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JUNE 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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उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

—:o:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(70)

Sri Ramakrishna Mission
P.O. Belur, Dt. Howrah
26 August 1916

Dear Maharaj,

I was extremely delighted to get your long letter. It is over eight years nearly since the passing away of Mahendra Babu, and we could not go to Darjeeling, in spite of their repeated requests. It was very good that I went this time; they were full of gratitude and I, too, was very happy.—'s mother greatly desires that something be done in memory of Swamiji at Darjeeling. She showed me a plot of land, but it is two miles below the town; it is extremely difficult to get down and climb up. I felt dead tired on my return after visiting the place once. The place is quite solitary, but it is near the cremation ground, though not very near. One or two rich Marwaris have agreed to help in this work. They are not in Darjeeling at present; they are in Calcutta; the matter will be discussed after their return. I was there for nearly a month; but not for a single day did I keep well—I had pain in the stomach almost throughout; added to that, I suffered much from neuralgia. . . .

At the behest of Baburam Maharaj, we had the opening ceremony of the dispensary building here on the *Janmāṣṭamī* day. The worship of Sri Ramakrishna and *homa* were performed, and portions of the *Bhāgavata* and the *Gītā* were read. Later, in the evening, a few medicine bottles were placed in the room, and from next day the dispensing of medicines started from that room itself. Jatin is overjoyed. No doubt, the room is not yet completely

dry ; but the work is going on. The number of patients is also greatly increasing—daily attendance is about sixty-seven or sixty-eight persons. Sitting arrangements have been made for the waiting patients.

I was very happy to learn that the foundation of the Madras Ashrama has been laid and that a superintending engineer is helping in the work ; I was all the more happy to learn that he very much liked our plan. Now, if by the Lord's grace the work is slowly completed, everyone would feel happy. Of course, it involves a good deal of expense, no doubt about it. Particularly, as the basement area had to be deepened, there will certainly be an increase in expenditure. However, now that it has been started, it will certainly be completed by the Lord's grace. There is no doubt about it.

I was extremely glad to learn that you are all keeping well at Bangalore. — Maharaj is a devout soul ; he is very eager to serve you. Wherever all of you may stay, the Lord will keep you happy. I am glad that — Maharaj's stay there is having a good impression on the people. . . . The Lord protects the devotees ; even if they stray into a wrong path by mistake, He, out of His mercy, will bring them back to the right track, in the manner of a father. Otherwise, what other way is there for the devotee ?

I was happy to learn that vegetables etc. are exceedingly tasteful and cheap at Bangalore, and that the best quality of milk is available. May the Lord keep you all in great bliss and happiness ! This is my innermost prayer. I was transported with immense joy to hear of that devout woman vegetable-vendor. The Lord's devotees are in all places ; He has no distinction of space and time.

It is raining incessantly here. The sky is overcast with clouds practically every day. But the rains are not heavy : the waters of the tanks have not increased much. . . . Other things here are in a way quite all right by the Lord's grace. Sukul Maharaj is slightly better. . . . Surya, Shyamacharan, Sanat, and Varada—all the four have gone to Kasi. Baburam Maharaj will write to you about the rest.

Accept my heartfelt love, salutations, etc., and convey my blessings and love to all the boys. Don't forget to convey my heartfelt love and blessings to Narayana Iyengar ; also convey them to —.

Yours
Shivananda

ANCIENT VALUES IN MODERN INDIA

[EDITORIAL]

A time there was when India devoted the best part of her energies to the pursuit of religion and spirituality. Today, the attention of the people in India, as elsewhere, is more concentrated on politics and seeking of material enjoyment, often under the veneer of art and culture, than on religion and spirituality. That is at least what is visible to the naked eye. Now, is this but a passing phase natural in a period of transition or is it going to be the permanent feature of the Indian outlook in future, as it is already in the western countries and most of the underdeveloped countries under the influence of the West? What answer is India going to give to the question? On that depends not only the future of India but of civilization itself.

It is not in a vainglorious spirit, born of narrow patriotism, that we are making such an assertion. While goodness and spirituality are not the exclusive privileges of any country or race and we find men of sterling spiritual character everywhere and in all climes and among all nationalities, no nation has clung to religion with such a passion and for such an unbroken period as India, in spite of the vicissitudes and ravages of time; and it is in India alone that there is a spiritual tradition of centuries which can ward off the evils of a material civilization. While other civilizations, as old as the Indian or older still, have perished, India still continues to live, and live zestfully, with nothing of her accumulated wisdom seriously tarnished. A hundred tides of conquest and depredation have rolled over the country, yet leaving undisturbed the core of her existence. The conquerors have been transformed and absorbed into the national stream of her

life, and she has managed to maintain the main tenor of her life more or less unaffected. And in the worst period of her national life, she has been able to throw up spiritual personalities of the highest magnitude. Now is she going to recoil from the position of strength and vitality that has been hers all these years? We think not.

No doubt there is general apathy and contempt for moral and spiritual values all around, among the young and the old alike, who are busily preoccupied with material advancement, sometimes in the most gross form unworthy of a great nation like India and at other times in higher subtle forms of national service, scientific outlook, and raising the standard of living. But one striking phenomenon stands out in bold relief. While in most of the eastern countries that have come under the sway of the western material civilization the process of secularization is almost complete, at least on the psychological level, and every one of them has succumbed to that influence without the least resistance, it is in India alone that there is a counter-force, however feeble it might be at present, standing up against such abject surrender. True, the number of persons rallying round that force is small and the force itself has not yet been able to hold its own and exert its influence on a universal scale, but that there is such a force and there are men rallying round it is in itself a silver lining in the midst of the darkening gloom. There is the vitality of the race which can supply the manna for the spiritual regeneration of humanity.

Even in the materially advanced coun-

tries of the West, the thoughtful and the educated are becoming aware of the necessity of a spiritual leaven to check the increasing pace of material civilization. But we do not know whether the West possesses within itself the necessary spiritual strength to set off the dangerous consequences of the forces it has let loose in the form of science and technology. However, in so far as its impact on the underdeveloped countries is concerned, its contribution has been wholly material. The vision of the future that the West conjures up in the minds of the easterners is not that of spiritual enrichment, but of material pomp and glory. On the other hand, Indian culture possesses the capacity for rejuvenation and for bringing about a radical upheaval. The challenge that the West has thrown before mankind, namely, spirituality versus materialism, can be successfully met, we believe, only on the soil of India. In this connexion, we may recall what Lord Linlithgow, the then Viceroy of India, said years ago while addressing the joint meeting of the Indian Science Congress and the British Association in Calcutta: 'Even the most enthusiastic believer in western civilization must feel today a certain despondency at the apparent failure of the West to dominate scientific discoveries and to evolve a form of society in which material progress and spiritual freedom march comfortably together. Perhaps the West will find in India's more general emphasis on simplicity and the ultimate spirituality of things, a more positive example of the truths which the most advanced minds of the West are now discovering. Is it too much to hope that you, gentlemen, will be a channel through which India will make in an increasing degree that contribution to western and to world thought which those of us who know and love India are confident that she can make in so full a

degree?' (Quoted by Radhakrishnan in *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 305)

But before Indian thought and culture could nourish humanity elsewhere, it is imperative that India should revitalize herself. As Swami Vivekananda said: 'If we set ourselves right here in India, the world will be "rightened". For are we not all one?' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. V, p. 227, 7th edition) How can it be done? That is the greatest problem before India. It is one thing to point out the ideal, another thing to carry it out in practice. Many of us recognize the need of a spiritual outlook, but we have the vaguest conception of spirituality and rarely do we work for things that make for spirituality. We may speak of transcendental spiritual realities in glowing terms and most eloquently; we may repeat *ad nauseum* about the need for belief; and people may even believe our words; but unless these transcendental realities are brought to the doors of the people in a tangible form, they are not likely to rouse any enthusiasm; or even if the enthusiasm is roused, it is not likely to last long. That is where *old* India scores. Old India not only spoke of religion and spirituality, but made them practicable, living, and dynamic. Man is by nature controlled by the senses; and spiritual truths are beyond the senses. Unless he withdraws himself from the attraction of the world and turns his vision inwards, he cannot experience spiritual truths. It is no easy task to do so, but we have to do it if we are to survive. It is a slow and gradual process. Man is to be helped from where he stands, step by step, to reach the threshold of the Divine. We have to create the necessary conditions for the gradual unfoldment of the divinity within. The ancient sages and seers of India knew about it. That is why they instituted various practical methods by which the senses and

the mind could be directed gradually towards higher realities. For instance, it was enjoined on everyone, at least on those belonging to the higher castes, to withdraw themselves from their worldly vocations and engage themselves in the worship of God or repetition of His name or singing His praises at fixed times of the day. And the habit was ingrained in them from their very childhood so that, by the time they grew up, religion and spirituality were no more matters of argument or speculation for them but felt realities, and their faith could not be unsettled by reasoning.

In the development of inner consciousness, as in most of the things in the world, tradition plays an important role. We may decry tradition because in its decadent stage it encourages superstition and blind conformity; but, without it, there could be no progress either. It is on the experience of the past that the future is built up. If we have to learn everything by our own personal experience, we would be where we were, or in ages may make a little headway. Man, unlike animals, progresses because he can learn from others' experiences, from their successes and failures, from their foibles and virtues. 'The force of the sense of social confirmation is very helpful to eradicate doubt and scepticism and engender faith. The ritual helps to summon into the marginal consciousness of the worshipper the sense of a long line of past and venerated ancestors, whose faith is crystallized in the ritual. When a whole community follows the same ritual, the will of the present is added to the voice of the past. This social confirmation becomes so effective that faith marches triumphant over doubt and irresolution.'

This tradition was conveyed to us through sacred books, holy examples, pilgrimages, religious festivals and fairs, dramas, music, etc., which were frequent

in ancient India. Also, there were the men of renunciation and laymen of exalted spiritual character, whose life itself was a demonstration of the reality of spiritual truths, and who went about the country preaching about God and religion. Through discourses in the vernaculars, often combined with music, they used to expound the scriptures in a simple language and carried the wisdom embedded in the books to the masses. And India was studded with innumerable temples in whose precincts men automatically breathed an air of spirituality. Over and above all this, society itself was ordered in such a way that the highest spiritual truths became practicable.

As a necessary step towards higher spiritual practices, the social law-givers insisted on its members abiding by the rules of conduct framed for the life in the community. Keeping in view the highest ideal of spiritual perfection or freedom or *mukti* as the ultimate goal, society dictated how the individuals should eat or drink or marry. The object was not to curb individual freedom as is evident from the ample scope left for the pursuit of worldly avocations, but to curb the selfish propensities that stood in the way of real freedom, namely, freedom from the bondage of the senses and the mind. While political freedom, economic freedom, social freedom were all recognized as important in their own spheres, they were all considered useful only as steps to spiritual freedom, which alone was ultimately valuable. So the principle held before members of the community was: 'Sacrifice of the individual pleasure for the sake of the family; that of the family for the sake of the village or town; of the town for the sake of society; and even the whole universe for the sake of the Spirit.' (*Mahābhārata*, I. cxv. 36) Individual freedom in the sense of licence to do whatever one liked irrespective of its effect on the community or one's own moral and

spiritual life can only lead to anarchy. The way to spiritual freedom lies through subjection to social compulsions and the sacrifice of individual interests for larger and larger units. The social conventions instituted by society with a view to spiritual perfection also instilled consciousness of the spirit in the lives of the people.

That was the rationale behind the ancient Indian social order which held up as worthy of pursuit the four ends of life, viz pleasure, wealth, righteousness, and spiritual perfection, and prescribed four successive stages of life, viz the life of the student, of the householder, of the ascetic, and of the all-renouncing monk. While *mukti* or spiritual freedom was the highest ideal or goal and demanded the complete renunciation of all worldly concerns, it was recognized that such absolute renunciation could come only by long, strenuous training. The vast majority have to pass through the path of enjoyment. When they are satisfied with it and realize the hollowness of it all, then alone can they seek something higher. But completely giving oneself away for enjoyment also is not the way. Through restrained enjoyment to perfect renunciation of all enjoyment was the principle behind these four ends of life and four orders of life. 'Man', as the *Bhāgavata* (XI. v. 11) says, 'is instinctively inclined towards the enjoyment of sexual pleasure, flesh, and wine, and is in need of no scriptural injunction for that; the scriptures enjoin marriage, animal sacrifice, and consecrated wine so that man might gradually lose all attachment to his habituated evils by restricted enjoyment.' It further gives in XI. xx. 21 the example of the unruly horse to illustrate how this is effected. Just as in order to control an unruly horse, the breaker of the horse has to run some distance with the animal, keeping his hold on the reins firm, even so we have to gain control over our bodies

and minds.

Looked at from this standpoint, the present materialistic tendency that we observe on the Indian scene is not, after all, as bad as it seems on the surface. It is only a passing phase. India, for long deprived of even the bare necessities of life, let alone the luxuries, through long years of subjection to foreign rule, is just now tasting a bit of enjoyment and is passing through the necessary stages of wealth and pleasure, before she could renounce them and wholly devote herself to the spiritual pursuit as of old. In the height of her glory, we find India surpassing every other country not only in spirituality but also in the earth's treasures—in art and culture, in commerce and industry. Now the entire picture has changed. The old order has broken down, though not entirely, and a suitable new one has not yet been instituted, and there is great turmoil. The economic condition leaves little leisure for other things except earning a livelihood. That explains the general disinterest in religious things and the materialist leanings of the people. We need not, however, get uneasy over it; hundreds of such waves have passed over the country, and this also will. After all, what glory is there in the renunciation of the beggar? or what benefit can accrue from such renunciation? A poor man does not benefit spiritually by fasting. First there must be the capacity and possibility of enjoyment. Only voluntary surrender of such an available chance of enjoyment constitutes true renunciation. Therefore, modern India's absorption in industrialization programmes and increasing the production capacity of the country is most welcome. That is the significance of Swami Vivekananda's repeated emphasis on the need for a harmonious synthesis of the East and the West. 'Therefore', he says in one of his inspiring utterances, 'man must aspire to become *mukta*, he must go be-

yond the bondage of the body; slavery will not do. This *mokṣa* path is only in India and nowhere else. Hence is true the oft-repeated saying that *mukta* souls are only in India and in no other country. But it is equally true that in future they will be in other countries as well; that is well and good, and a thing of great pleasure to us. ... However, the central fact is that the fall of our country, of which we hear so much spoken, is due to the utter want of this *dharma* (i.e. in the Mīmāṃsaka sense of that which makes man seek for happiness in this world or the next). If the whole nation practises and follows the path of *mokṣa*, that is well and good; but is that possible? Without enjoyment, renunciation can never come; first enjoy and then you can renounce. Otherwise, if the whole nation, all of a sudden, takes up *sannyāsa*, it does not gain what it desires, but it loses what it had into the bargain—the bird in the hand is fled, nor is that in the bush caught. ... He who cannot leap one foot is going to jump across the ocean to Laṅkā in one bound! Is it reason? You cannot feed your own family or dole out food to two of your fellow men, you cannot do even an ordinary piece of work for the common good, in harmony with others—and you are running after *mukti*! ... Heroes only enjoy the world. Show your heroism; ... The householder must earn money with great effort and enthusiasm, and by that must support and bring comforts to his own family and to others, and perform good works as far as possible. If you cannot do that, how do you profess to be a man? You are not a householder even—what to talk of *mokṣa* for you!’ (*The Complete Works*, Vol. V, pp. 446-8) Again: ‘In India the quality of *rajas* is almost absent; the same is the case with *sattva* in the West. It is certain, therefore, that the real life of the western world depends upon the influx, from India,

of the current of *sattva* or transcendentalism; and it is also certain that unless we overpower and submerge our *tamas* by the opposite tide of *rajas*, we shall never gain any worldly good or welfare in this life; and it is also equally certain we shall meet many formidable obstacles in the path of realization of those noble aspirations and ideals connected with our afterlife.’ (ibid., Vol. IV, p. 404, 8th edition)

Here we should sound a note of warning. These are days when we are apt to make compromises with ideals to satisfy our own pet fancies and deep-seated desires. There is great danger of mistaking this plea of Swamiji for the combination of the East and the West to mean a combination of materialism and spirituality, as if materialism and spirituality can ever go together. That can never be: God and mammon cannot be served simultaneously. All religious teachers are emphatic that no spiritual emancipation is possible without absolute renunciation of everything worldly. The combination of the East and the West can be understood in two senses: (1) the combination of the best elements, both material and spiritual, of the East and the West; (2) the adoption of western scientific methods to raise the standard of living of the people, so that, with their bodily and mental needs satisfied, they may peacefully devote themselves to spiritual things, on the pattern of the ancient ideals of *artha*, *kāma*, *dharma*, and *mokṣa*. Let us not take this as a licence for unrestrained sense-enjoyment just because it is told that after complete satiation will come renunciation automatically. We will be deluding ourselves if we thought so, as Yayāti found out from experience long back: ‘Enjoyment of sense-objects only increases the thirst for further enjoyment as fire fed by butter.’ (*Bhāgavata*, IX. ix. 14) Material glory can in no sense be deemed to be spiritual. Yet, if it helps

man to satisfy his worldly ambitions and thus demonstrate the hollowness and triviality of the world, they indirectly help him to realize religion; and only in such a sense it is justifiable. But, for this, our secular activities are to be constantly reinforced by a transcendent idealism which would gradually lift us out of the mire of sensuality. We must always keep the most precious jewels that India has accumulated through the ages constantly before our eyes. Let us have industrialization, let us have scientific

knowledge, let us have programmes for health and wealth and social well-being and prosperity, but let us also keep bright the torch of wisdom handed down from our ancestors. Otherwise, mere secular aspirations are dangerous. Those that lead the nation and are planning for the progress of the country must remember this and try to keep the spiritual ideal bright before them. A great responsibility also rests on religious men; much depends on how bright they can keep the torch of wisdom that has ignited their souls.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF HENRY D. THOREAU

MR. C. H. MACLACHLAN

In the summer of 1837, after his graduation from Harvard, Henry D. Thoreau, like many another bright young college graduate, was thinking about what he should do for a living. There were no corporation recruiters in those days, and no seductive baits offered by business and the professions. Thoreau would certainly have rejected them in any case, for he had already decided that he was going to live his life in his own way. But how? 'How', he asked himself, 'shall I get my living and still have time to live?'

His answer to this question must have seemed daring and unique at that time, and would seem even more so to this prudent generation. For he had decided upon a reversal of tradition. 'The seventh day', he said, 'should be man's day of toil, and the other six his Sabbath of the affections of the soul.' This was only seeming exaggeration. During the greater part of his life, he managed to live on only six weeks of gainful work a year. In New England, such a thing was heresy. What good was

a college education if one intended to do odd jobs for a living and spend most of his life in the woods? His fellow townsmen of Concord were nearly unanimous in their feeling about Henry Thoreau: he was lazy.

Henry was too proud, or too independent, or too much of a realist to offer any explanation. He revealed his aims mainly in his life and, when they were eventually published, in his books. 'What I am, I am and say not. Being is the great explainer', he wrote. And in a letter to a friend he offered this bit more along the same line: 'If you want to convince a man that he does wrong, do right. But do not care to convince him. Men will believe what they see. Let them see.'

Emerson, his neighbour and good friend, understood. It was his touch that awakened Thoreau's genius, and the friendship begun in Thoreau's youth ended only with his death. Thoreau felt no shame in not studying for a profession, and Emerson approved. 'My brave

Henry', he commented in his Journal, 'does not postpone his life, but lives already.'

There were thorny aspects of Thoreau that Emerson did not understand or that at least he found painful and limiting. 'I think', he wrote after Thoreau's death, 'the severity of his ideal interfered to deprive him of a healthy sufficiency of human society.' Emerson found 'something in his nature not to be subdued, always manly and able, but rarely tender, as if he did not feel himself except in opposition'. 'He wanted a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, I may say required a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum, to call his powers into full exercise. It cost him nothing to say No; indeed, he found it much easier than to say Yes.'

But, for Henry, the ideal was all important, and therefore not severe. He was nonconformist by nature. He sternly disapproved of all frailty, especially his own. He was determined to live in as complete accord with his ideal as he could, and this was the central urge of his whole life. The intuitive awareness of underlying reality that is found in poets and men of genius was always strong in him. 'Our whole life is startlingly moral', he wrote in *Walden*. 'There is never an instant's truce between virtue and vice. Goodness is the only investment that never fails. Though the youth at last grows indifferent, the laws of the universe are not indifferent, but are for ever on the side of the most sensitive.'

Emerson greatly loved and admired his young friend and neighbour. 'He was', he said, 'a person of rare, tender, and absolute religion, a person incapable of any profanation, by act or thought.' And in his funeral oration he submitted this explanation of the man who refused to explain himself:

'I must add the cardinal fact that there was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him

the material world as a symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted light, serving for the ornament of their writing, was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever faults or obstructions of temperament might cloud it, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In his youth he said one day: "The other world is all my art: my pencils will draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing else; I do not use it as a means."'

At what point in his life Thoreau became aware of 'the material world as a symbol' is not precisely known. It has been suggested by more than one writer that he experienced some kind of spiritual rebirth, and that it took place soon after he joined the Emerson circle in 1841. As usual, Thoreau has given us no clue. Henry Seidel Canby, his biographer, indicates that Emerson discerned in Thoreau a genius that was not awake until he touched it, 'that he felt an instant response of like-mindedness, and in his Olympian way overlooked the differences; that his magnanimity set about to create a poet, and found unexpectedly an interpreter as Transcendental as himself and far more sensitive to the realities of the American fields and woods, which were the visible face of that nature which he worshipped in spiritual form'.

Two verses from Thoreau's first book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, which date from this time, reflect some extraordinary experience. They are animated by the thought which Emerson says 'makes all his poetry a hymn to the Cause of causes, the Spirit which vivifies and controls his own'.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
And sight, who had but eyes before;
I moments live, who lived but years,

And truth discern who knew but learning's lore.

And again in these lines :

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
And only now my prime of life ;
I will not doubt the love untold,
Which not my worth or want has
brought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes
me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

Whatever happened, Thoreau seems always to have been single-minded about purity. There was no apparent deviation throughout his life, no change of course, only an intensified experience. Emerson remarked while Henry was still young : 'I can see, with his practical faculty, he has declined all the kingdoms of this world. Satan has no bribe for him.'

It was also about this time that Henry discovered *The Laws of Manu* in Emerson's well-stocked library. He reported the find in his Journal with the excitement of one who has unexpectedly encountered a seminal mind :

'I cannot read a sentence in the book of the Hindoos without being elevated upon the table-land of the Ghauts. . . . The page nods toward the fact and is silent. . . . The impression which those sublime sentences made on me last night has awakened me before any cockcrowling. . . . The simple life herein described confers on us a degree of freedom even in perusal. . . . Wants so easily and gracefully satisfied that they seem like a more refined repleteness.'

THOREAU AND THE GITA

When Thoreau read the *Bhagavad-Gītā* some four years later, the effect was even more significant. He read it in the first

English edition, the Charles Wilkins translation of 1785, with a preface by Warren Hastings. He quotes without comment in his Journal the paragraph about action versus inaction. Arjuna is irresolute about engaging in a battle in which he must meet and slay his kinsmen and best friends. Is not understanding better than action, which here leads to slaughter? But Kṛṣṇa resolves these doubts, and Thoreau made careful note of the answer :

'A man's calling, with all its faults, ought not to be forsaken. . . . Wherefore, O Arjoon, resolve to fight. . . . Children only, and not the learned, speak of the speculative and the practical doctrines as two. They are but one. For both obtain the self-same end, and the place which is gained by the followers of the one is gained by the followers of the other. . . . No one ever resteth a moment inactive. Every man is involuntarily urged to act by those principles which are inherent in his nature. . . . So the man is praised who, having subdued all his passions, performeth with his active faculties all the functions of life, unconcerned about the event. . . . He who may behold as it were inaction in action, and action in inaction, is wise amongst mankind. He is the perfect performer of all duty.'

Action and inaction, says Kṛṣṇa, obtain the selfsame goal, since God is in both and the issue is always in Him. A man must seek out 'those principles which are inherent in his nature', and act accordingly. And this was the principal idea which Thoreau took from the *Gītā*, that 'the wise man . . . seeketh that which is homogeneous to his own nature'. This struck a responsive chord in Thoreau, for years before he had expressed the same thought in different words in his Journal where he wrote : 'We are constantly invited to be what we are.'

Thoreau's interest in the *Gītā* is reflected in the space he devoted to it in the

Week, where among other comments he made this one :

'What after all does the practicalness of life amount to? The things immediate to be done are trivial. I could postpone them all to hear this locust sing. The most glorious fact of my experience is not anything I have done or may hope to do, but a transient thought, or vision, or dream, which I have had. I would give all the wealth of the world, and all the deeds of the heroes, for one true vision. But how can I communicate with the gods, who am a pencil-maker on the earth, and not be insane?'

It would be interesting to know precisely when Thoreau read the *Gītā*. His biographer says he probably read it in June 1845, after he had made his decision to go to Walden Pond. But this is only a guess, based on the probability that he had discovered the *Gītā* through Emerson, who had just read it for the first time and was discussing it with enthusiasm in his correspondence. But it is challenging to speculate on the possibility that Thoreau had *not* decided to go to Walden prior to reading the *Gītā*. There are no Journal entries between April 1842 and July 5, 1845, the day after he went to live at the pond. Thoreau seldom acknowledged his indebtedness to persons or institutions, and he well understood the value of an epochal book.

'How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book!' he exclaims in *Walden*. What if the book behind *Walden* was that book of which Thoreau wrote in *Walden*: 'In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagvat-Geeta, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial; and I doubt if that philosophy is not to be referred to a

previous state of existence, so remote is its sublimity from our conceptions.'

It may well have been the *Gītā* that sent Thoreau on the great adventure in simple living and high thinking that is one of the notable gestures of the human spirit.

Two days after he went to live at the pond, Thoreau gave his own reasons for the move: 'I wish to meet the facts of life—the vital facts, which are the phenomena or actuality the gods meant to show us, face to face, and so I came down here. Life! who knows what it is, what it does? If I am not quite right here, I am less wrong than before; and now let us see what they will have. . . . Even time has a depth, and below its surface the waves do not lapse and roar.'

The reason given in *Walden* when it was published nine years later differed only in phrasing: 'I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.'

LIVING THE GREATEST ART

For Thoreau, living was the greatest art of all, the art for which he laboured so hard on nature and his own thinking; for which he so eloquently opposed dishonesty, injustice, bigotry, and every device by which the spirit of man is enslaved. It was the art for which he cultivated so many arts, and in *Walden* he reveals how incessantly he worked at it. 'Do not be among those who have eyes and see not and ears and hear not', he advised. And in a letter to a friend, he revealed his eagerness to live. Was there folly in demanding too much of life? Not for Henry Thoreau. He was not afraid of exaggerating the value or significance of life, but only that he might not be up to its demands. 'I shall be sorry to remember', he said, 'that I was

there, but noticed nothing remarkable ; not so much as a prince in disguise : lived in the golden age a hired man ; visited Olympus even, but fell asleep after dinner and did not hear the conversation of the gods ... lived in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, but never knew there was such a one as Christ among my contemporaries.'

Lines from the Journal of 1841 are a further avowal of his feeling :

My life has been the poem I would
have writ,
But I could not both live and live to
utter it.

These lines later were included in the *Week* with this note of explanation : 'There is always a poem not printed on paper ... stereotyped in the poet's life. It is what he has become through his work. Not how is the idea expressed ... is the question, but how far it has obtained expression in the life of the artist.'

Like all great books, *Walden* is one that lingers in the mind and in the heart. It is a book for those who love all nature and wildness, and it is also a book for those who want to explore life, who want to live daringly and meaningfully. It is a book for those who have the courage to create for themselves the values they shall live by, and who reject all meanness and conformity. It is a book to be read as it was written, in sentences and paragraphs, as a manual of devotion is read. It is a book in which the author observes his own rules for good writing as he prescribed them for others in the Journal ; that it must have 'Sentences which suggest far more than they say ... which do not merely report an old, but make a new impression. ... Sentences which are expensive, towards which so many volumes, so much life went ; which lie like boulders on the page, up and down or across ; which contain the seed of

other sentences, not mere repetition, but creation ; which a man might sell his grounds and castle to build'. It is a book that is 'solidly done', not 'cursed with a style'.

Thoreau had an original mind. He did not get his ideas at second hand, not even from Emerson. He 'filtered' them from himself. *Walden* is against the values which make 'lives of quiet desperation' for the majority of men. Thoreau urged a life of principle dictated by conscience rather than a life of expediency dictated by society. He obeyed laws which he felt were more fundamental than those in force in the State. In *Walden*, he challenged the values of a society which refused to make an adequate return for a man's labour. And he offered a solution in simplified living and self-reliance, the deliberate reduction of one's wants to a level that could be easily satisfied, and leave time to cultivate the garden of the soul. He made no attempt to reform the world, but spoke 'mainly to the mass of men who are discontented, and idly complaining of the hardness of their lot or of the times, when they might improve them'. He did not 'prescribe rules to strong and valiant natures, who will mind their own affairs'. He did not speak to those who are well-employed, in whatever circumstances ... 'and they will know whether they are well-employed or not'.

He limited himself to a minimum of possessions, saying that his greatest skill was in wanting little. He was ashamed of time wasted in reading a novel or a newspaper. But he never felt ashamed of his rambles in the woods and along the streams of Concord, although his neighbours thought him lazy and a wastrel of time. 'If a man does not keep pace with his companions,' he said, 'perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.' Living was the great art he wished to learn, and he

felt that his neighbours who exchanged so much of life for property and respectability were the real wastrels. He was not thinking only of his neighbours in Concord or even in New England when he asked why men gave so poor an account of their time if they had not been asleep. 'The millions', he wrote, 'are awake enough for physical labour; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, and only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life.' He had never, he said, met a man who was quite awake. 'How could I have looked him in the face?'

Pondering Thoreau's life after it was over, Emerson so much regretted the loss of his rare powers of action that he said he could not help counting it a fault in him that he had no ambition, that 'instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry party'. Few lives, he noted, contained so many renunciations. 'Thoreau was trained for no profession. He never married. He never went to church. He never voted. He refused to pay his tax to the State. He ate no flesh and drank no wine. He never smoked tobacco, and although a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun. He had no talent for wealth, and he knew how to be poor without the least hint of squalor or inelegance.' Emerson said he had 'no temptations to fight against—no appetites, no passions, no taste for elegant trifles'.

THOREAU AND HIS FRIENDS

Was it strange that the man who had set for himself so high a standard should find himself so constantly disappointed in his relations with his friends? Thoreau's Journal reveals an ambivalence about friendship that has baffled even his admirers. He had a passionate nature that longed for love and friendship, but, if the Journal is to be believed, he seldom if ever

found a truly satisfying relationship.

'I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time', he wrote in *Walden*. 'To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers.'

But in the Journal he reveals a longing for friendship that he did not admit in *Walden*. 'How happens it', he asks, 'that I find myself making such an enormous demand on men and so constantly disappointed? Are my friends aware how disappointed I am? Is it all my fault? Am I incapable of expansion and generosity? I shall accuse myself of anything else sooner.'

It was his greatest wretchedness to be loneliest when he was in the company of his closest friends, and Emerson was no exception. He is invited to see them, and 'they do not show themselves'. He feels 'a thousand miles off'. 'I leave my friends early. I go away to cherish my ideas of friendship.' 'No fields are so barren to me as the men of whom I expect everything, and get nothing. In their neighbourhood I experience a painful yearning for society.'

Friendship for Thoreau was an ideal state, and he demanded much of it. There must be a sacramental quality about a meeting with a friend. 'Unless we meet religiously we prophane one another.' 'Our friend's is as holy a shrine as any God's, to be approached with sacred love and awe.' And again: 'Some men may be my acquaintances merely, but one whom I have been accustomed to regard, and mix up intimately with myself, can never degenerate into an acquaintance. I must know him on that higher ground or not know him at all.' Friends need not confess and explain, but must be so intimately

related as to understand each other without speech.

Sensibilities as fine as Thoreau's could seldom have found matching sensibilities in others. His noblest and truest thoughts on friends and friendship were communicated to the Journal. There is much evidence there that he loved his friends, but with his New England reticence he never told them so. 'Praise', he once wrote, 'should be spoken as simply and naturally as a flower emits its fragrance.' Perhaps, if he had practised this advice on his friends, he would have found less to complain about in friendship. But he demanded perfection, and not finding it, he went on his way unsatisfied.

BURROUGHS ON THOREAU

Thoreau called himself 'a mystic, a transcendentalist and a natural philosopher to boot'. Nature was a great passion with him, but his greatest skill was not as a naturalist. John Burroughs, the famous American naturalist, discovered an idiosyncrasy in Thoreau. 'He was too intent upon the bird behind the bird always to take careful note of the bird itself', he said. But he added that 'All other nature writers seem tame and insipid beside Thoreau'. And it is fundamental to Thoreau to be deeply concerned with the spirit manifest in form—the bird behind the bird. There was some strange, mystic, deeper meaning always struggling to the light. 'At one leap,' he said, 'I can go from the buttercup to the life everlasting.'

'Man', he explained, 'cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her. To look at her is as fatal as to look at the head of Medusa.' What Thoreau was finally after in nature was something ulterior to poetry or science or philosophy. 'It was', Burroughs said, 'that vague something

which he calls "the higher law" and which eludes all direct statement.' 'He went to nature as to an oracle; and though he sometimes, indeed very often, questioned her as a naturalist and a poet, yet there was always another question in his mind. . . . He . . . brought home many a fresh bit of natural history; but he was always searching for something he did not find . . . for the transcendental, the unfindable, the wild that will not be caught.'

He saw architecture in the trees of the forest, the plumage of birds in the ripples of the Merrimack River, and man himself as only a part of nature's scheme, although sometimes a superior part. ('Shall I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself?') He describes the formation of a small island at the confluence of two rivers as one who has been present at the creation of the world. He seems to see the earth in all of its ages. No beauty escapes his eye, and he has a name for everything. But he sees with the eyes of the soul. The society he loved best he found in the woods and along the streams or on the banks of ponds. There, in solitude, he felt his kinship with 'the Spirit which vivified and controlled his own'. And there in the cool of a summer morning, with the wind in the trees and the sound of crickets in the air, the man who had been called too cold for friendship could give expression to psalm-like utterances like this:

'My heart leaps out of my mouth at the sound of the wind in the woods. I, whose life was but yesterday so desultory and shallow, suddenly recover my spirits, my spirituality, through my hearing. . . . Ah! if I could so live that there would be no desultory moments. . . . I would walk, I would sit and sleep, with natural piety. What if I could pray aloud, or to myself, as I went along by the brookside, a cheerful prayer, like the birds! And then, to

think of those I love among men, who will know that I love them, though I tell them not . . . I thank you, God. I do not deserve anything; I am unworthy of the least regard; and yet the world is gilded for my delight, and holidays are prepared for me, and my path is strewn with flowers. . . . O keep my senses pure!

'CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE'

Perhaps it was inevitable that Thoreau, who was a man of uncompromising principle and conscience, and lived his conviction that 'there is never a moment's truce between virtue and vice', should sooner or later collide with authority. Thoreau's encounter took place in the July of 1846 as he walked from Walden Pond to Concord to have a shoe mended at the cobbler's. He had refused to pay his poll-tax—a protest against two things he regarded as evil, slavery and the Mexican War. 'When a sixth of the population of the nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, I think it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize', he declared in his famous essay, 'Civil Disobedience'.

Henry was seized and put in jail, but his tax was paid by an aunt, much to his annoyance; not, however, before he had spent the night behind bars.

The essay, 'Civil Disobedience', resulted from this experience, and was, like most of Thoreau's writings, first given as a lecture. He was seldom an inspired lecturer; he was the kind, Canby said, 'who keeps his nose in his manuscript and drives the words at his audience'. His success was with the few exceptional listeners. The United States government, against which it was levelled, was a moderate government judged by the standards of many countries. It was not tyrannical, and majority rule was taken for granted.

But Thoreau felt he was one of the 'very few . . . (who) serve the state with their consciences . . . and so necessarily resist it for the most part'.

GANDHI AND THOREAU

Neither the lecture nor the essay that followed from it made much impression on Thoreau's contemporaries, but the essay has produced explosive results ever since. Gandhi called it a 'masterly treatise', which 'left a deep impression on me'. It was his source-book in the campaign for Civil Resistance in India, as it became in very recent years the source-book for Martin Luther King's campaign of passive resistance to segregation of the American Negro. Gandhi studied the essay during his second stay in jail and copied from it these words: 'I did not feel for a moment confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar.' And he must have been just as impressed by these other words from the same paragraph: 'They (Thoreau's jailers) thought that my chief desire was to stand on the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous.' The essay has been read with excitement and hope by generations who have seen in it man's most effective method of dealing with tyranny.

Gandhi's biographer, Louis Fischer, wrote: 'By doing at all moments what he thought right and not what he thought expedient, or comfortable, or profitable, or popular, or safe, or impressive, Gandhi eliminated the conflicts in his personality and thereby acquired the power to engage in patient, peaceful conflicts with those whom he regarded as doing wrong. He took words and ideas seriously and felt that having accepted a moral precept he

had to live it. Then he could preach it. He preached what he practiced.' All of this could be said as truthfully of Thoreau. 'Not a particle of respect had he to the opinions of any man or body of men,' Emerson said, 'but homage solely to the truth itself.'

'Must the citizen', Thoreau asked in his essay, 'ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has a man a conscience then? No. Men should be men first and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for law, so much as for right.'

'Why', he asked again, 'doesn't government cherish its wise minority? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?'

'If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go . . . perchance it will wear smooth—but if it be of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.'

'Under a government which imprisons unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison. . . . If any think their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be an enemy within its walls, they do not know how much truth is stronger than error.'

'The State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own

fashion. Let us see who is strongest. What force has a multitude? They only force me who obey a higher law than I.'

'It is not important that many should be as good as you, as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump.'

'They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have traced up its streams no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible, and the Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage toward the fountainhead.'

'LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE'

In earlier days when Thoreau was deciding what he should do for a living, he had considered trade, but soon decided against it, because he found that it would take ten years to get under way, and he was afraid by then that he might be doing 'what is called a good business'. For he was genuinely shocked to find men spending so much of their lives getting a living and so little in fulfilling the higher purpose for which he believed man was created. He believed that 'trade curses everything it handles'.

That was why in 1854 he prepared another lecture which has come to us as the essay, 'Life without Principle'. He felt that if he were to sell his forenoons and afternoons to society, as most other men did, there would be nothing left worth living for. A man might be very industrious and yet not spend his time well. 'It is remarkable', he noted, 'that there is little or nothing to be remembered on the subject of getting a living; how to make getting a living not merely honest and honourable but altogether inviting and glorious; for if *getting* a living is not so, then living is not.'

This essay is not the work of a profes-

sional agitator or reformer, but of an upright man, a man who throughout his life was moved solely by principle. 'The community', he said, 'has no bribe that will tempt a wise man. . . . An efficient and valuable man does what he can, whether the community pay him for it or not.' He found it so difficult to dispose of the few facts which were significant to him that he hesitated to burden his attention with those that were insignificant. It was important to him to preserve the mind's chastity and not 'to make a very bar-room of the mind's inmost apartment, as if for so long the dust of the street occupied us.' 'We quarter our gross bodies on our poor souls, till the former eat up all the latter's substance.'

Thoreau was never a 'joiner', never an organization man. His family's home in Concord was for many years a meeting-place for abolitionists, but Thoreau never became one of them. It took the Federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 to shake his philosophic detachment. He was angered by the capture of a Negro, Sims, in 1851. He was outraged in 1854 by the capture, after a futile attempt at rescue, of another Negro, Burns. And both of these episodes were in Massachusetts! Thoreau addressed an abolitionist audience in nearby Framingham, and the lecture has become famous as the essay, 'Slavery in Massachusetts'. He did not involve himself in abolitionist arguments. He did not attack the South. He attacked the North and he stood, as he always stood, on eternal questions of principle.

'I have lived for the last month—and I think every man in Massachusetts capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have had a similar experience—with the sense of having suffered a vast and indefinite loss. I did not know at first what ailed me. At last it occurred to me that what I had lost was a country.'

'I wish my countrymen to consider', he said, 'that whatever the human law may be, neither an individual nor a nation can ever commit the least injustice against the obscurest individual without having to pay the penalty for it. A government which deliberately enacts injustice, and persists in it, will at length even become the laughing-stock of the world.'

And again: 'Whoever can discern truth has received his commission from a higher source than the chiefest justice in the world who can discern only law.'

Lawyers and judges who venerated constitutional law and precedent found no deference in Thoreau.

'The law', he declared, 'will never make men free; it is men who have got to make the law free. They are the lovers of law and order who observe the law when the government breaks it.' 'In important moral and vital questions like this, it is just as impertinent to ask whether a law is constitutional or not as to ask whether it is profitable or not.' 'What is wanted is men, not of policy, but of probity—who recognize a higher law than the Constitution, or the decision of the majority.'

During this period, he could think of nothing else. Even the outdoors found him unresponsive. 'I walk toward one of our ponds,' he wrote in the Journal, 'but what signifies the beauty of nature when men are base? We walk to the lakes to see our serenity reflected in them; when we are not serene, we go not near them.'

Thoreau's disappointment in men, and this must have included some of his friends, was their lack of his own tough, uncompromising principle. In 'Life without Principle', he had written that 'It is for want of a man that there are so many men'. He was contemptuous of men who banded together, leaning on each other, and no individual strong enough to stand alone on truth. Sturdily self-reliant himself, he

yearned for the self-reliant individual, the man of inward and private life. In 'Civil Disobedience', he declared that 'if one *honest* man, in this State of Massachusetts, ceasing to hold slaves, were actually to withdraw from this copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail, therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America.'

MEETING WITH JOHN BROWN

It was in Thoreau's own home in 1857 that he met the abolitionist, John Brown. Emerson has described Thoreau as a searching judge of men, one who could measure his companion at first glance and could very well report on his weight and calibre. Brown passed the test with honours. He had come to Concord to meet other abolitionist supporters, and Thoreau subscribed to the cause because he was so impressed in this first meeting with Brown. Here was the embodiment of his ideal, the man of principle who was also a man of action.

Brown was also a man of violence; but Thoreau, years before in 'Civil Disobedience', had recognized the need for violence under some conditions. 'But even suppose blood should flow,' he had said, 'is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.' Brown was the man he had been dreaming about for years, the 'one *honest* man', the minority of one he had argued could overturn a government. And Brown would have only men of principle in his band. 'I would rather', Thoreau heard him say, 'have the smallpox, yellow fever, and cholera all together in my camp, than a man without principle. . . . It is a mistake, sir, that our people make when they think that bullies are the best fighters, or that they are fit men to oppose these South-

erners. Give me men of good principles—God-fearing men—men who respect themselves, and with a dozen of them I will oppose any hundred such men as these Buford ruffians.'

Brown's raid on the Federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry came as an absolute surprise to his abolitionist supporters in Concord, who had not been taken into his confidence. But when the raid failed and Brown and his surviving followers were in jail awaiting trial, Thoreau was aroused as never before. Officialdom had acquiesced in the festering evil of slavery, and many, even among his own neighbours, regarded Brown as a fool or a madman. Thoreau could think of nothing but Brown. He was stung by his critics and angered by his fellow countrymen's treatment of the man who 'had the courage to face his country herself when she was in the wrong'. Thoreau wrote steadily for several days, often without sleep, and then, while Brown was still in jail, announced that he would speak to his fellow townsmen in the church vestry.

Brown's followers, with their leader's approval, had deliberately killed five members of the pro-slavery 'group' in Kansas several years before. This had alienated support for him, even among some abolitionists who had a horror of violence. But Brown had called himself an instrument in the hands of God, and Thoreau, conceding the need for violence under certain conditions, believed he had been right. He may have been thinking of the *Gītā* and its doctrine that the slayer may slay if it is his duty or genius to do so, and his motives are just.

'It was his peculiar doctrine', he declared in his lecture, 'that a man has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slaveholder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him. They who are continually shocked by slavery have some right to be shocked by the violent death of the slave-

holder, but no others. . . . I do not wish to kill nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both these things would be unavoidable.'

The lecture, 'A Plea for Captain John Brown', given before his fellow citizens on October 30, 1859, two weeks after the Harper's Ferry raid, was not an attempt to save Brown's life, nor yet an attack on slavery, but a justification of violence in a good cause. With few exceptions, Thoreau never wrote or spoke enthusiastically of anyone, and never, before or after, as he did of John Brown.

'Think of him—of his rare qualities—such a man as it takes ages to make, and ages to understand . . . a man such as the sun may not rise upon again in this benighted land. To whose making went the costliest material, the finest adamant; sent to be the redeemer of those in captivity; and the only use to which we can put him is to hang him at the end of a rope.'

Earlier, Thoreau had urged his native State of Massachusetts to sever the relationship which tied it to the slave-holding states. His idealism had no compromise in it, and he apparently was not troubled by the consequences of secession. He was concerned with principle, not with statesmanship. 'No face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well as the truth', he had said in *Walden*. 'This alone will wear well. . . . Say what you have to say, not what you ought.'

But he thoroughly understood the value John Brown's death would have for the anti-slavery cause.

'I see now that it is necessary that the bravest, humanest man in all the country should be hung', he said. 'Perhaps he saw it himself. I almost fear that I may yet hear of his deliverance, doubting if a prolonged life, if *any* life, can do as much as his death.'

The 'Plea' was delivered with passion and eloquence, and Emerson noted that it was heard respectfully by many, and with a sympathy that surprised themselves. Its influence increased the ranks of the abolitionists, and the passionate outburst provoked by the episode at Harper's Ferry and its results, must have surprised even Thoreau.

THE GOLDEN SUNSET

Ill health clouded the remainder of his comparatively short life. But as he grew older, he mellowed. His earlier strictures on friends and friendship no longer occupied a place in the Journal. Emerson reported that 'He grew to be revered and admired by his townsmen, who had at first known him only as an oddity'. Over the years, he had attracted as admirers a number of men of like mind with whom he carried on a considerable correspondence, and who became very much like disciples. In 1850, he had written in a Journal entry that 'We inspire friendship in men when we have contracted friendship with the gods', but on the same day he had characteristically warned of the weakness of needing others: 'Woe to him who wants a companion, for he is unfit to be a companion even of himself.'

The last months of his life were peaceful. 'There can have been few deaths more enviable', Mr. Canby writes, comparing Thoreau's passing with accounts of Northumbrian saints and holy men in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. He had begun to enjoy an entirely unsuspected popularity. Strangers sent grateful messages; children called on him; and boys of the neighbourhood brought him game to eat.

Thoreau had confined his expressions of disappointment with his friends to the Journal, and of these his friends were unaware. Emerson referred to him as 'a

friend, knowing not only the secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great heart'. And Bronson Alcott paid him a similar tribute in an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* a month before his death :

'I know of nothing more creditable to his greatness than the thoughtful regard, approaching to reverence, by which he has held for many years some of the best persons of his time, living at a distance, and wont to make their annual pilgrimage, usually on foot, to the master—a devotion very rare in these times of confessed unbelief in persons and ideas.'

A neighbour reported that Henry was deeply touched by the solicitude of his friends and neighbours and said that if he had known how people felt about him he would not have been so 'offish'. A friend,

knowing that death was near, wondered 'how the opposite shore may appear to you', but Thoreau replied, 'One world at a time'. And when his aunt asked him if he had made his peace with God, he said, 'I did not know we had ever quarrelled'.

Thoreau died quietly on the morning of May 6, 1862. Funeral services were conducted in the parish church where Emerson, 'with broken, tender voice', read a eulogy of his departed friend, in which were included these words :

"The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst his broken task, which none else can finish. . . . But he, at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest society ; he had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world ; wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home.'

THE MORAL IDEAL

DR. P. S. SASTRI

What is the difference between the object of the good will and that of the bad will ? What is the moral end, the object pursued by the moral man ?

The moral good must conform to the generic definition of 'good' : it must relate itself to interests of a subject, i.e. moral good is that which satisfies a moral agent.

A more definite content is needed for this idea of the moral end. Consider the distinction between good and better. An object is good if it satisfies some interest. It is better if it satisfies a greater or more permanent interest.

The moral agent is a unitary self. The moral good, then, must satisfy the self, and not merely an interest. Moral good, then,

refers to the full self-satisfaction.

The action of a self-conscious agent is action for ends, and progress from a merely good to a better state implies the notion of a Best. This Best is our complete self-perfection, and hence it is only the Best, not the Better, that will satisfy the moral agent.

Moral good is thus the true or absolute Good, which is the Best. The pursuit of this Best is the distinctive characteristic of the moral will. This is the *formal* character of the moral good. What, then, is the *content* of the good ? What is that object or end which possesses this character ?

Only the man actually living the morally

good life can provide an answer to this question. Or else, a man of great practical moral insight can provide one. The moral philosopher can study the ideals men entertain and the ends they pursue. He can describe the general character of those ideals, setting out their principal features.

In the mind of the moral agent, there is operative the idea of an end,

(1) which is absolute, taking precedence of all other ends ;

(2) which is a common good—a good which can be shared by a society of which he is a member ; and

(3) that the more clearly and concretely it comes before the mind, the more is this absolute, common good seen to be the good will itself or the 'perfection' of personal agents.

Any good which is to satisfy a unitary self-conscious agent is contemplated as complete and absolute. The moral consciousness envisages such an end.

PERSONAL GOOD AND SOCIAL GOOD

How can this ideal of personal good also be an ideal of social good ? If it is not the same, it cannot be a moral ideal, for a moral ideal is social.

How can the ideal then be both personal and social ?

The ideal must satisfy all the fundamental interests of the agent ; and amongst those interests, the interest in other persons is quite obvious. Others also must share in the good I desire for myself.

Interest in others implies that those who are its objects are 'ends in themselves', and he is an end to himself. Their satisfaction is included in the conception of that at which he aims, viz his own satisfaction. The interest in other persons is developed only from an impersonal or social interest. Only from a community of persons cherishing each other's welfare could society

develop. Pursuit of a common good gives rise to a system of laws, of rights and duties, of moral and legal rights and duties. Respect for the authority of the law arises not from fear, but from the idea of the common good : law is imposed by each member of the community on himself in conformity with a general good he is seeking.

A notion of common good is the basic idea in all community life, and is the foundation of the systems of rights and duties. This does not mean that this idea is *directly* implied in every particular assertion of right or duty. We find that unfair privileges do exist. These are parasitic. They are tolerated with a bad grace ; for, to remedy them, one may have to upset what in the system is conducive to general good.

Men claim such privileges as 'rights', but do not recognize how rights and duties necessarily imply each other. They see that *their* rights imply duties for *others* ; but not that the *possession* of rights implies the *submission* to corresponding duties. Hence the privileged classes make one-sided claims.

A common good is operative wherever a real *social* bond exists. From this follow the many implications of community life. Anyone capable of owing duties is capable of owning rights ; scope should be given to these capabilities once they are realized. These lead to the development of morality.

DEVELOPMENT OF MORALITY

Development of morality can be analysed into two main aspects : (1) the gradual extension of the range of persons who are recognized as having a claim to share in the common good ; and (2) the consequent development in the notion of the common good itself.

(1) *Expansion of area over which 'common good' is recognized*

At first the range is narrow, confined to the members of the family or tribe. Then the range becomes wider because of the growing experience and the deepening reflection. One seeks to answer, 'Who is my neighbour?' Then, humanity is embraced and the conception of duty becomes larger and more complex.

This is a natural development of the human spirit. The idea of a common good is seen to grow with increasing diplomatic and economic contacts, giving rise to the idea of universal humanity. Humanitarian principle is thus evolved.

Humanitarianism is an ideal, and it deepens the bonds holding together the members of a clan or city; and it refuses to see any gain won at the expense of its honour and integrity. Nationalism and internationalism are alike based on freedom and self-government, on a consenting voice in questions of world policy and control of home affairs. It is founded on claims of justice, and is a protest against external imposition of another's arbitrary will. Thus liberty and equality give rise to the desire for fraternity.

The claim to be a person, with the rights and privileges of a person, implies also the recognition of those rights in others, in virtue of a common nature and ability to share in a common good.

From absolute monarchy or oligarchy we develop into democracy: (1) There is a deepening of the sense of common good and (2) also a deepening sense of each person as an end in himself. We find that democracy is (1) a deepening sense of individuality in the separate nations, and (2) a willingness to co-operate for a common good. Here we move towards the negation of war. Mutual war theory is opposed to facts of life and of thought,

and it supports vested interests. Utilitarians, too, reject this view, for 'each is to count as one, and none as more than one'. Their fault is the insistence on a practical recognition of the principle that the individual is an end in himself.

The moral will is continuously working towards the conception and realization of a universal society. Organized society is a universal spirit individuating itself in particular persons in a community—a community of persons recognizing claims and counter-claims.

Economic forces and imperial conquest bring about conditions in which common needs and common nature can be recognized. Our 'better reason' or 'moral sense' operates in these circumstances and forges the bonds of new and wider association. The consequences put an end to imperialism.

(2) *Development in the idea of the 'common good'*

With this gradual extension, there goes an enrichment of the content of the idea of the good itself. This involves varied mental processes. Reflection on desires reveals them to be desires of a unitary self, and thus yields a notion of 'self' as distinct from any or all of its desires. There, then, supervenes the notion of a possible satisfaction of self as a whole. This is implied in the most elementary moral judgement on the conflict of desires, and on greater and lesser good.

Amongst the earliest objects fitting this idea of 'good as a whole' is the well-being of the family, our permanence in the family institution. In the earliest stages of specifically *human* development, the rejection of any particular good is inspired by the idea of a permanent good which is at the same time a common good. Into that idea of a true good which is the standard of moral judgement, the distinction of good

for self and good for others has never entered. The idea of true good is an idea of satisfaction for a self which contemplates itself as abiding, but can only contemplate itself as such by identifying itself with some sort of society.

This well-being a man certainly thinks of as his own; not exclusively his own, because it is only as living in a community that he can conceive himself as having permanent existence. He thus presents to himself his own personal well-being as a social well-being.

This conception of well-being leads to an ordering of life in which some permanent provision is made for the self-realization of self and others. A man's well-being or happiness consists in the successful pursuit of various interests which society has determined for him. When realized, these take their place as a contribution to an abiding social good, for the opposition of self and others is not relevant to the good which he makes his end.

He recognizes their nature as like his own, and hence conceives their true happiness to be in the same direction as his own. As his interests belong to him only because he is a member of a society, he ascribes like interests to others.

At first, the common good is the well-being of a family. He is after having a stock of provision for maintaining life; he needs food, clothing, and a cave. Then he seeks the production of something of a permanent value like medicine.

Reflection on these capacities and activities gives rise to the notion of a spiritual good. He is not merely to keep the members of a family alive, but also to make them individuals of a certain kind or character.

Thus moral and spiritual virtues like honesty, bravery, and skill emerge. Then arises a distinction between deserving prosperity and having prosperity. Here the

interest in merit arises as a guiding factor. When this interest in merit becomes self-conscious, we reach the stage of recognizing in the good will itself the supreme good and ultimate object of human endeavour. The only true good is conceived as *being* good.

Common good is not competitive: my gain must not involve your loss. The only really non-competitive good is the universal will to be good, i.e. the settled disposition to make the most of humanity in one's own person and in those of others. It is at this point that there emerges the distinction of good will from the bad will. It refers to the object of pursuit which distinguishes the virtuous will from the vicious.

We can consider this by reflecting on experience and by looking carefully at the actual pursuits of those whom we respect as good men. From these, and from actual moral judgements, and the history of men's moral ideals, we can say:

1. The moral end is the absolute good, i.e. it takes precedence of all others.
2. It is a common good.
3. The more we reflect upon practical life and the implications of the terms 'absolute' and 'common', the more do we become convinced that the ultimate good is nothing other than the will to *be* good, or to attain to perfection of humanity for self and others.

THE CONSERVATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE ASPECTS OF THE MORAL IDEAL

The moral ideal is conservative and at the same time progressive. How are we to reconcile these two views? The object of the good is the good will. This is arguing in a circle. Good must be defined in relation to its object. The object is good will. 'The good will wills itself' or its own realization.

To avoid the 'circle', we have to take the object of the good will to be something

quite other than itself. This is not true to the ordinary moral consciousness. The supremacy of virtue over all other goods is a case in point. Kant has set out that nothing is good without qualification but the good will.

Then (1) we may take the good will to aim at an ultimate end other than its own development. This is to repudiate the judgement of the moral consciousness itself; or (2) we admit the 'circle'. The first is unreasonable. Ethical theory has no right to dictate ends. Its function is to theorize about the moral life. Its data are the actual judgements passed by the moral conscience. And an essential fact about moral judgement is its regarding virtue as the supreme good. The second alternative is really not a 'vicious circle'.

If we have to explain what the good will is by reference to its object, we must know the *object* of the good will. Or, if we can only say what the object is by referring it to the good will, we must already know what the good will is. Here is an insoluble blind alley. All will, as will, is the same psychologically. The distinction between the good and the bad will is to be found in the kind of the object willed. So we must be able to say something more definite about the object.

The conviction that a perfect realization must be possible influences our conduct. We have the idea of an eternally existing Best. It is the effort after this Best, starting from reflections upon its partial embodiments in social institutions, which gives the clue to its further embodiments. We know that *the Best* is; we do not fully know *what* it is. For fully to know would be to have attained. But we know enough of it to take the step of doing the duty lying to our hand. The *doing* will yield fuller knowledge, to the extent of setting the conditions which make the next duty clear. The extent to which one has ful-

filled or fallen short of the ideal today will determine what, in particular, the fulfilling of it will entail tomorrow.

The conservative function of the moral ideal may now be taken up. We should know *what* it (the Best) is to have a system of categorical imperatives and definite laws, yielding our *actual* moral standards and inducing obedience to them. What is the relation between the moral ideal and 'the law' (the system of rules and commands prescribing particular courses of action for members of the social organism)?

Such an ideal operates as follows: It will keep before a man an object absolutely desirable, and yet not identified with any particular object of passing desire, but regulative of all satisfaction of particular desires. It will make a man impose upon himself rules which the wisdom and practical experience of his forefathers have discovered to be conducive to its attainment. The *what* which is commanded in these rules is to be found in the social institutions, laws, and refined public conscience. Those recognized duties of the good workman, parent, and citizen may *generally* be regarded, for all practical purposes, as categorically imperative. But theoretically, all duties are contingent upon and relative to circumstances. Increasing insight and change of circumstances may involve change in the law which, professedly, is directed to achieving the unchanging good. The good is absolute and unconditioned, and it gives rise to *generally* binding rules; but they are not absolute and unconditional in the sense in which it is.

Our categorical imperative has then too much content. But how can we discern our duty in extreme cases where no rule for behaviour exists? How can the same ideal be the source both of existing law and our obedience to it, and also of that advancing morality which stands as critic of

those laws, gradually displacing them by higher and better ones? Here we have to take up the progressive aspect of the moral ideal.

THE CASES OF THE SAINT AND THE REFORMER

Consider the cases of the saint and the reformer. The saint is satisfied with the scheme of duties presented to him and strives to fulfil them perfectly. He is the conscientious man who does the unrecognized duties in the proper spirit. The reformer rebels against many so-called duties and strives to alter the existing system. How can the same ideal be operative in both these? The saint is the conscientious man, acting as a good man, with a pure heart and having his will set on the object it should be set on. This reflection on the springs of conduct is the source from which morality is perpetually renewing its life. It keeps the saint from becoming a mere legalist.

Is such a reflection likely to make one become more disposed to do his duty? Does it make him any wiser as to what his particular duties are?

The reflection upon the ideal will direct us to 'what we have already seen producing good results'. The reflection upon the past separates the essentials (why such and such actions were held obligatory by us) from the rest. These essentials constitute the *aim* of action in present and future circumstances. Our practice becomes highly sensitive to our knowledge. This will have its effect on the content of our ideal; for the conscientious man transcends the level of routine action and the mere law of opinion. He selects the most appropriate principle and gives it a freshly significant application; he perpetually makes new law, while he is ostensibly applying the old. Holding to the ideal of perfection as a genuine practical ideal, the

saint will find it developing its own content out of the stuff supplied by circumstance, custom, and growing knowledge.

Thus conscientiousness begins with loyalty to accepted standards, and almost inevitably rises above them *through* that loyalty. The distinction, then, between the saint and the reformer cannot be sharply drawn. But in a perfect state, there is no need for a moral reformer; not so the self-abasement before an ideal of perfection.

This act of self-abasement is self-exaltation, and it is the one final and permanent expression of spiritual character. Though in principle one with other expressions, it remains when the necessity for them has gone. Saintliness will endure for ever.

THE ULTIMATE UNITY OF GOOD

If these important characteristics merely arise as accidental to the 'passing phases' of development, how can we, who are in the evolutionary process, say finally which are not merely transient characteristics of humanity? How can we be certain that any specifically human interest or activity will be 'conserved in the end'? Are we justified in looking forward to a full and eternal perfection of the human spirit in which it will have attained all that it is apparently aiming towards, here and now? If the special characteristics of the reformer are transient, are there any which are not?

A process *ad infinitum* is not a development; for, in development, the end must be continuously present through the process from first to last. Otherwise, it is only a change or series of changes.

Though all other capacities (e.g. animal functions) pass away, yet a capacity consisting in a self-conscious personality cannot be supposed so to pass. It partakes of the eternal nature; time exists for it.

We do not know what our capacities *are*, for we know them only as realized. But we can distinguish the essential demands from the unessential.

Among those unessential demands, we may place the demand for pleasure. Among the essential, we have the realization of man's perfection as a moral being, the development of the good will itself.

It is difficult to see what the good will would be like in a context of perfection. Other capacities (aesthetic and scientific, for example) also have their place in the total perfection.

We do not know adequately what the

end of the developing process is. We do know that it must be the perfection of *man*—the perfection of a social being, and it must therefore include a perfectly good will.

Virtue is a good; so are artistic and intellectual activities. There must be some *ultimate unity* of 'good'.

We assume this ultimate unity because the self is a unity; and we have to assume that moral, aesthetic, and intellectual perfection are necessarily related to one another; for the self cannot be divided into various 'faculties', each with its independent 'capacity'.

THE TASKS OF THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

SRI H. G. KULKARNI

The Education Commission set up recently by the Government of India was inaugurated at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, by the Union Minister of Education, Sri M. C. Chagla, on 2 October 1964. The Chairman of the Commission is the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Sri D. S. Kothari. Besides the Chairman, there are fifteen distinguished members of the Commission, drawn from different parts of India as well as from abroad. The Commission is to avail itself of consultations with experts like Sir Eric Ashby of Cambridge, Professor P. M. S. Blackett and Sir Willis Jackson, both of whom are drawn from the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, and Professor Fredrick Seitz, President, United States National Academy of Sciences, Washington. France, U.S.S.R., and Japan are also to send their experts to collaborate with the members of the Commission on behalf of the UNESCO. The Commission has the unique distinction of

bringing together expertise from the most advanced countries of the world, working under diverse ideological bases. It is, indeed, pretty exciting to find out how the experts from different areas of experience look upon the problems of education in a basically backward country like India. The Commission is asked to submit its report latest by 31 March 1966.

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

This is the sixth commission to be appointed by the Government of India to review the state of education and to recommend lines of further development. No commission in the past, however, was entrusted with so comprehensive a task as to screen the entire system of education at all the stages and in all its aspects. The commissions in the past were asked to deal with some particular sectors or aspects of education, and not with the system as a whole. The present Commission, under

Sri Kothari, is the first of its kind to take stock of the entire situation as it has evolved in our country through the process of history, with a view to suggesting measures to overhaul the system in the light of the economic, social, and political needs of the country and the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice, which our constitution holds before the people.

The resolution of the Government of India setting up the Commission states: '... the system of education has not generally evolved in accordance with the needs of the times; a wide and distressing gulf continues to persist between thought and action in several sectors of this crucial field of national activity.' Further it observes: 'In view of the important role of education in the economic and social development of the country, in the building up of a truly democratic society, in the promotion of national integration and unity, and, above all, for the transformation of the individual in the endless pursuit of excellence and perfection, it is now considered imperative to survey and examine the entire field of education in order to realize within the shortest possible period a well-balanced, integrated, and adequate system of national education, capable of making a powerful contribution to all spheres of national life.' In view of the unlimited tasks set before the Commission, there does not seem to be any chance left for anybody to accuse the Commission of transgressing the terms of reference on any score. The Commission, of course, has already devised a plan to work on, on the basis of division of labour; and towards this end, twelve task forces have been formed to take up some particular aspects of education. The synthesis of the conclusions reached by particular task forces would provide the overall picture of the existing system of education in India and the lines of development suggested by

them on the basis of their findings.

THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE OF EDUCATION IN A COUNTRY LIKE INDIA

The basic objective of education in a country like India should be to help the people to make an adequate living. This has to be the inevitable goal for the overwhelming majority that has to struggle under conditions of grinding poverty to eke out a bare subsistence. It must be remembered that the *per capita* income of India is no more than Rs. 339 per annum (the figure refers to the year 1962-63 at current prices). Given the great disparities in the distribution of income, the vast majority of the people in India are compelled to live under a state of perennial threat of famine and starvation. Phrases like 'the endless pursuit of excellence' are devoid of any content to people to whom food and shelter are still a great luxury. The wretched children of misery can hardly be expected to appreciate the value of education. Swami Vivekananda observes in this connexion: 'What is the goal of your education? Either a clerkship or being a roughish lawyer or at the most a deputy magistracy, which is another form of clerkship—isn't that all? What good will it do you or the country at large? Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, proverbial for its food. Will your education fulfil this want?' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VII, p. 182, 5th edition) The cry for food has become ever more piteous because of the enormous growth of population and the painfully slow increase in the supply of foodstuff during recent years. There has to be a nation-wide awakening in India about the seriousness and gravity of the miserable economic situation, and what better instrument could be conceived of towards the achievement of this end than a well-designed system of education?

Education in India has to be practical, realistic, and occupation- and productivity-oriented. People must be made to act on the basis of reason. Reason is the special prerogative of man, but unfortunately the bulk of the people do not seem to believe in it. Restoration of reason to its own rightful place should be the supreme objective of education. The formative years of the rising generations must inculcate vigorously the basic attitudes to life in the light of the needs of our country. It is possible to revolutionize the Indian society within a short span of twenty-five years, if adequate efforts are made to transform the youngsters.

The economy and the society have to be integrated and co-ordinated. The present system of education leaves much to be desired in this connexion. Boys and girls are not trained for any particular pre-planned goal as such, excepting in a few cases. In most cases, there is a mere drift towards some unknown purpose. Energies are thus unnecessarily wasted. Purposeful and goal-oriented education is the cry of the hour.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK

Stupendous is the magnitude of the task to be accomplished. The present population of India is likely to be around 50 crores. Assuming that about 20 per cent of the people are in the age-group 6-14, the size of the school-going children would be 10 crores—the entire population of Japan, or U.K., or Pakistan, or half the size of the population of U.S.A. (According to 1961 census, the percentage of children in this age-group happened to be 19·1; hence the assumption of 20 per cent is not arbitrary.) The population is scattered over a very wide area. There are as many as 5,67,351 villages and 2,700 towns inhabited. Eighty-three per cent of the people live in the villages, and only 17 per cent in the towns.

If the percentage distribution of children as between the rural and the urban areas be taken to be the same as that of the general population, 8·3 crores of children would be from the rural areas and 1·7 crores from the towns and cities. Out of the 10 crores of children, only about 6 crores are actually expected to be in some school by the end of the Third Plan. Four crores would still be left out, and almost all of them would be the rural children. During the decade 1951-61, expenditure on primary education increased from Rs. 12·46 crores in 1950-51 to Rs. 33·67 crores in 1960-61. All the same, it is extremely small. During 1960-61, the total public expenditure came to Rs. 1,653 crores, of which primary education accounts for only 33·67 crores—a little more than 20 per cent only. No wonder primary education should suffer on account of paucity of funds.

There is further aggravation of the problem because of the growing numbers. Some immediate measures have to be undertaken to ensure free and compulsory universal education for all the children in the age-group 6-14.

It is estimated for the year 1960-61 that the percentage of children schooling in the age-group 6-11 is 61·1; in the group 11-14, it is 22·8; in the group 14-17, it is 11·5. In the next age-group of 17-23, consisting of university students—arts, science, and commerce—the percentage drops to 1·8. As against 6 crores of children in the primary schools, there were only 9 lakhs in the universities. The science students constitute only 35·8 per cent of the total strength, studying in the universities. The number of universities comes to 58.

Out of the total outlay of Rs. 1,960 crores under the First Plan, Rs. 133 crores were spent on education; the actual outlay under the Second Plan was Rs. 4,672 crores, and of this, expenditure on education came to Rs. 204 crores. In the Third Plan, the

total outlay is expected to be Rs. 8,099 crores, and that on education Rs. 408 crores. Thus, a little less than 7 per cent of the First Plan, a little less than 4.4 per cent of the Second Plan, and a little more than 5 per cent of the outlay in the Third are assigned to education. In the Third Plan, more than half the allotment is made for elementary education; the secondary schools get a little more than 22 per cent; the universities about 21 per cent; and the rest goes to other schemes of education. There has been obviously a great expansion in education, but the task to be accomplished is so big that the efforts seem very much inadequate.

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

So often the cry is heard that the quantitative expansion of education in India has brought about a qualitative deterioration, and since further quantitative expansion would be inevitable in the years to come, the maintenance and improvement of standards becomes an exceedingly difficult task. The number of students per teacher goes on increasing; the class rooms get overcrowded; there is a great shortage of accommodation to house institutions of education; there is no place to play owing to lack of space for playgrounds; the libraries cannot expand fast enough in keeping with the pace of growth of the number of students; the laboratories cannot be built and equipped with in keeping with the growing needs. For the meagre wages paid to the teachers, it is difficult to attract really good teachers, particularly when the materialistic forces hold sway over the mind of the whole society and the appeal of ideals fights an ever losing battle against the onslaught of the triumphant rise of modernism. Most of the students and the teachers are drawn from those layers of society that remained aloof from 'education' in the past. They are the beginners

in the field, and, like all beginners, they have to take some faulty steps before they can hope to stabilize their strides. Fresh traditions have to be built up. It takes time to educate the parents and to build up 'home universities'. Such of the students as are endowed with a strong inner urge would always maintain their standards, but theirs is a dwindling number as a percentage of the total. The bulk of them have to be taught to appreciate the worth of finer values. Their wild and untrained instincts have to be given a proper direction. The institutions of education find it so hard to cope with the problem. Indiscipline is inherent in the sort of situation that is evolving. Matters are made much worse because of the impact of politicians, who find a handy human stuff to be employed off and on for the furtherance of party or personal ends. Restoration of the reverence for learning is a difficult task of reconstruction, since the traditional values are in the melting-pot. A certain amount of coarseness is, perhaps, unavoidable in the sort of competitive, acquisitive society that is emerging in India out of the womb of the industrial revolution.

The emphasis on technical perfection to improve the supply of trained labour to the nascent industries and the ever growing needs of workers under the impact of the modern ways of living force them to be good tools of production, whether or not they develop into good human beings. The technical standards have to be maintained and perfected, and if time permits, some attention may be paid to the cultural standards as well. It is difficult to guess what the Commission is going to suggest in this context.

THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

One of the ticklish issues that has come to the forefront in our country in the post-independence period is the problem of

medium of education. The elementary and the secondary schools have changed over to the regional languages, but most of the universities still continue to teach through the medium of English. There is no doubt about the fact that English has done immeasurable service to our country in liberating reason's role from out of the trammels of all sorts of superstitions imposed by our degenerate traditions. Recently, there has been a strong reaction in our country to the continued use of the English medium of education, and the demand for replacement of English by Indian languages has gained considerable strength. There is a strong case for this demand, but violent changes may do more harm than good. We have to wait till our own languages grow into fit enough instruments for the teaching of all sciences.

FAILURES AND WASTAGES

Anyone who cares to look at the system of education in India would be struck by the colossal wastage of years caused by failures of a very large number of boys and girls in different examinations. One wonders whether it is not possible to have a system in which nobody fails. It may appear a ridiculous proposition to those who are used to see a large percentage of failures year after year, but it is possible to conceive of a system which eliminates failures altogether, excepting for those that become inevitable on grounds of ill health. Some cynics might say that it would aggravate the problem of unemployment,

since failures withhold large numbers away from the labour-market at least for a short while, and if failures are eliminated, the number of job-seekers would immediately go up. We have to face this problem sooner or later, and the sooner we face it, the better. The verdict of the Commission on this issue should be of great interest.

THE ULTIMATE AIM OF EDUCATION

The ultimate aim of education is to help the children to grow to their fullest stature and to realize the best which their potentialities permit. They grow in accordance with their own nature. All that education has to do is to remove the obstacles out of their way. Nothing, in fact, could be imposed in a short period of time. We have to expose the children to the right ideas and allow them to assimilate those thoughts to the best of their ability. Swami Vivekananda observes in this connexion: 'What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean, meeting death face to face. . . . It is man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. III, pp. 190, 224, 8th edition) To devise a system of education with such high ideals is extremely difficult, but let us hope we would take a step in the right direction.

KATHA UPANIṢAD: SĀNKHYA POINT OF VIEW—3

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

*Rtām pibantau sukr̥tasya loke
guhām praviṣṭau parame parārdhe ;
Chāyātapaṇi Brahmavidō vadanti
pañcāgnayo ye ca trīṇācīketāḥ—*

‘There are the two in the world who have entered into intelligence in the supreme cavity of heart, enjoying the results of their good deeds. The knowers of Brahman call them as light and shade; likewise also (say) those householders who perform the Nācīketa sacrifice three times.’ (I.iii.1)

Following the Sāṅkhya, it can be said that the use of the dual number (*dviva-cana*) in this verse indicates that both *buddhi* and Puruṣa are to be referred to with a view to understanding the real implication of this *Kaṭha Śruti*. It is because consciousness remains hidden in *buddhi* that it has been described as *guhām praviṣṭa*. Intelligized *buddhi* assumes different forms by coming in contact with the diverse objects of the world. Owing to *vṛtti-sārūpya*, these diverse forms are falsely ascribed to Puruṣa. *Buddhi-vṛttis* are subject to origination and decay, but consciousness is eternal. So intelligized *buddhi* and pure consciousness are as radically distinct as shade and light. The place where pure consciousness is realized is *hṛdayākāśa*, i.e. the heart, which is subtler than the outer *ākāśa*.

It is no doubt true that, according to the Sāṅkhya, knowledge is the direct means of liberation. Still, worship of fire, too, may be regarded as a means for removing sorrows from life. In the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, it has been admitted that sacrifices etc. can remove sorrow partially for a particular period of time. It is only the absolute

cessation of misery that cannot be brought about by performing sacrifices.

The general belief is that, in the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, *vaidika* sacrifices have been ridiculed. It seems to me that this impression is not correct. The author of the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* has simply tried to emphasize the importance of the discriminatory knowledge which, in his opinion, is superior to *vaidika karmas*. The system of Sāṅkhya is orthodox; it is therefore not proper to hold that it has adopted anti-Vedic attitude here and has condemned the Vedic sacrifices. The unsteady and non-eternal nature of the fruits of the Vedic rituals has also been discussed by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣyas*.

While explaining this *Kaṭha Śruti*, the Vedānta system has referred to *jīva* and *Īśvara*. The follower of the Sāṅkhya, too, can say that both forms of Puruṣa (pure and impure owing to its reflection being caught in the *buddhi*) have been referred to in this verse. Although it is the *Avivekī* Puruṣa that experiences pleasures and pains through reflection, still the use of the dual number is permissible here on the basis of *chātri-nyāya*. All modifications of *buddhi* are wrongly ascribed to *Avivekī* Puruṣa only, and not to the Puruṣa in its pure form. Pure Puruṣa is light, but *Avivekī* Puruṣa, owing to *aviveka*, occupies the place of darkness.

*Yah seturījānānām akṣaram Brahma
yat param ;*

*Abhayaṁ titīrṣatām pāram Nācīketam
śakemahi—*

‘We are capable of performing the Nācīketa sacrifice which is the bridge for the sacrificers, and also we can know the imperish-

able, supreme Brahman, which is free from fear for those who want to be emancipated.' (I.iii.2)

Nāciketa fire is the means (bridge) for removing the sufferings of the sacrificers, whereas the wise attain liberation by the acquisition of the discriminating knowledge (i.e. by the realization of the true form of the soul or Ātman).

*Ātmānam rathinam viddhi śarīram
rathameva tu;*

*Buddhim tu sārathim viddhi manah
pragrahameva ca—*

'Know that the soul is the master of the chariot who sits within it, and the body is the chariot. Consider the intellect as the charioteer and the mind as the rein.' (I.iii.3)

*Indriyāṇi hayānāhur-viṣayāṁsteṣu
gocarān;*

*Ātmendriyamanoyuktam bhoktetyāhur-
manāṣiṇaḥ—*

'The senses, they say, are the horses, and their roads are the sense-objects. The wise call Him the enjoyer (when He is) united with the body, senses, and mind.' (I.iii.4)

Here the word 'charioteer' stands for the Avivekī Puruṣa or the Bhoktā Puruṣa, while the body has been referred to as the chariot. This is because the *prārabdha karmas* of the Avivekī Puruṣa get exhausted only by being enjoyed through the body. Even *tattva-jñāna* or the discriminating knowledge is acquired through the internal organ (i.e. the body). The charioteer is getting related to the chariot through the mediation of *buddhi*. It is the intelligized *buddhi* that either helps the Jīva Puruṣa attain liberation through its virtuous dispositions, or leads him astray through the vicious ones. Mind has been described as 'rein' because it is only by

restraining the mind that the intellect can control the sense-organs. The sense-organs, therefore, have been described as horses, whereas objects have been referred to as roads. (This is because the sense-organs get related to objects.) Owing to non-discrimination (*aviveka*), the Jīva Puruṣa gets associated with the intellect, the mind, the sense-organs, etc., through reflection and experiences (of course, seemingly) of worldly pleasures and pains.

It may be argued that in the *Kaṭha Śruti* (I. iii. 3), body has been mentioned explicitly, whereas in the *Kaṭha Śruti* (I. iii. 10), *mahat* (and not the body) has been spoken of. All categories of the verses 3 and 4, excepting the body, have been mentioned again in verse 10. This discrepancy has got to be reconciled if a satisfactory explanation is to be provided for. I shall make an attempt to give a satisfactory explanation from the Sāṅkhya point of view.

It is an admitted fact in Indian philosophy that migration of the soul from one world to the other is effected through the subtle body known as *sūkṣma śarīra* or *liṅga śarīra*. According to the Sāṅkhya, when the subtle body gets associated with the gross body, the *buddhi* in its *vyavasāyātmika* form emerges in the *jīva*. The *Kaṭha Śruti* (I. iii. 3) has mentioned this *buddhi*, and it is because the *vyavasāyātmika buddhi* works in a gross body that the gross body has been spoken of. But in verse 10, categories have been mentioned in a series passing from the less subtle to the more subtle. Hence, there *mahat-tattva* or the more subtle form of *buddhi* has been mentioned after the *vyavasāyātmika buddhi* of the *jīva*. There is no mention of the gross body, which is simply a gross modification of the gross *bhūtas*.

It has already been mentioned that the Avivekī Puruṣa, being associated with in-

telleet, mind, etc., appears as a *bhoktā* or enjoyer of pleasures and pains. The question, therefore, arises: What is the real meaning of the *bhoktṛtva* of Puruṣa?

The Advaita Vedānta denies both agency and power of enjoyment of the soul, so as to keep unimpaired its unchangeable character. According to the Sāṅkhya, on the other hand, Puruṣa is '*draṣṭā bhoktā*' and *akartā*. *Kartṛtva* (agency), causing changes in the Puruṣa, has not been admitted by the Sāṅkhyas, but *bhoktṛtva* of Puruṣa has been admitted. This admission of Puruṣa as *bhoktā* has caused much confusion in the minds of the critics. *Bhoktṛtva* here has not been used in its ordinary worldly sense. It simply refers to the relation of the Jīva Puruṣa with the objectified *buddhi-vṛttis* through reflection. (This point is fully clarified in my book *Essays on Sāṅkhya and Other Systems of Indian Philosophy* in the article 'Vācaspati and Vijñāna Bhikṣu on the Bhoktribhāva of Puruṣa'.)

This fact of enjoyment through reflection does not destroy the non-attached nature (*asaṅga*) of Puruṣa, because *asaṅgatva* of Puruṣa is opposed only to changeableness (*pariṇāmitva*) and not to the power of reflection. Whether the formless soul can have reflection is a great controversial issue in the Advaita Vedānta. In addition to *pratibimbapakṣa*, the Advaitins have also accepted *avacchedakapakṣa*. Following the Sāṅkhya, too, we can say that there can be *avacchedya-avacchedaka* relation between consciousness (*caitanya*) and internal modes (*buddhi-vṛttis*). Moreover, the Sāṅkhyas have accepted the reflection of Puruṣa only in the *buddhi-vṛttis* and not in any other place. The Advaita Vedānta also admits the reflection of the soul in *antaḥkarana*. Just as the relation of the soul with *antaḥkarana* through reflection does not cause any change in the former according to the Advaita Vedānta,

in the same manner, the relation of the soul with *buddhi-vṛttis* through reflection does not spoil the *kūṭastha* nature of the Ātman.

One more question may be raised in the context of these verses 3 and 4. Even granting that the Sāṅkhya categories have been enumerated in the verses 3, 4, 10, and 11, we find that there is no mention of *ahankāra* anywhere in these *ślokas*. How are we to account for this important omission? In answer to this objection, it may be pointed out that although there is no mention of *ahankāra* as a category in these verses, still there is a definite mention of *ātmendriyamanoyukta bhoktā* in the verse 4.

The charioteer (as we have already seen) refers to Avivekī Puruṣa, who is incapable of distinguishing himself from *buddhi*, whereas the body is that with the help of which the world is being enjoyed by the Avivekī Puruṣa. The *ātmendriyamanoyukta bhoktā*, mentioned in the verse 4, may be supposed to refer in a manner to *ahankāra*. This is because *bhoga* or enjoyment is possible only when there is awakening of *ahamvṛttis* in the intellect. The sense-organs give us only indeterminate knowledge. After that, the mind intervenes and completes the work of analysis and synthesis. But actual enjoyment does not take place unless there is such experience as 'I am happy', 'I am sad', 'This is my experience', etc. When the intellect starts its own function which is called *adhyavasāya*, the *ahamvṛtti* takes its rise; because, unless there is 'I-feeling' (*aham-bhāva*), there cannot be any decision whether the enjoyment should be clung to by the enjoyer or should be given up. Hence *bhoktā* (enjoyer) in the verse 4 refers to consciousness reflected in *ahampratyayātmaka buddhi-vṛtti*.

*Indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthā arthebhyasca
param manah ;*

*Manasastu parā buddhiḥ buddherātmā
mahān paraḥ.
Mahataḥ paramavyaktam avyaktāt
puruṣaḥ paraḥ ;
Puruṣānna param kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā
sā parā gatī—*

‘The objects are superior to the senses, the mind is superior to the objects, the intellect is superior to the mind, the great Ātman is superior, again, to the intellect. The unmanifested is superior to the great Ātman, and the Puruṣa is superior to the unmanifested. Nothing is superior to the Puruṣa. That is the end, that is the supreme goal.’ (I. iii. 10-11)

Here, the Sāṅkhya categories have been mentioned in a series. *Tanmātras* are more subtle than the sense-organs, mind is more subtle than *tanmātras*, *buddhi* is more subtle than the mind, and *mahānātmā* or *mahat-tattva* is more subtle than the intellect. *Mahat-tattva* here refers to *samaṣṭi buddhi*. It is because *mahat-tattva* is the seed of the whole world that it may also be described as the soul of all. It is permeated with consciousness. This intelligized subtle *samaṣṭi buddhi* has practically no difference from the first-born Hiranyagarbha of Śaṅkara, as the latter is the root of *sarvabuddhi*. *Avyakta Prakṛti* is subtler than *mahat*, and pure consciousness or Puruṣa is subtler than *Prakṛti*. There is no other category subtler than Puruṣa. The soul is the last limit, and is of supreme value.

According to Śaṅkara, *avyakta* here does not refer to *Prakṛti* of the Sāṅkhya. On the other hand, it stands for the unmanifested seed-power of God, a power that gives rise to name and form.

While commenting on the *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. iv. 5), Śaṅkara says that the entity which has been described in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I. iii. 15) as *mahataḥ param* is also the principle that is referred to by

such words as soundless, touchless, formless, etc., meaning thereby the Paramātmā. So, in the sentence *mahataḥ paramavyaktam*, the *avyakta* may legitimately be understood to refer to the seed-power of God, which is also known as *Māyā*.

Following the Sāṅkhya, it can be stated here that the mere fact that *aśabdā* etc. refers to that which has been denoted by *mahataḥ param* in *anādyanantam mahataḥ param dhruvam* (I. iii. 15) does not logically imply that this principle cannot be the *Pradhāna* of the Sāṅkhya. This is because the *Pradhāna*, too, can be described as soundless, touchless, formless, tasteless, and smell-less, as there is no manifested quality in Nature. *Prakṛti* is also *avyaya* as it is an inexhaustible source of matter and energy.

According to the Sāṅkhya, the discriminating knowledge (*vivekajñāna*) is the only means of liberation; the knowledge of the distinction between Puruṣa and *Prakṛti* is not complete unless there is an inquiry into the nature of *Pradhāna* (*Pradhāna-jijñāsā*). In fact, it is only after taking birth in different *yonis*, assuming different forms and enjoying *Prakṛti* in diverse ways that the *jīva* can realize that *Prakṛti* is of inferior value and is therefore to be given up in favour of the soul which is of the supreme value. One seeks to attain Self-knowledge only when he realizes fully that *Prakṛti* is an obstacle on the path of liberation. Hence, if the Vedas declare that Self-knowledge (*Ātma-jñāna*) is means to liberation, it has no real incompatibility with the Sāṅkhya position.

The sentence in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I. iii. 15), *nicāyā tam mṛtyumukhāt pramucyate*, can be understood in relation to *Prakṛti* also; because, unless there is knowledge of *Prakṛti*, there cannot be any escape from the clutches of Death.

According to *Yoga-Sūtra*, *Prakṛtilīna*

Puruṣas are those who worship Prakṛti. Hence, as an object of worship also, Prakṛti is *jñeya* (object of knowledge).

Eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu gūḍho'tmā na prakāśate ;

Dṛśyate tvagryayā buddhyā sūkṣmayā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ—

‘This Ātman, hidden in all beings, reveals itself not at all, but is seen only by the seers of the subtle through their pointed and subtler intellect.’ (I. iii. 12)

The soul which lies hidden in the innermost core of all things is not perceived when one remains under the influence of ignorance. When, through spiritual discipline, intellect becomes pure, subtle, and *sāttvika*, then only the true form of Puruṣa is reflected in it. Those who have purified their minds by *samādhi-yoga* are in a position to perceive the minutest thing and also to feel the subtlest of feelings. The intellect of the wise becomes as sensitive as the eyelids. These wise men are called *sūkṣmadarśins*, because they can perceive the subtleties of objects with their purified intellect.

Yacched vañmanasī prājñāḥ tad yacched jñāna ātmani ;

Jñānamātmani mahati niyacchet tad yacchechhānta ātmani—

‘The wise should merge the speech in the mind and that mind in the intellect, the intellect in the great self, and that great self, again, in the self of peace.’ (I. iii. 13)

According to Śaṅkara, the word *vāk* refers to sense-organs. This interpretation is acceptable from the point of view of the Sāṅkhya school as well. The wise man (*Vivekī Puruṣa*) should keep his external sense-organs under the control of his mind, because the external sense-organs are directly connected with the mind. Mind, again, should be kept under the control of his own *buddhi*, the unconscious illu-

minating principle (*jñāna ātmani*). It is because the intellect exercises its influence over all the instruments of knowledge that it can be regarded as the soul of all the *karaṇas*. The individual *buddhi* should further be brought under the control of *mahat-tattva* or *samaṣṭi buddhi*. Lastly, *mahat* will be subordinated to Puruṣa. Thus, all the categories of Nature will be finally subordinated to consciousness or soul. The *mahat-tattva* of the Sāṅkhya occupies the same place that has been occupied by the first-born Hiraṇyagarbha of Śaṅkara. Prakṛti of the Sāṅkhya becomes living and meaningful through the reflected consciousness of Puruṣa. So, consciousness is the primary principle, and hence realization of *Ātma-svarūpa* constitutes the highest goal of human life.

Uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata ;

Kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā durgam pathas-tat kavayo vadanti—

‘Arise! Awake! (O man) Realize (that Ātman) having approached the excellent teachers. Like the sharp edge of razor is that path, difficult to cross and hard to tend—so say the wise.’ (I. iii. 14)

In this verse, the aspirant has been called upon to realize the true nature of his self. This is the path of *yoga sādhanā*. One has to proceed by this road very carefully following the instructions of Śāstras. The wise man describes this path as a difficult one. This is as precarious as the sharp edge of a razor. A slight carelessness on the part of the aspirant will mean a tragic fall.

The verse 15 has already been explained along with verses 10 and 11. In the remaining verses of the third canto of the first part of *Katha Upaniṣad*, the importance of *Ātma-vidyā* has been laid stress upon.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Mr. C. H. MacLachlan is a member of the Vedanta Society, New York. He was formerly the Editor of *The Long Islander*, a paper started by Walt Whitman. His beautiful portrayal of 'The Spiritual Life of Henry D. Thoreau' is the fruit of deep study and research over a long period, and we are grateful to him for specially preparing it for *Prabuddha Bharata*.

Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., Head of the Department of English, Nagpur University, examines the content of 'The Moral Ideal' in its different phases.

Sri H. G. Kulkarni, who is familiar to readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* through his reviews of books, focuses our attention on some of 'The Tasks of the Education Commission' recently appointed by the Govern-

ment of India to examine the entire system of education prevailing in the country and to suggest ways and means for its improvement. Sri Kulkarni did his M.A. from the School of Economics, University of Bombay, and held a Ford Foundation Fellowship in the Economic Development Section of the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi. Currently, he is a lecturer in economics in the Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University.

In the third instalment of her article on 'Kāṭha Upaniṣad : Sāṅkhya Point of View', Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., Reader in Philosophy, Patna University, takes up for exposition ślokas 1-4 and 10-15 of the third canto of the first part of the *Kāṭha Upaniṣad*. The first and second instalments of the article appeared in the August 64 and February 65 numbers of *Prabuddha Bharata* respectively.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

CENTAUR: ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF MEDICAL IDEAS. BY DR. FELIX MARTI-IBÁÑEZ, MD Publications, Inc., 30 East 60th Street, New York 22, N.Y., U.S.A. 1960. Pages xxii+714. Price \$6.

This collection of essays and other writings is from the prolific pen of a doctor who is also a well-known medical historian, psychiatrist, writer, philosopher, and editor-in-chief of a medical newsmagazine which has a wide circulation in America, Canada, and other countries.

This voluminous book is divided into eight chapters with an Introduction and exciting titles. The first seven chapters contain the learned doctor's contributions to the *International Record of Medicine* between 1952 and 1958, as well as his addresses and lectures published in the said journal during that period, and several Forewords and a few essays brought out in some other journals; the last

chapter presents the editorials of the savant in the *MD* medical newsmagazine in 1957 and 1958. These were brought out in a book form first in 1958 and again in 1960.

Dr. Marti-Ibáñez shows in these kaleidoscopic writings an astonishingly wide and varied knowledge of many subjects. He speaks with justifiable authority not only about medical topics such as the history of medicine, psychiatry, chemotherapy, endocrinology, neurology, etc., but also concerning such diverse subjects as atomic physics, painting, cooking, drama, semantics, philosophy, and the literature of many countries.

The captions to the essays are interesting, though uncommon, and stimulate the curiosity of the reader to pursue the subject further: for instance, 'Medicine in the Spain of Don Quixote', 'On the Psychology of Symbolism in Oriental Rugs', 'The Theatre in Our Age of Anxiety', to quote only three out of the many.

Moreover, a fascinating theme which appears repeatedly, for example, the motif of a Beethoven Symphony, is developed in the book, and it gives the essays a unity in spite of the diversity of the subject matter. This suggests that all expressions of human endeavour, whether they are scientific or philosophical discoveries or artistic creations and spiritual evolution, are all related to one another and also to the current trends of thought of the time in which they appear. Viewed in this context of the total environment, these manifestations lose their apparent strangeness and are seen to be a necessary product of the times. With his wide knowledge in so many different fields, Dr. Marti-Ibáñez has ably introduced this original and highly interesting concept into his essays with a subtle but powerful effect.

The subject index and the name index at the end are thoughtful additions. The bibliography refers to over 350 books. This unique book is well arranged, thought-provoking, and demonstrates profound erudition. The printing and get-up are excellent. It is a book which may be read by anyone with pleasure and profit.

DR. G. G. JONES, M.D.
SWAMI EKATMANANDA

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ART. BY DR. S. K. NANDI, M.A., LL.B., D. PHIL. (CAL.), SAHITYABHARATI (VISVA-BHARATI). University of Calcutta. 1962. Pages 175. Rs. 10.

Dr. S. K. Nandi's book is a philosophical treatment of the real nature of the aesthetic activity and the object of that activity. It seems to be anomalous that a writer who is not himself an artist in the accepted sense will philosophize on art, but we cannot deny to the philosopher the right to undertake a critical analysis of any particular aspect of human experience and activity and to view it in relation to human life as a whole. The philosophy of art is a part of the general philosophy of man and his world with special reference to man as an artist and to that aspect of the world which we call beauty, and a philosopher's views on art must be influenced by his general philosophical outlook.

This book contains, in addition to the Introduction, six chapters on Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Romain Rolland, and Tagore and Croce respectively. Dr. Nandi's observations on the theories of beauty and art propounded by these eminent thinkers show that he has made a painstaking study of their works and has subjected their views to a thorough examination in a critical spirit. He has made a careful assessment of the relative importance of the different

elements in their theories and has pointed out their main defects. His remarks on Plato's 'mimesis' theory which regards every form of art as an imitation, and Aristotle's utilitarian theory which regards the generation of socially valuable emotions as the main task of art will be found to be eminently reasonable by everybody who has given any serious thought to the nature of art. He has rightly pointed out why Kant's attempt to show that in art or aesthetic judgement, the 'ought' can realize itself as 'is' fails on account of the dualism inherent in his philosophy and that Hegel's excessive intellectualism vitiates his theory of the nature of beauty and the artistic activity. The fifth chapter, containing an appreciative account of the views of Romain Rolland on beauty and art, and the sixth chapter, containing a comparative study of the aesthetic theories of Croce and Rabindranath, are the most valuable and interesting chapters of the book.

Dr. Nandi is not, however, a merely negative critic. He has made an important contribution to the theory of beauty and art. It is true that he is very much under the influence of B. Croce, but he is not a mere camp-follower of that eminent philosopher and art-critic. His book deserves to be read by everybody who has a real interest in the philosophical theories of art.

It is a matter of regret that the pages of such a book are disfigured by a large number of printing-mistakes, some of which leave a very bad taste in the mouth of the reader.

PROFESSOR K. C. GUPTA

SWAMI TURIYANANDA. BY SWAMI RITAJANANDA. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras 4. 1963. Pages 212. Price Calico: Rs. 2.50; Board: Rs. 2.

The book is an English biography of Swami Turiyananda, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and a personality of the highest spiritual excellence. Swami Turiyananda was a living embodiment of the highest ideal of Advaita Vedānta, and was greatly responsible for moulding the life of both the lay devotees and monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order in the East as well as in the West. His life is naturally full of facts and incidents which provide a living lesson to those who aspire to build up a life of dedication equally capable of purposive attachment to work and blissful detachment from it. As such, the present book fulfils a great need.

The book is divided into twelve chronologically arranged chapters. There is an appendix containing an interesting account of the reaction of an outside visitor to Shanti Ashrama, California, U.S.A., of

which Swami Turiyananda was the founder. The author has taken great pains to collect not only episodes of deep spiritual significance but also simple incidents suggestive of Swami Turiyananda's human side of life, and the book is replete with authentic narratives, often in Turiyananda's own words. These features make the book all the more valuable to every spiritual aspirant. The language and style are simple and lucid. But the book deserves a better get-up.

P. R. BHATT

THE LAST YEARS OF BRITISH IN INDIA. BY MICHAEL EDWARDES. Cassel & Company Ltd., London (Allied Publishers Private Ltd., 17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 13). 1963. Pages 250. Price 25 shillings.

Michael Edwardes, with his knowledge and first-hand experience of military service in India, Burma, and China, and the Punjab massacres of 1947 and a knowledge of Indian languages, is peculiarly competent to write on this topic. As a contributor to the *Guardian* and a commentator on Asian affairs for the B.B.C., his views are of importance.

The book purports to present truthfully the story of Indian Independence, how it came about and what prospects it holds. But some of his statements like 'Patel was not a thinker but a worker. Nehru was a thinker but not really a man of decisive action' (p. 45) or that 'India owes more to him (Subhas Bose) than to any other man' (p. 45) are rather sweeping generalizations, which may not be acceptable to all. However, the book is well written and is worth going through.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

VEDANTA DICTIONARY. BY ERNEST WOOD. Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y. 1964. Pages 225. Price \$ 6.

The learned author was the President and Dean, American Academy of Asian Sciences, San Francisco. He has also spent quite a few years in India, studying for the Vedānta Śiromaṇi degree of the Madras University.

The present book under review is a companion volume to the other two books, viz *Yoga Dictionary* and *Zen Dictionary* by the same author. It is claimed by the publishers that 'The Dictionary embraces all the three well-known schools of Vedānta Philosophy. It is based upon the Vedānta Sūtras and the original Sanskrit writings of the great philosophers who founded those three schools'. But the 'selected bibliography' given at the end of the

book omits most of the well-known *prakaraṇas* of Advaita, and has no reference to the original works of Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita. Common terms used in Vedāntic literature like *ādhāra* (substratum), *adhi-karaṇa* (substratum or topic), *pariṇāma*, *āgama*, *āptavākya*, *smṛti*, *vivarta*, *pañcikaṛaṇa*, *vikalpa*, *samaṣṭi*, *vyasṭi*, etc. do not appear as main titles, whereas non-Vedāntic terms like *skandhas* have made their appearance here and there. Technical terms peculiar to the systems of Vedānta other than the Advaita are totally absent. Spelling of Sanskrit words is not very happy (e.g. Ansha for Aṁśa, Hansa for Hainsa), since the author has used his own system of transliteration instead of the standard one accepted by Indologists.

Some peculiarities and defects may now be noted. The explanation of *krama-muloti* (p. 100) is completely wrong. The word 'Gocara' has been translated as cow-rope (p. 48), and is called a simile. A more appropriate translation would have been 'grazed over by cattle', indicating the range of cattle. It is a regular word and not a simile. Under 'Upanishads' (p. 195) the author states: 'The following ten are definitely quoted in the *Brahma Sūtras*, and therefore are accorded front rank place: Aitareya, Taittirīya, Chhāndogya, Brihadāraṇyaka, Shwetashwatara, Isha, Kena, Mundaka & Māndukya.' In the first place, none of the *sūtras* is a direct quotation from any of the Upaniṣads; they only refer to certain Upaniṣadic statements which appear to have ambivalent meanings. Secondly, neither the *Īśāvāsyā* nor the *Māndūkya* forms the subject matter of the *Brahma-Sūtra*, whereas the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, which does, has been omitted. Under 'Shankara-charya', only the date has been discussed, and nothing at all has been mentioned regarding his life or achievements. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the author seems to subscribe to the view that Śaṅkara lived between 500 B.C. and 200 B.C. (p. 172). On page 121, 'Mumukshutwa' has been printed as 'Mumukshatwa'. Perhaps, this is only a printing mistake. It would have been better if the author had consistently used either the Sanskrit words or their equivalents in the alphabetical order. The mixing up has given rise to some duplication (*vide* *Pramā* and *Pramāna* [p. 137]; *Knowledge*, *Means* to [p. 100]).

The book, however, has its brighter side. A lot of trouble has been taken to collect the required information and present it in a simple but systematic manner. Hence it can serve as a useful handbook of Vedānta for beginners.

Printing and get-up are superb, but the cost is prohibitive from Indian standards.

SWAMI HARSHANANDA

LONG DISCOURSES OF THE BUDDHA (DIGHA NIKAYA I-XVI). TRANSLATED FROM THE PALI WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY A. A. G. BENNETT. Chetana Ltd., 34 Rampart Row, Bombay. Pages 237. Price Rs. 6.50.

The *Dīgha Nikāya* is a collection of dialogues in which the Buddha gave his views on the social, moral, psychological, and philosophical problems. These problems continue to agitate us even today.

Dīgha Nikāya is a part of the *Sutta Piṭaka*, one of the *Tripitakas*. The first two *suttas* explain the state of thought at the time of the Buddha. These are the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* and *Samannaphala-Sutta*, which present the doctrines of the Vedāntists, relativists, nihilists, and subjectivists. The next three present the Buddha's conversations with the leading Brāhmaṇas. Here we have his views on wisdom, conduct, and sacrifice. The fifth gives us the *pañca-śīla*. The sixth and the seventh cover the stages of the path. The eighth deals with the ascetic and the ninth with suffering. Teachers are discussed in the twelfth, and the union with Brahmā in the thirteenth. The sixteenth is the famous *Mahāparinibbāṇa-Suttanta*.

The translation of each *sutta* is clear and lucid, and a précis is provided. The introduction is a brief but critical survey of the contents. The author is to be congratulated on her fine translation of the Pāli text.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

ENGLISH-SANSKRIT

VEDĀNTA-PRAKRIYĀ-PRATYABHIJÑĀ (VOL. I). BY SWAMI SATCHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATI. Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur, Mysore State. 1964. Pages 133+672. Price Rs. 16.

In an age of changing ideals and programmes, it is but natural for the reflecting and thoughtful minds to look back upon the rich tradition and examine it carefully. Such an examination is bound to reveal the supreme value of the perennial philosophy called Advaita Vedānta. It is the religion of man, and it is the philosophy of all times. But a system of philosophy becomes a living one when it is reinterpreted in the light of the new concepts and problems of the age in which we want it to work.

This is precisely what Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati has done in the present work. It is the first systematic treatise to be written in simple and lucid Sanskrit in the present century. In a 133-page English Introduction, we have a clear exposition of the Vedāntic doctrine of Reality, of Vidyā and Avidyā, of the thought of Śaṅkara, and of the con-

tributions of his successors. There is a valuable explanation of the *adhyāropa-apavāda nyāya*.

The Sanskrit text draws our attention to the traditional method of interpreting the Upaniṣads as found in the writings of Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara, and Sureśvara. This methodological study of Advaita, spread over seventeen chapters, takes us to the works of Śaṅkara, Maṇḍana, Sureśvara, Padmapāda, Vācaspati, Vimuktātman, Prakāśātman, Amalānanda, Śrīharṣa, Citsukha, and Sarvajñātman.

This is the first volume of the historical development of Advaita, and we eagerly await the next volume. Written in a simple language, the work stimulates the reader to be eager to approach the works of the great masters. This study is of the greatest value, and every student of philosophy will find here a rich treasure. The validity of method is what is important in the study of philosophy. That the traditional method of Śaṅkara alone does full justice to the *Prasthāna-traya* is the basic tenet of this work. It is to this tradition that the Advaitic thinkers have been ably related.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

BENGALI

MAHĀBHĀRATER GALPA (PART I). BY SWAMI VISVASHRAYANANDA. Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Belgharia, 24 Parganas, West Bengal. 1964. Pages 126. Price Rs. 2.

The author, who has already to his credit a number of books specially meant for the younger generation, narrates in the present work some of the stories of the *Mahābhārata* in a simple captivating style. The stories selected and the manner of their presentation are sure to inculcate in the young minds of the students character-building and strength-giving ideals. The first two stories, for instance, lay stress upon self-confidence, self-exertion, and practical wisdom; the fourth and the fifth on nobility of character; the seventh and the eighth on the development of character through renunciation and service. The next two stories beautifully portray the high ideals of Indian womanhood—piety, chastity, and courage. The last two elucidate in brief the different philosophical ideas of Hinduism and the goal of human life. Others also are similarly inspiring and instructive.

The author deserves the gratitude of all lovers of Indian heritage for his efforts to disseminate the ancient Indian ideals among the younger generation. Every boy and girl should read this book.

SWAMI SIDDHARTHANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS

XI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

SEPTEMBER 6-11, 1965—CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

A group of European and American scholars, specialists in some particular period of the general history of religion, aware of the wide public interest aroused by Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, decided to meet regularly for international congresses and for the publication of their various researches through the proceedings of the congresses. Among the leaders of this group, besides Sir James Frazer, were Raffaele Pettazzoni (Rome), Gerardus van der Leeuw (Amsterdam), H. Ch. Puech (Paris), Friedrich Heiler (Marburg), and Arthur Darby Nock (Harvard). The first Congress was held in Paris in 1900; the second in Basel in 1904; the third in Oxford in 1908; the fourth in Leiden in 1912; the fifth in Lund in 1927; and the sixth in Brussels in 1936. When UNESCO organized the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies as an agency for promoting the continuation of the researches of scholars during the difficult war years, these historians of religion decided at the seventh Congress in Amsterdam in 1950 to organize themselves as a member society of this International Council. From that time on, under the patronage and co-operation of UNESCO, the International Association for the History of Religions, following the general plan established by the International Council, has held regular congresses every five years. The eighth Congress was held in Rome in 1955, and a special Congress in 1958, held in Tokyo under the initiative of the recently organized Japanese Branch of the IAHR, became the ninth Congress and marked the beginning of the world-wide organization of IAHR. The tenth Congress was held in 1960 at Marburg. It was at this Congress that the Executive Committee decided to hold its next Congress in the Western Hemisphere and accepted the invitation extended by the Claremont School of Theology and the Blaisdell Institute to hold the 1965 Congress at Claremont. The Claremont Colleges immediately gave their support to this invitation and have co-operated in the planning of the meeting. The International Executive Committee is composed of historians of religion from all continents and represents a growing number of branch organizations.

It is customary to focus the communications presented at these Congresses around a central theme. At the tenth Congress, at Marburg, for example, the

central theme was 'First and Last Things'. In view of the revolutionary war situation and the great historical significance of current events, the International Committee approved three major topics for the Claremont Congress. The more specialized communications in various fields in the history of religion will centre on the theme of 'Guilt and Rites of Purification'. There will be separate sections for papers on: (1) General Theory of Guilt, Pollution, and Purification; (2) The Ancient Near East and Early Christians; (3) Islam; (4) Buddhism; (5) Other Religions of Japan; (6) India and Indonesia. The plenary sessions will be devoted to 'The Impact of Modern Cultures on Traditional Religions'. The evening sessions will be devoted to panel discussions of the question: 'What can critical scholarship contribute to a better understanding of the problems raised by contemporary relations among religions?' This selection of topics makes it evident that the Congress is concerned both with the ancient themes in the development of religion and with the revolutionary changes of the present.

THE PROGRAMME

Monday, September 6: Afternoon and evening

Registration in Claremont Men's College

Tuesday, September 7:

9-30 a.m.: Opening Session

3-30 p.m.: Sectional Sessions: 'Guilt and Rites of Purification'

8-00 p.m.: Symposium: 'Relations among Religions Today'

Wednesday, September 8:

9-30 a.m.: Plenary Session: 'Traditional Religions and Modern Cultures'

3-30 p.m.: Sectional Sessions

8-00 p.m.: Symposium

Thursday, September 9:

9-30 a.m.: Plenary Session

Afternoon and evening: Excursion to San Juan Capistrano Mission and party on ocean beach

Friday, September 10:

9-30 a.m.: Plenary Session

3-30 p.m.: Sectional Sessions

8-00 p.m.: Symposium

Saturday, September 11:

9-30 a.m.: General Assembly of IAHR

12-30 p.m.: Closing Session.