PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

THE VISION OF PĀRVATI

By Elise Aylen

Alone on the mountains
She roamed,
The daughter of Himavat,
Fearless,
The child of Himālaya,
Through forest and wild valley
And on the solitary height,
She who was born of the mountain,
The soul of its vastness,
Unsullied, and thoughtful,
Deep-eyed and pondering
In her inmost heart
Of the forms that are seen
And the unseen Lord,
Their sustainer.

Alone
Where no mortal might follow
In the wild tangles and thickets
And on the icy ridges
She treads,
The immortal one,
The daughter of the mountain;
Putting far from her
The life of women
And the homes of men;
Lithe as the young doe
And delicately treading,
Fearlessly seeking
The heart of the Dancer
Robed in the tiger-skin,
Girdled with serpents,
Ringed with fire,
Who bears the horned moon
Upon his forehead
And in his hand
The thunderbolt,
He whose home is Kailāsa;
Withdrawn from the world,
Alone he meditates,
Unseeing, unhearing,
Yet bearing the world in his heart.

To him alone turns the daughter of
Pārvati, deeply seeking [Himalaya,
Through the world
And in her own heart
For the unseen Lord;
Alone she kneels on the mountain,
Alone in the storm and the stillness
Speaks softly, with weeping:
'I may not find him
In the ways of the world
Nor lure him with the beauty of woman;
How then shall I find him,
How stir him from his trance,
The Lord of the world from his dreaming?
By austerities, perhaps, I may win him,
By the terrible rigours of the saints,
Fasting and naked and sinless
In the stern cold
And the fierceness of the sun
Keeping sleepless vigil,
So may I win to the vision,
The Lord of the world
In my heart.'

Lo! on her prayer and her fasting,
On her sorrow and hunger and seeking,
Looks the Lord of the world from his
Bends from his holy abode, [dreaming,
From his rapt height of the spirit;
Sheds the grace of his beauty upon her;
His power and his passion and terror
Are but flowers that fall at her feet.
Revealed in immortal glory,
Clothed with earth and with heaven;
So he takes form of her longing
Incarnate to mortal eyes.
The arm of his strength is extended
To encompass her weakness and weeping;
His breast is the place of peace
Serene, unchanging for ever;
In his eyes is the ultimate vision
That shines beyond sight, beyond knowing,
Lifting all life unto heaven,
Rapt in transfigured light
Alone she kneels on the mountain,
Alone on the summit of stillness,
Alone in the stainless hour,
In the rapt, eternal moment
That is past and present and future,
That is timeless and now and for ever;
Alone to the snows and the silence
Her face is lifted in worship,
Her lips show forth his praise.

'Lord of the Sacred Abode,
Thou who art Dancer and Dreamer,
Thou with the moon on thy forehead,
Whose throat is the blue-shadowed twilight,
Whose breast is the shining snow;
O thou who receivest Gangā
As she rushed forth out of heaven
Down to the fainting earth
And the creatures that languished for
sorrow—
O Mahādeva, by one tress of thy hair
The sacred waters descend—
So comes thy vision and blessing
On the parched and aching heart.

'Thou who sit'st dreaming for ever
On the topmost height of Kailasa,
Who madest the world in thy dreaming
In its love and its laughter and sorrow,
Wandering forth in illusion,
In beauty and vision and terror;
O Mahadeva, who holdest the life of all
As one in thy brooding heart. [creatures

'O Lord, the world is thy body
And the rhythm of its life is thy dancing;
Yea, on the dead and the living
Thy feet beat the sacred measure;
In the place of death I have seen thee,
Circled with fire and with serpents;
O Mahadeva, in my heart of hearts I
There in the place of ashes [have found thee,
Thou hast danced to life again.
Depart not again for ever,
O Mahadeva, my Lord,
I have sought thee and felt thee and
O Lord of beauty and terror, [found thee;
But give to my eyes the vision,
To my lips the words that shall praise thee;
My heart is bowed at thy feet
And my life is thy fallen garland.'

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, ALLAHABAD: SUNDAY, 23 MAY 1930

It was twilight hour. Swami Vijnanananda, seated in the courtyard of the Math, was conversing with some devotees.

The Swami: 'Truth is a harsh thing. It is a testing experience to converse with great spiritual men. They can easily read all our thoughts and understand the workings of our mind. By looking at the face and the eyes, they can understand which person is of what sort. Nothing can remain hidden from them. Truthfulness is said to be the *tapasyā* (spiritual discipline) in the Kali Yuga. If one can remain steadfast in truthfulness, all else will follow. What a remarkable amount of unflagging application to truthfulness the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) had!

'Whenever you do anything wrong, if you frankly confess your guilt and resolve not to repeat it, then the evil effect of the wrong act (on the mind) is nullified. But such confession of one's guilt must not be after the fashion of brazen-faced persons who not only do wrong but also go on bragging about it to show themselves off as 'heroes'. Is it so easy to confess one's own wrongdoing? It is indeed very hard to do so. In fact none can do so unless the mind is pure and holy. If a person holds on to truth, his mind becomes pure and he even attains Self-knowledge.'

A devotee: 'There is a beautiful story illustrating the fact that a person's mind will become pure if he practises truthfulness. Once a thief went to a great saint and wanted to be initiated with Mantra. The sage received and entertained the thief with much kindness and courtesy and said to him, "Go home and sincerely ask your own mind, tonight, if you will be able strictly to carry out my instructions. If you can assure me that you will implicitly carry out my instructions then only shall I initiate you." '

The Swami: 'Now, look here, I have a word to say at this point—The Guru, at the very outset, bound him (thief) over to truth by asking him, "Will you be able implicitly to carry out my instructions?"—Well, now proceed further with the story.'

Devotee: 'The thief thought within himself: "The Guru will give me the Mantra and I will have to make Japa only; after all, what difficulty can there be in this? When I want to commit theft I shall do that as usual." Thinking thus, he went to the Guru the next day and told him, "Revered sir, I have made up my mind to be initiated by you and I shall do whatever you command me to do." The Guru replied, "Very well, I shall initiate you. Do not tell a lie under any circumstances. Now go—this much for today." The thief went away. During the day he attended to his normal work and went to bed at night; but he could not go to sleep at all, for his mind was constantly occupied with the thought how he should proceed to commit theft that night. At last, when the night was far advanced, he said to himself, "Let me go now and commit theft. I shall not come across anybody else at this time of the night." Thinking thus he went out; but on the way he unexpectedly met a person who accosted him saying, "Hallow, where are you going at this time of night?" To this, what could the thief reply?—There was the Guru's command that he should not utter a lie. So, (having no other go), he answered that he was returning home, and to keep his word, he actually went back home. Thus it so happened that whenever the thief attempted to go out at night to steal he had to return home without stealing, for the same reason as above. He had no other go, for he had promised to his Guru that he would not utter a lie. As a result of his steadfastness to truth, before long, the thief got rid of his deep-rooted evil tendencies.'

Having heard the story, the Swami said: 'Ah, he (the thief) has been saved. This human birth is so difficult to obtain. It should be properly made use of. The Master would often say, "May all be enlightened, may their divine Consciousness be roused, may everyone be illumined." '

Devotee: 'Maharaj, what Mantra was the Paramahamsa Deva (Sri Ramakrishna) initiating others with?'

The Swami: 'The Master would be annoyed when he was addressed by any of these three words—Guru, Kartā (lord), and Bābā (father). He was not giving Mantra to anybody in the usual way in which it is generally understood and practised. But his advent is for the welfare of humanity—to confer liberation (*mukti*) on all persons (*jīva*). He showered his grace on numerous persons, and even during the course of conversation—by a mere touch or wish of his he would vouchsafe to a man the vision of his own chosen deity (*iṣṭa-darśana*) —he made them realize God in their hearts. There was not, in him, the least ostentatious display of giving the Mantra.'

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

By the Editor

Sam gacchadhvam, sam vadadhvam, sam vo manāmsi jānatām; . . . samāno mantrah, samitih samānī, samānam manah, saha cittameṣām; . . . samānī va ākūtih, samānā hṛdayāni vah; samānamastu vo mano, yathā vah susahāsati.

'Together walk ye, together speak ye, together know ye your minds; . . . common be your prayer, common be your end, common be your purpose, common be your deliberation; . . . common be your resolve, let your hearts be of one accord; unified be your intentions that your union (assembly) may be perfectly happy.'

—*Rg-Veda*, X. 191. 2, 3, 4.

Individuality in universality, in other words unity in variety, is the plan of creation. Man is individual and at the same time universal. He is, as it were, an infinite circle whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere, and realizes his own individual nature best when he succeeds in realizing his national and international nature most. The consciousness of the Real within him seeks for its own corroboration the touch of the Real in the universe outside. For, man is rooted in a deep and abiding, though to him often obscure, Reality. He finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship. Ever since man became truly conscious of his own Self and realized the Eternal in his life, he has also felt an intimate kinship with and loyalty to a universal and divine spirit of unity with humanity, inherent in and at the same time transcending his limited self. The consciousness, underlying and animating this divine, creative principle of unity, is spiritual and reveals itself in more and more perfect illumination and in the unfolding of the potentialities of life. That is why the greatest teachers of mankind have cultivated and expressed in their person that harmony of the true Self of man,—inherent in Man the Eternal,—a harmony far greater in its universality and permanence than that of the individual self that gives prominence to narrow personal needs.

The achievement of human unity—not a drab, regimented uniformity but a great common brotherhood of man, regardless of race, creed, or colour—on the basis of enduring ideals is one of the foremost aims undertaken to be accomplished by our generation.

The two world wars, together with the conflicts and tensions among nations and groups, have left the majority of people in every country morally, materially, and spiritually exhausted. Almost in every part of the world there is a growing volume of opinion in favour of revolting against the established forms of national, social, and industrial life. There is a general demand for a new social order, a new culture, a new philosophy of life and action. Those with a revolutionary urge, who are naturally impatient of the slow-moving evolutionary processes of world history, are willing to pull down the structure of the existing order of things, and to do so they seem to be prepared to throw aside the lessons of traditional wisdom and past experience. Different thinkers, tracing the chaos and unrest prevailing in the modern world to different causes, offer dissimilar methods of approach to the fundamental problem of the preservation and advancement of peace, mutual understanding, and co-operation among men. There can be no single panacea, it is true, for such a problem fundamental to the future of civilization itself, especially in a world of varying manifestations of the powers of man and Nature.

There is no doubt that no formal and artificial unification of mankind under a common and universally-to-be-accepted political or economic pattern was ever meant to be evolved by those right-thinking men in all civilized countries who are striving for human brotherhood and a better understanding among nations. Rather, most of them think such a complete composure of men's basic differences in attitudes and temperaments next to impossible, for no two men are seen to be alike. Nor was it intended by the Scriptural utterance: 'God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth'. As diversity is the very fabric of creation, it is inevitable that we should try as hard as is humanly possible to discern the living nexus of thought and action which can unite the whole of mankind in the face of the prevailing rivalries, ambitions, and ideological differences. Notwithstanding personal predilections, everyone desirous of working for the ushering in of a better world order than the one existing, will have to learn to understand and appreciate the points of view of those who belong to other races, nations, cultures, and religions, if he expects to meet with success in his efforts. Coherence within the individual and harmony with the environment are both equally essential for an integrated experience of spiritual fellowship.

But yet, even here, it is no narrow nationalism or tribal ideal that is called for. There was a time when common codes and ideals of morality and patriotism concerned with one's own limited group or clan was all sufficient. Today the entire world has, in fact, become one in many respects and cries for a better and more liberal interpretation of the dominant beliefs and ideas in the fields of nationality, patriotism, and religion. The days of sectarianism, dogmatism, and bigotry are numbered. Yet, looking about us today we can still perceive conflicts and tensions arising from the thoughtless actions of not less distinguished persons subscribing to exaggerated and fanatical views regarding the fancied superiority of their own race, religion, or nationality. Men are unwilling to rid themselves of pet convictions even when they are known to be based on untruth, greed, and hatred. An international organization like the U. N. has not found it possible to bring peace to the distracted world of warring groups because it has not been able to make the peoples of the various countries feel that they are equal members of one human community.

Clearly, materialism of a strange type,—not affording aid and comfort to the common man, but basing itself on arrant selfishness and pitiless competition,—has possessed the modern mercenary civilization and is the cause of the critical state of human relations the world over. Unthinking humanity, deluded and led astray by false prophets and deceptive slogans, has contrived to ignore higher values of every kind and has learned instead to pay homage to pelf and power which alone seem

to determine and decide the worth of an individual. Some persons openly repudiate any divine or spiritual reality in the world, and advocate a hedonistic view of life. Their code of morals is dictated by self-interest and group-interest; they tend to believe that the right to live belongs to them only, for they think they belong to a 'superior' race or 'chosen' nation. Hence, so long as they can, they want to exercise that right at the cost of those whom they can manage to subjugate and exploit. Such egotistic spirit of vanity and self-aggrandizement on the part of men and nations is at the root of much of the prevailing antagonism between countries and the consequent dread of disruption of human unity.

What, then, is the true ideal of human unity and how best to achieve it? This momentous problem is receiving top-priority consideration in the councils of nations and the assemblies of priests and politicians, of scientists and sociologists. Various ideals and theories have been and are being formulated and several methods and techniques have been and are being applied with a view to bringing about international and intercultural understanding, but with no appreciable amount of success. Genuine human understanding does not necessarily arise from the mere acceptance of a common cultural, political, or economic ideal. It does not invariably involve treaties and charters that concern only political and economic matters and fail to locate and eliminate the powers of greed, passion, and lust that lie hidden in the mind of man. Moral, political, social, and economic tensions are the symptoms of an inveterate psychological malady created by man's lack of spiritual illumination. Man is a spiritual entity and the remedy for his evil tendencies,—which alone, ultimately, can be found to be the source of every form of class strife, national hatred, and international disunity,—is a spiritual one too. Science, humanism, materialism—dialectical or otherwise, and even organized religion have apparently been found wanting in investing man with that spiritual vision and ethical outlook, so necessary for the progress of mankind as a whole. A thoughtful man cannot avoid the conclusion that there is no other secure foundation for lasting human understanding than the true spiritual ideal of every non-sectarian and non-dogmatic religion of the world. Such a conclusion may disappoint and be disapproved by those whose thinking is dominated by a pre-Copernican view of the universe and man. But it seems certainly to fit the facts.

Humanity needs an all-comprehensive, yet individually elevating, faith for today, a faith that has no fear of truth and does not contradict reason, ever rooted in the concern for the common good. A community of universal interests and ideals can hardly stick together for long,—much less hope to remove conflict, confusion, and tension,—by mere formal observance of external rituals and ceremonies or by theorizing over moralisms and doctrines of altruism. Hence the incapacity of many existing religious groups to influence individual life and conduct for the better and to the desired extent. 'The world has need of a philosophy, or a religion,' writes Bertrand Russell, 'which will promote life. But in order to promote life, it is necessary to value something other than mere life. Life devoted only to life is animal, without any real human value, incapable of preserving men permanently from weariness and the feeling that all is vanity. If life is to be fully human, it must serve some end which seems, in some sense, outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty.' Human behaviour is still governed very largely by emotional impulses, instinctual desires, and force of habit and the resultant effect on interpersonal and international relationships has been devastating. The more important factor is thus not the political expediency or ethical formula or even the instrument of education, science, and culture that may be used for producing greater understanding among men, but the individuals for whom they are meant. For, as long as the individual remains sense-bound and egocentric

in his pursuit of pleasure and achievement on earth, he can never be expected to restrain himself from seeking those pleasures regardless of his fellow men and without detriment to the larger interests of humanity.

Human unity can be achieved on earth through the all-pervading and ever present spiritual ideal of man, contained in every religion of the civilized world, whether its followers understand and respect it or not, and practised by those heroic souls whose love and service know no limits of history or geography. The world is in need of these heroic souls, not one, two, or three but thousands and hundreds of thousands, who have the courage of their vision of human oneness and who can set in motion a movement for bold spiritual thinking and religious revival. Religious culture,—a vital force in the emotional integration of man, often little understood as such, though much maligned,—can offer a satisfactory spiritual (and hence a moral as well as a material) basis for harmonious living and the attainment of general welfare which could simultaneously benefit all. This Vedantic ideal of human unity, as a profound thinker and writer has expressed, 'exhorts us to see the Man behind men, the Religion behind religions, the Culture behind cultures. It demands of us the translation of this vision in love, mutual respect, and good neighbourliness.'

According to the Rishis of ancient India, there is a state of superconscious awareness, to which every human being can attain through self-effort and persistent spiritual discipline, in which the individual develops a cosmic sense not only with this universe and its beings but with the whole of existence itself. That complete existence is God, the ultimate Unity in the universe. In Him we are all one. This truth may be put by different religions in different ways, such as, 'children of God', 'expression of God', or 'manifestation of the divinity that is already in man'. So it is obvious that right belief in the existence of God and an understanding, through Self-realization, of the relationship of man to man, man to society, and man to God can make a positive contribution to the ushering in of 'peace on earth and goodwill among men'. In the *Mahābhārata,* Dharma or the eternal principles and values of human relationship that regulate individual and collective life in a manner conducive to the welfare and unity of humanity, is referred to thus: 'It is nothing else but that ancient morality which is known to all and which consists in universal friendliness and is fraught with beneficence to all creatures. That mode of living which is founded upon total harmlessness towards all creatures or upon minimum of such harm is the highest Dharma.' There is no better way to substitute passions that engender mutual co-operation and understanding in the place of those that make for dissension, discord, and disunity.

The four cardinal truths of Vedanta, viz. the divinity of man, the unity of God, the oneness of existence, and the harmony of religions, summing up, in fact, the essence of the ideals of all religions, supply the surest foundation as well as the best means for the promotion of human fellowship. The doctrine of the divinity of the self represents the real way to the goal, not only for individuals but for mankind collectively. Every soul is a representation of the Divine, nay divinity itself, and it can be manifested through knowledge. Hence no more special privileges of any kind whatever, which seek to divide man from man and create invidious distinctions. This will mean a truce to all strife and struggle to gain such privileges within the human family. The same power is in all, the same potentiality is present in every soul. So the idea that some are born superior to others has no place in Vedanta. Since men are truly divine and the Self of man is ever shining and pure, unaffected by the dual opposites such as birth and death or weakness and strength, considerations of high and low or superior or inferior, based on wealth, power, or social rank do not count in judging a man's intrinsic human worth as an individual. In the realm of the Spirit, there are no 'have-nots', no inequalities, and no expropriation.

Every man is the visible representation of God and is, as such, entitled to love and regard by everyone else. It does not attempt any rigid uniformity, destroying the distinct individuality of man, but shows him the underlying point of union with others, notwithstanding all the apparent differences which are bound to be there on the surface. Self-realization or awareness of the identity of the individual self with the ultimate Reality can alone show the way to unity in humanity through a higher vision and balanced outlook that transcend the limitations of race, creed, and nationality.

Genuine human fellowship and lasting world unity are not utopian dreams but positively attainable goals except to those who believe in creating chaos and strife and fishing in troubled waters. The Vedantic ideal of the oneness of existence is an undeniable spiritual experience which can serve to bring men together and make them realize that they are members of a common human family. To quote Paul Deussen, the great German philosopher:

'The gospels fix quite correctly as the highest law of morality, "Love your neighbour as yourself". But why should I do so, since by the order of Nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer is not in the Bible, but it is in the Veda, in the great formula, "*tat-tvam-asi* (That art thou)", which gives in three words metaphysics and morals all together. You shall love your neighbour as yourselves because you are neighbour, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbour is something different from yourselves.'

Thus Vedanta provides, in this ideal of the realization of the unity of existence, the fundamental and most convincing basis of all morality, of all ethical virtues that are indispensable to the promotion and preservation of the brotherhood of man. He who has attained this same-sightedness sees God in all and all in God. He feels that whatever is pleasure or pain to himself is alike pleasure or pain to all beings. Naturally, he treats others as if they were his own self and wishes good to all and evil to none. This practical side of Vedantic morality is as necessary today as ever—perhaps it is even more necessary—if we want to make sure that the foundation of world understanding and universal brotherhood we are laying does not rest on sand.

The Vedantic ideal of the harmony of religions is no less essential to the growth of human unity. The attitude of the followers of one religion towards those of others is a vital factor either in strengthening or in breaking down human brotherhood. Religious bigotry and fanaticism have divided man from man and caused some of the bitterest conflicts in the world. But yet history points to the fact that true religion is the most cohesive element for the integration of vast numbers of men and women of different parts of the world. According to Sri Ramakrishna, who was the best and most recent exponent of the harmony of religions, all religions are but manifestations of one eternal, universal religion; they are so many paths leading to the same ultimate Reality, the common goal of humanity. As humanity includes all human beings, the universal religion—not a fusion of religions but an orchestrated concord—includes all religions. Mere toleration is not enough. Positive reverence for the ideals of other religions and respect for the universal spiritual teachings of their prophets and seers is necessary. As a learned thinker has aptly said, 'There are enough religions in the world to hate one another, but there is not religious spirit enough to make worshippers love one another'. The affirmation of such an organic harmony and brotherhood of religions of the world can bring about unity among men on the psychological, cultural, and spiritual planes.

The brotherhood of all men, irrespective of race, creed, or nationality is the ideal aim to strive for. The *Mahābhārata* says that there is nothing nobler than humanity (*na mānuṣāt śreṣṭhataram hi kincit*). The different races, with their national, religious, and linguistic differences, will continue to live and flourish side by side, as fellow travellers on their journey to the haven of peace and bliss. The ideal of human unity is becoming more diffi-

cult to achieve in the context of the prevailing international situation. But in proportion as it is difficult it is important. What we do depends upon what is practicable, but what we ought to do (in all our sincerity) does not. Those of every nation and country who have faith in the solidarity of the human race, and who believe that the kingdom of God on earth is the ideal destiny of mankind, must be prepared, even in the face of overwhelming odds, to hold aloft the banner on which will be written 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace, and not Dissension'. Unless and until the religious ideal of spiritual realization and self-perfection takes hold of society as a whole, the atom-menaced and bigotry-ridden world of ours is not safe for civilization and humanity.

INDIAN MYSTICISM

By Anirvan

Mysticism is, in its essence, a consciousness of the Beyond—an intuition of the ultimate Reality and its expression in the life of the mystic who has experienced it. The ultimate Reality or the Beyond is called so as it transcends the normal experiences of this sense-bound life, but in no way is it something ultramundane or abnormal. As soon as Reason has dawned on man, his insistent endeavour has been to universalize the substratum of his organized experience and translate it into a conceptual entity comprehensive enough to include all the modes and factors of his manifold becoming. Philosophically considered, this has been the idea of a 'Prime cause' or 'Substance' or both from which everything, whether subjective or objective, has to be derived. This universal concept as the background of all rational processes may first appear only as an entity with a hazy outline which we tacitly assume without feeling any urge to probe its depth or make its character clearer to our understanding. Often enough, this concept is a contribution of the social tradition as the idea of God and inculcated upon young minds to train them up according to some orthodox pattern of religiosity. The concept in that case lies dormant and is simply imbibed without releasing in the life-stream any of the creative virility that is inherent in it. But in some, the seed sprouts and brings about a revolutionary change in the values of life. In them traditional religiosity changes into a glowing spirituality and from the hitherto barren concept of the 'idea' of God blossoms the living Reality of a palpable 'Presence' which is at once an awakening (*bodhi*) and an urge (*preti*) as the Vedic seers of India called it—a 'great departure' (*sāmpārāya*) and a toilsome march into the Unknown, illumined by the revealing light of the heart. Here a 'new life' bursts the shell of the enveloping tradition and Mysticism or the Science of the Vast (*Brahma-vidyā*) is born.

But mysticism is not at all foreign to human nature; rather it is towards this very ecstatic height that human consciousness has always been moving. The poet, the artist, the lover—they are all incipient mystics. They, in their radiant moments, have soared beyond the sense-bound monotony of normal life and have discovered a new *meaning* in the objective world and gave a new *value* to their subjective existence. To find a meaning and to create values for life in which the intellectual and the aesthetic hankerings of man find their fulfilment may be said to be the supreme aim of all human endeavours. In our inspired moments we are all poets and

creators, and in the roseate glow of a dawning mysticism have a glimpse of what God is like. 'He is a Poet who has created this visible Poem which knows neither death nor decay', declares a seer of the *Atharva-Veda*.

As in mysticism lies the ultimate value to be achieved by the progression of the evolving human nature, its main characteristics for all ages and all over the world will be the same. The mystics, though widely separated from one another in space and time, all belong to a single race of supermen whose spiritual affinities show through the superficial divergencies of the outward accidents of their lives. They all speak the same language and describe the same vision; and their way of life is also the same. Through them is being realized the Universal Man (*vaiśvānara*) who as the Son of God will one day bring erring humanity torn by wars and strifes, greed and imbecility, passions and prejudices, to the eternal haven of peace, light, and bliss.

The salient characteristics of mysticism are: (1) a sensing of the Beyond—a direct perception of an order of Reality which comprises and yet transcends the order given to the normal senses; (2) a realization of the unity of life and things; and (3) lastly, a feeling of an unrestrained gush of a torrential stream of light and life so long pent up in the depth of one's own being. The vision and realization of these things fill their souls with a love and joy which prompts them to burst into inspired sayings as seers and prophets. 'They create the Word', as it has been naively expressed by a seer of the *Rg-Veda*.

Their supreme realizations being the same, some peculiarities of course appear in their mode of approach to the ultimate Reality in their personal (and sometimes racial) emphasis on the different levels of their ascent to the Beyond, in the formulation of the philosophical *weltanchauung* they derive from the impact of the Reality on their psychological make-up, and in their mode of expression as coloured by the symbols and imageries inherited by them from their traditional past. But in their expressions, the ring of a real and ultimate experience is so genuine that these accidental peculiarities never stand in the way of understanding the eternal message of light and joy, they have brought for us from the shores of the Beyond. We now propose to give a rapid survey of the course of Indian mysticism as it has run through ages extending over thousands of years, briefly noting its salient points.

The records of Indian mysticism are as old as the Vedas whose beginnings are shrouded in the grey mists of antiquity. But there has been an unbroken tradition from the past to the present day, mystical knowledge being transmitted from the adepts to the neophytes in an uninterrupted continuity. The Upanishads which belong to the Vedic age and are composed in a language less symbolic than the Vedas and thus have a greater appeal to those accustomed to an intellectual mode of thinking, stand midway between the ancient Vedic mysticism and the mysticism continuing up to the present day; and they throw their light both backwards and forwards, thus illumining both the ends of the mystic path. The Vedic hymns, clothed in a language of rich symbolism, are extremely suggestive and contain the germs of almost all trends of mysticism that have appeared later in India. Of course there has been mysticism outside the Vedic pale; but they have been mostly of Aryan origin and in course of time they have been completely Vedicized. The non-Aryan element in Indian mysticism, if any, has been so completely absorbed by the wonderfully assimilative Aryan spirit that today Indian mysticism, as it is practised, forms an organic whole, whose living members would not allow themselves to be dissected without being maimed and disfigured.

The root-idea of this mysticism is to be found in the Vedic word *brahma* which primarily means 'growth' and thence an 'expansion of consciousness'. The concept at once aligns mysticism with the life-urge and at the same time points to its essentially subjective origin and introversive character. Brahma, the Divine, is not something extraneous to one's

being. It[1] is the very principle of Consciousness that constitutes the sentient being and so the realization of the Divine is only a progressive realization of the Self by an unlimited expansion of its bounds till it is coincident with the infinity of space and the eternity of time. In this unbounded Self-expansion is to be found the communion (*sāyujya*) with the Divinity. 'One knows the Divine by being the Divine.' And this knowledge and immersion can be arrived at both through the mind and the heart, an ideal mode of approach being through a harmonious attuning of the chastened faculties of both. 'With mind (*manasā*) and then with the upsurge of the mind (*manīṣā*) and finally with the heart (*hṛdā*)'—this has been a formula of spiritual procedure from the days of the Vedic hymns up to the present day.

This is the subjective standpoint from which one looks at Reality and aims at attaining it. But along with this, there is also a recognitive and aesthetic judgment passed on the objective world. This is expressed by the famous Upanishadic formula of the triune aspect of Reality; and it may be regarded as the master-key to Vedic symbolism which modern Indologists in their ignorance have confounded with a so-called Naturalism. The Upanishadic formula runs thus: Every entity can be viewed from the subjective standpoint of the 'self' (*adhyātmam*) and then from the objective standpoint of the phenomenal appearance (*adhibhūtam*) and again from the transcendental standpoint of the Reality comprehending both (*adhidaivatam*). And there is an equation obtaining between the three: The Divine has no less become the world as it has become the 'self'; and the self, in its progressive realization of the Divine, must incorporate the world also in itself. If we start from the standpoint of self-realization, the position may be explained thus, as has been expressed by a seer of the *Yajur-Veda*: There may be three movements of self-realization, not mutually exclusive but only as three modes of one and the same integral achievement. The 'self' as pure Consciousness, purged of all contaminations of the limited ego-sense, may realize itself as the substance which comprises all beings; in a deeper sense, it may penetrate into the depth of each being and know itself to be one with its essence and feel the throb of its infinite potentiality; and, finally, in a supreme identification it may become 'all that is'. It is this integral self-realization that forms the foundation of all ethical conduct and explains why morality can never be a living spiritual force unless it is rooted in love.

The Brahma-concept has been viewed as a grand trinity of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss corresponding to the ancient Vedic trinity of Varuna, Mitra, and Aryaman. This triune concept of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (*sac-cid-ānanda*) forms the very key note of almost all forms of Indian mysticism. *Saccidānanda* is the *summum bonum* to which all spiritual endeavours are aspiring, because this is the essence of one's own self also. The Upanishads explain the idea in this way. All life is essentially a process of assimilation and growth; and this process passes through five successive and interconnected stages. First there is the physical growth helped by life, then the vital growth helped by mind, and then the mental growth on which there is an incidence of what the Upanishads call *Vijñāna* or the universalizing Consciousness. Ordinary man stops at the mind and only vaguely feels that there is something beyond it. Spirituality begins when mind seeks to transcend itself and tries to seize bodily the illuminating principle of *vijñāna* or pure Consciousness behind it. But it cannot be seized unless one's gaze is turned inwards (*antarāvṛtta*). In introversion, the mind forfeits its inherent idea of duality by which it has all along been creating a polarity of subjectivity and objectivity; and it gradually begins to see that true knowledge of an object comes from a realization of the essential iden-

[1] It is customary with Indian mysticism to speak of the highest Reality in the neuter gender, emphasizing its impersonal character without losing sight of the intuition that it is the Impersonal (*tat*) that transforms itself into the Person (*puruṣa*).

tity of the knower and the known. And this knowledge by 'identity' is the illumination of *vijñāna*. But the spiritual life-urge probes further on and translates the knowing identity into the depth-charge of a feeling identity. In the language of the Upanishads, here the illumination of *vijñāna* becomes massed as it were and *ānanda* or 'bliss' is born. This is exactly what happens in normal life, though in a lesser way, when we *know through love*. True love is always an inner realization of the beloved and in this inwardization what first comes is a glow or an illumination which widens and heightens the consciousness until its luminous intensity melts away into that ineffable joy of supreme unity where 'each becomes both'. And this brings one to pure Existence (*sat*), the soul at last knows and feels what it is *to be*. Thus, to be is also to achieve immortality, to conquer the forces of death and decay as the Vedic seers expressed it.

Mystic realization, thus in India, has always this *sac-cid-ānanda* as the ultimate goal, whether it has proceeded along the path of knowledge or the path of love. The divergence between the two paths lies in their preliminary assumption on which their modes of procedure are based. These assumptions again are derived from an analysis of the nature of Brahma. Brahma is *saccidānanda*. And this is its essential nature to be realized by the soul. But then Brahma is also this phenomenal existence; it has become all this (*idam sarvam*) that we experience, without abrogating its essential nature.[2] What we experience are names (*nāma*) and forms (*rūpa*). Forms are what we apprehend objectively and names are our conceptive constructions based on these objective apprehensions. In other words, our external world consists of forms and our internal world of names. From an integral point of view, Brahma is *saccid-ānanda* as well as *nāma-rūpa*. In our attempt to realize Brahma, we may start from the concept of its essential nature, eschewing *nāma-rūpa*; and this will be the idealistic path of knowledge (*jñāna*). Or, we may start with *nāma-rūpa* and move towards *sac-cid-ānanda*; and this will be the realistic path of love (*bhakti*). Brahma has become these visible forms that we see; and it has also become the ideal forms in which we can worship it and realize its essential nature in our self. If these names and forms of our normal experience are real for our practical purposes, so are the names and forms of our inner experience for our spiritual purpose. They are only two orders of reality conceived to meet the demands of two equally real urges of human life. Names and forms are not the ultimate Reality either for our empirical or spiritual existence; in both the spheres, we have to grow out of them. In spiritual life, the names and forms conceived as Personal God or gods, all, in the long run, merge into the nameless and formless It. 'It is the One, the existence of which the yearning hearts speak in diverse ways', declares the seer of the *Ṛg-Veda*. For the quarrel about the names and forms of the Divine we have to thank the sectarians and their academic supporters: the mystics never quarrel.

(*To be continued*

[2] In Indian mysticism, creation is viewed not as 'making' but as 'becoming'—'manifold pouring-out' (*visṛṣṭi*), as the *Ṛg-Veda* says, wherein the agent, the energy, and the material are the same. The only analogy with this process can be seen in the poet's creating himself in his poem. In the Vedas too, the Creator has been called the Poet.

'Can you ever see God if you do not direct your whole mind toward Him? The *Bhagavata* speaks about Sukadeva. When he walked about he looked like a soldier with fixed bayonet. His gaze did not wander; it had only one goal and that was God. This is the meaning of Yoga.'

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

THE VEDIC RELIGION: A TWOFOLD WAY

THE WAY OF PROSPERITY AND THE WAY OF SUPREME GOOD: HOW THEY MEET

By Swami Satprakashananda

(*Continued from the March issue*)

VI. The Practice of Karma Yoga, the Connecting Link Between the Two Ways. Two Principal Types of Karma Yogi.

This stage of mental purification (Chitta-shnddhi) is the terminus of the way of activity (Pravritti-mārga). Here the seeker of prosperity enters into the way of renunciation (Nivritti-marga) and turns into the seeker of Supreme Good. He becomes indrawn and passes from the active to the contemplative life. Outer activities lose their hold on him. Work is no longer indispensable to his self-development. He can even retire from the world and live in solitude a life of resignation and meditation with the sole object of God-realization. It is said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, 'For an aspirant who wants to attain Yoga activity is the way, but when he has attained Yoga calmness is the way'.[41] That the main purpose of work is to prepare the mind for contemplation on spiritual Reality has been aptly expressed by Sureshvaracharya:[42] 'Activities (without attachment) purify the mind and turn it to the inmost Self. Then, their purpose served, they disappear like clouds after the rains.'[43] In fact, Karma Yoga disciplines the mind for devotion to God as well as for Self-knowledge. Sri Krishna says, 'One should perform work until one is free from desire or nntil one has developed veneration for listening to talks about Me and other devotional practices. He who, O Uddhava, performs his duties and the sacrificial rites without any desire for results goes neither to heaven nor to hell, unless he does otherwise. Becoming sinless and pure, such a man attains true knowledge or perchance devotion to Me living in this very world.'[44] It is worthy of note in this connection that none can go beyond work but through work. 'Not by abstaining from work does man attain freedom from work, nor by merely renouncing work does he attain perfection', declares Sri Krishna.[45]

Though included in the way of activity (Pravritti-marga) Karma Yoga forms, as it were, the arc that joins it with the way of renunciation (Nivritti-marga). As a connecting link it is intermediate between the two. It turns the mind from the search of prosperity to the search of Supreme Good. It is preparatory to every other Yoga that constitutes the way of renunciation, such as Jnāna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Dhyāna Yoga, and so forth. So it can be adapted to any one of them, of which Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga are the principal. In fact, different types of spiritual aspirants practise Karma Yoga with different mental attitudes, an essential feature of which is equanimity. Karma Yoga is not mere unselfish work; it is not an ethical course but a spiritual discipline. None can practise this or any other Yoga, until he is disillusioned of duality and wants to go beyond the pairs of opposites, such as birth and death, growth and decay, prosperity and adversity, pleasure and pain, right and wrong, good and evil; until he is prepared to direct his mind dominated by old habits from the search of

[41] VI. 3.

[42] One of the four leading disciples of Shankaracharya. Author of many Vedantic treatises. He was known as Mandana Mishra before embracing Sannyasa (monastic life).

[43] *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, I. 49.

[44] *Bhāgavata*, XI. xx. 9-11.

the relative to the search of the ultimate Good, from the search of the evanescent to the search of the Eternal, from the search of the finite to the search of the Infinite. As the stepping-stone to the two principal Yogas, e.g. Bhakti Yoga (the way of devotion to God) and Jnana Yoga (the way of Self-knowledge), Karma Yoga has a very distinct place in the lives of the spiritual aspirants. Broadly speaking, there are two main types of Karma Yogi: (1) devotional and (2) introspective.

A Karma Yogi of devotional type does his work as an offering to God, knowing Him to be the Snpreme Master of all, to whom belongs everything. All power, all beauty, all wisdom, all goodness, all greatness are His. As an ideal servant he claims nothing for himself. Regardless of his pain and pleasure, fortune and misfortune, he performs his duties for the satisfaction of the Master. To do the Lord's will is the devotee's sole aim. Surrendering himself completely to the divine Ruler, he remains unperturbed by the varying conditions of life, over which he knows he has no control. As he forsakes all claims on his acts, they do not react on him. That is, they leave no mark (Samskāra) on his mind to produce future effects, good or evil. In this way he works out the accumulated impressions (Samskaras) of previous actions without acquiring any new. With regard to the practice of Karma Yoga by the devotees, Sri Krishna says, 'He who performs actions without attachment, resigning them to God, is untainted by their effects as the lotus leaf by water. Forsaking attachment the devotees work solely with body, senses, mind, and intellect, for the purification of the heart.'[46] Therefore, He instructs Arjuna to dedicate all actions to Him, 'Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give away, whatever austerity you practise, O son of Kunti, do this as an offering to Me. Thus shall you be free from the bondages of actions that bear good and evil results. With your mind firmly set on the Yoga of renunciation you shall attain Liberation and come to Me.'[47] This is, of course, the ideal that a Karma Yogi of devotional nature emulates.

The Karma Yogi of introspective type, who aims at the realization of the Self as Brahman (the Impersonal Absolute Being), holds his thoughts on the real nature of the Self as he works. He knows that all activities belong to the body, the senses, and the mind, and that the Self, the calm witness of all physical and mental movements, is ever at rest. He is therefore assured that, while working apparently, he does not really work. He is self-poised even when intensely active. A person regards himself as the doer simply because he indentifies the Self with the psycho-physical complex. The body, the senses, and the mind as well as the external objects are transformations of the Gunas of Prakriti.[48]

[45] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 4.
[46] *Ibid.*, V. 10, 11.
[47] *Ibid.*, IX. 27, 28.
[48] The three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, are the primal constituents of Prakriti, primordial nature, *natura naturans*, from which the whole universe of mind and matter has evolved. The Self, the only immutable and intelligent entity, is ever distinct from Prakriti and its evolutes—mind, senses, body, and external objects. All changes, all movements, are in the realm of Prakriti; the Self is beyond them all. It is the very presence of the Self that enables Prakriti to function, to transform. There is no awareness anywhere but in the Self. Even the mind is not self-aware. It glows with the light of the self-luminous Self. Before the creation of the universe, the three Gunas remain in a state of equilibrium. They counterbalance one another. Then Prakriti is indiscrete and undifferentiated. With the unbalancement of the Gunas, the process of evolvement starts. From the grossest to the finest, everything in Nature (human and non-human) is composed of the three Gunas, which always exist together and are inseparable. But everywhere one or another of the triad predominates the other two. It is the preponderance of one or another of the Gunas in varying degrees that makes all differences in things. Gunas are not the attributes of Prakriti. They may be conceived as substantive energies. Sattva is the principle of poise, conducive to purity, knowledge, joy. Rajas is the principle of motivity, leading to activity, desire, restlessness, or pain. Tamas is the principle of inertia resulting in inaction, dullness, delusion. Sattva is light, Tamas heavy,

Activity means the occupation of the body, the senses, and the mind with the objects. The Self, which is ever distinct from them all, is therefore beyond activity. On this phase of Karma Yoga practised by the seekers of Self-knowledge Sri Krishna remarks: 'All work is performed by the Gunas of Prakriti (as body, senses, mind). He whose understanding is deluded by egoism thinks "I am the doer". But, O mighty Arjuna, he who knows the truth about the Gunas and action and what is distinct from them (that is, the Self) remains unattached knowing that it is the Gunas (as body, senses, and mind) that associate with the Gunas (as objects).'[49] Again he says, ' "I do nothing at all", thinks the Yogi who knows the truth, for he is convinced that, in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, in walking, breathing, sleeping, in talking, emitting, holding, in opening and closing the eyes, it is the senses that are occupied with the sense-objects'.[50] He who thinks of himself as the doer of work must experience its fruits, sweet and bitter, both of which create bondage. But he who forsakes the idea of the doer acquires by work neither merit nor demerit, and has not therefore to reap its fruits. The work done creates no new bondage for him, but simply eliminates the old by removing the deposits of his past actions.

(To be continued)

Rajas moderate. Sattva is represented as white, Rajas as red, Tamas as dark.

[49] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 27. 28.
[50] *Ibid.,* V. 8, 9.

ART AND RELIGION

By Prof. Haridas Bhattacharya

To discuss a topic like *Art and Religion* it is necessary to have a clear idea of the meaning of the two terms. Unfortunately neither art nor religion has any well defined meaning. The word art has sometimes been used in opposition to nature to denote things that are done with intelligence and skill. The art of cooking or the art of navigation has the sense of being something done with skill acquired by training. When animals hunt their prey they do so by nature, but when men go out ahunting with fire-arms or bows and arrows they have to practice an art, namely, the art of shooting. It is not all persons that can cook or navigate or shoot, though all can fight with their hands naturally. Closely connected with this meaning of art we have the distinction between artificial and natural—things that require the labour and intelligence of man and things that exist without them. There is an added significance here, in fact, namely, that the artificial is something unreal while the natural is true. The artificial is not only an imitation of the natural but is also less spontaneous and more evanescent in character. In fact, it has been suggested also that the more conscious art becomes the less grace it possesses—the creative spontaneity of life is lacking in conscious art. Unconscious art is, therefore, nearer Nature than conscious fabrication, and indeed perfection is more easily attained by those in whom conscious imitation is seconded by an unconscious impulse towards action. Those lacking in bodily plasticity and tendency to movement may pick up the art of rhythmic motion through training but they would never become good dancers. Similarly, learning to play on an instrument by following musical notations will not make a man an attractive musician for music demands a natural tendency towards tuneful humming.

But art has another meaning, namely, a product of aesthetic activity. A thing that appeals to our aesthetic sense because it is beautiful is an object of art. If the artificial lacks life, the artistic ravishes the mind by its

conformity to certain ideals of proportion and harmony. It is not expected that all would be producers of artistic things, but in so far as a person enjoys an artistic product he is an artist in embryo. All men do not enjoy all types of art, for many of the arts demand special training for appreciation. Indian music, for instance, may jar on Western ears and *vice versa,* and yet it is possible to create a taste for alien tunes provided the musical ability is there. A person attracted by a lovely figure of the opposite sex and repelled by an ugly one is an artist of a sort. It is true that when we talk of an art monument we generally understand by it some painting or sculpture or architecture, but this is an undue restriction in the meaning of the word. Wherever beauty is produced—whether in sound or in sight, there art is present. The fine arts, therefore, include music and poetry, playful activity, dance and pantomime, painting, sculpture, and architecture. In some of these utilitarian motives may be present—a piece of architecture may be not only beautiful but also useful, as, for instance, when it is used for residential purposes. Similarly, music and poetry may be composed to excite martial spirit. But it is only when art gets freed from all interests that it becomes pure and expressive of beauty alone. We should remember, however, that beauty is not to be understood in a moralistic sense—even villainy can be consummately portrayed and the nude in art is not always ugly as an aesthetic representation.

Now, religion is equally difficult to define. Primitive religion was mostly magical—its rites and ceremonies were not meant so much to adore and worship the supernatural powers as to propitiate and coerce them. There are religions which are vaguely animistic—thinking of a pervasive presence without dividing it into definite overlords of Nature's domains or controllers of human destiny as polytheism and polydemonism do. Then there are religions which believe in fetishes—weird symbols and articles supposed to possess strange powers—if not for all times, at least for the time being. Some others are totemistic—looking upon some animal as the progenitor of the race or tribe or as protector and upon some plants even as a rallying sign. Some fairly high religious systems think of the departed worthies of the race or ancestors of families as having become gods or godlike and worthy of adoration. Then there are religions which people the unseen world with diverse types of spiritual beings—some benevolent and others malicious, possessed of diverse powers and tenanting different elements and localities. Polytheism personifies the different powers of Nature and sometimes those of the mind also and sets them over the different departments of the universe and endows them with attributes appropriate for the discharge of their functions. Gradually the human mind rises to the conception of a single god after temporarily holding the idea that of the many gods of polytheism each may be regarded as supreme according to the need of the worshipper, or that of the many gods only one should be worshipped even though the rest may be worshipped by other tribes or races. But the religious quest does not end with attaining monotheism for at once questions are raised as to whether God has any form and whether He could be located anywhere in particular and whether His government of the world could be thwarted by any hostile spirit like Angra Mainyu or Satan. It is obvious that the character of religious belief will have a profound influence upon life and conduct and any artistic representation of religious life will be deeply affected by our idea regarding the nature and function of God or gods or spirits and powers that are supersensible but whose goodwill we are under an obligation to cultivate.

Religious art owes its origin to certain acts and attitudes that man adopts as being indispensable or helpful in keeping the unseen powers in good humour. As is natural, in primitive religion art will be magical in character, when not merely imitative. When the savage was scratching or painting animals on the walls of caverns, he was choosing desirable animals like bisons and reindeer, oxen

and horses, goats and mammoths, and avoiding the undesirable ones like lion and bear, tiger and jackal. He was either representing and propitiating totemistic ancestors or magically bringing about a multiplication of useful animals by inscribing or painting their figures on walls. Symbols would sometimes replace actual figures—the symbol of the fish in the catacombs of Rome and of the Cross in later times falls within religious art in Christianity. But symbols with magical significance are to be found in primitive art as when fish within a net are drawn on the paddle of fishing boats to lure the fish and increase the catch. Pictorial diagrams enclosed within amulets serve to ward off malign influences and decorative symbols painted or embroidered act as protective mechanisms. Many religious decorations on bodies and many signs made are conceived to armour a man against evil. Religious symbolism is a vast subject by itself and cannot be treated here—the phallic symbol is a well-known religious object of many lands in ancient and modern times. Flower or grain as a symbol of resurrection is also freely used in religious art. Natural objects that bore some resemblance to the religious idea sought to be expressed often figured in art in ancient cults.

But religion has prompted not only static art—it has also evoked movement in body. A man seized with religious frenzy often started religious dances in primitive societies. Dance as a religious art has declined in modern times —but think of the dancing dervishes and lamas, the frenzied music-cum-dance (*kīrtana*) of Bengal Vaishnavism and the religious dance of Devadāsis or temple-girls of South India. The weird religious dances of primitive men, when they invoke or placate their benign spirits or propitiate the unfriendly ones, have often been described in anthropological literature. Similarly, music has been associated with religion from very early times—in fact, some of the Hindu gods themselves carry musical instruments, for example, Vishnu has his conch-shell, Shiva his trumpet, Sarasvati her Vīṇā, Krishna his flute, etc. Much religious service is musical composition or pure music. Even in fairly advanced religions the sole heavenly occupation is singing hallelujahs or praises of God. From the droning of savage gatherings to sacred songs in cultured religious communities is a far cry, and yet the impulse owes its origin to the same cause—a playful and joyous outburst of emotional excitement due to the contemplation of friendly supernatural agency. Supplication and gratitude have alternated with each other in marshalling thoughts into the moulds of poetry or beautiful prose and thus sacred literature has grown up in many lands. Compared with the hoary antiquity of sacred literature secular literature is a child of yesterday; and even if there were secular compositions in ancient times, posterity has preserved the sacred and forgotten the profane literature of antiquity in most cases. The scriptures are almost invariably the oldest books of any community—sacred association has not only given them birth but has also ensured their preservation through the ages. Sympathetic magic is similarly one of the oldest of rituals and sacred dramas are objects of perennial interest in widely separated areas.

But religion has not only prompted music, dance, and poetry—it has been responsible also for a whole group of artistic representations connected with images of divine powers. Holiness has been invariably associated with some kind of purity and orderliness and has therefore been a congenial soil for the development of art. A shaman or a priest must dress somewhat differently from the rest and more strikingly than others. Similarly, the haunt of the supernatural powers has often been chosen for its sublimity or beauty and various taboos have been imposed on those wishing to approach the sanctuary or taking part in religious celebrations. It is obvious that art which has a sensuous appeal would flourish best where divine figures are conceived. A formless God cannot be artistically represented, and it is because of this that Judaism and Islam have not been noted for their artistic representation of human or animal figures. But the defect was made good by creating

lovely works of art in the form of mosques or synagogues, painted or carved objects used in religious service, illuminated manuscripts and exquisite calligraphy, mystic floral designs in buildings and cloths. Christianity, when not puritanic, could create lovely figures of saints and the House of God could be decorated lavishly to create an aesthetic atmosphere, congenial to exalted thinking. In Christian countries, as in Muslim, religious houses were built for eternity and have therefore remained abiding wonders of artistic impulse and religious enthusiasm. If religious zeal has created art, art has in its turn served to kindle religious feelings in admiring votaries of the faith. Temples, mosques, synagogues, churches, Vihāras and all places of religious worship have almost always been nobly conceived and executed to be worthy of the highest spiritual exercise of man.

We can well imagine what an impetus art received when gods could be given visible representation and endowed with different attributes and vehicles. Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism in the East and Roman and Greek religions in the West have been noted for their prolific religious art because their mythologies supplied an inexhaustible source of lithic representation. Fresco painting in Buddhism as at Ajanta and in Christianity as at Rome are marvels of art turned to religious purposes. Iconoclasm of puritans has made a havoc among religious figures in all lands, but enough remains to show to what great aesthetic heights the human mind can rise to express its devotion. True, it is not always that the divine figures and their houses have been equally noble, but that is an exception rather than the rule. Those who have not seen the gorgeous temples of India and the churches and mosques in the West would not be able to understand what labour, enthusiasm, and expense went into the construction of religious houses and what unexpected energy of mind and body religion released. Hegel taught that art was the first inkling of the Divine as religion was the second and philosophy the third. We need not enter into the vexed question of the superiority of any over the others, but there is not the least doubt that art has flourished from hoariest antiquity to the present times as a handmaid of religion and its independence of religious influence is a comparatively recent phenomenon.

THE CONCEPTION OF THE SPORTIVE ABSOLUTE

By Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjea

I. Yearning for the Absolute Inherent in Human Consciousness

The human consciousness lives and moves and has its being in a world of relativity. It thinks and feels and wills necessarily in terms of relations. Every object of consciousness is what it is by virtue of its relations to other objects as well as to the subject. Whatever the consciousness accepts as a real entity is, when more deeply scrutinized, found to be nothing but a relational complex. It cannot conceive or imagine any concrete reality which exists by and for itself and has any definite characteristic independent of all relations. The whole universe appears to the human consciousness as one beginningless and endless stream of innumerable orders of relational complexes. The consciousness itself appears to itself as a relational complex, existing at the centre of and in necessary relation to the relational complexes constituting its objective universe. It cannot form any definite idea of anything as really existent outside the range of its conception and unrelated to itself.

Though thus caged in a world of relativi-

ty, the human consciousness has a faith most deeply rooted in its very nature that all relativity must have the ultimate ground of its existence and appearance in one Absolute Reality. On this account it always feels in the innermost depth of its being a stubbornly persistent urge for flying out from the cage of relativity into the free atmosphere of the Absolute. It finds no rest and peace in its own natural world—the world of relativity. The very constitution of the human consciousness prompts it from within to seek for an adequate explanation of all relativity, with which alone it is acquainted, in the Absolute, with which it has no acquaintance and of which it cannot even form a definite conception. It seems to have in its innermost nature an unshakable conviction that perfect acquaintance with the ultimate truth about the relational complexes, which constitute the world of its experience, and even with the ultimate truth about its own essential character, would be possible only by its transcending all relativity and somehow reaching the Absolute and seeing all relative realities from the view-point of the Absolute.

Accordingly, the Absolute always remains at the background of the human consciousness as the ultimate regulative ideal of all its activities,—all its thoughts, emotions, desires, and aspirations. Its self-fulfilment in all directions seems to lie in its union with the Absolute. It must somehow know the Absolute, love the Absolute, realize the Absolute, get itself identified with the Absolute, see all things as existing in, for, and by the Absolute, and enjoy the truth, beauty, and grandeur of all relational complexes as free self-expressions of the Absolute. This inherent yearning for the Absolute is at the root of what is called the 'divine discontent' of the human consciousness in the world of relativity and is the moving power behind all its progress in science and philosophy, in morality and religion, in love and benevolence, in art and creative activities, in social friendship and philanthropic missions, in its sense of fellowship and in its recognition of unity amidst all the diversities of the universe.

Truly speaking, not only philosophy but all the sciences owe their origin ultimately to the search of the human consciousness for the ground and cause and the essential truth of the changing, finite, relative plurality in one infinite, eternal Absolute Reality. Morality and religion originate ultimately from the demand of the human nature for putting itself consciously and freely in tune with this unknown and sought-for infinite, eternal, absolute ground and Self of the universe. Social, national, and international organizations, cultural and humanitarian institutions, literary and artistic self-expressions of men, etc.—all these can be traced ultimately to the need which the human consciousness deeply feels for transcending the diverse kinds of limitations which it experiences in the world, and advancing towards the blissful experience of unity underlying all diversities, of peace and harmony behind all rivalry and discord, of the infinite and eternal behind all changes and imperfections, of the Absolute One behind the relative plurality. In course of its progressive self-enlightenment, self-expansion, self-realization, and self-enjoyment, the human consciousness comes across higher and higher orders of relative unity, relative peace and harmony, relative infinity and eternity, and relative absolute. But at no stage of its progress does it feel itself perfectly enlightened, perfectly acquainted with the ultimate truth about itself and its universe, perfectly satisfied with what it has attained and what it has become. Its innermost urge moves it on and on. It cannot find peace within itself until and unless it discovers the true Absolute behind all orders of relativity and puts itself in direct communion with it in actual life.

II. Various Unsatisfactory Conceptions of the Absolute

It is well known to all serious students of philosophy and religion that the human consciousness, inspired and governed by its in-

herent yearning for the Absolute, has, since the earliest stages of the development of its thinking power, formed various conceptions about the nature of the absolute ground of all relative existences and that every such conception has failed to give it perfect satisfaction. Even when philosophical speculation was in its infancy in the human society, the human reason and imagination made many attempts to discover some one ultimate, self-existent Absolute Reality and to trace the origin and diversification of the finite, transitory, relative objects of experience from it.

Water, air, fire, sky, energy, space, time, fate, chance, etc. had each their turn to be conceived as the ultimate Reality and the source of all finite, transitory relative realities. In consequence of deeper reflection, each of them had to be abandoned. The Absolute was then conceived as pure *Being*, without any temporal or spatial attributes, without any change or modification or limitation, without any particularizing characteristic. But how could such an abstract, characterless Being furnish any causal explanation for the birth and growth of this cosmic order,—for the origin, development, adjustment, and destruction of the countless species of finite, transitory, relative existences? Reflection upon the dependence of the objective, relative realities on the knowing *subject* sometimes led the human reason to think of one absolute subject or universal pure consciousness as the ultimate ground of all those realities as well as of the individual subjects. But this conception leading to the idea of the subjective existence of all objective realities could not fully satisfy its demand. The human consciousness went on and on with its search.

III. On the Horns of a Dilemma

The experiences of failures in all its attempts at reaching a logically unassailable conception of the Absolute create now and then a retroflected tendency in the human consciousness to accept the world of relativity as all in all,—as itself the Absolute Reality,—as self-existent and self-complete, without any ground or cause or sustainer beyond itself. It tries to form a consistent and adequate conception of the world order in terms of the plurality of simple elementary substances in relation to one another. But it fails to silence the insistent demand coming from within for an ultimate rational explanation for the well regulated and uniform relations among plurality of mutually independent realities and for the wonderful order, harmony, beauty, and sublimity of the cosmic system.

This demand again goads it on to seek for some ultimate ground of the unity and uniformity, some source of the laws and regulations, some cause of the plan and design, which it experiences in this world of relativity. It is forced to the conclusion that the rational explanation for the world order must be found in some reality, which is not one among the many, but one above the many, one uniting and governing the many, one transcendent of as well as immanent in the many, one either consciously originating, or purposely manifesting itself as the harmoniously related many. It fails to form a consistent and adequate conception of the organized system of many subjective consciousnesses and many objective realities without reference to some one reality beyond them.

But whenever an attempt is made to form a logically definite conception of such an Absolute Reality above all relativity, it turns out to be of the nature of a relative reality,—of the nature of a one among the many,—with some distinguishing characteristic, with some negation and consequent limitation, and hence demanding the recognition of some higher reality for its own explanation. The human consciousness is thus placed on the horns of a dilemma. It cannot rest contented with relativity ; it cannot form a perfectly satisfactory conception of the world of its experience without reference to some absolute reality. On the other hand, it cannot bring the Absolute within the range of its comprehension and even of its logical thonght without converting it into a relative object aud hence

an element within the world of relativity it seeks to explain.

The consciousness seeks an escape out of the horns by abandoning the idea of forming a definite conception of the Absolute while recognizing its necessary existence behind and beyond and at the basis of the universe of relativity. It assumes that all its movements and self-expressions,—all its knowledge, imagination, and conception, all its feeling and emotion, desire and will,—are necessarily confined within the world of relativity. But nevertheless it maintains, as a matter of deep faith and logical postulate, that there must be one absolute ground and substratum and bond of unity of this phenomenal world of relative plurality. The true character of the Absolute, however, must, as a matter of course, remain unknown and unknowable to the human consciousness. The consciousness can only be sure *that* it is, but can never definitely know *what* it is.

But the rational consciousness of man cannot stick to this agnostic position with any degree of self-complacency, inasmuch as it cannot disown or eradicate the inherent demand of its own essential nature for the knowledge and realization of the Absolute. Moreover, it feels that the agnostic conclusion is self-contradictory. Agnosticism claims to *know* the Absolute as *unknowable*; it *conceives* the Absolute as the necessary ground and substratum of the phenomenal world and in one and the same breath proclaims it as *inconceivable*. If the Absolute is known to be really existent, it cannot be entirely beyond the range of the human consciousness, and its nature must be knowable to a great extent from the nature of the world, of which it is the most adequate ground of explanation.

IV. The Absolute Playing Hide-and-seek with Human Reason

In this way the human consciousness, being impelled by the inherent yearning of its own essential nature for free communion with the Absolute,—being unconsciously prompted and moved and drawn as it were by the incessant and irresistible call of the unseen and unknown Absolute from above and beneath and behind and beyond the apparently closed world of relativity in which it seems to be imprisoned,—has been restlessly knocking itself against the prison-walls for ages and ages and thinking out various ways and means for emancipation from its imprisonment and union with its eternal, unknown, 'beloved'. The Absolute seems to have been eternally playing hide-and-seek with the human consciousness. Every philosopher or sage who has anywhere and at any time made any original contribution to human thonght about the ultimate Reality,—every school of metaphysics and religion,—represents a particular form of self-exertion and self-discipline of the human consciousness for the discovery of the true character of the Absolute and the way of attaining union with it.

Whoever has asserted that the Absolute is *this* and not *that*,—of this particular nature and not of any other nature,—has obviously been found to have contradicted himself, since whatever can be characterized in this way must belong to the world of relativity. The Absolute must be above all *this* and *that*, above all *yes* and *no*, above all affirmation and denial, above the laws of identity and contradiction, above all determination and characterization. This implies that the Absolute must be above all conception and knowledge. But still the Absolute must be distinctly conceived, definitely known, and intimately apprehended, for otherwise the human consciousness has to deny itself, to deny its innermost nature, to deny the possibility of its self-realization, and even to deny the possibility of true knowledge. No disappointment can ever kill its spirit of search for the Absolute. Though dwelling in the region of the relative, it inwardly knows the nnknown Absolute to be its eternal 'beloved' and it can never remain indifferent to its call.

(To be continued)

STUDIES IN THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD

By Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma

(*Continued from the March issue*)

It is argued that Brahman is both the One and the Many. The Many, forming the contents of the universe, are part and parcel of Brahman. Just as the sea contains the waves and as the waves belong to the sea, so also the things of the universe belong to Brahman and are as real as Brahman itself. It is not understood how the Many, forming contents of the One, can be denied reality and dismissed as illusory appearance. The leaves, the branches, and the flowers form part of the plant and the plant is one as containing all these, is a 'one-in-many', and cannot be supposed to be one as dismissing the 'many' which form its contents. The One apart from the Many is an abstraction, the concrete reality being the totality of the One and the Many. Moreover, the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Vedas, dealing with plurality, falls to the ground altogether if plurality is to be dismissed as illusory appearance. It cannot be maintained that while one part of the Vedas is valid, the other part is invalid. Hence, the oneness of Brahman is to be interpreted as signifying a concrete unity that leaves room for the Many and not as abstract unity that dismisses them altogether. That the same thing is both 'one' and 'many' is seen in the instances of the sea and the plant and such other cases. A hypothesis which is confirmed by facts cannot be overthrown merely on grounds of abstract reasoning and of formal logical contradiction. It is seen in practical life, in almost all instances, that Reality is one as comprising the many within it. It cannot be dismissed by saying that Reality cannot be both one and many, as it implies contradiction. The logic of life, the logic of experience is higher than the lifeless, dead, and abstract logic of formal reason, and the seeming contradiction is resolved in the concept of the concrete universal. The One denying the Many and the Many losing sight of the One are both one-sided abstractions which are synthesized in the concrete reality of the 'One-in-Many'. This is the substance of the argument of all qualified or restricted monists designated as the Bhedābhedavādins in India. The ancients as well as the moderns, including Hegel and Sri Aurobindo, all speak in the same vein and in this matter there is a striking similarity between the East and the West. Sri Aurobindo, an erudite scholar and a deep student of the Vedas and Upanishads, misunderstands and misinterprets the Absolute Monism (*advaitavāda*) of Shankara exactly in the same places and on the same lines as does his Western counterpart, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. There is absolutely no difference in the arguments, no difference in the approach to the problems, and one really wonders how with such abundant knowledge of the Upanishads he could happen to be in agreement with the findings of the German philosopher who evidently had no first hand knowledge of the texts and was liable to form an erroneous view of their real meaning.

Śankara attempts to refute the arguments of the Bhedābhedavādins by pointing out, in the first place, that it cannot be said of Brahman that it is 'one' in one way and also 'many' in another aspect, simply because, according to texts, it is the One without any second and without any division (*Brahmaṇo advaitatvāt eva ekadeśatvānupapatteh*). The analogy of *himsā* (killing) being forbidden in all places and yet being permitted in some special cases like those of *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice and others cannot apply here, and hence it cannot be said that Brahman is one and yet not one. As Brahman is one and absolutely one, there is no room for allowing exceptions to a general rule—*utsarga* and *apavāda*—and hence the analogy is not applicable here. The

other possibility of a *vikalpa* or an alternative arrangement is also not applicable here. A *vikalpa* or alternative arrangement is possible where the option lies with the agent of an action either to take (or do) a thing or not to take it. The Atman or Brahman is something eternally existing in its own essence and no action on the part of any agent can do or undo it. Hence the device of *vikalpa* or alternative arrangement is not helpful in any way in establishing that Brahman is both one and many.

Śankara next points out that the contention of the Bhedābhedavādins is against all logic and also against scriptural testimony (*śrutinyāyavirodhācca*). If the Atman is supposed to be containing the Many inherently, it becomes *anitya,* non-permanent. That which consists of parts (*sāvayava*), that which has 'many' as its content (*anekātmaka*), that which performs actions, cannot be eternal and permanent (*sāvayavasya anekātmakasya kriyāvato nityatvānupapatteh*). And if the Atman or the Self is non-eternal, the whole of the *karma-kāṇḍa* even breaks down. If there is nobody to reap the fruits of actions, who will be so foolish as to spend enormous money for sacrifices (*yajña*)? Moreover, this supposition of the Atman or Brahman being inherently many (*anekātmaka*) would be in direct contradiction with such Śruti texts as— *saindhavaghanavat prajñānaghanaikarasam,* as homogeneous in its essence of consciousness or knowledge as the lump of salt in its salty essence; *asthūlam ananu,* neither stout nor thin; *anantaram abāhyam,* having no inside or outside; *neti neti,* not this, not this. These innumerable mantras of the Upanishads will have to be thrown away into the sea (*samudre prakṣipta syuh*) if Brahman is to be supposed as *anekātmaka,* as having 'many' as its content.

There is a flat contradiction in supposing that the *nitya, niravayava* Atman or Brahman can be both the One and the Many. If it is *nitya* (eternal), it cannot have 'many' as its content, because the Many, according to all hypothesis, change and have their destruction. If it is *niravayava* (without parts), it cannot have *avayava* (parts) in the form of the Many. Either the Śruti texts are valid or else the supposition of the Bhedābhedavādins is to be dismissed summarily. Śankara admits that in the case of effects (*kāryavastu*), in the case of the things of the world, the *dvaitādvaita,* the 'many-in-one' is perfectly legitimate. Things which are in time, which change constantly, which assume different appearances every moment, which are *pariṇāmī,* are certainly *dvaitādvaitātmaka,* characterizable as both one and many. They have a substratum which seems to be unchanging even amidst changes and therefore they are *dvaitādvaita.* But it has to be remembered that this unchanging character of the substratum is only relatively so. The absolutely unchanging, the *kūṭastha nitya,* is only the Atman or the Brahman. The partaking of a double character—change and no change—is only possible in the realm of duality and division, in the *jagat* or the world of time and temporal relations. Sri Aurobindo as well as Hegel seem to forget that the instances taken from concrete life, taken from the world of time, have no application whatsoever to the Absolute, the Atman or Brahman, which is beyond time and temporal relations. There is no continuity between what is in time and what is beyond time. This is the magic of the great Magician. What is not in time seems to be in time, the Timeless appears as if it is in time. It is magic simply because the Timeless cannot also be in time. To think that there is no opposition between the Timeless and the temporal is to confuse between the *pariṇāma nitya* and the *kūṭastha nitya,* between the relatively 'timeless' and the Absolute beyond all time. To say that there is a magic of the real and that what is in time is real along with the Timeless is not to understand the full significance of the Absolute that is really beyond all time. The Timeless, expressing or manifesting itself in and through time, is the *pariṇāmī nitya,* the concrete universal of Hegel, the Supreme Reality of Sri Aurobindo, synthesizing the two abstractions of a static dead unity, on the one hand, and an

ungrounded plurality on the other. The vision that sees the unending flow of time from the Timeless, that restores life to the false abstractions and incomplete dead theories, is certainly a step higher, a synthesis of the opposing contentions of unity and plurality. But the Upanishadic seers have definitely given hint of another vision which completely surpasses the previous synthesis and reconciliation. It is a vision where the Timeless Beyond and the temporal relations are both seen in their proper perspectives. Time and temporal divisions are then felt to be *āhārya adhyāsa,* conscious, voluntary assumptions and not continuations of the Timeless. As assumptions they do not touch or affect the Timeless at all. They are realized to be like the magical performances of a magician and the question of the magic of the real as distinct from the magic of the unreal loses all meaning at this stage. If by 'real' is meant still the reality possessed by the things of the world which have been left behind, they are real. But if by 'real' is meant the reality that belongs to the Absolute, certainly they are not real and it is because this difference is felt at this stage of experience that they are described as magical. It is difficult to understand what Sri Aurobindo means when he wants to put up a case for the magic of the real. If he means to say that the things of the world are as real as Brahman, he definitely gives up the Upanishads and even his own position. If, on the other hand, he means to ascribe to them an ordinary workableness or a *vyāvahārika sattā,* that is granted even by his supposed opponents, the Śankarites. When the things of the world are described as unreal or illusory or magical, it must be in contrast with the reality of the Absolute which has now been in sight that they are described thus. Hegel realizes this in places and he uses the term 'illusion' thrice in the same paragraph in reference to the things of the world. It is unfortunate, however, that Sri Aurobindo does not even attempt to understand the real position of the Śankarites and says that the illustrations used by them are not wholly applicable. But it should be remembered that all illustrations are bound to have this defect and only the points which are intended to be served by the illustrations should be taken into account.

It is interesting to note that Sri Aurobindo in some places uses some expressions which seem to be almost identical with the views of the Śankarites and so long as the authorship is not revealed, it is difficult even for a careful student to take them to be coming from one who is definitely against Śankara. I am giving one such instance. 'The One Self sees itself as many, but this multiple existence is subjective; it has a multiplicity of its states of consciousness, but this multiplicity also is subjective; there is a reality of subjective experience of a real Being, but no objective universe'. (*The Life Divine,* Vol. II, p. 238). But these are occasional utterances which either have no consistency with his main doctrine or have a meaning which is perfectly consistent with his doctrine in his mind but not readily discernible by others. There is not the least doubt that if the passage quoted above means anything in the lines of Advaita Vedanta, it is not what Sri Aurobindo means by it. It must be said to his credit that he makes no secret of his opposition to Śankara's views and if any passage anywhere seems to have any similarity with the *advaita* interpretation of Śankara, it may be safely ignored as not revealing his real views on the matter. He thinks that in the Upanishads the unreality of the universe has not been preached. Rather, it has been consistently affirmed that 'all is the Self, all this that is, is the Brahman, the Reality', and Sri Aurobindo thinks that this 'emphatic assertion leaves no room for an illusory *māyā*'. This is his fundamental doctrine. As everything has come from Brahman, as even the imagination of Brahman cannot be supposed to create anything unreal or imaginary, but it becomes real as soon as it is thought of or willed by Brahman, as Brahman is the source of all that is, the universe and all that there is must be supposed to be real. He seems to forget during all these arguments that all illusory or hallucinatory appearances have their

source or origin in a real substance, and that while it is true that the snake is the rope and nothing but the rope, it cannot be said that the rope is the snake. The false snake that appears has its origin in the rope and is nothing apart from it, but it cannot be said that the rope is nothing but the snake. Similarly, although it is true that the universe is nothing but Brahman, that everything that there is is Brahman, the converse of it cannot be affirmed. The reality of the rope, the reality of the origin and the substratum, does not and cannot award reality to the appearance, the snake. The magician is real, but his magical shows coming from him are not real. Sri Aurobindo admits that there are fourfold states of the Self and thinks that all of them are real. He definitely states that he has behind him the support of the Upanishads which nowhere declare the unreality or illusoriness of the threefold states. According to the Śankarites, the reality of the *turīya,* the fourth and the transcendental state, is incompatible with the reality of the three states of waking, dream, and dreamless sleep, and in face of the self-evident reality of the transcendental state, the preceding states cannot but be declared unreal. But Sri Aurobindo maintains that the 'cosmic is a different order of the Real from the Supra-cosmic Transcendence, but there is no need to take it as in any way non-existent or unreal to that transcendence'. He definitely states that 'the purely intellectual conception that only the Eternal is real . . . is only an ideative distinction, a mental construction; it is not binding on a substantial and integral experience'. He expresses his views unambiguously when he says, 'Time is not necessarily cancelled out of existence by timeless Eternity; their relation is only verbally a relation of contradiction; in fact, it is more likely to be a relation of dependence'. (*Ibid.*, p. 247). He definitely holds that the Timeless and time together form the whole and in the passage quoted above there is not the least doubt that his Timeless is correlative to time and as such is not the Absolute Beyond which is above all correlation and dependence. Śankara's conception of the *turīya* or the Absolute admits of nothing on which it is dependent or to which it is correlative. There is nothing wanting in it—it is all, it is whole, it is perfect freedom. Sri Aurobindo seems to remember it in many places when he says that as Brahman is the All, the universe cannot be unreal, but he seems to forget it when he identifies Brahman with the Timeless and regards it as correlative to time and as dependent on it. It is clear that Sri Aurobindo is for integration and aggregation and he conceives of synthesis in those terms and has not been able to grasp the Vedantic conception of transcendence.[1] He thinks that Śankara's Brahman excludes the cosmos and that there is a relation of opposition between the Timeless, eternal, immutable, static Brahman and time represented by the dynamic cosmos, and argues confidently that his conception of 'Integral Experience' is the highest inasmuch as it 'gathers together all experience in the truth of a supreme and all-reconciling oneness' (*Ibid.*, p. 265). He refers to Śankara's theory as 'Illusionism' which 'unifies by elimination', and leaves no doubt in the mind of his readers that his interpretation of Śankara's Brahman is that it is static as opposed to the dynamic, that it is immobile as opposed to any dynamics or movement. No worse interpretation of Śankara is conceivable.

Śankara's Brahman, which has been repeatedly described as beyond all opposition and contradiction, as *asthūlam, anaṇu,* as *dūrastham antike ca tat,* as *aṇoraṇīyān mahato mahīyān,* as all these and yet none of these, *neti neti,* as beyond staticity and dynamicity, has been supposed to be one member of the opposition. Sri Aurobindo ought to have thought twice before charging Śankara whom he has described as 'the powerful intellect' with this glaring contradiction. If the cosmos is eliminated from Brahman, if the world is opposed to Brahman, if Brahman remains as the 'eternal immobile' excluding all dynamics or movement out of it, is not Brahman limited

[1] My paper on 'Vedantic Transcendence' in the *Calcutta Review,* Jan. 1942.

by what falls outside of it, by what it is supposed to eliminate? It does not require any powerful intellect to notice this flat contradiction and to think that the masterly genius of Śankara was not able to understand the meaning of the texts such as 'Brahman is all this', 'All this is Brahman' (*Brahmaivedam sarvam*) (*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*), and to perceive the inconsistency between this implication and the supposition that Brahman eliminates and puts aside the cosmos and yet to describe him as a 'powerful intellect' show an absolute lack of judgment. Had Śankara's Brahman been the Timeless that is *opposed* to time, Sri Aurobindo's Timeless that 'includes' and 'gathers together' the manifestations in time would have been certainly a higher conception. The aggregation or integration of the opposing members is undoubtedly a higher conception than mere opposition. But Śankara's Brahman is not the Timeless that is *opposed* to time. In fact, it has been repeatedly stated that nothing can be opposed to it. It represents the highest synthesis; it stands for absolute reconciliation (*avirodha*). The Śankarites have stated definitely that they have no oppositionists and that they cannot have any. Opposition is possible to a partial view, but when the Absolute, which goes beyond everything, is posited, there is no room for any partial view to oppose it. Clearly Śankara is not for opposition or elimination, but for transcendence. Transcendence is something very different from negation or opposition. There is an annulment or a negative movement, as Hegel calls it, but there is also the affirmation or the absorption. If there is only negation there is no transcendence. If there is bare affirmation, then also there is no transcendence. Brahman is the world and yet not the world. The false snake that appears is the rope and nothing but the rope, but still it is not the rope. That which was so long being taken as the snake is now found to be the rope; therefore, the snake is the rope. But the snake is not the rope; there is a world of difference between the two. This is transcendence. When one sees through the whole process, one gains the transcendent vision. A person who first took the rope to be a snake, had no knowledge of the rope but only of the snake. He then finds that what was seen as the snake in the dark is seen as a rope, when seen in clear light. He then identifies the two—the appearing snake and the rope. He then concludes that what falsely appeared as a snake is nothing but the rope. This is transcendent vision. Is the snake eliminated or negated? The answer must be a 'no'. The snake is explained fully as having its origin in the rope seen in the dark. If the curd is explained when it is traced to milk, the snake ought to be supposed as fully explained when it is traced to the rope. The snake that appeared is fully affirmed or absorbed in the rope. But is it an affirmation then? The answer also is a 'no'. There is no affirmation of the snake in the rope. There is a rejection, a denial, it may be said. The snake is a false appearance, the rope is the reality, and there lies all the difference between the real and the unreal. The knowledge of the rope as the substratum of the *false* appearance of the snake is the vision which affirms as well as denies, which absorbs as well as eliminates simultaneously, which, in short, transcends all previous experiences. If the transcendent experience is declared as real, the partial experiences have to be declared unreal being very different from the former. The division of time, duality and opposition, variety and multiplicity, are all affirmed in the 'Timeless Eternal' which is an aggregation or integration, a condensification in duration of what is manifested elaborately in time, Sri Aurobindo supposes. But he has no idea that Śankara's Brahman represents the Absolute which is beyond the Timeless duration or eternity and time, which is beyond all duality and opposition, which is *ekarasa* (homogeneous) leaving no room for variety and multiplicity. The Timeless that includes time has no similarity with the Absolute Beyond where time has no applicability or any meaning. To think that the Timeless and time can exist together is to confuse the Timeless which is only condensed

time for the Absolute which is beyond all temporal conceptions. The Timeless in Sri Aurobindo is only *relatively* timeless. The distinction between the absolute Timeless and time is not merely 'ideative'. No experience can unify or integrate the real Timeless and temporal distinctions. If any experience claims to do this, it is either an experience of the pseudo-Timeless, i.e. of mere duration including time processes, or, if the real Timeless is meant, the reconciliation is only verbal and there is no experience behind it. There must be a gap between the real Timeless and time simply because one is 'time-less' and the other is time. The Timeless is 'noumenal' in the language of Kant and *pāramārthika* according to Śankara, while time is phenomenal and *vyāvahārika*. To hold that there is a continuity between the Timeless and time and to attempt to evade the contradiction involved by seeking refuge in an appeal to 'substantial' experience is only to show that there is no substance in the experience claimed. The correlativity of the real Timeless and time cannot be translated into experience and, however pleasing the reconciling aggregation may sound to the ears, it bubbles into air when any attempt to realize it in experience is made. If there is correlativity, it is not the real Timeless but only condensed time; if it is really the Timeless, any talk of correlativity becomes meaningless. The Timeless of Sri Aurobindo which holds time in its bosom is only the causal or the *kāraṇa* state and there is an easy transition from the *kāraṇa* (unmanifested causal) state to the *sūkṣma* (subtle) and the *sthūla* (gross) states and *vice versa*. But when there is the ascent to the *turīya* or the fourth state, there is no longer a continuity but a leap and the fourth is not the fourth in continuation of the three preceding states but it represents the state that is beyond the three and transcends the three previous states. Śankara's theory is not 'Illusionism' as Sri Aurobindo puts it but is really transcendentalism. It shows what real transcendence implies and explains that transcendence is not merely aggregation or integration as Sri Aurobindo takes it to be but that it is at once an affirmation as well as a denial, an assertion or absorption as much as a rejection, an 'yes' or 'no' at the same time, as is implied by the texts, 'Brahman is all these', and 'Brahman is *neti neti*, not this, not this, nothing of these at all'. Sri Aurobindo has noticed only the aspect of affirmation, and transcendence to him means integration and aggregation. He definitely states that 'nowhere in the Upanishads is it actually laid down that the threefold states is a condition of illusion or the creation of unreality; it is constantly affirmed that all this that is—this universe we are now supposing to have been constructed by *māyā*—is the Brahman, the Reality'. It is clear that he has forgotten the oft-repeated Śruti texts such as —*neti neti* (not this, not this); *neha nānāsti kiñcana* (there is no multiplicity, no variety here); *mṛtyo sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati* (he who sees something like multiplicity here is doomed to utter destruction). The censure that is attached to the seer of multiplicity and division leaves no room for doubting that the purpose of the Upanishads is to preach the reality of a divisionless unity and not that of a 'manifold oneness' as Sri Aurobindo thinks.

Sri Aurobindo seems to misunderstand Śankara's theory altogether. The universe is not *asat* (non-existent), according to Śankara, but only *mithyā* (unreal). The great distinction that Śankarites make between the *asat* and the *mithyā* seems to be not only ignored by Sri Aurobindo but he ascribes to Śankara just what the latter entirely denies. Sri Aurobindo thinks that 'if we plunge by a trance of exclusive concentration into a mystic sleep state or pass abruptly in waking Mind into a state belonging to the Superconscient, then the mind can be seized in the passage by a sense of the unreality of the cosmic Force and its creations; it passes by a subjective abolition of them into the supreme superconscience', and holds that 'this sense of unreality and this sublimating passage are the spiritual justification for the idea of a world created by *māyā*'. (*Ibid.*, p. 240). He

is of opinion that if, on the contrary, the transition to the supreme superconscience is made 'not through dream trance or sleep trance, but through a spiritual awakening into these higher states, we become aware in all of them of the one omnipotent Reality; there need be no perception of an illusionary *māyā*'. Evidently Sri Aurobindo thinks that because the Vedanta believes in an 'abrupt transition' and in an 'exclusive concentration into a mystic sleep state', it preaches the theory of the unreality of the universe. But this is exactly what the Śankarites deny. The lower experience becomes *bādhita* (contradicted) by the higher experience, step by step, and the Vedanta preaches *bādha-samādhi* as against *laya-samādhi*, transcendence as against denial or rejection. This is the great distinction between the Vedantic realization and the Yogic concentration. The former finds that the lower becomes unreal in the face of the higher experience which transcends it. The unreality of the lower category is a perceived fact in the simultaneous experience of the higher and the lower. The reality of the superior experience establishes itself by reducing the lower experience to the level of the unreal. The Vedanta does not rely on any 'mystic sleep state' or in any 'abrupt' transition and if it preaches the unreality of the universe it is because the reality of the unchanging and eternal Absolute reduces the universe to the level of the unreal in a felt experience which agrees with the findings of reason. The Yogic experience relying on a 'trance of exclusive concentration' has the possibility of regarding both the *vyutthāna* experience and the *samādhi* experience, the ordinary experience preceding and succeeding the trance state as well as the experience of the state of concentration, to be real inasmuch as both are experienced facts. But the Vedantin, not believing in any mystic sleep state or in any exclusive concentration but preaching the full glory of the self-luminous consciousness and the approach through reason as the only way to the Absolute, has no other alternative but to declare the experience of duality and division as unreal in the presence of the experience of the divisionless One. The world is real so long as it is not presented to the Absolute order. The simultaneity of the temporal and the Timeless cannot but reduce the former to the level of the unreal. Those who believe in successive experiences of the world and the Absolute and are ready to put them under two different heads find no difficulty in assigning reality to both. But as soon as we want to put them together, the *mithyātva* of the changing and the reality of the unchanging become established automatically.

It is gratifying to find that Sri Aurobindo does not doubt the validity of the Vedantic experience of the 'overwhelming single objectless ecstasy' and testifies to the 'overwhelming decisive convincingness *ekātmyapratyayasāram* with which this realization seizes the consciousness of the spiritual seeker'. He is also ready to admit that it is one among 'the penultimates of the One ultimate', one among the 'steps by which the soul crosses the limits of Mind into the Absolute', but he is not willing to regard it as the 'final and absolute realization which is at the end of every journey' and holds that the finality claimed by the Vedantist is only apparent and not real. He thinks it is possible to 'travel beyond by a greater negation or a greater affirmation', 'to extinguish Self in non-Being or to pass through the double experience of cosmic consciousness and *nirvāṇa* of world-consciousness in the one existence to a greater divine union and unity which holds both these realizations in the vast integral Reality'. He says that 'an overwhelming self-evident convincingness, an experience of Absolute authenticity in the realization or experience is not an unanswerable proof of the sole reality or sole finality, for other spiritual experiences have the same convincing, authentic, and final character. It is open to the intellect which has once arrived at the conviction of the unreality of all other things to take a further step and deny the reality of Self and all other existences.' Here Sri Aurobindo does not seem to realize the full significance of what he says. It is not possible 'to deny the reality of the Self and all other existences', because one must stand

somewhere in order to deny other things. An absolute nihilism defeats its purpose and stands self-contradicted. *Bādha* or the process of elimination cannot be unlimited and must stop somewhere. There cannot be *niravadhi bādha* or unlimited elimination. You can eliminate everything else taking your stand on the Self. But if the Self too is eliminated there remains nothing to stand upon. Elimination implies the thinker who eliminates in thought and this is the Self. *Ya eva hi nirākartā tasyaiva ātmatvāt*—that which eliminates is the Self itself and therefore it remains uneliminated in the elimination of the all. After Śankara's refutation of Buddhist nihilism, this argument of Sri Aurobindo seems like an anachronism. He also forgets that if the supreme criterion of truth is not accepted, that if self-evidence also is no test of validity, he is leaving no room open even for his 'spiritual illumination verified by the abiding fact of the spirit'. The convincing self-evidence claimed by the Vedantist as the test of truth is nothing other than this verification by the abiding fact of spirit. Sri Aurobindo does not seem to know his own mind and he is not speaking consistently. If he thinks that spiritual illumination can override reason and consistency, it is preposterous to attempt a philosophical presentation of one's views and to criticize the philosophical views of others.' A spiritual illumination that cannot establish itself in the court of reason has no claim to be considered in the discussion of philosophical topics and has every chance of being spurious. There cannot be two logics—the logic that rejects contradiction and another that allows it. The Vedanta bases itself on spiritual realization, it is true; but when it attempts to present its philosophical basis it nowhere seeks refuge in transcendent realization but fully accepts its responsibilities and faces all difficulties boldly. Philosophy is rationalization of experience and when a philosophy of spiritual experience is attempted, the demands of reason have got to be satisfied fully. For philosophy the law of contradiction holds supreme and as a philosophical theory, the Bhedābhedavāda breaks down simply because it asks us to accept Reality to be both 'one' and 'not-one'. If in a logical disputation, this point is reached where one and the same thing is ascribed two contradictory attributes, it cannot proceed any further and Aristotle tells us that this must be regarded as the end of all logical discussion, because if contradictory attributes be predicated of the same thing, a term ceases to have any definite and fixed meaning. Śankara also regards this *virodha* or contradiction involved as the most effective point that refutes the Bhedābhedavādins.

(*To be continued*)

PATCHING UP

By Irene R. Ray

It is a widely accepted contention that in the process of 'the commerce of ideas' amongst the nations of the world, India must learn from the West such things as punctuality, civic sense, technical efficiency, and the general art of 'getting things done'. And in return for this, it is contended, India will give to the West the treasures embodied in her scriptures, treasures which propound certain basic principles such as the spiritual foundation of the universe, the oneness of all forms of life, and the divinity of man. These principles are common knowledge in this country even to the point of being unconsciously so. In the West, the advance of science and the failure of organized orthodox religion are only just beginning to open the door to the possibility of the recognition of

these principles on a wide scale. In them the West will find the fulfilment of all that it now holds dear. The West believes in ethics. Vedantic principles will supply the reason why those ethics are good and necessary. To be honest, kind, and helpful means much to a Westerner, and it is significant that he uses the word 'neighbourly' to describe one who possesses these qualities. But if he is asked why he should be neighbourly he is unable to give any better reason than that 'the Bible says so'. Vedantic principles supply the answer and form the only sure foundation of all ethics. Without that foundation ethics cannot stand.

Free to go High—or Low

But when we survey the position in India we find that although Vedantic principles are there 'in the blood' of every individual, the practical manifestations of those principles are sadly lacking. India does not translate her principles into everyday ethics. Not that she has never done so. She has. She has done so in the past and, in modern times, Swami Vivekananda preached just this. And the organization he left provides an excellent example of Vedanta in practice. This modern beginning has to be extended into every sphere of national life.

To do this is not so difficult as would appear on the surface. It is not a wild dream or a counsel of perfection. There is so much in the Indian character that makes it very easily possible. Once the will to do so is aroused, it could easily be achieved. For example, there is great flexibility in the Indian character. It is this flexibility which leaves the individual free to go either to the highest—or to the lowest! Conduct which is based on mere ethics and not on principles leads to rigid observances as may be seen in the West. The result of that is that the individual is bound by those observances. He cannot go beyond them; he is ruled by them instead of being helped by them. Thus while he clings to mere ethics, the Westerner can never achieve the perfection of character the Indian can achieve. India demands not ethics but principles, and it is the application of those principles in fullest freedom that alone leads to perfection. And India is satisfied with nothing less than perfection.

The Importance of a Shirt

The *Holi* festival is an excellent example of India's freedom from rigidity. Can the West ever go so 'crazy'? To the average Westerner a shirt is a very important thing. He marvels to see the abandon with which shirt after shirt is ruined on *Holi* day. He is shocked when told that 'the colour won't come off'. He is horrified at the thought that in spite of the shortage of shirts, and other clothing too, in spite of India's wide-spread poverty, year after year the habit of *Holi* continues with unabated fervour. This difference in attitude to a shirt surely symbolizes the difference between a mind which tends to materialism and a mind which is capable of rising high above materialism. There is no doubt that the rigid ethical behaviour of the West is closely linked with a materialistic outlook in life. Materialism means pinning one's faith on earthly possessions, on outward forms, and even on outward forms of conduct. Even pity can arise from materialism. Selfless service is spiritually higher than pity and compassion.

Beware of Borrowing

It is necessary, therefore, to be very cautious in our attempts to open our doors to Western influences. Mere imitation can lead us into great danger. Some may see no harm in imitating all that strikes the outsider as attractive and worth emulating. Travellers return home with tales of lost umbrellas being found, of newspapers being sold at street corners unattended—you put down your penny and take a newspaper. And nobody steals the cash! Bottles of milk stand on door-steps and are not stolen. Examinations in schools, colleges, and universities are uniformly conducted without guards and with only one or two teachers acting as invigilators. These and many more instances of the 'ethical West' are

cited and sadly compared with conditions prevailing in this country. And we make a sorry picture! That is true, and it is also true that if the new India is to have any meaning, if she is to hold her place amongst the nations of the world, we must reform ourselves—and that quickly.

But reforms must be a natural growth from within and not mere imitation of Western standards. India must put her principles into practice and not merely copy Western ethics. The basic principle, and one which the Indian mind finds no difficulty in grasping, is the unity of all life. To injure another is to injure one's self. Forgetting that principle India sinks to the lowest of the low; remembering it she rises to her full stature. It is no mere philosophical abstraction; it can form the basis of everyday living. Take, for example, good manners, a very important aspect of everyday life. The smoothness of our relationships with those we live with and work with depends to a large extent on good manners. Good manners are not mere etiquette; they cannot be confined to rules of conduct. Our manners portray our inner attitude to our fellows. To behave with consideration to others, with thought for the convenience, comfort, and well-being of others—this constitutes good manners. If, therefore, the individual bases his behaviour on the principle of the unity of all life he will be *naturally* good-mannered.

A Real Revolution

Behaviour based on this principle would have a revolutionary effect more radical than any as yet devised by political and social reformers. The much longed-for civic sense would appear *naturally*. Libraries would no longer have their books stolen and mutilated; university students, who can be so powerful when they wish, would themselves introduce such standards into their examinations that guards would no longer be tolerated or necessary; 'filthy towns' would be transformed. And social reforms would follow equally naturally. A living wage for all, equal rights and opportunities for all would be realized simply and naturally.

The Chinese philosopher, Lao-Tse, made this idea of achieving good *naturally* the centre of his teaching. The Chinese word 'Tao', like so many Sanskrit terms, takes a great many English words to explain its meaning! It means all that India understands by Brahman plus the way of life followed by a knower of Brahman. Tao, therefore, stands for the principles of the spiritual foundation of the universe, the oneness of all forms of life and the divinity of man—the very principles which form the basis of Indian religious thought. Tao also stands for the practical application of those principles.

In the *Tao Teh King,* Lao-Tse's small book, Chapter 18 is as follows:

> 'When the great Tao is lost men follow after charity and duty to one's neighbour.
>
> 'When wisdom has met with honours the world is full of pretenders.
>
> 'When family ties are severed then filial duty and parental indulgence take their place.
>
> 'When a nation is filled with strife then do patriots flourish.'

The commentator has given this chapter the title, 'Patching Up'. This is an important lesson for us today. In our efforts to reform ourselves let us not be content with 'patching up'. To cultivate virtues merely because it is good or ethical to possess them is 'patching up'. To follow fundamental principles is the real revolution.

'Be strong and stand up and seek the God of Love. This is the highest strength. What power is higher than the power of purity? Love and purity govern the world. This love of God cannot be reached by the weak; therefore, be not weak, either spiritually, mentally, or morally.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

SHIVA-MĀNASA-PUJĀ

OF SHANKARACHARYA

By Prof. K. R. Pisharoti

Space we wish to conquer, time we want to annihilate, and Nature we desire to subjugate. That has been the goal towards which human strivings have, at least latterly, been directed, that has been the avowed aim of science and that continues to be so even today. And, indeed, we are proud we have achieved so much. Unfortunately, however, the more we achieve the more yet remains to be achieved, for the farther recedes the horizon of the Unknown and the Unconquered. Practically there seems to be no end to what is yet to be conquered for the achievement of the goal science has set before itself. And what is the result? We have begun with the noble purpose of maximizing human happiness by minimizing sources of human sorrow, but what we have actually achieved is maximizing human sorrow by minimizing sources of human happiness. This is what we see around us despite our expansion of knowledge, despite our subjugation of environments, despite our control of the forces of Nature. And this naturally raises the question—why have we not succeeded? The answer seems to be clear enough: we have not succeeded because of one significant omission in the process of our strivings; we failed because we have not cared to study ourselves. We have been devoting our attention to the study of everything else, everything outside us, but our own selves we have been ignoring, and so we have allowed ourselves to be tossed about like a rudderless boat in the stormy ocean of life.

We are a world in ourselves, a world by ourselves. We create, sustain, and destroy many worlds. This world of ours stands in a specific relation to the world outside us, and, unless we adjust our world to the world outside, around, and beyond us, our world must necessarily be unhappy. As matters are, the subjective world of ours does not fit in with the objective world around us: the two seem to pull in opposite directions, and the result is that life is not happier, but more miserable. If they continue to fight on, nothing but frustration and disappointment can be the ultimate end of all human strivings.

Three are the alternatives before us. We can live in this world as a creature of Nature, live content with what Nature has given us. This is the path for the weakling—the path of submission. We can fight with Nature, wrest from it as much as we can, in an attempt to make our lives happier. That is another path, the path of conquest, followed by the West. We can know ourselves and cultivate our own world—the world within us—and assimilate the world outside into one within our own: that is the path of peace, the path followed by the ancient Rishis of old.

The path of peace, like the path of war, also means intense preparation. Rightly has it been said that winning peace is more difficult than winning war. Success in the battle of life involves, in the first place, absolute mental hygiene and this results from Self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge, self-reverence, and self-respect—these three alone invest life with sovereign power. In the second place, we must have a correct scale of values in judging men and manners and things. On the basis of these two, we must develop character, integrate our personality, enunciate a master ideal and direct all our strivings to the achievement of that ideal.

In so far as this process is concerned, a more potent, nevertheless a more simple, method cannot be imagined than what is contained in the *Śiva-Mānasa-Pūjā* of Shankaracharya. The whole of life's activity—good, bad, and indifferent; physical, verbal, and mental; conscious, unconscious, and subconscious,—every one of these is to be rendered

as an offering unto the supreme Lord. The process involves no new adjustments in our lives as such, physical or mental, no strivings other than the accustomed ones, no sacrifice of the few comforts we are habituated to. It is merely a matter of disciplining ourselves. It is easy to understand and easy to practise, if the will be there, and it yields results far beyond our normal expectations. Thus can the subjective and the objective worlds be fused into one, thus alone can we overcome the ills of life and attain mental peace and happiness. But this means a necessary preliminary—the recognition of the existence of a supreme Godhead and the acceptance of the realization of that Godhead as the supreme goal of life.

When we render all our activities as an offering to the God of our heart, we naturally do only such actions, think only such thoughts, and utter only such words as are worthy of Him and eschew those which are repugnant to Him. We may accept any code of life, any system of morality, any religion of God: here is an attitude of mind, here is a code of conduct, for every one of us, on which we might well base our life and our life's behaviour. Such an attitude begets peace for us as well as for those in whose midst our life is cast.

To enshrine Godhead in our self, to surrender our body and soul to Him, to live our life as an offering to Him—that is the way to ensure peace, contentment, and happiness, that is the way to achieve the main aim of life, namely salvation of self. That is the directive contained in this short hymn of the great seer —the directive which tells us how best to live our lives.

The Stotra is composed of four verses. In the first verse, the Godhead is invoked on to an extraordinarily rich *pīṭha,* fashioned by and placed within the heart of the worshipper, and *upacāra* is offered. Then He is entertained to a rich repast, consisting of various kinds of dishes and delicious drinks—all served in golden bowls—after which recreation in the shape of music and dance is provided. Thereafter obeisance is made and the Lord's glories are sung. Godhead being localized at heart, the next stage, namely God-assumption, is described, during which the worshipper assumes himself to be the God. His heart being filled with godhead, he sees godhead in every part of his body and in every one of his activities. Thus, enthused with the Spirit divine, the worshipper assumes godhead and in due course grows into God, i. e. attains *mokṣa.* Here, then, are described the two processes of God-infilling and God-assumption, in which the worshipper renders every one of his activities as an offering to God and finds God in himself, ultimately leading to God-realization: a very simple practice for even the ordinary man in order to overcome the ills of life and attain the realization of Godhead that is inherent and immanent in him.

शिवमानसपूजा ।

रत्नैः कल्पितमासनं हिमजलैः स्नानं च दिव्याम्बरं
नानारत्नविभूषितं मृगमदामोदाङ्कितं चन्दनम् ।
जातीचम्पकबिल्वपत्ररचितं पुष्पं च धूपं तथा
दीपं देव दयानिधे पशुपते हृत्कल्पितं गृह्यताम् ॥ १ ॥

1. Seat[1] made of precious stones,[2] bath in cold waters,[3] lustrous garments,[4] variedly jewelled ornaments,[5] sandal-paste scented with musk, flowers of jasmine and *campaka,* and *bilva* leaf,[6] incense and light[7]—these, my

[1 Here is described a mental mode of worshipping God, and naturally the objects used in worship are the creations of mind and not tangible ones.

2 The plural is suggestive of the use of many kinds of gems, for the guest is the most honoured and the seat offered must be worthy of Him. And it must be located in the most honoured place: in the present case it is located in the heart of the worshipper, the most honoured place within man.

3 Cold waters are offered for bathing, since a cold bath is very refreshing. And it is appropriate in the present case, since the Lord is the denizen of the Himalaya—the abode of snow.

4 The term *divyāmbaram* means divine garments, such as are fit for gods to wear. We prefer to understand the term as lustrous or glowing garments.

5 The better reading seems to be *vibhūṣaṇam.*

6 The term *racita* means composed of. The phrase means that the flowers used in worship are varied ones. It deserves to be pointed out that in worship garlands may or may not be there, but loose flowers there must be.

7 Burning incense and swaying of lights form invariable parts of every worship.

mind's creations, receive, O Lord,[8] O Fountain of mercy,[9] O Lord of life.[10]

[8] *Deva* suggests that He is an object of worship, and failure to worship Him means failure in the discharge of one's duty. Therefore in worshipping Him, the worshipper is only discharging his duty.

[9] The ingredients of worship may not come up to the standard required for the worship of the Lord of life. He could only say that he has chosen the best he could conceive of, and, if there be any shortcoming in quantity or quality, he expects to be pardoned.

[10] See Note 8 *ante*. The use of this phrase again suggests that worship of the Lord is a matter of duty.]

सौवर्णे नवरत्नखण्डरचिते पात्रे घृतं पायसं
भोज्यं[11] पञ्चविधं पयोदधियुतं रम्भाफलं पानकम् ।
शाकानामयुतं जलं रुचिकरं कर्पूरखण्डोज्ज्वलं
ताम्बूलं मनसा मया विरचितं भक्त्या प्रभो स्वीकुरु ॥ २ ॥

2. Ghee,[12] pudding, food of five different kinds with milk and curds, plantains, *pānaka,*[13] varied kinds of leafy dishes,[14] tasty water, *tāmbūla* lustrous with camphor, all these in vessels of gold, set with precious stones, which my mind has devoutly[15] prepared, be pleased, O Lord, to receive.

[11 This reading is also current in many parts and is often preferred to *bhakṣyam*.

[12] Here is described the repast prepared for the Lord. The four kinds of *bhojya* are: *khādya* (what is to be chewed), *coṣya* (what is to be sucked), *lehya* (what is to be licked), and *peya* (what is to be drunk). The fifth kind of *bhojya* is rice. It is a rule that every ceremonial feasting must have all these varieties of dishes.

[13] *Pānaka* is a kind of exhilarating drink which has all the six Rasas combined. It is very refreshing and relieves thirst and fatigue.

[14] *Śākānāmayutam* refers to leafy dishes. These are also held to be essential parts of ceremonial feasting. This is an interesting reference as showing that the value of leafy dishes as an article of diet was realized very early by Indians.

[15] The various items of the feast for the Lord have been prepared with great devotion and form the best his mind could conceive.]

छत्रं चामरयोर्युगं व्यजनकं चादर्शकं निर्मलं
वीणावेणु[16] मृदंगकाहलकला गीतं च नृत्यं तथा ।
साष्टांगं प्रणतिः स्तुतिर्बहुविधा ह्येतत्समस्तं मया
संकल्पेन समर्पितं तव विभो पूजां गृहाण प्रभो ॥ ३ ॥

3. Umbrella, pair of chowries, fan, crystal mirror, instrumental music of the *vīṇā, veṇu, mṛdaṅga,* and *kāhala,* sweet vocal music and dance, obeisance on 'all eights',[17] varied hymns of praise—all these offered Thee conceptually, receive, O Lord, as my *pūjā,* O all-prevading[18] Being.[19]

[16 This is according to the reading current in many parts. The *Bṛhatstotraratnākara* reads **भेरि** in place of **वेणु** .

[17] This expression is used on the same lines as 'on all fours'. The eight parts of the body which ought to come into contact with the ground, during prostration, are—hands, feet, knees, head, and chest. Simultaneously with this, the mind should contemplate on God and the tongue should utter His *nāma*.

[18] *Vibhu* means vast, i.e. the macrocosm.

[19] After the feast is over, the Lord is accorded all the emblems of royalty, and recreation is provided in the shape of music and dance. Then the worshipper falls prostrate before the Lord and sings hymns of glory.]

आत्मा त्वं गिरिजा मतिः सहचराः प्राणाः शरीरं गृहं
पूजा ते विषयोपभोगरचना निद्रा समाधिस्थितिः ।
संचारः पदयोः प्रदक्षिणविधिः स्तोत्राणि सर्वा गिरः
यद्यत् कर्म करोमि तत्तदखिलं शंभो तवाराधनम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. O Shambhu! My soul[20] Thou art; my *buddhi,* (Thy consort), the daughter of the Mountain Lord; my Prāṇas, Thy Gaṇas; my body, Thy abode; my enjoyments, Thy worship; my sleep, Thy (state of) Samādhi; my walking is the circumambulation (round Thee); my words all, hymns of praise to Thee; and whatever deeds I do, an offering to Thee.

[20 Here the worshipper identifies himself with the Lord. A finer, more poetic conception it is hard to find in any devotional lyric, a conception pregnant with practical wisdom. Whoever can conceive in this strain—and the blessed alone can do so—raises himself to a higher plane of existence, realizes godhood that is inherent in man, becomes one with the Godhead supreme. Here is a process of sublimation, the very highest of its kind. That is the ideal towards which must be directed all our strivings in thought, word, and deed, the ideal which alone can save us and the world in which we live.]

Many texts of this Stotra give a fifth verse as the concluding stanza, which runs as follows:

करचरणकृतं वा कम वाक्कायजं वा
श्रवणनयनजं वा मानसं वाऽपराधम् ।
विदितमविदितं वा सर्वमेतत् क्षमस्व
शिव शिव करुणाब्धे श्रीमहादेव शंभो ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Shiva, O Shiva, Thou Ocean of mercy, O Mahādeva, O Shambhu, forgive me all my sinful actions done by hands and feet, or by word or deed, or by ears and eyes, or by mind, and done consciously or unconsciously.

[This is a very popular verse, and it figures in many hymns of prayer, and the penalty for this popularity it has paid in a variety of variants. The text given above is the one current in Kerala, the land of Shankaracharya. There are other texts with different reading current in other parts. We are inclined to think that this verse does not form part of the original text particularly because the main theme is complete with the fourth verse, and because this verse does not fit in with the contents of the same. What, then, is the explanation for the presence of the verse? Every *pūjā* must have a *samāpana*—a fitting conclusion—and in very many cases this verse figures as the *samāpana* verse. And because the Stotra embodies a *pūjā,* the usual *samāpana* verse also figures therein.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Pārvati, daughter of the Himalaya mountain, practised severe penance and earnestly prayed to Shiva, desiring to be accepted by Him as His spouse. Giving up her royal style and not minding her tender age, she led an ascetic life, remaining completely merged in the thought of her lord. Shiva was deeply moved by Parvati's intense love, devotion, and perseverance and fulfilled her desire. *The Vision of Pārvati,* by Elise Aylen, recalls this touching mythological episode. . . .

In a concise but ably-written study of *Indian Mysticism,* Srimat Anirvan, a profound thinker and eminent scholar, makes a rapid survey of the uninterrupted course of Indian mysticism, extending over thousands of years. Writing with massive erudition, he points out that mysticism in India is not only a great force in the country's spiritual life but is also progressive in character, always trying to discover new vistas of the Unknown and find out new forms of practices that will have a greater appeal to and be more in harmony with the spirit of the age. This learned study was originally written as a Foreword to an Anthology (in Polish) of mystic songs and poems of India; it will be concluded in our next issue. . . .

Prof. Haridas Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., Retired Head of the Department of Philosophy, Dacca University, and at present Honorary Professor of Indian Philosophy and Religion, College of Indology, Banaras Hindu University, discusses a subject, rich in interest and full of historical value, viz. *Art and Religion*. He underlines the fact that religion has from the earliest times, exerted an interpenetrating influence on art, thus prompting every form of artistic activity, and concludes that art has always flourished as a handmaid of religion. That is why classical works of art have not only beauty of form but also the touch of divinity. The secular movement that has sought to pursue art 'for art's sake', bereft of its vibrant spiritual content, is, as Prof. Bhattacharya rightly observes, a comparatively recent phenomenon. . . .

Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjea, M.A., an old and esteemed contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata,* brings his vast scholarship, analytical insight, and power of exposition to the task of the elucidation of *The Conception of the Sportive Absolute.* The article will be continued in successive instalments. . . .

'Patching Up' is the title given by a commentator to a chapter in Lao-Tse's 'Book of Tao'—*Tao-Teh-King*—one of the profoundest

books in Chinese philosophy. Mrs. Irene R. Ray reaffirms the truth of the fact that to cultivate virtues or imitate observances merely because it is good or ethical to possess them is no better than 'patching up'. She rightly concludes that in following the fundamental principles lies the path to real progress. . . .

Śiva-Mānasa-Pūjā is a popular hymn in Sanskrit, by Shankaracharya, describing the mental worship of Shiva. This admirable rendering, with introduction and notes, is by Prof. K. R. Pisharoti, an eminent Sanskrit scholar. Prof. Pisharoti informs us that he wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to H. H. the Maharaja of Cochin, one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of India, for kindly looking through this study and offering his valuable suggestions.

EDUCATION AND RELIGION

The vexed question of imparting religious instructions in educational institutions has been agitating the minds of modern educationists and leaders of society. The question has of late assumed much prominence in India in view of its urgency and importance in any scheme of reorganization of our national education. The Constitution lays down that 'No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds'. But an exception is made in the case of certain special types of educational institutions. And even there, everyone is allowed full freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or worship. In a country where followers of different religions have to live side by side, as citizens of the same motherland, it is understandable and necessary that the State should be free from all communal or sectarian conceptions of religion.

There is some justification for the fear that religious instruction in educational institutions may give rise to tensions and disturbances, because of the unfortunate activities of many persons who have used (and may still want to use) the innocent student community, in the sacred name of religion, for destructive purposes in order to achieve their own self-seeking aims. But such fear does not certainly justify that religion itself, in any form whatsoever, be condemned and dispensed with, lock, stock, and barrel, as some persons seem to think. They should properly evaluate whether religion itself is to blame or whether the abuse of religion is to be condemned and effectively provided against. Or else, it would be like suggesting decapitation as a cure for headache. For, the solution seems simple enough, though absurd: Because there is what is called 'religion' in the world, there are its abuses too; *ergo* 'religion' (and religious instruction) should be done away with in order to cure man of bigotry and fanaticism.

Dr. M. S. Aney, Governor of Bihar, in his illuminating Address at the last Convocation of the Calcutta University, has very rightly emphasized the need for and the importance of religious education in schools and colleges. Dr. Aney's observations are not only thought-provoking but also most opportune,—the occasion was no less appropriate—and all serious thinkers on education would do well to reflect on them. 'Religion, in the widest sense, should inspire education,' observed Dr. Aney, 'and a curriculum devoid of all ethical basis will prove barren in the end.' Communalism or sectarianism has doubtless no place within the portals of the temple of learning. If it is admitted that the aim of education is the building up of a firm character, the educational institutions should impart to their students instruction in religious tolerance and understanding so that they may acquire that breadth of outlook and that active, living sympathy so very necessary for national solidarity. Moreover, true character, as Dr. Smiles says, is human will guided by morality and religion.

Deploring the fact that the education imparted in our schools and colleges at the present time made no provision for healthy and spiritually elevating religious instruction to growing boys and girls, Dr. Aney pointed out that the absence of such religious education was not a little responsible for the unwhole-

some effect of the prevailing system of education on the educated youth. He said:

'The effects of irreligious education were being felt by the society more clearly in the attitude of the youth, which showed a lamentable lack of discipline, self-restraint, and respect for the elders, their religion and ancient culture. . . . Our youth are being brought up in the tradition of veiled contempt for religion and everything religious. Spiritualists and religious devotees are the laughing stock of the educated youth, and as the general masses are religious-minded and have great respect and reverence for such devotees and spiritualists, they feel generally disgusted with the attitude of the educated class and have no regard for them as a class. The educated class has also no feeling of affection for the masses, whose ways of life are mostly moulded and determined by religious ideas. The result is that the educated classes have not been able to produce in large numbers servants to work for the amelioration of the masses in a real missionary spirit. This love for those who are suffering is the outward expression of a true spirit of religiousness and faith in God as the common Father of all.'

Dr. Aney exhorted the universities to give effect to the first recommendation of the University Commission which said that all educational institutions should start work with a few minutes of silent meditation. He felt that a student who had no morning and evening prayers became an 'unbeliever' and his mind became a blank book. 'Neither ethics nor religion makes any impression there. He runs after the mirage of rationalism and very often falls under the influence of some dangerous doctrines.'

Behind effective education lies vital religious experience. No one, not even those who have had the painful experience of all the great abuses of religion within living memory, need be afraid of *real* religion, confusing it with any form of pseudo-religion such as sectarianism, priestcraft, or 'world-negating' sanctimoniousness. The best remedy for religious (and communal) bigotry is not condemnation or disregard of religion as such but a better appreciation and deeper understanding of the basic principles of religion—one's own as well as another's. There is not the least harm in being a staunch believer in or practitioner of one's own faith, provided there is also a sincere effort at understanding the equally valid truths of other religions and studying the teachings of their great seers.

In this task of affording a golden opportunity to the youth, from their early years, for cultivating a positive and enlightened approach towards the ideals and ideas of the religions of the world, the educational institutions, in addition to the environment at home, can play a vital role. The task is no doubt not easy. And today, in India, the problem of providing religious (or even cultural) education in schools and colleges bristles with many difficulties. Yet it cannot be given up as unnecessary or impossible. Eminent educationists and the leaders of the people, of every community and religious group, should come together and apply themselves to the now perplexing task of evolving a commonly acceptable scheme of imparting religious instruction to boys and girls in a manner best suited to the needs of the country. Those who condemn, often thoughtlessly, everything connected with religion, not excluding all the spiritual values that every religion embodies, should learn the lesson of history that material life is not secure without a moral basis and moral life is not secure without a spiritual basis.

. . . You have the saying that men cannot be made virtuous by an Act of Parliament. And that is why religion is of deeper importance than politics, since it goes to the root, and deals with the essentials of conduct.'

—*Swami Vivekananda*

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

EVERYDAY LIFE IN ANCIENT INDIA. By Padmini Sengupta. *Published by Oxford University Press, Mercantile Buildings, Lal Bazar, Calcutta. 1. Pages 203. Price Rs. 5.*

It is a new and useful addition to the series of books dealing with the history and culture of ancient India. In particular, it professes to describe the various phases of the everyday life of the people in those past days—'how our ancestors lived and talked, and ate and slept, what they worked at . . . what they wore . . .'. The subject is so vast and the available information so plentiful that it is difficult to do full justice to it within the space of a small book, and the writer must be complimented for having condensed an immense amount of information into a remarkably small compass.

The book has been divided into fourteen chapters. Chapters II-VI describe the salient features of our civilization, through the succeeding epochs, from the earliest age to the advent of Islam in the country ; chapter VII gives a picture of the life of the people in the South ; chapter VIII summarizes the impressions of the Greek and Chinese visitors to India ; and the remaining chapters deal with such topics as literature and the seats of learning, status of women, arts, crafts and occupations, and dress and ornaments. The book also contains a useful Index, in addition to illustrations and bibliographies attached to each chapter.

The book, however, contains certain statements which would not meet with general acceptance, e.g. the assertion that 'no events of great importance are chronicled during Puṣyamitra's reign' (p. 75) is contrary to the evidence furnished by the *Mahābhāṣya, Mālavikāgnimitram* or the Ayodhya Stone Inscription that he defeated a Greek invader and celebrated two *Aśvamedha-yajñas*. Likewise the statement that Fa-hien does not mention Nalanda (p. 167) needs to be modified in the light of what Prof. Giles has to say on the subject (*The Travels of Fa-hsien,* p. 49). It is also difficult to agree with the writer that the 'last two centuries of the Hindu period were static and negative' (p. 6): it would be ignoring the creative activity of an age which produced the Khajuraho and Bhuvanesvara groups of temples and the many eminent men of letters who adorned the courts of contemporary rulers. Again, the statement that Fa-hien has given 'a vivid chronicle of the life of Chandragupta Vikramāditya' (p. 77, n. 1) is surprising for, the Chinese pilgrim has not even mentioned the name of the great emperor during whose reign he had visited the country. Similarly one cannot subscribe to the writer's view that 'the famous buildings of Sanchi had crumbled into complete ruin' in the Gupta period (p. 79) or that Samudragupta had transferred the capital to Ayodhya (p. 77).

The learned writer may also consider the advisability of incorporating, in the subsequent editions of the book, the information preserved in the Jātakas and in the *Dharma* and *Gṛhya Sūtras* on the daily life of the people in ancient India, and of inserting diacritical marks in the transliterations of Sanskrit words into Roman script.

Dr. R. K. Dikshit

KANNADA

PURANDARA-DĀSARA-KIRTANE. *Published by P. G. Rao & Sons, S. M. S. Granthalaya, P.B. No. 16, Udupi (Madras). Pages 530. Price Rs. 4.*

The volume under review is a magnificent collection of the ecstatic Kirtanas (devotional songs and hymns) of Purandara-Dāsa, the well-known poet-mystic of South India. It is divided into five parts and contains over a thousand Kirtanas and over a hundred Ugābhogas (transcendental sayings and maxims). The publishers deserve congratulations for their laudable effort in bringing out this one-volume edition, at a moderate cost, with the object of popularizing the Kirtanas and conveying, through them, the spiritual message of Purandara-Dasa, for the benefit of the Kannada-reading public.

Purandara seems to have been a native of Hampi. Purandara Vithala, an emanation of Lord Vishnu, was his Ishta-Devata. This is clear from the common ending of every song and saying of his. He lived in the court of the ruler of Vijayanagar, King Achyutaraya, and died in (or about) 1564, a year (or so) before the fall of the Vijayanagar Kingdom. He was a Brahmin of the Madhva Deshastha sect, and is a unique example of a millionaire who became overnight a saint and later a great composer.

He is most famous and popular among the Madhva singer-devotees of Vishnu, whose ten incarnations, with detailed incidents therein,—especially those of Rama and Krishna—Purandara commemorates in the sweetest of songs found in the Kannada language. That he was a learned musician is quite patent from the huge number of Rāgas and intricate Tālas in which his songs seem to have been composed. (Cf. Song 136, Part IV). What Tyagaraja is to the Telugu musical world, Purandara is to the Karnataka.

Purandara's diction is always direct, simple, and mellifluous. He relates himself to God in different common human ties existing between parents and children, masters and servants, and of lovers. He

is often ecstatic and tender when he touches upon the childhood incidents of Krishna, or interprets, in his masterly way, the Rāsa-Kridā (Song 163, Part IV), or exhorts people to rise to spiritual and ethical heights (Songs 61 and 77, Part I) in order to live righteous and honest lives, giving up dissimulation, with a view to reaching the Lord. There is a likeness between this immortal bard of Karnataka and Jayadeva, the great Sanskrit poet and illustrious author of *Gita-Govinda*. Devotion being the easiest of all spiritual paths of the present age, this singer, who is also a Yogi, advocates it to the laity. 'Nāma-Japa' being an important step in Bhakti Sadhana, Purandara emphasizes this in his Kirtanas, for not only cultivating Yogic concentration but also as a salve for many human ills. He places this above everything else in an illustrative manner (Songs 18 and 73, Part I), and goes even to the extent of defying God, saying 'I do not need Thee, but only Thy Name!'.

Part V contains, besides a number of Kirtanas, Purandara's renderings, into Kannada songs, of some important Sanskrit Shlokas, under the caption 'Bhagavadgita-Sāra'. His Ugābhogas have the crispness and simplicity Upanishadic statements, relating to the empyrean and the transcendental.

In the book under review, a great desideratum is an illuminative introduction, elucidating the authenticity of the text and the philosophy of this master-composer, for, instances are not wanting where the text has different readings (e.g. there are different readings to the second and sixth Charanas of Song 18 and the second Charana of Song 93 both of Part I). Moreover, the inclusion of a biographical sketch in the book will enhance its usefulness to the general reader.

P. Sama Rao

NEWS AND REPORTS

CONSECRATION OF RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE, KAMARPUKUR

The consecration ceremony of the Temple of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna at his birthplace, Kamarpukur, will be celebrated by his devotees and followers on Friday, the 11th May, 1951.

Those who wish to attend the function are requested to contact for accommodation etc. Swami Saradeswarananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, P.O. Kamarpukur, Dt. Hooghly (West Bengal), before the 25th April.

P.O. Belur Math
Dt. Howrah
19. 3. 51

(Sd.) Swami Vireswarananda
General Secretary
Ramakrishna Math

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BOMBAY

Opening Ceremony of Students' Home, Vivekananda Hall, Shivananda Library, and Charitable Hospital

On the 4th March 1951 an impressive and colourful ceremony was held at the Ramakrishna Mission, Khar, Bombay, the occasion being the formal opening of four new institutions of the Mission by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India. The laudable humanitarian activities of the Bombay branch of the Ramakrishna Mission have been considerably augmented by the addition of these useful institutions which comprise a Students' Home, the Vivekananda Hall, the Shivananda Library, and Charitable Hospital wherein all the three systems of medical treatment—Ayurvedic, Homoeopathic, and Allopathic—will be available.

Presiding over the function, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, Vice-Chancellor of Poona University, said that the ideals which guided the Ramakrishna Mission were cultural, quasi-religious, and humanitarian, in short, of alleviating human suffering wherever it might exist. In the quasi-religious field, its work did not show even a trace of 'egotistical intolerance'. It was quasi-religious in the sense that it afforded consolation on the cultural plane to bring several communities together in order to carry out the great ideals of Swami Vivekananda.

In his inaugural address, declaring open the new institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, the Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru observed that for the last twenty years or more he had been visiting Ramakrishna Mission centres and the institutions conducted by it, both in India and abroad. He had been impressed both by the good work the Mission had done and by its singular lack of 'that modern craze for vulgar publicity'. The Mission's work had always been unostentatious, quiet, and efficient. It was the inspiration of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and the encouragement of Swami Vivekananda that sustained the Mission.

In his early youth, Sri Nehru said, he had read some of the books and speeches of Swami Vivekananda. In later years, when he had more leisure

during periods of imprisonment, he had read them again and was astonished to find how the message contained in them remained immutable and formed part of the ideals and message of India as a whole. But while enunciating that message, Swami Vivekananda had made it something constructive and manly, something that made one vital, something that made one feel and work and live it.

Sri Nehru continued: The message of India to the world from time immemorial had been one of unity and tolerance. India's has always been a broad and tolerant outlook and not a 'proselytizing outlook' as it has been of some other nations. There has been no compulsion, no force in India's outlook. The basic strength of India has been that while maintaining her essential unity, she has pursued the ideal of 'live and let live' and not come in the way of others. He felt that the message of India had been reflected in the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's appeal was to the spiritual man. Great men leave their message, and small men follow after them, and, in that process, often make the message rigid, leaving out the spirit of the message and retaining only the letter of it. But the Ramakrishna Mission had translated the message of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda into action.

Deploring any tendency towards regimentation in cultural or religious thought, and emphasizing the need for strengthening the vital and basic unity of the country as a whole while, at the same time, not jeopardizing the rich diversity of life and type, Sri Nehru said: Ramakrishna Paramahamsa expressed the essential unity of the country with its enormous variety of faith, belief, and ways of life. But sometimes one was likely to forget that there was a tremendous variety in India, for, having lived in a particular part of the country and got accustomed to a particular pattern of life, one was apt to think that that part and that pattern was India. But India was too big. There was a great variety between the southern and northern tips of the country But her essential unity had kept India together in spite of political disasters. The unity as well as the variety had to continue. If the unity was forgotten or if the variety alone was stressed, then the country would go to pieces.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

An Appeal

The newly-opened Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium, by the side of the Ranchi-Chaibassa road, 10 miles from Ranchi town, removes a long-felt want. It has been able to secure the expert services of Dr. M. S. Mitra, M.B., T.D.D. (Wales), (who was associated with the Lady Linlithgow Sanatorium, Kasauli, for a number of years), as Medical Superintendent. There are also other medical assistants and nursing staff necessary for the efficient working of the Sanatorium. It will have the additional advantage of consulting specialists of Ranchi town, whenever necessary. Besides, there are X-ray and other modern equipments.

At present the Sanatorium provides accommodation for 25 male patients in a General Ward and 7 in a Special Ward. No building has so far been erected for women patients, nor are there individual Cottages for patients, as yet. A cheap type of Cottage may, however, be built within three months for a patient who makes an advance payment of fees for two years.

For running the institution economically and, at the same time, for providing greater facilities to the sufferers, the number of beds in the Sanatorium has to be raised at least to 100. This will involve a heavy capital expenditure. For, in addition to accommodation for 100 patients in Wards and Cottages, there is need for an Administrative Block for properly housing the X-ray plant, Dispensary, Laboratory, Operation Theatre (with attached post-operative ward), offices, and hospital stores. Suitable quarters for the medical staff are also urgently required.

The need for increasing beds for tuberculosis patients can hardly be overemphasized. It is our earnest appeal to our largehearted countrymen to help liberally this new institution of the Ramakrishna Mission. Any one wishing to perpetuate the memory of his near and dear ones can do so by donating for a Cottage or part of a bigger building. The cost of construction of a single-bed Cottage, with attached rooms for attendant, kitchen, and bath is Rs. 6,000, and that for a double-bed one, with separate kitchens, etc. for each patient, is Rs. 10,000.

Any contribution, in cash or kind, either for construction or for maintenance of the Sanatorium will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

Swami Vedantananda
Secretary
Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium,
P.O. Hatia, Ranchi (Bihar)