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TO
PRABUDDHA BHARATA
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Editor: SWAMI NISREYASANANDA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

RAMAKRISHNA

HIS NAME AS LIGHT AND HONEY

By Swami Pratyagātmānanda Saraswati

The bee is keen on thy scent, O! my veiled lotus of heart!
Where art thou? Its frail wings tire in roving
to and fro in untelling gloom!
Having, alas! to cut thro' a wind blowing athwart
and hitting hard as shaft!
You spake, Lord! and Your Word was Light;
Vouchsafe unto the groping eyes that Light!
Show, unveiling, the lotus core,
In its untarrying, unshying ardour of bloom!
You breathed, Lord! and Your Breath inspired;
By that Breath inspire the fainting heart
in its beaten, broken agony,
And tow the battered wings of the hapless plying fly
To its Haven Home of Hallowed Light,
of Everlasting Honey!

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7. He is surely a good man who is engaged in public activities. To cease running after money is indeed very hard. Having enough to spare, if man does not give to the poor and the needy he is guilty in the eye of God, for they are the deserving persons for charity.

8. Man marries and gets infatuated with wife and children. God, of course, does not ask one to drown one's family in the sea. What is required is not to be so infatuated as to forget God, for that brings miseries.

9. People like to be initiated by men of renunciation. But of what use is it if they do not learn to rein up passions? Annually begetting children, they go about as innocent lambs, as if they know nothing of the world! Do you think they can have spiritual advancement?

10. There are two kinds of women—*vidyā-śaktis* who lead men Godward, and *avidyā-śaktis* who lead men to hell. Men should beware of the latter. These *avidyā-śaktis* dress and adorn themselves attractively, and play hundred and one tricks to ensnare men. They excite men's passions and keep them in nefarious bondage to themselves. They exert tremendous influence over these slaves of theirs. Men hankering after spiritual enlightenment should be hundreds of yards off from them.

11. Ah! my boys, in this world of *Māyā* money alone is one's darling. For money's sake man can do anything. For its sake the son kills his father. Such is the attraction of money. Friends and relatives, even one's dear wife—all are of no consequence before the almighty dollar. For its sake all relationships snap. Nowadays, divine worship has yielded place to mammon worship. Day and night there is but one thought—of the dollar. God, charity, righteousness—everything shines with the dollar's glitter!

12. Master Mahāśaya (Mahendra), Ram Babu, Deven Babu, and others lived a householder's life at the Master's (Sri Ramakrishna's) bidding. Entally is a holy place. How nicely Deven Babu put it: When the 'seed of simulation' reaches the stomach one's understanding gets perverted. At first I could not follow him, I was kept guessing what that 'seed of simulation' might be. On being asked, he explained, 'As long as you have not sufficient money to maintain a high standard of living you remember the Lord all right. But the moment your wants are removed, you forget Him.' 'Seed of simulation' is rice (staple food of Bengal). Oh, how did Deven Babu suffer! He had no money. He had to serve in an office. But look at his spiritual stature.

13. Look here, beware of women. We know many good monks had falls in the company of women. They come in the guise of religious seekers and contrive the falls of monks. Master used to say, 'Never mix too much with women even if they be good and religious.' You are young and handsome. So I warn, 'Beware.' This is for the monks.

14. This human body is made up of bones, flesh, and blood. It is but natural that there will remain a bit of lust, anger, and other passions. So, on that account you need not feel depressed or learn to scorn yourself. They are of the body, they are natural to it.

15. You will find householders showing great reverence for *sādhus*, even to the extent of shedding profuse tears. But ask for money and the reverence has vanished. Master used to say, 'That is the test of a householder devotee—whether he has true devotion for the Lord or not. Those who can, for the Lord's sake, pour money like water without stint are real devotees, theirs is the true love for Him.' The householders have the greatest attraction for money. On their lips are big words—God, religion, righteousness, etc. They may inundate the ground with tears at the

mention of the Lord's name. But they are unwilling to spend money for the sake of righteousness.

16. Women are highly emotional, and emotions are first cousins to passions. Men are charmed by these emotions. Monks, beware; if once you are caught in the net you are undone for ever. Their charms are too dangerous. No monk can be too cautious in this regard.

17. If you are running temperature everything tastes bitter, you do not like sweets. Even so, as long as you have the desire to enjoy worldly things you can have no taste for prayer, meditation, fasts, and vigils—all taste bitter. When this worldly fever subsides prayer, meditation, etc. taste sweet. Mind settles down quickly to them. Temptation cannot sweep you off your feet.

18. You may have visions of wondrous light thousands of times, but if you lack in continence all are vain.

19. Nowadays noble birth or breeding is not held in respect. Wealth is the thing. One who has money is regarded a gentleman, one who has not is considered uncultured.

20. The Lord is pleased with a pure life. Life is equally valuable to all. But the Lord likes the pure life. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'I reveal Myself to pure hearts.' Where is the Lord? 'Foolish men roam about in search of Me. They do not know that I reside in each heart. Most hearts, however, are filled with the tares of roguery and perversity; so they do not find Me within.'

21. You talk of marriage? Why, it is a loving invitation to miseries. Ne'er-do-wells, they have no hearth and home,—they occupy an ill-paid post—that also is uncertain—and may be kicked out tomorrow—even such persons are eager to marry! How do they dare? This is what they call *Karma*.

22. Wealth and youth are the two most dangerous things on earth. It is through God's grace that a man can pass unscathed through them. Theirs is salvation already.

The True Guru and Disciple

1. In the modern world it is as difficult to get a true *guru* as a qualified disciple. A disciple who acts up to the *guru's* word is protected against the machinations of his enemies. The Lord himself remains always by his side. Today or tomorrow he is sure to realize Him.

2. A true *guru* actually imparts faith and devotion to the disciple. There are however disciples who want money and property, rank and fame; they will never get a true *guru*. But those who want to see God will go to men of God, even if the latter do not promise them any worldly gain. The real *gurus* instruct their disciples in accordance with the latters' mental attitude, present tendencies, past *Karma*, etc., so that the disciples may progress towards illumination. Others talk irresponsibly and lead men to dangers. So people should exercise discrimination in selecting *gurus*. Else they stand the chance of losing here and hereafter by enthusiastically trying to follow every charlatan who cares to speak a few words.

3. To have a true *guru* is indeed a rare luck; without an especial favour of the Lord one cannot have such a luck. And spiritual illumination is assured when one gets a genuine *guru*.... One must try to get initiated by a man of true renunciation.

4. Everybody cannot be religious. How many are willing to follow the instruction of their *gurus* throughout their lives and get disciplined thereby? Everyone wants to be independent. None likes to obey.

5. A true *guru* increases one's faith in and love for God.

6. A *guru* pays greater attention to the disciple's faults than to his merits. So do the parents to their children. Do you know why? To make him whole and perfect by removing his defects. Their heart's desire is to see them improve incessantly. Hence they draw the disciples' attention to their faults.

EDUCATIVE VALUE OF PHILOSOPHIC DISCIPLINE

BY THE EDITOR

"It is knowledge alone that will save us in every department of life—in knowledge is worship. The more we know the better"

Practical Vedānta BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A little analysis will convince us that our usual round of activities is prompted, among other things, by two main desires. One aims at bringing out our best as quickly as possible. When consciously directed, it releases a tremendous amount of energy to go forward, and overcomes the obstacles that beset our path. But often it fails to operate properly, and in forgetful moments we glide down into childish levels and waste our precious time in running after pleasures that deaden finer perceptions. Often, too, the sight of the difficulties confronting us and of the successes of our neighbours in apparently similar circumstances, throws us off the main track. And then, instead of putting forth creative efforts to eliminate our troubles, we permit our minds to become the dancing ground of destructive emotions like envy, anger, or despair. Even if they are not actively present, the craving for securing quick results holds the field. It does much harm. In most cases it is responsible for making us skip over important facts. Unless checked in time, it produces the chronic inability to discern just those subtle forces and events—in ourselves and in our environment—on whose proper control our forward movement depends. Without sharp observation and steady habits, none can climb high or achieve anything worthy. And this means rigorous discipline.

The second desire, which analysis reveals, aims at using our best gifts for participating in an intimate and beneficial manner in whatever world movement we can conveniently contact. This is a very commendable tendency. The fact that different parts of the world have come close together in a number of ways provides ample scope for the fulfilment of this desire. Men of talent, original thinkers, inventors, planners, business executives, administrators, and specialists in every field, including religion and philosophy, are in demand everywhere. For the world's needs are many, and they go on multiplying from day to day. Competent men and women to satisfy them are wanted in constantly increasing numbers. This, again, means rigorous discipline.

Mass production of gifted individuals, with strength and purity combined, is not an easy task. How often we witness the sad spectacle of experts in certain fields, able to fulfil their own limited duties well, turning out to be hopelessly inefficient, if not unreliable and even corrupt, in their general dealings in departments of social activity for which they had not the requisite training or qualification! Such tragedies take place because of the lack of suitable and timely exercises in character formation. There are four factors, which have, somehow or other, become dominant in shaping people's attitudes at the present day. They are: race, language, geographical position, and nationality. Each of these can, up to a certain extent, assist in calling forth the finest sentiments from within, and in canalizing them for the betterment of the world. The achievements of any individual, naturally, can be the result of invoking the past glory of any of these. Such achievements can also, in their turn, enhance the prestige of any or even all of these four, with which he is connected. But there are dangers too where the person concerned has serious defects in his character, existing side by side with his special talent. By such a person's getting of his own accord, or being officially sent, into areas involving

large-scale contacts with the public, the benefits accruing from his talents are, as we often see, neutralized by the disturbances and explosions he creates. In a simple domestic field the damage will be acute, no doubt, but limited in extent. Bnt the damage becomes incalculable indeed in the national and international fields, now open to those who can supplement their single talent with plenty of the capacity to elbow their way forward. Democracy's greatest merit is that it can give an individual a fair chance to rise to his full stature by his own efforts. But democracy, as a framework of the external environment, cannot guarantee that every individual develops his character properly before entering into the general—and quite often, unscrupulous—struggle for power and position. What is it, then, that can, negatively, prevent calamities, and positively, enable us to draw inspiration from our racial, linguistic, national and geographical associations, and to express that inspiration in ways that promote the world's welfare? It is only our own conscience, our own sense of what is right, reasonable and dignified, our own highest estimate about ourselves and others, in short, our philosophic outlook. Its acquisition and retention too depend upon rigorous discipline.

II

Life enforces some discipline or other. In fact, from early childhood, the behaviour of an individual gets adjusted to certain patterns, although for the most part unaccompanied by that controlled combination of language and reasoning which we learn to use as we grow older. It is not uncommon to see indulgent parents permitting their pet children to evolve a kind of formula, viz. of persistent crying, for securing all that they want! At school, however, where the parents and the home atmosphere are replaced by the teacher, fixed hours of instruction, and the presence of diligent companions getting credit for greater proficiency, the crying formula is discovered to be totally useless. As a resnlt of close observation of the conduct of every one in his new environment, the child slowly learns to put forth his best efforts, to compete with other students, and to pick up knowledge as fast as they do. Crying and fighting are not dropped altogether, but are reserved for employment wherever they might snceed. After studies are finished and the adult enters service, he finds it necessary to modify the formula of competitive learning and adapt himself for quick and efficient discharge of the responsibilities officially put on him. The fear of punishment and the hope of promotion play a great part in prompting him to acquire the required skills without delay, and in avoiding open corruption or fights. When, in due course, he marries and sets np a separate house, love compels him to evolve a totally new formula, in which crying and competition are automatically ruled out, and the attitude of co-operation and of a healthy give-and-take becomes the dominant element. Competition and fights survive even now, but are reserved for modified application to forge ahead in official and social fields, particularly with the aim of making his own family more prosperous than the rest. Even the latest formula is, however, seen to be inadequate when he is blessed with children of different capacities and temperaments, and he is thrown into the need for forgiving, teaching, protecting, and even praying for, them.

When a formula is repeated, especially with satisfaction, a number of times it becomes a habit. And unless it is neutralized by opposing formulas through conscious effort, it creates new channels of expression, like pent-up waters making breaches wherever resistance is less. What happens, then, to the formulas of noisy cries, of competition and of fighting which find limited utility in certain contexts yet? Their roots lie safely imbedded in the sub-conscious or the habit-level—the secluded expanse of the personality affording them facilities to make alliances for common purposes. We know that the piling up of armaments is likely to be followed by some

explosion somewhere, even on slight provocations. Habits of a lower cultural value also follow the same law. If allowed to remain entrenched without conscious control, they become capable, whenever occasions arise, of invading areas of conduct where they can secure victories without immediate detection or effective resistance. The manifold contacts, which the complicated national and international relationships of the present day offer, often become the 'no man's land' where the unsublimated formulas of the individual can make periodic inroads, while on the domestic front his latest-evolved formula of love and co-operation, of forgiveness and prayer, holds its ground and is realized to be eminently satisfying.

What is called common sense or worldly wisdom certainly imposes restrictions on wild behaviour. What we are concerned with here is the essential worth of the reasoning or calculation that compels us to impose them. If actual deeds alone are controlled, and not their sources in the thought world, and that too when danger is scented, viz. exposure or punishment for us as individuals, or loss and bloodshed for the community as a whole, the relatively steady platform from which we launch the controlling force is really low indeed. If our basic formula is that we shall not withdraw from self-seeking so long as gains flow in, or until dangers threaten us, our inner development does not rise much above that of the cow that approaches us when grass is held in her front, but runs away the moment we brandish a stick.[1] Such a formula, moreover, is definitely inferior to that of the pious man who refrains from bad conduct owing to his fear of hell fire, and who scrupulously observes every detail of formal worship because of the pleasures God may give him in heaven. In the latter case, the formula has the decided merit of incorporating the concept of God in some form to dignify his daily round of activities. As against it, in the former there is the sordidness of keeping aggrandisement and expediency as the principal factors. Finer sentiments can never take root in our personality as long as we wish to entertain them only for a diplomatic handling of the situations external to us. The case is similar to that of poetry or painting, in which a person rises to the fullest creative heights, not when he resorts to it because of compulsion from others, but only when he realizes that the taste for it is part of his mental make-up, and that he should dedicate all his energy to develop it to perfection even if others obstruct him.

Nowadays we rightly honour the man who detects oil deep down in the earth, or dares to climb up a peak which baffled man's approach hitherto. Compared with these activities, it must be the most stimulating adventure for us to dive into the personality itself and explore its farthest reaches, just because we have been associated with it from our birth, and it accompanies us in every situation like a faithful friend and multipurpose instrument. A thorough investigation of its highest possibilities and appropriate adjustments to them constitute, in a sense, the most fundamental of all sciences. To give it a minor importance, or to discontinue it in any community or in any generation will allow imperfect values and discordant forces to vitiate human relationships, and to that extent lead to the misuse of the benefits the other sciences confer. In accepting such a research we are only making a vital extension of the very principle of evolving new training formulas that made the baby grow into the loving parent. When followed up to its sublimest range, it gradually transforms sectional-minded, struggling men and women into integrated personalities, in whom conceptual differences of oneself, others, nature, and divinity become equally effective springboards, nay, sacred means, for manifest-

[1] Yathā hi paśvādayaḥ . . . daṇḍodyatakaram puruṣam abhimukham upalabhya mām̐ hantum ayam icchati iti palāyitum ārabhante, harita-tṛṇa-pūrṇa-pāṇim upalabhya tam prati abhimukhībhavanti.

Śaṅkara bhāṣya, Introduction to *Brahma Sūtra* I.i.1.

ing perfect unity and rendering loving service. By philosophic discipline we mean all the efforts involved in this change of direction and values.

III

When we stop talking about the utility of such a comprehensive discipline and turn to the field of philosophy proper for picking up some suitable practical steps from it, we are confronted with a variety of systems, which ordinarily provide sufficient material for three or four years of intensive study even for one whose lowest aim is to get a general view of them and to equip himself for transmitting that view to others! We cannot say definitely to what extent the propounder of each system —especially if he was not a clergyman— struggled to transform his own personality in the light of the picture of the universe and of his place in it, which he found coherent in the course of his diligent and long-continued search.

To put it roughly, each system serves the purpose of a map, having its own pattern to arrange the diverse elements and forces, operating outside as well as inside the human being, and regarded by the founder as essential for a correct understanding of the universe. Most often one of the categories is shown as the dominant factor, or the supreme cause, and the rest as subordinate to it, or flowing from it in different streamlets as its modifications or results. If any system includes what religions call God, it is natural to expect essential powers attributed to Him, and His grace indicated as descending at some stage to complete the transformation of the spiritually advancing seeker. If, however, the system eliminates God completely—as certain types of government do with kingship—we can find that the other categories share those powers among themselves in varying proportions, so that on the whole it becomes possible to account for the current running of the universe, as pictured in that system.

The progress of science in the different fields of its inquiry is exerting its own influence on philosophy's map-making, and on the interpretation of certain aspects of existing maps. Referring to "standard philosophical discussions" of problems like causality and free will, or of materialism and mentalism, Sir James Jeans says towards the close of his book, *Science and Philosophy,* that they "are based on an interpretation of the pattern of events which is no longer tenable", "the scientific basis of these discussions" having been "washed away." He hastens to add that "this does not mean that the conclusions reached were necessarily wrong. But it means that the situation must be viewed afresh. Everything is in the melting-pot and we must start anew and try to discover truth on the basis of the new physics. . . . Apart from our knowledge of the pattern of events, our tools (for such discovery) can only be probable reasoning and the principle of simplicity." From the standpoint of physics, particularly, he says that "there is no longer the dualism of mind and matter, but of waves and particles; these seem to be the direct, although almost unrecognizable, descendants of the older mind and matter. The two members of this dualism are no longer antagonistic or mutually exclusive; rather they are complementary", "for one controls the other—the waves control the particles, or in the old terminology, the mental controls the material." Though these remarks cannot be taken as positive statements about mind, they can be taken as indications of the way in which the facts of scientific research are altering the total landscape on our maps, showing some familiar hills submerged and new ones emerging in unexpected areas. One thing is clear; the man-sized world is now standing between two unimaginably vast and wonderful worlds, that of the atom with its minute size and tremendous energy on one side, and the astronomical bodies with their fantastic speeds and distances on the other. We have only to add to these the advances made in departments like biology and psychology, to understand

the difficulty of evolving a coordinated picture of the universe on the basis of science itself.

How does man look in this present setting? The complexity of this problem was seen by thoughtful people even before atomic research reached its present phase of development. As early as 1935, Dr. Alexis Carrel wrote in *Man the Unknown* (ch. 1 and 2) that "It is impossible . . . to make use of the mass of information accumulated by the specialists. For no one has undertaken to coordinate the data already obtained, and to consider the human being in his entirety . . . Mechanical, physical, and chemical sciences are incapable of giving us intelligence, moral discipline, health, nervous equilibrium, security and peace . . . The science of man . . . the most difficult of all sciences . . . will be the task of the future . . . Such a synthesis cannot be obtained by a simple round-table conference of specialists. It requires the efforts of one man, not merely those of a group . . . The synthesis needed for our knowledge of man should be elaborated in a single brain."

IV

In these days numbers count and the tendency to think in terms of mass movements is on the increase. Hence a formula like that of "working for the welfare of the world" captures the imagination, and is likely to create in each person, irrespective of his fitness, the picture of himself as the glorious instrument to benefit as many as he can contact. While the enthusiasm evoked is certainly valuable, it has to be supplemented by the clear recognition that actual work must be based, as in any department of scientific activity, on a careful study of all the forces involved. The first duty is to collect relevant facts about the section to be benefited, its requirements, our own capacities to serve as instruments for creative work, and the potentialities inherent in the particular time and place. This must be followed by the formulation of a realizable goal, in which all the facts are harmonized, and also by the laying down of a series of steps leading to it. Last comes the actual carrying out of the planned steps,—a course often revealing facts previously not observed. The basic condition leading to success in this complicated undertaking is the development and harmonization of our own personalities. We all know that a tar-brush is not the proper instrument for painting walls white. And yet most of us plunge, or dream of plunging, into the midst of activities affecting numbers of people, without first purifying our own motives by systematic discipline, and increasing our 'visibility', or power of accurate perception, in the field of the subtle forces regulating human relationships. In other words, in the mental world we rub ourselves against others with much tar flowing with our motives! The wise have declared as *tāmasic,* or born of inner darkness, that type of action started without calculating one's own ability to push it through to success, or the evil consequences that may arise from it, viz. deterioration in the total situation, and needless pain to those who do not deserve it.[2]

Taking, then, the harmonization of our own inner powers and the heightening of our capacity to grasp subtler forces as the basic requirements for future good, either of ourselves or, through us, of others, it is easy to see that every philosophic (and religious) system becomes valuable as a good map for intending travellers. Since each one of us is guided by a selective impulse from within, a comparative study of the various systems is bound to evoke a natural response from that interior agency, and help us in choosing that system which suits our temperament, as much as a variety store enables the purchaser to select the article that very nearly answers his needs. Here we make a wise approach to philosophy itself: instead of allowing the structure of each system to remain apart

[2] Anubandhaṁ kṣayaṁ himsām anapekṣya ca pauruṣam Mohād-ārabhyate karma yat-tat-tāmasamucyate.

Gītā xviii. 25.

pointing to a torch-like intellectual conclusion at its top, we propose to traverse the steps, take the torch and introduce it into all the intricate movements of life, as we live it, verifying its lighting power as we proceed. The selected system thus becomes a conceptual ladder, by climbing whose rungs our emotional awareness of what we call love, good will, beauty, prayer, peace and so on can be established on sublimer levels, and raised to such an intensity that it can penetrate egoistic walls in the same way as electricity in the form of light can penetrate glass and become available to those who wish to take advantage of the transmission. If philosophic principles are employed for graded creative work within our own personalities, we shall find the different systems, not contradictory, but highly useful, each in its own way, to master particular forces.

The sincere seeker can easily choose from the material supplied by each system, and prepare for his use, a graded system of disciplines for bridging that vast gulf that has, on one side, ignorance, laziness, selfishness, fear, or duplicity, and, on the other side, corresponding virtues like wisdom, fervour, generosity, courage, or truthfulness. As the wide span becomes covered, sectional terms like mysticism, idealism, materialism, humanitarianism, dualism, non-dualism, or 'otherworldliness' will be found inadequate to express the nature of the processes involved or the transformation achieved internally and externally. Quarrels stop when we reach higher levels and visibility increases.

EDUCATE FOR SWEETNESS

By Sri B. S. Mathur

Education is verily an essay in human relationship. We are here for harmony and sympathy. Knowledge, liberty, and happiness are substance of life. Education is a preparation for life; education must, therefore, aim at substance of life—achievement of knowledge, liberty and happiness.

This achievement is not possible without sympathy and harmony. Naturally, a ceaseless effort is to be made to achieve a sweet and free atmosphere in our educational institutions. One feels, after deep thinking and a bit of experience, from working inside, that there is something lacking in the atmosphere where we work to produce future citizens of a free country. Our students feel, perhaps wrongly, that their teachers are not with them, that the interests of their teachers are opposed to their own interests, and that the man who is responsible for the administration is also against them. This is too much. Here is a vicious thinking and it can take us all very near a tragedy.

Education is a lesson in human relationship; it must foster culture, peace and harmony along with ever-increasing knowledge. It has a great burden. In life we have so many difficulties, dark things that seem to frustrate our designs, our efforts for continued and shared happiness. After all, we must be happy and we must make others happy. This our education must enable us to fulfil. The urge is inside for peace, harmony and sweetness. That urge must have its immediate and continuous flowering. This education must do. In an atmosphere of distrust, this consummation is not forthcoming.

Our students must think clearly that we are with them to enable them to give a concrete shape to their inner sacredness and

sweetness. That experiment of making their sweetness and sacredness concrete is real education. We are out for this experiment. Who can imagine this experiment bearing fruits in the absence of sympathy and understanding between the teacher and the taught?

There might be something unhappy about the atmosphere we work in. We are human beings with infinite funds of energy. Let us pool our energies to banish darkness. Darkness cannot be perpetual; it must end in light, of course, as a result of ceaseless efforts to regain knowledge. Man is said to be a bundle of knowledge. A sage has said that the infinite library of the world is inside our minds. Why not tap the inside library of infinite knowledge? Let us expand our minds. That alone will not do; that alone will not give us the necessary lamp to go by in this dark world. Let us expand our hearts. Here is the solution.

"We should cultivate the optimistic temperament, and endeavour to see the good that dwells in everything. If we sit down and lament over the imperfection of our bodies and minds, we profit nothing; it is the heroic endeavour to subdue adverse circumstances that carries our spirits upwards." (Swami Vivekananda)

We are to be engaged in an heroic endeavour of carrying our spirits upwards. Imperfections are there and they may be many. But that is not all, not the entire story of what we possess. We have many good things and let us stick to them. And then very soon a day will come which will declare the end of imperfections in us. We will have to work ceaselessly, always in co-operation and harmony. Work can never go unrewarded. It might be late in the day to near the fulfilment aimed at, but fulfilment will be there to give us joy and satisfaction.

> Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
> That shall lack a timely end,
> If but to God we turn, and ask
> Of Him to be our Friend.

Wordsworth has these beautiful lines of meaning. Let us turn to our Friend, knowledge and understanding, with an ever-expanding heart. Revolution will be there but it will be silent and steady, and also equally sweet. That is the burden of education. Let us try to carry this burden through. The end will be joy and fulfilment, real education and culture.

Let us, therefore, think and act in co-operation. We are all friends, keen on knowledge and culture. No power can stop the hands of progress. But we must have hands of progress. Let us be sure of them.

Our schools and colleges must be regarded as temples of learning and sacredness. Learning and sacredness cannot flourish in a vicious atmosphere of materialism and selfishness. Change of mentality is immediately indicated. Then alone, with the necessary change of heart, in an atmosphere of real sweetness and harmony, education is possible through hands of progress. At the moment, hands of progress are not available because of present worldly mentality. Turning to God, to sacredness, divinity that is inside us, this inward turning, realizing God—all this is essential, if real progress is our end.

Religious education must form a substantial part of our life in schools and colleges. The vicious atmosphere will disappear and instead there will be basis for proper education, real emergence of man in a flowering world.

There is talk of academic disquiet, of ever-increasing student indiscipline, in the country, after the achievement of political freedom. It is said that students do not respect their teachers; teachers do not love their students; teachers do not worship the institution they have the honour to serve. It is said that students and teachers alike don't have the spirit they must have to be genuine lovers of learning and wisdom.

What is responsible for all this? Lack of religious education is the answer. The atmosphere of sweetness is not to be found in our schools and colleges. We all seem to think in

terms of money. We definitely worship money. This is bad. Money considerations must be in our life but they must not be our only considerations. Let us have a balance. We must have spiritualism in plenty. That is possible through religious education. We can rise above the world and sing in terms of God and sweetness. That music, born of divinity, must be with us to take us above the world and to step into a sacred atmosphere. This is also the burden of education.

In an atmosphere of sweetness and light there is no scope for any indiscipline or disquiet. Sweet education will naturally make way for a sweet world.

Then all barriers, all walls, separating man from man, will disappear, a picture of a sweet and happy world, of fulfilment and flowering of man, will be before us for all time to come. Then alone education would have its duty done. Till then we are not to cease.

Change of heart and mind alike is of the essence: schools and colleges are known as temples of learning and light. Let them be really so. There is enough in name. They must be real temples. Sacredness must reign in them.

JEWISH MYSTICISM AND VEDĀNTA *

By Rabbi Asher Block

Vedānta teaches three basic truths: man is potentially divine; the aim of our life is to actualize this potentiality; and all the great faiths are paths to the realization of God. I should like to point out this morning how Judaism is fundamentally in agreement with these principles.

That man is inherently divine is stated clearly in Genesis: "God created man in His own image. . . . The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life, and man became a living soul."[1]

That the goal of life is to call forth this Divinity within, is expressed in Leviticus and Deuteronomy: "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to revere Him, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him: to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul."[2]

And, as for universalism in the Bible, Malachi (the last of the Old Testament prophets, who preached at about 450 B.C.) declared: "From the rising of the sun unto its going down, the Lord's name is great among the nations. In every place offerings are presented unto His name—pure gift-offerings . . . Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why, then, do we deal faithlessly a man against his brother?"[3]

Of course, the Bible is not *all* of Judaism. It is the Holy Writ, the Scripture. In addition, there is the vast "Oral Teaching" of the Talmud and Midrash and also an extensive body of liturgy and prayer. In these classic sources of Judaism, the Vedāntic principles become even more explicit and pronounced.

There is, for instance, this meditation in the daily morning service: "O God, the soul

* Talk given by Rabbi Asher Block at the Vedānta Society, New York, on Sunday, February 19th, 1956.

[1] Genesis 1:27; 2:7.

[2] Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 10:12.

[3] Malachi 1: 11; 2: 10.

which Thou didst implant within me is pure. Thou didst create it and fashion it . . . So long as the breath of life is within me, I will give thanks unto Thee, Master of all works, Lord of all souls."[4] The Rabbis of the Talmud taught that "the righteous among all peoples have a share in the world to come"[5] —that is to say, are heirs of immortality, alongside the righteous in Israel. One Midrash proclaims: "I call heaven and earth to witness that, whether one be Jew or Non-Jew, man or woman, bondman or free, according to their mode of life does the Divine Spirit rest upon them."[6] And, on the High Holy Days, we pray: "O Lord, may all Thy creatures come to know Thee, and all mankind bow down to acknowledge Thee. May all Thy children unite in one fellowship to do Thy will with a perfect heart."[7]

There are, to be sure, various strains in the texture of Judaism. Some elements stress the sinfulness of man (though always with the possibility of redemption), and some stress the chosenness of Israel (though usually implying salvation for mankind). Yet, though other strains are present, the element of which we speak today—the element of "Vedāntic Judaism" (if I may use that term)—is, I am convinced, genuine and authentic in the stream of the Tradition. The evidence for that lies in the history of Jewish mysticism.

The difference between ordinary religion and mysticism (one might say) is one of degree—the degree of earnestness or intensity. When one says: "I believe in God"—that is religion. But when one says, as does the Psalmist:[8] "As a deer panteth for the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul for Thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for the living God . . . . how long till I come and appear before him!"—that is mysticism. This figure of speech, incidentally, is reminiscent of the parables of Sri Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna spoke of one having been immersed in water, panting for breath—or of a thief ready to crash through a wall for the sake of treasure. When such is man's yearning for God (said he), then God will be realized.

Mysticism, therefore, is the taking of religion in all seriousness, when theory and verbalization are transformed into search and verification. Evelyn Underhill, in her work on "Mysticism",[9] defines this term as "a highly specialized form of the search for reality"—a search which enlists not only the powers of "reason and perception, which we attribute to the head", but also "those vital powers of love and will, which we attribute to the heart." "Under the spur of this love and will, the whole personality rises in the acts of contemplation and ecstasy to a level of consciousness at which it becomes aware of a new field of perception." It rises to "that experience in which the human soul enters consciously into the presence of God."

There are many instances of such mystic experiences recorded in the Bible: Abraham at Mt. Moriah, Jacob at Beth-El, Moses at the Burning Bush and on Mt. Sinai, Elijah, when he heard "the still, small voice", and the visions that came to Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. In addition to these individual experiences, there are numerous references to group efforts at attaining a higher and more vivid consciousness of God. For example, the priesthood brought special offerings to the altar of the Tabernacle, and at their head was the High Priest who, on the Day of Atonement, invoked the Name of God in the Holy of Holies. "On this day (the. Bible says) atonement was to be made for the people, to cleanse them, that they might stand clean before the Lord".[10] This was no doubt a deep and moving experience. We read also, in the Scriptures, of other groups:—such as the Nazirites, who took vows of ritual purity;[11]

[4] Daily Prayer Book, ed. by Joseph H. Hertz, pp. 18-19.

[5] Tosephta Sanhedrin 13.

[6] Tanna D'be Eliyahu Rabbah 10.

[7] Daily Prayer Book, ed. by Joseph H. Hertz, pp. 846-9.

[8] Psalm 42:2, 3.

[9] Pp. 93, 94.

[10] Leviticus 16:30, 31.

[11] Numbers, Chapter 6.

the Rechabites, who inclined toward asceticism, in the days of Jeremiah,[12] and the *B'nai Ha-Neviim,* "the sons (or disciples) of the prophets".[13]

From the spiritual expressions in the Bible we can easily surmise that a great struggle and striving must have been taking place during the era, say, from the 8th to the 2nd c. B.C. And these feelings have been capsuled in certain of the Psalms—very much as certain sentiments and experiences of the early Hindus were presented in the Vedas or the Upanisads. Here are a few: "The Lord is near to all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."[14] "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy holy Spirit from me."[15] "Teach me Thy way, O Lord, that I may walk in Thy truth. May my heart be unified ("one-pointed") to revere Thy name."[16] And if we should ask: What was the goal of all this striving? That answer, too (as in the 19th Psalm), comes in the most Vedāntic terms: "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. . . . More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." Is not this but another formulation of *Sat-Cid-Ānanda*: Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss absolute?

So, this is the origin and the background of Jewish mysticism, as it manifests itself in the Bible. However, the more intensive and effective developments of it were yet to come. During the past 2,000 years there were at least three major movements in Jewish mysticism that deserve our special consideration. The first was that of the *Essenes*. The next, that of the *Kabbalists*. And the most recent was that of the *Hasidim*.

[12] Jeremiah, Chapter 35.
[13] II Kings, Chapter 2.
[14] Psalm 145:18.
[15] Psalm 51:13.
[16] Psalm 86:11.

During the latter days of the Second Temple, there was a stratification of the society into certain distinct types and interests. On the one hand were the Hellenists, later the Sadducees. On the other were the "pietists", who branched off into the Pharisees and the Essenes. Our interest at the moment focuses upon these latter, for they constitute a remarkable development in spiritual life. Though they were relatively few in numbers, we are only now beginning to suspect how extensive was their influence. According to Philo, there were only some 4,000 Essenes—and they preferred living in the villages rather than in the cities—yet one of the gates of Jerusalem was named after them.

From the contemporary writings of Josephus, Philo and Pliny, we gather a fairly clear (though inadequate) description of their lives. They had a carefully planned, self-sustaining economy, together with an advanced, rigorous religious discipline. Property was shared in common, the diet was simple and austere, and the rules of cleanliness were quite strict. Most members observed complete celibacy. There were regular periods of worship and silence. There were four classes, or ranks, within the Essene communities, according to spiritual achievement. Josephus mentions three of their masters who had prophetic powers and could foretell events. Visitors to these communities reported a great sense of calm and tranquillity; also that its members were beyond fear and pain. When the Roman army captured Jerusalem, some Essenes were persecuted and tortured, in order that their secrets might be obtained. Yet, we are told, they endured it all unyieldingly and cheerfully.

Our knowledge of this group has been tremendously enhanced in our own day by the recent fascinating discoveries of ancient scrolls from the Dead Sea.[17] One of these scrolls contains a Manual of Discipline, setting forth the rules of the organization, requirements of membership, and a ceremony of admission. From the new information that has

[17] "The Scrolls from the Dead Sea", by Edmund Wilson, Oxford Press, N. Y., 1955.

come to light, some notable similarities are established between this Jewish fellowship and the early Christian church. Both held meals in common as a kind of sacrament; both practised ritual immersion (or baptism); both placed great stress on personal devotion and brotherly love. As a result of these striking similarities, there is speculation to the effect that John the Baptist and possibly Jesus himself may, for a time, have had some direct contact with the Essene brotherhood.

Be that as it may, there can be little doubt as to the basic significance of this experiment in earnest religious living. We are not quite certain what happened to this particular spiritual enterprise. Probably it was abruptly halted by the Roman destruction. But that certainly did not spell the end of Jewish mysticism.

Philo describes a group of Jewish mystics that settled near Alexandria, Egypt, known as the *Therapeutae* ("Worshippers of God" or "healers").[18] In contrast to the Essenes who, he said, followed the life of action, these embraced the life of contemplation. In their monasteries they offered thanks to God every morning at sunrise for the light of day, as well as for the light of the Torah (i.e. the Law and the Prophets), and again at sundown they praised God for the Truth and the Light hidden within the soul. On the Sabbath they assembled in a large hall for the common study of the Torah and for their communion meal. And on certain Festivals they spent the entire night in prayer and song. The Therapeutae admitted women members also, who lived a monastic life and had special areas for their meals and their worship.

Such movements were, of course, variations from common practice. Nevertheless, even within the normative Tradition, there was the presence and recognition of mystics.[19] The Talmud and the Midrash have numerous accounts of supra-normal experiences on the part of such leading personalities as Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai, Rabbi Akiba, and Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai. With regard to the last, it is told, that he lived in seclusion for 13 years, during which time he acquired much knowledge and wisdom. Various miraculous powers were ascribed to him, and to his disciples, and later generations believed him to be the author of the "Zohar," central work of the *Kabbalah* (lit., "Tradition").

In all probability, the Zohar ("Illumination") was not composed until much later, at about the 13th century, but the fact that it was traced back to Rabbi Simeon, of the 2nd century, is significant of the trend that had been growing during that time. The Kabbalistic movement—which is our second major area of interest—was largely academic or scholastic in nature, engrossed in trying to unravel the mysteries of the universe. Scripturally, the point of departure was usually the Story of Creation or Ezekiel's vision of the Heavenly Chariot.

The Kabbalists were deeply concerned with the problems of matter and spirit, of body and soul, of good and evil, of the many and the One. Like most sincere religionists, they were eager to know man's true nature, his relation to God, and what it is that separates man from God. And their answer was amazingly "Vedāntic" in character. They said that the whole of creation came about through *Sefirot*, a process of "emanations" from God. The further these emanations went, the less spiritual they became, inasmuch as they were removed from their original divine Source and Essence. Thus the world and the individual soul came into being. Man, according to their view, is a key element in the whole creative scheme. For in him are combined the material and the spiritual. In him the pure, inner Self has been covered over and eclipsed by various outer husks or shells—what Vedānta would call "layers of ignorance"—so that he has forgotten or lost sight of his essential nature. It is this dark outer covering which accounts for division and conflict, and so-called

[18] The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XII, p. 138.

[19] "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism", by Gershon G. Sholem, Schocken Books, N.Y., 1946. "A History of Jewish Mysticism", by Ernst Mueller, East and West Library, London, 1946.

evil. This is the "world of opposites", the world of constant change and illusion ("māyā"). It is not the world of Reality, It is not God.

According to the Kabbalah, human birth is only a descent of the soul from a higher to a lower sphere. The Zohar also speaks of the doctrine of *gilgul,* which is "reincarnation", or the transmigration of souls. It follows, therefore, that man's major purpose in this life is to liberate the soul from its earthly attachments and bondage. And this can be done through *Torah* (spiritual learning or "discrimination") and through *Teshuvah,* penitence (literally "a turning about"), a "renunciation" of the enticements of the world and a facing in the direction of our true goal.

It should be mentioned, in all fairness, that a good deal of Jewish mysticism (as in other cases) veered in the direction of occultism, a preoccupation with psychical phenomena, and the like. There were false Messiah movements, and so on. For this reason, even if for no other, a study of comparative mysticism is most helpful, for it serves to point out the pitfalls and to highlight the real attainments.

We now come to the third—and, in a sense, the most intriguing—of the Jewish mystical movements: *Hasidism.*

In the writings of Swami Vivekananda, in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* and in other Vedāntic sources, various paths (or Yogas) toward the realization of God are set forth. The main ones are Karma, Jñāna, and Bhakti—the paths of service, reason, and love. In my own mind, as I was thinking about the various developments in Judaism, I could not help but assign each to a different Yoga. Of course, none is exclusive, but each does seem to follow a certain pattern and set a particular tone. The Essenes were largely a *working* group, dedicated to the building of an ideal community. The Kabbalists were *philosophic* mystics, trying to interpret the Scriptures and the world of experience. The Hasidim (as we shall see in a moment) aimed at sanctifying all of life with a sense of divine *love.*

One of the last of the Kabbalists and a forerunner of the Hasidim was Rabbi Isaac Luria, who lived in Safed, Palestine, in the 16th century.[20] He gathered about him a group of associates or disciples, who soon came to refer to him as *Ari,* "the Lion". Of him it was said that he beheld Spirit everywhere—in the rustling of the leaves, in the song of the birds, in the rushing of water, or the flickering of flames. The mysticism of Luria, though it embraces Kabbalistic study, was directed mainly at *Tikkun ha-nefesh,* "perfection of the soul." He inspired special prayers, hymns, and devotional exercises.

Then, at the beginning of the 18th century, in Poland, there appeared Rabbi Israel Baal Shem (lit. "Master of the Lord's Name"). The Baal Shem, as a youth, instead of going to school, spent much of his time in the solitude of the woods communing with God. Later he became an assistant schoolmaster, but instead of drilling his students in the usual book learning, he taught them to chant and to pray and to rejoice in the Lord. A father once complained to the Baal Shem that his son had forsaken God. "What shall I do?" he asked. The Baal Shem replied: "Love him more than ever".[21] He was an unusual person, and it was not long before many disciples and a host of simple, pious folk began to flock about him. He became the prototype for several generations of outstanding teachers and disciples that followed, and a new vitality was infused into Jewish life.

Some of the characteristics of this movement are: first, a strong guru-disciple relationship. The Master was called the *Zaddik* (a righteous, or saintly man). His intimate followers would see in him the embodiment of divine qualities and higher powers, while

[20] See article, "Safed in the 16th Century", in Solomon Schechter's "Studies in Judaism" (second series), pp. 202-285.

[21] "Hasidism", by Martin Buber, Philosophical Library, N.Y., 1948 (p. 175).

others would come on pilgrimages from time to time to be taught and inspired. Another characteristic was the sense of great joy in the service of the Lord—not asceticism or mortification (as had been practised elsewhere), nor mere intellectual scholarship. When the master and his disciples came together, there was dancing and singing and a festive meal.

Lastly, Hasidism stressed the omnipresence of God. Man must serve God, through all his thoughts, words and deeds, and thus he will release the divine spark within. There is no distinction here between the secular and the sacred, between good and evil—all our impulses must be directed and "sublimated" toward the One Goal. And in order to do that, of course, the ego must be overcome.

A typical story is told of a friend who, coming to see a Hasidic teacher, knocked at his door. The teacher inquired, "Who is there?" and the visitor responded, "It is I." But the door was not opened, so the man knocked again. Whereupon the voice from within said: "Who is it, who is so bold to say 'I'—that which God alone may do?"[22]

Sadness, for example, according to the Hasidic teaching, is the attribute of an egoist, one who is always thinking, "Something should rightfully come to me; something is wrongfully lacking to me." Whether in worries physical or spiritual, it is always "I" at the root of it.[23] In contrast, one saint once prayed: "O God, I have no wish for Thy Paradise, nor any desire for the joys in the world to come. I want Thee and Thee alone."[24]

We have here also the idea of non-attachment to the fruits of our work. Work itself is necessary, but it should be done as a service to God, without expectation of reward. Indeed, in Hebrew, one word *Avodah* is used for both work and worship. By this concept all the ethical virtues—and particularly service to others—become exercises in spiritual growth.

One leader, Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav, summed up much of the Hasidic outlook in these words:[25] "God is everywhere. He is among the most common of men; he is to be found in the lowliest occupation. Delve deeper and you will find a way to serve God in everything and in every work and place. No matter how low you may have fallen in your own esteem, bear in mind that if you delve deeply into yourself, you will discover holiness there. A holy spark resides there which, through repentance, you may fan into a consuming flame which will burn away the dross of unworthiness. Passion and desire surround us. Break through the shell and attain understanding."

As a result of such self-discipline and pious devotion, some of the Hasidic masters did indeed attain a high degree of God-consciousness. Of one it is related that during his especially prayerful days he had to look at the clock occasionally to remind himself that he was in the temporal world.[26] Solomon Schechter, in an essay on "saintliness", tells of a Jewish saint who fasted the first six days in the week. When asked how he managed to do it, he answered that he never meant to fast: he simply forgot to eat.[27]

Martin Buber, in his "Tales of the Hasidim", has this to tell about Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of the town of Berditchev.[28] On the forenoon of one Day of Atonement, during the Avodah Service, he was so overwhelmed with fervor that he fell on the floor and lay as one dead. In vain did those standing near seek to revive him. They lifted him from the floor, carried him to his room, and laid him on his bed. Then the Hasidim, who knew very well that this was a state which had to do with the

[22] "Hasidism", by Buber, p. 185.

[23] "The Hasidic Anthology", by Louis I. Newman and S. Spitz (p. 243).

[24] See Schechter, above, p. 181.

[25] The Sayings of the Bratzlaver, in Hasidic Anthology, above.

[26] "A History of Jewish Mysticism", above, p. 142.

[27] See "Studies in Judaism" (second series) Jewish Publication Society of Am., p. 163.

[28] See Volume 1, The Early Masters—Schocken Books, p. 210.

soul and not a sickness of the body, continued in their prayer. It was only toward evening that the Rabbi returned and concluded the prayers with the congregation. (In Vedānta, this might well be called a form of *samādhi*.)

Thus we see how surprisingly similar are the various insights of mysticism at their higher levels. Hasidic Judaism, mystical Christianity, Zen Buddhism, Sufi Mohammedanism, Vedāntic Hinduism—all, basically, seem to be pointing in one direction. No doubt, at some points along the way, there was contact among them. But the likenesses are too great to be merely historical or coincidental.

Western theologians often like to draw a sharp contrast between the Oriental tradition and the Judeo-Christian heritage. The Eastern teaching, they say, by making Brahman and Atman as One, tends to negate the world and individual life, while Western religion, being dualistic, leaves room for individuality.

For the vast majority of us, however, this is a purely theoretical question, with no relevance to our real situation. Ramakrishna pointed out very often: As long as the body and the consciousness of self are with us, we cannot pretend that they do not exist. Hence, if we must have ego, let it be the ego of service, the ego of devotion and love.

So it is not a question of dualism or monism, it is only a question of whether our thoughts and actions shall be self-centered or God-centered. On this, it seems, all the great faiths are wholly agreed: that our life has no other ultimate purpose but to seek to dwell in the Presence of the Eternal.

RELIGION AND SOCIETY BEFORE THE BUDDHA'S TIME

By Sri K. D. Bajpai

The time before the rise of Gautama, the Buddha, is of considerable importance in the history of India. It marked the transitional stage not only in the political field but also in the life and thought of the people. The trend of opinion was now growing against the rigid formation of the Vedic sacrifice. The mental stir of the age was responsible for this change.[1] In the philosophy of the Upaniṣads we notice the ferment for true knowledge. In place of the elaborate and expensive Vedic rituals, the mind of the thoughtful people was diverted towards seeking peace and salvation by the knowledge of *Ātman* and *Paramātman*. The high position which the Brāhmaṇa priests had so far occupied could no longer be maintained. The Kṣatriyas had now gained predominance. Some of them were renowned philosophers. Even the learned Brāhmaṇas used to approach them for seeking higher knowledge.[2] The examples of the royal philosophers like Prāvahaṇa Jaivali, Janaka and Ajātaśatru are before us. The first named king used to hold intellectual tournaments at his court in Kāmpilya. From the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*[3] and the *Chhāndogya*[4] Upaniṣads, we learn that Śvetaketu, the son of Uddālaka Āruṇi went into the assembly of this king. Jaivali asked him several searching questions about the nature of the soul and

[1] We notice this change in some passages of the *Ṛgveda* also (cf. *Rv.* x. 129).

[2] Some of the Kṣatriya kings, instead of employing Brāhmaṇa teachers, were themselves imparting education to their sons. In the *Gāmanichanda Jātaka* (II, 297) we read about a king who taught to his son the Vedas and the worldly knowledge (*'tayo vede sabbaṁ cha loke kattabbaṁ*).

[3] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, VI. 1.1.

[4] *Chhāndogya*, V. 3.1.

the other world. Śvetaketu, however, failed to give satisfactory answers. On his return, he conveyed this to his learned father, Uddālaka Āruṇi. Thereupon both the father and the son went to king Jaivali, who gave them necessary instructions in higher knowledge.

It should not, however, be supposed that the Vedic rituals were ignored *en masse* in this age of reason and higher learning. They no doubt continued, although in a less vigorous form. The theology, as contained in the late Vedic literature, was still current. Mystic significance was attached to these rituals and sacrifices. In Śrauta Sūtras and the Gṛhya Sūtras, we come across elaborate descriptions of Vedic rituals. Many Brāhmaṇas were still earning their livelihood through these Yajñas. They were patronized by the kings and nobles. This state of affairs continued in the time of Buddha also.[5]

There was no central organization of the Brāhmaṇa priests during this age. Nor were there any Brāhmaṇic temples where people could worship. In the absence of such temples, the common folk used to worship trees in the form of Vṛkṣadevatās (tree gods). Besides, the Nāga cult was also prevalent. These Nāgas (serpents) were regarded as very wealthy and powerful. They were supposed to live, like mermen and mermaids, under waters. They could also assume human forms and people were afraid of them. These Nāgas were worshipped both in the form of serpents and human beings.[6]

Then came the Yakṣas and Gandharvas. In the Madhyadeśa the Yakṣas had several centres notably at Mathura and Ālavi. Kubera was their lord. He was the god of wealth also. Some of the Yakṣas and Yakṣinīs were cruel and fearful, whereas others were of pleasant forms, mild and benevolent. The ancient literature contains numerous references to the Yakṣa worship. In the *Mahābhārata* we come across the Yakṣas, one of whom asked some questions (*Yakṣapraśna*) to Yudhiṣṭhira.[7] From the Buddhist and Jaina literature we learn that the Yakṣa-cult had a wide currency in northern India. We read about the names of such powerful Yakṣas as Umbaradatta, Surambara, Māṇibhadra, Bhaṇḍīra, Śūlapāṇi, Surapriya, Ghaṇṭika, Pūrṇa Bhadra, etc. Similarly we come across such names of the Yakṣiṇīs as Kuntī, Natā, Bhaṭṭā, Revatī, Tamsurī, Lokā, Mekhalā, Alikā, Bendā, Maghā, Timisikā, etc.[8] People were afraid of them and used to pay homage to these so-called semi-divine figures. The last-mentioned four Yakṣiṇīs belonged to Mathura. According to tradition, they were checked by Buddha from their unpleasant deeds. The Yakṣa, called Gardabha, was then very powerful at Mathura. Buddha succeeded in subduing him also, thereby relieving the people of Mathura from the constant fear of this Yakṣa.[9] Similarly the great Yakṣa of Ālavi was also humbled by Buddha.

During the period before the birth of Buddha, a number of superstitious beliefs were current in north India. We read about the following kinds of 'animistic hocus-pocus' followed by the people of Madhyadeśa:—

"Palmistry, divination of all sorts, auguries drawn from the celestial phenomena, prognostications by interpretation of dreams, auguries drawn from marks on cloth gnawed by mice, sacrifices to Agni—it is characteristic

[5] King Prasenjit (Pasenadi) of Kosala and Udayana (Udena) of Kauśāmbī were believers in the efficacy of Vedic rituals.

[6] The first is called *Sarpavigraha*. Generally females desiring children used to worship such images in the form of cobras. The human form (*Mānavavigraha*) had usually the form of a male or female having the serpent hoods on the back of the head.

[7] Cf. *Brahmodya* of the Vedic literature (*Yajurveda*, 32.9.45), which is the same as *Yakṣapraśna*. Yakṣa is generally referred to as *Brahma* in the Vedic literature. The worship of *Brahma* or *Brahmadeva* is current to this day, and so also the worship of *Bīrā, Jakhaiyā, Mātā, Joginī, Dākinī*, etc. which are the present forms of Yakṣas and Yakṣinīs.

[8] Cf. Motichandra, 'Some Aspects of Yakṣa Cult', *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay 1954, pp., 43ff.*

[9] N. Dutt. *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. III. pt. I, pp. 14-17.

to find these in such company—oblations of various sorts to gods, determining lucky sites, repeating charms, laying ghosts, snake charming, using similar arts on other beasts and birds, astrology, the power of prophecy, incantations, oracles, consulting gods through a girl possessed or by means of mirrors, worshipping the Great One invoking Śrī (the goddess of Luck), vowing vows to gods, muttering charms to cause virility or impotence, consecrating sites, and more of the same kind."[10]

Thus we find that people had faith in magic rituals and queer utterances. The Vedic gods, Indra, Agni, etc, were still worshipped. But side by side the worship of Mātṛdevī (mother-goddess), Vṛkṣadevatā (tree deity), Yakṣas, Nāgas and Asuras was also fairly current. Some of these were benevolent, while the others were cruel and offensive. Several of these latter gods symbolized the air, cloud, heat, or light and quite a few represented the mental faculties.

This transition age was an age of religious freedom. People were free to choose their way of life. This gave rise to several cults and creeds. The contention of some scholars that the pre-Buddhist Indian society was rigidly bound to the ritualistic conventions created by the Brāhmaṇa priests, is not sound. Had this been the case we would not have seen so many different cults. In fact the freedom in religious outlook had given rise to several streams of thought which existed side by side. In the Pāli literature we read about the existence of 62 cults before Buddha. These were Ājīvakas, Pravrājakas, Jaṭilakas, Muṇḍa Śrāvakas, Tedaṇḍikas, etc. The Jaina canons refer to no less than 363 cults! Many of these may have been gradually absorbed in Vedic, Jaina or Buddhist modes of life. Before Buddha preached his new *Dhamma*, there was quite a large number of eminent scholars propagating different faiths. Buddha met several of these. In the Buddhist works we come across the names of such luminaries as Purāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Goshāla, Niganṭha, Nāṭaputta, Ajita Keśakambalin, Asita Ṛṣi, Pakkuddha Kachchāyana, Moggalāna, Sañjaya Velaṭṭhaputta, Alāra Kalāma, Uddaka Rāmaputta (Rudraka Rāmaputra), etc.

Let us now turn to the social condition of the period. Before the rise of Buddhism, colour (*Varṇa*) was the main decisive factor of various grades in society. But it had not yet assumed the form of the rigid caste system of the later times. The superiority of the Brāhmaṇas based on the caste theory, was now limited only to a small class. On the other hand, the theory of *karma* was becoming more popular and it was realized that people of the lower strata could also attain higher status in society if their actions were good. In the Upaniṣads and in several discourses of Buddha on this subject, we find echo of this sentiment.[11]

The people could change their hereditary professions. In the Jātakas we come across several such instances. At one place[12] we read about a Kṣatriya, who first assumes the profession of a potter. Then he becomes a basket-maker. After that, he becomes a florist and then a cook. But he does not lose his caste thereby. Similarly we read about a *Seṭṭhi* doing the work of a tailor and a potter, without the loss of his social rank.[13] When some Brāhmaṇas found it difficult to earn their livelihood, they turned to other professions. We come across the Brāhmaṇas turning to such professions as agriculture,[14] trade,[15] carpentry[16] or hunting[17]. Some of them were doing the work of a teacher, or that of an astrologer or a charmer.

Besides the three upper social ranks,—the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas (*Seṭṭhis*)—there were people of lower status also. They were engaged in the so-called lower profes-

[10] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, (Calcutta Edition, 1950), pp. 143-44.

[11] Cf. *JRAS.*, 1901 p. 868.
[12] *Jātaka*, V. 290.
[13] *Jātaka*, III. 372.
[14] *Ibid*, III. 163
[15] *Ibid*, V. 471, II, 15.
[16] *Ibid*, IV. 207.
[17] *Ibid*, II. 2.

sions (*hīna sippāni*). They were bird-catchers, dancers, barbers, potters, leather-workers, weavers, basket-makers, carpenters, etc. Below these were the Chaṇḍālas and Pukkusas.[18] There were also the slaves, whose children too were generally regarded as slaves. For the most part these slaves were household servants. Their number was, however, small and they received good treatment at the hands of their masters.

As regards marriage, both the forms of regular (*anuloma*) and irregular (*pratiloma*) marriages were then current. The child born to the parents of different social ranks was generally assigned to the higher rank. Irregular unions were quite popular.[19] Inter-caste dining was also fairly known. But the taking of food by the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas with the Chaṇḍālas, Pukkusas, etc. was regarded as derogatory and was discouraged.

One of the important features of the then society was the *āśrama* system. In the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads* we read about three *āśramas* only, viz. *Brahmacarya, Gṛhastha* and *Vānaprastha*. These three were regarded as the three branches of the Tree of Life and not the three successive stages of life. In the later Upaniṣads, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Dharma Sūtras*, we generally find these *āśramas* in the form of the successive stages of life and the fourth *āśrama* of Sannyāsa is also added to them.

During the period under review, we find the people of the third *āśrama* living in forests. They eschewed the Vedic sacrifices. They were after the search of true knowledge and peace of mind. Some of them adopted the practice of preaching to the laymen the correct mode of life, which was based not on Vedic rituals, but on the acquisition of true knowledge (*jñāna mārga*). Some of the talented ladies also became preachers of the high philosophical canons. Gradually people at large became more inclined towards the doctrine of *jñāna*. They began to think it futile to be entrenched behind the cult of Vedic rituals.

The language of the people was Pāli. It was current right from Takṣaśilā in the west to Champā in the east. The Sanskrit language was limited to a small number of the higher class. It was different from the ancient Vedic Sanskrit. In the Pāli language, then current, many words of the Vedic Sanskrit had been absorbed. Some new words were also coined and some were taken from the non-Āryan languages. Buddha adopted this Pāli as the medium of his preachings, thereby enraging some of the orthodox Brāhmaṇa priests, who had a sort of dislike for the language of the people.

The economic condition of the pre-Buddhist society was fairly good. A number of crafts was flourishing and the means of communications were also satisfactory. On the main roads were situated several big industrial towns like Champā, Rājagṛha, Vaiśālī, Vārāṇasī, Ayodhyā, Sāketa, Śrāvastī, Kauśāmbī, Mathurā and Takṣaśilā. There were numerous crafts in the towns and villages. Occasional references are also found to the weavers, ivory and metal workers, carpenters, potters and stone-cutters. Besides, the garland-makers, confectioners, leather-workers, dyers, jewellers, basket-makers, etc. are also mentioned.

During the period the craftsmen and the businessmen had almost freed themselves from being entirely dependent on the agriculture class. They now went ahead into their professions. Besides fulfilling the needs of the village agriculturist, they began to prepare extra ready-made material for export. Another important step was taken up by the craftsmen by forming their respective guilds. These guilds or corporations were called *nigama, saṅgha, śrenī, pūga* and *nikāya*. Each guild had its head or president, who was called *pamukha* (pramukha) or *jeṭṭhaka* (*jyeṣṭhaka*). In the Jātakas we read about such names as *kumārajeṭṭhaka* (Jātaka No. 387), *mālākārajeṭṭhaka* (No. 415), *vaḍḍhakijeṭṭhaka* (No. 460) etc.

[18] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, I. 162; Jacobi; *Jaina Sūtras*, II. 301.

[19] *Jātaka*, IV. 38; 146 and IV. 348.

The heads of the traders were called *satthavāhajeṭṭhaka* (No. 256). The robbers also had their own *jeṭṭhakas*. In one Jātaka (No. 279) mention is made of a gang of 500 robbers. In another Jātaka (No. 466) we read about 1,000 carpenters of a village. There were two *jeṭṭhakas* of these, one over each 500.[20]

At several places the head of the guild is called *seṭṭhi*. The number of members in various guilds varied. These guilds or corporations looked after the protection and development of their respective crafts.[21] The *jeṭṭhakas* had often an important voice in the matters of administration of the country. The various corporations had their own rules, which were honoured by the king. In case any breach or dispute arose among the members of a guild, the king regarded it his duty to set the matter right.[22]

From the Jātakas we also learn that some of the heads of these guilds were appointed as high government officers. Two presidents of Kośala were holding the esteemed position of ministers.[23] At another place[24] the president of the guild of ironsmiths has been called king's favourite. Another *jeṭṭhaka*[25] was made the treasurer of the kingdom.

[20] *Kulasahasse pañcannaṁ pañcannaṁ kulasatānaṁ jeṭṭhakā dve vaḍḍhaki ahesuṁ* (*Jātaka* No. 466).

For a detailed account of the guilds see R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, pp. 5.18-19; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 57 ff.

[21] *Mahāvagga*, viii. 1.6 *"Bahūpakārako devassa ceva negamassa."*

[22] Cf. *Gautama Dharma Sūtra*, XI. 21, *Uraga Jātaka* I. 154.

[23] *Sūchī Jātaka* No. 387; *Nigrodha Jātaka* No. 445.

[24] *Cūlavagga*, 6. 4. 1.; *Jātaka* Nos. 128, 300, 382, and 445.

[25] See Richard Fick, *The Social Organisation in Northern India in Buddha's Time* (Calcutta, 1920), pp. 258 ff.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN MIND
(An Approach)

By Sri S. N. Rao

Human mind is rightly described as a highly complex Radio Set with innumerable diverse wave lengths, and is capable of being switched on to take in all thought currents, great and small, past and present, flowing incessantly in cosmic space. Man's environment is thus filled with unlimited supply of thought currents. What is called Mahat or Cosmic Intelligence is all a mass of thought filling the universe of space.

Man is a psycho-physical product of evolution, physically through gradations of the five primal elements, and psychically through gradations of mind, intelligence and egoity (*Gītā*, XIII, 5 & 6). The physical content of human individuality cannot lose its relation with the fivefold elemental matter from which it has evolved, nor can the psychic content of that individuality lose its relation with the cosmic soul from which the individual soul has evolved. Individual psyche and the world psyche are therefore necessarily related. Human mind, conditioned by egoity and individuation, is oblivious of its relationship with the cosmic mind, and is thus unable to attune itself to the diverse wave lengths of thought currents in cosmic space. It is only in great poets and philosophers that egoity is very much less, and hence their communion with Nature and the universe is much deeper and

more intimate than that of the average man, however learned and cultured he may be. All great thoughts that enrich the human mind, and all values that enrich human life, come from those great souls who are in tune with the Infinite. Theirs is the highest level of understanding, the highest level of human personality. Man is not just a physical self; he is also a thinking and a knowing self, and his level of understanding is the level of his thinking and knowing self.

What we call mind is the seat of awareness, knowledge and intelligence. It is the sixth sense, fundamental for the functioning of the five primary senses. Awareness, understanding and intelligence are the functionings of the mind. But the mind itself cannot function without the light from the self-luminous and self-effulgent entity in man, the entity we call the soul.

That which is an object for a subject, that which is seen for a seer, that which is known for a knower, is considered as insentient and non-intelligent. Mind becomes an object when it is perceived, i.e., when you say 'my mind'. And yet, mind becomes a subject, a seer and a knower when it sees objects. Mind is the connecting link between the 'I' and the organs of sense. If the mind is not there, the 'I' can neither see nor hear. Perception or knowledge is thus a result of conjunction of three factors, namely, the 'I' and the mind and the senses. It is the senses that bring the mind into action; they feed the mind. Senses externalize the mind, and we frequently need to internalize the mind. That internalization is what we call introspection. Introspection is the study of one's own mind, not sullen brooding nor unawareness of all environment. It is turning one's own mind into itself, in order to know its own nature and its working. In introspection, mind itself is the subject matter of study; a portion of the mind studies the remaining portion of the mind. The higher mind watches the movements of the rest of the mind. Introspect for an hour, and you will know your defects and weaknesses. Intelligent introspection has great value in life. If we identify ourselves with everything our mind thinks and wishes to do, we come under the bondage of the senses, and we would never know our defects and never see the necessity of rectifying them.

We suggested that mind is the connecting link between the 'I' and the senses, and that perception is the result of that connection. Mind, egoity and intelligence are products of Prakṛti, products which Prakṛti is able to produce because of the immediate presence and proximity of the Self in man. The Self somehow becomes identified with those products; it gets a conditioning by that identification with mind, egoity etc. (*Gītā*, XV.7). When the Self gets that identity, it assumes ego-hood, and the same Self appears as mind, *buddhi* and other products of psychic nature. All is Self only, and the rest of the entire aggregate is Non-self, or what Vedānta calls *Asat*. Self is the spiritual principle, the ground on which the whole personality of man is built up. Human individuality is thus a blend of both *Sat* and *Asat*. *Sat* and *Asat* are both facts, the difference being that *Sat* is the Reality and *Asat* is the appearance of that Reality. The same is the case with the universe which is also a blend of *Sat* and *Asat*. *Asat* is the product of Prakṛti, a product on the cosmic plane which Prakṛti has manifested, has been able to manifest because of the immediate presence and proximity of the cosmic *Sat*, the spiritual pinciple in the universe (*Gītā*, IX.10). There can be no *Asat* without the *Sat*, and where there is *Sat* (*Sat* is everywhere), there can be its appearance (*Asat*). All is *Sat* only. That is the *Darśana*, the realization of the fact or truth of life. Ātman or Reality is basic and fundamental, and individuality is the appearance at the functional level. Mind itself is an appearance, the conditioned Self, not a separate physical entity with a spatial location in the human body, which can be dissected and taken apart like the brain, heart or liver.

Mind in flux is thought, and all thought is a flux. Thinking is never a fixture. What we call *Citta* in Hindu psychology is the mind-

stuff, i.e., mind without thoughts. *Citta* is a condition, a state of mind when dormant. Such a state is compared to a calm lake. When mind is in action, i.e., when thoughts arise, such thoughts are compared to the waves or ripples on the surface of the mind-lake. Name and form is the normal way in which these thought waves arise. There can be no thought without name and form. *Citta* is thus a storehouse of tendencies and impressions of experience, and memory is the trap door through which they come to the surface of the mind. Here, a question may arise whether *Citta* is the same as the 'sub-conscious' of the Western psychologists. The answer is both yes and no. To the Western psychologist, the 'sub-conscious' is also a storehouse of submerged and suppressed tendencies and habits, thrown into background but recoverable. What Hindus call *Saṁskāras* and *Vāsanās* are also habits and tendencies, but they are mostly inherited from past life or lives which the Western psychologist does not admit or believe in. The 'sub-conscious' is in the *Citta,* but the *Citta* is more than the 'sub-conscious' and has a much larger content. In Hindu psychology, the terms *Cit, Cetana, Manas, Vṛtti,* etc., are all concepts given as counters on the table of understanding. They represent various states of the human mind. They flow into each other and also flow out of each other. They are currency coins of thought, and their value and application vary according to the thinker and his understanding. The only true coin is the Self, while all the others must be taken as mere tokens whose value depends on the then conditioned state of the Self.

To a psychologist in the West, all thinking is just a dance of physical atoms in a physical brain, and all perception is mere stimulation of physical nerves and a vibration of physical muscles. The Western psychologist is unaware of any soul behind the mind, and takes, rather mistakes the mind for the soul. Psychology in the West is mostly physiology of nerves, muscles and brain tissue. It seeks to understand the human mind from the analogy of an animal's instinctive response to a plate of food. At the instinct level of the animal, and even of man, there is no mind at all behind action, and how can we search for a mind which is not there?

The thinking principle in man is the soul, and it feeds on perception, impressions and experience. Ideas, and words expressing those ideas, produce a creative effect only when they have a value and serve a purpose. Word is the form; idea is the content. In all art, philosophy and literature, two processes are involved. One is the process of thinking, and the other is the process of feeling. When both the processes are integrated, the product exerts a creative influence and contains a creative value. It gives an impact, leaves an impress, thus influencing our very life. It is creative art and literature that enrich our mind, widen our vision and elevate our levels of understanding—levels for each one of us determine our sense of values in life. Art and literature are not products of intellect only. It is the feeling and emotion that gives greatness and immortality to a poet and a philosopher. The purely intellectual level is a surface level, while the emotional or heart level is deeper. Surface level is the form, while the deeper level is the content. The one reveals the other, and both reveal the whole.

> "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty, that is all
> Ye know on earth and ye need to know."
> (Keats)

Here we have a profound and mystic utterance of a great poet. It is an expression of a mystic experience. How are we to understand it? What is Truth and what is Beauty? Wherein lies their sameness and identity? We call things beautiful, things which are agreeable and pleasing to our sense perception. Whatever exists as a fact, ideological, emotional or physical, we take it as truth. This is what we generally understand by the terms 'Beauty and Truth'. In our conception of beauty, we find we have excluded all ugliness and all that is unpleasant to our senses. In our conception of truth we find we have ex-

cluded all that is false and all things which we can never conceive of as happening or existing. It is a different level of understanding, a negative level. When we put these two meanings together, we get to a still deeper level, a more positive level. If a thing is not beautiful, it must be ugly, and all ugliness is evil. If a thing is not true, it must be false, and all falsehood is evil. We therefore necessarily come to the conclusion that all things beautiful and true are *good,* and all things that are ugly and false are *evil.* We thus see that both Beauty and Truth have the same identical quality which we call *goodness.* All saints and philosophers, ancient and modern, proclaim that Truth, Beauty and Goodness are the supreme values in life. It is an all-comprehensive truth, the biggest truth in ethics and philosophy. It is the same as the Vedāntic truth, *Satyam, Sivam* and *Sundaram.* Keats only gave a charmingly poetic expression to the Truth of all truths in the famous lines quoted above.

Human mind has its limitations. Total awareness remains a dream. All-comprehensive and integral knowledge, as we proceed nearer and nearer, recedes farther and farther. When we speak of the levels of human understanding, we must not commit the mistake of thinking that there is any conflict or antagonism between one level and another. Conflict and antagonism arise only when misunderstanding creeps in, not otherwise. Every level, however high it may be, includes and contains all the lower levels. No level can possibly negate, deny or decry the level or levels below. The evolution of man is from knowledge to knowledge, from one level of trnth to higher and higher levels of truth, and not from error to truth.

CHARACTER AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

By Sudhangshu Bhusan Pal Choudhury

Character is something one grows. It is not inherited at birth but results from what happens to each individual as he uses, and is used by, the things and people around him. Becoming a person is a complicated and often perplexing adventure, for it involves something unique among living beings. Man alone seems to be aware of distinction between right and wrong in what we may call a moral sense. The infants of many species can learn to distinguish between right and wrong food, between the right and the wrong turn, between what is right to touch and what wrong. But only a child can go farther to distinguish between right and wrong in relation to people.

Early in his life a child discovers for himself a difference between human beings and things—in the way they respond to what he does and in the way they act upon him. Human beings treat other people, including babies, as persons, not as things. The child learns new right-wrong distinctions in relation to persons. Some acts bring smiles and favours and other indications of approval; they bring satisfactions that have nothing to do with food or fun or other material values. He discovers himself as a person who can be hurt or pleased in his own self; these are new kinds of values. Here he begins his lifelong effort to understand himself as one of many in a family, a society, and to build useful and satisfying ways of communicating with all the persons he gets to know.

However defined, spirituality is a quality belonging to people. We usually associate spiritual values with the worthy and important concerns of the most respectable people in the group to which we belong. In general,

these concerns are for ways of feeling, thinking, and acting which are judged to be best in the long run for the entire group. Character itself is defined as one's habitual ways of feeling, thinking, and acting in various situations. And so it comes about that spiritual values reinforce society's effort to preserve and strengthen the kind of character which best serves the people as a whole.

Those who believe in a personal God are sure that both child and adult may have experience of Him as of a person. This comes in worship or in some sudden mystical intuition that in the history of religions is everywhere affirmed as the most significant of all experiences. Those who cannot accept such a conception of God may none the less have the same sort of experience in contact with spiritual values in men and in the symbols men have devised to convey them.

What are the ways in which we can help our children to acquire spiritual values that will stand the test of the coming years? We have assumed that these qualities we call spiritual belong to people and are learned from people. We have assumed that character grows as the growing child responds to what goes on around him, and specially to what the people around him do. That means that, whether or not we feel qualified to use it, we parents have more influence than anyone else on the kinds of persons our children become, on the kinds of things they want and value most in life.

Character and spiritual values are not just predetermined qualities that our children must be made to develop. They are always to be freshly created in the warm, free fellowship of the home. They grow out of mutual feelings of affection, dependence, and trust. They involve mutual regard and respect for differences, a sense of solidarity and responsibility. They appear in courage, in the confidence that we can find our way in all situations.

In the give-and-take of daily living in the home, in the way in which each person in it learns to get along with the others, to make demands and to respond to them, to be oneself and to give oneself, to trust and to be trusted, to love and to be loved—character and spiritual values are built in each family and in each member of it. Character emerges from every aspect of family life, and its quality measures the quality of the home itself. Especially does it measure the adults who, by their every thought and act, give shape and direction to the home.

Thus each family is a fellowship in which all share; it is not static and formal but warm with life and growth. Creative difference and conformity together build true fellowship. The family is strong both because of its varieties and because of its identities. Each member gives from his strength and receives for his weakness. And all both give and receive help. The building of character is an adventure in which all share and all are changed. The teaching of spiritual values is a two-way process between parents and children. All learn and all teach. Spiritual values come out of shared joys and sorrows, victories and defeats. They are the way members of a family together learn to respond to life. They are what grows out of experience, what guides it and gives it meaning. They are both the truths others have learned about life and the sudden flash and thrill of discovery and seeing for oneself.

Parents of grown-up children know well that their own character and ideals were changed by the process of bringing them up. For though there is always much that is deeply shared, there is also much that is special to each member of the family. Neither in character nor in the values that are a part of it is any one exactly like any one else. Each child has something quite his own to contribute.

There is a contagion of character and spirituality which is more subtle than the formal standards of honesty, justice, and brotherhood. Character and spiritual values are affected by the responses and sensitivities some call culture, an awareness of beauty in art, music, literature, history, and nature, a life attuned to simple, noble, and common-

place events. Some have this gift of higher perception in the midst of unseeing folk around them.

Character cannot be improved from without. It grows from within. It cannot be trained up on trellises of spiritual values set up for the purpose. Spiritual values are an incentive and direction from within. They are like a food that must be absorbed and assimilated if it is to give energy and growth. They are not usually effective when they are forced on unwilling children. In the long run, the most successful parents are those who deeply know, feel, and practise the ways of life they want to teach. They are those who, at the same time, truly respect the unique personalities of their children. They are those who patiently and objectively try to help their children find themselves and the patterns of behaviour that are to them socially fulfilling.

Character and spiritual values grow out of the interaction of personalities in the intimately shared experiences of a family. Under the warmth of genuine affection and respect for himself and his needs, the child develops a conformity that is a pattern of feelings and attitudes rather than one of 'do's and don'ts'.

But these patterns of motives and values do not grow to the fullest proportions unless and until they take in more than the family. A certain exclusiveness is necessary in the earliest stages of a family's growth. But the family that refuses to be a part of the larger community never really grows up. Religious convictions sometimes get in the way of this larger fellowship. The more we treasure our own spiritual beliefs the more we are inclined to doubt about the worth of those of others. When convictions become dogmatic, they seem to stand guard against the approach of alien values. The closed group and the closed mind seem to go together.

Here is one of the chief hazards of education in religion. Parents are tempted to use God as their substitute and defender against the child's naughty disobedience. What God wants seems then to be always what mother wants. It is clear to the child that God belongs to mother, not mother to God. And the child projects his resentment of mother's refusals and demands upon her Assistant. Or the combination proves so strong for the child that, thrusting his resentment deep down out of sight for a period, he becomes submissive and yielding. When at length rebellion breaks through the surface conformity, both mother and God are likely to be rejected.

It is not enough to build values within the family group. To strengthen the family by building around it a wall of shared belief is dangerous unless gateways are kept open to strangers. The family that has its own resources of character and social idealism need not be afraid of outside influences. The strongest families, the family groups richest in character and conviction, are not those that shut themselves away from the outside world, but those that welcome it. By contrast and comparison and by shared beliefs, the visiting friends of another faith, the visitor from a distant land, the neighbour of a different racial background, give new zest and direction to the family search for better ways of living. The open mind is part of the Indian ideal. There is no better way to ensure its acceptance by our children than to make home an experience that we are sometimes glad to share. When he sees it freshly through the eyes of a visitor, a child looks with new appreciation and understanding upon the home he often takes for granted.

Like character, spiritual values grow out of struggle, but not out of all struggle. Poverty, disease, national disaster, fear and hatred of others can warp and weaken both character and values. To speak of high ideals to hungry men is to inflict gross and cruel indignity. Self-respect and regard for others are hard to cultivate in children exposed to cruelties of social rejection and to the sneers of children more fortunately born. Crowded rooms in insanitary tenements, family insecurity, broken homes, the lack of proper care and affection—all these make it harder for children to grow up into the pattern of life that most of us think good. Society in gene-

ral and parents in particular have a tremendous job to do, to see to it that every child has a place to grow up in, that is physically clean, decent, and orderly. Much has been done to give children their chance to grow into normal, healthy adnlthood. But many boys and girls, through no fault of their own, have half a chance or less.

Let us face it. Most parents have to struggle and sacrifice to provide what their children really need in order to realize their potentialities. A good house, good clothes, adequate medical care, sound schooling, wholesome and varied recreational activities—even if money is there to pay their costs, these require planning efforts. Only shallow thinking can hold that these more material and commonplace essentials can be ignored in building character strong in spiritual values. But it is sometimes hard for the privileged few, who have never seen the harsh qualities of dire need, to realize that they too are threatened when poverty drives families to desperation and children grow up in streets where crime is play.

Inevitably children learn about poverty and human suffering. But the world's sorrow has to be tempered to their years and never made a burden on them. More difficult for children to accept is the fact of evil in man's life. Something can be done about human suffering, and often children can share in the efforts. But what do we tell children about the problem of evil?

This problem seems to have the unhappiest effect upon families that seek to find and keep those qualities that give life beauty, order, and significance. There is much in home, school, and community, in politics, business, and international relations that makes it hard for us to believe in our heritage of spiritual values. Justice is always for sale somewhere. Fear and hatred divide the world against itself. No wonder our dreams seem empty, our ideas a sham. No wonder we so often fail to build our own and our children's characters to the pattern we profess.

The strongest bulwark against this pressure of the world's evil must be in the character of the adults around whom the home is built, and in their own response to this challenge. None can hope to find a satisfying answer to this problem of evil which underlies all moral philosophies, all efforts to grasp the meaning of history and its tragedies. But we can avoid like plague the spiritual snobbery that makes of the home an ivory tower, its inmates holy and withdrawn, free from any blame or any involvement in the evil around it. Such an attitude so shields a child as to unfit him for life's realities, so misrepresents the real character of his elders as to make inevitable a later devastating disillusionment.

As children must not be crushed beneath the weight of the world's suffering, so they must not be overwhelmed by the burden of its sin. But, step by step, they must be helped to know of it; and with knowledge must come compassion. They must begin to want to be helpful when confronted with wickedness as with suffering—in themselves and in their homes as well as in the world outside.

Religious Beliefs: The spiritual values at the heart of our Indian tradition ask of us to be just and merciful and walk humbly, feeling the presence of God within and without. In character shaped to these values, there is no room for either disdain or despair. And there is no family so fortunate as not to need to be thus fortified at times.

Sin and suffering are never completely overwhelming and destructive so long as we fight against them. It is in facing them as they are that we most often become freshly aware of the beauty and power of the spiritual values that can vanquish them. The study of many religious groups of our day and of olden days leaves the observer deeply impressed. Personal experience as a member of a religious society or divine organization often has the same effect. At its best such a society or organization is a group of friends united by a shared belief in a divine source of all life, whose purposes and plan include a place for each of them, and whose strength is sufficient for them in any crisis or calamity. The

fellowship of such a faith sincerely held is an experience of social support and completion, of joy in knowing and in being known, that is not equalled elsewhere. And this is lifted to the heights of mystic experience in the act of joint worship of God who is the source and goal of all this joy in being—in being one, each with the others and with Him.

In this basic sense, the family was beyond doubt the first religious society, the father and the mother being the 'sages' whose solemn task it was to bring the entire family into the Presence. It is regrettable that many parents have today delegated this duty and privilege entirely to professional priests. For, more completely than in a religious society or a divine organization, religion at its best, has its proper place in the family circle, its 'sages' being the parents who, in the eyes of their children, are in wisdom and power little short of divine.

GURU NANAK: HIS MESSAGE

By Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji

Centuries ago Lord Kṛṣṇa told his friend, devotee, and disciple, Arjuna:

"When goodness grows weak,
When evil increases,
I make myself a body.
In every age I come back to deliver the holy,
To destroy the sin of the sinner,
To establish righteousness."

Bhagavadgītā, iv. 7-8.

The same idea finds an echo in a sermon by Rev. Raymond Raynes sometime back in Johannesburg—"It has often happened in history that some particular person has been raised in whom the aspiration and dire needs of his generation seem to be crystallized and there is a stirring of men's hearts."

India had been long passing through a crisis in the 15th century. Hindus, the children of the soil, groaned under the weight of Muslim tyranny and all that it connoted. Their religion was ridiculed. Places of worship were desecrated. Womanhood was dishonoured. Not unoften were they denied the fruits of their labour. Hinduism too, it must be admitted, had lost its original vigour and elasticity. It had become a series of meaningless ritualistic formalities and observances. It had become a stagnant pool overgrown with weeds in the shape of casteism, emphasis on the externals of religion to the neglect of the substance and the like, and failed to serve the essential purpose of a religion.

Islam in India had a twofold effect on Hindu Society. For one thing, the *proselytizing* zeal of Islam strengthened Hindu orthodoxy. Caste rules were made more stringent. An invisible barrier of inhibitions was sought to be raised between the Hindus and the infidel, impure, "Yavanas". For another, some of the democratic principles of Islam had profoundly stirred the Hindu mind and affected the Hindu outlook. The common man chafed against Muslim tyranny as well as against socio-religious inhibitions. There was a genuine yearning for freedom from both internal and external slavery. The hour, the hour for the re-orientation of Hinduism, for the re-conditioning of the Hindu mind, had struck. A galaxy of saintly teachers—Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Rāmānanda and many others—appeared on the Indian scene in the 15th and 16th centuries. To re-state Hinduism, to rid it of trammels of conventionalism and thus to defend it against the onslaught of Islam was their life's mission.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was an exponent of the liberal 'Bhakti' (loving faith in God) cult. In common with the kindred spirits of his age, he drew his inspiration from the great Vaiṣṇava philosopher Rāmānuja (d. 1137 A.D.), who, in his turn had been influenced by earlier saints of Southern India called 'Ālvārs'. The theistic idealism of Rāmānuja, was indeed "the fountain that fed the Bhakti movement of Medieval India." Nanak, however, was no blind imitator. Thus, while the Vaiṣṇava influence is clearly discernible in his teachings, he, along with the theistic teachers of the medieval school, brought about a significant innovation. Let us illustrate. Nanak says, "No one calleth clarified butter or milk impure", "such is a saint in regard to caste." This is almost an echo of the well-known Vaiṣṇava saying that even an outcaste with genuine devotion to the Lord is superior to the Brāhmaṇa.[1] The liberal humanism of the saintly teachers had, however, made little impression on the citadel of orthodoxy. Orthodoxy set its face against liberalism in any shape or form. Thus, while admitting that a glorious and blissful freedom is the goal of man's spiritual endeavours, it emphasized that this freedom is attainable by the 'Dvijas' and the 'Dvijas' alone. The portals of *mokṣa,* or *mukti* (Deliverance) could thus open only to the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas. The poor Śūdra had no chance in his present life. But the Guru taught that God was not concerned with a man's caste, that his dignity depended on his actions, not on his birth. Sincere devotion is the only quality that matters. All else are useless without it. They are very often obstacles to spiritual progress. Guru Nanak realized the truth that sincere and earnest devotion could change the perspective. It was this profound spiritual realization of his "which revitalised everything by its magic touch and encompassed all in one wide synthetic sweep."

About forty miles to the south-west of Lahore in Western Pakistan, at Talbandi Rai Bhoey (modern Nankana), lived Mehta Kalu, a Kṣatriya by caste. A son was born to him on April 15, 1469. This was the future Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. The boy was indifferent to the world from an early age. He would spend, we are told, most of his time in meditation and in the company of holy men. Mehta Kalu and his wife were unhappy over the abnormality of their child. Was he afflicted with some malady? A physician was called in to treat him. Nanak told the physician:—

"Physician, go thy way,
My body groans, because my soul is crying.
It is not a case for thy medication,
The Creator alone who has given this pain can remove it."

The physician left perhaps with the impression that Nanak was a victim of insanity. Nanak married Sulakhani and had two sons, Sri Chand and Lakshmi Das and possibly two daughters by her. He worked for a time as the Store-keeper of Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of the Punjab. His love for God was however as strong as ever. He was, in other words, in the world, but not of the world.

Guru Nanak was a widely travelled man. He set out on long tours on four occasions. His sojourn covered the whole of India and much beyond. His wanderings took him as far afield as Iran and Arabia. A platform commemorates Nanak's visit to Baghdad, the capital of Iraq (Mesopotamia). An inscription in Turkish on the wall behind the platform has been translated in at least two different ways.[2] The date given in the inscription is 927 A.H. (1520-21 A.D.).

[1] *Chandālopi dvijaśreṣṭhaḥ Haribhakti-parāyaṇaḥ* also, *Muchi haye suchi haya yadi Hari bhaje.*

[2] "Guru Murad died, Baba Nanak Fakir helped in constructing this building which is an act of grace from a virtuous follower" (Banerjee: *Evolution of the Khalsa,* Vol. 1., p. 73).

"In memory of the Guru, that is, the Divine Master, Baba Nanak Faquir Aulia, this building has been raised anew with the help of seven saints" (Teja Singh and Ganda Singh: *A short History of the Sikhs,* Vol. 1, p. 12).

Nanak spent his last days in Kartarpur (city of the Lord) in what is now Western Pakistan. The universalism of his teachings achieved a fair measure of success in drawing closer the Hindus and the Muslims of his age. His catholic outlook did not a little to blunt the edge of prevailing bigotry and orthodoxy. The unity of Godhead and human brotherhood are the burden of his message. A non-sectarian character and harmony with secular life are among the most striking features of his system. These characteristics, in fact, mark him out from many of the saint-seers of Medieval India. The sweetness of Nanak's character and the simple yet sublime truth behind his teachings made him an object of love and respect to Hindus and Muslims alike. A couplet says of him:—

"Guru Nanak Shah Faquir,
Hindn Ka Guru, Musalman Ka Pir."

(Guru Nanak is the prince of mendicants. He is a spiritual preceptor of the Hindus and a saint of the Muslims).

Nanak died in 1538 or 1539 A.D. His mantle fell on Lahina, better known as Angad, the second Guru of the Sikhs.

Nanak's first utterance as a teacher of humanity was:—

"There is no Hindu and no Musalman." Hindus as well as Muslims of his age had forgotten the precepts of their religions. Nanak turned the searchlight on the true import of religion which, in contemporary India, lay buried under superstitious ignorance. He, therefore, told his contemporaries that there was no true Hindu and no true Musalman.

Nanak's liberal outlook, born of intense spirituality of a very high order, was intolerant of all conventions and meaningless formalities. He was convinced that truth cannot be the monopoly of any individual, sect or Holy Book revealed or otherwise, that the Ultimate Truth of God lies latent in every man. This Ultimate Reality has to be discovered and realized by sincere and selfless endeavour (*sādhanā*). "Man becomes man when the Ultimate Truth dawns on him, when he can love truth sincerely." The age of Nanak was an age of strife and ignorance and his message, a message of truth and peace. He taught that God is but one, "the primeval, the pure, without beginning, the indestructible, the same in every age." Singing the name of the Lord is the only way to reach His portals. He asserts that only by submitting to the *guru* (spiritual preceptor) the wandering of the heart is restrained. He sang out:—

"Castes are folly, names are folly,
All creatures have one shelter, that of God."

Nanak was never tired of preaching the greatness of God and the comparative insignificance of everything else. "There are hundreds of thousands of Mohammads," he exclaims. "Many Mohammads stand in His court." "It is ridiculous to try to conceal the greatness of God by glorifying the deeds of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma." In his opinion, they are no better than tiny stars before God.

Nanak attacked the prevailing obsession with a blind adherence to sacred texts and an unintelligent performance of rituals. "Ritualistic practices," he said, "are of no avail". "Religion," he went on to say, "consisteth not in a patched coat, or in a jogi's[3] staff or in ashes smeared over the body", "not in ear-rings worn, or a shaven head, or in the blowing of horns", "not in mere words", "not in wandering to tombs or places of cremation, or sitting in attitudes of contemplation", "not in wandering in foreign countries, or in bathing at places of pilgrimage." What, then, is religion? Nanak's reply was clear and unequivocal. "He who looketh on all men as equal is religious." He advises all to "abide pure amid the impurities of the world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion." Purity is thus the supreme test of true religious life. This purity has, however, little to do with external practices. It is rather a matter of inward devotion.

"Pilgrimage, austerities, mercy and almsgiving on general and special occasions,
Whosoever performeth may obtain some little honour;

[3] The *Jogis* are a Hindu religious order.

But he who heareth and obeyeth and loveth God in his heart,

Shall wash off his impurity in the place of pilgrimage within him."

Elsewhere, "Ritualistic practices are of no avail. The profit which is obtained from pilgrimages, repeating the Smṛtis[4] and bestowing alms all day long is obtained in one *ghari* (24 minutes) by remembering the Name that conferreth greatness."

Pride and egotism are the root of all man's troubles. They are the cause of his undoing as well. Impurity, in Nanak's opinion, consists in pride, in the refusal to recognize the supremacy of God's will and in the wanton pursuit of worldly desires. Pride, egotism, and material desires must be, therefore, rooted out. Surrender to the will of God and the love of His (God's) name are the only way to emancipation. Nanak said, "God is self-created; so is His name" and "by obeying Him, man attaineth the gate of salvation." M. A. Macauliffe, the author of *The Sikh Religion* in six volumes, and modern Sikh scholarship would have us believe that "Guru Nanak was not a reformer who wanted to remove the abuses that had crept into the old order and set it right by re-stating it in terms of newer environments but that his object was to cut himself adrift from the old moorings and set up an independent path by itself" (Banerjee: *Evolution of the Khalsa,* Vol. 1,p. 113). Many however differ. "Sikhism," says Banerjee, "no doubt, had its start in a protest but it was a protest against conventionalism and not against Hinduism. In Nanak, perhaps, the reaction reached its limits and thus gave a poignant tone to many of his utterances, which at first sight give the impression that his was a destructive and revolutionary ideal. But there is no satisfactory evidence to show that he intended to overturn the social fabric . . . He was out not to kill but to heal, not to destroy but to conserve." (*Evolution of the Khalsa,* Vol. 1., p. 143-45).

It is not our intention to take the cudgel in defence of either view. We would rather point out that bickerings of this nature lead nowhere. They are no more useful than the ritualistic practices against which Guru Nanak raised his voice.

The greatness of Guru Nanak lies in the innate beauty, utter simplicity and profound humanity of his teachings and in the spontaneity and sincerity of his feelings.

[4] Socio-religious codes of Hindus.

ŚRĪ BHĀṢYA

By Swami Vireswarananda

CHAPTER I

Section II

In the first Section it has been shown that a person who has read the Vedic texts and studied the ritualistic portion of the Vedas (Pūrva-Mīmāmsā) realizes that the fruit of ritualistic action is ephemeral; while from other Vedānta texts he finds that the fruit of the knowledge of Brahman is eternal and infinite. Therefore a desire for release through the knowledge of Brahman arises in him. Knowing further that words have the power of conveying knowledge about existing things and need not be connected with things to be done, and being convinced that Vedānta texts describing the nature of Brahman are authoritative means of conveying the knowledge of Brahman, which is the highest aim of man,

he begins the study of the Śārīraka Mīmāmsā (*Vedānta Sūtras*).

It has also been shown that with respect to the Supreme Brahman, which is the First Cause as defined by the *Taittirīya* text, 'That from which these beings are born' etc. (3.1), Scriptures alone are the means of knowledge as It is not an object of any other means of knowledge. This point is further proved by the following facts: That all Vedānta texts refer to this Brahman alone which, though not related to actions, is yet the highest goal of man; That this Brahman which is the First Cause is different from the insentient Pradhāna inasmuch as 'thinking' is attributed to the First Cause (vide *Ch.* 6.2.2-3); That It is also different from the sentient individual soul, be it in the state of release or bondage, as It is said to be infinite bliss, all-pervading, and the Inner Self of all beings, sentient and insentient; That this Brahman has a divine form which is not material (*Aprākṛta*) and not a result of *karma;* That this First Cause, though referred to by such terms as *Ākāśa* and *Prāṇa* (vide *Ch.* I, 9. 1-2, and I. 11. 4-5) which are well known material things, is yet the same Supreme Being, Brahman; so also is the same Being referred to by the word 'light' in *Ch.* 3. 13.7, on account of its connection with heaven and its supreme splendour; That due to the characterization of Brahman, viz. the attainment of Liberation through Its knowledge, the words *Indra* and *Prāṇa* (vide *Kau.* 3.1-8) refer to Brahman as it is in keeping with scriptural teaching. The result therefore arrived at was that the Supreme Person, Brahman, which, on account of Its infinite number of excellent qualities, is so very different from all other things, is beyond all means of knowledge except the Scriptures whose texts have for their purport only Brahman.

Though the Vedānta texts have Brahman alone for their purport, yet certain texts seem to establish some particular beings comprised within Pradhāna or the individual souls. In this and the next two Sections such texts are taken for discussion, the doubt is answered, and the qualities mentioned in such texts are shown to establish certain excellent qualities of Brahman. In this Section texts which contain obscure references to the individual soul are discussed. In the third Section texts which contain clear references to the individual soul are taken up, while in the last Section the texts selected for discussion are those which seem to refer to the individual soul but in fact refer to Brahman.

Topic 1: THE BEING CONSISTING OF MIND IS BRAHMAN

सर्वत्र प्रसिद्धोपदेशात् १।२।१॥

1. (That which consists of the mind [Manomaya] is Brahman) because (the text) states (qualities) well known (to denote Brahman only) throughout (the Scriptures).

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* we have: 'Man is a creature of thought. Even as is his thought in this world, so will be his hereafter. Therefore he should think (meditate) (thus): He who consists of the mind, whose body is *Prāṇa,* whose form is light' etc. (3.14). Here the object of the meditation prescribed by the words, 'He should think (meditate)' is 'He who consists of the mind,' etc. A doubt arises whether the 'being consisting of the mind' etc. prescribed as the object of meditation is the individual soul or Brahman. The opponent holds that it is the individual soul, for the mind and *Prāṇa* are instruments of the individual soul, and as such, the qualities of 'consisting of the mind', etc. are apt in it and not in Brahman which is described as 'without *Prāṇa* and without mind' (*Muṇ.* 2.1.2). Nor is it possible to assume that Brahman which is mentioned in the previous text. 'All this is verily Brahman' (*Ch.* 3-14.1) is prescribed here as the object of meditation; for we get in this text itself the object of meditation prescribed, viz. 'He who consists of the mind', etc. Hence there is no doubt about the object of meditation, and consequently there is no justification for us to infer it from a previous text. The word 'Brahman' which occurs in the concluding text, "This my Inner

Self is Brahman' (*Ch.* 3.14.4), is used with respect to the individual soul to glorify it. So it is the individual soul that is referred to in the text under discussion as the object of meditation.

This *sūtra* refutes this view and says that Brahman is the object of the meditation prescribed, for qualities like 'consisting of the mind' etc. which denote only Brahman in Vedānta texts are found in this text. Vide also: 'He who consists of the mind, the ruler of the subtle body (*Prāṇaśarīra*)' etc. (*Muṇ.* 2.2.7); 'There is the ether within the heart and in it there is the Person consisting of the mind, immortal, golden' (*Taitt.* 1.6.1.); 'It is not perceived by the eyes, nor by the speech. . . but by the pure mind', etc. (*Mun.* 3.1.8); 'It is the *Prāṇa* of the *Prāṇa*' (*Kena* 1.2); '*Prāṇa* alone is the conscious Self, and having laid hold of the body it makes it rise up' (*Kau.* 3.3); 'For all these beings merge into *Prāṇa* alone, and from *Prāṇa* they arise' (*Ch.* 1.11.5). 'Consisting of the mind' means 'capable of being perceived by the pure mind' and 'having *Prāṇa* for the body' means 'the support or ruler of *Prāṇa*'. Thus the word 'Brahman' in the concluding portion of the text under discussion, 'This my Inner Self is Brahman' is used in its primary sense and refers to Brahman. The text, 'without *Prāṇa* and without mind' means that Brahman does not depend on mind for thought, nor does Its life depend on *Prāṇa*.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

RE-DEDICATION AND OUR THANKS

The Prabuddha Bharata has now completed sixty-one years of useful service. We take this opportunity to thank all those who have been sending us their valuable articles, expressing their best thoughts, convictions, and hopes. We know, and our readers too have seen, that these articles have been the fruits of years of patient study, observation, research, and co-ordination. We trust that the writers will continue to maintain the same intimate relation with this journal and retain it as the channel for the spread of their choicest ideas. Even without our aimiug at it, such continuance will have a twofold effect. In the first place, these ideas will attract the attention of other mature thinkers and persuade them to reinforce our creative endeavours with theirs. Secondly, the impact of this steady stream of ideas will inspire many among the readers to take up independent research on useful topics and, in due course, aid in keeping up the supply of the vital nourishment, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, philosophical, and spiritual, that the Time-Spirit will require as years roll by.

Every day, even every minute gives us an opportunity to serve others and to ennoble ourselves in the process. Still it is the custom to use the commencement of the New Year to remember our goals, immediate as well as remote, in a special sense, and to make the necessary re-grouping of our energies to approach them sooner. While taking such a step with regard to this journal, whose work may be compared to a kind of cultural Relay Race, it is fitting that we should look at some hints that Swami Vivekananda gave in his letters as early as 1896 (Nos. xlvi. xlix. and lv).

Referring particularly to Indian philosophical ideas, the Swami said that a beautiful synthesis has to be made, in which 'the abstract Advaita must become living, poetic, in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate Mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come

the most scientific and practical Psychology.' And 'all this must be put in a form so that a child can grasp it.' His advocacy of 'the simplest language possible' was meant only to make explanations understandable, not to lower the standard of exposition from the standpoint of depth or dignity. For, while pointing out 'a vast untrodden field' of the day, viz. 'the writing of the lives and works of Tulsidās, Kabir, Nanak, and of the saints of Southern India,' he insisted that they should be written in a thorough-going scholarly style.' 'In fact,' he laid down, 'the ideal of the paper, apart from the preaching of Vedānta, should be to make it a magazine of Indian research and scholarship, of course, bearing on religion.' What he called 'religion' in the last century, we have to call 'philosophy' in this. And to achieve the end he visualized, he added, 'You must approach the best writers and get carefully-written articles from their pen.' To get a correct perspective, we have to apply these principles to the wider fields of fruitful exchange of knowledge and of services between the East and the West, that the Swamiji's life-work symbolized. Whether people who wield power over the lives and fortunes of millions at the present day can, or do, consciously aid it or not, the world is fast marching toward some sort of unity in which—if not as yet *all* human *hearts*—at least the findings of all sciences and the cultural refinements of the diverse races of mankind will find useful and honoured places. Any step promoting the spread of scientific knowledge and the appreciation of the cultural attainments of any community will certainly hasten such a unity; and we hope that this journal can play an important role in this noble task through its able contributors, month after month.

TO OUR READERS

"Educate for Sweetness" is a very timely appeal to everyone who has anything to do with education. In it, Principal B. S. Mathur, in his quiet and mature manner, points out the need to regard "our schools and colleges" as "temples of learning and sacredness" Being in daily intimate contact with students, Mr. Mathur knows the art of tapping "the inside library of infinite knowledge", and of getting ready "the necessary lamp to go by in this dark world." Indeed, if by religious education of the right type, we can create in our educational institutions "an atmosphere of sweetness and light", as he suggests, there will be no scope for "indiscipline". "Then all barriers, all walls, separating man from man, will disappear. Till then we are not to cease." . . . Mr. Asher Block is the Rabbi of a synagogue in New York. He shows us what the spirit of harmony can do when a sincere seeker, who is well versed in his own faith, studies with reverence the essential features of other religions. If his example is followed by the votaries of different creeds, the spirit of holiness will definitely be on the increase in human hearts. A good deal of energy is now spent in canvassing followers for one's own religion at the expense of others, or in defence against one another. All that energy can be saved and wisely employed for the benefit of every child of God, irrespective of the creed to which he may belong. The Rabbi, whose scholarship and breadth of vision are evident in every paragraph that he writes, has rightly pointed out two important facts: (1) That "the various insights of mysticism at their higher levels" are "surprisingly similar"; and (2) That "Western theologians often like to draw a sharp contrast between the Oriental tradition" and "Judaeo-Christian heritage", saying that the former tends to negate the world and individual life, while the latter gives ample room for human individuality. "For the vast majority of us, however," as he says, "this is a purely theoretical question, with no relevance to our real situation." The real question is "whether our thoughts and actions shall be self-centered or God-centered." And on this "all the great faiths are wholly agreed: that our life has no other ultimate purpose but to seek to dwell in the Presence of the Eternal." . . . Śrī K. D. Bajpai, M.A., is the Curator of a

Government Archaeological Museum. He has the unique advantage of scriptural studies and the knowledge arising from the special activities of his department. Whatever may have been the level of the philosophical discussions of learned Brāhmaṇas and kings of olden days, "the common people", we are shown, "in the absence of temples", had their own worship of tree-gods and the like, symbolizing the elements and "mental faculties". Then "people were free to choose their own way of life". Histories in current use are devoted mainly to a catalogue of wars of aggression or of retahiation. But the main focus of history ought to be on the way the people thought and lived. This article gives us important details about the social, economic, and administrative set-up of pre-Buddhistic days. We shall be glad to receive more articles of a similarly documented nature, dealing with other periods as well....Śrī S. N. Rao, Bar-at-Law, is a regular contributor of articles based upon a co-ordination of mental discipline and scientific views of time, space, and causal relation. When looked at through a harmonizing glass of that kind, some of the meanings that theologians and scholastics give to some technical terms become filtered a little. And when Śrī Rao puts them into the suggestive framework of poetry, they come out in charming colours, combining Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. He rightly says that "every level, however high it may be, includes and contains all the lower levels." "Intelligent introspcetion has a great value in life." . . . Śrī S. B. Pal Choudhury, our new contributor, combines in himself knowledge of science and medicine. He has correctly emphasized the place of the family in helping children to develop their character and cultivate spiritual values. He shows that the strongest bulwark against "the pressure of the world's evil upon the child is the character of the adults around whom the home is built." We hope he will, with his characteristic clarity and thoroughness, write about different aspects of this vast and interesting field. Man is a spirit, whose inherent perfection can be manifested by suitable discipline; and the virtues cultivated in the course of such a discipline strengthen character and make social adjustments easy. . . . Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookherji, M.A., Head of the Department of History, Khalsa College, writes about the liberal Bhakti cult, as taught by Śrī Guru Nanak,—the faith that "vitalized everything by its magic touch and encompassed all in one wide synthetic sweep." "He who looketh on all men as equal is religious." We all stand to gain at the present day by learning from the lives of other saints also how they "surrendered to the will of God" and expressed that surrender in activities meant to create strength, wisdom, and peace among people who lacked them. . . . Swami Vireswarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission—whose translation of Śrī Rāmānujācārya's *Śrī Bhāṣya* appeared serially in these columns,—concluded the First Section of the First Chapter of the *Sūtras* in December, 1954. We are glad to commence the second Section with this issue.

TESTING ONESELF

Our personality has sometimes been compared to a chariot and spiritual pursuit to the art of driving it. We know that in driving a vehicle we wish not only to go forward, but also to avoid jerks and sudden twists in steering. We aim at maintaining a steady or uniform speed. In spiritual matters too our ideal is to combine a forward movement with freedom from delays and irregularities.

Most of us, who believe that religious disciplines enrich life, usually set apart some time daily for reading, and for reflecting on, scriptural texts suitable for devotional exercises. We also roughly make an estimate of our progress from time to time. It may not form part of any programme of directed thinking or introspection. It may be rather an 'involuntary' act like the movement of the eyes which take in views of different parts of the environment, without any special motive. As a result of this estimate we notice, howsoever vaguely, a gap between what we have achieved and what yet remains to be achieved.

Ourselves, plodding on, engaged in our day to day struggles, and ourselves as we would like to be: these form two opposite poles, as it were, in this estimate. The gap makes us feel keenly the need for more strenuous effort on our part, or for help and guidance from others. Within certain limits it is advantageons to focus attention in a systematic way upon those aspects of the personality that reveal the poles and the gap. We can treat them as meter readings connected with our inside, and incorporate into our self-control measures the implications of what they show at the surface, in the same way as we do after looking at the dials in our vehicle and at the nature of the road ahead. Progress is sure to be steady when we wisely put into operation the principles found to be helpful even when they work at random.

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Forward movements in the mental field can be watched and directed in the course of what we may call routine work, if we cultivate the habit of cleaning the entire mental area as diligently as we clean our body and the furniture in our rooms. As this practice takes root in us, and we take delight in it, we shall become increasingly conscious of onr mental 'lay-out', its ups and downs, its beautiful flower plants and dangerous weeds, its irrigation channels and their obstructions. We shall also, by practice, develop the capacity to spot out quickly the type of men and events —the very play of forces in and around them —which may help us in adding to our inner worth. By contrast we shall also be able to detect the subtle changes in our snrroundings that may damp our enthusiasm, destroy our self-reliance, and throw us into temptation or discord. The decisive factor in our progress is always the character of the conscious move we learn to make after every snch discovery. We expect Nature to favour ns by arranging outer supplies to suit our immediate inner needs. Any change that will really benefit us can take place only when we know the connecting links, and carry out properly all that falls within our range. Every important outer change, related to us, has its beginning in an acceleration of what we regard as our will power, at least to the extent required to detach ourselves from the unhealthy aspects of the environment and to get into positive contact with the virtuous. When the intensity of this effort reaches a certain creative pitch, we shall find near us just the person, book, or context that can give us a lift, or a new outlook. Men and things are moved into appropriate positions by a single push, so to speak; and what we do within ourselves is intimately related to its timing, force, and helpful qualities. After a few direct experiences of this interconnection between the inner and outer aspects of life, we shall be able to isolate the vital creative elements of our mental energy, and employ them in different fields of activity with vigour and confidence.

* * * *

When good people meet, they keep their discussions at a level that gives them elevating thoughts and emotions. Our progress can be speeded up by joining them and imbibing their spirit. A little introspection will reveal to us whether our questions and answers are always preceded, and accompanied by, and concluded with the pure motive of widening knowledge. Often with our arguments, which may be sound, we combine the intention to show off our superiority, or to defeat others, or to secure converts. Whatever may be the final result of this motive on those who hear us, the consequence on our own life is bound to be unfortunate in the long run. For, when this process is repeated in different contexts, we repeat also the wrong egoistic stress within ourselves. While the force directed outside is distributed among the hearers who may not be the same always, the impact on ourselves, the constant factor in all scenes, continues without a break. When this gathers strength, it distorts, first, the inner structure of our personality and, then, all the grosser elements that enter into it and play around it. Such is intention's vital role. How can we expect any high 'meaning', value, or significance to come into our life and become organically

related to it if we do not, by continued aspiration, evolve earlier a suitable mental limb to receive, absorb, and retain it? As we repeatedly intend, so alone do we become competent to get and keep.

STRIKING SIMILARITY

Those who were blessed with the vision of God or were recipients of His grace have always found it difficult to find suitable words to convey to others the full depth and richness of their inner experience. Some have remained silent. Their hair standing on end and tears streaming from their eyes were some of the signs visible on their physical frames. Others, on the other hand, burst into poetry and song. The wonderful rhythm and imagery contained in them became a sort of verbal splash of the waves of inward bliss on which their personalities floated during and after the experience. Often they combined in their thought various objects, which men in their daily life use as the best examples of vastness, majesty, and splendour. But they dropped those objects almost immediately from their comparisons, having discovered them to be absolutely inadequate to represent what they saw and felt. To our sense-bound understanding these combinations, found in their poems, appear to be simple exaggerations. But in the case of those fortunate Seers of the Supreme Glory, they were the spontaneous and inevitable outpourings of their devotion and poetic sense at the feet of the Almighty.

Stanza 32 of the *Śiva-mahimnaḥ Stotra*, beginning with *Asita-girisamaṁ syāt kajjalam* is one such outpouring, attributed to a celestial singer (*Gandharva*), named Puṣpadanta. It can be freely translated thus: 'O Lord! Let us suppose that the Goddess of Learning Herself begins to describe Your excellent qualities. She may use the whole earth as her paper. She may take up a good twig of the celestial Wish-yielding Tree to serve as Her pen. The ink-pot may be the very ocean, and the quantity of ink equal in volume to the Himalaya mountains. She may also propose to continue writing for all time. Still She will not be able to give an exhaustive account of those excellent attributes! (Then what to speak about my poor attempt!)

One of our learned contributors, Sri Mohini Mohan Mukherji, writes to us that "an idea very similar to this exists in a Chaldean Ode sung in Jewish Synagogues during the service of the first day of the Feast of Pentecost. A translation of the stanza of the Ode by Meir Ben Isaac Nehoval, reproduced on pp. 39-40 of the American publication, "God speaks to Modern Man" is given below:—

> Could we with ink the ocean fill
> And were the skies of parchment made;
> Were every stalk on earth a quill,
> And every man a scribe by trade;
> To write the love of God above
> Would drain the ocean dry,
> Nor could the scroll contain the whole
> Though stretched from sky to sky!' "

* * * *

"He who knows the Brahman's bliss, from which words as well as mind turn powerless, fears nothing." (*Taittirīya* II. iv).

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE GIST OF RELIGIONS. By Swami Narayanananda. *Published by N. K. Prasad & Co, Rishikesh P. O. (U. P.), India. Pp. 138. Rs. 2/- Sh. 5. Cents. 75.*

This book contains short sections giving free translations of the positive guiding principles of Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Islam, Sufism, Judaism, and Christianity reconciled on the basis of Sādhana and the tenets of Vedanta. The style is direct, simple and appealing. Each religion is shown at its best, and actual practice is empha-

sized at every turn. Probably brevity is responsible for leaving unexplained statements like, "If thy enemy is hungry, feed him; if he be thirsty, give him water; and thus heap coals of fire on his head" (p. 55), or supporting with Vedāntic arguments alone a statement like, "All religions admit rebirth" (p. 112).

THE MINISTRY OF THE GLORY CLOUD. By R. E. Hough. *Published by the Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y. Pp. 145. $3.50.*

The Glory Cloud has always signified "some manifestation, revelation, or activity of God on behalf of man" and the author gives here an impressive and scholarly account of each of its appearance—before the advent of Jesus, during his own life, at the time of his crucifixion, and afterwards. The general drift of the explanations is to show that all the Ordinances of earlier days "composed largely of types and symbols of the person and work of Christ," "who would offer himself as a sacrifice in fulfilment of these symbols . . . Christ having done that is today the only High Priest. No altar is needed (as in the days of the Old Testament), for the all-sufficient sacrifice has been offered once for all." "Christ is the only mediator between God and man." Many sections, like that on Paul "the Last Apostle" are beautiful in conception and presentation. Christians and non-Christians alike will agree with the author in saying that "The ghost of fear stalks the world today with no one to stop it." But his references to "the ravages of war" and "the barbarism of civilized nations" will only help to conjure up pictures of the Christian West responsible for the two World Wars of this century, and the need to remove the sources of the conflicts that arise there. His statements that "the mission" is "the evangelization of the world, the method the teaching and the preaching of the Gospel of grace, and the goal the return of Christ at the end of the age in power and glory," or that "the only hope for world peace and order is the personal return of the Lord Jesus in power and glory" may not be enough to infuse much confidence or stimulate the right enthusiasm in the millions that constitute the non-Christian world of the present day.

NEWS AND REPORTS

VISIT OF SWAMI MADHAVANANDA AND SWAMI NIRVANANANDA TO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

At one p.m. on Wednesday, February 29, 1956, Swami Madhavananda and Swami Nirvanananda arrived at San Francisco International Airport to begin an eight-day visit as the guests of Swami Ashokananda.

The visit had long been anticipated, and a group of seventy-five members of the San Francisco and Berkeley Centers accompanied Swami Ashokananda and Swami Shantaswarupananda to the airport to meet them.

After lunch with members of the Monastery and a short rest, the Swamis were taken by Swami Ashokananda to inspect the new San Francisco temple at Vallejo and Fillmore Streets, now sufficiently near completion to enable the visitors to appreciate its beauty and spacious accommodations. From there they stepped into the adjoining residence, presently occupied by members of the Society's Convent, where they visited the chapel of Sri Ramakrishna. That evening, following the regular Wednesday lecture by Swami Shantaswarupananda in the auditorium of the present temple, the Swamis met a group of devotees, who overflowed the library and office rooms, eager to pay their respects to and talk with the two revered visitors.

On the following day they went across the bay bridge to Berkeley, where Swami Shantaswarupananda showed them through the East Bay Center and entertained them at lunch. After a short rest they enjoyed a drive through Berkeley. That evening, they, together with Swami Ashokananda and Swami Shantaswarupananda, were given a feast in Indian style at the Convent in San Francisco. Some twenty-nine women devotees were present, and the Swamis graciously answered many questions for them during the evening.

Friday, March 2, was spent at the extensive Retreat at Olema, thirty-five miles north of San Francisco.

On the evening of Saturday, March 3, they went again to the Berkeley Center, where a joint reception was held in their honor, attended by 220 devotees from all the Northern California Vedanta Centers. Swami Ashokananda introduced the program. Then followed the chanting of the "Hymn to the God-Man," (Khandana-bhavabandhana) by monks of the Monastery and other male devotees, and the "Invocation to Sri Ramakrishna" from the "Sri Ramakrishna Oratorio," composed by one of the members, after which Swami Ashokananda requested Mrs. Soulé, as Secretary of the Society, to deliver the address of welcome to the revered guests. Mrs. Soulé read as follows:

To Swami Madhavananda and Swami Nirvanananda:

Revered Swamis, it is my great privilege this evening to offer you an official welcome in behalf of the Vedanta Society of Northern California. The occasion is indeed a rare one, for had it not been for the invitation extended to you by our sister center of Southern California to be present at the dedication of its temple in Santa Barbara, you would not have visited America at the present time; and we should have missed the opportunity of knowing you and listening to you. Please accept our most heartfelt respect and love, not only for yourselves but for all the monks of the Order which you represent.

Swami Madhavananda, although only a few of us have met you before, you have not been unknown to us, for you were at one time in charge of our Society; and we cannot forget that you, as one of the predecessors of our present leadership, have added to the forces which have made us what we are today. We have also been acquainted with your literary works, particularly your brilliant translations of the difficult Sanskrit texts, most of which, including the monumental Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, are objects of our constant study. We know further that you had a vital part in the preparation of the standard lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, published by the Advaita Ashrama. You were in charge of the Himalayan Center and also for many years, as an executive in the Ramakrishna Order, have borne on your shoulders the burden of great responsibility. It would be presumptuous on my part to speak about your profound spiritual attainments, but you have been, we are assured, an example to the monks of the Order by your life of austerity and renunciation, contemplation and dedication. The Order can be justly proud of having you as one of its members.

And you, Swami Nirvanananda, although you may not be aware of it, have been known to us for many years and have been the object of our respect and special love as having been for so long the constant attendant of Swami Brahmananda, the spiritual son of Sri Ramakrishna. Very fortunate and exceptionally endowed you must be to have lived so close to so great a soul. Many have been your services we know, to the cause of the Ramakrishna Order, and as Treasurer of the Order your responsibilities must be great. It has given us exceeding joy that you have stopped for a few days in our midst, affording us the opportunity and privilege of knowing you personally.

No doubt, revered Swamis, particularly you, Swami Madhavananda, you will be interested in learning a little about the work we are trying to carry forward. Since the establishment in 1900 by Swami Vivekananda of the Vedanta Society, of which historical event we fortunately have a contemporaneous and detailed record, the Society has been endeavoring to carry out the purpose for which it was founded: the preaching and assimilation of the great truths of Vedanta.

We try to practise Swami Vivekananda's doctrines of the divinity of man and of the worship of man as the visible God. We also try to study and practise religion according to the rational and universal principles which he inculcated, to recognize the basic unity of all religions and to see in Vedanta not a creed but a synthesis of man's most noble and lofty thoughts.

Since no principles can be appreciated or properly grasped except in and through the persons in whom they have been realized, we have always shown deep reverence to all the great sages and prophets of all religions, and particularly to Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples, who have so fully and brilliantly embodied the theoretical and practical teachings of Vedanta.

We fully recognize that without the deepening of spiritual consciousness, attained through diverse spiritual practices, the lofty ideals of Vedanta might become mere pretensions, and we assure you that we have not been unmindful of this fact in our personal lives. Following, as we think, the wishes of Swami Vivekananda and also following the traditions of Western spirituality, we have sought to elevate work to a high level by impregnating it with the spirit of worship. We have felt a great responsibility in carrying on the work of the Society, for, on the one hand, we know we must be uncompromisingly true to the principles of Vedanta, without even unconsciously altering them, and, on the other hand, we know we must be ever alert that Vedanta does not become narrowed to a cult or sect, however attractive, and thereby isolate itself from the larger life of the Western nations. We feel that Vedanta, to be fully effective, must not replace Western traditions but fulfil them, bringing about, as Swami Vivekananda wanted, a culture born of the highest ideals and noblest achievements of both East and West.

We have endeavored faithfully to attain these ends; and although our efforts may have been punctuated with some failures, we assure you, Swamis, that we shall carry on with undaunted enthusiasm until Vedanta has been well established in our life.

It is superfluous to mention that we, the American students of Vedanta, would have succeeded only meagerly had it not been that the Ramakrishna Order has so graciously and unstintingly lent the services of its Swamis to teach us and to help us grow spiritually. We cannot be too grateful to you, the authorities of the Ramakrishna Order, for their leadership, and we cannot adequately express our gratitude to you for mak-

ing their guidance and inspiration available to us.

We wish that your visit among us could have been a long one. It would have afforded you an opportunity to know the details of what we are trying to accomplish and to know our methods and purposes more fully. We hope, however, that your stay here has been and will continue to be a happy one; and that when you proceed on your journey you will carry with you pleasant memories.

May I again take this opportunity of tendering you, on behalf of all our members and friends, our heartfelt appreciation of your visit and of offering you our reverence and love?

Yours truly,
Mrs. H. D. B. Soulé
Secretary,
Vedanta Society of
March 3, 1956. Northern California

In his reply to the address, Swami Madhavananda thanked the members of the Society for their great kindness and hospitality but declared that it was only through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna that he had been able to be of service to anyone. He referred to Sri Ramakrishna's vision of being in a distant land, among white-skinned people whose language he did not know and who did not understand his words, but who nevertheless comprehended his ideas. And he said that when Swami Vivekananda appeared at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, it was as if Sri Ramakrishna himself had come in the person of Swamiji to address the people of America. It had been the effort of all the Swamis who afterward came to the West to carry on their teachings and to accentuate the impression that Swamiji had left in the West.

It would take many years, the Swami pointed out, for the great truths taught by Sri Ramakrishna to become fully manifest in the world, and none should lose heart if progress seemed slow. In Swami Ashokananda and Swami Shantaswarupananda, he said, the members of the Society had very able guides, and all the devotees should strive with patience and perseverance not only to progress themselves in spiritual life but, through their example, to inspire other people to follow the life of the spirit.

Swami Nirvanananda spoke, as was his custom, in Bengali, which Swami Ashokananda afterward translated.

The Swami said two thoughts always occurred to him with regard to America. The first was the vision of Sri Ramakrishna, previously mentioned by Swami Madhavananda; and the second was Swami Vivekananda's comments about this country. Swamiji had found the United States full of enthusiasm, activity and generosity, and had considered it a very fertile field for the preaching of Vedanta. Having come to this country, Swami Nirvanananda said he now understood Swamiji's words more clearly: he found the Americans with whom he had come in contact a wonderful people, and he felt that if they added the teachings of Vedanta to the noble qualities they already possessed, an entirely new kind of thought would develop, resulting in a completely new culture. In that culture, American generosity, hospitality and activity would broaden and deepen so that Americans would see the whole of mankind as their own, with the result that the world would be benefited and peace would really prevail in the world.

At Swami Ashokananda's request Swami Shantaswarupananda then spoke a few words.

In the concluding address of the evening, Swami Ashokananda spoke of his own personal delight when he learned that Swami Madhavananda and Swami Nirvanananda were coming to the Santa Barbara dedication, and of his mounting feeling of upliftment at the fact that two leaders of the Order had come to the West. He considered it the greatest privilege of his life, he said, to have been allowed to belong to this great Order, and it behooved all to study and try to appreciate the significance of the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and the Master's other disciples, from whom the Order had sprung. He said the revered guests had, on their part, been very happy to meet the devotees in America and to note their sincerity and depth of feeling about Vedanta and the august personalities behind this great movement.

Finally, Swami Ashokananda offered to the guests his most respectful and affectionate salutations and asked their blessings upon himself and all the assembled devotees.

Throughout the evening the various addresses were interspersed with special vocal and instrumental music. All the musicians were devotees, and most of the music for the occasion had been composed by them. At the conclusion of the program, refreshments were served to the Swamis and the assemblage, after which the devotees had an opportunity of greeting the guesta personally.

Erratum :

December 1956 issue P. 507, Column 2, line 10 *for* 'nine-petalled' *read* 'nine-portalled'.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The 94th birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls on 22nd January 1957.