*Tvayaiva dhāryate sarvam, tvayaitat sṛjyate jagat;*
*Tvayaitat pālyate devi, tvamatsyante ca sarvadā.*
*Mahāvidyā, mahāmāyā, mahāmedhā, mahāsmṛtih;*
*Mahāmohā ca bhavatī, mahādevī, mahāsurī.*
*Tvam śrīstvamīśvarī, tvam hrīstvam buddhirbodhalakṣaṇā;*
*Lajjā puṣṭistathā tuṣṭistvam śāntih kṣāntireva ca.*

'O Devi, by Thee always is everything snpported, by Thee always is this world created, sustained, and at the end destroyed.

'Thou art the Supreme Knowledge, Māyā, intellect, memory, delnsion, and the great prowess of the gods as well as of the demons.

'Thou art Lakshmi, Thon art the Supreme Goddess, Thou art bashfulness, Thou art the determinative faculty, modesty, nourishment, contentment, as also peace and forgiveness.'

—*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (*Devī-māhātmya*)

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# O MOTHER! BEAUTIFUL AND FEARFUL

None can know the Mother's nature or comprehend Her inner reality. Though the *embodiment of all attributes, She is devoid of attributes.* Changeless She is, and neither gross nor subtle. Formless She is, yet possessed of many forms. Like the moon reflected in numberless waters, She is seen as one and as many. This diversity of form is but the infinite flowering of the One Supreme Life.

Her bright lotus-feet dispel the darkness of Her worshippers, for moonlight She is, and sunbeam. Beautiful as the rain cloud is Her form; She soothes all who are burnt by the fires of misery. Though self-illumined, She now and again appears in fearful darkness, for, issuing from the Great Abyss, She is always terrible to those who live in the illusion of separateness (the cause of all fear), to those who have not yet realized their unity with Her or come to know that Her every form is one of loveliness.

Her children say, 'Listen, O Goddess worshipped of the universe! Thou art the effulgence of the fire of dissolution, the power of Shiva of dreadful visage. Though Thou art full of mercy and the source of it, Thou art also the consort of Death, Thou dost use a skull as Thy drinking cup and wearest a garland of bones. All glory and shame, all bitter and sweet, are Thine alone.'

Only the Mother Herself knows why She assumes both aspects simultaneously.

No more shall I wander, living in error. Weighted no more with passions, I shall never again sink into wells of poison. Regarding joy and sorrow alike, I shall not carry fire in my mind. No longer drunk with the desire for wealth and fame, I shall not wander from door to door. I shall not clutch at the wind of hope, nor lay bare my mind to others. Being now no more captive to the snares of sense, I shall not dally beneath the tree of human love.

The name of Kāli is the land of salvation; it is the land of fields flowing with nectar. Nevertheless our scriptures say that he who speaks Thy name, Mother, wins for reward a string of bones and a tattered robe. 'Taking Thy name, one's happiness flames into ashes.'

Yet, Mother who removest sorrow, the sorrows Thou hast brought and can still bring me are only Thy mercies. Make me weep again Thou mayest, yet I shall always cry 'Kali, Kali' and with my tears wash Thy blessed feet.

To Her who is supreme bliss—reverence for ever.

O Devi Nārāyani, O Eternal Mother, all reverence to Thee!

# THE IDEAL OF TRUE HAPPINESS

By the Editor

*'Yata vaco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha, ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kadācana (kutaścana)'*

'That (Brahman) from which all speech, with the mind, turns back, not having attained (It),—knowing the *bliss* of that Brahman one fears not from anything at any time.'

—*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II. 4, 9.

To the question 'What is your goal or purpose in life?', every normal human being would at once answer, 'happiness'. From the cradle to the grave the one masterful driving force in life is the insatiable thirst for enjoyment and pleasure. The urge for the conquest of happiness, though differing in form and content from man to man, dominates the human personality and seeks to manifest itself in every bit of man's thought, speech, and action. Everyone is after the 'golden fleece', determined to leave no stone unturned in order to obtain for himself all the enjoyable things the world can offer. For the vast majority of mankind, happiness derived through enjoyment and pleasure is the only real and practical philosophy of life. The thief who steals, the saint who communes with the Divine, the soldier who braves his life on the battle-field, the scholar who concentrates on his subject of study, the ruffian who murders, the patriot who sacrifices for the country, the miser who greedily hoards his wealth, and the lover who is busy with his beloved—all alike seek happiness in some form or other. The end is the same, but the means differ, some good and some bad. All the sciences are for this one end, to bring happiness to humanity, and that which brings the larger amount of happiness is in greater demand than that which brings the lesser amount.

Even as it is quite common to find man madly rushing along the primrose path of pleasure and enjoyment, it is no less common to find that man constantly meets with failure and disappointment and suffers. Though man has perforce to live in the world and must work for making himself and others happy and comfortable, he is never really satisfied with the state of things as they obtain around him. This is occurring all over the world. It is an irony of fate that man is bound, crippled, and finally destroyed by the very things in and through which he seeks enjoyment. But he is often such an incorrigible optimist that any amount of failure and suffering does not deter him from pursuing the *ignis fatuus* of worldly pleasure in a mere life of the senses. He seeks comfort in the fallacious argument —and false prophets are not wanting to give him spurious precept *ex cathedra*—that since life is short and the gay period of youth and health is shorter, one must snatch as much of the pleasures as one can before one is overpowered by age and death. To such a person the ideal of happiness could be no better than the hedonistic pleasure-principle—eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die and we know not what happens after death. It peremptorily excludes all thought, all speculation, all curiosity and anxiety about the past or the future of man. The pleasure-seeker's ideal of happiness is, in short, 'Live as the butterfly lives, a few hours of a gay existence, a flashing of gorgeous wings in the sunshine, the flittings from flower to flower sipping honey, the merry chasing of the mate, and the final flutter and then the stillness of of death'.

It would be more than a consolation to

many if man were assured of even this much of shortlived, sensuous happiness. But, alas! even this much-sought-after unmixed happiness is eluding man at every step. After every happiness comes misery, almost side by side, as it were. It is a fact of universal experience that enjoyment without misery accompanying or following it and good without evil, like light without darkness or cold without heat, though much desired and fondly sought-after, have never been seen to exist anywhere on the earth. Everyone wants to obtain the maximum happiness unto himself, even at the cost of others if necessary, and the consequent selfish competition and struggle leads to inevitable violence, war, and all-round unhappiness. Man constantly runs after pleasure in the sincere and earnest hope of becoming eternally happy, but before he reaches it he finds to his utter dismay that it is gone, has slipped through his fingers. But, all the same, blinded by the passions, attachments, and temptations that flesh is heir to, man runs headlong into unhappiness, unable to see the folly of pursuing the fruitless search for happiness that is by its very nature limited, finite, and transient. Such a person is very much like the bullock which is yoked to and made to work the type of crude oil-extracting contrivance common in India. To a piece of wood projecting from the yoke is fastened a wisp of straw. The bullock is so blindfolded that it can only look at the straw just in front. Desirous of getting at the straw, the bullock naturally stretches its neck and pulls itself forward, thus going round and round in the hope of catching the straw, and in the process it grinds out the oil. It never catches the straw, which is always held away from it by a special fixture in the yoke. Exactly similar is the condition of men who are attracted by the limited physical pleasures of the body and the senses and go through a countless number of lives, following after mere chimeras and without obtaining anything of permanent value.

There are not a few people in every country who honestly believe that there will come a time when this world will become perfect and life will be full of happiness only, to the exclusion of all unhappiness. But even to a man in the street it is sooner or later obvious that on the face of it such a state of 'one-sided' perfection is an impossibility. Life is a continuous struggle between man and his environment, between internal and external nature, between the forces that take man upward, Godward, and those that bring him downward, towards contraction and bondage. The ideal of true happiness in life can never be reached so long this complex and continuous struggle between man's inner and higher life and his outer and sensuous life does not cease. Man thinks foolishly that he can make himself happy by attaching himself as closely as he can to his own body and senses, to his wealth, wife, children, and possessions. Being incapable of cognizing the sublime bliss of the life of the Spirit, the man of ordinary understanding concentrates his energies and efforts in developing the physical and at best intellectual sides of life only, and utterly ignores the moral and the spiritual aspects of life. The vast majority often subscribe to the mere physical and sensual manifestation of happiness, neglecting, due to ignorance and delusion, the superiority of the happiness that comes from a fuller realization of man's inner spiritual being. It is this lack of spiritual awareness which deprives man of real and permanent happiness in life. Though he resides in great comfort and commands mnch convenience, even the richest man on earth is unhappy within. He longs for that inexpressible peace, satiety, and poise which alone can make life worth living and enjoying.

So long as man is an egotist he must experience despair, so long as he is selfish he must undergo suffering. After years of struggle, of groping in the dark, labyrinthine mysteries of life, man finds out at last that true and permanent happiness lies not in external things but within oneself, within one's own soul. As the *Gita* says,

'Among thousands of men, one, here and there, strives for perfection; and of those who strive and

succeed, one perchance, knows Me (the Supreme Lord) in truth.'

Hence those who sincerely strive after the ideal of true happiness are rare indeed on this earth. Such happiness consists in making others happy, and the more a person makes others happy by doing good for the sake of doing good to humanity the more joy and satisfaction does he himself obtain within him. So have all religions and spiritual teachers declared that happiest is the man who does the greatest good to the greatest number, without the least selfish thought of any return. To the man who is eager for attaining the ideal of everlasting happiness, the main point in life is not simply living but the *how* of living. Before enjoying the objects that are thought to bring happiness, one has to know how to enjoy so that he may not get entangled in the snare of Maya which ever biuds a person full of selfish motives. He who bases his entire life on the foundations of spiritual realization and, having become conscious of his oneness with the whole of existence in and through his own Self, works without attachment for the highest good of humanity attains to true happiness and eternal bliss. He is untainted by unhappiness even if he were to plunge himself into a whirlpool of action, like a lotus-leaf to which no water in a lake however billowy, clings.

What makes people happy or unhappy? Perhaps there can be no single answer to such a question, and each person will have to find it out for himself. According to the teachers of Yoga, what bring misery or unhappiness to man are ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life. In fact, ignorance (*avidyā*) is the cause of all the other obstructions (*kleśāh*). Through ignorance man mistakes the non-eternal for the eternal, the impure for the pure, the painful for the happy, and the non-Atman for the Atman. There can be no real happiness so long as we labour under the delusion that man is a mere physical body, a Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so. Egoism is the identification of the seer (*dṛk*) with the instrument of seeing (*darśana-śakti*). Such wrong identification makes us think we feel pleasure or pain. Attachment (*rāga*) is that which dwells on pleasure (*sukha*). Where we find pleasure we are naturally attached. Aversion (*dveṣa*) is that which dwells on pain (*duhkha*). In contrast to the previous statement, where we find pain we immediately seek to get away from. The clinging to life (*abhiniveśa*) is most commonly present in every living being from the lowest animal to the highest man of learning. There is no doubt that this intense and inveterate fondness for life and the consequent fear of death are at the root of much of man's unhappiness. Even where one commands all the so-called happiness in the world, there lurks every moment the fear and unhappiness arising from the thought of death, the inevitable.

All happiness is within—not without—either in the body or in the mind, or in the Atman. With animals and some human beings not differing much from animals in their sensuality, happiness is all in the body. Their sole concern is to eat, sleep and beget offispring. They believe that to remain healthy and strong and to enjoy physical pleasures is the alpha and omega of life, and that there is nothing higher or better than these. In rationally and intellectually advanced men, much of the happiness lies in the mind, in thought and contemplation. In the man of supreme spiritual realization, the highest ideal of happiness is to be met with. His happiness is not derived from anything extraneous; he is the very essence and embodiment of the bliss of the Self (Atman); he rejoices in the Self, is satisfied with the Self, and is content in the Self alone. This is possible only when one has renounced all worldly attachment and is devoted to the Supreme Self or God. Sense-gratifications, food and drink, and wealth and possessions can have no more utility for him as he does not have any the least desire for the limited pleasure they afford. Worldly happiness is but an infinitesimal part of the true happiness with which one is filled when one realizes Brahman. Brahman is bliss itself, because in it there is complete cessation of all

sorrow, of all finiteness, and of all duality. Brahman is the immeasurable ocean of bliss —of happiness that knows no diminution or cessation. Anything short of or other than this infinite bliss of Brahman cannot be ultimate and everlasting (*ato anyad ārtam*); hence, it cannot be the ideal of true human happiness. Reiterating this truth, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says that 'That which is Infinite (Vast) (*bhūmā*) is indeed (true) happiness; there is no (real) happiness in the finite (limited) (*alpa*)'.

It is needless to say that the Bliss of Brahman, which is Brahman itself, should never be confused with the temporal happiness that a man experiences through the senses. Without renunciation and contentment (*santoṣa*) it is impossible to obtain this superlative happiness (*anuttama sukha*) of God realization. If the supramundane delight of the realization of Brahman which is *saccidānanda* is the highest ideal of true human happiness, it may then be asked if this supernal bliss is some 'post-mortem excellence' that has nothing to do with this world and the present life. The teachers of Vedanta unambiguously declare that this *Brahmānanda* (Bliss of Brahman) is to be attained here and now, in this world and in the present life. Real happiness is a quality of the soul. It abides in man's innermost Self and comes through spiritual understanding. All forms of happiness, of whatever grade and degree, that man experiences are but manifestations of this *saccidānanda* which is inherent in every soul. Any amount of outer happiness cannot satisfy the mind and the heart of man unless he seeks and obtains this permanent and all-knowing bliss. One cannot help seeking it any more than one can help breathing, for it is the intimate and ultimate Reality which interpenetrates and yet transcends all existence. Everything in the universe is constantly gravitating towards this eternal bliss, consciously or unconsciously. The unmixed joy of the Infinite can hardly be compared with the limited, obscured, and illusory reflection of it in the individual egos that constitute the finite beings. One has to renounce the lower, temporal, and finite joys and attachments for the higher, spiritual, and infinite bliss which makes mortal immortal and of this earth a Kingdom of God.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* clearly states that this ideal of the infinite Bliss of Brahman is attained and enjoyed here on earth by one who has renounced all desires and has realized Self-knowledge. It is also attained through the performance of sacrifices as prescribed, but in this case the soul has to traverse successively the different heavenly worlds, gaining increasing measures of bliss in ascending degrees. But if one assimilates the teachings of the scriptures (*śrotriya*) and renounces desire (*akāmahata*) through the practice of spiritual discipline, one can most certainly obtain this highest Bliss of Brahman in this very life. For, as the Upanishad affirms,

> 'He who is self-created is Bliss. A man experiences happiness by tasting that bliss. Who could breathe, who could live, if that bliss did not exist in his heart?'

Though this ineffable and immeasurable happiness of the Self cannot be conceived of by the finite, impure mind and cannot be measured by any relative human standard, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* yet presents, for the convenient comprehension of the ordinary man, the following analysis of the degrees of happiness (*ānanda*), beginning from that of an ordinary mortal and leading up to the infinite bliss of Brahman:

> 'Let there be a noble young man who is well read (in the Vedas), very swift, firm, and strong, and let the whole world be full of wealth for him—that is one measure of human bliss.
>
> 'One hundred times that human bliss is one measure of the bliss of human Gandharvas, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*
>
> 'One hundred times that bliss of the human Gandharvas is one measure of the bliss of divine Gandharvas, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*
>
> 'One hundred times that bliss of the divine Gandharvas is one measure of the bliss of the Fathers, enjoying their celestial life, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of the Fathers is one measure of the bliss of the Devas who are endowed with heavenly bodies through the merit of their lawful duties, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of the Devas is one measure of the bliss of the Devas who are endowed with heavenly bodies through the merit of their Vedic sacrifices, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of the sacrificial god is one measure of the bliss of the thirty-three Devas who live on the sacrificial offerings, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of the thirty-three Devas is one measure of the bliss of Indra, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of Indra is one measure of the bliss of Brihaspati, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of Brihaspati is one measure of the bliss of Prajapati, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

'One hundred times that bliss of Prajapati is one measure of the Bliss of Brahman, and *likewise of a great sage learned in the Vedas and free from desires.*

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* too we find a similar description, where it is reiterated that the ideal of the infinite bliss of Brahman is directly and immediately attained by him only who is versed in the scriptures (*śrotriya*), who is sinless (*avṛjina*), and who is free from desire (*akāmahata*).

The sum and end of life is everlasting happiness, happiness arising from the conquest —complete and final—of the bondage of the round of births and deaths, and the attainment of peace that passeth understanding. The knowledge of the Self, of the divinity of man, is the way to the attainment of this happiness and peace. This is the driving power behind the wheels of life, the determining cause of the course of the destiny of the individual's journey on earth. Man stands far above and higher than the rest of created beings not merely by his possessing a higher order of intelligence but by the nobler and higher urge of his inherent divinity, his power to detach himself from the finite and the tangible in pursuit of the Infinite and the Intangible, and his distinct ability to discriminate between the real and the unreal, between the temporal and the perennial. The happy man is certainly not he who seeks maximum self-indulgence in the fleshly appetites that are common to him and to other animals, just as a vulture, though soaring high up in the sky, always looks for the carrion below. Nor can a man be said to be happy if he deludes himself with the thought that by merely denying himself certain physical comforts and practising severe mortification of the body, without the mind being purified and directed towards God, he can attain the ideal of happiness. All that proceeds from dependence, hatred, and difference is downright misery. True happiness stems spontaneously from freedom, love, unity, and same-sightedness (*samadarśitvam*).

There are two courses in life that men seek to follow—one of enjoyment and pleasure (*preya*), and the other of happiness and real blessedness (*śreya*). Avaricious people are drawn away along the path of pleasure by their outgoing, turbulent senses, and they degenerate and meet their inevitable doom sooner or later. But men of determination and discrimination prefer the path of blessedness to that of pleasure and having attained the ideal of immortal bliss, do not run after any impermanent and perishable joys of this world. Never should one confound happiness with pleasure. Pleasure is limited to the body and the senses, is deceptive, is derived from and is dependent on an 'other', exhausts the vigour of the sense-organs, and keeps man bound to the wheels of misery and suffering. Happiness, on the other hand, is ever present in the very Self of man, is true and permanent, is omniscient and omnipotent, and liberates man by eliminating his selfishness and slavery to the cravings of flesh. In the *Gita,* Sri Krishna describes the threefold division of happiness as follows:

'That in which a man comes to rejoice by practice and in which he reaches the end of pain, and that which is like poison at first but like nectar in the end—that happiness, born of the clear knowledge of the Self, is said to be of the nature of Sattva.

'That which arises from the contact of the senses with their objects, and which is like nectar at first but like poison in the end—that happiness is said to be of the nature of Rajas.

'But that which deludes the soul at the beginning and even after its termination, and which springs from sleep, sloth, and error—that happiness is declared to be of the nature of Tamas.'

The relative, temporal pleasure that most men seek in life cannot but make them more unhappy than happy, because by ignoring the Self within they proceed to reckon without the host. Such emphasis placed on the hedonistic pleasure-principle as the major premiss of our life has contributed not a little to the schism in the soul of man, the deplorable consequences of which are lack of integration of personality and want of co-ordination between the individual and the community.

The watchword of the Vedanta is to realize the infinite Bliss of Brahman directly and immediately, here and now (*aparokṣanubhūti*). Mere talking will not do. There is no easy 'get-rich-quick' method to take man to the abode of true happiness. Nor is it something far beyond the ken of the ordinary human being. Every person is by right an heir to this eternal bliss and can succeed if he strives resolutely along the right lines. 'But seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you'—was not uttered in vain.

Swami Vivekananda repeatedly stressed the great need of man becoming divine by realizing the Divine. 'Talking, talking religion is but little good', he said, 'Put God behind everything—man, animal, food, work; make this a habit'. When Col. Ingersoll expressed the view that he (Ingersoll) believed in making the most out of this world, in squeezing the orange dry, as this world was all he was sure of, Swami Vivekananda, answering back with perfect ease, said, 'I know a better way to squeeze the orange of this world than you do and I get more out of it. I *know* I cannot die, so I am not in a hurry; I know there is no fear, so I enjoy the squeezing. I have no duty, no bondage of wife and children and property: I can love all men and women. Everyone is God to me. Think of the joy of loving man as God! Squeeze your orange this way and get ten thousandfold more out of it. Get every single drop.' This is the key to the door that leads man to the acme of true and lasting happiness.

## WHAT VEDANTA MEANS TO ME

By Swami Aseshananda

I was attracted to Vedanta when I first met Swami Turiyānanda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, in Banaras. He was seated in his room. I was introduced to him by Swami Arupānanda, who served Holy Mother for many years. Swami Turiyananda spoke fervently that day about Shankara. He remarked that Shankara made a great impression on his life when he was in his teens. This eighth-century philosopher-saint—what a wonderful brain he had; such clear thinking and sure presentation of the Advaita viewpoint! This had commanded the Swami's attention. Then the Swami recited a verse in Sanskrit in his inimitable voice, the import of which was that everything in the world is fraught with fear, but renunciation is the source of all fearlessness. His words gave me courage. His personality gave me assurance. My hesitant steps became steady. I made up my mind not to falter. That day I made the final decision to renounce, and embrace the monastic order of Sri Ramakrishna.

Vedanta philosophy is broad and up-

lifting. But without renunciation its high philosophy serves no purpose. It acts in the same way as does a handsomely built boat having leaks in the bottom. Renunciation is the very basis of spiritual life. Endowed with renunciation one can face with boldness the trials and struggles of life and overcome the overtures of the flesh. Suffering is intricately mixed with pleasure. Craving for enjoyment is the root cause of all evil. Desires can never be satisfied by sense gratification. They increase the more, as fire fed by fuel. Yet man forgets this truth, in the thrill of new excitements and the spell of momentary happiness. It was this urge to conquer relative life—and the availability of a method by which to do it—that was Vedanta's first real attraction.

Then there was the fear of death. Among all the certainties the most certain thing is death. Death is a universal phenomenon. All men, whether rich or poor, great or small, learned or ignorant, must inevitably move toward that hour when the eyes will close and life will ebb away. Man lives but for a short while and death comes as an intruder to blast all his hopes and ambitions. Death stirs the deepest thoughts in man. A discriminating person will naturally ask questions: If death be the end of everything, what is the purpose of life? Why was man created at all? Is there anything in man which survives the event of death? So, as my first interest in Vedanta was the efficacy it offered in meeting the problems of life, so Vedanta's second attraction was the helpfulness it gave toward facing the crisis of life's end.

These questions came to my mind when I saw the passing away of a person whom I loved, respected, and adored. He was Swami Sāradānanda, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. In him I found all that was great, all that was true, all that was noble in Vedanta. He was a living exemplar of the teachings of Vedanta. I lived with him for six years. Never did I see him lose his inner calmness. In the midst of calamities he kept his poise. He was the very embodiment of patience. As the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission he had to deal with people of different types and temperaments. He treated them all with extreme kindness and sympathy. He was the very soul of compassion. It was through compassion that he taught. It was through loving sympathy that he moulded the lives of many who came to learn of him. Not by criticism, not by condemnation was it that he corrected the mistakes of the people that strayed from the path; rather it was by entering into their hearts and touching them with his sweetness and unbounded forgiveness.

Whenever I went to Swami Saradananda with a distressing thought, a few words from his lips would soothe me. His presence would bring cheer and hope to my soul. In the midst of dryness he gave me encouragement; in the midst of loneliness he gave me joy and the companionship of a teacher in whom one could have absolute trust. On one occasion when I could not pray, when I could not meditate due to lack of enthusiasm, Swami Saradananda said to me, 'Hold on to God even in the gloom. Never miss meditation or forget to repeat the name of the Lord. Meditation is the anchorage of the soul. Meditation will purify the mind, and when a pure soul performs Japam, the Mantra rises up from within and one need not make a special effort to repeat the name. Continue Japam and meditation without losing heart. You belong to the Master.[1] By his grace you will be able to achieve everything when the time is ripe.'

Swami Saradananda lived what he preached. During the last few years of his life he suffered from various kinds of ailments. His health was not good. In spite of failing strength he used to spend long periods in meditation. When he would meditate he would sit immovable like a rock, completely oblivious to the outside world. His face was lighted with serenity and he radiated peace from his indrawn calmness.

Time rolled on. One day in the course of a discussion about business matters, Swami Saradananda light-heartedly said, 'The bell

[1] Sri Ramakrishna.

has tolled; I am preparing for the great journey'. On the sixth of August, 1927, he had a stroke of apoplexy. The shock was tremendous. He lived twelve days, with his massive body completely paralyzed. Speech totally left him, but there was inner consciousness. Expert medical advice, skillful nursing —nothing was missing. But all failed. The fateful hour came. He drew his last breath and closed his eyes as if he had gone to sleep. He died peacefully amidst the chanting of holy names and the recital of texts from the *Gita*. His body was cremated with due rites on the bank of the Ganges in our monastery at Belur.

I lived with the Swami in the same house which was associated with the blessed memories of Holy Mother. In his absence the house, the room he used to occupy, seemed to me so terribly empty. My way of thinking, my consolation, my support, my whole life were dominated by his presence. When he was removed the void was dreadful. I found myself to be a weary traveller in the tractless desert of life. Darkness enveloped me. But then, during the time of gloom and depression when I lost all of my prop and support, Vedanta came to my rescue. I found light in the teachings of Vedanta. One significant passage of the Vedas struck a deep note in my heart and healed the wounds: 'Hear ye, children of immortal bliss. I have known the Being that is beyond all darkness. It is by knowing Him alone that man crosses death. There is no other way. There is no other way to everlasting life.'

I thought within myself, 'The body of the Swami has gone out of my sight. It has been reduced to a handful of ashes. But his soul, which is the real man, could not be hurt even though the fire has devoured the perishable form in which it was clothed.' The Swami was a man of realization. Through spiritual experiences of Samādhi he literally crossed the bounds of death and attained the shore of immortality. Does not the scripture say that a knower of Brahman becomes Brahman? Swami Saradananda experienced the truth, the reality on which human ignorance weaves the dream of multiplicity. While alive he was a blessing to many. Death of such a soul is nothing but going from one apartment to another. It is men of his stature that keep religion alive and not the erudite scholars. Men of inner vision are the pillars of society. Of them the scriptures say, 'By their birth the earth is purified, the family is glorified, and humanity finds justification'.

In a word, Vedanta means to me life—life that fulfils its purpose by the experience of the Highest Reality in the depth of contemplation and expresses that realization in the form of service, service to man as the greatest manifestation of God on earth. Ringing clear in our ears are the wonderful words of the Vedic seers, who proclaimed in a beautiful voice: 'Thus seeing the same God equally present in all, the sage does not injure self by the self and thus reaches the highest goal. Even in this life they have conquered relative existence whose minds are firmly fixed on this sameness; for God is pure and God is the same to all. Therefore such are said to be living in God.'

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'This apparent universe has its root in the mind, and never persists after the mind is annihilated. Therefore dissolve the mind by concentrating it on the Supreme Self, which is thy inmost Essence.'

—*Sankaracharya, Vivekachudamani*

# THE CHALLENGE OF MYSTICISM

By C. T. K. Chari

To those who love the great metaphysical and mystical traditions of the East, a disappointing feature of current European philosophy is the attempt to exclude from logic all statements about Value (whether aesthetic, moral, or religious) on the ground that they are 'emotive' or 'non-factual'. Logical empiricism has fashioned the technique of analysing statements into empirical and non-empirical elements and displaying the non-empirical as tautological and the empirical as contingent and as verifiable in sense-perception. We hear that the laws of logic, far from being parliamentary laws of thought or being, reflect the arbitrary conventions of language. The only admissible initial formulae are tautologies or axioms. The formulae derived from them according to the rules of logical syntax are 'theorems'. Propositions that are neither tautological nor verifiable in sense-perception are just 'nonsense'. Metaphysics, religion, and ethics must be banished from the field of logic. Ontology is nothing but a series of verbal delusions. The snare of the metaphysical proposition is that it looks like scientific and commonsense statements without having their pedigree. Must we acquiesce in the contemporary mood? Has a mystical philosophy no claims to be heard today?

### Dialectical Presuppositions of Logic

I think that the dismissal of whole classes of sentences as 'emotive' or 'non-informative' neatly begs the whole question. The fundamental issues about language, which are philosophical, must be honestly faced and not thrust out of the way. The attempt to formalize *all* thinking lands ns in an infinite regress. Statements about logical formulae, their necessity, validity, and consistency are made in a material language. What tells us that the material language is true? 'Self-evidence', driven out with a pitchfork from the 'object language' or the language of logical symbols, reappears in the 'metalanguage', the language in which we do our material thinking. The statements that we make in the 'metalanguage' may refer to logical statements. But are they themselves logical statements? We may say, if we please, that a given formula is a tautology and, therefore, necessarily true. But is the statement about its necessity itself necessary?[1] To be sure, we can *describe* a formula in the material language and say that anything that satisfies the description is a tautology. That does not, however, slay the doubt whether any given collection of symbols on paper satisfies the description.[2] It is not presuming too much on the ambiguity of words to say that most, if not all, so-called 'self-evident' statements are true only with certain provisos and, once these qualifications are explicitly stated—this may be none too easy—can be either abandoned or modified.[3] Our 'axioms' then resolve themselves into special cases of wider philosophical generalizations. In my previous article, pnblished in *Prabuddha Bharata,*[4] I have suggested that the ordinary two-valued logic, which classifies sentences into 'true' and 'false', can be exhibited as a special case of an ontology entailing certain 'indeterminable' features of Reality which are 'wholly other' (*das ganz Andere*) than 'assertables' in the ordinary sense, i.e. the things about which

[1] *Cf.* Hans Reichenbach: *Elements of Symbolic Logic* (Macmillan, New York, 1947), Ch. IV, § 34; A. P. Ushenko: *The Problems of Logic* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1941), Ch. I.

[2] See Reichenbach's essay contributed to *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell,* edited by P. A. Schilpp (Evanston & Chicago, 1944), esp. p. 40 *et seq.*

[3] *Cf.* N. O. Lossky, *The Intuitive Basis of Knowledge* (Macmillan, 1919), Ch. X.

[4] June 1951.

unambiguous positive or negative statements can in principle, if not in practice, be made.

The crux about knowledge can now be stated. How can we doubt logical evidence without including the doubt itself in what is doubted? How can philosophic self-criticism lead to general principles of which the original assumptions are special, even arbitrary, cases? How do we effect the metaphysical generalization of logic? The current antithesis between cognition and valuation and the reduction of truth to a conventionally defined 'T' symbol in a 'truth-table' permit no answer to the question. The preoccupation with the biological and the psychological sciences accounts for the popularity of the dictum that the *esse* of value is not its *percipi* but its *desiderari*. To know an object, it is said, is not necessarily to value it. Value is the satisfaction of the valuer; a function of conative-affective attitudes. To this we may reply that if we know anything at all, we are not wholly indifferent to it. All language, from its origin, is expressive and evocative. To distinguish its 'communicative' from its 'suggestive' and 'promotive' uses and the 'symbol' from the 'symbol-user' can easily mislead us. There is no privileged class of 'fact-finding' or 'scientific' sentences in which nobody is interested. Valuation is not irrelevant to cognition; it is the essence of cognition. Every ideal is a pattern of perfection or excellence. Truth-seeking sets an infinite task, for the *ideal* of truth-seeking is the cognitive grasp of the whole world embracing truth and all other values, the 'indeterminables' as well as the 'determinables'. Truth in this all-inclusive sense needs no ostentatious worship of It; It is implicit in our cogmitive attitudes of approval and disapproval. Its vehicle is a disinterested interest. Truth is not true because we *desire* It; we *ought* to desire It because It is true. Cognition and valuation notwithstanding all the current tags and conventional banalities, are coextensive. In all judgmental activity there is the acknowledgment of an unconditional obligation, an 'Ought' or *Sollen*. The standpoint of Value philosophy or Axiology is above that of the warring schools of epistemology all of which alike tacitly assume, at some point or other, cognitive value. Axiological principles include in their sweep logical and epistemological principles. The problem of reconciling diverse metaphysical systems, each with its own peculiar conception of reality, does not appear so insoluble when we realize that the term 'reality' itself has a rich value-connotation. Philosophers, despite all their perplexing differences in vocabulary, are striving after Value.

What then is the ontological status of Value? It cannot be defined or validated in terms of anything else. We cannot determine Its genus and differentiae; It is not just a quality or any set of qualities; nor is It mere relatedness; It is *sui generis*. Professor W. M. Urban, who has made a penetrating study[5] of the problem, remarks that 'it is of the very nature of a value judgment that it apprehends something not as completely given, but rather as something that *ought to be*. Value is not a determination of being, but a direction of becoming.' It presents Itself as a 'that' not as a 'what'. Value is a 'wholly unique and irreducible form of objectivity, lying between being and non-being'. I suggest that Time is a 'surd' for human thought because it is the mode of manifestation of Value. Neither Time nor Value can be predicated of anything describable wholly in terms of mere 'Is-ness'. Both resist the 'closure' of Being which is the dream of the rationalist. The postulation of a special kingdom of 'essences' or 'subsistents' —heroism without the hero, charity without the giver, so to speak—which 'causes', in a mysterious fashion, everything connected with it to become valuable[6] offers no solution of the ontological problem of Value. Nor an 'emer-

[5] *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XIII, pp. 449-465, 673-687; Vol. XIV, pp. 309-327; *cf.* Vol. XV, pp. 253 ff., 393 ff.; also *The Intelligible World* and *Beyond Realism and Idealism*, both published by George Allen & Unwin, London.

[6] The solution is adopted by Nicolai Hartmann in his *Ethics*, by E. G. Spaulding in his *New Rationalism*, and M. E. Clarke in her *Study in the Logic of Value*.

gent deity' to whom the cosmic process tends.[7] Valuation points to some ultimate Synthesis of *Sein* and *Sollen,* Being and Value, the 'Is' and the 'Ought to Be', Self and Reality. The Synthesis—Dante's *il primp, il summo Valore* —proves intractable to the intellect; nevertheless, It is its presnpposition. Absolute Truth is not an 'assertable' in the ordinary sense; hnman language is unable to say what the attainment of it would mean. But all language and communicability rests on It; no 'assertable' would be intelligible without It. According to Swami Vivekananda (his lecture on 'The Absolute and Manifestation'): The Atman of the Vedanta is neither known nor unknown but something infinitely higher than either. He is *one with us.* You cannot *know* your own self. You cannot objectify it because you *are* that and cannot separate yourself from it. Neither is it *unknown,* for what is better felt or "known" than yourself? It is really the centre of our knowledge'.[8] The futility of analogy is nowhere more evident. Sören Kierkegaard, approaching the problem with his 'existentialist' presuppositions perceived the fatal limitations of the intellect. 'What then is the Unknown? It is the limit which one constantly approaches, and as such (when we think in terms of rest rather than of motion) it is the Different, the absolutely Different. But the absolntely Different lacks all marks of identification.'[9]

Kierkegaard's term 'limit' gives us an inkling of the difficulty. A simple illustration of how a logical operation can be carried out only if we stop short of a self-acknowledged 'limit' is provided by the use of 'indeterminate forms' in classical algebra and the calculus. A function of x may have no 'determinate value' when $x=a$, but it may endlessly *approach* a 'limiting value' when x *approaches* a.[10] All descriptions of Ultimate Reality such as 'Infinite Power', 'Supreme Personality', etc. are 'limiting valnes' assigned by the intellect when it 'approaches' the 'limits' of human experience. They do not tell us what the Absolute is 'at the limit'. And the very notion of 'the approach to a limit', it should be noticed, is just one more questionable analogy. Kierkegaard urged that 'the understanding cannot even think the absolutely Different, for it cannot absolutely negate itself . . . and so it thinks only of a certain sublimity above itself'.[11] *'Neti, neti'* is the only possible description of the Brahman according to the Upanishadic Seers.

Ultimate Reality is ineffable to thought and yet not inaccessible to the adventuring spirit. The mystical philosophy of the Vedanta is based on a 'transcendence of problems' in the profound sense. It delimits the sphere of knowledge to allow it to merge in the vast realm of the experienceable. It insists (and thereby perhaps departs from Kierkegaard's 'existentialism') that we are not simply tethered to human experience; the human shades off into the 'over-human'. The answers to ultimate questions are experienceable but, from the nature of the case, not intellectually constructible. The cognitive grasp of Absolute Reality involves what *must* be 'indeterminable' for the intellect and the *mysterium tremendum et fascinaus* for the emotions. Swami Vivekananda, in his lecture on 'The Necessity of Religion', observes: 'Thus, a

[7] S. Alexander: *Space, Time, and Deity* (Macmillan, London, 1920), II, Book iv.

[8] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta), Vol. II.

[9] Cited by Dr. Walter Lowrie in his *Kierkegaard* (Oxford University Press, 1938).

[10] Suppose, for instance, $y=(x^2-4)\div(x-2)$; then y *approaches* the 'limiting value' 4 when x *approaches* 2. But *at the limit* $x=2$, $y=(4-4)\div(2-2)$, i.e. $0\div0$. The operation cannot be carried out, since it is specifically excluded by the fundamental laws of algebra. We cannot evaluate $0/0$ as 1 or as 0. It can be any number whatsoever, since any number multiplied by 0 yields 0. It is usual to point out in elementary text-books that 'division by zero is undefined'. Modern mathematicians, since the time of Weierstrass, replace problems of this kind by new definitions ensuring the 'continuity' of functions. See Bertrand Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics* (Cambridge, 1903), Vol. I, Ch. xxxix.

[11] Cited by Dr. Lowrie, *op. cit.*

tremendous statement is made by all religions that the human mind at certain moments transcends not only the limitations of the senses, but also the power of reasoning'.[12] There is nothing provincial about the frame of reference of the Vedanta. In teaching that the life of the great mystic is *la vraie vie,* it goes beyond the glib antitheses of 'West' and 'East'.

### The Psychology of Inspiration

But if Truth is ineffable, as Swami Vivekananda and all mystics have declared, any proposed *test* of It must, in ultimate analysis, share Its ineffability. *Quod verum est* can neither establish *Veritas* nor function apart from It. I maintain that the psychology of inspiration furnishes ample support for the thesis. The subject has received desultory treatment from Western academic psychologists with rationalistic and materialistic prepossessions. It is an awkward stone to fit into their edifice. The commensurability of inspiration—'the mother-idea from which all the others flow' as Flaubert called it—with ordinary mental processes is rooted in its incommensurability with them. The mystical paradox is discernible at the lowest as well as at the highest levels of inspiration, in dream-mentation as well as in ecstasy. The inventiveness of dreams has, of course, been exaggerated. We know that the long passages of poetry Tennyson dreamed when he was ten years old gave little promise of the Poet Laureate and that the quality of The Witch of Atlas and Epipsychidion, in which Shelley's dream-sources probably predominate, has been doubted. But it is the exception that disproves the *clichés* of orthodox scientific psychology. Even apart from Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*—the attempts made to explain it away are abortive—there is sufficient evidence to show that mental processes of incredible complexity can go on below the 'threshold' of 'waking consciousness'. Owen Meredith's 'Lines composed in Sleep' and William Archer's *The Green Goddess,* the central idea of which emerged in a dream,[13] are but pointers. So are Hamilton's discovery of 'Quoternions', Poincaré's flashes of insight into problems of great technicality[14] and Ramanujan's 'failures'[15] more wonderful than the triumphs of other mathematicians. The intuitive leap in invention is not an easy theme to write about or explain; there can be no irreverent familiarity with it. The hypothesis put forward by F.W.H. Myers[16] that all discovery begins as a 'subliminal uprush' and ends as a 'supraliminal artifice' has not been outmoded. The consensus of testimony in its favour—ranging from Milton's 'impelling faculty' for which he did not know how to account, Thackeray's 'occult power moving the pen', George Eliot's 'wind playing my old harp as it lists', Saint-Saëns' 'idées musicales' which came 'toutes seules et á flots', Blake's 'imaginations beyond the mortal eye' to Voltaire's 'la diable au corps' who alone makes the great poet, artist, or actor, Gretry's 'man of the night' whose 'scribe' is the 'waking self', R. L. Stevenson's 'Brownies' who did most of his work for him when he was asleep, and J. M. Barrie's unruly half "'M' Connachie" who by running away with him was respon-

[12] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. II. *Cf.* Vladimir Solovyof: 'Human personality, and therefore every individual human being, is *capable of realizing infinite fullness of being,* or, in other words, *it is a particular form with infinite content'. The Justification of the Good* (Eng. tr. by Mrs. Duddington, Constable & Co., London, 1918), p. 200.

[13] See R. L. Mégroz, *The Dream World* (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1939), Part III, Ch. 9, also 'notes' appended to Part V.

[14] *Science et Méthode,* 51-3.

[15] *Collected Papers of Srinivasa Ramanujan,* edited by G. H. Hardy, P. V. Seshu Aiyar, and B. M. Wilson (Cambridge University Press, 1927), p. xxv, p. xxxv; *Ramanujan* by G. H. Hardy (Cambridge University Press, 1940), pp. 9-10, 12, 20.

[16] *Human Personality* (Longmans, London, 1903), I, Ch. iii. For an instructive comparison of the hypothesis of Myers with the views of Freud and Jung, see T. W. Mitchell's *Beneath the Threshold* (Myers Memorial Lecture for 1931, Methuen, London), pp. 12-14, 16-18. Myers was interested in the 'treasure-house' of Man's hidden Self not in its 'rubbish-heap'.

sible for his literary output[17]—is too impressive to be denied by either psychologists or philosophers. Mozart's musical pieces, which came to him at odd hours and as organized wholes[18] suggest, if anything, a 'time-span' far different from the one with which we are acquainted in 'normal' experience. Our Selfhood is not confined to a flickering and intermittent empirical consciousness. According to Myers, the 'subliminal mentation' which co-operates with 'supraliminal' processes in the productions of genius can, when it forces itself through ordinary consciousness without amalgamating with it, evoke those 'paranormal' cognitions (telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition) which are clean off the orthodox psychological maps. To write acceptably about such 'borderland' phenomena is notoriously difficult. But to suppose that, by invoking the hypothesis of adult credulity, we can dispose of the scientific evidence for them today is childish incredulity.[19] Jung has pointed out that the 'unconscious' has a potentiality, autonomy, and purposiveness too deep to be fathomed by ordinary consciousness. The 'buried strata' of the psyche raise far-reaching ethical and philosophical questions and not merely therapeutic ones. Those who dub Jung a 'mystic' and refuse to take his findings seriously are afraid that their intellectual playground will be disturbed by admitting them. They shrink from the conclusion, to which modern research increasingly points, that Spirit 'must not be viewed as an "epiphenomenon", as "sublimation", but as a principle *sui generis*, as a formative and therefore the highest principle through which "gestalt", organized structure, is psychologically and perhaps also physically possible'.[20] The creative psyche evades causal and spatio-temporal explanation; it persuades us by provoking us. The mystical psychologies of the East are based on a recognition of the fact. The ancient 'depth psychology' of India, crude as it may appear at the first blush to those trained in the rigours of experimental science, has a range to which modern thought is alien.[21]

### The Higher Intuitionalism

I am arguing for the incompetence of reason in a perhaps not very familiar sense when I claim that all cognition extracts its nourishment, its strength, the very means of its incessant and generally unpredictable growth, from an intuition which *ipso facto* can never be exhausted; anything else would spell the starvation and the death of the intellect. Attempts to refute the Higher Intuitionalism can only mean that thoughts are not allowed to appear with their 'umbilical cord', if I may use the vivid metaphor of Kierkegaard's *Journals*. Neither in science nor in art nor yet in metaphysics can we say just what 'correspondence with facts' or 'verifiability', or 'coherence of thought-patterns', *ought* to mean save as it is born of an intuition 'above reason, but not without reason'. No antecedent formulation of the nature of Truth, no statement as to what It *is*, enables us to seize any concrete instance of It. We can appropriate solutions to problems only when they come with their self-authenticating character and the self-authenticating is not the self-evident in any naive sense. I take this to be the real meaning of Lamartine's oft-quoted 'It is not I who think; these are my ideas that think for me' (Ce n'est pas moi qui pense; ce sont mes idées qui pensent pour moi) and Chateaubriand's 'order

[17] See the article 'Inspiration by the Inspired' in *Enquiry* for February 1950. Prof. H. D. Lewis, notwithstanding his severely critical attitude to mysticism in his recently published *Morals and Revelation* (George Allen & Unwin, London) grants that there is something about the artistic experience of 'reality' that is incommunicable. He uses the artists in his enquiry into religious experience.

[18] Holmes: *Life of Mozart*, p. 317; Otto Jahn: *Biography of Mozart*.

[19] See Dr. S. G. Soal's Presidential Address to the British Society for Psychical Research (S. P. R.), *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, Part 180 (April 1951).

[20] Dr. Jolan Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung* (Kegan Paul, London, 1942) p. 64.

[21] See my article, 'Ancient Indian Depth Psychology and the West', in the *Vedanta Kesari* for April 1951. *Cf.* Dr. Herbert Guenther's able discussion in *Prabuddha Bharata* for May 1950, pp. 210-16.

more profound and enchanting than that of intellectual logic'. Any proposed test of Truth must share Its ineffability; but the ineffable is not the vague or the hazy. Picasso has confessed: 'I put on canvas the sudden apparitions that force themselves on me. . . . It is only later that I begin to evaluate more exactly the results of my work'.[22] The 'later evaluation', the 'reflection, much writing, ceaseless correction' as Bach called it, and the 'epistemological analysis' as the modern philosopher styles it, presuppose the earlier confrontation with Truth and can have no title to validity apart from it.

> Reason has her moons, but moons not hers
> Lie mirrored on her sea,
> Confounding her astronomers;

and withal delighting them (*pace* the poet)[23] for it is by glimpsing the moons 'not hers' that reason can unfold her celestial maps.

[22] *Enquiry, op. cit.*

[23] Ralph Hodgson. His stanza runs:

> Confounding her astronomers,
> But Oh! delighting me.

Cited by Charles Williams in his *Poetry at Present* (Oxford, At the Clarendon Press).

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# LIMITATIONS OF PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

By Prof. D. N. Sharma

*(Continued from the September issue)*

## III

The psycho-analyst has broken no new ground by pointing the way towards the sub-conscious which is mainly emotional in character, and whose intrusion in our normal life causes unusual and abnormal experiences. Instead of pursuing his search to the logical end, he has stopped short at the first promise of a solution to his immediate difficulty; he failed to penetrate deeper. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* gives a more comprehensive and convincing analysis of an apparent maladjustment which is nonetheless an essential step towards perfect integration of an individual. The senses, it says, have been created with outgoing tendencies which lead the individual towards the external nniverse—'the world of pleasure'. The ignorant run after external objects of desires; they crave for an emotionally gratifying state of the mind, and fall into the snares of widespread death. Their life is marked by split consciousness, confusion, and disintegration. Only the wise turn their backs on sensual objects and fix their gaze inwards. Unchained by 'the pleasant' they crave for 'the good', do not covet the fleeting things here, and attain the true end. The outgoing, pleasure-seeking tendencies are mainly sensual in character, and if not gratified, result in maladjustment and a consequential disintegration of the conscious life. The inner 'good', which comprises of non-emotional integrating tendencies, tends to give a steadiness, balance, and harmony to life at its conscions level. Psycho-analysis has limited its research to one end of the psyche which contacts the environment, gets stuck in 'likes and dislikes', and thus ignores the other end which remains inseparably liuked with and immersed in the Unconscious. The even and placid conscious life is as likely to be interfered with by the original impulse as by the unsubmissive but subdued urges pushed into the region of the sub-conscious. The intervention of the Unconscious is not so much consequent on the frustration of the sexual instinct as on the insatiable longing of the psyche for a richer and profounder experience than the one

promised at the conscious end. Hence the impulsion towards introversion. No study of human life can claim finality unless it brings within the orbit of its inquiry the way in which the Unconscious operates in healthy minds. The right approach to gain this essential knowledge is to psycho-analyse the mind not of a hysteric but of the poet-mystic.

The psycho-analysis of a poet's mind reveals the presence of a perpetual conflict for supremacy between the conscious and unconscious forces of life; the former having assumed a practical, mechanical, and individualistic aspect, as contrasted with the intrinsically non-utilitarian, non-mechanical, and universal character of the original unconscious principle. In the life of a man of the world the Unconscious remains unborn; his life is marked by a complete bankruptcy and improvement of the primary impulses as it is obviously circumscribed by the needs and enthralments of the environment which comes to have an exclusive hold on his urges and volitions. The non-appearance, effacement, or suppression of the Unconscious leaves him at the mercy of the environment and, as a consequence of it, he gets enmeshed in its tantalizing labyrinths and, before long, gets lost in 'the winding mossy paths'. These advantages, however, are amply set off and compensated, though temporarily, by distinct gains and facilities on the other side. The psyche is not at rest in any state; it arms him with an appropriate knowledge of the environment so as to understand its ways, to harness its resources, and to harmonize its demands. He reigns supreme in this realm and reaps a rich harvest of the promised fruit. Success comes easy to him and he aims at nothing higher.

A mystic's life, on the contrary, takes on a different hue, being cast in a different mould. It is characterized by an ineffable serenity and blissful quietus in which the ordinary consciousness does not obtain. Such a one, says, the *Gita* (II. 71), freed from desires, attachment, egoism, and thirst for enjoyment, attains peace. The mystic gets merged in the Superconscious which, says the Upanishad, is 'silence'. In between these irreconcilable extremes, we observe, securely poised, the life of the poet wherein the commingling of an alternation between the conscious and unconscious forces constitutes the rhythm of a unique experience, which, by virtue of its rare simplicity, naturalness, and grace, may well be termed as 'pure experience'. Here we find achieved a reconciliation, in various degrees of perfection and completeness, between the two opposite and contradictory tendencies. Tagore had this phenomenon in view when he declared that poetry was half divine and half human. It was a recognition of the same phenomenon which Coleridge refers to as the origin and basis of metre-formation—the unconscious flow of the inner urges (the 'libido' in Freud's terminology), checked and controlled by the conscious 'will'. The poet is a mystic in as far as the Unconscious constitutes the very fibre of his being and the substance of his life-experience. Yet his psyche functions in a different way from that of the mystic, who is enwrapped in complete silence brought about by an apparent withdrawal. 'Like a tortoise, which draws in its limbs from all directions, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects and his mind becomes stable.' (*Gita,* II. 58.) The urge for sensuous expression is completely restrained in such a life. Not so in the life of a poet. The vast mass of his unconscious psychic experience presses for immediate expression at the conscious level, and as a result of it, he finds himself confronted with the compelling urgency of making use of the concepts that have gained currency in that realm or, as an alternative, is forced to fall back upon his own resources to evolve a new language and a new form of imagery which partakes equally of the natures of both the realms, of which he has the privilege to be a denizen simultaneously. The poet possesses, in abundance, the unrivalled gift of experiencing as well as expressing the Unconscious. The Unconscious, which is ordinarily taken for a series of mental aberrations in the life-history of a hysteric person,

turns out to be the eventual fulfilment of life's urgency for self-expression in the case of the poet. This urgency is present in an infinite degree in the original Unconscious itself which, on that account, is poetic. So the *Rg-Veda,* in an inspired passage, addresses the Absolute as the 'poet of poets'. This naturally leads one to inquire into the nature and operational activity of the Unconscious Principle. Shall we fall in line with the findings of Dr. Freud? The wisdom of the ages has given a lie to the doctrine that all activity is prompted by the sex urge. The *Mahābhārata* is a priceless treasure-house of the rich and varied experiences, exploits, and achievements of man, engaged in the struggle for existence and in the arduous task of working his way towards the fulfilment of his individual and social destiny. It reveals the vast panorama of life in all its diverse phases, its limitations and possibilities, its comedies and tragedies, its agonies and glories. All actual and probable problems that confront humanity have been thoroughly discussed, patiently diagnosed, and intelligently decided for the guidance of the frail but potentially divine humanity on its march towards the attainment of eternal values and immortal bliss. This gigantic drama of life brings within its compass an analytical and appreciative study of the whole gamut of the urges and impulses that enter into the fabric of individual life, the entire range of the potentialities of the inner purpose which constitutes the basis of the labyrinthine maze of social activities, and the interplay of values which add to the zest of life and give it a direction. What a mass of human experiences!—actual and potential; yet it would be too much to say that anywhere, if at all, does the sex urge appear, even distantly, to provide the compelling urge to human activity of the noblest type.

On a more secular plane, Shakespeare who, in the words of Raleigh, has depicted humanity more faithfully and appreciatively than any other mortal, achieved immortal glory in his delineation of the supremely tragic characters and situations; yet it would be sheer arrogance to assert that this great dramatist wanted his readers to believe that it was the 'all-pervading' sex urge which enacted all this awe-inspiring and overwhelming drama of life. We have already observed that even the first disciples of Dr. Freud looked askance at his undue emphasis on sexuality as the key-impulse to all activity, normal no less than abnormal, and broke away from him as a result of this cleavage of opinion on this vital issue. The substitution of any other single instinct to replace sexuality would likewise, fail to serve the purpose; for here, as elsewhere, we must not be tempted to walk into the trap of over-simplification, which cuts short our journey to the final and whole truth. Dispassionate thinking, in this case, is ruled out, and one takes recourse to the process of picking and choosing, impelled by preferences and eccentricities which are peculiar to the individual. This difficulty can be easily obviated provided one, unlike a theory-ridden enthusiast, resolves to take a broader and more comprehensive view of things. So purified, the poetic vision begins to realize the Unconscious—the one primal life-urge—as also its infinite amplifications at a single glance. The infinite cross-sections made against the original life-impulse by the ruthless demands of the environment have caused its integrity to be split up into an endless multiplicity, thus presenting it in the form of a bewildering variety of individualized 'blind urges', baffling problems, and perplexing situations.

Dramatists and epic poets have given the world an all-inclusive and yet a microscopic view of the play of the one unconscious life-impulse, in the midst of the confusing diversity, with a masterly thoroughness and subtlety of vision. But, for an understanding of the successful emergence of the Unconscious Principle, as a harmonizing and integrating force, which permeates the environment and charges it with the glow of its own glory and dignity, we need must turn to the experiences (and not experiments) of mystics, poets, as well as philosophers. Wordsworth, England's

most original mystic poet and prophet, seems to have caught the spirit of the Upanishads in declaring the Unconscious Principle as the all-pervading 'Presence' that 'impels all thinking things, all objects of all thought, and rolls through all things'. It is 'the internal Atman of all'. (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad,* II v. 12). It is, no doubt, inaccessible to the conscious perception, yet the mystic vision feels 'a sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused' in the landscape no less than 'in the mind of man'. This Principle cannot, for all this, be equated or identified with a mere 'subjective state' or a purely transcendent being. It is a subjective no less than objective, the inner no less than the outer, Principle. It is the whole of Existence. 'As the one fire, after it has entered the world, though one, takes different forms according to whatever it burns, so does the inner Atman of all living beings, though one, take a form according to whatever object it enters and is, at the same time, outside all form'. (*Kaṭha Up.*, II.v.9). The Unconscious, a fugitive principle for those who are too much in the world, is firmly planted 'in the heart' of all individuals in the form of those 'first affections' and 'shadowy recollections' which prompt enquiry and awaken a thirst for eternal search. The Upanishadic illustration of Nachiketas demonstrates the nature and quality of these eternally 'obstinate questionings' which are at once expressive and indicative of the Unconscious. The Upanishads declare that eternal enquiry into the nature of Reality is inherent in man and precedes all striving after a knowledge of the Primal Force which 'is different from what is known and is beyond what is unknown'. (*Kena Up.*, I. 3.). It works in an 'unconscious' way—'it is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know' (*Kena Up.*, II. 3).

The working of the Unconscious admits of infinite degrees in the extent, variety, and intensity of its operations, according as it projects itself in the world outside or practises complete self-withdrawal. All experience is a response of the Unconscious to the environment as and when it impinges itself upon the senses. The response may be voluntary or involuntary:

> The eye—it cannot choose but see;
> We cannot bid the ear be still;
> Our bodies feel wher'er they be;
> Against or with our will.

'Attraction and repulsion', says the *Gita,* 'are rooted in all sense-objects. Men should never come under their sway, because these are the two main stumbling-block in the way'. (III. 34). So long as the senses continue to be employed meretriciously as the instruments of the instincts of self-preservation to gratify its needs, they cannot be said to be either free or unrestricted in their activities. Coleridge had this bondage of the shackled senses in view when he complained that 'we have eyes but we see not, we have ears but we hear not, . . .'. Freed from this bondage to the pressing demands of Need, and left to themselves, the liberated senses engage themselves in activities that are natural to them, namely, to drink in the spirit of Nature and Beauty sown broadcast in the wide world. This 'wise passiveness' of 'clarified sentience', which inhales unconsciously all that is sweet and exquisite in the world of Beauty, constitutes the origin of poetic vision. Without sensibility, that purest form of poetry which we call 'lyrical' cannot be thought of, but clear sensibility is denied to an agitated mind. 'He whose senses are completely restrained from their objects, his mind is stable' (*Gita,* II. 68). This release of the senses from the needs of the practical world makes it possible for the Unconscious to project itself outward in the objective world. Such self-projection brought about through emancipation from contact with the cumbersome routine of prosaic life is what has hitherto been known as the *imagination.* It refuses any longer to be contemptuously labelled as an aimless wandering or soaring in the region of illusions. It is a positive experience which has an objective validity. But the enfranchisement of sensibility is not yet complete; exalted sensibility needs must free itself from still another limit-

ation which an enslavement to the requirements of thonght-processes imposes upon it. Thought is simply another name for an anticipatory appreciation of, or preparation for, a new situation which one is, or is likely to be, confronted with in the near or distant future. To thought-processes, in this restricted sense, there can be attached no poetical values. This led the precocious genius of Keats to exclaim, 'O, for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts!'. Thought, admittedly and deservedly, occupies an exalted status, and enjoys an exclusive dignity in the world of practical interests where it subserves the purposes of desires and regrets. But it is evidently a discarded value in the realm of poetry, unless it can carry into it, or bring with it, sensations. It must be stamped with the psychic experience; else we 'lay waste our powers' and 'give our hearts away—a sordid boon'. The impact of the psyche tends to lend to it the dignity of 'elevated thought' which is just another name for that thought which has been emptied of empirical contents and detached from its practical entanglements and commitments. So purged and purified, thought can claim to be an unfailing source of our consciousness of the beauty about us, and an indispensable step on the way to the *making of beauty*. Without thought, the rich stock of sensuous experience would continue to remain a mere illusion, a hallucination of a frenzied brain or heated imagination, and, at best, an empty vision. Thought lends weight and imparts value to psychic experiences, else the abundance and forcefulness of the self-expressions of the life-urge would not only remain primitive and unconscious but also blind. Thought or awareness of our psychic experiences and appreciations lifts our joy in them to the peak-point of self-exaltation, otherwise named as poetic ecstasy. As an immediate consequence of it, the psychic energy transforms the 'idea' into a rhythm—'a rhythm without discord', thus turning it into 'an elevated expression of an elevated thought'. Extreme sensibility, on its side, imparts intensity or rapture to intellectual pursuits and processes. Such an emotionally charged thought gains the quality of *inspiration*.

Sensation and thought, we have reason to believe, are the two channels in which the unconscious 'libido' flows to secure for itself embodiment in the process of self-projection. This urge of the libido-impulse, for self-luxuriance in its own excess, marks the first stage in the direction of withdrawal or introversion. Proximity to the original Unconscious imparts to sensibility a peculiar quality of intensity—'a kind of white heat or flame that distinguishes the poet as compared with the dull-red flame that may be the emotional register achieved by the ordinary individual'. But poetry can be taken seriously only when it corresponds to the poet's whole being—to a deeper view of thoughtfulness and still more to the ever rising surges of the sea of the unfathomable mysteries of the 'libido'. In this process 'the feeling for beauty deepens from sensation to emotion and from emotion to passion'. Sensation, hitched on to the wagon of the Unconscious 'libido', gives rise to a richer emotional appreciation. Poetry derives much of its interest, value, and depth from this source. This inner impulse, once aroused, becomes the true poetic *motif*, and inspiration marks it off as a distinct value of life. Inspiration is the light-winged spiral movement of the libido-urge as freed from all physico-intellectual limitations. Poetry, in its perfect form, is the *impassioned expression of an inspired impulse*. When inspiration comes this way poetry may well be described as 'the language of the imagination and the passions'. But perfection is still beckoning from afar and inspiration may come in quite a different way in the case of a gifted and enlightened poet whose life is completely swamped with the psychic energy to the entire exclusion of every other interest.

Just as sensation, when aligned with the libido-urge, develops and deepens into 'emotion', in a corresponding way, the introversion and intensification of thought enables it to outgrow its limitations and ultimately pass over into a state of self-communion—a state

in which the poet finds himself in complete identity with the Unconscious. Awareness of the environment with which we enter into practical and utilitarian relations is but one form of the operations of the Unconscious. Both Russell and James have conclusively demonstrated that 'consciousness' is just a fictitious entity and has no existence as the main current of life that gives rise to and feeds the particular mental phenomena. Conscious thought is, accordingly, an assiduously built up and organized pattern of the mode or modes of our reaction to the environment. It is an offspring of the Unconscious, yet it is utilized for a purpose which is extraneous to its genuine nature, and is thus directed towards activities which lead away from rather than towards the 'Unconscious'. Detached or disinterested thought, however, from the fact that it is non-practical, succeeds in obtaining a glimpse of the unbroken radiance of the life-urge which otherwise gets stained by the practical pursuits of life. It has the further advantage of leading the poet back to 'the one that remains' after the curtain of the illusion set up by the consciousness of 'the many that change' is lifted. The 'libido' withdraws itself completely from the body-consciousness, and the poet, thus enlightened, takes the final plunge into the Unconscious. Veil after veil of the conscious fabric is then rent asunder, the cloud of illusion is scattered, and the lamp of practical wisdom is shattered. The creative energy of the 'libido' engulfs the conscious life of the poet and begins to act through him and empower him to 'see into the life of things'. This is poetic inspiration *par excellence,* and a most natural event that marks the normal and healthy self-expression of life's Unconscious purposes. This ineffable state cannot be brought about by 'the study of the Vedas or intelligence or much learning'. It is, on the other hand, brought about by a resolute will to 'cross the bar' and 'turn, again home—that immortal sea which brought us hither'. Only when we have made a resolve to 'travel thither' shall our merger in the Unconscious be assured beyond doubt. 'He whom the Self chooses, by him alone the Self can be attained, and to him the Absolute reveals its true nature' says the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.* This state is recognized by a total extermination of the vital foes of man—delusion and grief (*moha* and *śoka*). Peace and tranquillity come to take their place, 'the knots of the heart (all types of complexes and obsessions) are broken, and all doubts get resolved'. 'With the attainment of such placidity of mind, all his sorrows come to an end; and the intellect of such a person of tranquil mind, soon *withdrawing itself from all sides,* becomes finally established in God.' Wordsworth, too, has embodied this highest truth, in a few lines of excellent poetry:

> . . . that serene and blessed mood,
> In which the affections gently lead us on,
> Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
> And even the motion of our human blood
> Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
> In body, and become a living soul;
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.

This is a reaching back to the Unconscious; this is the *fulfilment of poetic experience.*

(*Concluded*)

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'From dreams awake, from bonds be free!
Be not afraid. This mystery,
My shadow, cannot frighten me!
Know once for all that I am He!'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

# AESTHETICS—A VEDANTIC VIEW

By Pravas Jivan Chaudhury

The aesthetic attitude is characterized by what is technically known as psychical distance,[1] that is, a peculiar disinterestedness on the part of the subject towards the aesthetic object. Thus beauty is disinterested contemplation of an object for its own sake. This separation of the beautiful from the useful has been done by many an aesthetician,—Kant, Hegel, and Croce in the West, and Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and Mammata in the East, amongst them. The useful is to be understood in its most comprehensive sense in which it includes the pleasing, the understandable, and the good. All these are related to the practical self of man seeking satisfaction of some need in things outside him. Thus the pleasing, often called sensuous or superficial beauty, satisfies the senses. The understandable satisfies the intellect which wants to know a thing through studying all its causal connections with other things. This knowledge is never complete and leads the mind from one thing to another *ad infinitum,* and moreover, it is not quite free from practical interest—a thing is known with a view to use it. The good satisfies the practical mind seeking security and ease through personal and social rules and conventions.[2] The useful, in its specific or thin sense, is what satisfies the more immediate and obvious vital needs of man. The beautiful is distinct from all these four grades of the useful ; it is apart from the needs and desires of our ordinary life. The aesthetic attitude can develop when our practical interest in the environment is suspended. We then watch with the unconcern of a mere spectator something which ordinarily arouses great concern, for instance, a stormy sea, a house in flames, or a wicked affair. In this disinterested mood our practical self loses itself in some more universal and neutral Self and this is what Keats hints when he speaks of negative capability of poets and of poetic character being without self or identity. A poet identifies himself with all things and delights in both foul and fair, high and low, equally well.[3] It is in an aesthetic mood that the poet appreciates a street-fight as a fine display of spirits.[4]

This psychical distance marking our aesthetic attitude has been well recognized by both Western and Eastern thinkers, but its philosophical implications have not been specifically worked out. The Indian aestheticians have let fall some significant hints such as the supernormal and divine nature of the aesthetic experience and the delight associated with it, while some Western idealists like Hegel, Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Croce, have regarded beauty as an expression of the Absolute Spirit. A comprehensive philosophical theory of the aesthetic attitude, utilizing these cues, seems to be an intellectual need, for the satisfaction of which a study of the philosophical basis of psychical distance, from the Vedantic standpoint, is imperative and important.

The object of aesthetic contemplation is detached from its practical interests which include the sensuous, moral, and intellectual ones. The practical self, the self that seeks to use the object for satisfying some organic need, is thus set aside or suppressed. A

[1] A term coined by Edward Bullough (*British Journal of Psychology,* V. 89).

[2] This idea of goodness and ethics is empirical; so is the idea of intellectual knowledge. Goodness and knowledge in their transcendental sense are not meant.

[3] See Keats's Letters to Baily, 22 Nov. 1817 and to Woodhouse, 27 Oct. 1818.

[4] See Keats's Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, 19 March 1819.

drawing-room chair that is valued for its utility in the household, for its appealing structure and finish (aesthetic surface), for the scientific knowledge about it, and for the moral value attached to it by virtue of its being offered to visitors,—fulfils but some organic need. But when regarded as a thing of beauty, either in nature or more easily in art, all these vital functions of it are obliterated and it shines in a peculiar supermundane light, affording an extraordinary joy. An oil-painting of a man famed for his virtue appeals to his relatives and friends, who recognize in it a familiar figure, in a manner different from that in which it does to a moralist, and it appeals differently to a dealer in paintings or to a child who may be pleased by the display of rich colours in it. But all these appeals have one thing in common: they serve some organic need of the human species. To an artist the painting will reveal something that is unconnected with him as an organic being having vital needs. The self in the aesthetic attitude is thus different from that in an ordinary attitude. Philosophical speculations start from this point and the main questions to be answered by any responsible speculative venture are those regarding the nature of this aesthetic self and its experience. In other words, the subject in an aesthetic experience and the experience itself has to be made intelligible once they are distinguished from their analogues in ordinary experience.

For this we have first to enquire into the nature of aesthetic experience. It is marked by psychical distance, a peculiar detachment from ordinary interests that are essentially practical. The other mark is a dominant sentiment (*sthāyi-bhāva*), served and nourished by some subordinate feelings (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*)—all suffused by a delight of an extraordinary flavour (*rasa*). For instance, a love poem (or a painting or a sculpture on the same theme) moves us with its sentiment of love which is aroused and sustained by many auxiliary feelings such as longing, jealousy, pain, anger, stupefaction, and joy. But, over and above these, there is a peculiar delight that can hardly be confused with the joy that may be evoked as an accessory to the dominant sentiment or even as a dominant sentiment itself. The aesthetic delight is different in taste from the ordinary one. The delight that moves the poet to express it in a poem is not the sole delight which the poem yields to the reader or the poet himself. There is an added delight of a different and finer kind which is the delight of expression. Any sentiment, whether of joy or of sorrow, is shot through and through with this aesthetic delight when it is given expression in art. In the case of natural beauty, when the sentiments associated with the beautiful object are contemplated and expressed, the natural object of beauty appears as an artistic expression of the sentiments, as a piece of art made by some cosmic artist,—God or Nature-Spirit.

Thus we have two paradoxes with regard to aesthetic attitude. First, there is psychical distance or a certain detachment ; yet, there is some amount of attachment to human sentiments as projected on the aesthetic object (which seems to arouse and satisfy these sentiments) through aesthetic sympathy (technically known as empathy). Secondly, the joy afforded by the beautiful is not ordinary joy, as yielded by an object satisfying some organic need,—practical, sensuous, intellectual, or moral. We have to resolve these paradoxes. This is to be done by realizing that the sentiments associated with the beautiful in art and Nature are not specific, affecting one personally, but they are generalized sentiments which one feels in an impersonal manner. The feelings accompanying an aesthetic experience are dislodged from their particular objects and individual minds and float as universal contents in the mental continuum of collective man. The feelings neither belong to the beautiful object, which is said to evoke them and on which they are projected, nor to the person who is said to feel them. No real interest is taken in the aesthetic object, which suffers an illusory or fictitious being, serving only as a general scheme or body, to shelter and suggest

the feelings, and no real emotional attitude is evoked in the sense that the subject is neither anxious to continue it (if it is an agreeable one) nor to stop it (if it is a painful one). The subject contemplates any emotion, either tragic or pleasurable, with equal interest, for it does not touch him really and personally. In a realistic attitude, one holds the object as a part of his environment and relates it to other objects (to know it) and to himself (to use it). In an aesthetic attitude, because the object is no longer held as real, it is not related to anything but contemplated for its own sake as a self-complete and self-dependent entity. As the object is thus disengaged from reality, the feeling associated with it loses any real source for the subject who feels it in a general way. The feelings are universal essences that are projected on and read into the aesthetic object. They are felt not blindly and passively, as is done in a realistic attitude, but consciously and actively. This active and enlightened way of feeling a generalized emotion projected on an appropriate image yields a superior kind of delight, the characteristic aesthetic delight (*rasa.*) An emotion, either agreeable or disagreeable in itself, is thus enjoyed in a transcendent manner, and this enjoyment, which can defeat tragic emotions and feast on them, must be held to be higher in grade than the ordinary emotions. Thus it is that the two paradoxes mentioned above can be solved. We can understand how in aesthetic attitude there are both detachment and attachment and how the aesthetic delight is distinct and superior to ordinary one.

In the above manner can we comprehend the complex psychical process involved in aesthetic attitude.[5] We have found from the above study that an object when regarded in an aesthetic attitude (i.e. as a thing of beauty) loses its hard reality, and so its necessity or imperativeness, and slips into a shadow world. It then ceases to press upon our consciousness with an iron hand and to evoke realistic attitudes,—practical, sensuous, intellectual, or moral. Again, the emotions associated with the object as real cease to be real and specific when viewed in the aesthetic attitude and the contemplation of these generalized floating emotions yields a delight qualitatively superior to ordinary delight. We have now to ask the most philosophical question, viz. how is it that the mind or the self is capable of adopting an aesthetic attitude in which an object and its associated feelings cease to be real and pragmatically effective for it (the mind or the self) and how is it that this sublation of reality is attended by a characteristic delight? To answer this all-important question, we have to take recourse to some kind of metapsychology. For, the question itself is metapsychological; it asks the reason behind a fact that has no further fact as its cause, unless, of course, the metapsychological cause itself is intuited as a fact in some supernormal manner. So long as this transcendental cause is not realized as a fact, our speaking of it will be metaphorical in terms which will not strictly mean but suggest some entities. The latter have to be treated as hypothetical and imagined on the analogy of their analogues in empirical experience.

Now, the metapsychological scheme that we postulate here, to answer our question in aesthetics, is that offered by Vedanta. The ego or the practical self is to be conceived as a lower and deluded state of Brahman, the universal Spirit. It has fallen into a kind of phantasy or dream in which it finds itself as individuals having particular interests and points of view. The same self-induced 'degradation' has created an objective world of change and multiplicity, confronting the self. The world and individuality are creations of the conjuring power (*māyā-śakti*) of the Absolute, Self, or Brahman. This conjuring power consists in projection or objectification of inner sentiments as outer objects suggesting them and in adopting individual points of view. Space-Time, which according to new physics is the matrix of the physical world, is one result of this projecting power, for it is

[5] See author's article, 'Psychical Distance in Indian Aesthetics' in the *American Journal of Aesthetics,* Dec. 1948.

necessary for differentiation; the individual living beings, spirits in physically separated bodies, are the second result. All these exist as dream objects in the universal Spirit. Brahman remains as such. Only a part of Brahman descends into the differentiated state. 'Pervading the universe, He yet transcends it by a space of ten fingers', says a verse in the Purusha-sūkta of the *Ṛg-Veda,* and 'only a quarter of Him forms all the living beings', says another. This only means that Brahman is immanent in and yet transcends the individual souls formed by its conjuring power. We can understand this through our analogous experience in dreams and illusions. In the former, the inner (sub-conscious and repressed) desires seek release and fulfilment through projected objects which arouse and satisfy these desires in waking experience. In an illusion, we project an emotion upon a meagre outline of a presentation that is associated with the emotion and create the complete presentation. Thus we see silver where only a silvery surface, such as that of nacre, is presented ; we see a snake where only a snake-like appearance, provided by a rope, is given. Projection is found in the empirical order of being. Self-differentiation, by way of identification of the self with diverse states and beings, which is the basis of aesthetic sympathy, is also given in empirical experience. Again, the transcendence-immanence of Brahman, with regard to its creations, has its analogue in empirical order, viz. in dreams and illusions, where the ego somehow knows and subtly and vicariously enjoys the emotions suffered by its deluded part in these lapses. But these are not mere analogies; the universal Spirit exercises its projecting power both in its universal grade and the individual one. The images projected in the individual capacity in dreams and illusions are those which are associated in waking experience with the released emotions. This release, objectification, or expression of emotions, pent up in waking experience, works out through symbolization, which has some individual and universal elements derived from experience. But the images projected by the universal Spirit, in its original unmodified capacity, cannot have any individual elements and they cannot be said to be derived from any previous experience without falling into an infinite regress. Hence these images must be regarded as creations of the emotions associated with them. Why a certain image universally arouses and fulfils a certain emotion (e.g. a certain facial expression excites universally laughter and another fear even in children that have not learned these associations from experience) is to be answered ultimately by the postulate of an original and divine rule of symbolization. A particular image is created by a particular emotion that seeks and finds a concrete embodiment and a final expression in it.

The universal Spirit, residing in the individual spirits (egos or selves), enjoys through them their feelings. The feelings affect the egos who suffer them passively and blindly, but they are actively relished by the higher Spirit that sees through them and knows them as its own creations. The higher Spirit has two grades of being at once; one, the individual, blind and passive ; the other, the universal, active and enlightened. As an individual it suffers, but as a universal it enjoys. The secret of the enjoyment of the emotions and the emotive images is that the universal Spirit, through our waking experience (and the ego in dreams), knows them to be but its creations. They stand as living symbols and witness of the conjuring-power of the Spirit, the power to cast and withdraw the net of emotions and images, to shadow forth and sublate the multitudinous phenomena.

The universal Spirit, engaged in this sport (*līlā*) of creation and enjoyment, this Brahman as conjurer, is called Ishvara, the *māyādhīśa* (wielder of *māyā*), who drinks through us sublime delight.[6] 'On the vast canvas of the Self, the Self itself paints the picture of various worlds and the Supreme Self itself derives extreme bliss from seeing that picture',

[6] He is called the very essence of *rasa,* in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad.*

says Shankaracharya (*Svātmanirūpaṇa,* verse 95). Ishvara's power of and delight in creation and sublation (which, we shall presently see, will explain the empirical self's similar power and delight in the aesthetic attitude) has its source in Brahman, the One that apparently adopts the Ishvara grade of Spirit only casually and momentarily (and not causally and permanently. Brahman's moment may easily be an aeon for us, time being relative to the state of consciousness). Brahman is essentially undifferentiated, and it, after a moment's caprice for some 'other' relapses into its primordial mood, with relief. It cannot stand for long the 'strain' of the 'other' which it at first creates, for fun. But even this love of fun cannot be said to be a necessary qualification of Brahman, which may be conceived without any real relation to its occasional lapses (*māyā*), just as a dreamer or a poet may be viewed apart from his dreams or poetry. Brahman, in relation to *māyā,* as a creator and enjoyer of the world, is Ishvara, who is a 'lapsed and momentary' grade of Brahman, the Absolute Spirit. However, the two moments or poles of attitudes towards the conjured up world present in Brahman, while at play, are love of diversion and love of its sole Self. Ishvara, therefore, enjoys the world and the attached emotions in a twofold manner: He delights in their appearance and also in the consciousness of their illusoriness. He treats the world as a passing show with amusement, the enjoyment being derived partly from the positive presentation of something before Him and partly from the feeling of its being self-created and retractable,— mere figments to 'beguile' Himself for a while. The world and the emotions, therefore, do not affect Him in the manner they do the individual self. The cause of His delight in the world is thus seen to be its essential unreality with regard to Brahman, the ultimate Reality. Only the Real is the *true* delight, and the consciousness of unreality of some experience other than that of Real is akin to this delight. For, consciousness of unreality of the unreal brings awareness of the Real which is approached through the repeated recognition of what it is not. It is indicated in the Upanishads by negatives (*neti, neti,* not this, not this).

Now, in the light of the above metapsychology, we may answer the aesthetic question posed before, viz. how do we possess the power of sublating reality of objects in an aesthetic attitude and how does it afford a characteristic delight? Our answer is that the aesthetic delight is of the nature of the sublime delight of Ishvara (described above) and draws its being from the latter. The practical self is shed away in the aesthetic attitude and the essential universal Spirit in us, roused from its deluded state, adopts an Ishvara-like grade in which the emotions are seen as self-created, having no specific or actual efficacy. They float as universal essences, as noted earlier, and are felt by the universal Self in us in an impersonal way. The aesthetic object is no real and particular object but a generalized symbol for the generalized emotion and the self experiencing them is the universal Self as Ishvara, immanent in the empirical one. Therefore, the aesthetic attitude is accompanied by a delight of an extraordinary kind (*lokottara*). The delight is similar in quality, though much *lower* in degree, to the sublime delight of Ishvara, contemplating the world as *māyā*. (The quantitative inferiority is due obviously to the far less range and vividness of projection of emotions possessed by the aesthetic subject; aesthetic intuition is a fragmentary image of the vision that is God's). Aesthetic experience may thus be regarded as akin to the relish or delightful realization of God (*Brahmāvādasaciva*). Delightful realization of God implies partaking of the being and experience possessed by Him. The aesthetic experience, i.e. beauty, reveals to the self the creative and retractive activity (*līlā* or *māyā-śakti*) of Ishvara who is immanent in it (though He transcends it too), and gives it a foretaste of the divine delight of the Ishvara wielding *māyā* with perfect freedom and detachment.

This interpretation of aesthetic experience,

while separating it from morality, vindicates it, refuting the stand of its opposers. Of course, the aesthetic experience we are speaking of, may it not be forgotten, is not sensuous or merely formal but it is expressive of human sentiments. This experience, we have seen, is akin to that of the realization of God, and so it cannot lead us astray. It helps, as do practice of goodness, truth, and piety, to make man progressively conscious of the illusoriness of the empirical world and the ego-life and of the reality of the higher and non-attached Spirit that is within him for realization. This is the highest good, the *summum bonum* of life. Aesthetic experience or enjoyment of beauty (which is expressive and not sensuous), either in art or in Nature, is good for mankind. In an ultimate sense, therefore, beauty, truth, and goodness are one.

A few words of explanation regarding the distinctive philosophical assumptions made in the present study may be helpful to the reader. Grades of reality, corresponding to grades of consciousness, are postulated and the one in which consciousness is absolutely at rest with itself, pure and undifferentiated, is held to be the highest grade. Lower in order of reality are those grades where apparent differentiation occurs and the original Consciousness apparently seeks and projects objects for contemplation, thereby appearing progressively to suffer 'self-delusion', though in essence and actuality it ever transcends these degraded states. These lower grades are those corresponding to Ishvara—contemplating and wielding the world as *māyā,* empirical selves (egos)—experiencing the world as real, and the deluded selves—suffering dreams and illusions. Since all these states are self-induced modes of Brahman which is present even in the lowest one, the subject at any one of these can ascend to the higher one by realizing its original unconditioned state.[7] Thus, liberation of the ego from the empirical world is possible. The individual self, in the aesthetic attitude, rises temporally and in a very small degree to its next higher state, Ishvarahood. The objects, in this state, lose their empirical reality and appear in their universal emotive aspects which induce, instead of any realistic attitude, serene contemplation and delight. The aesthetic subject transcends for a time his empirical self and participates in a more elevated state. This experience of self-transcendence and illusory objectivity is attended by a characteristic delight, different from that resulting from a passion or need satisfied in practical life. This experience is valuable for spiritual progress which consists in progressive knowledge of and freedom from the veils of *māyā*.

The principle or method involved in our metapsychological explanation of aesthetic experience is that it is attributed to a similar experience on a higher grade of consciousness, the lower one being a fragmentary image and derivative of the higher one. The ultimate reason for this higher grade of experience (of Ishvara) of illusory objectivity is indicated with reference to the highest grade where there is no experience of objectivity, Brahman being above all subject-object duality. This gradation of consciousness and the power of the subject to pass from one grade to another is supported by, extrapolated from, and understood on the analogy of the same two things found in the empirical order where the consciousness suffers dreams and illusions,

[7] The different states of Brahman are not physical parts or transformations of it. Our language being fashioned for practical purposes, dealing with the material world, cannot adequately express, without recourse to paradoxes and contradictions, this state of affairs in which a portion of the Spirit in any of its modes is essentially and potentially the whole of the Spirit. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says, *'That* is Whole, *this* (too) is Whole; from the Whole proceeds the Whole; (and when) from the Whole the Whole is taken, the Whole alone remains'. The individual self becomes Brahman by realizing Brahman within, as the Upanishads declare. As the dreaming self gets conscious, in the dream, of the unreality of the dream state and then wakes from it, even so the ego becomes aware of the unreality of the empirical world and then rises to higher states. The subtle workings of the higher grade of consciousness in the lower one in order to rouse and raise the subject in the latter is the essence of divine grace.

transcends and enjoys them subtly, and then wakes from them. This consciousness is felt to be the only self-dependent entity and its nature can explain the nature of the world of experience. To explain this diversity of the latter, some principle of unity is necessary and this principle must be a conscious self-developing and differentiating entity, for, any abstract law or formula, as sought by a naturalistic philosophy, will demand some vital-conscious agent to conceive and work it. The world and its evolution can ultimately be understood only in terms of consciousness, as a psychological process, for, the only thing that must be accepted as ultimate and unquestionable is consciousness that questions. Any objective entity known by consciousness as the 'other', as matter or abstract laws, will be further questioned. Consciousness and its higher grades are not objects of knowledge as such, they are to be realized as embedded in the Self and they are to be fully lived. Knowledge of Brahman is to be Brahman ; he who knows it as the 'other' deludes himself, says the Upanishads. Brahman, as the undifferentiated being, is conceived (in our rational philosophy) by carrying to the logical extreme our principle of analogy and gradation. Since consciousness is seen, in its lower grades, as capable of self-delusion and differentiation as well as of self-realization and self-collection, we have to conceive a state of pure and collected being of consciousness, where it transcends all objectivity, and not as conscious of itself like a subject set against some object. It is purely impersonal in this extreme state, while its first mode of self-differentiation, Ishvarahood, is personal. Ishvara is referred to as 'He' while Brahman as 'It'. This absolute state of consciousness is co-essential with absolute awareness, freedom, and delight. Progressive self-limitation of these characters arise with increasing differentiation (and veiling and distorting) of the pure Consciousness. The concept of self-conditioning of an unconditioned Spirit, for which conditioning is apparent and a passing mood, adopted in sport and cancelled with relief, serves to explain, in lower grades of the Spirit, the fact of illusory objectivity, self-transcendence, and a characteristic delight.[8]

[8] This essay is a development of an earlier one entitled 'From Aesthetics to Vedanta', published in *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1948.

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# THE PHILOSOPHY OF VIVEKANANDA AND THE FUTURE OF MANKIND

By Dr. Gobinda Chandra Deb

*(Continued from the September issue)*

## III. Metaphysics

After our brief survey of Vivekananda's epistemology, we may now quite logically pass on to the consideration of his metaphysics which is necessarily characterized by the same synthetic outlook.

For Vivekananda, the synthesis of intellect and intuition is, rightly understood, a means to an end since it prepares the path of yet another synthesis which is of paramount importance for metaphysics viz. the synthesis of sense and intellect and through that of sense and the transempirical cognition of identity, the ultimate objective of intellect. He has, in fact, broadened our notion of sense by the

admission of the objectivity of superpsychic experiences which very considerably widen the scope of the manifold of sense. This unwieldy plurality of sense is apparently the direct antithesis of the transempirical cognition of pure identity, to which Vivekananda throughout ascribes superlative importance, and it is obviously difficult, if not impossible, to make them meet. The problem does not however appear to be peculiar to the philosophy of Vivekananda, since, in some form or other, this is the Gordian knot of all idealistic metaphysics. It is extremely gratifying to find that there are in the writings and speeches of Vivekananda significant suggestions in the light of which this problem may be resolved, it seems, to the full satisfaction of intellect.

In the history of philosophy, we come across certain attempts to solve this puzzling problem, which by reason of their over-simplification of the issue proved unacceptable. It has been asserted, with a rather unusual degree of confidence, that the felt plurality must share in the reality of the Absolute which, without the former, will metaphysically be a big cipher. The accusation of Hegel, probably against Parmenides and others, that pure being is no better than pure nothing and the strictures of Ramanuja upon the monistic conception of the non-relational Absolute might be cited as relevant examples. Such a categorization of the Absolute, stripped of its metaphysical subtleties, ascribes to it the irreducible minimum of reality, so much so that its introduction itself into the arena of philosophy seems to be an unavoidable contingency, if not a superfluity. The tendency may not be so apparent in Ramanuja (because of his allegiance to supralogical intuition) as in Hegel whose 'absolute' itself has, on account of his undue emphasis on the world of sense, at times been described as temporal. Others have, therefore, asserted that it is better to eliminate this superfluous reference to a purely subjective unity and welcome instead a scheme of unmitigated pluralism. Another extremist tendency is visible in those who go to the length of reducing the world of experience to a purely subjective fiction and treat the indeterminate Absolute, revealed in the pure intuition of identity, as the alpha and omega of reality. Vivekananda seems to find the truth of metaphysics not in such extremist tendencies but in a *via media* which steers clear of an undue allegiance either to the notion of identity or to that of plurality.

The highly original orientation he gave to the doctrine of Maya, the great pivot of the non-dualistic Vedanta of Shankara and his followers, in his famous London lectures[1] might with full justice be looked upon as a crucial instance in favour of the thesis stated above.

A world of thought for future metaphysics seems to have been compressed in Vivekananda's apparently simple but superlatively significant conception that 'Maya is a pure and simple statement of fact' and 'not a theory for the explanation of the world'. Being a statement of fact, it cannot obviously lend support to the view that the universe is an illusion, meaning by the term an individual fancy. The recognition of Maya as a fact is perhaps, as Vivekananda himself suggests, as old as Shankara who characterizes Adhyāsa as a common experience (*sarva-loka-pratyakṣah*). Its essence consists, according to him, in a fusion of the subject and the object, which being by nature contradictories, judged by a logical standard, should not meet but do, as a matter of fact, meet. Maya is thus a recognition of what definitely is but what certainly should not be. But this demonstration of the contradictions inherent in the world of experience primarily interests the intellectualists—more precisely the metaphysicians,—and the plain man, innocent of finer logical subtleties, will find very little interest in it. He will assuredly fight shy of it, even if he be not horrified by it. The concept of Maya will undoubtedly make a universal appeal as it should,—being a statement of facts, of what we are,—only if its meaning is brought to light by an analysis

[1] These are incorporated in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. II.

after Vivekananda of the ever increasing contradictions, of the tweedledum and tweedledee of our practical life, individual as well as collective. The sum and substance of this practical demonstration is that, since no adjustment of our workaday life is perfect and as the quantity of the good achieved invariably breeds fresh evils,—to quote Vivekananda's expression, as the increase of happiness in arithmetical progression is followed by an increase of sorrows in geometrical progression, —our very existence must be something short of the absolute reality, a curious mixture of existence and non-existence standing midway between full reality and utter unreality. Romain Rolland shows great insight in pointing out that Vivekananda's Maya is the metaphysical equivalent of what has come to be known in science later on as relativity, a word unwittingly used by Vivekananda in its precisely scientific acceptation. The statement will be quite true to facts only if it be remembered that Maya is relativity plus the recognition of the Absolute as the ultimate Truth and not relativism pure and simple. This will express much better the implications of Rolland's exposition of the concept of Maya in Vivekananda.

The practical implications of Maya, as brought out with convincing earnestness and pathos by Vivekananda, are no doubt quite consistent with the traditional concept, since the orthodox view is unequivocal in the declaration that without a transcendence of Maya liberation cannot be achieved and consequently frustration of the practical life must continue with tiresome regularity. Vivekananda brings to the forefront this practical aspect of Maya and finds a repetition of the contradictions that the philosophers, owing to their predilections for a theoretical approach, see in facts, in our inner life—in the myriads of its attempts to adjust itself to the perpetual interaction of the Self and the not-Self, in its breathless strivings to come out of an ever receding vicious circle. Herein lies definitely the novelty of his approach.

Again, notwithstanding the recognition in Shankara of Maya as a matter of common experience, as a bundle of contradictions that constitutes the world of sense, the systematic efforts of many of his followers to utilize it as a principle for the explanation of the world of experience give the impression that it is a theory about facts and not a mere statement of their character and essence. The idea consequently has gained ground that Maya is a concept derived from experience and not a fact directly apprehended. Theoretical contradictions that pertain to existence as presented before us might be the result of an inferential process but the practical contradictions are a content of immediate apprehension and writ large on every page of the book of life which only the callow and the perverse might feel tempted not to decipher. So if Vivekananda can claim to have taken out Vedanta from the caves of the recluse and introduced it into our workaday life, he may with equal justice claim to have dragged Maya out of the brain cells of dialecticians and made it the warp and woof of our practical life in its widest dimensions.

Maya cannot be a theory, he has rightly pointed out, since the function of a theory is to explain and Maya does not explain anything. It merely recognizes certain logically incomprehensible peculiarities of facts as they confront us within and without. Vivekananda does not believe in a synthesis of opposites, as Hegel does ; but he unequivocally recognizes the self-discrepant character of the universe and this is what, according to him, is Maya, an infinite regress—to escape out of which is liberation. As he puts it to Sister Nivedita: 'One set of persons, you see, gives priority to the external manifestation, the other to the internal idea. Which is prior, the bird to the egg or egg to the bird? Does the oil hold the cup or the cup the oil? This is a problem of which there is no solution. Give it up. Escape from Maya.' We have to recognize the mystery as insoluble, since contradictions cannot be reconciled either empirically or logically though they may be transcended in liberation. It is curious, in the light of this exposition of Maya in Vivekananda, which is,

as we have seen, in substantial agreement with that of Shankara, to maintain with the critics of Vedanta, particularly in the West, that it explains away facts. Nothing can be farther from the truth, since in reality Maya does neither explain nor explain away but simply recognizes what it cannot help recognizing. Thus, it is the very height of absurdity to treat Mayavāda of Vedanta as illusionism as is the general impression among its so-called critics. We may, therefore, with full justice, conclude with Romain Rolland that 'the real world is Maya'.

A few words on the concept of God and its relation to the concept of the Absolute will throw further light on this much misunderstood topic. Consistently with his doctrine that the world is a meeting-ground of unreconciled contradictions, Vivekananda maintains that God as the source of the world of experience and identical with Maya is a reality in which all contradictions meet. In fact, God can be said to be the source of the world only when the reference is to the small world of a particular individual, the microcosm. But He is really one with the bigger universe, the macrocosm, out of which the different individuals construct their own smaller universes, more precisely the multiverses. The bigger universe, the macrocosm, though constituted of endless contradictions, is never disturbed by them since it has a transcendent awareness of its identity with the undifferenced Absolute which happens to be its apparent substratum. Thus, Maya, as operative in the microcosm, has its sting, since in the latter the contradictions are neither reconciled nor transcended; but it loses its sting with reference to the bigger universe, the macrocosm, since here, though not reconciled, the contradictions are transcended. To adapt the significant illustration of Ramakrishna: the poison, though in the mouth of the snake, cannot harm it. Throughout his writings, Vivekananda is never tired of repeating that the nature of God is incomprehensible. The reason behind this assertion is that the human mind, owing to its inherent limitations, cannot grasp how the contradictions in the divine life can possibly be transcended in its apparent background, the indeterminate Absolute. The inevitable consequence of this failure has been either to give a much too moral conception of God within the grasp of intellect, with obvious traces of limitations upon it, or to maintain, against the fundamental demand of human intellect, that contradictions can be reconciled. Vivekananda repudiates both these attempts at finitization of the Infinite. He maintains that God, though not obviously inframoral, must be supramoral i.e., beyond man's limited moral consciousness. A rather distant echo of the doctrine is audible in the concept of the Holy in Dr. Otto, which has according to him an 'overplus of meaning' besides its moral significance to which he gives the name 'numinous'. In reply to the puzzle of the theologians how God can be both just and benevolent, Vivekananda was, therefore, in the habit of referring, as a relevant illustration, to the centripetal and centrifugal forces of bodies and used to observe that if such contradictory features could pertain to finite particles of matter, how much more appropriate they would be with regard to God whose essence is infinitude. We cannot possibly fail to point out in this connection that the macrocosm, this sum total of contradictions, is dynamic in character, since the contradictory forces inherent in it make it move perpetually, though it finds the truth of its ever continuous movement in the equipoise of its indeterminate background. Judged in this light, God is a process, a ceaseless flow, having substantial similarity with the *élan vital* of Bergson, whose ceaseless dance in endless directions is neither determined mechanically from before nor teleologically by an end to be achieved in future. Though Bergson is not prepared to find the final truth of creative evolution of the *élan vital* in a static absolute, yet, by making it identical with love,[2] he has brought it much nearer to the concept of God in Vive-

[2] See his last book, *Two Sources of Religion and Morality*.

kananda and through that of Vedanta rightly understood. Vivekananda's highly lofty conception of Kāli the Mother as a mysterious mixture of the terrible and the merciful,—dynamic through and through in essence and dancing endlessly for the sake of delight of dance and not out of any extraneous considerations,—whose identity with the indeterminate Absolute he admits unequivocally, demarcates his position from the so-called concrete monism on the one hand and from abstract monism, tinged by solipsism, on the other. Obviously, on the basis of a new orientation to Vedanta, he is attempting to bridge the gulf between the indeterminate Absolute of Vedanta and the concept of Shakti in the Tantras.

That the world of experience, according to Vivekananda, is not an illusion is also evident from his statement of the gist of an important book he contemplated to write to show the harmony between Vedantic theories and modern science, which, as a matter of fact, aim at accommodating the Sānkhya cosmology, interpreted in the light of the science of the age, within the framework of the metaphysics of Vedanta. It is really a great loss to thinking humanity that a book with such immense possibilities for science as well as metaphysics could not actually be written by him. But from its broad outlines which are left to us, we find that the ultimate stuff of the world is the indeterminate Absolute which emanates itself in the shape of the primal creative energy to which it applies the Sankhya appellation, 'Mahat', and from this are traced Prāṇa and Ākāsha whose modern scientific equivalents are force and matter respectively. The blind Prakriti of Sankhya has been replaced by a universal intelligence, with due modifications. The Sankhya concept of Mahat, which has, in the absence of Prakriti as its background, been directly connected with the indeterminate Absolute—the highest link in the whole chain of metaphysics,—and the empirical existents, in their widest possible dimensions, have, with tacit reference to their scientific counterparts, been treated as variants of Prana and Akasha i.e. force and matter. In fact, Vivekananda is probably the pioneer of the movement carried later on with such great zeal by Eddington, Jeans, and others to base as far as possible metaphysics on the foundations of science. But neither in Vivekananda nor in Jeans nor also in Eddington has the world of experience been reduced to a cipher, a subjective fiction. The demand is for the Absolute and not for an unqualified rejection of the reality of the relative. The following significant passage from the outlines of Vivekananda's proposed book of which mention has already been made will clarify the position much better:

'Now as each individual can only see *his own* universe, that universe is created with his bondage and goes away with his liberation, although it remains for others who are in bondage. Now name and form constitute the universe. A wave in the ocean is a wave, only in so far as it is bound by name and form. If the wave subsides, it is the ocean, but that name and form have immediately vanished for ever. So that the name and form of wave could never be without the *water* that was fashioned into the wave by them, yet the name and form themselves were not the wave. They die as soon as ever it returns to water. But other names and forms live in relation to other waves. This name-and-form is called Maya, and the water is Brahman. The wave was nothing but water all the time, yet as a *wave* it had the name and form. Again this name and form cannot remain for one moment separated from the wave, although the wave as water can remain eternally separate from name and form. But because the name and form can never be *separated,* they can never be said to *exist*. Yet they are not *zero*. This is called Maya.'[3]

In his unambiguous refusal to treat the world of experience as a sheer illusion, in spite of his unqualified admission that pure identity is the fundamental stuff of reality, Vivekananda seems to have been influenced through and through by the spiritual realizations of his great Master, Ramakrishna, whose life itself was as it were a bridge between appearance and reality, between the world of plurality and the abstract unity behind it. Vivekananda's own realizations, being admittedly a corroboration of those of his Master, do not need, notwithstanding their unquestion-

[3] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. V, pp. 78-79.

able importance, to be treated separately. In Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, as in the relation of Socrates and Plato, we find that the mute metaphysics of the former, though resonant with the voice of direct experience, finds an expression in logico-scientific terms in the latter. Only nobody knows, owing to the distance of history, whether the great Greek Guru treated his would-be illustrious disciple with such respect and detected such great potentialities in him as did Ramakrishna in Vivekananda. And notwithstanding Plato's unadulterated homage to his Guru, evinced throughout his writings, it is at times asserted with considerably strong reasons that Socratic dialogues are actually Plato all over. But the philosophy of Vivekananda has upon it the unmistakable stamp of the spiritual genius of Ramakrishna so much so that, without minimizing the importance of Vivekananda, it may be asserted with full justice that all his fundamental doctrines are traceable to Ramakrishna. From the practical standpoint, at least, Ramakrishna is perhaps the greatest champion of the doctrine of pure identity as the fundamental stuff of reality, since the transempirical awareness of identity upon which the said doctrine is ultimately based was as it were his very breath. He demonstrates by life what a host of metaphysicians attempted without considerable success to establish by the sheer force of dialectic. Here he sides with his predecessors in India with whom nothing short of a practical demonstration in life of great doctrines can prove their validity. Like modern pragmatists, they believe in workability of truth, but nevertheless do not go to the length of identifying truth with its verification. This awareness of identity, though of paramount importance for a determination of the nature of reality, is but an apex, assuredly the most important apex, of the spiritual life of Ramakrishna, since he could pass on from it with great ease and irresistible naturalness to consciousness of cosmic plurality. His whole life is in fact a perpetual transition from the unity of the Absolute to the cosmic whole and *vice versa*. Saradananda, the great philosopher-biographer of Ramakrishna as Romain Rolland rightly calls him, characterizes this as 'Bhāva-mukha' and depicts it with great precision and significance as the gateway between divine transcendence in the undifferenced Absolute and divine immanence in the cosmic whole. Having taken his stand in this meeting-ground of the transcendent Absolute and immanent God, Ramakrishna does not feel inclined to underestimate the cosmic whole in spite of his ascription of the highest reality to its undifferenced background that constitutes it. He attempts to describe this unique metaphysical phenomenon by the simple analogy of the well-known *bel* fruit. The substance of the fruit, he tells us, is constituted by its essence, viz. the pulp, which people eat; but that does not mean that by rejecting the shell, seeds, etc. the total reality or full weight of the fruit can be determined. The same note is visible in Vivekananda's utterance that appearances have no reality whatsoever besides that of their substratum, just as the rays of the sun have no reality of their own apart from that of the sun. But yet the appearances are of the reality as much as the rays are of the sun. It may be noted in this connection that the recognition of some sort of extra-subjective status of the cosmic whole can alone account for the uncompromising philanthropic vigour of Vivekananda, the implications of which I shall attempt to bring out later, while discussing his Ethics. Meanwhile, I shall attempt to define, in precise philosophic terms, the fundamental metaphysical position that finds expression in Vivekananda's persistent efforts to bridge the apparent gulf between pluralism of the type that is current under the mask of concrete absolutism and a solipsistic negation of plurality on the basis of undifferenced absolutism.

The fundamental error of a virtually solipsistic interpretation of plurality in non-relational absolutism, which Vivekananda persistently refuses to commit, may be traced to a confusion of the relation between the part and the whole, between the multiverse or more

appropriately multiverses and the universe. In the interest of their extremely monistic metaphysics, the advocates of undifferenced absolutism have often enough strained every nerve to equate the status of the universe with that of the multiverses. The position of macrocosm, i.e. of God or the cosmic whole, in nonrelational absolutism appears, therefore, to be a bit too ill-defined, if not extremely curious. Ishvara has generally been ascribed a vital status in the explanation of the world of plurality and an appeal has been made to His mercy as the almost indispensable passport to the realm of undifferenced unity. Yet, in the last resort, He has been described as a makeshift whose metaphysical value is nil. The first approach is made under the obvious pressure of the world of experience in which the plain man lives, moves and has his being. The second approach was found to be necessary since it was presumed that if God be a permanent reality, the undifferenced Absolute will be infected by Him and will thus be deprived of its essence. Hence is the oft-repeated attempt at 'explaining away' the existence of the cosmic whole as an ethical necessity which ceases to operate as soon as the individual self transcends the realm of the empirical plurality and loses itself in the transempirical unity. This is the sum and substance of what has come to be known as logic of preliminary superimposition (*adhyāropa*) of the world of plurality upon the nndifferenced Absolute and the subsequent negation of the same (*apavāda*) during liberation. This also is mainly responsible for the application of the concept of partial acceptance with partial rejection of the literal sense (*bhāga-lakṣaṇā*) in traditional Vedanta, in its exposition of the great Upanishadic text 'Tattvamasi' which stands for the identity of the individual with the ultimate stuff of the universe. The possibility of an expansion of the finite individual into the cosmic whole, preparatory to its merging with the nndifferenced Absolute, is precluded under the apprehension that the cosmic whole would then become invested with a permanent metaphysical status which will deprive the ultimate stuff of the universe of its undifferenced and non-relational character. The same apprehension seems to lurk behind the analysis of the four grades of consciousness which purports to demonstrate that the world of plurality relates to the three varying states of ignorance, viz. waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), and dreamless sleep (*suṣupti*) while reality is constituted by the fourth state (*turīya*) in which there is no plurality whatsoever and which, therefore, is only metaphorically called a state, being by itself the stuff of reality. The presupposition throughout is that the cosmic whole, the macrocosm or Ishvara, is a construction of the individual, microcosm, i.e. the multiverses which, in some sense or other, form its part and parcel. If Hegelian absolutism has been guilty of an over-emphasis, direct or indirect, upon the whole, the other attempt at tracing the whole to its parts seems not any the less faulty. On a closer analysis, the whole cannot be taken to be a by-product of its component parts. The standard Vedantic view seems to be the recognition of a plurality of finite selves (*bahu-jīva-vāda*). Except in special cases, the preference for the recognition of only one finite self (*eka-jīva-vāda*) is hypothetical because solipsism may be logically irrefutable but not acceptable. Now, if the theory of a plurality of finite selves stands as it should, the attempt at the reduction of the cosmic whole to a pure and simple construction of the individual seems to fall to the ground. The variety of finite selves being inexhaustible, some individuals will always be in bondage and the cosmic whole, as its necessary counterpart, will prove to be a permanent reality and cease to be a temporary makeshift. If this be the case, will it not be more correct to say that the finite individuals who lose their existential status in liberation are the by-products of the cosmic whole and not *vice versa*? In other words, the relation between the finite and the Infinite is no doubt symmetrical, but nevertheless it implies more a dependence of the former upon the latter than of the latter upon

the former. This would place in a topsy-turvy condition the usually recognized conception of the role of Ishvara in undifferenced absolutism. It is to be noted that the way an individual reaches reality is not necessarily the way in which reality is to be judged from its own perspective. The underestimation of the role of Ishvara seems likely to be vitiated by anthropomorphism, by a confusion of the inevitable limitations of a human approach to reality with reality's own version of itself, if we can at all conceive of such a possibility.

Vivekananda fully recognized this loop-hole in such an interpretation of the status of plurality of experience, for he is unequivocal in his emphasis upon the notion of plurality of the finite self and states explicitly that Maya continues to operate with regard to other finite selves even after the liberation of a particular individual. As for the concept of the unity of the finite self, Vivekananda seems to be prepared to accept provisionally the reverse hypothesis, as is shown by his avowed leanings to the concept of universal liberation (*sarva-mukti-vāda*) according to which no particular individual can get out of Maya until all the rest are liberated. This clearly shows that he was no less emphatic in his recognition of the extra-subjective character of the cosmic whole as in his assertion that the undifferenced Absolute is the ultimate stuff of all that exists.

But the problem of problems is to account for the extra-subjective status of the cosmic whole, consistently with the undifferenced character of the Absolute which is decidedly the ultimate reality according to Vivekananda. A closer analysis reveals that a new orientation of the Vedantic concept of 'inexplicability' (*anirvacanīya*) of false appearances can alone solve this puzzle.

(*To be continued*)

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# NOTES AND COMMENTS

## TO OUR READERS

The annual autumnal worship of the Divine Mother will be celebrated early this month in many parts of the country. *Brahma's Prayer to the Divine Mother* is taken from the *Caṇḍī*, the well-known scripture of Mother worship. *O Mother! Beautiful and Fearful* is compiled from folk-songs addressed to the Mother—songs which, though comparatively unknown, are full of devotion, adoration, and exquisite imagery....

Swami Aseshananda, Associate Minister of the Vivekananda Home, Hollywood, gives a glimpse of the spiritual personality of Swami Saradananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, in his article *What Vedanta Means to Me*....

Our readers who have closely perused the two previous articles in the *Prabuddha Bharata* by Sri C. T. K. Chari, M.A., will easily recognize the present article—*The Challenge of Mysticism*—as an apposite sequel to the earlier ones. Here he argues that the mystical philosophy of the Vedanta, as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, is not only a *challenge* to the current psychologies and logics of West but also a *synthesis* at a deeply significant level of experience where the 'human' shades off into the 'divine'. Making a critical survey of some recent trends in value philosophy as well as 'depth' psychology, he affirms with convincing force that mystical intuition, especially Vedantic mysticism, marks the summit of creative inspiration and transcends the apparent antitheses of 'East' and 'West'....

The truly spiritual realization enables man to pass far beyond the aesthetic limit and

experience the deep, intense, and transcendental Ānanda (*Brahmāsvāda*). The Divine, expressing itself through man and Nature, creates the forms and objects of aesthetic delight, which, in effect, seek to serve as so many approaches to the one Reality behind and within all existence. The slogan, 'art for art's sake', has sought to focus attention on the merely physical, sensual, and formal aspects of beauty in the world, to the exclusion of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual aspects which are undoubtedly of perennial and more fundamental interest both to the creator and the enjoyer of beauty. In his keenly analytical presentation of *Aesthetics—A Vedantic View,* Sri Pravas Jivan Chaudhury of Visvabharati, Santiniketan, offers rich mental pabulum to connoisseurs in the field. He rightly holds that a metapsychological approach, based on Vedantic principles, is indispensable for a correct understanding of the aesthetic attitude and the problem of aesthetic delight.

## THE NEED FOR RELIGION

Before one can feel the urgency of the need for religion one has to clearly understand what religion is and what it is not. Most people in the world, in spite of the growing spirit of materialism and secularism, consider themselves as belonging to one religion or the other. But few indeed realize the difference between the essentials and non-essentials of religion. It seems on the surface that there is enough 'religion' in the world to make people fight fanatically over its non-essentials and just not enough of it to make them learn mutually to love and unite through an understanding of its essentials, which, in fact, constitute the soul of Religion, common to all religions. Hence, certain schools of modern thought hold there is no need at all for religion. It is argued that science and humanism, thriving in a suitable social environment based on 'ideal' economic equality, are quite adequate for giving man every kind of happiness and security he longs for. But, can this argument carry conviction to discerning people who are fully aware of the causes of discord and discontent, which are on the increase in every part of the world, notwithstanding the great advances our mechanistic civilization is proud of?

'Although scientific progress has brought material prosperity, yet we are not happier than the ancients. In certain respects we are much worse than our forefathers. Science has given man control over Nature but unfortunately he has not the Spiritual strength to utilise it for the good of the world. Science is a curse to humanity when it is used for destructive purposes.' These significant observations were made by Swami Vireswarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission and Math, in the course of an illuminating lecture delivered by him at Jaffna (Ceylon). Speaking of the need for a real understanding among men and nations through the practice of spiritual ideals, the Swami said:

'A deeper interest in religion is necessary if humanity is to be saved from impending destruction. After the downfall of the Roman Empire, when there was chaos in Europe, it was the message of Jesus Christ that brought peace and harmony. Today in several countries of Europe and in America there is a growing desire to understand the teachings of the ancient religious teachers of the East, because these people have begun to realize the loose foundations on which their civilization has been built. For the last two centuries the impact of Western civilization on the East has been very great indeed. The first onslaught had stunned the East but soon it rallied its scattered spiritual forces and now there is a counter-attack. It was left to Swami Vivekananda to interpret to the West the philosophy of the East as lived and taught by his Master.

The Swami emphasized the universal character of the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda:

'We are sure of progress if we believe in the ultimate Reality—that infinite Spirit which is manifest in all. This spirit has somehow got involved in matter and tries to manifest itself. This Self cannot be manifested by killing others

but by the killing of the lower self, thus 'me' and 'mine' through discipline, self-control, and self-sacrifice. In short self-abnegation is the law of highest life and all progress. All human achievement lies in the plane of the spirit and not matter. In the life of Sri Ramakrishna we have the greatest achievement of man. His message was not for a particular race or religion but was universal. He realized that all religions are true and that the trnth of religions can be proved not by philosophical discussion but only by direct experience or realization.'

Why, then, is so much irreligion practised in the name of religion? Because man is ignorant of the true nature of the Atman that resides within him and also within every other being in the world. Such ignorance leads to religious intolerance and fanaticism. Referring to this, Swami Vireswarananda observed:

'If God is infinite then He cannot be brought within the range of speech. So no description or definition of Him given by various religions can be complete. None of the religions can claim to possess the Absolute Truth. They can at best give a partial description of God and to that extent all religions are true. That is why the Upanishads do not attempt a positive description of God. They describe Him in the negative way by saying "Neti", "Neti", "not this" "not this", thus negating everything we experience through the senses as not God. Yet "He in each of the countless religions stands resplendent appropriate to each". There is a lot of religious conflict in the world today, because people do not understand this truth about religion.'

Intelligent critics of religion will help rather than hinder hnman progress by offering helpful and constructive criticism instead of its opposite. The Swami wanted that truly religious persons should welcome healthy changes in every field of life, including the practice of religion.

'The essentials of religions can never change and are applicable for all times while the non-essentials embodied in the Smrtis have to change according to the needs of the time. Healthy changes in religious practices have to be welcomed. If we resist these changes then there will be a reaction against religion itself.

'Religion is attacked as being other-worldly and antisocial. Before denouncing religion one has to practise it. A truly religious man cannot afford to neglect social improvement, although social improvement is not the ultimate goal of a religious life.'

Religion is realization,—not mere dogmas or rituals. The Vedantic religion is based on sound and rational experience and can boldly stand a scientific test. The *need* for religion is *felt* and *understood* within the heart of man. Any amonnt of academic discussion may not resolve the incessant and inevitable conflict between those who think religion is a blessing and those who think it is not, so long as both fail to recognize the essential truth of religion clearly distinguishing it from sectarian, institutional, or communal brands of religion.

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# REVIEWS AND NOTICES

## SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

YATĪNDRA-MATA-DĪPIKĀ (OF SRĪNIVĀSA-DĀSA). English Translation and Notes by SWAMI ĀDIDEVĀNANDA. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pages 256. Price Rs. 5.*

The learned translator of this outline of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedanta rightly remarks in his Introduction that the correct perspective in Indian philosophy has yet to evolve through an assimilation of the affiirmations of the comparatively neglected schools of Vedanta like Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita. To treat them as mere 'concessions to the vulgar' is a clear manifestation of ignorance and a refusal to benefit by the illuminating influence of classics like *Śrī Bhāṣya* and *Nyāya-Sudhā*

The work under review, *Yatīndra-mata-dīpikā*, is a concise and lucid presentation of the essentials of the system very beneficial to the beginner,

though, by the requirements of abbreviation it must lose in depth and thoroughness. To gather insight into the deeper logical foundations of the system and into the larger consequences of its principles, one has invariably to go to *Śrī Bhāṣya* itself, along with the works of Sudarśanasūri and Vedāntadeśika. But within the limits set by the purpose of the work it is an excellent introduction. It follows the traditional manner of progressive exposition, consisting of enunciation, definition, and examination. The field of philosophy is divided into theory of knowledge and theory of reality. Under the theory of knowledge, the nature of truth and error is set forth and the distinctive nature and scope of the modes of knowledge,—Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, and Śabda,—are determined. The treatment is kept, as far as possible, purely on epistemological grounds, and the central trend of thought, sustained throughout, is that reality, as capable of being presented to knowledge in all its aspects, is a concrete system excluding pure identity and pure discreteness. In theory of reality, differentiation of substance and attribute is made and substances are further divided into spiritual and non-spiritual. The spiritual field is divided into the Supreme Spirit and finite selves. The non-spiritual realm consists of pure Sattva, matter consisting of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, and finally Time. Under the scheme, the theory of God, the theory of the individual soul, and the theory of Nature—all receive brief but quintessential consideration. The analytical table, with elucidation, is just a device for clarity of statement and in no way hinders the apprehension of the fundamental idea that the supreme Reality is God to whom Nature and the finite selves belong and by whom they are sustained and animated.

The translator has to be congratulated on the high level of meticulous accuracy he has achieved. The Introduction and elaborate Notes appended are invaluable for a proper comprehension of the work. The publication justifies the high confidence that the reading public reposes in the publications of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

In the translation of technical terms, there is always bound to be diversity of opinion. For instance, the definition of Pramā or 'valid knowledge' (*yathāvasthita-vyavahārānuguṇa-jñānam*) has been translated as 'that knowledge which is adapted to practical interests of life as they really are,' on the basis of the support that Prof. Hiriyanna offers. It may be rendered as 'knowledge that can furnish a basis for a realistic adaptation to reality'. The amount of pragmatism that the former rendering would impute to Viśiṣṭādvaita is clearly in excess of the intention of the thinkers of the school.

The publication is excellent in get-up and is sure to fulfil amply the purpose that has inspired the author and the translator. The student of Indian philosophy has a right to expect from the learned translator further publications of this kind, with a larger philosophical scope fully utilizing his scientific scholarship and literary resources.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

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# NEWS AND REPORTS

## SWAMI TYAGISANANDA

With the deepest sorrow we record the passing of Swami Tyagisananda at Oorgaum, Kolar Gold Fields, on the 6th August, at 8-5 A.M. He joined the Ramakrishna Math at Madras in 1922, having already had his initiation from Srimat Swami Brahmananda. He took Orders in 1932. One of his main achievements was the starting of the Ramakrishna Gurukula, Trichur, in 1924, for managing which he had to struggle hard in the midst of adversity. As a result, his health broke down and showed signs of T. B., so that he had to be relieved from the work in 1937. He was appointed President of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore, in 1938, in which capacity he worked till the last day. He has to his credit some books which reveal his great erudition. For the past few months he was practically bed-ridden, and recently the doctors discovered spinal T. B. and an incurable disease called 'Multiple Myclomatosis.' He was taken to the Oorgaum Hospital for treatment, where despite the best care he expired. His demise creates a real vacuum in the Order, inasmuch as he was a monk of sterling spiritual worth and deep scholarship, and a valuable worker in the cause of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji.

May his soul rest in peace!!

## BIHAR FAMINE RELIEF

### AN APPEAL FOR FUNDS

For some time past we had been reading in the papers accounts about the acute scarcity of food in Bihar. Friends who came from that State corroborated those accounts. We were feeling the necessity of starting relief, but paucity of funds prevented us from doing so.

In the meantime the India Relief Committee, U.S.A., collected funds in that country for the purpose of sending food to India, purchased about 40

tons of wheat, and despatched it to us for free distribution among the needy.

As soon as we received this contribution, we decided to start relief in Bihar. After necessary enquiry we came to learn that the Madhubani sub-division in the district of Darbhanga was the worst affected area. So with the village Benipati of that sub-division as our centre we have started relief work.

Besides scarcity of food, the area has been badly affected by flood from the river Kamla.

With the limited fund and stock of food at our disposal, we can continue the work only for a short period in a small area. Unless adequate funds are forthcoming, it will not be possible for us to render further help. Hence we appeal to the public to help us liberally. Contributions will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by: The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah (West Bengal).

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
*General Secretary*
Ramakrishna Mission

Belur Math
Sept. 5, 1951

## RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, VRINDABAN

### REPORT FOR 1950

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Vrindaban, an up-to-date hospital with 55 beds, has completed the forty-fourth year of its useful existence. The following is a brief account of its work during 1950:

*Indoor Hospital:* The total number of general cases (including eye cases) treated during the year was 1,378, and that of surgical cases was 1,586.

*Nanda Baba Eye Hospital*: The total of indoor admissions was 519 and the out-patients treated numbered 21,461. 4,172 major and minor operations (including injection-therapy) were performed.

*Outdoor Dispensary*: The total number of cases treated during the year was 1,13,347 of which 34,444 were new. The number of surgical cases was 1,400.

*X-Ray Department*: The number of cases examined was 235.

*Clinical Laboratory and Electro-therapy*: 1,109 samples of blood, urine, and sputum were examined during the year in the Clinical Laboratory. 20 cases were treated by Electro-therapy.

*Refugee Relief*: 26 refugee patients were treated in the indoor hospital and 12,702 refugees were treated in the outdoor dispensary.

*Financial Position*: The total receipts for the year, under the General Fund, amounted to Rs. 60,465-2-1 and the total expenditure was Rs. 55,241-0-11, leaving a surplus of Rs. 5,224-1-2. At the beginning of every year the Sevashrama has to take a loan of Rs. 10,000 to enable it to proceed with the transactions under the General Fund. It is, therefore, essential that the Fund should close with a minimum balance of Rs. 10,000. As such more contributions for the General Fund from the generous public are needed.

*Kumbha-Mela at Vrindaban*: The twelve-yearly Kumbha-Mela celebrations at Vrindaban were held in the beginning of 1950, lasting for about two months. Arrangements for 40 extra beds were made in fully equipped tents, and the outdoor dispensary was also suitably equipped to meet the heavy rush on the occassion. The Mela patients, admitted and treated in the indoor and outdoor departments numbered 87 and 1,930 respectively. The Uttar Pradesh Government granted Rs. 7,500 towards the provision of these medical facilities. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 8,014-6-6, leaving a deficit of Rs. 514-6-6. No public subscription was received towards this Mela medical relief. The generous public are requested to make good this deficit.

*Needs*: (1) The Sevashrama, being situated just on the banks of the Jamuna, is threatened every year with floods. It is also in an out of the way locality and patients cannot avail themselves of its services easily and that to the desired extent. To obviate these difficulties, it has been decided to shift the Sevashrama to a more prominent and safe site near the Mathura-Vrindaban main road. This shifting of the Sevashrama and the new construction of the hospital buildings, doctors' and nurses' quarters, monastery, shrine, etc., will necessitate very heavy expenditure and the Management appeal to the generous public kindly to contribute liberally for this purpose.

(2) The Management of the Sevashrama is faced every year with the hard problem of raising about Rs. 20,000 towards the expenditure of the Sevashrama. It is, therefore, essential that the Permanent Fund of the Sevashrama should be considerably strengthened so that its finances may be stabilized to a reasonable extent. Persons desirous of endowing beds in memory of their friends and relations may do so by kindly contributing Rs. 5,000 per bed.

Contributions either in cash or in kind, however small, may kindly be sent to: The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Vrindaban, District Mathura, U.P.

# MAYAVATI CHARITABLE HOSPITAL

## REPORT FOR 1950

*Origin and Growth*: The Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati was started by Swami Vivekananda—far away in the interior of the Himalayas in the Almora District, U.P.—to be a suitable centre for practising and disseminating the Highest Truth in life. In addition to its religious and cultural work through publication of books and the magazine *Prabuddha Bharata,* and a library consisting of about 6,200 select books on various subjects, the Ashrama also runs a hospital to serve the suffering humanity as embodied divinity, without any distinction of caste or creed, and high or low.

The Mayavati Charitable Hospital came into being in response to most pressing local needs. The condition of the villagers, mostly ignorant and poor, is so helpless in times of disease and sickness that it was found necessary to open a regular dispensary in 1903. Since then it has developed into a hospital and has been growing in size and importance. Now quite a large number of patients come from a distance of even 50 to 60 miles taking 4 to 5 days for the journey.

The hospital has 13 regular beds. But sometimes arrangements have to be made for a much larger number of indoor patients, there being a great rush for admission. People come from such great distances and in such helpless condition that they have to be accommodated anyhow in improvised beds.

The operation room is fitted with most up-to-date equipment and various kinds of operations can be done here. This has been a great boon to the people of this area. There is also a small clinical laboratory, which is a rare thing in these parts. Almost all kinds of medical help that one can normally expect in a small town in the plains are available here. A small library, a gramophone, and a radio set are also provided for the recreation of the patients.

*Work during 1950*: The total number of patients treated during the year in the indoor department was 255 of which 204 were cured and discharged, 26 were relieved, 23 were discharged otherwise or left, and 2 died. In the outdoor department the total number of cases treated was 8,795 of which 6,846 were new and 1,949 repeated cases. Altogether 51 different kinds of diseases were treated and 38 operations were conducted.

The visitors' remarks show a great admiration for the tidiness, equipment, efficiency, and usefulness of the hospital.

The hospital has to depend for the most part on the generous public for donations and subscriptions. The Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December, 1950, shows Rs. 6,708-13-0 as the net expendable receipts, and Rs. 8,723-0-9 as the expenditure during the year. The hospital needs funds for its improvement and expansion. Contributions for endowment of beds, one or more, may be made in memory of near and dear ones.

The management express their grateful thanks for the donations by the generous public and hopes they will extend the same co-operation on which the work of the hospital depends and thus help to serve the sick and the diseased in this far-away mountain region.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI YOGESHWARANANDA,
*President, Advaita Ashrama,*
P. O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U.P.