PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

NEW DISCOVERIES REGARDING SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—IV

By An American Devotee

I

Among the many gaps which one finds in the biographies of Swami Vivekananda is that which appears after the Parliament of Religions and extends over the period comprising the last part of 1893 and almost the whole of 1894. The gap is, to be sure, not total. We know, for instance, that Swamiji toured through the East and Middle West, lecturing in many cities, for a time in connection with a lecture bureau and later on his own, and also as he went from place to place we catch distant and disconnected glimpses of him. But when we consider the thousands of conversations he must have held during this period, the hundreds of lectures and the many private interviews he must have given, to say nothing of the innumerable spiritual experiences he must have had, we cannot help but feel dissatisfied with the meagerness of our present knowledge. I am happy to say, however, that in this current installment, and in the one to follow, I may be able to throw a little light upon Swamiji's post-Parliament life and activities.

One thing about this period which has been obscure is the length of time Swamiji remained in Chicago before commencing his lecture tour. Supported by one or two contemporary reports, we can now hazard the guess that he made his home there for at least two months, taking short trips to nearby towns and, as will be seen, perhaps travelling as far afield as Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. It was probably not until the end of November that he began to make extended lecture trips through the Middle West and East, returning to Chicago only occasionally. During the months Swamiji lived in Chicago, he not only lectured in and about the city, but absorbed all kinds of information regarding the workings of Western civilization, in so far as such information could be of benefit

to India. Chicago offered him a broad field of study, for there is little representative of the West that cannot be found there; and this was as true in 1893 as it is today.

The Chicago correspondent of *The Critic,* Lucy Monroe, whose article of October 7 was quoted in the last installment, again wrote about Swamiji on November 11. Lucy Monroe, it might be mentioned here, was a sister of Harriet Monroe, the poetess, to whom we owe one of our vivid descriptions of Swamiji. Unlike her sister, Lucy Monroe went to hear Swamiji more than once, not merely because of her duty as a reporter, but, to judge from her articles, because of her personal appreciation of him. A small portion of the following report may be familiar to the reader, for, by way of illustrating the fact that he was proving to America that Indians "are not savages," Swamiji himself quoted from it in a letter to India. The full report reads as follows:

THE CHICAGO LETTER

> . . . It was an outgrowth of the Parliament of Religions, which opened our eyes to the fact that the philosophy of the ancient creeds contains much beauty for the moderns. When we had once clearly perceived this, our interest in their exponents quickened, and with characteristic eagerness we set out in pursuit of knowledge. The most available means of obtaining it, after the close of the Parliament, was through the addresses and lectures of Suami Vivekananda, who is still in this city. His original purpose in coming to this country was to interest Americans in the starting of new industries among the Hindoos, but he has abandoned this for the present, because he finds that, as "the Americans are the most charitable people in the world," every man with a purpose comes here for assistance in carrying it out. When asked about the relative condition of the poor here and in India, he replied that our poor would be princes there, and that he had been taken through the worst quarter of the city only to find it, from the standpoint of his knowledge, comfortable and even pleasant.
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> A Brahmin of the Brahmins, Vivekananda gave up his rank to join the brotherhood of monks, where all pride of caste is voluntarily relinquished. And yet he bears the mark of race upon his person. His culture, his eloquence, and his fascinating personality have given us a new idea of Hindoo civilization. He is an interesting figure, his fine, intelligent, mobile face in its setting of yellows, and his deep, musical voice prepossessing one at once in his favor. So it is not strange that he has been taken up by the literary clubs, has preached and lectured in churches, until the life of Buddha and the doctrines of his faith have grown familiar to us. He speaks without notes, presenting his facts and his conclusions with the greatest art, the most convincing sincerity; and rising at times to a rich, inspiring eloquence. As learned and cultivated, apparently, as the most accomplished Jesuit, he has also something Jesuitical in the character of his mind; but though the little sarcasms thrown into his discourses are as keen as a rapier, they are so delicate as to be lost on many of his hearers. Nevertheless his courtesy is unfailing, for these thrusts are never pointed so directly at our customs as to be rude. At present he contents himself with enlightening us in regard to his religion and the words of its philosophers. He looks forward to the time when we shall pass beyond idolatry—now necessary in his opinion to the ignorant classes,—beyond worship, even, to a knowledge of the presence of God in nature, of the divinity and responsibility of man. "Work out your own salvation," he says with the dying Buddha; "I cannot help you. No man can help you. Help yourself."

Much later, in September, 1894, *The Interocean,* a Chicago newspaper, ran an article on Swamiji which included a sentence pertinent to the weeks following the Parliament:

> . . . Vivekananda lingered in Chicago for several months after the great Parliament of Religions closed, studying many questions relating to schools and the material advancement of civilization in order to carry back to his own people as convincing arguments regarding America as he brought to this country concerning the morality and spirituality of his own people.

In view of the fact that Swamiji "lingered in Chicago" for so long a time, we have, to date, been able to find surprisingly little in the contemporary Chicago press concerning his lectures. We have, however, been able to gather a few reports of his trips to neighboring towns. Almost immediately following the Parliament, one such trip was made to Evanston, Illinois, in conjunction with Dr. Carl von Bergen, a fellow delegate from Stockholm, Sweden. Dr. von Bergen, to judge from a photograph published in "Neely's History of the Parliament of Religions," was a rather formidable, beetle-browed man, bald-headed and bewhiskered. According to the records, he spoke only once at the Parliament, giving on the opening day a short talk in which he made it clear that the broad and tolerant outlook of the Christian church in Sweden long antedated that of the Parliament of Religions. In other words, the conception that all religions have a measure of good in them was not new to him. We have reason to believe that von Bergen was one of those delegates who later developed a friendship with Swamiji, for we find that he attended a small and intimate luncheon in his company many months after the Parliament. But of this, more later.

Our information regarding the Evanston lectures came to us first from the *Chicago Evening Journal* of September 29, 1893, in the form of a preliminary announcement:

ALTRUISM OF CHRISTIANITY

It Will Be Contrasted with Hindoo Ethics in Lectures at Evanston

Suami Vivekananda, a representative from India to the recent World's Parliament of Religions, and Dr. Carl Von Bergen, a representative from Scandinavia, will give three lectures in Evanston beginning to-morrow evening. The other lectures will be given on Tuesday and Thursday evenings of next week in the Congregational Church. The subjects for Saturday evening are "Altruism in Christianity; illustrated by the life of Catherine of Siena, the herald of pure Christianity in the middle ages," by Dr. Von Bergen; "Hindu Altruism," by Suami Vivekananda. Tuesday evening, "Monism," Suami Vivekananda; "Lord Shaftesbury, the most earnest philanthropist of our age," Dr. Von Bergen. On this evening John W. Hutchinson will sing a number of the old time songs which have made him so famous. Thursday evening, "Huldine Beamish; the founder of the Edelweiss," Dr. Von Bergen. "Reincarnation," Suami Vivekananda.

The announcements in the Evanston papers of this lecture course first appeared on September 23, four days before the close of the Parliament, and then again on September 30, a week later:

THE EVANSTON PRESS
September 23, 1893

NEWS NOTES

SUAMI VIVEKANANDA is the brilliant Hindu monk at the Parliament of religions. He has been the center of attraction on all occasions, not only by his

> "Baltimore Oriole" dress, but by his beaming countenance, his perfect unconsciousness [sic] and his marvelous eloquence in expounding Hindu philosophy. This brilliant orator has been engaged to give a course of three lectures in Evanston beginning Saturday, Sept., 30.

The announcement in *The Evanston Index* was much the same as that above, and I will not burden the reader with it here, except to say that *The Index* referred to Swamiji himself—not his dress—as "the Baltimore Oriole." I will also spare the reader the notices of September 30, for the only additional information to be gathered from them is that admission to one lecture was fifty cents, and to the course of three, one dollar.

Since both Evanston papers were weeklies, it was not until Swamiji and Dr. von Bergen had completed their three lectures that *The Evanston Press* and *The Evanston Index* each ran a report on the series. The report in *The Evanston Index* of October 7, 1893, which is the more comprehensive, reads as follows (I have omitted those passages which relate only to Dr. Carl von Bergen):

RELIGIOUS LECTURES

> At the Congregational Church, during the past week, there have been given a course of lectures which in nature much resembled the Religious Parliament which has just been completed. The lecturers were Dr. Carl von Bergen, of Sweden, and Suami Vivekananda, the Hindu monk. . . . Suami Vivekananda is a representative from India to the Parliament of Religions. He has attracted a great deal of attention on account of his unique attire in Mandarin colors, by his magnetic presence and by his brilliant oratory and wonderful exposition of Hindu philosophy. His stay in Chicago has been a continual ovation. The course of lectures was arranged to cover three evenings. [The lectures of Saturday and Tuesday evenings are listed without comment; then the article continues:] On Thursday evening Oct. 5, Dr. von Bergen spoke on "Huldine Beamish, the Founder of the King's Daughters of Sweden," and "Reincarnation" was the subject treated by the Hindu monk. The latter was very interesting; the views being those that are not often heard in this part of the world. The doctrine of the re-incarnation of the soul, while comparatively new and little understood in this country, is well-known in the east, being the foundation of nearly all the religions of those people. Those that do not use it as a dogma, do not say anything against it. The main point to be decided in regard to the doctrine is, as to whether we have had a past. We know that we have a present and feel sure of a future. Yet how can there be a present without a past. Modern science has proved that matter exists and continues to exist. Creation is merely a change in appearance. We are not sprung out of nothing. Some regard God as the common cause of everything and judge this a sufficient reason for existence. But in everything we must consider the phenomena; whence and from what matter springs. The same arguments that prove there is a future prove that there is a past. It is necessary that there should be causes other than God's will. Heredity is not able to give sufficient cause. Some say that we are not conscious of a former existence. Many cases have been found where there are distinct reminiscences of a past. And here lies the germ of the theory. Because the Hindu is kind to dumb animals many believe that we believe in the reincarnation of souls in lower orders. They are not able to conceive of kindness to dumb animals being other than the result of superstition. An ancient Hindu priest defines religion as anything that lifts one up. Brutality is driven out, humanity gives way to divinity. The theory of incarnation does not confine man to this small earth. His soul can go to other, higher earths where he will be a loftier

> being, possessing, instead of five senses, eight, and continuing in this way he will at length approach the acme of perfection, divinity, and will be allowed to drink deep of oblivion in the 'Islands of the Blest.' "

I will not give here the report on the lectures that appeared in *The Evanston Press* of the same date, for nothing additional is to be learned from it except that "Mrs. Elizabeth Boynton Harbert entertained the lecturers at her residence Thursday evening, and here the third lectures were delivered."

Another indication that Swamiji lectured outside of Chicago comes from a letter which he wrote to Mrs. Tannatt Woods on October 10, 1893. Readers will remember the letter from the first installment of this series, but for the sake of convenience I will requote its pertinent passages: ". . . Just now," Swamiji writes, "I am lecturing about Chicago—and am doing very well—it is ranging from 30 to 80 dollars a lecture . . . Yesterday I returned from Streator where I got 87 dollars for a lecture. I have engagements every day this week. . . ."

Streator is a relatively small city, ninety miles southwest of Chicago. To judge from the announcement which appeared in the *Streator Daily Free Press* of October 5, 1893, the prices of admission to Swamiji's lecture, which was given in the Plumb Opera House of Streator, were twenty-five cents for the first floor and thirty-five cents for the balcony! By a mathematical process, and allowing for the percentage taken by the manager of the house, one can arrive at the conclusion that Swamiji's audience consisted of approximately six hundred people. But although the lecture was well attended, the *Streator Daily Free Press* of October 9, ran the following somewhat dreary review:

VIVEKANANDA

> The lecture of this celebrated Hindoo at the Opera House, Saturday night, was very interesting. By comparative philology, he sought to establish the long admitted relationship between the Aryan races and their descendants in the new world. He mildly defended the caste system of India which keeps three-fourths of the people in utter and humiliating subjection, and boasted that the India of today was the same India that had watched for centuries the meteoric nations of the world flash across the horizon and sink into oblivion. In common with the people, he loves the past. He lives not for self, but for God. In his country a premium is placed upon beggary and tramps, though not so distinguished in his lecture. When the meal is prepared, they wait for some man to come along who is first served, then the animals, the servants, the man of the house and lastly the woman of the household. Boys are taken at 10 years of age and are kept by professors for a period of ten to twenty years, educated and sent forth to resume their former occupations or to engage in a life of endless wandering, preaching, and praying, taking along only that which is given them to eat and wear, but never touching money. Vivekananda is of the latter class. Men approaching old age withdraw from the world, and after a period of study and prayer, when they feel themselves sanctified, they also go forward spreading the gospel. He observed that leisure was necessary for intellectual development and scored Americans for not educating the Indians whom Columbus found in a state of savagery. In this he exhibited a lack of knowledge of conditions. His talk was lamentably short and much was left unsaid of a seeming greater importance than much that was said.

It is clear from the above report that the American press, for one reason or another, did not always give Swamiji an enthusiastic reception.

To date these reports are all we have been able to gather in connection with Swamiji's side trips from Chicago, although undoubtedly there are many more waiting to be found. And just as we do not know fully his public life at this period, so we do not know in detail his private life and state of mind. We are not, however, completely in the dark in this latter regard, for we have been able to gather some new material which indicates what a blessed state he was in and that, in spite of his incessant activity in our world, he lived in a world of his own—a world of perfect serenity. How fortunate were those who knew him at this time, for his inner peace was such that it shone out as a blessing and a revelation! An excerpt from a newly discovered letter written to Swamiji by a member of the Hale family is illustrative of this aspect of his nature. This letter was written long after the Parliament, on February 26, 1895, but during the course of it the writer recalls Swamiji as

> . . . the great and glorious soul that came to the Parliament of Religions, so full of love of God, that his face shone with Divine light, whose words were fire, whose very presence created an atmosphere of harmony and purity, thereby drawing all souls to himself.

One look at a hitherto unpublished photograph which has recently come to our hands is enough to show us something of what the writer meant. I am sending a copy of it with this article, hoping that the publisher of *Prabuddha Bharata* will be able to reproduce it for the benefit of the reader. Looking at this photograph one cannot fail to be moved by the childlike tenderness of Swamiji's appearance, and by the wonderful peace and calm of his expression. Inasmuch as this picture was copyrighted in Washington by the photographer, it was evidently taken after Swamiji had become famous, that is, after the first day of the Parliament. It has come to us along with a group of five, all of which, there is reason to believe, were taken during the Parliament, and all of which have been published. One of these is no doubt familiar to the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata*; it is that in which Swamiji stands with arms folded across his chest and which was used as a colored poster during Parliament days. The set as it has come to us evidently belonged to Miss Isabelle McKindley, who was a niece of Mr. and Mrs. Hale and of whom, the reader will remember, Swamiji once wrote in a letter to Swami Brahmananda. All these six pictures are autographed by Swamiji and inscribed in his hand with English translations from Sanskrit mottoes, and some with also the original Sanskrit written in Bengali characters. The mottoes are as follows:

——1. Ajarâmaravat prâjnah vidyâm
arthancha chintayet/
Grihîta-iva késhéshu mrityunâ
dharmamâcharet//

When in search of knowledge or prosperity think that you would never have death or disease, and when worshipping God think that death's hand is in your hair.

2. Eka eva suhrid dharma
nidhanépyanuyâti yah/

Virtue is the only friend which follows us even beyond the grave.

Everything else ends with death.

Vivekananda

3. One infinite pure and holy—beyond
thought beyond qualities I bow down to thee

Swami Vivekananda

4. Samatâ sarva-bhûtéshu étanmuktasya lakshanam
Equality in all being this is the sign of the free
Vivekananda

5. Thou art the only treasure in this world
Vivekananda

6. Thou are the father the lord the mother the husband and love
Swami Vivekananda

It is through the kindness of Swami Vishwananda, who is in charge of the Vedanta center in Chicago, that these photographs and other invaluable material regarding Swamiji have come to our hands, and it is with his assent that we are making them known to the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata*. The story of how this material was discovered by Swami Vishwananda is worth telling here, for it is an example of those coincidences that occur so frequently in matters concerning Swamiji. Swami Vishwananda tells us that a young man, unconnected with Vedanta, had received from his grandmother a bundle of old letters, photographs and other material, all pertaining to Swami Vivekananda. Knowing that his grandmother had cherished them, the young man had kept them, and indeed might still have them, or perhaps by this time have discarded them, had it not been that a friend of his was a student of Swami Vishwananda. How this friend came to know of the bundle of old documents is not known, but one day she told Swami Vishwananda of its existence. The Swami forthwith visited the young man and discovered, with what joy we can imagine, a veritable feast of hitherto unknown material! The young man gladly gave him the bundle. It is such stories as these which give us hope that eventually more hidden material regarding Swamiji will come to light, slowly pushing its way up through the years.

But to return to Swamiji as he was during the Chicago days following the Parliament. We are again indebted to Swami Vishwananda, this time for a letter which he received in 1939 from a disciple of Swamiji, Sarat Chandra Chakravarti, whose diary is published in "The Complete Works." Perhaps the clearest indication of the exalted state in which Swamiji lived during those days is given in a portion of this letter which, translated, reads as follows:

> . . . Swamiji once told me that one moonlit night when he was on the shore of Lake Michigan his mind began to merge in Brahman. Suddenly he saw Sri Ramakrishna and he remembered the Work for which he had come to this world, and then his mind came down and again turned toward the fulfillment of his mission. I recorded this in my diary, but I did not think it necessary to make it public; therefore I have not published it as yet. I am letting only you know. . . .

In what a transcendental spiritual state Swamiji lived at the very time when the world was his for the asking! The doors of the rich, the socially prominent, the brilliant, were all open to him, and everywhere he was in demand. But Swamiji's difficulty, it would seem, was not to lift his mind above the world that pressed about him on all sides, but, for the sake of his work, to hold it down!

During the months Swamiji remained in Chicago after the Parliament of Religions, he must have been the house guest of various friends. He himself writes of this period: "Many of the handsomest houses in this city are open to me. All the time I am living as a guest of somebody or other." Unfortunately we do not know at the present time who all Swamiji's hosts were, but from the fact that a letter dated November 19, 1893,

which he wrote to Mrs. Tannatt Woods (see Part I of this series) was written on stationery bearing the letterhead: George W. Hale, 541 Dearborn Avenue, Chicago, we can judge that he was a guest of the Hale family for at least part of the time. This family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hale, their two daughters, a son, and their two nieces, all of whom, as is well known, were deeply devoted to Swamiji and whose friendship was to prove of great comfort to him during his years in America. Evidently the Hales were excellent hosts, treating him as a cherished member of the family and understanding him, perhaps not fully, but far better than most.

The Hale home was a block and a half from Lincoln Park, and there Swamiji sometimes went to sit in the open air and sun. I have recently heard of a touching and revealing incident that took place during these outings. It seems that each day as Swamiji sat in the park, a young woman and a little girl of four or five would pass by on their way to the market. One day the woman, no doubt convinced that Swamiji was a kind and trustworthy Hindu, asked him if she might leave her child in his charge while she went about her marketing. Swamiji assured her that she might, and thenceforth each morning that they met in the park, Swamiji took the little girl into his care. But the story does not end here. When the child had grown to fifteen or sixteen her mother came upon a picture of Swamiji, of whose fame by that time she knew, and showing it to her daughter, asked: "Do you remember your friend?" She remembered; for who knowing Swamiji even at the age of five could forget? And as the memory of Swamiji grew in her mind, other thoughts also awoke, and from then on she felt drawn to a spiritual life. After she had grown up she moved to Philadelphia and there became a student of Swami Akhilananda, who used to visit that city now and then to meet with a group of devotees. How many small happenings such as that of a mother leaving her child in his charge must have taken place throughout Swamiji's visit to America—how many chance contacts he had with people whose path was led upward through his touch or glance—we can never know.

The Hale family were perhaps the most blessed of all; for, as is known, not only was Swamiji their guest from time to time, but he made their home his headquarters during almost all of 1894, before the pivot of his activities moved eastward to the Atlantic Coast. It was on George W. Hale letter paper, and thus, presumably, during one of his stays in the Hale home, that Swamiji jotted down a series of notes on the subject of love and reason. This manuscript has just recently come to my hands, and it is with great pleasure that I am able to present it here. Unfortunately we cannot accurately place its date, but inasmuch as Swamiji wrote these notes in the sanctuary that the Hales offered him in Chicago, I think they will not be out of place here. I am giving them exactly as they appear in the original:

> Reason—has its limits—its base—
> its degeneration. The walls round it—
> Agnosticism. Atheism. But must not stop.
> The beyond is acting upon influencing us every
> moment—The sky the stars acting upon us—even
> those not seen. Therefore must go beyond—reason
> Alone can't go—finite can not get at the infinite.
>
> Faith its degeneration when alone—bigotry
> fanaticism—sectarianism. Narrowing
> finite ∴ can not get to the infinite.

Sometimes gain in intensity but looses [sic] in extensity—and in bigots & fanatics become worship of his own pride & vanity.

Is there no other way—there is Love it never degenerates—peaceful softening ever widening—the universe is too small for its expansiveness.

We can not define it we can only trace it through its development and describe its surroundings.

It is at first—what the gravitation is to the external world—a tendency to unification forms and conventionalities are its death. Worship through forms—methods—services forms—up to then no love.

When love comes method dies. Human language and human forms God as father, God as mother, God as the lover—Surata-vardhanam etc. Solomon's Song of Songs—Dependence and independence Love Love—

Love the chaste wife—Anasūyā Sītā—not as hard dry duty but as ever pleasing love—Sita worship—

The madness of Love—God intoxicated man—
The allegory of Radha—misunderstood
The restriction more increase—
Lust is the death of love
Self is the death of love
individual to general
Concrete to abstract—to absolute
The praying Mahomedan and the girl
The Sympathy—Kavīr—
The Christian nun from whose hands blood came
The Mohamedan Saint
Every particle seeking its own compliment [sic]
When it finds that it is at rest
Every man seeking—happiness—& stability
The search is real but the objects are themselves
but happiness is coming to them momentary at least
through the search of these objects
The only object unchangable and the only compliment
of character and aspirations of the human soul is God
Love is struggle of a human soul to find its
compliment its stable equilibrium its infinite rest

While Swamiji was in Chicago word of his great and saving spiritual power spread from person to person, and very likely many, seeking help and guidance, came to him for private interviews. A story of such interviews has been recounted by Mme. Calvé in her autobiography, "My Life," and subsequently reproduced in "The Life of Swami Vivekananda." But Mme. Calvé evidently did not choose to tell the whole story in her book. We are fortunate enough to have in our possession an account of this same meeting as she told it to a sympathetic friend long before she wrote her memoirs. It is to Mme. Paul Verdier, of Paris and San Francisco, that we are indebted for this earlier and

more complete version, for it was she to whom Calvé confided the story and who jotted it down while memory was still fresh.

Evidently it was in March of 1894, when Calvé was visiting Chicago with the Metropolitan Opera Company, that she first met Swamiji. She was at the peak of her career, having recently had a tremendous success in Europe and New York with her dramatic interpretation of the role of Carmen. The world was at her feet; she was entertained, as are most celebrities, by the cream of society, and had become friendly with whomever Swamiji was staying with at this time (most likely not the Hales). But Calvé, the toast of two continents, was possessed of a temperament that rarely makes for happiness. Tempestuous, headstrong and sensuous, she was, it would seem, frequently involved in emotional attachments. The most recent and most deeply felt of these had just come to an unhappy end, leaving her desolate. Her only comfort was her daughter, who had accompanied her to Chicago and upon whom she lavished her love. I will let the notes of Mme. Verdier tell the rest of the story, for they more closely approximate Mme. Calvé's own words:

> She [Calvé] told me that one evening at the opera where she was singing Carmen her voice had never been so beautiful and although she felt nervous going to the theatre, she had after the first act a tremendous success.
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> During the first intermission she suddenly felt terribly depressed and thought she would not continue the second act, but with a great effort she succeeded in getting ready and although she had the impression she would not be able to sing, she sang magnificently. Right after the second act, coming back to her dressing room she almost collapsed and asked the manager to announce she was ill. She was more depressed than before and had difficulty in breathing. The manager and people around her insisted so, that finally she continued and was almost carried to the stage for the last act. She told me that at that minute she made the greatest effort of her life to finish the performance. She also said that it was the day she sang her best and the public gave her a tremendous ovation. She ran to her dressing room without waiting for the applause, and when she saw several people and the manager waiting for her with sad faces, she knew something tragic had happened.
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> The tragedy was that her daughter, who had been in a house of a friend that evening, was dead, having been burned to death during the performance of Carmen. Calvé collapsed.
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> Then came the period of days during which she wanted to commit suicide. Her friend Mrs. X was constantly with her, trying to comfort her, asking, begging her to come to her house to see Swamiji. Calvé constantly refused. She told me that her only thought was to commit suicide by throwing herself in the lake. Three different times she left her house to drown herself and took the direction of the lake, and each time as though in a daze she found herself on the road to Swamiji's house. She said it was like awaking from a dream. And each time she came back home. Finally, the fourth or fifth time, she found herself on the threshold of her friend's house, the butler opening the door. She went in and sat in a deep chair in the living room. She was there for a while as in a dream, she said, when she heard a voice coming from the next room saying, "Come, my child. Don't be afraid." And automatically she got up and entered into the study where Swamiji was sitting behind a large table-desk.

From here on the story as it is quoted in "The Life" is substantially the same as that told to Mme. Verdier, and therefore I will not repeat it. The reader knows how Swamiji brought peace to Mme. Calvé's grief-stricken heart, and that for the rest of her life she was grateful to him.

There is yet another story which Mme. Calvé told regarding this period of Swamiji's life. Unfortunately we are not in a position to authenticate it, but it is not, in essence, an unlikely story, and, at the risk of providing material for the start of a legend, I think that I should let Swamiji's followers know of it. The story, as related in Mme. Verdier's journal from notes taken during conversations with Mme. Calvé, is as follows:

> Mr. X, in whose home Swamiji was staying in Chicago, was a partner or an associate in some business with John D. Rockefeller. Many times John D. heard his friends talking about this extraordinary and wonderful Hindu monk who was staying with them, and many times he had been invited to meet Swamiji, but, for one reason or another, always refused. At that time Rockefeller was not yet at the peak of his fortune, but was already powerful and strong-willed, very difficult to handle and a hard man to advise.
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> But one day, although he did not want to meet Swamiji, he was pushed to it by an impulse and went directly to the home of friends, brushing aside the butler who opened the door and saying that he wanted to see the Hindu monk.
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> The butler ushered him into the living room, and, not waiting to be announced, Rockefeller entered into Swamiji's adjoining study, and was much surprised, I presume, to see Swamiji behind his writing table not even lifting his eyes to see who had entered.
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> After awhile, as with Calvé, Swamiji told him much of his past that was not known to any but himself, and made him understand that the money he had already accumulated was not his, that he was only a channel and that his duty was to do good to the world—that God had given him all his wealth in order that he might have an opportunity to help and do good to people.
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> Rockefeller was annoyed that anyone dared to talk to him that way and tell him what to do. He left the room not satisfied, not even saying goodbye. But about a week after, again without being announced, he entered Swamiji's study and, finding him the same as before, threw on his desk a paper which told of his plans to donate an enormous sum of money toward the financing of a public institution.
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> "Well, there you are," he said. "You must be satisfied now, and you can thank for it."
>
> Swamiji didn't even lift his eyes, did not move. Then taking the paper, he quietly read it, saying: "It is for you to thank me." That was all. This was Rockefeller's first large donation to the public welfare.

The reader can make of this what he will. Except for the fact that it was, indeed, about this time that Rockefeller entered upon his career of philanthropy, there is nothing in the published accounts of his life to corroborate the story that he was inspired by Swamiji. But on the other hand, this is so intimate a story that it is unlikely that it would find its way into the biographies of a financier. We do know that in his own way Rockefeller was interested in religion, and once, almost as though echoing Swamiji, he said, explaining the reason behind his great philanthropy: "There is more to life than the accumulation of money. Money is only a trust in one's hands. To use it improperly is a great sin. The best way to prepare for the end of life is to live for others. That is what I am trying to do." (*John D. Rockefeller* by B. F. Winkleman. page 213.).

A definite picture of Swamiji's life in Chicago begins now to emerge. We see him in the full bloom of his youth, his face shining with a heavenly light, fulfilling many lecture engagements and, no doubt, many social engagements, taking a keen interest in Western life and institutions, and explaining India's life and culture in their true significance.

That fraction of his mind with which he attended to the world was brilliantly alert—indeed, was in itself far more than a match for the keenest intellect. But we see also that this small part was informed and illumined by a far larger part that lay quiet and untouched beneath the surface, always absorbed in God, ready to pour out blessings upon and alter the lives of those who came to him for help. How often Swamiji verged upon *nirvikalpa samadhi* only to be drawn back by Sri Ramakrishna, or by his own love and compassion for man, in order that he might fulfill his mission here, we cannot know; but we can assume that he lived on the borderline between the relative and the Absolute as a prophet of his supreme eminence must.

II

It is still not known exactly when Swamiji felt it advisable to enlist with a lecture bureau. Unfortunately we cannot be much more precise than "The Life" which tells us that "it must have been in the very late autumn or the early winter months when, to use his own expression, he 'began to whirl to and fro'." Although it indeed must have been around this time that the lecture tour started, Swamiji used the expression "I was whirling to and fro" at a much later date and in connection with his rapid travel between New York and Boston. He actually tells very little about his mid-Western "whirlings," or when and why he had joined a lecture bureau. But if his purpose was to broadcast the truth regarding Indian religion, culture and customs, which had been so systematically and thoroughly misrepresented to this country by Christian missionaries, and if he felt that he must earn money both for his own support and for the work in India, then to engage himself with a lecture bnreau seemed the logical step for him to take. Then, as now, lecture bureaus, concert agencies, impresarios etc. were necessary to anyone who would come before the general public throughout America. One might add that, by and large, such agencies are necessary evils, but of this Swamiji did not become aware until after he had signed a binding contract. Why no one warned him that almost as a matter of course attempts would be made to exploit him, I do not know, unless it was that his friends were as naive in this respect as was he. But, on the other hand, there was no other way to make coordinated engagements in many towns. The expedience of this move may have occurred to Swamiji as early as November 2, for in a letter written on that date he speaks of the fact that "a Christian lady from Poona, Miss Sorabji, and the Jain representative, Mr. Gandhi, are going to remain longer in the country and make lecture tours." From this we can gather that while Swamiji had not yet made any definite plans, he may have been considering the advantages of a lecture tour.

One is surprised to learn that when he did sign up he signed a three-year contract: It is in a sense difficult to believe this, for although Swamiji was uncertain of the future at this time, he had little intention of remaining in America for three years, and certainly would not have wanted to commit himself to do so. However, if one is to believe what one reads in newspapers, he did sign a long-term contract. This information is to be found in *The Appeal-Avalanche* of January 21, 1894, a Memphis, Tennessee, newspaper. "He," this paper says, meaning "Swami Vive Kananda," "is under contract with the 'Slayton Lyceum Bureau,' of Chicago, to fill a three-years' engagement in this country." It is possible that this entire bit of information is incorrect, for in the "Memoirs of Sister Christine" as published in the February, 1931, issue of *Prabuddha Bharata,* we learn that "after the Parliament of Religions, Swami Vivekananda was induced to place himself under the direction of Pond's Lecture Bureau and make a lecture tour of the United States."

Readers may think that it matters very little with which lecture bureau Swamiji enlisted; but consider how wonderful it would be if the files of the bureau could be tracked down! Perhaps somewhere, still undestroyed, is a list of all the towns Swamiji visited under its direction and the dates on which he spoke in them. To one who is trying to follow his footsteps across America no greater good fortune could be conceived.

However, little by little, even without this help we are able to fill in the gaps—although a certain amount of detective work is called for. One new clue regarding Swamiji's early post-Parliament activities may be mentioned here. In a joint letter dated December 7, 1893, two of Swamiji's disciples in Madras wrote to him expressing their joy upon hearing of his success in America. In the course of this letter, G. G. Narasimha writes this touching and informative paragraph:

> How much Alahiyasinga, Kidi and myself wished we were Americans and heard the words of wisdom as they flower from your mouth. We only succeeded in getting a summary of your address and a few of your utterances from the Chicago Daily's 'Tribune' and 'Interior Ocean.' We only came to know that you were received with an ovation in Washington and Philadelphia where you explained our Vedanta System.

Now this would mean that sometime in October or in the first half of November, 1893, Swamiji visited Washington and Philadelphia. It has not been possible at the date of this writing to follow up this clue, but I hope to be able to give the reader more information in a later installment.

In the meantime the first definite knowledge we have of the date on which Swamiji left Illinois to widen his field of activity over the whole of the country is contained in a letter which he wrote to Mrs. Tannatt Woods on November 11, 1893. This letter was published in the first installment, and the readers will perhaps remember that Swamiji said in it, "I am starting tomorrow for Madison and Minneapolis." That is all he tells of his plans. But it was enough to instigate a search of the Madison, Wisconsin, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, papers—a search which has not been unrewarding, although the Minneapolis reporters, as will be seen, had more to say regarding Swamiji's lectures than did those of Madison. However, meager as it is, here is the Madison report:

WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

November 21, 1893

GAVE AN INTERESTING LECTURE

> The lecture at the Congregational church last night by the celebrated Hindoo monk, Vivekananda, was an extremely interesting one, and contained much of sound philosophy and good religion. Pagan though he be, Christianity may well follow many of his teachings. His creed is as wide as the universe, taking in all religions, and accepting truth whereever it may be found. Bigotry and superstition and idle ceremony, he declared, have no place in "the religions of India."

Following are the reports of Swamiji's lectures in Minneapolis, Minnesota:

THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR

Saturday November 25, 1893

THE HINDOO RELIGION.

Its Principles and Truths Set Forth in a Clear and Forceful Manner in a Lecture by Swami Vive Kananda.

"Brahminism" in all its subtle attraction, because of its embodiment of ancient and truthful principles, was the subject which held an audience in closest attention last evening at the First Unitarian Church, while Swami Vive Kananda expounded the Hindoo faith. It was an audience which included thoughtful women and men, for the lecturer had been invited by the "Peripatetics," and among the friends who shared the privilege with them were ministers of varied denominations, as well as students and scholars. Vive Kananda is a Brahmin priest, and he occupied the platform in his native garb, with caftan on head, orange colored coat confined at the waist with a red sash, and red nether garments.

He presented his faith in all sincerity, speaking slowly and clearly, convincing his hearers by quietness of speech rather than by rapid action. His words were carefully weighed, and each carried its meaning direct. He offered the simplest truths of the Hindoo religion, and while he said nothing harsh about Christianity, he touched upon it in such a manner as to place the faith of Brahma before all. The all-pervading thought and leading principle of the Hindoo religion is the inherent divinity of the soul; the soul is perfect, and religion is the manifestation of divinity already existing in man. The present is merely a line of demarkation between the past and future, and of the two tendencies in man, if the good preponderates he will move to a higher sphere, if the evil has power, he degenerates. These two are continually at work within him; what elevates him is virtue, that which degenerates is evil.

Kananda will speak at the First Unitarian Church tomorrow morning.

It should perhaps be mentioned here that while Swamiji "had been invited by the 'Peripatetics,' " he nevertheless might at this time have been engaged by a lecture bureau; for it is a function of lecture bureaus to arrange precisely such engagements. On the other hand, he may still have been on his own. The next report appeared on the front page of *The Minneapolis Journal* of November 27, 1893:

AN ORIENTAL VIEW

Livami Vivekananda Addresses a Minneapolis Audience.

MERCENARIES IN RELIGION

In This way He Characterizes the Western Nations—He Tells About the Religions of India.

The Unitarian church was crowded yesterday morning by an audience anxious to learn something of eastern religious thought as outlined by Swami Vivekananda, a Brahmin priest, who was prominent in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago last summer. The distinguished representative of the Brahmn faith was brought to Minneapolis by the Peripatetic Club, and he addressed that

body last Friday evening. He was induced to remain until this week, in order that he might deliver the address yesterday.

Vivekanandi is a typical Uindeu, dark-skinned, well rounded features, and a flashing eye that gives evidence of a quick intellect. He appeared in his picturesque native dress. He occupied the platform with Dr. H. M. Simmons, the pastor, the opening prayer was sung, Vivekanandi following the lines closely, and then Dr. Simmons read from Paul's lesson on faith, hope and charity, and "the greatest of these is charity," supplementing that reading by a selection from the Brahmin scripture which teaches the same lesson, and also a selection from the Moslem faith, and poems from the Hindn literature, all of which are in harmony with Paul's utterances.

After a second hymn Swami Vivekanandi was introduced. He stepped to the edge of the platform and at once had his audience interested by the recital of a Hindu story. He said in excellent English:

"I will tell you a story of five blind men. There was a procession in a village in India, and all the people turned out to see the procession, and especially the gaily caparisoned elephant. The people were delighted, and as the five blind men could not see, they determined to touch the elephant that they might acquaint themselves with its form. They were given the privilege, and after the procession had passed, they returned home, together with the people, and they began to talk about the elephant. 'It was just like a wall,' said one. 'No it wasn't,' said another, 'it was like a piece of rope.' 'You are mistaken,' said a third, 'I felt him and it was just like a serpent.' The discussion grew excited and the fourth declared the elephant was like a pillow. The argument soon broke into more angry expressions and the five blind men took to fighting. Along came a man with two eyes, and he says, 'My friends, what is the matter?' The disputation was explained, whereupon the new comer said, 'Men, you are all right: the trouble is you touched the elephant at different points. The wall was the side, the rope was the tail, the serpent was the trnnk and the toes were the pillow. Stop your quarreling; you are all right, only you have been viewing the elephant from different standpoints'."

Religion, he said, had become involved in such a quarrel. The people of the West thought they had the only religion of God, and the people of the East held the same prejudice. Both were wrong; God was in every religion.

There were many bright criticisms on Western thought. The Christians were characterized as having a "shop-keeping religion." They were always begging of God—"Oh, God, give me this and give me that; Oh, God do this and do that." The Hindu couldn't understand this. He thought it wrong to be begging of God. Instead of begging, the religious man should give. The Hindu believed in giving to God, to his fellows, instead of asking God to give to them. He had observed that the people of the West, very many of them, thought a great deal of God, so long as they got along all right, but when reverse came, then God was forgotten: not so with the Hindu, who had come to look upon God as a being of love. The Hindu faith recognized the motherhood of God as well as the fatherhood, because the former was a better fulfillment of the idea of love. The Western Christian would work all the week for the dollar, and when he succeeded he would pray, "Oh, God, we thank thee for giving us this benefit," and then he would put all the money into his pocket; the Hindu would make the money and then give it to God by helping the poor and the less fortunate. And so comparisons were made between the ideas of the West and the ideas of the East. In speaking of God, Vivekanandi said in substance: "You people of the West think you have God. What is it to have God? If you have Him, why is it that so much criminality exists, that nine out of ten people are hypocrites? Hypocrisy cannot exist where God is. You have your palaces for the worship of God, and you attend them in part for a time once a

week, but how few go to worship God. It is the fashion in the West to attend church, and many of you attend for no other reason. Have you then, you people of the West, any right to lay exclusive claim to the possession of God?''

Here the speaker was interrupted by spontaneous applause. He proceeded: ''We of the Hindu faith believe in worshipping God for love's sake, not for what he gives us, but because God is love, and no nation, no people, no religion has God until it is willing to worship Him for love's sake. You of the West are practical in business, practical in great inventions, but we of the East are practical in religion. You make commerce your business; we make religion our business. If you will come to India and talk with the workman in the fields, you will find he has no opinion on politics. He knows nothing of politics. But you talk to him of religion, and the humblest knows about monotheism, deism and all the isms of religion. You ask:

'' 'What government do you live under?' and he will reply: 'I don't know. I pay my taxes, and that's all I know about it.' I have talked with your laborers, your farmers, and I find that in politics they are all posted. They are either Democrat or Republican, and they know whether they prefer free silver or a gold standard. But you talk to them of religion; they are like the Indian farmer, they don't know, they attend such a church, but they don't know what it believes; they just pay their pew rent, and that's all they know about it—or God.''

The superstitions of India were admitted, ''but what nation doesn't have them?'' he asked. In summing up, he held that the nations had been looking at God as a monopoly. All nations had God, and any impulse for good was God. The western people, as well as the eastern people, must learn to ''want God,'' and this ''want'' was compared to the man under water, struggling for air; he wanted it, he couldn't live without it. When the people of the West ''wanted'' God in that manner then they would be welcome in India, because the missionaries would then come to them with God, not with the idea that India knows not God, but with love in their hearts and not dogma.

We must leave Swamiji now in Minneapolis before continuing to piece together the further story of this post-Parliament period, throwing as mnch light on it as is possible. One thing which perhaps should be of some consolation to those of us who would like to see all the gaps filled in the story of Swamiji's life, is the fact that his brother monks and friends in India had an even more difficult time than we in attempting to keep track of him. By way of illustrating this, let me give here a letter of some poignancy, written through the direction of those whose hearts ached to hear of the doings and triumphs, in this strange land, of their beloved Swamiji.

The letter was addressed to Thos: Cook and Sons, Calcutta:

Dear Sirs—

Swami Vivekananda

Care Mr Geo. W. Hale

541 Dearborn Ave

The above Hindu monk has been travelling under Messrs Tho. Cook & Sons Agency. Your Bombay people arranged last year for his passage to America where he went to represent the Hindu religion at the Parliament of Religions held in connected with the World's Fair at Chicago—Swami Vivekananda is reported to have delivered several lectures in America, a few of which only are reproduced or noticed in the Indian papers—But as the extracts and notices that appeared here are believed to be unsatisfactory, the brother monks and admirers of Swamiji are anxious to obtain all the American papers or cuttings thereof as

most convenient containing all the speeches that have been delivered in and about Chicago, and in fact wherever he spoke in America, these to include all newspaper notices or criticisms both for and against that are known to have appeared, but not to include the Report of the Parliament of Religions issued by the Secretary of the Chicago Exhibition, a copy of which has already been secured from here. Under the circumstances the undersigned on behalf of the brother monks and admirers of Swami Vivekananda shall be very much obliged if you will kindly arrange, owing to the excellent facilities you possess on a/c of your numerous agencies and branches, with your people at Chicago for the collection of papers and pamphlets named above together with one or two copies of photos if they are in circulation, and have them all forwarded to your care, the express thereof shall be paid by Swamiji's admirers through the undersigned. Further the only address known of Swami Vivekananda is noted as above. It is quite possible that Swamiji has or will have left the place ere this reaches your Chicago Agent, therefore I beg to ask you to kindly write and inform your Chicago Agent to put himself in communication with Mr. Hale or any other party regarding the movements of Swami Vivekananda, who according to the rules of Hindu Sannyasi (ascetic) will not write and inform of his whereabouts, which information however is so anxiously looked for by his admirers and brother monks—

Yours obediently
Kali Krishna Dutta
Cashier & Accountant
Thos Cook & Sons
Calcutta

10-1 Old Court House St.
Calcutta 28th March/94

Although Swamiji often wrote to his Madras disciples, he did not, as we know, communicate with his brother monks until he had been in America nearly nine months. From "The Letters" we find that his letter to Swami Brahmananda, written on March 19, 1894, was his first to any one of them. It is little wonder, then, that they were eager for news! Why Swamiji did not communicate with his brother monks during the time he was writing regularly to his Madras disciples is a puzzle. Had he grown out of the habit of writing to them through a long separation? Or was he not yet prepared to offer them the new program which was taking shape in his mind, wanting, perhaps, to initiate it through his own disciples? Or, again, was he waiting for a command from On High before asking his brothers to follow his ideas? Yet another and more simple explanation presents itself in the fact that during this time most of the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna were still wandering through India and were as hard to trace as was Swamiji himself. The difficulty with this answer is that when Swamiji wanted to communicate his plans to his brother monks, he found their dispersion over India no particular drawback. It was possibly in April of 1894 that he wrote to Swami Shivananda asking that he call all the monks back to the Math to begin work. Almost immediately after receiving this letter, Swami Shivananda met Swami Brahmananda and Swami Turiyananda in Lucknow and relayed Swamiji's request to them. Swami Turiyananda returned to Calcutta in August, while Swami Brahmananda went first to Vrindavan, not leaving for Calcutta until November or December. Gradually all returned, and thenceforth Swamiji's letters from America to his brother monks were frequent, giving not much news of his external life, it is true, but giving something better—the power of his inspiration and vision that was to revolutionize the concept of monasticism in India.

THE CONTENT OF SPIRITUALITY

By the Editor

We have used, and shall have to use, the word 'spirituality' very often. So to prevent misunderstanding its connotation should be fixed. Apart from the difficulty of finding out the logical connotation, its vagueness will not be removed even if the attempt be successful. Clarity of expression being our aim, we shall try to describe it as best as we can, knowing as we do that some sort of vagueness will always remain round about it. What masters could not remove servants need not; but servants must be clear what they mean to say.

Etymology does not help us, for whatever 'spirit' might mean it certainly is not 'breath'. If we are to take 'breath' figuratively, darkness remains. The various shades of dictionary meaning do not take us any further, but they do show us the way to a sufficiently practical solution. If we carefully mark the different usage of the word, one thing is borne in upon us, that it indicates a 'core', something inside or within, an essence. This is what philosophy needs. Spirit is the innermost entity or being. Spirituality, therefore, means the quality or state of being the spirit or full of it. A man is spiritual to the degree he identifies himself, or rather feels himself identified, with the innermost entity. Scientists have placed matter in the position of an antithesis. So to the extent we are not full of the spirit or do not identify ourselves with it, or crave for something other than it, we are material—'where your treasure is there will your heart be also', says the Christ.

But can a man be whatever he wills to be? It would be dangerous, if this were so. A thing is what it is; it may appear differently with different adjuncts or under hallucination. Hallucination being mental and appearances being sensuous, it is the intervention of the mind and the senses that is responsible for a thing appearing other than itself. So appearances are not of the 'core' or the essence, they do not affect the spirit, the thing that it is. 'A man is spiritual', therefore, really means that he is the spirit, neither partly it nor full of it; and what appears in him to be lacking in spirit, or other than it, is but an appearance due to adjuncts or hallucination. To be spiritual then is equivalent to being oneself. Hence spirituality is not an acquired quality or a changing state, but the knowledge of the spirit, that we are that, that 'I am that I am'.

The two Sanskrit words used in the Upaniṣads, especially in philosophical discourses, are *Ātman* and *Brahman,* which convey the same meaning, viz. the innermost core, the essence, the all-pervading, the immutable. The Upaniṣadic equation of Atman = Brahman unites the four connotations into one and speaks of man as the immutable spirit; I am what is; whatever is, that I am, which amounts to 'I am that I am'.

What is man's experience of himself? That he is a conscious being, a being that is conscious of himself and the world. The common man does not go further, he is content to know himself as the knower and the world as his object of knowledge, and he goes about his work, his duties. He feels himself filled with many objects—feelings and desires. He feels an impulsion to do or to desist from doing, he wills, he works. He finds the world filled with objects, the same, or similar to what he feels within; he feels drawn towards them, he craves, wills, works for them. He is successful, he loves; he is deterred, he hates. As he seldom finds himself dispossessed of objects, he does not know him-

self even as the knower of all these objects. His life consists of a series of known and to-be-better-known objects, so much so that he almost forgets himself even as the knower, contradistinguished from the panoramic objects of his knowledge. But his forgetting of himself does not bring about any change in him—he is the same knower, whether he is conscious of it or not. Yet what an apparent transformation has taken place—spirit has turned matter! Consciousness and the source of consciousness have vanished, so to say, and matter has appeared and possessed the entire field. Bangkok, Formosa, SEATO, NATO, A- and H-bombs have possessed the field, the field of consciousness, from which, though present all the while and prompting the funny fatal game, consciousness has disappeared to all intents and purposes. The enthroning of this apparently dispossessed spirit is what is known as spirituality.

It is not an acquisition or attainment but a remembrance of our true nature, a re-embrace of ourselves and a promise and fulfilment thereof never to part again. Bangkok and Formosa are matter, are there; but are saturated by consciousness. They do not exist outside of consciousness or spirit but are informed and held together by it, which is ubiquitous. It is the spirit that is forming, de-forming, and re-forming the world, inside and outside, with and without a break; though it appears to be a product of chance, because a speck cannot conceive of the infinity at play. But when this speck realizes within and around it the existence of a force that has been forming it, maintaining its unity and consciousness, giving it all that it means by itself, it will have ceased to be a speck and have become the force; and having become the infinite it understands the play, its plan and purpose.

Was the speck ever a speck? Has it not all along been the force? Was it ever a distinct entity? Yes and no. The two, the speck as the speck and the speck as the force, are not contradictory. We actually see them together, feel their simultaneous existence in the speck, which is impossible in the case of contradictories—the existence of contradictories at the same time and space is inconceivable. But the speck, apart from the force, is nothing, is nowhere—the speck is an 'appearance' of the force which has innumerable other appearances, all otiose, H-bombs, Formosa, Chiang, Mao, that are thrown out and taken in; H-bombed, they disappear with a howl, and with many others; but out there a nebula whirls into existence a number of stellar worlds, where Dullesses and McCarthys, Churchills and Eisenhowers are not even dots. So this force is the reality, is what counts, and the appearances—this moment they are, the next moment they are not. That which pulverizes and that which is pulverized, that which is brought into being and that which brings into being—all these are the force—this force, and not plus anything. The speck here and the universe over there are merely this force, not blind but more than conscious—consciousness that we know of is only a mode of it. This is the spirit and the live knowledge of it is spirituality.

We call it *knowledge,* because it has the appearance of a new acquisition, so high and old is the heap of objects that hides it from our view; in reality the actual experience is that of the discovery of a thing that has all along been with the person as his very self. And this discovery changes the outlook of the man so completely that, to others, he turns out to be a new individual.

In the case of the theist the experience is fundamentally the same, though there is a slight difference in texture. His search was not for the reality in or behind the phenomena of the world; but for its Creator, about whom he cherished no doubts, and who was fundamentally different from what he experienced in the world, including himself. But the entire field of the theist's experience, including himself and the world outside, is suffused with the Divine presence in such a way that as long as the vision or experience or its memory lasts everything seems to be made of this one stuff divine. There are

distinctions, even innumerable, but there is no difference. In the rationalist's experience too —it may not be a vision—there are distinctions, but these distinctions being modal, due to the limited capacities of the mind and the senses, he goes beyond the sensuous experience, and relying on the veracity of reason and its correct processes accepts the latter's verdict as true and declares the differences to be appearances due to the constitutional limitations of the senses. Neither does the theist deny his mystic experience nor does the rationalist pluck out his senses. When, however, both these types of experience are subjected to the test of reason, we are driven to the conclusion of an all-pervasive conscious force building up and pulling down innumerable forms, sentient and insentient, itself remaining unaffected by the whirlpool of changes. The experiencer as well as the experience and the experienced is not different from or outside of it but is the very it. Judged by the veracity of the senses I am an individual, judged by that of reason I am the all-pervading force, creative and destructive. Between reason and the senses we are to choose and we know which to prefer.

Do we thereby repudiate the experience based on the individual, whose activities build all that is included in culture and civilization? Nobody can deny this practical life which is predominantly built by the senses, though supported and guided by reason. Nevertheless when reason is allowed to play its part the individual is no longer a mere individual but a particle forming the current and swayed by it. Then he is not a mere form, changing and vanishing, but something having a permanent ground and support that abides in the midst of changes. Then only the culture that he builds does not assume the character of a dew-drop, beautiful but short-lived, but of a meandering river, sparkling and dancing, changing its course, gushing with the rains and sleeping in the winter—beautiful yet not so short-lived as the other. Unguided by reason the senses cannot build anything, far less a culture. Guided by it, they build, though with varying degrees of permanence. What is the factor that contributes to this comparative permanence? It is the predominance of reason over sense factors in varying degrees. And when reason is absolute, building has terminated, culture and civilization are somebody else's concern, the individual has known himself as the reality, the spirit. So individuality, based as it is on sense experience, is a false assumption lasting as long as the senses hold the reins. When one is possessed by the seeking of truth or reality, the senses please no more; reason becomes the passion, which tears the veil asunder; individuality is swallowed up by the omnipresent spirit. Nationalism, humanitarianism, and the latest humanism appear stale, rouse no enthusiasm in the heart, because of their being based on the false assumptions of the senses. The highest art, philosophy, and science—all are based on, and are the outcome of, a compromise between reason and the senses. The experience, we mean the objective experience, is an amalgam of truth and falsehood. Consequently individual experience, on which hang culture and civilization, is not a nullity; it has a place and it plays an important part. It is a playmate of the universal in the latter's act of creation, preservation, and destruction; in and through it the universal acts. But it is limited, forms but an insignificant portion of the universal. The beyond is the guide, ground, and end of it. It is this beyond that holds the now and the here in its lap and that is the spirit; when the individual consciousness is aware of it and feels its presence and guidance within and around, in activity as well as in passivity, spirituality, the life in and of the spirit, dawns.

This spirituality is not a temporary feeling, which the poet and the artist sometimes have, or the lover and the philanthropist sometimes enjoy, or in a calm moment in the midst of tremendous activities the activist finds himself face to face with. It is an abiding settlement, a permanent possession, a filling to overflow when the personality's emptying is complete. To the theist it comes after an

Existentialist's moment, after a crisis, when life almost ceases to be. To the rationalist it is a serene revelation at the end of the ultimate analysis, the penultimate stage being equally critical, when things and beings, all objects, appear as reflections in the mirror of the Lady of Shalott, cracking from side to side and falling and breaking to pieces, when a soundless void engulfs the experiencer, who, later, rises up transfigured—as the universal. Whether a theist or a rationalist, the shifting of the centre of gravity from the individual to the universal is not an easy affair or a joyous process all through; it is a hard up-hill task, a perilous adventure, requiring the highest courage and aspiration, the most unflagging and unyielding zeal and determination, the most skilful workmanship. Its process is awfully slow, it cannot be mass-produced. One has to work through for years, apparently with no results or results quite unequal to the energy spent or risks staked. But the end, when reached, justifies the means; all the troubles and anxieties so far undergone are justified in the abiding joy that follows, in the awaking to our real self, the force universal, which never suffered.

This appears to be a linguistic, or at best a philosophical, quibble. So let us analyse it a little more deeply. It is, to be sure, the universal force, as individuals and as the unlimited current around, that has been, and is, working all along. It is the agent; as such it ought to be the enjoyer of the fruit of all these activities; for it is queer that *X* works and *Y* enjoys or suffers. Again, this universal force, judged from the results, does not appear to be enjoying the fruit. In 'quakes engulfing thousands and in wars killing millions as well as in numerous birth and marriage festivities and in victory celebrations, its indifference is palpable, its process goes on at the same unrelenting rate and speed and manner as ever. But the individuals dance with joys and beat their breasts in woes. We have seen, the individuals are nothing but this force, only calling their own the individual bodies and minds, which again are this force, being its modes, and which are being formed and reformed according to the will or (if you choose) vagaries of this force. And the consciousness of 'I' and 'mine' of the individuals also belong to this force, which being universal has nothing outside of it; this consciousness, it is a common experience, grows and decays and does not remain constant. So the whole trend of the argument amounts to this: Ever-changing conscious centres are trying to identify themselves with ever-changing bodies and minds that are running out at different speeds—all being particles of an unlimited field of conscious force.

Whence is this foolish urge at identification? It does not come from the individuals, the individuality itself being its product. The universal force being what it is, i.e. being the whole, is present in everything, in all individuals, in all bodies and minds; so there cannot be any urge for *becoming* what it already is. Yet the urge, though foolish and false, is there. It is something irrational and unreal. If we are to talk of any process, act, feeling, or experience it is of the force, which, being universal, possesses everything, is everything and cannot have any urge. Hence it is all a gigantic fun—the individual urge and experience, which are, as long as the individual wants them and sticks to his false individuality. But when reason brings the fun home to him he laughs, perhaps, in his sleeves. And there the matter ends—this false assumption goes, the real shines, joys and sorrows and all follies vanish. But the show goes on, *ad infinitum,* with other individuals. This understanding, this knowledge of our real being as the spirit universal is spirituality.

People say it comes as a flash, sometimes unsought, sometimes even per force. It is because the first experience has the appearance of a flash. But in reality the sufferer and enjoyer has to pay very dearly for the breaking of the dream. Very hard labour, interjected by despairs, tears, and sobs, is the price that individuals are to pay to break this false seriousness in order to enjoy the fun eternal. Real spirituality is not rosy romanti-

cism or soppy sentimentalism; it is not full of interjections, admiring beauties, and feeling nervous titillations. To break this false crust of individuality with its halo and glamour of raising humanity, building culture, discovering secrets of nature, fathoming the profundities of the psyche is not something that tricks can perform—all the will and energy of the individual must be bent on this one ideal if he wants success to attend him. To rise above the trivial temptations of a common man requires uncommon labour; how much more labour is required to break this illusion of the individual experience? To establish the proposition by reason is quite an easy thing—at least not very difficult; but to live the life of truth, to be so perfectly poised in the universal consciousness that not a moment's break is ever possible, is the most difficult task, needing a devoted dedication of the whole life, chastened and restrained.

All the numerous rites and ceremonies of the various churches and organizations and all the moral and social injunctions and restrictions that appear to be meaningless and annoying to the moderns have but this one end in view, viz. to chasten the common man's life, so that it may be orientated towards the spiritual goal. The fasts and vigils, the genuflexions and prostrations, the telling of beads and reading of scriptures, the baptisms and confessions are not matters to be pooh-poohed or belittled; nor have they been introduced at the whims of a Christian Father, a Muslim Mullah, or a Brahmin priest. Started surely by individuals prompted by an irresistible urge of their whole being, the rites and postures have come to obtain in societies and churches, when hosts of people testified to their proved efficacy in opening up the needed avenue of a new consciousness. They are not a day's introduction, and the forms they have taken are not casual ones; after a good deal of experimentation, in the course of which they must have undergone repeated changes to suit themselves to the racial and geographical conditions, have they assumed the present forms and established their rights of being recognized, of being followed implicitly. At their back there are holy associations of numberless saints and sages, whose memories create the atmosphere and tune the learner's mind to receive the spirit. No spiritual giant has ever talked of them except in terms of highest reverence.

No doubt some of the Indian sages of the Middle Ages have spoken deridingly of these rites and ceremonies, of going to mosques and temples, of poring over scriptures and quoting them fluently. But if we read these couplets and utterances with reference to the context we find in every case, without a single exception, that their tirades were not directed against these rites and customs as such but against the rampant hypocrisy and charlatanism of the contemporary leaders of church and society, against the Pharisees and Sadducees, against the devils quoting scriptures. We do not have the patience to undergo any training, we hate all kinds of discipline, and quote the utterances of the above sages to suit our convenience.

We cite Shri Ramakrishna's case and like to be saints looking at a flight of white cranes against the azure sky, or any other beautiful scene, little knowing that it is not the scene outside that had anything to do with spirituality but the peculiar bend of the Ramakrishna mind that was spiritual. Or we refer to his attempted suicide, when he was unable to bear the pang of separation from God, and jump to the conclusion that by giving free reins to sentimentalism, which leads to absolute lack of self-control, we can reach God, forgetting all the while Shri Ramakrishna's self-imposed discipline, according to scriptures, since the day he was invested with the sacred thread and his fasts and vigils and regular worship and meditation. Imagination or poetic temperament, indiscipline, and sentimentalism do not lead to spiritual opening. This deeper consciousness opens through hard and incessant knocks, prompted by a yearning heart that craves nothing else but the revelation of the Reality, behind the phenomenal existence that pleases it no more. A resolute

heart and a willing submission to established discipline are pre-requisites to spiritual enlightenment. These are necessary not to induce the spirit to descend from above or to well up from within but to remove the heaps of objects, as has been said, that occupy our conscious plane and shade the light of the spirit.

Is not this an unmeaning metaphor—objects covering the conscious plane? How can objects that are themselves illumined by consciousness cover the illuminer? Light, illumination, etc. are no doubt metaphorical expressions. What is meant by such expressions is, however, clear and simple. 'A thing is illumined' simply means 'it is brought to, or becomes an object of, our consciousness' or 'we become conscious of it', and in doing so the object occupies the entire field of consciousness, which goes unheeded. The point of the metaphor is this. Just as a light in the act of illumining a thing illumines itself also, but as our interest lying in the particular object illumined, the light, though all along revealed, passes unnoticed; even so the consciousness that reveals the whole world of objects reveals itself, but our interest lying in the objects, we do not attend to this consciousness, the revealer, which consequently remains unknown to us. This is what is called 'being or remaining covered'. All the senses are, every moment, bringing innumerable sensory vibrations to the brain. The peculiar vibrations of the individual senses combine in the brain to give a unitary idea of what we call a thing. Such things are always present in the brain, even without our willing. But we are conscious of that 'thing' only to which attention is directed. This tending of our mind towards a 'thing' is a necessary condition of what we call a thing's rising into consciousness or our being conscious of it. That which is not attended to is as good as not being there, though it is actually there—it is of no *use* to us. Whether we know it or not, it is this pragmatic value of a thing which we invest with the glory of existence. So many rays have been acting on our bodies but they were not even 'X' rays, but when they are of use to us they exist. It is our attention that invests them with what we call existence. This spirit, being all along present, giving us all that we call our 'I' and 'mine', our subjective and objective worlds, is as good as being covered, being non-existent; only because it is of no *use* to us, we do not attend to it; so busy, so overwhelmed we are —willingly and passionately—with acquiring and enjoying pleasant objects and repelling or shunning unpleasant ones. We are 'cultured'; we must save and improve our culture. Indeed, and at the cost of our self, our soul! The Biblical and Vedantic warnings—of what avail are the possessions to us if we lose our souls?—leave us cold.

And why should it not be so? What harm befalls us if we do not pay any heed to it? The spirit is there, the omnipresence cannot withdraw itself, even it were annoyed. Every syllable of what the Vedanta says, it is conceded, is true. It is all the more reasonable, therefore, that we should indulge in making merry. We are and shall be what we are.No power on earth or in heaven can take away a jot or tittle from us.

The Bible and all the scriptures of the world have given the answer, which we choose to forget or ignore—'where your treasure is there will your heart be also.' And what is your treasure should be mine. Why should riches be yours and all labour be mine? . . . Scrambles begin, with results the twentieth-century people need not be told.

But it may be posed that equal or equitable distribution of the enjoyables as well as the labour is possible; and gigantic experiments are on foot. Cynics shake their heads. Why do people want to enjoy? To run after the bare necessaries is understandable, though 'bare' remains vague and undefined. But why should there be a rush for the enjoyables? And how does labour fit in this scheme of enjoyment? What kind of ratio, direct or inverse, exists between labour and enjoyment? If I am satisfied with little and do not work hard, why should I be com-

pelled to put up more work? For others' enjoyment? Let them labour who want more, why should I be interfered with? Selfishness! Yes, but it is not a word of censure, everybody is so. Nowhere on earth is there equality or equitability in labour or enjoyment. Again, equality is comprehensible, though practically absurd. Equitability is as vague as bigness or smallness. Who are to decide it and with what standard? Equal labour, physical or mental, is impossible, because of the differences in the constitution. And to be satisfied with equality of enjoyment is absurd, owing to the infinite variety and intensity of hankerings due to the differences in the make-up of individual constitutions. Equal opportunity is a myth. Society requires all kinds of work, all of which are not equally easy or pleasant. Yet hard and painful works have to be done or society will collapse. To clear streets of snow in deep winter in chill wind is a work nobody will willingly do, if he can avoid. Society may pay more for the unpleasant task, which is an exploitation of one's poverty and need. Had he or she been well off, he or she would not have undertaken the chill job. But society requires it. Individuals and society are so constituted that labour and enjoyment are in inverse ratio to one another. Suppression of hankerings for long produces results that are pernicious to both individuals and society. Making enjoyment the goal of society, its builders are feeding the fire, and by encouraging hard labour they are trying to suppress it—that, by the very nature of it, is an explosive situation, which intelligent people should avoid, not encourage. Individual freedom to work and enjoy as one likes is a fact, and equality or equitability of labour and enjoyment or opportunity thereof is a myth. And the fact will assert itself today or tomorrow. If enjoyment is the ideal, competition and elbowing out are the necessary means to its attainment, and therefore 'making merry' is a wild-goose chase.

Thus when enjoyment is longed for and does not come and its opposite announces its unwelcome presence, when the unavoidable facts of sorrow and separation, disease and death confront man cynically, when love remains unrequitted and hatred and jealousy are promptly punished, when unequal rates of progress create chasms between mates and chums, when individuals in the same loving family reveal different tastes and tendencies, when, in a word, the pets, the world of objects, turn hostile simply by showing their natural hues—then comes the inquiry who it is that was building the happy paradise, which even had it been built would have remained unpeopled, for the interest in the objects had gone. But it does not happen to all. Most people live a sort of happy life in spite of sorrows and miseries. The inquiry about the self does not come to them. Too true. The inquiry about atoms and planets and into other secrets of nature does not arise in the minds of most people either. Inquiry springs up in rational people who cannot remain satisfied with a humdrum life, and in people who are intrinsically noble and great but have somehow been engrossed in base and selfish enjoyments, which need to be broken by physical or psychological shocks which invariably come to them, often too unexpectedly. Science and philosophy, art and literature are for these two classes of people.. Let others enjoy as they will and as best as they can.

So inquiry about the self is a matter that cannot be shelved for all time. It is wise we begin it before the shock-treatment starts. When life and death, growth and decay, weal and woe are the inevitable by-products of the one universal and eternal process, the sooner we know it and tune ourselves to the reality, the better for us. It pays us the highest dividend, for the inquiry leads us to the discovery of our self, which is the manipulator and director of the whole business. This truth that has always been dogging us, nay, been upon us, has ever been giving us the needed patience in the midst of trials and tribulations, and has been holding us tight in its bosom in moments of terrible distractions,

when death is preferred, appears to us in its serene intimacy as our own self. This *re-cognition* of our real self by the apparent self, created by the mediacy of mind and the senses, and broken by the genuine aspiration and endeavour of the latter, and engineered and brought to finish by the former (known in ecclesiastical terminology as grace) is what is spirituality. This unbroken and unbreakable serene poise born of the knowledge of the self, in activity or passivity according to individual constitution, is the spiritual life, the consummate end of human beings.

This duality of the real self and the apparent self is not a fiction, is not one that is posited by a peculiar group of philosophers, but is one which is in the experience of all who care to know. What do we understand by the word 'self'? The knowing entity within us, the knower. Do we mean by 'knower' 'somebody who knows', 'somebody who is conscious'? If we make a distinction between the knower and the knowledge, between one who is conscious and consciousness, it leads us to a contradiction. The knower, being different from knowledge or consciousness, must be matter, which, *ex hypothesi,* cannot know; no scientist (and 'matter' is their term we are using) will admit that their blind girl can see. Moreover there will be a philosophical difficulty. If the knower be different from consciousness it is unknown. Who or what posits it then? If it is consciousness that does the trick, it is not different from it but, if you wish, a division within consciousness. So 'knower' is 'knowledge' or 'consciousness'. In this knower-consciousness are held all the infinite varieties of things or objects of the universe, this is the locus in which all things live or have their being. There is nothing outside of it. If anybody comes to oppose, it is in the opposer's consciousness already, or else how does he come to argue about it? So every individual knower is the knowledge or consciousness in which his whole world of objects live, move, and have their being.

And yet he is conscious of himself as a little self or knower, outside of whom so many things and beings exist, a few friendly and pleasant, a great many inimical, wanting to crush him out of existence, as it were—a fact no individual can deny. Still the centre of both these knowers or consciousness is the same, within himself, for consciousness, awareness cannot be out there. So both these knowers are 'I', my self. As the same thing cannot be two, one of them must be called the real and the other apparent or unreal. As the universal one remains the same, allowing changes (apparent or real we need not discuss here) within itself and as the little one is ever changing with changes of objects within and without, the former one is the real; and the latter, having no identity apart from the former, must be regarded as apparent. This shifting of the centre of our being from the apparent to the real, this merging of the unreal into the only unchanging, abiding real is spirituality.

This is effected by knowledge alone—'effected' we say, but it is not an effect, it is not even a process, so far as the real self is concerned. There cannot be a forgetting for knowledge; in knowledge forgetting has no place. It is in the apparent self, which is a mixture of consciousness and matter in the capacity of adjuncts, that forgetting and remembrance take place, as our actual experience testifies. When we talk of the dawning of or progress in spirituality we do it with reference to this apparent self, or rather the matter portion of it—progress consisting of the adjustment of gross and subtle matter (of mind, the senses, and the body) in a way to make it prone to consciousness, to make it *sāttvika,* as they call it. So all the effort a man has to make to grow spiritually is directed to this material aspect of the apparent self. As this adjustment is against the natural tendencies of the mind and the senses, continuous vigilant efforts are necessary to make it permanent and habitual. A wave of sentiment, imagination, or romance cannot have this power of transmutation. Hence arises the necessity of spiritual practices, laid down by

the various religions of the world. But we should never forget for a moment that these practices, *sādhanas*, though indispensable to spiritual enlightenment, are necessary for purifying the adjuncts, for orientating them to the spirit, and not effecting anything new in the immutable spirit or consciousness, the mutability or modifications of consciousness that are apparent to us being due to the adjuncts.

Spirituality, then, is the unceasing and unbreakable conviction that our true self is the universal spirit that is the efficient and material cause of the universe. This conviction is a slow growth, born of the bold resolution to follow truth in the wake of reason, without flinching from the sacrifice it may entail. All the rare qualities that we are to acquire in the course of our extraordinary endeavour are for the removal of our false notion of and identification with the ego, and not for effecting anything in the spirit, which is perfect. This ego is but a big bundle of complexes, a collection of desires fulfilled or thwarted. Desires are rooted in and prompted by our innate nature of fullness, of perfection, and are generated by the false sense of separation from the whole. When this false sense is corrected by the true conviction, the individual life does not cease nor the world goes to pieces, for the individuals are not its causes but co-effects, the cause being the universal spirit. This individual's knowledge of and identification with the universal, invest him with the true sense of the fullest plenitude and perfection, and thus having taken away all impatience and littlenesses and therefore, all sorrows and sufferings, from him, endow him with strength and serenity that know no breaking. Religions invite mankind to this Kingdom of Heaven. Now that man is most heavy-laden, he is likely to hear the songs of joy that perpetually rise in this Heaven.

ART AND CULTURE

By Prof. O. C. Gangoly

It is a privilege, indeed, a valuable privilege, to be permitted to take part in this cultural conference to celebrate the Centenary of the Holy Mother, the spiritual consort of Ramakrishna. It is not for me, a humble devotee of the visual arts, to expound the significance of the holy sanctity of Divine Motherhood, a new form of Immaculate conception, that refused to raise progeny in our gross and physical sense, but extended a maternal blessing to the saintly brotherhood of the Ramakrishna Sangha who are carrying the message of the great saint of Dakshineshwar to the far corners of the earth.

The topic of my humble discourse, 'Art and Culture', is not of my own choice, but has been selected for me by the distinguished members of the committee who are running this cultural conference, investing it with a feminine beauty and grace, inspired by the memory of the Holy Mother.

The title of the topic, 'Art and Culture', is somewhat embarrassing to me for it may imply that art is something different from culture with which its relation is being sought; whereas I hold that art is the finest generator of culture and that the essence of art is culture—that art is culture. But as time will not allow me a logical elaboration of this thesis I will content myself with invoking the sacred authority of scriptural texts on their attitude to arts that moulded the various cultures, and leave the matter to be judged by the learned audience.

The most definite assertion about the relation between art and culture is to be found in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VI.5.1), which aptly says, *'Ātma-saṁskṛitir-vāva-shilpāni'*—'Arts are indeed the very instruments (i.e. the potent means) of self-culture.' Then the passage explains the assertion by adding that by the uses of the arts the devotee renovates and re-creates his own self and invests it with a dynamic rhythm, that is to say, attunes his own self with the rhythm which pervades the whole universe: *'Chandomayaṁ-vā etair yajamāna atmānaṁ saṁskurute.'* Here then we have an authoritative pronouncement on the relationship between *Shilpa* and *Saṁskṛiti*, between art and culture.

It may be remarked in a general way that most of the assertions of our scriptures are no mere random speculations but are pragmatic truths based on and discovered by actual spiritual experiences of the race, actual realizations or superconscious perceptions derived through centuries of investigations.

Yet, the claims of art and the cultivation and creation of Beauty occupy a precarious position in all the different systems and cycles of culture—Brāhmaṇical or Buddhistic, Jewish or Christian, Semitic or Islamic. And almost all the schools of culture regard the expressions of art with doubts and suspicions and look upon the purveyors of Beauty as fundamentally opposed and inimical to moral and religious culture.

The fundamental opposition of the leaders of our religious culture to the role and expressions of art is based on the fact that all forms of art and creations of Beauty can only function through our sense-perceptions, principally through the gateways of sight and hearing. Since all our contact with the external world is through our senses, all experience of visual and audible forms of Beauty is to a greater or lesser extent sensuous. And the propounders and leaders of all systems of religious culture carefully guard the boundaries of their cultures from any assaults from the exponents of art—from the seductions and allurements of the sensuous forms of beauty.

The appeals of all forms of beauty are, therefore, restricted and censored, and only those are given passports which do not hamper or injure the *sādhaka* in his strivings on the path of salvation, i.e. the emancipation and freedom from the chains of the senses which prevent our union with the Divinity. For, yoga or union with the Divinity can only be achieved by suppression of our physical sense-perceptions—*citta-vṛitti-nirodhaḥ*. And the *sādhaka* on the path of emancipation or *mokṣa* is permitted only to look at such sights and to listen to such sounds as are conducive and helpful to his progress on the path of his spiritual culture, on his path of approach to the Divinity. So the Vedic sages utter their wise warnings and grave admonitions to turn our ears only to such sounds and to confine our eyes only to such sights as are good for our spiritual welfare and destination:

Bhadraṁ karṇbhiḥ shṛiṇuvāma devā,
Bhadram paśhyemākṣabhir-yajatrāḥ.
Sthirairaṅgai-stuṣṭuvāṁsastanūbhir-,
Vyashema deva-hitaṁ yadāyuḥ.
(*Ṛig-Veda,* I.88.13.)

'O ye gods! May our ears listen only to what is good, pure, auspicious, and beneficial, may our eyes gaze only on sights that are good, pure, and elevating; and may we, with our bodies and senses fixed and controlled, sing paeans to the gods and live a life of service dedicated to them.'

By this puritanical injunction to confine our ears and eyes to songs and images leading only to spiritual ends, the activities of the artists to tempt us with all their sensuous creations and sensual appeals are severely ruled out; and the divergent temptations of sensuous forms, the colourful seductions of the purveyors of the so-called beauties are not admitted inside the sanctum of spiritual culture. Only that kind of *rasa* or aesthetic experience or enjoyment of Beauty is permitted which offers a taste of the Divine, which is the source and embodiment of the purest form of Bliss and is the archetype of all forms of Beauty. Only those works of beauty are admissible which are the brethren of (i.e.

analogous to) the taste of the All-Blissful Divinity—*Brahma-svāda-sahodara*. Therefore, in the whole field of Vedic culture there is not much opportunity for the use and employment of the arts and the artists. There is no work for the pictorial artist or the sculptors and the makers of images. The only scope for employment of the artists is in the building of the Fire-Altars and the Sacrificial Posts, the *yajña-vedis* and the *yūpa-kāṣṭhas*, sometimes set up in various artistic shapes and decorative forms.

The origin and development of the art of the sculptor depend in India on conditions quite different from those prevailing in other countries or other forms of culture. The whole cycle of Vedic culture is essentially *an-iconic*—that is to say, opposed to the use of forms or images of any manner or kind. This could not be otherwise as, according to old Vedic ideas, the Infinite, the Formless, cannot possibly be rendered in terms of a finite form or body. The great unconditioned Being, the Brahman or Īsha, the All-pervading Principle, cannot be conceived as an image, conditioned by form or space; in other words, there can be no representation, picture, or idol of the Divinity. The Vedic sages had no necessity to employ the pictorial artist or the sculptor, the maker of images. Vedic culture was, therefore, not favourable to the cultivation and development of the visual arts.

But to these uncompromising *an-iconic* conceptions, post-Vedic speculations introduced certain concessions or compromising ideas. If the Great Divinity, the transcendental Being, could not be pictured or visualized in a finite form, certain aspects of It could be symbolized and made accessible to or comprehensible by the worshipper, the *sādhaka*, or the *upāsaka* for his benefit. *Sadhakānām hitārthāya Brahmaṇo rūpa-kalpanam*—for the benefit of the worshipper, the Great Immanent Being condescends to assume an imaginative form. It is clearly understood that this symbol (*pratīka*) or image (*pratimā*) is not the Divinity Itself, but a suggestion to the finite human mind of a fragment of the Infinite Being. They are useful aids to contemplation (*dhī-ālambana*), for those who have not been able to develop their mental powers of contemplation fully (*alpa-buddhi-janāḥ*), and those whose powers of concentration are weak and loose (*shithila-samādhi-janāḥ*). In order to admit the use of images and the employment of the plastic artist to help our spiritual culture, the great Vedic sage Agastya skilfully conceived the idea of dividing the indivisible Brahman in three different aspects or phases: Firstly, as Īsha, as the All-pervading Principle immanent in all the endless variety of the phenomenal world; secondly, as *niṣkala*, as the bodiless, formless, invisible non-immanent Brahman; and thirdly, as *sakala* or imaginative forms or images of the Divinity. As the great sage has succinctly put it in a form of brilliant aphorism, 'the body of the great God can be apprehended in three ways, viz. as a symbolic image, as the formless transcendent, and as immanent in all forms of creative life.' In his famous text-book on image-making, known as *Sakalādhikāra*, Agastya admits the scope of practising the art of the sculptor in post-Vedic forms of worship. The culture of the arts, therefore, secured a firm footing inside the culture of post-Vedic religious beliefs.

In the cycle of Buddhist culture, the cultivation of arts originally occupied a somewhat similarly precarious position.

It has been frequently asked whether Buddhism was inimical to the culture of Beauty. The answer is dependent on what one understands by the words 'Beauty' and the 'Beautiful'. If we take the words as suggesting the sensuous snares of shapely forms which merely delight the eyes, without ennobling and elevating the spirit, they are certainly regarded as antagonistic to the early tenets of Buddhism, which, while they enjoined self-culture or self-illumination (*atta-dipā, ananna-saraṇā*) without the use of extraneous aids, began by inhibiting all manner of sensuous indulgences somewhat inevitable in the culture of the visual arts. Early Buddhism thus set up a *summum bonum* closely akin to

the Christian mystic conception of 'self-naughting'. And the *Psalms of the Sisters* (the *Theri-Gāthās*), although they now and then draw little vignettes setting down the beauties of natural scenes, are unequivocal in their condemnation of all manner of sensuous indulgences or of the enjoyment of Beauty for its own sake. Thus, one sister exclaims in one of the verses of the *Theri-Gāthā*: 'Speak not to me of delighting in aught of sensuous pleasure! Verily all such vanities now no more delight me!'

A religion of asceticism (such as Early Buddhism or Early Christianity) would naturally shut its door against all manner of Beauty, understood as sensuous pleasures. In the texts of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, the oldest records of Buddhist culture, the Buddha is said to have laid down injunctions prohibiting the monks and nuns from visiting the royal art galleries of Bimbisāra at Pāṭaliputra, and from enjoying the beauties of secular paintings (*Vaiṇika citram*) exhibited on the walls of the picture-galleries. This attitude towards the beauties of Nature or of art is actually justified by the doctrines of Early Buddhism, set down in various passages in the Hīnayānist texts.

Thus, in the *Cetokila-Sutta* recorded in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I, pp. 101-104), the Buddha says that there are five mental enslavements, or bondages of the mind (*cetaso vinibandhā*), from which every monk has to free himself in order to achieve the highest goal, viz. attachment to sensual pleasures (*kāme*), attachment to the body (*kāye*), attachment to visible forms (*rūpe*), attachment to mundane riches (*atthe*), and attachment to angelic powers (*devatte*). In the same text it is enjoined how monks should set their faces against 'forms of Beauty accessible through the eyes' (*cakku-viññeyā rupā*) and attain a state of aversion to visible form (*rūpe-vītarāgo hoti*).

In the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, the Buddha similarly admonishes monks of 'all cravings for things visible—things that are dear, things that are pleasant.' Some similar injunctions are recorded in the Buddhist formula of 'grace before meal', in the *Sutta-Nipāta* (II, 14, 12):

'Before thou seekest thy meal, clear thou thy mind of zest for forms, sounds, colours, taste, and touch, which turn men's heads . . . Formless is calmer than what has Form . . . Cessation (*nirvāṇa*) is calmer than what is Formless . . . From licence purge thy life and keep thy heart from things of beauty (*rūpe sneham na kubbaye*).'

In another passage in the same text it is pointed out that the objects of sense are variegated, sweet, and attractive, and in their transfigured forms pulverize the mind (*Kammā hi citrā madhurā manoramā virūpa-rūpena mathenti cittam*). There are other passages in analogous texts which prohibit the contemplation of Beauty in any form and ban the arts of forms: 'Form, sound, taste, smell, touch, —these intoxicate beings; cut off the yearning which is inherent in them.' (*Dhammikā Sutta.*) Likewise the *Dasa Dhamma Sutta* asserts: 'Beauties are nothing to me, neither the beauty of the body, nor that which comes from dress.'

Enough citations have been given which go to establish that from the point of view of the early phases of Hīnayāna, art and the cultivation of beauty were regarded as inimical to spiritual discipline, the essential tenet of Buddhist culture.

Then, must we regard Buddhist art, with its richly radiant pages shining with superb colour and form, as a protest against the letter of the doctrines of Buddhism? Were the monk-artists of the abbey of Ajanta, the devoted icon-makers of the *ateliers* of Mathura, faithless to the letter and the spirit of their own faith? It is said that 'much that passes for Christianity lacks the spirit of Christ.' Does Buddhist art lack the spirit of Buddha?

The answer is an emphatic negative. Buddhist art, through forms of elevating beauty, has preached and propagated the doctrines of the Buddha. Long before any Buddhist texts were translated into other Asiatic languages, the sight of the image of

the Buddha, the handiwork of devoted sculptors and painters, had converted to the faith whole regions and races in far-off places beyond boundaries of the birth-place of Buddhism. And the Buddhist monumental mound, the *stūpa,* and the image have been potent aesthetic instruments in awakening faith in the Doctrine in the hearts of millions of men. The story of the conversion of the king of Roruka of Scinde, the story of Māra and Upagupta, and the dream of the Chinese emperor Ming-ti are typical illustrations of this aesthetic appeal.

We may seek in the words of the Buddha himself support for the effective use of Beauty as a visible instrument for the propagation of the faith. Thus, the Hinayānist text which records the assertion of the Buddha 'that whoever gazes at me, looks at my Doctrine'—*'yo mām passati so dhammam passati'*—has been interpreted in the Mahāyānist formulation as encouraging the aesthetic use of images of the Buddha in winning over new converts to the Buddhist faith. So that the *Āryaganḍa-Vyūha,* a Mahāyānist text, asserts in emphatic terms, 'For this reason, the mere sight of the image of Jīna is conducive to the accession of spiritual knowledge.'—*'Tat kāraṇāt Jīnendrasya darshanam jñānavardhanam.'* But this mode of exploitation of the paths of Beauty for the propagation of faith owes perhaps its origin to the recommendation of the Buddha himself in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (II, 141, 142), where he gives directions to Ānanda to set up *caityas* or memorial mounds at four 'sightly places', by which believing clansmen should be deeply moved to aesthetic thrill—*'Cattāri kulaputtassa dassaniyāni samveganiyāni thānāni.'* And looking at the monuments set up at the four sacred places or pilgrim stations, the visitors could exclaim, 'Here the Buddha was born!' 'Here he attained *samyak-sambodhi*!' 'Here did he first set going the incomparable Wheel of the Law!' And the Buddha, in using the word *samvega* (aesthetic agitation) in the sermon in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* has perhaps unconsciously extended a charter of liberty to artists to formulate, in the path of Beauty, devices and designs of iconic or monumental import, intended to awaken in the hearts of pilgrims elevating aesthetic emotions in which thrills of awe and religious raptures commingle in happy unity. Could not the Buddhist artists rightfully claim that the path of Beauty, as a direct route to righteousness, derived its authority from the very lips of the Blessed One?

It may be doubted if the teachings of the Buddha and the finest fruits of Buddhist culture could have reached to the people inhabiting all the distant parts of the Asiatic continent if the culture of the visual arts had not been pressed into the service of the Buddhist religion, to decorate and glorify the faith through the supreme creations of art and artistic imagination.

We will now proceed to examine Christianity and Christian culture and its attitude towards the visual arts. Like the other religious systems we have examined, Christianity, in its earlier phases, was not very much favourable to the practice of the fine arts of painting and sculpture. The intense and bitter hatred of idolatry, which filled the Hebrew prophets, infiltered into Christianity and was recorded in one of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image', though the force of the commandment was somewhat diluted by interpreting it as meaning that images must *not* be made for the purpose of worship. There are statements in early Christian texts which have been interpreted as implying a condemnation of all forms of art. The statements are, however, primarily concerned with the making, embellishing, and setting forth of images connected with the pagan religion. This sort of thing was naturally forbidden to the Christians. Tertullian, an early Christian Father, goes so far as to ban the making of the similitude of any natural object, on the plea that it might become an object of adoration. On the other hand, he points out that the Christian artificer could properly exercise his craft on work which had no connection

with the pagan religion; and one of the Christian canons (the eleventh canon of St. Hyppolitus) allows the craftsman to make and supply ordinary social demands for artistic work.

While the art of painting was employed in decorating the walls of the catacombs of the early Christian centuries, the figure of Christ appears in pictorial effigies quite early, but in a disguised form, as the Good Shepherd.

After Constantine, the characteristic form of artistic expression is the monumental mosaic depicting the life of Christ and of the saints on the walls of the churches. And the Early Christian mosaics from the fourth to the sixth century, at Rome and Ravenna, are as great in their illustrations of the principles of design as in their technical excellence and artistic beauty.

But it was at the beginning of the twelfth century that Christian art was placed on a sound canonical basis by a German Benedictine monk named Theophilus who wrote an elaborate treatise on art in which he discoursed on visual art and on the cultivation of the beautiful as a part of the religious life of the community. And throughout the Gothic period Christianity and Christian forms of worship inspired and put to service the finest art of church architecture, fresco paintings, decoration of illustrated manuscripts, woven tapestries, stained-glass works and diverse forms of Church furniture and ritual utensils, in wood and in metal, which had been reckoned as some of the finest masterpieces of art ever fashioned by the hands of man.

And in the shining age of the Renaissance, which covered about four centuries, from the thirteenth, popes and princes, dukes and the Medicis, brilliantly inspired the art of painting which, under religious patronage, reached glorious perfection through the brush of Giotto and Fra Angelico, Botticelli and da Vinci, Michael Angelo and Raphael, and of hundreds of other master painters whose works have not been surpassed in any part of the world.

Christian culture, therefore, represents and embodies the most glorious development of the visual arts in Europe in the service and glorification of religion and of man's worship of the Divine.

We now come to the last item in our survey, that of Islamic culture, the youngest, yet most energetic of the cultures of Asia, which, born in a militant religious community, developed into a conquering world-power and spread extensively over three different continents. Born as the culture of a small community of Arab tribes, the religion of the Prophet Mohammed gathered materials from diverse sources, annexing and assimilating cultural data from all the races, countries, and civilizations that it traversed in its conquering career of swift and spectacular expansion.

Originally, the rudimentary elements of Arabic art consisted of a handful of decorative designs of the tents and caravans of a nomadic tribe, having no permanent home or habitation. But in the course of a few years, Islamic culture developed a system of visual art of the most dazzling splendour and of the most sparkling variety of designs and patterns. Curiously enough, the tenets of Islam originally instituted the most uncompromising ban against the development of any form of visual or representative art. Yet, this doctrinal ban is based on sound foundation of meticulous reasoning.

It was said that the creation of all kinds of forms, illustrated in the scenes of Nature, being the special and peculiar prerogative of the Almighty, man's imitation and transcription of natural forms are in a way a mimicry and an insult to the Divine Artist and a blasphemy of God and His supremely creative powers. So that Islam's stand against the practice of the figural arts, the art of painting and of sculpture is based on sound and incontrovertible logic.

But inasmuch as the prohibition against imitation of natural forms is not said to have been found in the text of the Koran, the actual records of the words of the Prophet, but in certain traditional records known as the Hadiths, some of the less orthodox sects of the Islamic brotherhood found no doctrinal

objection to the practice of the visual arts *as such* by avoiding the representation of human, animal, or vegetable motifs; and they devised a virile and fertile system of surface decorations—vaguely called the 'arabesques'—which consist of abstract and geometrical forms of ornamentation and designs which have anticipated the cubist artists of the Modernistic School by several centuries in their successful elimination of the sensual elements of the visual arts.

Pictorial art crept into Islamic culture through the art of calligraphy applied to the writing of the text of the Koran in beautiful scripts to glorify the words of the Prophet in the most perfect instruments of penmanship ever invented by the hand of man.

The system of congregational prayers called into existence a school of architecture characterized by a sense of space, a breadth of vision, and an unerring sense of balance and proportion, which have placed the monuments of Islamic architecture on the front ranks of the architectural designs of the whole world. In various phases of the applied arts and crafts in the field of painted pottery, in innumerable varieties of woven textiles, in the designs of wooden furniture, and in all varieties of metal wares, the Islamic craftsmen have surpassed all others in the fertility and originality of design, in the ingenuity of pattern-making, and in the superb perfection of their techniques and decorative expressions.

Pressed into the service of Islamic culture, the visual arts have developed a cycle of artistic expression which is at once the wonder and the despair of the whole world of art and artists.

LOCAL FACTORS IN INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

By Dr. V. M. Apte

It is a patent fact that the accident of geography (the *upādhi* of *desha*) gives a habitation and a name to a body of people thrown together to live as a nation. The history of a country, however, is the resultant of two great interacting forces, viz. the physical surroundings or environment and the individuality of its inhabitants. In other words, the history of a country is an inextricable and almost unanalysable amalgam of the action of its physical environment on its inhabitants and the latter's reaction to the former. It is proposed, in this article, to note the influence of the local factors on the formation of the Indian history and culture in some of its important aspects. By 'local factors', we mean not merely 'the configuration of the land, its mountains, and rivers' but also 'the climate, the flora and fauna, the minerals, the size and the location of India' *vis-à-vis* the rest of Asia and the world.

Isolation

India is a vast country of the size of a continent (a world in miniature, as it were), *isolated*, but not completely insulated from the rest of Asia and the world, by its formidable mountain-wall on the north, north-west, and north-east, and by the sea on the remaining sides. The comparative isolation has given a certain unity, homogeneity, and individuality to the social, political, religious, cultural, and linguistic history of India throughout the ages, in spite of its vastness. The common designation *Bhārata-varṣa* as applied to the whole of India in the ancient epochs and the fact that the wealth of Indè which was famous throughout the East from the earliest of times and

later became known to Europe, drew foreign adventurers and explorers like a magnet, are evidences of a kind of *political* unity; and the far-flung edicts of Ashoka (third century B.C.) addressed to the common people imply a certain religious and linguistic homogeneity as well in that era. High plateaus, which constitute a peculiarity of the physical configuration of Asia and which, like the mountains, have stood in the way of a free and smooth intercommunication between Asiatic countries (e.g. the lofty plateau of Tibet has cut off China from India more effectively than the Himalayas) have been responsible in a large measure for the almost independent evolution of their civilization and cutlure; and what is true of other Asiatic countries is true, to a far greater extent, of India. (In the field of literature, for example, India, thanks mainly to her isolation, has shown great originality and individuality.)

On the other hand, the following unfortunate consequences have flowed from this isolation: (i) There prevailed an ignorance of the outside world, owing to absence of contact with it, an ignorance of the dangerous intentions of foreign adventurers and invaders like the nomads of Central Asia, the Huns (A.D. 500), Genghis-khan (A.D. 1200), or the Moguls (A.D. 1500), and the consequent unpreparedness for their planned invasions or lightning forays, the timing of which was dictated by the dry eras of climatic cycle causing the aridity of the land and the resulting scarcity of food, in the homelands of these aggressors. There was thus a fatal incomprehension of the new offensive tactics of these hostile intruders who could lead successful cavalry charges against the elephant army and infantry divisions of the Indians. Disastrous, at least in the beginning, was the element of surprise sprang by newly invented weapons (like firearms from Central and Western Asia and artillery from remoter European countries). (ii) There developed, after a long period of undisturbed peace and prosperity, a hidebound and reactionary outlook like the one that banned a sea voyage lest the perfection of civilization and culture attained should be contaminated by contact with the less cultured people beyond the seas. (iii) The inability (for want of any experience or foreknowledge) to adjust social institutions and religious beliefs in sheer self-defence (as an *āpad-dharma*) when a state of emergency arose as the result of a clash with foreigners, whose social and religious outlook was the very reverse of theirs, led to disastrous consequences. The fairly elastic fourfold class division which was a legacy with the Aryans from Indo-Iranian (nay, Indo-European) times[1] had developed into a rigid, *mutually exclusive* system of caste division (not fourfold only but multifold), mainly as a consequence of the peculiar local conditions in India, viz. the isolation, the vastness, the new situation and environment, etc. Whenever, therefore, foreigners without these social inequalities among them entered India, there was always the temptation before them of exploiting these caste divisions by wooing the lower caste members with their disabilities and inferior status and turning them into fifth-columnists. The true explanation of whatever success foreign invaders had in India lies neither in India's lack of unity, for the invaders did not command numerical superiority in every battle or engagement, nor in her lack of physical bravery, for rarely did the conquerors win a battle in a frontal attack, though their fierce conquering zeal and fresh energy might have given them some initial advantages. It lies in the slow creeping in and development of certain stupid religious superstitions and a 'frog-in-the-well' attitude owing to lack of contact with the outside world and the shutting off of new and different currents of religious thought and social movements in the outside world. Thus, because of the fond belief that no one (not even a foreigner) could be vandal enough to destroy a temple idol and that even if that were possible, the idol had the divine power to avenge itself for such sacrilege, it was not thought necessary to give military

[1] See the writer's paper entitled 'Were Castes formulated in the *Rig-Veda*?' in BDCRI.

protection to or provide adequate guard for temple idols, heavily loaded with precious stones and costly ornaments. History records[2] that the sun-idol at Multan (sixty feet high) was attacked and robbed of its precious property by a foreign invader, who went off enriched, only to return the next year to loot the same idol again, refurbished as it was by its devotees in the interval and invitingly left unguarded as before! There have been many similar tragedies in Indian history and only a few typical examples can be cited here. The surreptitious and unnoticed lowering at night of a temple-flag in a capital city on the Sind seaboard and the consequent sight of the fallen flag in the morning so unnerved the powerful and numerically superior army in the capital that they collapsed before the attack of the Arab invaders, overwhelmed with superstitious fear! A mighty Rajput king retreated before a foreign invader owing to the latter's threat of the destruction of a temple idol that lay within his easy reach, if the former advanced even a mile further! Heart-rending is the tale of the irreparable and incalculable harm done to future generations by that narrow religious outlook of earlier generations of Hindus, who barred the door of the Hindu faith, for all times, not only to non-Hindus but also to such Hindus, as, within living memory, had been declared to have *fallen* not for something they had done willingly or even knowingly but for something done to them against their will and without their knowledge![3] It would be superfluous to cite any more instances.

The Geographical Location of India *vis-à-vis* Her Neighbours

The peculiar physical position of India *vis-à-vis* her neighbours (namely, the vast mountain ranges in the north and the sea in the south presenting formidable but not insurmountable obstacles to the unwelcome entry of hostile foreigners) throws revealing light on the India of pre-historic and historic times, as well as on the India of today. In prehistoric times, people of the Kolarian and Tibeto-Burman stocks appeared to have entered India by the north-east passages, as the corresponding racial elements have been traced in India. These hordes seem to have been driven to the mountains by the Dravidians who (according to one theory) next entered India from the north-west or who (according to another hypothesis) were autochthonous in the south of India and spread therefrom to the North and even beyond India in the north-western direction. The Dravidians, in their turn (according to a widely prevalent view) were thrown back to the South, by the Aryans who entered India through the Punjab in Vedic times. Thus are the four racial stocks—Aryan, Dravidian, Kolarian, and Tibeto-Burman—in the population of India explained. And a most interesting relic of these prehistoric ages is the survival of the aboriginal tribes in the mountainous regions, who form, as it were, an island of the Stone Age culture in a sea of modern civilization. The peculiar geographical location of India thus explains not only the direction and area of occupation of the Aryan immigration in prehistoric times, which has left an abiding and indelible impress upon the history of India, on its culture, civilization, society, literature, and religion, but also the Persian intrusion into India about 500 B.C. when the region on both sides of the Indus remained part of the Persian Empire for about two centuries; and the Greek invasion under Alexander, who destroyed the Persian empire in India in 331 B.C. and penetrated inwards nearly as far as the Ganges. The very much exaggerated Greek influence on Indian culture and civilization is to be traced to the period between this date and the second century A.D., during which time the Graeco-Bactrian successors of Alexander kept in touch with the

[2] This and the following examples are taken from *The History of Medieval Hindu India* by the late Rao Bahadur C. V. Vaidya.

[3] One notorious instance of this type is reported in the autobiography of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. The Brahmins turned down the request of virtually all Muslim converts in Kashmir to be readmitted to the Hindu fold, some centuries ago.

north-western parts of India. Finally, from the same (north-western) direction came the Muhammedan incursion which occurred off and on between the eighth and the twelfth century. The Muhammedan dominion proper was established only after A.D. 1200 and the Mogul empire (associated with Muhammedanism, in the popular mind) lasted for a century or so from A.D. 1556 onwards when it was finally shattered by the rise and growth of the Maratha power. As regards the southern peninsula it was even more securely guarded by the sea than Northern India by the mountains. With the exception of a certain volume of sea traffic between India and Babylon from the seventh to the fifth century B.C., when it was replaced by land trade with Arabia, nothing happened to the vast coastline until the fifteenth century when the Portuguese discovered the sea route to India and established settlements on her coasts to be followed in this venture by other European sea-powers like the French, the Dutch, and the English.

(*To be concluded*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In 'Art and Culture', Prof. O. C. Gangoly, the reputed art critic, has proved on the authority of the scriptures and sayings of saints that 'art is the finest generator of culture', that 'the essence of art is culture', and that, notwithstanding the puritanic character of some religions in their earlier stages, art played a prominent part in later times in attracting peoples of different countries to the new faiths. The article bears the stamp of Prof. Gangoly's genius—his observation, scholarship, and fascinating presentation. . . .

Dr. V. M. Apte, M.A., Ph.D. (Cantab.), the well-known Vedic scholar, whose numerous papers on different aspects of Vedic culture and civilization have evoked praises from all quarters, has marshalled in his paper the 'Local Factors in Indian History and Culture' all the geographical facts that have contributed to the physical and mental make-up of the Indians and through them the history of the land. Though modern science and technology and the people's will to live and conquer obstacles are fast nullifying these geographical and other influences, yet this ably written paper will remove many misconceptions about the character of the people and explain many facts of history that appear strange and naive. In this one article the learned Doctor has collected all the materials, so far published, besides adding a few of his own observations.

ARE THESE FACTS?

Many eminent scientists and writers are showing increasing concern regarding nuclear explosions; Japanese scientists have virtually declared that the increase of radio-activity in atmosphere has reached a dangerous degree in their country. After the latest explosion on 23 March, Canada has shown a hundred per cent. increase, which, we are assured by the scientists, is not injurious to living creation. Reports are appearing almost daily of perceptible increase in radio-activity in many countries around the scenes of explosion, though sufficiently far off the calculated danger zone. We give below an extract from an article in the *Atomi c Scientists' Journal* by Prof. J. Rotblat, Professor of Physics, University of London. Having dealt with the probable mechanism of the hydrogen bomb, he speaks of the possible effects of the explosions that 'an average 2.5 H-bomb tests a year would double the natural level of radiation in the world. "Rough as this estimate may be, it certainly shows that we are sailing much closer to the wind than many of us thought. . . . Even without a war, there is a probable risk of running into genetic trouble, if the tests of these weapons continue at the present rate",'

This is the apprehension not of one scientist, but of many. Small countries and nations are suffering and praying and protesting but to no avail. With a Satanic callousness, the fatal experiments are being carried on. Other

nations are joining the competition, rather are forced to join it. National economies are thrown to the winds. Sufferings of their own peoples are no concern to the capitalists who control the states. Shri Kumarappa has branded the U.S.S.R. also as a capitalist—a state capitalist, more ruthless, though less cunning than its rival.

One has every right to commit suicide and to murder one's enemy. But to poison the life of innocent neutrals and even allies, and that quite knowingly and deliberately and entreaties notwithstanding, is a phenomenon whose cruelty is unparalleled in history or mythology. Yet the people responsible for this state of affairs are rational beings, not mad or cruel. They are caught in a vicious circle, from which perhaps they cannot come out even if they wish. There is, however, neither the desire nor the attempt to come out.

The situation is extremely disturbing. Had the rivalry been between two democratic countries, the nationals would have risen against or at least brought pressure on the governments to cry halt to this madness. Unfortunately the peoples of the one group have no voice, cannot express their will; nor are they informed of the grim tragedy that awaits the world. The nationals of the other group, though fully aware of the danger ahead and of their power over their own governments, look helplessly at the condition prevailing on the other side, at the utter lack of control by the peoples of their governments' determination to push forward with their plans, and think it wise not to interfere with the only possible way of countering the national peril adopted by their governments. The protests and prayers of neutral nations do not reach the ears of the proud Bigs. Negotiations are vitiated by cunningness and propaganda idea. Each side thinks the other is about to bend his knees, which never comes true. There seems to be no way out but to carry on negotiations with the hope that better sense may prevail in the end and save mankind from their deserving doom.

TOO LATE, TOO SLOW, TOO TIMID

We had an occasion in March to refer to the growing indiscipline among the University students of our country. To guide the rising generations of the country is of supreme importance. Any government that fail to take proper steps to serve this purpose should better resign, even if their foreign policy might heap praises on their heads; and any educational institution that allows indiscipline to grow rampant should better close its gates, in spite of achieving the most brilliant results in University examinations. Material prosperity and intellectual achievements would defeat their ends if they are handed down to brutes, who would not only pull down the edifices so painstakingly built, but, like Samson, kill themselves and others and render all future building impossible.

We would not talk of the past, nor of the causes, especially of the persons, responsible for bringing about this deplorable state of things in the sacred precincts of learning. But the government, that never lose an opportunity of talking of establishing a welfare state, cannot escape the undeniable charge of doing nothing to stay the rot that they see, feel, and denounce almost everyday, and still for the last seven years did not take any positive step against. Academic and research institutes are being started, prizes and medals and certificates are being awarded, holders of high government posts are being regaled with dance and music to soothe their overstrained nerves; and here, in schools, colleges, and universities, teachers are being insulted and assaulted, vulgarism and hooliganism are stalking and are being encouraged by political parties, institutional properties are being damaged and destroyed, strikes among students and, what is worse, teachers are being organized, students are coming out of examination halls on the plea of questions being stiff, invigilators are being beaten and are even losing their lives for the faithful discharge of their duties. What a picture of a welfare state of international repute!

But who say that the beneficent govern-

ment have not done anything? Ingratitude! Public are notorious for their short memories. How many commissions have been appointed and what voluminous reports, the mementoes of the hard labour and furious thinking that made the members of the commissions, we suppose, bald and bleak, adorn the shelves of the Secretariate!

Why blame government alone? The public are as callous as the government they constitute. Even the guardians whose wards are bringing the country to such humiliation take no steps, and sometimes support them against the action of the heads of the educational institutions, suing and pursuing them even to the High Court. Madness seems to have overtaken the country.

Now that the Governors of the Uttar Pradesh and Madras—both of them are rare gems—are involved in the most vulgar incident of the Allahabad University Convocation day and that the Commission has denounced the activities of the students concerned in very strong terms, we hope and pray some suitable measures, strict and stringent, prophylactic and curative, would be adopted in the earliest possible time. The foundtion-stone of the true nation-building, we trust, will then be laid. We would not be surprised, however, if the public and government, in this land of lotus-eaters, take a pleasant siesta in this hot summer!

SARVODAYA MOVEMENT

We have been watching, from its very inception, the Sarvodaya ideal, which is fraught with high potentials. With the inauguration of Shri Bhave's Bhūdāna movement it has attracted the attention of the general public. Before the fighting speech of Shri Bhave in the Sarvodaya Sammelana, it had the serenity and dignity of a self-possessed movement. There was no conscious effort to advertize it, yet its innate strength and popular acceptance compelled advertisement to such an extent that it has become the talk of towns and villages.

The Congress as well as the Sarvodaya are Mahatmaji's God-children. The Congress, the elder child, attained majority and without a quarrel with the adored father separated, but stuck to his fundamental principles as far as practicable. The Congress leaders were not wrong, nor are they now, when the Mahatma is no more. On three points have they deviated from the strict Gandhian ideal: maintenance of the Police and the Army; the pomp and pageantry (of course from the Mahatma's standpoint) of the state and the high scale of salary of the state servants, including ministers; and the encouragement and undertaking of heavy industries. And to be just to the Mahatma's ideal, we must say that the metamorphosis is so great that the ideal apparently has taken wing. But nobody will have the boldness to say that the ideal followed by the Congress government is not Indian. Even pomp and pagentry is necessary, though not at the risk of starving the populace.

Mahatmaji's ideal, judged from all angles of vision, was ascetic, which no country as a whole can ever accept. It was almost an ideal of coenobitic monks of ancient days or of the Vedic householder *ṛiṣis*, which has been abandoned by the nation since the days of Chandragupta Maurya of the historic period. Every ideal, unless it shows the capacity of incorporating new ideas and modes of life, is bound to die when it has seen its fulfilment in society to a tolerable degree. Perfect fulfilment of an ideal in any entire society being impossible of attainment, we have to be satisfied with a certain degree of its realization. After that if its rigidity is too great, it yields to another ideal; and if it is receptive, it is invigorated by the introduction of fresh blood. This is the lesson of histories of all nations, dead and living.

India lives because of the wonderful capacity of its ideal to admit and incorporate new ideas. This capacity of the Indian ideal is due to its being broadly based on the psychology of human aspirations. Indian law-givers were practical psychologists. They understood that when desires burn in the hearts of people it is useless to talk to them of renunciation. They

must be given opportunities for fulfilling their cravings. Hence they set a twofold ideal before the nation: that of prosperity for those who were incapable of renunciation, and that of the 'highest benefit' or emancipation from the bondage of 'ignorance' for those who had no gusto for enjoyment. But they knew only too well that hankerings for enjoyment could never bring permanent happiness. So they orientated desires and methods of enjoyment towards the highest end of salvation so subtly and psychologically that the followers, without detriment to enjoyment, would never lose sight of the ideal. It is for this reason that they preferred the word *abhyudaya* (prosperity with an end in view) to *udaya* (mere prosperity). Sarvodaya, by the way, has discarded the better term, though not the idea behind it.

It is not a mere metaphor, as some are apt to think, that a nation has a soul. Only we do not understand its meaning, 'soul' being a word to us with no connotation. A soul is a living ideal, a motive force, that unfolds itself through a history to its realization. Each nation represents such a living ideal, which includes its mode of life, its angle of looking at things and events, its virtues and vices, and its happy or unhappy culmination. It is this ideal that moulds the nation; and leaders at any stage of a nation's growth or decay, are thrown up by it, which they are bound to follow, mostly unconsciously but sometimes consciously. It has a force that is irresistible; it catches leaders by the neck and compels them to follow a path deliberately chosen by itself. We cannot otherwise account for the rise to power and the hold on the nations, of such personalities as Napoleon or Hitler, Lenin or Mao. Similarly we cannot account for the phenomenon that Nehru, whose eyes glisten at the mention of the Mahatma's name, would change the latter's ideal almost beyond recognition. The same power that threw up the Mahatma, got its work done by him, had him murdered when his alloted work was finished, and placed him permanently in the adored niche of the national heart, is impelling Nehru and other leaders to take momentous decisions to change the direction of the original ideal. This may appear mystifying but is what is actually happening throughout the world. Under its influence brightest wisdom is displayed as well as silliest follies are committed.

India's ideal has chosen to rise to a new synthesis, beneficent to the whole world. Whatever the novel elements might be, it is not going to be asceticism. Anyone who reads the history of India intelligently since its downfall in the Middle Ages and dives deep into the dreams of its poets, philosophers, artists, and prophets through these centuries, will at once realize that it has been one continuous tirade against asceticism. Again the culture and civilization that the world force has built through the Eur-American nations is not meant to be blown off leaving a vacuum of centuries but to be incorporated and synthesized in a more glorious culture. And synthesis means dropping off of the proved ills and introduction in their places of new beneficent ideas and activities. If India with its wonderful capacity to synthesize is not to do it, is not to play the part of Shiva in drinking the poison of industrialism for the safety of the world, what other nations, impatient and proud as they are, can do it? To deny industrialism is to write off the world-history for at least two centuries—a foolish attempt, not sanctioned by history. So India has accepted industrialization and will see, as is already evident, that its evils are eliminated. Nehru is but an instrument in the hands of this national ideal, bubbling with life; and the nation's darling must be happy and humble that he has been chosen for the task, difficult but delightful.

Heavy industries are for big cities, outside which there lie stretched extensive plains and wooded hills and mountains, studded with numerous villages, old, new, and just springing up. Now that electricity is going to be supplied in many places throughout the country, small towns with middle-sized industries will develop and the villages in the midst of cultivable lands will smile with crops of all kinds, and with orchards, and vegetable and flower

gardens. Division of land into small plots owned by individual farmers entails waste of cultivable land and energy. So mechanization and collectivization (not in the red sense) on the basis of free, willing co-operation of men and women is a necessity which must be accepted, if the country is to be prosperous, with a balanced self-sufficient economy. This will include a majority of the country's population. And here Acharya Bhave's Sarvodaya movement comes in with a unique message of peace and prosperity. This is the exclusive preserve of the Acharya. This does not, however, mean that the message will have no value to the city population. This message of love and amity, of the loving sharing of labour and its fruit, of the joys of the combined cultural activities, of the austere boldness in face of dangers and difficulties, of the unsurpassing peace and beauty of meditation and contemplation has an appeal of even greater value to the people working in, and wrought-up by the nerve-shattering noise, bustle, and speed of the high-powered giant machines, which compel thousands to imitate them or be crushed by them. Bhave's is the eternal message of India which, in spite of its universal applicability, *mutatis mutandis,* appears more graceful in rural settings than in busy noisy cities, whose synthetic culture shall have to be greatly different from the rural one.

Both the bustle of industry and the peace and quietude of pastoral life are essential for the regeneration of the country. The first is necessary to guard against man's sinking into inertia and indolence, the second to prevent his brutalization. Just as peace in villages cannot be had without small machines produced by big industries, even so brutalized humanity cannot cease to plan destruction without the introduction into mills and factories of the humane elements that spontaneously grow in village surroundings. If some people think that villages must be made self-sufficient in the sense that they will need very few implements and the few they need should be produced by village carpenters and smiths, they are thinking of setting back the national clock, of dragging the country down to that soporific state in which it lay for the last two centuries and more, and to revert to which it has a dangerous proclivity, as its history bears out. The country needs both Nehru and Bhave, industry and agriculture—big, medium-sized, and small. Nehruism is not against Bhaveism. Nehru appreciates Bhave. Nehruism, may well afford to encourgae Bhaveism. Bhaveji also ought to support Nehruism. But the Acharya, in his speech referred to above, has shown a little impatience, a kind of irritation, whose roots, we are afraid, lie deep in his life-long personal asceticism. Personal asceticism is not bad, rather good for those who accept it after a careful analysis of their psyche; we encourage it even. But to make that the national ideal is to repeat the mistake of at least a thousand years of Indian history. Social tyranny, political bondage, and religious obscurantism and sentimentalism have made the nation hungry for a little enjoyment. For Lord's sake let the people enjoy a little. We are so sure of the innate greatness of the Indian people, of their love of God and respect for moral principles that they will never go astray, they are bound to return to their noble heritage.

This does not mean we are against the ideal preached by the great Acharya. That is impossible. His is the true voice of eternal India, the vigour of its ideal, which has all along been synthesizing ideas and activities that came in contact with it. Only we request him not to misunderstand what Nehru is doing. Bhave being synonymous with India, the question of discarding him does not arise. Nehru representing India-to-come, it is foolish not to welcome him. India's spirit is working through both, one represents its instinct of preservation, the other its joyous march—not of proselytization, but of loving embrace to, and fearless incorporation of, all that comes in the way.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ADVAITA VEDANTA AND MODERN PHYSICS. By Puragra Parampanthi. *Published by Jogiraj Basu, 'Viraj', Dr. Basu's Road, Dibrugarh, Assam. Pages xvii+138. Price Rs. 3.*

The purpose of this book is to justify the cosmological doctrines of Advaita Vedanta in the light of modern physics. In support of his thesis the learned author has marshalled ideas and quotations from recent writings on the philosophical implications of new physics—chiefly from the popular works of Eddington, Jeans, Sullivan, Einstein, and Whitehead. To elucidate the cosmological position of Advaita Vedanta he has adduced numerous passages from the works of Shaṁkara, Swami Vivekananda, and others. Any writer venturing on this difficult theme should be aware of two important criteria: Firstly, the universe revealed by new physics is neither a metaphysical stuff nor an insubstantial void; secondly, the advances in physics brought about by Quantum Mechanics and Relativity, do not contradict classical physics, but are only more thorough and consistent generalizations, of which classical physics turns out to be a concrete instance. The startling and novel conceptions of new physics, far from disproving matter, show that matter itself is a chain of energy-events. The justification and verification of the new physical theories are based ultimately on experiments and observations *on matter as we see it*. To say, therefore, that the 'objective world is . . .tending to disappear into the regions of mind or spirit' is a naive assertion.

It would have served the purpose of the book more if the author, by an analysis of the subjective elements in modern physics, arrived at the incontrovertible conclusion that the world observed by physical science is only a partial view of the universe revealed to the human mind and thus admitting the possibility of the existence of a universe not observed by the human senses. An exhaustive study of the factors that contribute to this 'selective subjectivism'—to use Eddington's phrase—would have directly led to the doctrine of Māyā, which is the corner-stone of Advaita Vedanta. The best defence of Advaita Vedanta and its consistent synthesis with modern physics would have been achieved if the author had subjected to close and searching enquiry the *methodology* of new physics, rather than its conclusions and theories. For, Advaita Vedanta, like the other systems of Indian philosophy, lays an overwhelming emphasis on epistemology. A critical survey of the epistemology of Advaita Vedanta and the methodology of new physics would have borne out the essential unity in their perspectives. Incidentally it would also have established the universalism and comprehensiveness of Advaita Vedanta which embraces not only the universe of insentient phenomena, but also the world of life and mind. The author, with his wide range of studies and grasp of scientific and philosophical concepts, should be able to undertake a study on these lines.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SANATORIUM, RANCHI

Progress Since 1954

Advanced Chest or Thoracic Surgery, which plays an important part the treatment of Tuberculosis, was started in India in a few sanatoria about 6 or 7 years back, and is to be fully developed for better treatment of tuberculosis in India. This Sanatorium recently carried out such an operation successfully. The Management of the Sanatorium are thankful to Dr. A. K. Bose M.S., F.R.C.S. and party of Calcutta for performing the first surgical operation on March 20, 1955. The Management have been making efforts to organize a team for the handling of cases requiring such surgical intervention.

Towards the organizing of such a team the manamegent of Sanatorium have already advertized for an anaesthetist trained in thoracic surgery; setting up of blood bank (each patient requiring about 2 to 3 thousand c.c. of blood), installation of costly instruments and equipments, air conditioning of the Operation Theatre and the Post Operative Ward, and other arrangements, have also been undertaken. It is a great credit to the organizers of the Sanatorium that a successful Pneumonectomy has been performed with 4 years of its inception.

The construction of a dam on the adjoining rivulet, together with an overhead tank for storage, has been handed over to the Damodar Valley Corporation—at an estimated cost of Rs. 81,043, to be borne by the management. Already Rs. 33,000 have been collected for the purpose, with promises for another Rs. 10,000. The balance is yet to be collected. Among the urgent improvements the following may be mentioned: (i) Tarring of the road from Chaibassa railway station to the Sanatorium, a distance of about 10 miles; (ii) Balanced number of subsidized beds; (iii) Tomography; (iv) Amenities for the colony; (v) Power-supply.

Funds are required by the Sanatorium for successfully undertaking and completing all these schemes. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium, P.O. Ramakrishna Mission Sanatorium, Ranchi, Bihar.