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MAY 1965

Prabuddha Bharata

**OR
AWAKENED INDIA**



**By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.**

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MAY 1965

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BEAR THE BURDEN OF DEFENCE
AND DEVELOPMENT CHEERFULLY

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXX

MAY 1965

No. 5



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(68)

Ramakrishna Math
Belur, Howrah
15 May 1916

Dear Hari Maharaj,

I am extremely delighted to get your detailed letter of the 10th instant. I was anxiously waiting for it. I was much relieved to learn that there was good rainfall in those areas, through the Lord's grace. If the Lord be not gracious, how can there be the preservation of creation?

Our visit to Shillong is delayed. They (the devotees of that place) have asked us to wait for another fortnight ; of course, they have already sent us the passage money. Even now I am not very eager to go there owing to various reasons. But then, there is a great powerful attraction, viz Kamakhya Devi. When that thought comes to the mind, it does not appear to be difficult to put up with all other inconveniences. Let us see what the Lord wills. . . . There is a large gathering of devotees here now ; it is delightful to see. If you also were to see it, you would be extremely happy. Many people are taking to, and are ready to take to, the ideals of the Master and Swamiji. Seeing this, one is indeed filled with joy and hope. It is my desire, as also of others, that you should come here once and spend a few days ; of course, your coming here before the winter is out of question. I feel that if — stays for some time at the Math with Maharaj, it will conduce to his supreme welfare. It is my firm belief that if he stays at the Math, the dross of his mind will be washed off to a great extent. It will be as the Lord wishes ; may He bring about his supreme well-being—this is my innermost prayer.

If my going to Shillong is not coming off, I shall go to Almora, if it be

the Lord's wish. Accept my heartfelt love, *pranāmas*, etc. Convey to Ram and K—. . . .

Servant—Tarak

(69)

Ramakrishna Math
Belur, Howrah
25 May 1916

Dear Hari Maharaj,

I have received your letter of the 20th instant and noted the contents. Hope, by the grace of the Lord, the *homa* etc. have been performed at the cottage last Monday; and I am very happy to hear that it is now habitable. Anyway, it is a matter of great joy that there is a place for the Master at Almora and that his devotees will reside there in the Ashrama pinning their hopes on him. In such a place, the health remains well, and one can carry on one's spiritual practices satisfactorily. Maharaj is happy to go through your letter. . . . I am very glad to learn that Kanai has reached there. K—'s going to Kailasa, Manasasarovara, and other difficult places of pilgrimage in such a weak state of his body is not approved off either by Maharaj or Baburam Maharaj. Immediately on receipt of his letter, Baburam Maharaj reported the news to Maharaj; the latter was very much pained on hearing it and said: 'The company of great souls is obtained through the accumulation of much merit; that he has obtained so easily; added to that, he is rendering to Atul whatever service is needed—the latter is also a saintly soul. No special benefit is gained by his giving up all these and going through that extremely inaccessible route. Rather, the result will be he will bring back his body in a state of extreme ill health.' I am also of the same opinion.

Nothing is done about going to Shillong; the heat also is oppressive, and that, too, is spent here. Shillong is very bad during the rainy season; I am thinking of going to Almora in June. If there are a few showers by the Lord's grace, it would be very nice. This side also, there is scarcity of rains; the situation in the country is frightening. Not to speak of Bankura, famine has broken out in Comilla; Mahesh Babu has taken two workers there on request. They are working there. By the will of the Lord, the money for the famine relief at Bankura is pouring in in plenty; they are digging a canal, one mile long and twenty-five feet broad; and they have sunk many wells and ponds, and are sinking more. . . . Mother alone knows what She has in mind; the condition of the country is very pitiable.

Accept my heartfelt love, *pranāmas*, etc. . . . Here all are well in a way. Many boys are desirous of seeing you and staying with you for at least some time. A few good boys have come.

Servant—Tarak

PS. Sarat Maharaj has returned to Calcutta after visiting Kasi, Prayag, and Vrindaban on the way. He has reached Math today; he is keeping all right. . . .

GOD THE MERCIFUL

[EDITORIAL]

Men worship God for various reasons. The vast majority do so either for the amelioration of suffering and distress or for attaining material wealth, power, pleasure, and glory. Is it really true that there is a benevolent God who answers these prayers of men for material ends? To the devotee, the two parts of the question have no relation whatsoever. Suppose these prayers are not answered, does that make God less real or benevolent? On the other hand, the greatest devotees welcome suffering and misery and deprivation of wealth as the grace of the Lord. The famous prayer of Kuntī, the brave and courageous mother of the Pāṇḍavas, is a case in point. 'O Guide of the universe,' says she, 'may calamities befall us at every step, for during distress we are blessed with Thy vision that stops our transmigration.' (*Bhāgavata*, I. viii. 25) St. Bernadette supplicates: 'O my God! I promise by the help of Thy grace to prove my love for Thee by receiving the sufferings it may please Thee to send me, whether from my superiors or my companions or even the devil himself, as well as I can. O Jesus! Make me love Thee and then crucify me as much as Thou wilt! ... O God! If I stop to consider my many faults and Your justice, I am terrified and bewildered. O God! Pity my misery and my great weakness! Let me suffer! Give me pain and difficulty! They are the only ways of getting rid of myself.' The Lord Himself says in the *Bhāgavata* (X. lxxxviii. 8): 'I gradually deprive him of wealth on whom I decide to shower My grace.' Then there is the story of the saint who, when bitten by a snake, greeted it as a messenger from the Beloved. The Jews

were thinking of God's mercy only in terms of their deliverance from the foreign yoke and oppression, but they were disappointed and crucified Jesus when the latter declared unto them: 'My kingdom is not of this world. ... Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.' (John xviii. 36; Luke xii. 51-53)

Surely an enigmatic statement, but quite intelligible and clear to the person who takes a spiritual view of the whole world process. The modern man's difficulty about the incompatibility of the existence of pain and suffering and evil in a world ruled over by a benign and merciful Providence arises from seeing the wrong side of the picture. To the devotee whose outlook on life has changed, the problem does not appear in the same light as it does to the ordinary man of the world who measures everything with the yardstick of material profit and loss. Good and evil are, after all, relative to the values we cherish in life and to the growth of our personality. The playful behaviour of a child which delights the hearts of the on-lookers would be repellent in an elderly person. The code of conduct which would be perfectly legitimate and ideal in a householder would be evil and objectionable in a monk. What we condemn as brutality and barbarism is a daily occur-

rence in the animal kingdom ; we do not blame God for these acts of violence. Why should we when we find them among men ? It is not that God found it necessary to inflict pain and suffering and evil on mankind. When the animal evolved into man, the latter found a better way of living, and the previous habits appeared evil and pain-bearing in relation to the present one. Absence of evil and suffering would not be, even from a worldly point of view, so desirable as it seems in prospect. If all tendencies to error, ugliness, and evil are to be excluded from the world, there could be no seeking of the true, the beautiful, and the good. It is through suffering, conflict, risk, and struggle that we rise to higher levels of perfection. As we advance in civilization and culture, the practices of a past age become sinful and evil. And when the spiritual vision dawns on man, the very complexion of the world with all the evil and suffering changes for him. To such a person, evil and suffering are not the result of capriciousness on the part of a whimsical Lord, but the result of our alienation from Him. The presence of pain and suffering does not belie the reality of God, but emphasizes the need for our developing a spiritual outlook on life and advancing towards the Lord to get rid of evil and suffering. As the *Gītā* (V. 15, 19, 20) points out : 'The all-pervading Lord does not take the evil or merit of any. Wisdom is covered by ignorance ; whereby creatures are bewildered. . . . Even while living, relative existence (with its dualities of birth and death, misery and happiness, etc.) is overcome by those whose mind is established in same-sightedness. God is flawless and equally present in all. He who knows the Lord, and who is steady-minded and freed from delusion, does not rejoice on obtaining the pleasant, nor does he grieve on obtaining the unpleasant.'

Pain and suffering can be overcome and

we can feel the warmth of God's mercy only when we regard God as the source of all enjoyment and seek Him alone. It is also imperative that we should cease considering worldly pleasures as the goal and end of life. From the standpoint of spiritual life and the search after God, there is nothing to choose between enjoyment and suffering. Even in our day-to-day affairs, we know that many of our efforts fail to produce the desired effects, if unaided by the invisible divine help. That is why, in the *Gītā* (XVIII. 14), the Lord mentions *daivam* (Divinity) as the last of the requisites for actions to be fruitful. To the person who has started on his spiritual journey, the mercy of the Lord is evident at every step. It is not a mere theoretical proposition for him, but a felt experience. At every stage of his struggle and progress, he is intimately aware of the grace of God, which is infinite, spontaneous, and impartial. He finds His grace manifest in the whole world process with all its contradictions. Even destruction is only an aspect of His grace, as much as creation and sustenance. For destruction prevents him from doing wrong by temporarily removing from him the chance of a fall.

Even those who would be hesitant to accept the working of grace cannot close their eyes to the presence of an inner urge which is in everyone of us, but manifests all on a sudden in the spiritual aspirant without any conscious effort on his part. In the *Bhāgavata* (XI. 7-8), it is related how the Avadhūta's spiritual consciousness is stirred by witnessing ordinary events like the bee sucking honey from the flowers, or an archer sharpening his arrow. How does this happen ? By the grace of the Lord, which opens the aspirant's inner vision and bestows understanding on him. It is within the experience of almost all who have taken to spiritual life how miraculously

they come in contact with teachers, and how they are helped onward in their quest for God, without their knowledge. God Himself provides what the aspirant lacks, and protects what he has, thus fulfilling His promise in the *Gītā* (IX. 22). How God protects His devotee is illustrated by the following incident told by Swami Vivekananda :

‘Once there was a soldier, by name Raghunath Dass, in the British service. He was very faithful and good as a sentinel, and much beloved by his officers. One night, however, he heard a Rām-Rām party. He tried to do his duty, but “*Jaya bolo Rāmcandar kī jay !*” maddened him. He threw away his uniform, and joined the worship.

‘This went on for some time, till reports reached the colonel. He sent for Raghunath Dass, and asked him whether these were true, and if he knew the penalty. Yes, he knew it. It was to be shot.

“Well,” said the colonel, “go away this time, and I shall repeat it to no-one. This once I forgive you. But if the same thing happens again, you must suffer the penalty.”

‘That night, however, the sentinel heard again the Rām-Rām party. He did his best, but it was irresistible. At last he threw all to the winds, and joined the worshippers till-morning.

‘Meanwhile, however, the colonel’s trust in Raghunath Dass had been so great that he found it difficult to believe anything against him, even on his own confession. So, in the course of the night, he visited the outpost, to see for himself. Now Raghunath Dass was in his place, and exchanged the word with him three times. Then, being reassured, the colonel turned in, and went to sleep.

‘In the morning appeared Raghunath Dass to report himself and surrender his arms. But the report was not accepted,

for the colonel told him what he had himself seen and heard.

‘Thunderstruck, the man insisted by some means on retiring from the service. Rāma it was who had done this for His servant. Henceforth, in very truth, he would serve no other.’ (Sister Nivedita: *Master as I Saw Him*, pp. 193-5, 2nd edition)

But the greatest manifestation of the Lord’s grace is found in His descent on earth, called the *avatāra* or incarnation in the Hindu terminology. God as the *anta-ryāmin* is guiding every being in the universe to realize his own perfection. He pours forth His whole soul to uplift mankind. He accepts body and the accompanying sufferings to favour the creation. In the words of the *Rg-Veda*: ‘All that is bare He covers; all that is sick He cures; by His grace the blind man sees and the lame walks. God is the Refuge and Friend of all. Thou art ours and we are Thine.’ He is more anxious about the welfare of His creatures than they themselves are. He is *always* eager to free the souls from bondage. Says the scripture: ‘The immutable, immeasurable, and attributeless Lord is born to lead humanity to liberation.’

Every earthly love, even the love of the mother, has some selfishness attached to it. But in the Lord’s love and mercy, there is not even an iota of selfishness. God is said to be *apāra-kāruṇya-sauśīlya-vātsalya-mahodadhi*—a boundless ocean of compassion, goodness, and affection. If God is considered only as a man who works out law and justice, giving every man his due, then there is no escape for man. There is not one amongst us who is not guilty of having done something or other which demands punishment. But the merciful God never looks to these. He feels intensely for man, and is ever ready to forgive all. Śrī Rāmacandra says to Vibhīṣaṇa in the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* (VI. iii. 12):

'This is my eternal vow—to give protection and fearlessness to one who has taken refuge in Me at least once saying "I am Thine".' *Bhakta-vatsala* is an adjective of God. He never makes a distinction between a rebellious and a patient child. His mercy flows equally towards all. Only many of us are not able to make use of the grace bestowed on us. As Sri Ramakrishna says: 'The grace of God is always blowing like a wind. Those who unfurl the sails will have the advantage.' Self-effort is the unfurling of the sails. That alone is not enough. Only unfurling the sails will not make the boat move. The agreeable wind is essential. Even so, if God's grace is not there, any amount of self-effort on our part is ineffective. That is why Śaṅkara says in his *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya* (II. iii. 41): '*Tadanugraha-hetukenaiva ca vijñānena mokṣa-siddhir-bhavitum arhati*—By the knowledge bestowed upon us by His grace alone man attains to liberation.'

God is not partial to anybody; to those who seek Him, He gives Himself away completely and without reservation. That is His assurance to His devotees. He says: 'I am under the grip of devotees, like one who is a captive; my heart is completely won over by My pious devotees. And I am the Beloved of My devotees.' (*Bhāgavata*, IX. iv. 63) 'I always support those who give up all worldly advantages and pleasures for My sake.' (ibid., X. xlv. 4)

By these pronouncements, it is not to be understood that the Lord makes invidious distinctions between the worldly and the spiritual. He exists alike in all beings. Prahlāda, the king of devotees, assures us: 'Surely such notions of superiority and inferiority as one comes across in worldly people could not be in You, the Friend, nay, the very Self of the universe. Yet Your grace, like that of a celestial (wish-filling) tree, could be secured only through devoted service; and the fruit (enjoyed by the

devotees) varies according to (the quality of) the service rendered by them; the superiority and inferiority on the part of devotees have nothing to do with the flow of His grace.' (ibid., VII. ix. 27) He gives to each according to his yearning and capacity. As Vyāsa tells us in the *Brahma-Sūtra* (II. i. 34): 'Partiality and cruelty cannot be attributed to God.' Those who seek worldly enjoyment get that; but since worldly enjoyment, by its very nature, is always accompanied by evil either as 'consequence, or anticipation, or loss of happiness, or as a fresh craving arising from impressions of happiness, or as counteraction of qualities', man loses sight of the fact of divine grace.

The grace of God is always there, only the ego and the material interests prevent man from taking advantage of it. By making efforts in an improper direction, man moves away from divine grace; he intrudes and impedes the path of God's grace by his own ignorance and inadvertence. But when the obstacles on the path of grace are removed by fresh efforts in the right direction, grace flows of its own accord. Primarily, it is His grace alone that saves; but some self-effort is essential, to remove the hindrances brought about by past deeds. The law of Karma is itself a proof of His grace; for the merciful Lord does not wish to interfere with the freedom of choice He has vouchsafed unto man. He does not want to force him to do anything against his own likes and dislikes. We are all one in God, being His diverse manifestations. He is in the sentient and the insentient, in the saint and the sinner. His grace equally extends to all without any distinction. The urge for higher perfection is felt by us because of His grace. And we get His grace easily when we can completely surrender to Him, which will guide us unmistakably towards our goal, which is *mukti*. External helps

do not work when God's grace is absent. When His grace comes, man instinctively moves to perfection. Absolute self-denial is the only condition for His grace to flow. Says He: 'My sentence standeth sure, "Unless a man renounce all that he possesseth, he cannot be My disciple". Thou therefore, if thou desirest to be My disciple, offer up thyself to Me with all thine affections.' (*The Imitation of Christ*, IV. 8)

THE BASIC APPROACH

SRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

We have many grave internal problems to face. But even a consideration of these internal problems inevitably leads to a wider range of thought. Unless we have some clarity of vision or, at any rate, are clear as to the questions posed to us, we shall not get out of the confusion that afflicts the world today. I do not pretend to have that clarity of thinking nor to have any answer to our major questions. All I can say, in all humility, is that I am constantly thinking about these questions. In a sense, I might say that I rather envy those who have got fixed ideas and, therefore, need not take the trouble to look deeper into the problems of today. Whether it is from the point of view of some religion or ideology, they are not troubled with the mental conflicts which are always the accompaniment of the great ages of transition.

TRAGIC PARADOX OF ATOMIC AGE

And yet, even though it may be more comfortable to have fixed ideas and be complacent, surely that is not to be commended, and that can only lead to stagnation and decay. The basic fact of today is the tremendous pace of change in human life. In my own life, I have seen amazing changes, and I am sure that, in the course of the life of the next generation, these changes will be even greater, if humanity is

not overwhelmed and annihilated by an atomic war.

Nothing is so remarkable as the progressive conquest or understanding of the physical world by the mind of man today, and this process is continuing at a terrific pace. Man need no longer be a victim of external circumstances, at any rate, to a very large extent. While there has been this conquest of external conditions, there is at the same time the strange spectacle of a lack of moral fibre and of self-control in man as a whole. Conquering the physical world, he fails to conquer himself.

That is the tragic paradox of this Atomic and Sputnik Age. The fact that nuclear tests continue, even though it is well recognized that they are very harmful in the present and in the future; the fact that all kinds of weapons of mass destruction are being produced and piled up, even though it is universally recognized that their use may well exterminate the human race, brings out this paradox with startling clarity. Science is advancing far beyond the comprehension of a very great part of the human race, and posing problems which most of us are incapable of understanding, much less of solving. Hence the inner conflict and tumult of our times. On the one side, there is this great and overpowering progress in science and technology and of their manifold consequences; on the other,

a certain mental exhaustion of civilization itself.

Religion comes into conflict with rationalism. The disciplines of religion and social usage fade away without giving place to other disciplines, moral or spiritual. Religion, as practised, either deals with matters rather unrelated to our normal lives and thus adopts an ivory-tower attitude, or is allied to certain social usages which do not fit in with the present age. Rationalism, on the other hand, with all its virtues, somehow appears to deal with the surface of things, without uncovering the inner core. Science itself has arrived at a stage when vast new possibilities and mysteries loom ahead. Matter and energy and spirit seem to overlap.

In the ancient days, life was simpler and more in contact with nature. Now it becomes more and more complex and more hurried, without time for reflection or even for questioning. Scientific developments have produced an enormous surplus of power and energy which are often used for wrong purpose.

OLD QUESTION FACES US

The old question still faces us, as it has faced humanity for ages past: What is the meaning of life? The old days of faith do not appear to be adequate, unless they can answer the questions of today. In a changing world, living should be a continuous adjustment to these changes and happenings. It is the lack of this adjustment that creates conflicts.

The old civilizations, with the many virtues that they possess, have obviously proved inadequate. The new western civilization, with all its triumphs and achievements and also with its atomic bombs, also appears inadequate and, therefore, the feeling grows that there is something wrong with our civilization. Indeed,

essentially, our problems are those of civilization itself. Religion gave a certain moral and spiritual discipline; it also tried to perpetuate superstition and social usages. Indeed, those superstitions and social usages enmeshed and overwhelmed the real spirit of religion. Disillusionment followed. Communism comes in the wake of this disillusionment and offers some kind of faith and some kind of discipline. To some extent, it fills a vacuum. It succeeds in some measure by giving a content to man's life. But, in spite of its apparent success, it fails, partly because of its rigidity, but even more so because it ignores certain essential needs of human nature. There is much talk in communism of the contradictions of capitalist society, and there is truth in that analysis. But we see the growing contradictions within the rigid framework of communism itself. Its suppression of individual freedom brings about powerful reactions. Its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of life not only ignores something that is basic in man, but also deprives human behaviour of standards and values. Its unfortunate association with violence encourages a certain evil tendency in human beings.

I have the greatest admiration for many of the achievements of the Soviet Union. Among these great achievements is the value attached to the child and the common man. Their systems of education and health are probably the best in the world. But it is said, and rightly, that there is suppression of individual freedom there. And yet the spread of education in all its forms is itself a tremendous liberating force, which, ultimately, will not tolerate that suppression of freedom. This, again, is another contradiction. Unfortunately, communism became too closely associated with the necessity for violence and thus the idea which it placed before the world became a tainted one. Means distorted ends.

We see here the powerful influence of wrong means and methods.

Communism charges the capitalist structure of society with being based on violence and class conflict. I think this is essentially correct, though that capitalist structure itself has undergone, and is continually undergoing, a change, because of democratic and other struggles and inequality. The question is how to get rid of this and have a classless society with equal opportunities for all. Can this be achieved through methods of violence, or can it be possible to bring about those changes through peaceful methods? Communism has definitely allied itself to the approach of violence. Even if it does not indulge normally in physical violence, its language is of violence, its thought is violent, and it does not seek to change by persuasion or peaceful democratic pressures, but by coercion and, indeed, by destruction and extermination. Fascism has all these evil aspects of violence and extermination in their grossest forms and, at the same time, has no acceptable ideal.

This is completely opposed to the peaceful approach which Gandhiji taught us. Communists as well as anti-communists, both seem to imagine that a principle can only be stoutly defended by language of violence, and by condemning those who do not accept it. For both of them, there are no shades; there is only black and white. This is the old approach of the bigoted aspects of some religions. It is not the approach of tolerance of feeling that, perhaps, others might have some share of the truth also. Speaking for myself, I find this approach wholly unscientific, unreasonable, and uncivilized, whether it is applied in the realm of religion or economic theory or anything else. I prefer the old pagan approach of tolerance, apart from its religious aspects. But whatever we may think about it, we

have arrived at a stage in the modern world when an attempt at forcible imposition of ideas on any large section of people is bound ultimately to fail. In present circumstances, this will lead to war and tremendous destruction. There will be no victory, only defeat for everyone. Even thus, we have seen in the last year or two that it is not easy for even great Powers to reintroduce colonial control over territories which have recently become independent. This was exemplified by the Suez incident in 1956. Also, what happened in Hungary demonstrated that the desire for national freedom is stronger even than any ideology and cannot ultimately be suppressed. What happened in Hungary was not essentially a conflict between communism and anti-communism. It represented nationalism striving for freedom from foreign control.

Thus, violence cannot possibly lead today to a solution of any major problem, because violence has become much too terrible and destructive. The moral approach to this question has now been powerfully reinforced by the practical aspect.

If the society we aim at cannot be brought about by big scale violence, will small scale violence help? Surely not, partly because that itself may lead to the big scale violence and partly because it produces an atmosphere of conflict and of disruption. It is absurd to imagine that out of conflict the social progressive forces are bound to win. In Germany, both the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party were swept away by Hitler. This may well happen in other countries too. In India, any appeal to violence is particularly dangerous, because of its inherent disruptive character. We have too many fissiparous tendencies for us to take risk. But all these are relatively minor considerations. The basic thing, I believe, is that wrong means will not lead

to right results, and that is no longer merely an ethical doctrine, but a practical proposition.

Some of us have been discussing this general background and, more especially, conditions in India. It is often said that there is a sense of frustration and depression in India and the old buoyancy of spirit is not to be found at a time when enthusiasm and hard work are most needed. This is not merely in evidence in our country. It is in a sense a world phenomenon. An old and valued colleague said that this is due to our not having a philosophy of life and, indeed, the world also is suffering from this lack of a philosophical approach. In our efforts to ensure the material prosperity of the country, we have not paid any attention to the spiritual element in human nature. Therefore, in order to give the individual and the nation a sense of purpose, something to live for and, if necessary, to die for, we have to revive some philosophy of life and give, in the wider sense of the word, a spiritual background to our thinking. We talk of a welfare state and of democracy and socialism. They are good concepts, but they hardly convey a clear and unambiguous meaning. This was the argument, and then the question arose as to what our ultimate objective should be. Democracy and socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. We talk of the good of society. Is this something apart from and transcending the good of the individuals composing it? If the individual is ignored and sacrificed for what is considered the good of the society, is that the right objective to have?

It was agreed that the individual should not be so sacrificed and, indeed, that real social progress will come only when opportunity is given to the individual to develop, provided the individual is not a selected group, but comprises the whole community. The touchstone, therefore, should be how

far any political or social theory enables the individual to rise above his petty self and thus think in terms of the good of all. The law of life should not be competition or acquisitiveness but co-operation, the good of each contributing to the good of all. In such a society, the emphasis will be on duties, not on rights; the rights will follow the performance of the duties. We have to give a new direction to education and evolve a new type of humanity.

This argument led to the old Vedāntic conception that everything, whether sentient or insentient, finds a place in the organic whole; that everything has a spark of what might be called the divine impulse or the basic energy or life-force which pervades the universe. This leads to metaphysical regions which tend to take us away from the problems of life which face us. I suppose that any line of thought, sufficiently pursued, leads us in some measure to metaphysics. Even science today is almost on the verge of all manner of imponderables. I do not propose to discuss these metaphysical aspects, but this very argument indicates how the mind searches for something basic underlying the physical world. If we really believed in this all-pervading concept of the principle of life, it might help us to get rid of some of our narrowness of race, caste, or class, and make us more tolerant and understanding in our approaches to life's problems.

But, obviously, it does not solve any of these problems, and in a sense we remain where we were. In India, we talk of the welfare state and socialism. In a sense, every country, whether it is capitalist, socialist, or communist, accepts the ideal of the welfare state. Capitalism, in a few countries at least, has achieved this common welfare to a very large extent, though it has far from solved its own problems and there is a basic lack of something vital.

Democracy allied to capitalism has undoubtedly toned down many of its evils and, in fact, is different now from what it was a generation or two ago. In industrially advanced countries, there has been a continuous and steady upward trend of economic development. Even the terrible losses of world wars have not prevented this trend, in so far as these highly developed countries are concerned. Further, this economic development has spread, though in varying degrees, to all classes. This does not apply to countries which are not industrially developed. Indeed, in those countries, the struggle for development is very difficult, and sometimes, in spite of efforts, not only do economic inequalities remain, but tend to become worse. Normally speaking, it may be said that the forces of a capitalist society, if left unchecked, tend to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, and thus increase the gap between them. This applies to countries as well as groups or regions or classes within the countries. Various democratic processes interfere with these normal trends. Capitalism itself has, therefore, developed some socialistic features, even though its major aspects remain.

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

Socialism, of course, deliberately wants to interfere with the normal processes and thus not only adds to the productive forces, but lessens inequalities. But what is socialism? It is difficult to give a precise answer, and there are innumerable definitions of it. Some people probably think of socialism vaguely just as something which does good and which aims at equality. That does not take us very far. Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism, though I think it is true that the wide gap between them tends to lessen, because many of the ideas

of socialism are gradually incorporated even in the capitalist structure. Socialism is, after all, not only a way of life, but a certain scientific approach to social and economic problems. If socialism is introduced in a backward and under-developed country, it does not suddenly make it any the less backward. In fact, we then have a backward and poverty-stricken socialism.

Unfortunately, many of the political aspects of communism have tended to distort our vision of socialism. Also, the technique of struggle evolved by communism has given violence a predominant part. Socialism should, therefore, be considered apart from these political elements or the inevitability of violence. It tells us that the general character of social, political, and intellectual life in a society is governed by its productive resources. As those productive resources change and develop, so the life and thinking of the community changes.

Imperialism or colonialism suppressed and suppresses the progressive social forces. Inevitably, it aligns itself with certain privileged groups or classes, because it is interested in preserving the social and economic status quo. Even after a country has become independent, it may continue to be economically dependent on other countries. This kind of thing is euphemistically called having close cultural and economic ties.

We discuss sometimes the self-sufficiency of the village. This should not be mixed up with the idea of decentralization, though it may be a part of it. While decentralization is, I think, desirable to the largest possible extent, if it leads to odd and rather primitive methods of production, then it simply means that we do not utilize modern methods which have brought great material advance to some countries of the West. That is, we remain poor and, what is more, tend to become poorer, because of

the pressure of an increasing population. I do not see any way out of our vicious circle of poverty, except by utilizing the new sources of power which science has placed at our disposal. Being poor, we have no surplus to invest and we sink lower and lower.

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF LIFE

We have to break through this barrier by profiting by the new sources of power and modern techniques. But, in doing so, we should not forget the basic human element and the fact that our objective is individual improvement and the lessening of inequalities; and we must not forget the ethical and spiritual aspects of life, which are ultimately the basis of culture and civilization and which have given some meaning to life.

It has to be remembered that it is not by some magic adoption of socialist or capitalist method that poverty suddenly leads to riches. The only way is through hard work and increasing the productivity of the nation and organizing an equitable distribution of its products. It is a lengthy and difficult process. In a poorly developed country, the capitalist method offers no chance. It is only through a planned approach on socialistic lines that steady progress can be attained, though even that will take time. As this process continues, the texture of our life and thinking gradually changes.

Planning is essential for this, because otherwise we waste our resources which are very limited. Planning does not mean a mere collection of projects or schemes, but a thought-out approach of how to strengthen the base and pace of progress, so that the community advances on all fronts. In India, we have a terrible problem of extreme poverty in certain large regions, apart from the general poverty of the country. We have always a difficult choice

before us : whether to concentrate on production by itself in selected and favourable areas, and thus for the moment rather ignoring the poor areas, or try to develop the backward areas at the same time, so as to lessen the inequalities between regions. A balance has to be struck and an integrated national plan evolved. That national plan need not, and indeed should not, have rigidity. It need not be based on any dogma; but should rather take the existing facts into consideration. It may, and I think in present-day India it should, encourage private enterprise in many fields, though even that private enterprise must necessarily fit in with the national plan and have such controls as are considered necessary.

OBJECT OF LAND REFORM

Land reforms have a peculiar significance because without them, more especially in a highly congested country like India, there can be no radical improvement in productivity in agriculture. But the main object of land reforms is a deeper one. They are meant to break up the old class structure of a society that is stagnant.

We want social security, but we have to recognize that social security only comes when a certain stage of development has been reached. Otherwise, we shall have neither social security nor any development.

It is clear that, in the final analysis, it is the quality of the human beings that counts. It is man that builds up the wealth of a nation, as well as its cultural progress. Hence education and health are of high importance so as to produce that quality in the human beings. We have to suffer here also from the lack of resources, but still we have always to remember that it is right education and good health that will give the foundation for economic as well as cultural and spiritual progress,

A national plan has thus both a short-term objective and a long-term one. The long-term objective gives a true perspective. Without it, short-term planning is of little avail and will lead us into blind alleys. Planning will thus always be perspective planning, and hard in view of the physical achievements for which we strive. In other words, it has to be physical planning, though it is obviously limited and conditioned by financial resources and economic conditions.

The problems that India faces are to some extent common to other countries; but much more so there are new problems for which we have not got parallels or historical precedents elsewhere. What has happened in the past in the industrially advanced countries has little bearing on us today. As a matter of fact, the countries

that are advanced today were economically better off than India today, in terms of per capita income, before their industrialization began. Western economics, therefore, though helpful, have little bearing on our present-day problems. So also have Marxist economics which are in many ways out of date, even though they throw a considerable light on economic processes. We have thus to do our own thinking, profiting by the example of others, but essentially trying to find a path for ourselves suited to our own conditions.

In considering these economic aspects of our problems, we have always to remember the basic approach of peaceful means; and perhaps we might also keep in view the old Vedāntic ideal of the life-force which is the inner base of everything that exists.

EDUCATION AND TRADITIONAL VALUES

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

The subject of 'Education and Traditional Values' should be treated as of utmost importance by our country today, when it is passing through a critical period of transition.

The forces generated by science and the democratic idea have been operating in the modern world for over three centuries to transform human life. Already a vast amount of transformation has taken place in some areas, and the impact is being felt in the rest of the areas of the world as well. Our country has been feeling the effect of these forces in a general way for the past half a century; but since the attainment of our political independence and the initiation of our five-year plans, we are being thrown, with increasing momentum

year by year, into the very vortex of these forces. India, today, has to reckon with them. Many old cultural, social, and religious values in our country are crumbling down and vanishing in the wake of the fast-moving pace of our industrialization programmes. Human adjustment to these fast-moving changes in the social and cultural milieu is becoming increasingly difficult. In the absence of such adjustment, man gets twisted and mis-shapen, and becomes a focus of tension and sorrow. A chain is as strong as its weakest link. The modern age in India is the link between her hoary past and her endless future. The modern age demands of our citizens an understanding of these forces, an acceptance of them, and an intelligent assimilation

of their values, so that India may forge a new character and a new destiny for herself. This is the problem before Indian education today.

Compared to other countries, there is something special and significant in the interaction and outcome of these modern forces in the Indian context. For that context is constituted of a deep and abiding religious consciousness, which derives its strength from a rational and comprehensive philosophy. Since historic times, religion has been the most vital force moulding our individual and collective life; it is so even today. The Indian tradition is shot through and through by the religious idea and impulse. It has given to the Indian tradition strength and vitality to stand the vicissitudes of her long history, resilience and adaptability to adjust to changing times and conditions, and an amazing assimilative power to synthesize the new with the old, making for continuity in the context of progress. Says Jawaharlal Nehru in his lecture on 'Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda' delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, in 1949 :

'For India never ignored, in the course of her long history, and in spite of the other activities of the world, the spiritual values of life, and she always laid certain stress on the search for truth and has always welcomed the searchers of truth by whatever names they may call themselves. And so India built up this tradition of the search for truth and reality, and at the same time she built up the tradition of the utmost tolerance to those who earnestly strive for the truth in their own way.' (*Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda*, p. 2)

THE MAIN PROBLEM OF INDIAN EDUCATION

The problem for India in the modern age is the assimilation of the forces released by science, technology, and democracy which are being grafted on to her traditional tree.

The success of this experiment depends upon two factors: one, the vitality of the spiritual sap running in the tree, and two, its hospitality to the new forces contained in the grafts.

These new forces in the grafts had their birth first in Europe, and later in other parts of the western world, including the U.S.S.R. They had a revolutionary effect on those countries. The intellectual force of science and the social force of technology and democracy have had devastating effects on the traditional thought and life of the western man. These new forces could not be assimilated to the western religious consciousness and cultural tradition, which did not prove a hospitable soil to them. The result is a schism in the mind of the western man, indicated by ever-recurrent conflicts—faith in conflict with reason, the spirit at loggerheads with matter, and man in opposition with the universe and with brother man. In such a situation, the human mind despairs of all higher spiritual values, and tends to get involved and entombed in tangible material pursuits. The once powerful Christian and humanist tradition has become reduced to a thin veneer of the more dominant modern tradition.

'What are the driving forces of our culture?', asks Mr. C. J. Dippel, Chief Chemist in the Philips Physical Laboratory at Enidhoven, Holland, in his article on 'Renewal or Leave Taking' (appearing in *Delta—A Review of Arts, Life and Thought in the Netherlands*, Autumn 1960, p. 17), and answers :

'Lust for power, productivity, the creation and satisfaction of needs, speculation on man's material instability, excessive consumption, expansion, an ideology of liberty accompanied by the most primitive rules for the selection of leaders. The cause or the result: an enormous diversity of moral values, varying from a reckless

hedonism to a cynical moral vacuum; speed, turbulence; an almost automatic compulsion to run after the fruits that our culture holds out to us. The stabilizing factor of our society is its material success and managerial character; the general herd merely adds its vitality—without responsibility—to the inertia of this cultural movement. It is clear that “things first”, “people second” is a guideline that we share with Soviet Communism. Hence the overriding force of economics. The question “what should be done” is decided for us on the free market and in the sphere of power politics. Our Christian past has become a burden and nothing more. We have probably never yet rightly understood the social and cultural implications of the Gospel.’

If even a part of this estimate is true, India has to view with deep concern the outcome of her grafting experiment. Her handling of these new forces, the method and manner of her approach as much as the outcome of her endeavours, is of more than national significance and relevance.

A period of profound transition is not the time for complacency. India has experienced stormy periods in her long history. She has responded successfully to all such challenges, on the strength of her tenacious loyalty to fundamental spiritual values, which she consequently placed at the foundation of her national culture and tradition.

Addressing the assembled congregation at St. Paul’s Cathedral, Calcutta, on 24 August 1962, on the occasion of his enthronement as the 11th Metropolitan of India and the 15th Bishop of Calcutta, Rev. Dr. Lakdasa De Mel referred to India’s unbroken cultural tradition since the days of the Indus Valley Civilization, and said: ‘What had distinguished Indian history during these 5,000 years was the conspicuous spiritual quest of the people.’

(*Statesman*, 25 August 1962)

It is this faith in spiritual values, which has been tested in good and evil fortune, that is being challenged and menaced by the most powerful storm yet experienced by her, viz the modern transition. All the previous challenges were mild in comparison, being only fractional, whereas this one is total. Is there not something in her age-old heritage which has the vitality to welcome these new forces—the intellectual force of tested and verified truth which is science, and the social force of technology and democracy—and assimilate their values into, first, the national heritage and, through that, into the human heritage, so that it may emerge stronger and richer than before? This question widens the scope and deepens the significance of education for our democracy today.

THE SOURCE OF THE VITALITY OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE

A long history of five thousand years, uninterrupted and continuous, lies behind India. Some profound social insight and wisdom must be present in the Indian tradition to account for this miracle of national longevity. It is resilience, adaptability, and assimilative power that enable an organism to live and thrive. Their presence indicates youthfulness; their diminution indicates onset of old age; their total absence spells death. Cultures and civilizations have passed through the three stages of birth, youthful vitality, and old age, to end eventually, invariably, in death. But India has been an exception to this rule. The only conclusion to be drawn from this arresting fact is that, somewhere in the depths of this culture, there must be a focus of undying, youthful vitality, making for fresh outbursts of adaptations and assimilations in times of crisis; so that history, in the case of India, becomes a series of rejuvenations, following each cycle of birth,

development, and decay, but never the final death. Writes Will Durant in his *Story of Civilization* (Vol. I, *Our Oriental Heritage*, p. 633):

'One cannot conclude the history of India as one can conclude the history of Egypt, or Babylonia, or Assyria; for that history is still being made, that civilization is still creating. ... We cannot claim for this civilization such direct gifts to our own as we have traced to Egypt and the Near East; for these last were the immediate ancestors of our own culture, while the history of India, China, and Japan flowed in another stream, and is only now beginning to touch and influence the current of occidental life. It is true that even across the Himalayan barrier India has sent to us such questionable gifts as grammar and logic, philosophy and fables, hypnotism and chess, and above all, our numerals and our decimal system. But these are not the essence of her spirit; they are trifles compared to what we may learn from her in the future. As invention, industry, and trade bind the continents together, or as they fling us into conflict with Asia, we shall study its civilizations more closely, and shall absorb, even in enmity, some of its ways and thoughts. Perhaps, in return for conquest, arrogance, and spoliation, India will teach us the tolerance and gentleness of the mature mind, the quiet content of the unacquisitive soul, the calm of the understanding spirit, and a unifying, pacifying love for all living things.'

This continued youthful vitality of India has its origin in her spiritual thought and social philosophy. The Upaniṣads are the source of her spiritual and philosophical thought of which the fundamental ideas are: (1) the divinity of man; (2) the non-duality and spiritual character of the ultimate reality; (3) the basic solidarity of all existence; (4) realization, and not a mere belief or creed, as the criterion of

religion; and (5) the harmony of religions. These concepts breathe the spirit of the universal and human, and mark human culture at its highest and best. They gave rise to the values of tolerance, peace, gentleness, and non-aggressiveness, which became the distinctive marks of Indian culture and tradition, finding expression both in individual behaviour and state policy. Religion was, and continues to be, the source and sustenance of this culture and tradition. India did not allow the universal values and outlook of her religion to be smothered by the limitations of political affiliations. There was no identification of religion and the State. Her concept of religion did not permit a rigid creed or an exclusive, all-powerful church to get established on the Indian soil. Says Dr. Radhakrishnan: 'The emphasis on the goal of spiritual life bound together worshippers of many different types and saved the Hindus from spiritual snobbery.' (*Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 322)

Absence of rigidity made for hospitality to new ideas. This left the way clear for experimentation from within and assimilation from without. Indian culture, religion, and society bear the impress of this long-continued, and still continuing, experimental and assimilative approach and process. This explains India's diversity and richness, on the one side, and its vitality and uninterrupted continuity, on the other.

THE SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN POLITY

Its social philosophy derives from its spiritual thought. Unity in diversity is the ruling idea, and not uniformity. The fact of social change is recognized by her thinkers who, while accepting the need for change, advocate also the need for preserving the continuity of tradition. India's

social philosophy enshrines the wisdom of the reconciliation of tradition and change. The central ingredient of this wisdom is enshrined in her concepts of *Śruti* and *Smṛti*, and their interrelation. In the light of these concepts, we find that every tradition embodies two elements: (1) a set of universal, eternal, and fundamental principles and (2) a group of values derived from the first, and finding expression in individual and collective attitudes and behaviour. These latter are limited, temporary, and relative in their scope and authority. The first should be upheld, while allowing the second to respond to the urge for change. In Sanskrit, this idea is expressed by saying that the *Smṛtis* change, while the *Śruti* remains. The term '*Śruti*' represents the spiritual content of religion and is always meant to be a singular, while the term '*Smṛti*' represents its socio-political expression and is also used in the plural. The same idea is expressed in another way. *Dharma* or spiritual tradition has two aspects—the *sanātana dharma* and the *yuga dharma*, tradition eternal and tradition valid for only an epoch or an age. This first connotes the *Śruti*, and the second the *Smṛti*. Says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: 'The Hindu view makes room for essential changes. There must be no violent break with social heredity, and yet the new stresses, conflicts, and confusions will have to be faced and overcome. While the truths of spirit are permanent, the rules change from age to age.' (*Religion and Society*, p. 113)

Referring to the impact of Indian spiritual ideas on the modern world, in his 'First Public Lecture in the East', delivered in Colombo on January 15, 1897, on his return from the West, Swami Vivekananda, spoke as follows on the subject of this central ingredient of the wisdom of the Indian tradition:

'At the same time, I must remark that

what I mean by our religion working upon the nations outside of India comprises only the principles, the background, the foundation upon which that religion is built. The detailed workings, the minute points which have been worked out through centuries of social necessity, little ratiocinations about manners and customs and social well-being, do not rightly find a place in the category of religion. We know that, in our books, a clear distinction is made between two sets of truths. The one set is that which abides for ever, being built upon the nature of man, the nature of the soul, the soul's relation to God, the nature of God, perfection, and so on; there are also the principles of cosmology, of the infinite of creation, or more correctly speaking, projection, the wonderful law of cyclical procession, and so on; these are the eternal principles founded upon the universal laws in nature. The other set comprises the minor laws, which guide the working of our everyday life. They belong more properly to the *Purāṇas*, to the *Smṛtis*, and not to the *Śruti*. These have nothing to do with the other principles. Even in our own nation these minor laws have been changing all the time. Customs of one age, of one *yuga*, have not been the customs of another, and as *yuga* comes after *yuga*, they will still have to change.' (*The Complete Works*. Vol. III, pp. 111-12, 8th edition)

THE HAPPY OUTCOME OF THE TRADITIONAL INDIAN OUTLOOK

The fruit of this social wisdom is seen in the absence, in ancient and modern Indian history, of violent social upheavals or bloody revolutions; instead, we see only steady adjustments and adaptations to new situations, keeping basic values intact. The Indian social experience has uniformly been evolution and not revolution; or rather, evolutionary changes of a revolu-

tionary nature, without, however, serious social conflict and violence. The impact of Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, Śaṅkara and the later reformers, has always been creative and constructive, peaceful and pervasive. India responded to them in a natural way, and became richer in the process. A study of the history of India shows that the concept of an unchanging Indian society is a thorough misnomer. Both in religious concepts and forms, as well as in social values and processes, India has seen revolutionary changes. 'Those who are familiar with the work of Hindu commentators on Hindu law works', writes Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, 'know the magnitude of the changes effected by them. . . . Social flexibility has been the chief character of Hindu dharma. To uphold the *sanātana dharma* is not to stand still. It is to seize the vital principles and use them in modern life. All true growth preserves unity through change.' (*Religion and Society*, pp. 114-15)

The R̥g-Vedic gods and the forms of their worship, and the R̥g-Vedic society itself, are not in evidence a thousand years after the *R̥g-Veda*. The very fact that there are several *Smṛtis* indicates social change; otherwise, the first *Smṛti* should have continued throughout. But the spiritual legacy of India, as represented by the Śruti, remains steady and clear to this day. Sri Ramakrishna's pithy saying explains this changing character of social laws, as represented by the *Smṛtis*, so well as nothing else can: 'The Moghul coins have no currency under the (East India) Company's rule.'

The *Manu Smṛti* (I. 85) itself gives eloquent expression to this principle of change:

*Anye kṛtayuge dharmāḥ tretāyām
dvāpare apare ;
Anye kaliyuge nṛṇām yugahrāsānu-
rūpataḥ—*

'There is one set of *dharmas* for man in the

kṛta yuga ; a different set for each of the *tretā*, *dvāpara*, and *kali yugas* ; the *dharmas* change according to the change of the *yugas*.'

REGENERATION OF INDIA: THE RAMA-KRISHNA—VIVEKANANDA WAY

Modern Indian history also illustrates abundantly this wisdom of Indian history. The verdict on Indian history by ignorant or prejudiced historians, both Indian and foreign, as well as by unsympathetic foreign social critics, during the last one century, harped on the following themes :

1. Indian society is built on the rigid hierarchy of the caste system.
2. Caste derives its strength and sanction from the Hindu religion.
3. It finds its extreme expression in untouchability.
4. Caste cannot be destroyed without first destroying the Hindu religion.
5. By destroying Hindu religion and caste alone can a new modernized India emerge.
6. Democracy, on the one side, and Hinduism with its caste, on the other, are irreconcilable.
7. The suppression of Hindu women derives from the Hindu religion.
8. Modern technology and industrialism will spell the final death-knell of Hinduism.
9. The various religions of India will ever remain in water-tight compartments, mutually hostile, if not warring with each other; this fact, added to the pernicious caste system, will never allow India to develop a national consciousness.

10. And the conclusion was clear: if these follies were to be overcome and a stagnant India made progressive, she has to cut adrift of her traditional moorings, borrow wisdom from outside, and reshape herself in a completely new way.

It is undoubtedly true that Indian society

and the Hindu religion, during the last few centuries, did exhibit the above features in a rather prominent form. But the fault of the critics lay in exhibiting these foibles and follies as the wisdom of India. This led to much iconoclastic thinking and action in the middle of the last century; it created its own counter-force in movements inspired by fear of the new, and in defence of everything old, in religion and society. This action-and-reaction process continued till the end of the century when the age-old, historically tested wisdom of India expressed itself, gently but effectively, in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The entire theme of Sri Ramakrishna's life was spirituality. In the words of Gandhiji: 'The story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. . . . Ramakrishna was a living embodiment of godliness. . . . His love knew no limits, geographical or otherwise. May his divine love be an inspiration to all who read the following pages!' (Foreword to *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna*)

Sri Ramakrishna did not disturb any of the existing religions, nor did he start any new religion. He loved all religions and sought God through all of them. Swami Vivekananda carried the mission of his Master far and wide, the mission of the spiritual regeneration of humanity. Within India itself, he saw the main obstacles to this mission in the rigidities and in the decayed elements of the Indian tradition, of which caste-exclusiveness, untouchability, and self-centred religiosity formed the more harmful ones. In his *Lectures from Colombo to Almora* and in his *Letters*, he exposed these faults and foibles of the *Smṛti* elements of the Indian tradition, and placed before the nation the strengthening, unifying, and broadening spirituality of the Upaniṣads, or the Śruti elements of that tradition. He had personally wit-

nessed the power and glory of this Śruti constituent of his country's tradition in the blazing life of his Master. And he, therefore, exhorted the nation to fearlessly do away with the stagnant elements of the national tradition and build a new body-politic, worthy to ensoul the age-old spiritual legacy of India and the scientific and social legacy of the modern world.

THE GALVANIZING EFFECT OF VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE

A few brief quotations from his letters, written from abroad to social workers in India, will help to show how he galvanized the Indian tradition and made it progressive:

'So you see, we must travel, we must go to foreign parts. We must see how the engine of society works in other countries, and keep free and open communication with what is going on in the minds of other nations, if we really want to be a nation again.' (*Letters of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 54, 4th edition)

'I cannot write what I have in my mind about the Japs in one short letter. Only I want that numbers of our young men should pay a visit to Japan every year. To the Japanese, India is still the dreamland of everything high and good. And you, what are you? . . . talking twaddle all your lives, vain talkers, what are you? Come, see these people and then go and hide your faces in shame. A race of dotards, you lose your caste if you come out! Sitting down these hundreds of years with an ever-increasing load of crystallized superstition on your heads, for hundreds of years spending all your energy upon discussing the touchableness or untouchableness of this food or that, with all humanity crushed out of you by the continuous social tyranny of ages—what are you? . . . Come, be men! Kick out the priests who are always against progress.

... Root out priestcraft first. Come, be men! Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how nations are on the march. Do you love your country? Then, come, let us struggle for higher and better things; look not back, no, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward!' (ibid., pp. 63-64)

'India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men—men, mind, and not brutes. The English Government has been the instrument brought over here by the Lord to break your crystallized civilization, and Madras supplied the first men who helped in giving the English a footing. How many men, unselfish, thoroughgoing men, is Madras ready now to supply, to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things—sympathy for the poor and bread to their hungry mouths, enlightenment to the people at large—and struggle unto death to make men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts by the tyranny of your forefathers?' (ibid., p. 64)

'A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising up—the gospel of equality.

'No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism. The Lord has shown me that religion is not at fault, but it is the Pharisees and Sadducees in Hinduism, hypocrites, who invent all sorts of engines of tyranny in the shape of doctrines of *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika* (absolute and relative truth).' '... It is

not their fault. They are children, yea, veritable children, though they be great and high in society. Their eyes see nothing beyond their little horizon of a few yards—the routine work, eating, drinking, earning, and begetting, following each other in mathematical precision. They know nothing beyond, happy little souls! Their sleep is never disturbed. Their nice little brown studies of lives never rudely shocked by the wail of woe, of misery, of degradation and poverty, that has filled the Indian atmosphere—the result of centuries of oppression. They little dream of the ages of tyranny—mental, moral, and physical—that has reduced the image of God to a mere beast of burden; the emblem of the Divine Mother, to a slave to bear children; and life itself, a curse. But there are others who see, feel, and shed tears of blood in their hearts, who think that there is a remedy for it, and who are ready to apply this remedy at any cost, even to the giving up of life. And "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". (ibid., pp. 68-70)

'The Hindu must not give up his religion, but must keep religion within its proper limits, and give freedom to society to grow. All the reformers in India made the serious mistake of holding religion accountable for all the horrors of priestcraft and degeneration, and went forthwith to pull down the indestructible structure, and what was the result? Failure! Beginning from Buddha down to Ram Mohun Roy, everyone made the mistake of holding caste to be a religious institution and tried to pull down religion and caste altogether, and failed. But in spite of all the ravings of the priests, caste is simply a crystallized social institution, which, after doing its service, is now filling the atmosphere of India with its stench, and it can only be removed by giving back to the people their lost social individuality. Every man born here (in U.S.A.) knows that he is a *man*. Every

man born in India knows that he is a slave of society. Now, freedom is the only condition of growth; take that off, the result is degeneration. With the introduction of modern competition see how caste is disappearing fast! No religion is now necessary to kill it. The Brāhmin shopkeeper, shoemaker, and wine-distiller are common in northern India. And why? Because of competition. No man is prohibited from doing anything he pleases for his livelihood under the present government, and the result is neck and neck competition, and thus thousands are seeking and finding the highest level they were born for, instead of vegetating at the bottom.' (ibid., pp. 75-76)

'My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate. Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now, and then decide. We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will be done by nature according to her laws. Work hard, be steady, and have faith in the Lord. Set to work, I am coming sooner or later. Keep the motto before you: "Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion."

'Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. But alas! nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow remarriage. Of course, I am a sympathizer in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon *the condition of the masses*. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work, and energy, and

at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts? This is to be done and we *will do it*. You are all *born to do it*. Have faith in yourselves, great convictions are the mothers of great deeds. Onward for ever! Sympathy for the poor, the downtrodden, even unto death—this is our motto.' (ibid., pp. 83-84)

'This idea of wonderful liberality joined with eternal energy and progress must spread over India, it must electrify the whole nation and must enter the very pores of society, in spite of the horrible ignorance, spite, caste-feeling, old boobyism, and jealousy which are the heritage of this nation of slaves.' (ibid., p. 87)

'Social laws were created by economic conditions under the sanction of religion. The terrible mistake of religion was to interfere in social matters. But how hypocritically it says and thereby contradicts itself: "Social reform is not the business of religion"! True, what we want is that religion should not be a social reformer, but we insist at the same time that religion has no right to become a social law-giver. Hands off! Keep yourself to your own bounds and everything would come right.' (ibid., p. 90)

'The one thing that is at the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor. The poor in the West are devils; compared with them ours are angels, and it is therefore so much the easier to raise our poor. The only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, *to develop their lost individuality*. That is the great task between our people and princes. Up to now nothing has been done in that direction. Priest-power and foreign conquest have trodden them down for centuries, and at last the poor of India have forgotten that they are human beings. They are to be given ideas; their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in the world around them, and then they will

work out their own salvation. Every nation, every man, every woman, must work out one's own salvation. Give them ideas—that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest. This is what is to be done in India.' (ibid., pp. 109-10)

'The present Hindu society is organized only for spiritual men, and hopelessly crushes out everybody else. Why? Where shall they go who want to enjoy the world a little with its frivolities? Just as our religion takes in all, so should our society. This is to be worked out by first understanding the true principles of our religion, and then applying them to society. This is the slow but sure work to be done.' (ibid., p. 137)

'I do not believe in a religion or God which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth.' (ibid., p. 141)

'To my mind, the one great cause of the downfall and the degeneration of India was the building of a wall of custom—whose foundation was hatred of others—round the nation, and the real aim of which in ancient times was to prevent the Hindu from coming in contact with the surrounding Buddhistic nations.

'Whatever cloak ancient or modern sophistry may try to throw over it, the inevitable result—the vindication of the moral law, that none can hate others without degenerating himself—is that the race that was foremost amongst the ancient races is now a byword and a scorn among nations. We are object-lessons of the violation of that law which our ancestors were the first to discover and discriminate.

'Give and take is the law, and if India wants to raise herself once more, it is ab-

solutely necessary that she brings out her treasures and throws them broadcast among the nations of the earth, and in return be ready to receive what others have to give her. Expansion is life, contraction is death. Love is life and hatred is death. We commenced to die the day we began to hate other races, and nothing can prevent our death unless we come back to expansion, which is life.

'We must mix, therefore, with all the races of the earth. And every Hindu that goes out to travel in foreign parts renders more benefit to his country than hundreds of men who are bundles of superstitions and selfishness and whose one aim in life seems to be like that of the dog in the manger. The wonderful structures of national life which the western nations have raised are supported by the strong pillars of character, and until we can produce numbers of such, it is useless to fret and fume against this or that power.' (ibid., p. 150)

'I fully agree with the educated classes in India that a thorough overhauling of society is necessary. But how to do it? The destructive plans of reformers have failed. My plan is this: We have not done *badly* in the past; certainly not. Our society is not *bad* but *good*, only I want it to be better still. Not from error to truth, nor from bad to good; but from truth to higher truth, from good to better, best. I tell my countrymen that so far they have done well—now is the time to do better. Now take the case of caste, in Sanskrit, *jāti*, i.e. species. Now this is the first idea of creation. Variation (*vicitratā*), that is to say, *jāti*, means creation. "I am one, I become many" (various Vedas). Unity is before creation, diversity is creation. Now if this diversity stops, creation will be destroyed. So long as any species is vigorous and active it must throw out varieties. When it ceases

or is stopped from breeding varieties, it dies. Now the original idea of *jāti* was this freedom of the individual to express his nature, his *prakṛti*, his *jāti*, his caste, and so it remained for thousands of years. Not even in the latest books is inter-dining prohibited; nor in any of the older books is intermarriage forbidden. Then what was the cause of India's downfall? The giving up of this idea of caste. As the *Gītā* says, with the extinction of caste the world will be destroyed. Now does it seem true that with the stoppage of these variations the world will be destroyed? The present caste is not the real *jāti*, but a hindrance to its progress. It really has prevented the free action of *jāti*, i.e. caste or variation. Any crystallized custom or privilege or hereditary class in any shape really prevents caste (*jāti*) from having its full sway, and whenever any nation ceases to produce this immense variety, it must die. Therefore what I have to tell you, my countrymen, is this: that India fell because you prevented and abolished caste. Every frozen aristocracy or privileged class is a blow to caste and is not caste. Let *jāti* have its sway; break down every barrier in the way of caste, and we shall rise. Now look at Europe. When it succeeded in giving free scope to caste and took away most of the barriers that stood in the way of individuals—each developing his caste—Europe rose. In America, there is the best scope for caste (real *jāti*) to develop, and so the people are great. Every Hindu knows that astrologers try to fix the caste of every boy or girl as soon as he or she is born. That is the real caste, the individuality, and *jyotiḥ* recognized that. And we can only rise by giving it full sway again. This variety does not mean inequality nor any special privilege. This is my method—to show the Hindus that they have to give up nothing but only to move on in the line laid down by the sages

and shake off their inertia, the result of centuries of servitude. Of course, we had to stop advancing during the Moham-medan tyranny, for then it was not a question of progress but of life and death. Now that that pressure has gone, we must move forward, not on the lines of destruction directed by renegades and missionaries, but along our own line—our own road. Everything is hideous because the building is unfinished. We had to stop building during centuries of oppression. Now finish the building and everything will look beautiful in its own place. This is all my plan. I am thoroughly convinced of this. Each nation has a main current in life; in India it is religion. Make it strong and the waters on either side must move along with it. This is one phase of my line of thought.' (ibid., pp. 191-3)

'My Master used to say that these names as Hindu, Christian, etc. stand as great bars to all brotherly feelings between man and man. We must try to break them down first. They have lost all their good powers and now only stand as baneful influence under whose black magic even the best of us behave like demons. Well, we will have to work hard and must succeed.

'That is why I desire so much to have a centre. Organization has its faults, no doubt, but without that nothing can be done. And here, I am afraid, I will have to differ from you—that no-one ever succeeded in keeping society in good humour and at the same time did great works. One must work as the dictate comes from within, and then if it is right and good, society is bound to veer round, perhaps centuries after one is dead and gone. We must plunge heart and soul and body into the work. And until we be ready to sacrifice everything else to one idea and to one alone, we never, never will see the light.

“Those that want to help mankind must take their own pleasure and pain, name and fame, and all sorts of interests, and make a bundle of them and throw them into the sea, and then come to the Lord. This is what all the masters said and *did*.” (ibid., p. 211)

‘Do you mean to say I am born to live and die one of those caste-ridden, superstitious, merciless, hypocritical, atheistic *cowards* that you find among the educated Hindus? I hate cowardice, I will have nothing to do with cowards or political nonsense. I do not believe in any politics. God and truth are the only politics in the world, everything else is trash.’ (ibid., p. 243)

‘What I mean by mentioning all this is that there were many good things in ancient times, but there were bad things too. The good things are to be retained, but the India that is to be, the future India, must be much greater than ancient India. From the day Sri Ramakrishna was born dates the growth of Modern India and of the Golden Age. And you are the agents to bring about this Golden Age. To work, with this conviction at heart!’ (ibid., p. 252)

‘From the day when education and culture etc. began to spread gradually from patricians to plebeians, grew the distinction between the modern civilization as of western countries and the ancient civilization as of India, Egypt, Rome, etc. I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses. The chief cause of India’s ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, i.e. by spreading education among the masses.’ (ibid., p. 367)

THE IMPACT OF RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA ON MODERN INDIA

What was the result of Vivekananda’s handling of the Indian tradition? Quoting several stirring passages from Vivekananda’s *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, Romain Rolland remarks:

‘Imagine the thunderous reverberations of these words! The reader almost says with the Indian masses and with Vivekananda himself:

“Śiva! ... Śiva!”

‘The storm passed; it scattered its cataracts of water and fire over the plain, and its formidable appeal to the Force of the Soul, to the God sleeping in man and His illimitable possibilities! I can see the Mage erect, his arm raised, like Jesus above the tomb of Lazarus in Rembrandt’s engraving: with energy flowing from his gesture of command to raise the dead and bring him to life. ...

‘... From that day the awakening of the torpid Colossus began. If the generation that followed saw, three years after Vivekananda’s death, the revolt of Bengal, the prelude to the great movement of Tilak and Gandhi, if India today has definitely taken part in the collective action of organized masses, it is due to the initial shock, to the mighty

“Lazarus, Come forth!”

of the message from Madras.’ (*Life of Vivekananda*, pp. 124-5)

Again:

‘So India was hauled out of the shifting sands of barren speculation wherein she had been engulfed for centuries, by the hand of one of her own *sannyāsins*; and the result was that the whole reservoir of mysticism sleeping beneath, broke its bounds, and spread by a series of great ripples into action. The West ought to be aware of the tremendous energies liberated by this means. The world finds itself face

to face with an awakening India. ... Whatever the part played in this reawakening by the three generations of trumpeters during the previous century (the greatest of whom we salute, the precursor: Ram Mohun Roy), the decisive call was the trumpet blast of the lectures delivered at Colombo and Madras. And the magic watchword was unity. Unity of every Indian man and woman (and world-unity as well); of all the powers of the spirit: dream and action, reason, love, and work. Unity of the hundred races of India with their hundred different tongues and hundred thousand gods. ... Unity of the thousand sects of Hinduism. Unity within the vast ocean of all religious thought and all rivers past and present, western and eastern'. (ibid., pp. 316-17)

Dealing with the spiritual source of modern India's social adjustment, through the activation of the Śruti content of its tradition, Rolland continues:

'This "greater India", this new India—whose growth politicians and learned men have, ostrich fashion, hidden from us and whose striking effects are now apparent—is impregnated with the soul of Ramakrishna. The twin star of the Paramahansa and the hero who translated his thought into action dominates and guides her present destinies. Its warm radiance is the heaven working within the soil of India and fertilizing it. The present leaders of India: the king of thinkers, the king of poets, and the Mahatma—Aurobindo Ghose, Tagore, and Gandhi—have grown, flowered and borne fruit under the double constellation of the Swan and the Eagle—a fact publicly acknowledged by Aurobindo and Gandhi.' (ibid., pp. 317-18)

The Indian tradition was fortunate to have a leader and innovator of the spiritual stature and credentials of Swami Vivekananda. Speaking about the impact of

Vivekananda on Indian life and thought, Jawaharlal Nehru says:

'I do not know how many of the younger generation read the speeches and the writings of Swami Vivekananda. But I can tell you that many of my generation were very powerfully influenced by him and I think it would do a great deal of good to the present generation if they also went through Swami Vivekananda's writings and speeches, and they would learn much from them.' (*Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda*, p. 4)

Referring to the contemporary relevance of Vivekananda's ideas, he says:

'If you read Swami Vivekananda's writings and speeches, the curious thing you will feel is that they are not old. It was told 56 years ago, and they are fresh today, because what he wrote or spoke about dealt with certain fundamental matters and aspects of our problems or the world's problems.' (ibid., p. 5)

Speaking further about Vivekananda's influence on Indian politics, he says:

'He was no politician in the ordinary sense of the word and yet he was, I think, one of the great founders—if you like you may use any other word—of the national movement of India, and a great number of people who took more or less an active part in that movement in a later date drew their inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Directly or indirectly he has powerfully influenced the India of today. And I think that our younger generation will take advantage of this fountain of wisdom, of spirit and fire that flows through Swami Vivekananda.' (ibid., pp. 6-7)

Swami Vivekananda educated the Indian mind to discriminate between the essentials and the non-essentials of the national tradition, and to welcome and assimilate the modern forces of progress. This form of social education can be done effectively only by a towering spiritual personality.

Says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan : 'Swami Vivekananda's life and teachings have prepared us for the new age of freedom in which we live. They tell us how best we can consolidate the freedom we have won.' (*Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 191)

The fruits of this spiritual education of a whole people can be seen in the impressive achievements of India during the last sixty years in the field of fundamental social reform. Many of these reforms, such as removal of untouchability, opening of temples to the Harijans, reform and codification of Hindu law, ignoring of caste by the constitution as a factor in inter-group relationships, breaking down of caste barriers, and even creed and race barriers, with respect to eating and marriage, and disappearance of opposition to sea voyage and foreign travel, are radical measures. Many of these are legal enactments backed by enlightened public opinion. They never gave rise to social conflicts, in spite of their radical impact on the old tradition ; they helped, on the other hand, in the growth and renewal of that tradition.

The awakening of the Indian women and their rise to positions of the highest responsibility is another striking aspect of this peaceful evolution and growth of the Indian tradition in the modern age. It is noteworthy that, unlike several western countries, India did not experience a feminist movement ; the significance of this fact lies in the way it reveals the social wisdom of the Indian tradition. It is when a world-view goes counter to the claims and aspirations of women, and men uphold that world-view as against the spirit of the times, that a feminist movement takes place. This is the experience of modern western history. But in India, men came forward to uphold the claims of women and move with the times ; and in this they were sustained as much by the spiritual constituents of the Indian tradition as by

the recent orientation of that tradition by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

The absence of opposition in India to social reform measures such as family planning, as noted by international study groups, is another instance of the adaptive character of the Indian tradition.

The Indian constitution, with its broad democratic base and equalitarian objective, bears the touch of the wisdom and broad outlook of the Indian tradition and its capacity for assimilation. And the healthy functioning of democracy in India, and the success of its three general elections, involving over 200 million voters, the most stupendous democratic phenomenon in the world today, is another fruit of the vitality and wisdom of the national tradition.

NEED FOR A BALANCED OUTLOOK BETWEEN THE ANCIENT AND THE MODERN

Technological advance is bound to affect profoundly and recast in a revolutionary way our culture and tradition. But it will be only its peripheral aspects that will be so affected. And, thanks to the education received by the nation from its great spiritual and social leaders like Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, this recasting of the peripheral aspects will not only cause no concern, but will cause only satisfaction to enlightened Indian minds. But there is imperative need to stress the validity and relevance of the central aspects of our tradition if the fast-coming peripheral changes are not to blow away the whole tradition itself. This is where the role of national education comes in. *The nation needs to be continually educated in the abiding spiritual constituents of its tradition.* In the words of Vinobaji, science must be combined with spirituality ; or Vedānta is to be coupled with modern science, as Vivekananda long ago expressed it in his formulation of the content of Indian education.

Spirituality is the positive content of the Indian tradition ; it is its undying constituent. The Upaniṣads are its fountain-source. The *Īśa* is one of the oldest of these Upaniṣads. It has been a source of deep inspiration to Indian thinkers and seekers in ancient and modern times. It asks man to feel the pulsations of the Divine in life and nature, and enjoy with zest the full life span of a hundred years through renunciation. '*Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāh*—Enjoy through renunciation'—is its watchword. This idea was later developed by the *Gītā* into a comprehensive and practical spirituality, in its theory of detached action. Renunciation becomes joyous when it leads to higher levels of being and purer forms of delight. This positive concept of renunciation is the core of ethics, of *dharma*, in Indian thought. This dynamic teaching of practical spirituality has tremendous consequences for man and society ; for the emphasis here is on character, leading to universality of vision, on the one side, and social efficiency, on the other. Life is viewed in a context of progress, development, realization, with the infinitude of being as the target of achievement. This man-making message was communicated to our country by Swami Vivekananda in a brief statement of national educational policy : 'Renunciation and service are the twin ideals of India ; intensify her in those channels, the rest will take care of itself.'

Since political independence, our national leaders have taken much pain to criticize again and again the negative features of the Indian tradition. One of the targets of attack has been Hindu communalism. There is no doubt that there are some narrow-minded communalists among the Hindus. But that such narrow communalism is not a prominent characteristic of the Hindu people as a whole, or of their tradition, is proved by the fact that even

the shock of partition of the country on communal grounds did not result in the Hindu community voting for a Hindu communal state in India, and that behind the broad secular constitution of the nation is the sustenance and support of the broad masses and enlightened sections of the Hindu community. The spirit of inclusiveness of the Hindu tradition is fully evident here ; and we cannot but recall what Swami Vivekananda said on the subject of the Hindu tradition while addressing the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 : 'I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 3)

Casteism and untouchability have also been constantly exposed with a view to ridding India of these evils and making democracy a living reality. The public have received, through these and other criticisms by our national leaders, a measure of social education, which is very valuable ; but, unfortunately, this educational process has been one-sided : it has exposed only the faults and foibles of the Indian tradition without directing the people's mind to the positive and permanent constituents of this tradition. This has resulted in creating an impression in the people, especially in the youths, that their country's tradition is mostly obsolete and that there is nothing in it worth preserving. This has had, and is having, a highly deleterious effect on the national mind, national character, and work efficiency, by undermining its faith in the nation's legacy and, consequently, weakening its ability and strength to assimilate the best in the modern heritage.

This has to be corrected by our education. Education should acquaint the people with the life-giving, abiding, positive elements of the Indian tradition ; this alone

will help to forge a spiritually and socially efficient national character. In this field, the importance of Vivekananda literature in toning up and invigorating our education cannot be over-estimated.

None had criticized the faults and foibles of the Indian tradition more vehemently than Vivekananda; but he did not stop with mere criticism and exposure. He also held before the people the glorious and imperishable, the pure and positive, constituents of their national tradition, and also showed the way of enriching the national tradition by assimilation of the tested values of modern experience.

The progressive adaptation of the Hindu tradition to the requirements of the modern age, and the liberation of its universal spiritual values, will also help in the realization of a similar integration by the Islamic, Christian, Parsee, and other great traditions of India. They will also learn to shed the parochial and outworn elements of their traditions, and liberate their universal and human contents. It is only thus that the process of nation-building in India will be consummated, and a free, equalitarian, spiritually oriented body-politic provided for India's undying soul.

OBJECTIVES OF OUR EDUCATION: WHAT THEY OUGHT TO BE

Our educational vision has to grasp the whole of India as a perennial laboratory for the achievement of human integration. Her immense variety and diversity, natural as well as human, which she has studiously fostered, form the data for its science of man and society. Based on the universal concept of man's divinity, she achieved in the past a measure of cultural unity and human integration which has stood firm against many a political cataclysm of long or short durations. The legacy so left is our starting-point. It has now to be enriched extensively as well as intensively,

both within India as well as outside. This is very much facilitated by the world conditions created by the modern technological civilization. A nation's educational policy, like its political policy, gets added dynamism and direction when to its domestic policy is added a foreign policy content as well. The spiritually liberated man is the aim of Indian education: '*Yā vidyā sā vimuktaye*—That is knowledge which liberates'; and it was of this Indian educational vision that Rabindranath Tagore sang in a famous passage of his *Gītāñjali* (35):

Where the mind is without fear and the
head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;
Where words come out from the depth
of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms
towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not
lost its way into the dreary desert
sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by Thee
into ever-widening thought and
action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake.

Swami Vivekananda defines education as the manifestation of the perfection already in man. Similarly, he defines religion as the manifestation of the divinity already in man. Religion, according to him, is also a process of education; in fact, it becomes continued education. This synoptic view finds eloquent expression in one of his oft-quoted passages:

'Each soul is potentially divine; the goal is to manifest this Divine within by controlling nature, external as well as internal.'

This is his concept of complete educa-

tion in which man achieves social welfare by the mastery of the external environment through scientific and technological efficiency, and he achieves spiritual enrichment by the mastery of his inner life through religion.

Education so defined should place before itself clear objectives, if it is to find expression in practical measures of implementation. In the light of all that has been discussed above, we can discern six objectives for our education :

1. The training of our children to an appreciation of our nation's cultural heritage and to equip them with the desire and the capacity to enhance the same and leave to posterity a richer legacy.

2. The training of our children in talents and capacities by which they become productive units of society and the source of its economic strength.

3. The equipment of our children with the qualities of courage and vision to protect our newly won national freedom, to

preserve its democratic structure, function, and liberties, and to carry the same to ever wider fields and ever higher levels.

4. The training of our children in virtues and graces that will make them emotionally stable individuals and enable them to live in peace, harmony, and co-operation with their fellow citizens.

5. The training of our children in virtues and graces that will make them international in their outlook and sympathies, and enable them to live in peace, harmony, and co-operation with the emerging world community.

6. The training of our children to an awareness of the spiritual and trans-social dimension of the human personality, and to a converging life-endeavour in the realization of this fact in and through life and action.

It is only thus that our education will become a fit discipline to help to continue the march of the Indian tradition from an impressive past to a glorious future.

APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

DR. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

To unite all mankind in the acceptance of one universal religion has been the cherished desideratum of many wise men and thinkers all down the course of human history. Three main approaches to the problem of a universal religion are discussed in the lines that follow.

UNIVERSALISM THROUGH ECLECTICISM A PIOUS HOPE

Some have dreamt of the emergence of a universal religion as the result of an eclectic or syncretic combination of elements chosen from all the existing historical religions, a

sort of an 'esperanto' religion. Akbar's attempt at founding a *Din-Ilahi* is a well-known historical example of the syncretic approach. Arnold Toynbee, in our times, seems to accent the syncretic approach when he says : 'A time may come when the local heritages of the different historic nations, civilizations and religions will have coalesced into a common heritage of the whole human family. ... The missions of the higher religions are not competitive, they are complementary.' (*An Historian's Approach to Religion*, 1956, p. 296)

The syncretic solution, it has always

appeared to me, is a pious hope which can never be materialized. I am in heartiest agreement with John Baillie that

'Every one of the world's so-called "higher religions" has its own special genius, if that word be allowed. Each is a logical whole by itself—a *Gestalt*, as the psychologists might say, with an internal self-consistency of its own. It is quite fanciful to suppose that you can take a piece of one, and then of another and then of still a third, and glue them together.' (*The Sense of the Presence of God*, p. 203)

THE CHAUVINISTIC CLAIM OF SECTARIAN RELIGIONS TO UNIVERSALITY

The second approach to the problem of a universal religion is the approach of those whom I should like to describe as spiritual chauvinists or those with an exclusive claim or what the Germans would call *Ausschliesslichkeitsanspruch* for some one historical religion as being the best, the most developed and the highest, and, therefore, fitted to be the universal religion of whole humanity. They would like to extirpate all other religions save the one which they consider to be the only true religion. Even the use of force has not been spared to gain this end. History is full of records of 'holy wars', jihads, and crusades.

Where do we stand today in respect of this spiritual chauvinism? Thank God! far removed from it. Time was, some seventy years ago, when even a man of the eminence of Edward Caird maintained in his celebrated Gifford Lectures, *The Evolution of Religion* (1893), under the influence of Hegel and his dialectical method, that the varied forms of the religious life are steps in the development of the religious Idea whose crowning fulfilment is the religion of Jesus. The swing in the opposite direction today is marked by numerous appreciative references not only to Chris-

tianity but to other religions also, particularly to Hinduism and Buddhism, by contemporary western writers on religious themes. An article under the caption of 'The Coming Copernican Christology' by Professor Woodbridge O. Johnson, published in the October 1960 issue of *The Hibbert Journal* (p. 13) is worthy of note. In this article, Professor Woodbridge writes: 'Jesus Christ is no longer the one and only, complete, and final creating and saving word of God. His sovereignty is limited to this "wayside planet". He is but one among other instances of the eternal Logos becoming flesh in a divine kenosis. He is not the only supernatural saviour, but one of a plurality of saviours sent forth to save a plurality of intelligent races of beings on a plurality of worlds throughout the flow of time.'

Not a whit of the glory and greatness of Christ is lost, I should like to add here, by recognizing him as one of the several saviours sent to humanity; and not a whit is added to his greatness by insisting that he is the only saviour humanity ever received.

But vestiges of the old prejudice may still be seen lingering here and there, and sometimes in quarters where we least expect them. John Baillie's Gifford Lectures for 1961-62, now published with the title *The Sense of the Presence of God*, make excellent reading, dealing admirably with the central issues in the philosophy of religion, but to my great surprise still harping on the old times of Christian *Ausschliesslichkeitsanspruch*. It is perfectly legitimate for a Christian to discuss religious issues within the framework of and in the light of his own Christian faith within which he is brought up, if he cannot take a broader view which is a more desirable procedure in a *philosophical* handling of the issues. But if he ventures to suggest, as Baillie does, that it is 'a gracious ordering of

things on God's part that there should be ultimate salvation for us all in only one Name' (op. cit., p. 209), he exposes himself to criticism.

Baillie argues that there can be genuine unity amongst mankind *only through the acceptance of one saviour, that is, Christ*; otherwise, humanity will remain divided. To support his view he quotes, or rather misquotes, the prayer uttered by Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane on the eve of his Crucifixion, 'that they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us'. Taking his stand on this utterance of Christ, Baillie argues: 'For if it had been so that each could find God in his own way, each would be finding Him without at the same time finding his brother. If the love of God were revealed to each in a different place, then we could all meet Him without meeting one another in love. If the various tribes of mankind could find their ultimate enlightenment and salvation in different names, the human race would for ever remain divided. Men might still attempt to unite on the level of certain secondary and prudential interests, but are we not learning today from bitter experience how fragile and unstable this kind of association must always be, if in their ultimate concern, which is the concern for salvation, men remain apart and strangers to one another?' (ibid., p. 208) Strange logic is this! Is it thinkable that one can find God without finding his brother in Him? Is God an abstract unity unrelated to humanity, or the indwelling Soul of all the souls, the thread which runs through the pearls of all the existents, as the *Bhagavad-Gītā* puts it? If the latter, then finding God by any one *eo ipso* means finding his brethren in Him. In the prayer of Christ referred to by Baillie, God is clearly indicated as the ultimate ground of unity. Christ had found his unity with Him, and

his prayer is a call to other men to find theirs with Him. That is the purpose for which a saviour comes into this world, and for the self-same purpose different saviours came into different parts of the globe at different epochs of human history. It is a complete travesty of Christ's prayer to interpret it to mean that it rules out the possibility of human brotherhood except through the acceptance of Christ as the *one* sole saviour of humanity.

'Was it not then a gracious ordering of things on God's part', asks Baillie, 'that there should be ultimate salvation for us all in only one Name; that we can meet with Him only by meeting with one another; by betaking ourselves all together to one place—to one "green hill far away"; by encountering there a single Figure to whom we offer our united allegiance; by listening to the self-same story; by reading in the same sacred book; by being baptized into the same fellowship; by eating and drinking at the same Holy table; so that "there is no difference between the Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all", and "here there are not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, or free man, but Christ is all and in all. Is it not true that we cannot have real unity until we all have "the same Lord"?' (ibid., p. 209)

Well, if it be true that 'the same Lord is the Lord of all', then the 'gracious ordering of things on God's part' seems to be more convincingly expressed by the German philosopher of the *Aufklärung*, David Friedrich Strauss, whom Baillie quotes in his book as having said: '*Die Gottheit liebt es nicht ihre ganze Fülle in ein Exemplar auszuschütten und gegen alle andere zu geizen* (The Godhead loves not to pour its whole fulness into a single instance and to be niggardly towards all others).' (ibid., p. 206)

Baillie finds the ultimate sanction for his

standpoint in his own Christian experience : 'Do I in fact find God coming to meet me in Jesus Christ as nowhere else, or do I not ?' (ibid., p. 207) As a Christian brought up in Christian traditions and atmosphere, he assuredly does ; but so does a follower of another religion find God coming to meet him in the saviour acknowledged in his own faith, and the legitimate conclusion to which we are driven is to admit with Woodbridge that 'there is a plurality of saviours sent forth to save a plurality of intelligent races of beings on a plurality of worlds throughout the flow of time'.

But prejudices die hard. One cannot help being distressed when one reads the following sentences in Baillie's book :

'Each one of the pagan religions has some light in it, but it has also much darkness—and how great is that darkness ! There is something in each that makes for spiritual health, but there is much also that makes for disorder and sickness. I have already repudiated the view that the pagan peoples would be better without any religion than with those they profess, yet I cannot be blind to the havoc these religions have often wrought in the lives and societies of those who professed them. I have thus no hesitation in reaffirming my conviction that only by following the way of Christ is there any hope for the ultimate salvation of mankind. ...' (ibid., pp. 199-200)

How great is the darkness even in the seventh decade of the twentieth century !

TRUE MEANING OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION AND THE WAY TO ITS REALIZATION

I now come to the third approach, in my opinion the only right approach, to the problem of a universal religion. This I shall call the approach of 'concrete universalism'. According to this approach, it is as futile to found a brand new religion for universal acceptance by an eclectic combination of elements taken from all the

existing historical religions as to champion the supremacy of any of them over the rest and foist it on the whole human race. The universal ideal of religion already exists in and through all the various historical religions and is not something which awaits emergence at some future date. It has been admirably said by Swami Vivekananda : 'As the universal brotherhood of man is already existing, so also is universal religion. Who of you that have travelled far and wide have not found brothers and sisters in every nation ? I have found them all over the world. Brotherhood already exists ; only there are numbers of persons who fail to see this and only upset it by crying for new brotherhoods. Universal religion, too, is already existing.' (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. II, p. 367, 10th edition)

What is needed today is not a search for a new universal religion, but a universalizing of our outlook, a widening of our intellectual horizon, a bursting of the shell of parochialism which keeps us imprisoned within its narrow confines, an opening of our eyes to the variety and richness of God's immeasurable bounty in His bestowal of varied faiths to humanity through a succession of saviours and God-men. Not until men and nations rise to this height of universalism, not until the truth is driven home to their minds that the Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, the Zend-Avesta, the Buddhist Tripitakas, and other sacred scriptures of the world are pages in the self-same Bible of humanity, can there ever be real unity amongst them on the plane of religion.

'If there is to be a universal religion,' to quote the illustrious Swami Vivekananda again, 'it must be one which will have no location in place or time ; which will be infinite like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Kṛṣṇa and of Christ, on saints and sinners

alike; which will not be Brāhmanic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms and find a place for every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage not far removed from the brute to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman and whose whole scope, whose whole force will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true divine nature.' (ibid., Vol. I, p. 19, 11th edition)

The problem of the unity and variety of religions must be intelligently and philosophically understood. We should understand clearly where the different religions meet, like the different radii of the circle in its centre, and where and why they diversify. It is as important to understand that there is a common, universal, and quintessential core in all religions, as to understand that the diversity in forms and practices, doctrines and dogmas, rituals and ceremonials, is but an inevitable result of the exigencies of historical circumstances in which they had their birth, growth, and development. The *gestalt* of each religion has been shaped by and bears the inevitable stamp of the genius of the race which gave it birth, and the efficacy of each for the spiritual nourishment of its followers is proved by the large number of saints and sages of the highest order it has produced within its fold.

Now, what is the common essential core of all religions? It is, I would say following Vivekananda, the impulse towards the actualization of the potential divinity in the soul of man. The goal which every

religion has set before its followers is the attainment of a state of supreme blessedness of the soul, whether designated as union with Godhead or attaining of a perfection even as the Father in Heaven is perfect, or *Ātma-jñāna* or *nirvāṇa* or *kaivalya* or *kevala-jñāna*. From times immemorial, since the very dawn of civilization, religion has been a persistent and irrepressible urge in man and *can never be eradicated*. Why? What is the *raison d'être* of this irrepressible urge? It is the potential divinity of man struggling for actualization. As the poet has put it:

Were not the eye itself a sun,
No sun for it could never shine,
By nothing God-like could the heart be
moved,
Were not the heart itself divine.

The ultimate salvation which man seeks in the form of perfection, freedom, or immortality could never be permanently attainable by him unless these belonged intrinsically to the ultimate nature of his soul.

I would sum up the whole philosophy of religion and the ultimate explanation of the unity and diversity of religions in the following words. Religion has existed all down the ages and will exist for ever as an irrepressible and ineradicable urge in man, because it is the soul's own inherent urge to actualize or realize its own potential divinity. No seeking or sensing or knowing of the Divine would be possible for man, if man himself did not partake of the nature of the Divine or if it were not a fact that, as Wordsworth has put it,

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

'Man can know nothing of God', says

Baillie, 'except as God reveals Himself to him.' (*The Sense of the Presence of God*, pp. 187-8) But God could never reveal Himself to man unless man were of a nature akin to Him.

Religion is an atavism of the soul; the stages in man's spiritual unfoldment are stages in the progressive uncovering of his own pristine divinity.

This basic, universal, irrepressible, ineradicable religious urge in man found expression in the form of different historical religions in different countries at different epochs of human history. Each had its *gestalt* comprised of a body of ethico-spiritual disciplines, rituals and ceremonials, doctrines and dogmas, myths and symbols, theology and philosophy, shaped by the historical conditions of the place and the intellectual development of the times in which it had its birth. Baillie is certainly right in his observation that the *gestalt* of each faith is a logically complete whole and none of its elements could be taken from it and grafted to the *gestalt* of another faith. It should be deemed a high-water mark of cultural refinement on the part of a follower of any faith who could enter into a deep and sympathetic understanding of the *gestalt* of another faith. Nobody is yet known to have surpassed Sri Ramakrishna in this respect who actually *lived through* the *gestalts* of faiths other than his own.

But though these *gestalts* are different, one undertaking a comparative study of religions will not fail to notice that they have overlapping spots in them, and though varying in certain respects, they agree in certain other essential respects. The late Dr. Bhagwan Das's book, *The Essential Unity of All Religions*, is an excellent and erudite vindication of this fact, and has blazed a trail to follow for all future students of the comparative study of religions who want to do it in the right spirit.

Rituals and ceremonials must obviously differ, and so must myths and symbols and all other external observances, but the common platform on which all religions take their stand is their insistence on absolute moral perfectibility, cultivation of purity of heart, truthfulness, compassion, chastity and charity, worship, fasting, prayer, meditation, devotion to God, and service of all living beings. Buddhism, it is often pointed out, and Baillie also says that in his book, is a religion which stands apart in utter contrast to other religions in so far as it is a religion which does away with God, while the conception of God is the central point in other faiths.

A word, incidentally, about the attitude of Buddhism to the problem of God may not be out of place here, though, for considerations of space, it would not be possible for me to go into the problem *in extenso*. Whenever Buddha was questioned about the reality of God, he kept quiet. *He neither denied it nor affirmed it.* Why? Edmund Holmes, in his illuminating book, *The Creed of Buddha*, explains this silence as meaning that God was for Buddha a reality too deep for words to utter. Be that as it may, there is enough material in the Buddhist literature to suggest that Buddha was not interested in the enunciation of theological or metaphysical propositions, but presented his religion as a way of life, a *magga*, a path to be trodden which would eventually lead the aspirant to the direct perception of the ultimate Truth. The heart of his religion, 'The Noble Eightfold Path that leads to sorrow's ceasing (*ariyam atthaṅgikam maggam dukkhupasagāminam*)', is the pith and marrow of the ethico-spiritual discipline of all religions.

By far the greatest agreement in religions is to be found in the utterances of the mystics of all religions; so far as these pertain to *pure* mystical apprehension of

Godhead, they are the ultimate melting-point of all religions. All doctrinal and philosophical differences cease there. Doctrines and philosophies are products of human thinking, and as such, necessarily rela-

tive to the intellectual development of the minds which produce them. They are but tuition about the finite and the limited which must necessarily melt away in the intuition of the Infinite and the All.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

'The Basic Approach', by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, the late Prime Minister of India, originally appeared in the *Economic Review*, the fortnightly publication of the All India Congress Committee, and is reproduced here through the courtesy of the *Economic Review*. The document is remarkable for its clear analysis of the problems facing us today, and particularly for the emphasis it lays on the necessity of an ethical and spiritual approach in the solution of those problems. This month, as our readers will recall, marks the first death anniversary of Sri Jawaharlal Nehru.

'Education and Traditional Values', by Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the

Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, is the text of a paper contributed by him to a symposium on the above subject organized by the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco on 27 September 1962 at New Delhi. In his paper, the Swami deals with the approach of Indian thought, as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, to the problem of cultural continuity in a fast-changing historic milieu.

In his article on 'Approaches to the Problem of a Universal Religion', Dr. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A., D.Litt., Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vikram University, Ujjain, elucidates the true import of the ideal of a universal religion and the way to its realization.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RATIONAL RELIGION. By W. H. SHELDON. Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 16. Pages 138. Price \$4.75.

The main thesis of the book is that 'pure straight reason', by logical necessity, leads to worship of supernatural deity. True religion is the marriage of reason and emotion. That being so, the author argues, 'we cannot rest content with any conflict between faith and reason'. With great feeling, Dr. Sheldon asks: 'Why, then, should the infinite

Lover give mankind this gift of reason, which is so good for them in many ways, yet is prevented from helping them to contact Him whom they crave to know?' Hence the author claims to demonstrate that pure straight reason leads to Christian love.

There is nothing new or startling in all that the author has to say. He traverses the well-known ground in the debate over mediate reason versus immediate experience. However, he claims novelty for the approach he makes to the discovery of the

practical road to salvation through an analysis of 'goodness' by the help of pure straight reason. What the author does is this: First he tries to formulate an all-inclusive moral law, then he shows the impossibility of fulfilling this law in this earthly life, and, finally, he demonstrates the identity of morality and supernatural religion. By and large, our author seems to agree with Professor Blanshard in holding that 'the Good, in the sense of the ethical end, is the most comprehensive fulfilment and satisfaction of impulse-desire' (p. 21). This statement of the moral good is further elaborated by saying that it is something which is wanted before we have it, and is also wanted while we have it (p. 33). Out of this arises the well-known paradox: the conflict of good as wanted by different individuals. This conflict is solved by bringing in the will of the Deity and the guidance for practical action obtained by the identification of individual will with divine will. As already pointed out, there is nothing new or original in the arguments advanced so far.

In the third chapter of the book, which may be said to be original, the author tries to make explicit what has been implicit in his thinking. Reason guarantees the presence of the Deity in moral conflict, and this fact assures us that He is all love. This love is the third person in the Christian Trinity, who has so far not been fully identified as such in the history of the Christian religion. Christianity is fast entering this new phase of recognizing the Holy Ghost as pure love, and will soon develop universal love and selfless tolerance of all religions.

The concluding chapter harks back to faith whose essence is not outside reason.

This is a good book, worth studying thoroughly. Yet, the basic arguments need reorientation. Faith is reason mature. Just as a child grows or develops into an adolescent, and this into an adult, so reason has to grow and develop and mature into faith. In such a natural development, there is no question of any conflict or gaps between the two. Reason in the moral realm is incomplete and arrested in its growth, if it does not blossom into faith. The author has missed the significance of the *natural evolution* of reason into faith in religion and morality.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

LETTERS TO MANIBAHEN PATEL. BY M. K. GANDHI (Trans. Valji Govindji Desai). 1963. Pages 100. Price Re. 1.

STONE WALLS DO NOT A PRISON MAKE. BY M. K. GANDHI (COMPILED AND EDITED BY V. B. KHER). 1964. Pages 231. Price Rs. 2.50.

MAHATMA GANDHI: A PROPHETIC VOICE. BY HARIDAS T. MAZUMDAR. 1963. Pages 194. Price Rs. 2.50.

Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 14.

(1) The letters in the first book number in all 183. They cover the period between 12 February 1921 and 13 January 1948, and are addressed mostly to his spiritual daughter Srimati Manibahen Patel and her brother Dahyabhai and his little son. They are tender and are more of historical importance than of the literary. They give us an intimate insight into his Buddha-wise humanity and solicitude for the welfare of his disciples and co-workers whom he sculptured successfully into shipshape, in his own pilgrimage to realize freedom for his mother country. They also furnish us with the workings of his mind just on the eve of his momentous decisions taken to effect social and political reformation (Harijan uplift and country's freedom) for his own people as well as the rest of the world, whom he regarded as his flesh and blood.

(2) The title of the second book is taken from Richard Lovelace's lyric 'To Althea from Prison', and aptly heads M. K. Gandhi's experiences in jail in Africa (1908-1913) and in India (1917-1942). The compilation is, as it were, a philosophy of jail life, and gives us a vivid glimpse of the Mahatma's strenuous efforts at securing, firstly, jail reforms and, secondly, freedom for India; his faith that we are nothing without divine guidance; his equable vision and great compassion to one and all; his reflections on Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism; his beneficent humour even amidst the stress and strain of merciless incarceration; his kind words and attitude to his cruel jailors or other opponents.

(3) *Mahatma Gandhi: A Prophetic Voice* is the Indian edition of the author's *Mahatma Gandhi, Peaceful Revolution* (Scribners, New York, 1953), in a revised form with some additional material. The author, an intimate associate and a fervent devotee of Mahatma Gandhi, interprets and reconciles many of the seeming contradictions, especially with respect to *satyāgraha* and economics, in the philosophy of Mahatmaji. Some of the author's reflections on and criticisms of the Wardha scheme of education are really precious. The author's comparison and contrast of Gandhian socialism with the other forms of it are no less acute or convincing. This small thesis on Gandhism is simple and comprehensive.

P. SAMA RAO

THE SIMILE OF THE CLOTH AND THE DISCOURSE ON EFFACEMENT OF THE BUDDHA. EDITED BY NYANAPANIKA THERA, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES. 1964. Pages 54. Price not mentioned.

THE WAY OF WISDOM: THE FIVE FACULTIES. BY DR. EDWARD CONZE. 1964. Pages 53. Price not mentioned.

Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Ceylon.

The first booklet relates to two discourses of the Buddha invoking the simile of the cloth, which describe ways and means to wipe out the sixteen defilements, elucidated later on into forty-four, such as covetousness, greed, ill will, anger, denigration, jealousy, envy, vanity, conceit, negligence, etc., and thereby purge the mind (askesis) of all its unrighteous activities and ultimately attain, with concentration and meditation, to a perfection tantamount to *nirvāṇa*, a blissful tranquillity. The second defines and elucidates the five faculties and prescribes *sādhana*s to achieve a perfect balance (*sthita-prajñatva*) among them all, i.e. the overall wisdom that is synonymous with and leads directly to *nirvāṇa*. The relevant portions of the Buddhist texts are clearly translated and explained.

P. SAMA RAO

THE LONELY PILGRIM. BY SRIMATI MANUBAHEN GANDHI. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 14. 1964. Pages 273. Price Rs. 3.

The book under review is the English translation of Srimati Manubahen's diary, written in Gujarati, on Mahatma Gandhi's Noakhali 'pilgrimage', which he undertook from 19 December 1946 to 2 March 1947 to heal the wounds of the communal riots that broke out in the two subcontinents of India and Pakistan in the wake of the Partition. The writer was by the side of Mahatmaji throughout the period of the pilgrimage, not only to attend to his personal needs, but also to help him in his arduous task of cementing the strained relations between the two communities, and she kept a faithful and first-hand record of Gandhiji's daily activities. The recorded events were read out to Mahatmaji as they were written from day to day and approved by him, and so we can vouch for their authenticity. The author takes particular care, in recording the events, to bring out the characteristic features of the unique method of non-violence and love employed by Mahatmaji—'soft like a flower and adamant (at times) like a steel'—in achieving his mission. The title, taken from a famous song of poet Rabindranath Tagore, 'The Lonely Pilgrim', is very apt. Gandhiji, the 'lonely pilgrim', was filled often with anguish at the sight of the ruin and devastation all around, but his intrinsic faith in the power of the name of the Lord (*Rāmdhru*) sustained him through the pilgrimage, and helped him to bring it to a successful conclusion. Little details of his life of austerity and his views on

national problems given in the book remind us again and again of the great ideal of simple living and high thinking, of which he was a great exemplar. The book is a valuable addition to the Gandhian literature.

SWAMI SIVARUPANANDA

DAWN OF WISDOM. BY SWAMI RAJESWARANANDA. Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras 17. 1964. Pages 260. Price Rs. 5.

The book contains a choice collection of writings from out of the editorials of the learned saintly author, contributed to *The Call Divine*, of which he was the chief editor. The collection covers a wide range of subjects, both secular and spiritual, about seventy-five in all. The book, like his *Divine Awakener*, abounds in sublime ideas expressed with great force and exquisite grace. In a way, the Swamiji has succeeded superbly in etherealizing and metamorphosing mundane values into the most spiritual ones, and all spiritual seekers are sure to benefit from a perusal of the book. The format is neat, and the price is quite modest for the spiritual fare provided, but the text needs a tidying up from printer's mistakes.

P. SAMA RAO

THE TECHNIQUE OF MAHAYOGA (SELF-ENQUIRY). EDITED BY SRI N. R. NARAYANA IYER. Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai, S.I. 1962. Pages 66. Price Re. 1.

This booklet contains precious selections from Sri Ramana Maharshi's statements during his talks with his disciples, with connecting links supplied by the editor, who was one of his pupils. It is an authoritative exposition on *yoga*.

The work contains a brief life of the Maharshi and an Introduction to *mahāyoga* and its technique. The appendices cover Sri Ramana Maharshi's *Truth Revealed*, bearing on the practice of *mahāyoga*, with a running translation of Sri K. Lakshmana Sarma, another close disciple of his.

The *mahāyoga* of the Maharshi differs from the other yogic *sādhana*s like *rāja-yoga* only in form and not in substance, although there is a variation in the stress laid on some of the *bhūmikā*s and on the steps taken to attain the Divine and get merged in It. A perfectly realized soul like Sri Ramakrishna that the Maharshi was, his contribution to yogic *sādhana* is immeasurable; and this booklet which sets it out in a brief, precise, and lucid manner is doubly so. Sri Narayana Iyer deserves grateful congratulations for bringing this work to light.

P. SAMA RAO

THE BIG IDOL. By RICHARD R. GREGG. Navajivan Publishing House. Ahmedabad 14. 1963. Pages 72. Price 75 P.

This brochure on the role of money in the modern industrialized societies cuts altogether new ground in understanding the economic, social, and psychological consequences that inevitably ensue from the universal worship of 'The Big Idol', viz money. The author believes that the consequences of worship of this 'Big Idol' have been terribly disastrous, though he is aware of the good services rendered by it.

Mr. Gregg examines the functions of money in modern economies in terms of the role of money as a medium, a measure, a standard, and a store, and a means of transferring value from time to time and place to place. He realizes that these functions are extremely important. But for money, the growth of economies is almost certain to be hampered. All the same, lots of evils accrue because of the unreliability of the money-measure and because of the fact that the different functions of money are performed by the same currency. The value of money never remains constant. Things keep on fluctuating. Those who have experienced the horrors of a deep depression or those of a galloping inflation know fully well what havoc this faithless tool can play.

The author suggests that an attempt should be made to experiment with a separation of functions devised on the basis of assignment of different functions to different kinds of money, instead of asking the same unit of currency to perform all the functions. For instance, ordinary currency meant for day-to-day use could cease to be a store of value after a specified period of time, say a week. After the lapse of a week, the value of this currency would deflate either fully or partially. Everyone would be eager to get rid of this currency within the specified limits of time. This device would reverse the operation of Grasham's Law. There need not be a chronic deficiency of demand for goods and services. The stamp scrip idea of Silvio Bessel illustrates this point. Richard Gregg broadly agrees with the measures of monetary reform suggested by Lord Keynes.

All this appears apparently pretty sound and logical, but it overlooks the obvious point that the evils that should be attributed to the capitalistic mode of production are wrongly being attributed to the misbehaviour of money. Most of the evils that Mr. Gregg mentions just do not exist in a country like the Soviet Union. *En passant* he makes

a very casual reference to how some of the evils persist even in a centrally organized economy, but does not pause to examine why the usual evils of capitalism do not exist, at any rate on the same scale, in a planned economy. 'The co-existence, concomitance, and the consequence of money' and certain evils associated with money lead him to the oft-repeated fallacy in reasoning that one is the cause of another. Both of them are the mere symptoms of the basic deficiencies in the working of the capitalistic order.

Monetary reform is necessary and useful, but it would hardly scrap the surface of the gigantic mountain, namely, capitalism. Mr. Gregg soft-pedals the issue, though he is fully aware of what is what.

H. G. KULKARNI

BENGALI

TANTRA O ĀGAMAŚĀSTRER DIGDARŚANA (Vol. I). By MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA SRI GOPINATH KAVIRAJ, M.A., D.LITT. The Principal, Sanskrit College, Calcutta 12. 1963. Pages 62. Price Rs. 5.

Good introductory books on a subject like the Tantra are really a boon to the students of ancient Indian philosophy, because they help them to have a clear grasp of the fundamental principles of the subject. They also awaken in their minds an intense desire to know more and more of the subject. From this standpoint, the book under review is a very valuable and authentic contribution.

Tantra refers to that branch of knowledge in which characters, qualities, and actions of gods are described and *mantras* are also uttered. With the help of these *mantras* and also with the help of *yantras*, gods are invoked, worshipped, and meditated upon in a specially formulated esoteric manner by the initiated persons. It is because of this esoteric practice and mystic nature of the Tantra that it is widely misunderstood and misinterpreted.

The author of the book is a profound scholar of various branches of Indian philosophy, specially of the Tantra, and he is also well known for his valuable philosophical contributions. The present work will help the readers to have a clear understanding of the meaning of the Tāntric terms and also to have a thorough understanding of the significance of the Tāntric *sādhana*. The book contains extensive knowledge of the Tāntric literature and also of the different Tāntric schools (*sampradāyas*).

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION EAST PAKISTAN MIGRANTS' RELIEF CENTRE

KURUD CAMP, DT. RAIPUR (M.P.)\

ABSTRACT REPORT OF DISTRIBUTION

MAY 15, 1964 TO JANUARY 14, 1965

<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	
Barley	554.5	kg.
Milk Powder	50,836	lb.
Multipurpose Food	768	kg.
Multivitamin Tablet	80,850	
Vitamin in Liquid Form	1,51,795	ml.
Horlicks	120	lb.
Sugar	600	kg.
Muri (Puffed Rice)	72	bags
Biscuits and Lozenges	67	kg.
(mainly for hospital patients and maternity cases)		
Sāris	10,776	
Dhotis	4,350	
W.C. Blankets	11,120	
Woollen Blankets	50	
Garments	25,531	
Chaddars	418	
Blouses	1,080	
Banyans	1,858	
Lanterns	1,002	
Buckets	504	
Aluminium and Brass Utensils	550	
Enamel Plates	944	
Thread Reels	4,608	
Needles	17,000	
Vermilion	63	kg.
Vermilion Cases	9,072	
Books	1,800	
Exercise Books	326	
Slates	400	doz.
Slate Pencils	30	doz.
Pecuniary Help	Rs. 549.74	

Besides the above, about 750 items of allopathic medicines were given to the camp hospital for use in the dispensaries attached to it, and miscellaneous articles, such as gunny pieces, tin cans, bottles, and phials were distributed.

The Mission is also conducting a small library equipped with about 200 books for the benefit of the refugees.

Relief centres are also being run by the Mission in three other transit camps, namely, Mana, Mandala, and Shabari.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTER SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

DEDICATION OF THE NEW CHAPEL

The three-day (January 9, 10, 11, 1965) programme of dedication of the remodelled premises of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center of Seattle, located at 2716 Broadway East, was presented by Swami Vividishananda, the founder and minister of the Center. The following guest Swamis of the West Coast took part in all the ceremonies, contributing much to the success of the programmes: Swami Prabhavananda, accompanied by Swami Krishnananda, of Hollywood; Swami Shraddhananda, of San Francisco; and Swami Aseshananda, of Portland.

The programme opened on Saturday morning, January 9, with a ritualistic worship performed by Swami Aseshananda, assisted by Swami Shraddhananda, the other Swamis being in attendance on the platform. At the end of the worship, there was offering of flowers by the Swamis and devotees, followed by the serving of a buffet luncheon. In the evening, many returned for vespers and singing of hymns.

The main dedication service for the public was held on Sunday, January 10, at 11 a.m. A record crowd attended. A loud speaker was used in the library, and every available space was used to seat the congregation. Swami Prabhavananda gave the opening prayer. Swami Vividishananda welcomed the congregation and introduced the speakers. The messages of good will and felicitation from friends and well-wishers were read by Swami Aseshananda. The visiting Swamis addressed the congregation. Swami Aseshananda spoke on 'Vedānta as the Philosophy and Religion of Experience'. Swami Shraddhananda had for his subject 'Human Approach to Vedānta', and Swami Prabhavananda concluded the addresses with a discourse on 'Vedānta as the Religion of Love'. All the talks were very inspiring, and the people enjoyed them very much.

The final item of the programme of dedication was a dinner served to the members and friends of the Center on Monday, January 11, at 7 p.m. After the dinner, Swami Vividishananda introduced Dr. Ainsley Csrilton, of Christ Episcopal Church, and Mr. Paul Thiry, who designed the remodelled chapel; both spoke a few words to the guests. Swami Aseshananda spoke on Swami Vivekananda, who initiated the Vedānta movement in this country, and outlined his valuable contribution to the West.

Swami Prabhavananda gave his intimate reminiscences of Swami Brahmananda, who succeeded Swami Vivekananda as the Head of the Order and consolidated it by his quiet meditative life. Swami Shraddhananda spoke about the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The addresses were friendly and informal, and proved extremely interesting to the dinner guests.

The entire interior remodelling work has been done in blonde mahogany. The altar has a carved symbol representing the harmony of religions. The symbol consists of the lotus, thunderbolt, star, cross, and crescent, sacred to the five basic religions of the world. A similar design appears on the front door and in the stained glass panels on each side of the door.

The library has similar panel work as the hall, chapel, and the music room, and has built-in bookcases with glass sliding-doors, accommodating approximately 3,000 volumes.

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS MISSOURI, U.S.A.

REPORT FOR 1963-64

Sunday Services: Swami Satprakashananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, spoke on different religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings. The services were open to all. Some came from Christian churches, Jewish temples, and different educational centres. The regular services were suspended during the hot season for about six weeks. But the Vedānta students continued to meet every Sunday morning and Tuesday evening at the usual time for prayer, meditation, reading, and listening to the Swami's tape-recorded lectures.

Meditation and Discourse: On Tuesday evening, the Swami conducted a meditation and expounded the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Members and students of different religious and educational centres also attended the meetings. Meditation was also conducted on special occasions. The chapel was open for silent meditation on all week-days from 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

Additional Meetings: Special meetings were arranged in the Society's chapel for senior high school students on two different occasions. After the students had listened to his tape-recorded lecture, the Swami met them and answered their questions. On Good Friday, he conducted a special service and gave a talk on 'Death and Rebirth'. Christmas Eve was duly observed. The Swami spoke on 'The Kingdom of God Is within You'.

The Swami also gave occasional lectures by invitation. At the Jewish Temple Shaare Eneth, he spoke on 'Sri Ramakrishna and His Place in Hinduism'.

At the Missouri Methodist Church in Columbia (the site of the University of Missouri), his topic was 'Hinduism and Christianity'. The Swami gave a radio interview over KMOX radio station (CBS network) and also participated in a panel discussion in the studio of KTVI, Channel 2.

The 25th Anniversary of the Society: On Tuesday evening, October 22, the eve of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, a special meeting of the members and friends of the Society was held to honour the Swami. An artistically designed written tribute, expressive of their deep appreciation of the Swami and his work, was presented to him along with a handsome cheque as a personal gift. The Swami also received messages of congratulation from some out-of-town members and friends.

The public celebration of the 25th anniversary was held on Tuesday evening, March 24. Dr. L. A. Ware, Professor of Electrical Engineering, State University of Iowa, Reverend Thaddeus B. Clark, Minister of the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, Rabbi Jerome Grollman, Rabbi of the United Hebrew Temple and President of the Rabbinical Association of St. Louis, and the Reverend Walter A. Hearn, Professor of the Missouri School of Religion, Columbia, spoke on the occasion. The messages of Swami Madhavananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and two other Swamis working in the U.S. were read at the meeting. A brief report of the work done by the Society during the first twenty-five years was also presented at the meeting.

As a special feature of the 25th anniversary celebration, the Society undertook the distribution of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (abridged edition) to universities, colleges, and public libraries.

Anniversaries: On the birth anniversaries of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Śaṅkara, Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda, devotional worship was performed in the shrine and special services were conducted in the chapel.

Out-of-town Guests and Visitors: The Society had the privilege of receiving about thirty-five guests and visitors from different places in the U. S. and abroad.

Interviews: The Swami gave about hundred interviews for spiritual guidance and for the solution of the seekers' personal problems.

Library: The library was well utilized by its members and friends.

The Vedānta Work in Kansas City, Missouri: The Vedānta students in Kansas City held fortnightly meetings for prayer and meditation, and listened to the Swami's tape-recorded lectures delivered in St. Louis, which was followed by a discussion.