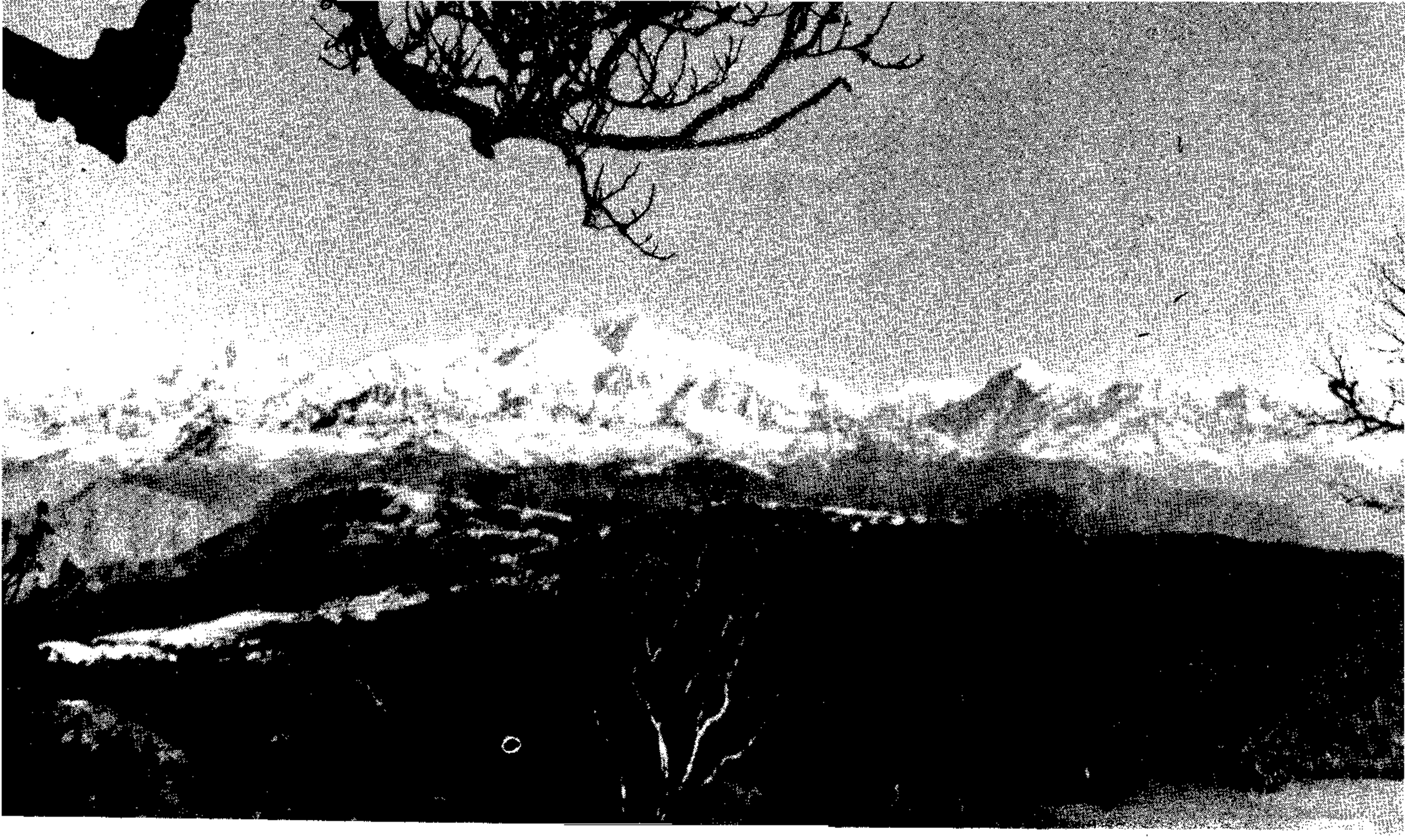

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Kanchenjanga from Sandakphu

Photo: Bimal Dey

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXX SEPTEMBER 1975 No. 9

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

SRI RAMAKRISHNA REMINISCES

'I used to meditate on the flame of a light. I thought of the red part as gross, the white part inside the red as subtle, and the stick-like black part which is the innermost of all, as the causal.'

*

'During my sadhana period I had all kinds of amazing visions. I distinctly perceived the communion of Atman. A person exactly resembling me entered my body and began to commune with each one of the six lotuses.[1] The petals of these lotuses had been closed; but as each of them experienced the communion, the drooping flower bloomed and turned itself upward. Thus blossomed forth the lotuses at the centres of Muladhara, Svadhishthana, Anahata, Visuddha, Ajna, and Sahasrara. The drooping flowers turned upward. I perceived all these things directly.

'When I meditated during my sadhana, I used to think of the unflickering flame of a lamp set in a windless place.'

*

[A devotee having mentioned burning of the 'thorns' of sense-objects in the fire of Knowledge]— 'I had direct visions of those things. One day I was passing back of the kuthi[2] when my whole body burst into flames, as it were, like the fire in a homa.'[3]

*

'Oh, what a state I passed through! At that time I didn't eat my meals here. I would enter the house of a Brahmin in the village or at Baranagore or at Ariadaha. Generally it would be past meal-time. I would just sit down there without saying a word. If the members of the household asked me why

---

[1] Describing the same experience at another time, the Master added that the 'person' 'thoroughly shook my Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna nerves. He licked with his tongue each of the lotuses...' [i.e., at the six 'centres' through which the Kundalini rises.]

[2] The bungalow at the Dakshineswar temple-garden, for the proprietors and guests.

[3] A Vedic sacrifice in which oblations are offered into a fire.

I had come, I would simply say, "I want something to eat." Now and then I would go, uninvited of course, to Ram Chatterji's house at Alambazar or to the Choudhurys' at Dakshineswar. But I didn't relish the food at the Choudhurys' house.'

*

'When this state [of consciousness] dawned in me, I could not worship or offer anything to the Mother Kali [at the Dakshineswar Temple]. At that, the temple manager began to abuse me. But I only laughed at his abuse without feeling offended in the least.'

*

'One day I went to see him [Krishnakishore] and found him in a pensive mood. When I asked him about it, he said: "The tax-collector was here. He threatened to dispose of my brass pots, my cups and my few utensils, if I didn't pay the tax; so I am worried." I said: "But why should you worry about it? Let him take away your pots and pans. Let him arrest your body even. How will that affect you? For your nature is that of Kha!" He used to say to me that he was the Spirit, all-pervading as the sky. He had got that idea from the *Adhyatma Ramayana*. I used to tease him now and then, addressing him as "Kha". Therefore I said to him that day, with a smile: "You are Kha. Taxes cannot move you!"'

*

'Krishnakishore had two sons. They were of the same age as Bhavanath, and each had two university degrees. They both died. And Krishnakishore, jnani that he was, could not at first control himself. How lucky I am that I have none!'

*

'Once I went to Vishnupur. The raja of that place has several fine temples. In one of them there is an image of the Divine Mother, called Mrinmayi.[4] There are several lakes near the temple, known as the Lalbandh, Krishnabandh, and so on. In the water of one of the lakes I could smell the ointments that women use for their hair. How do you explain that? I didn't know at that time that the women devotees offer ointments to the Goddess Mrinmayi while visiting Her temple. Near the lake I went into samadhi, though I had not yet seen the image in the temple. In that state I saw the divine form from the waist up, rising from the water.'

---

4 *lit.*, 'made of earth'. This image was widely known as 'awakened'—a living presence—but some years before, it had been broken and then replaced. When Sri Ramakrishna was on the way to this temple, he had, in *bhava-samādhi*, the vision of the face of this goddess; then when he saw the image he was surprised to find it unlike his vision. Later, it was learned that the 'new' image had a quite different-appearing face from the old one.

ONWARD FOR EVER!

The idea of unthinking philosophers was that the mind was a simple, and this led them to believe in free-will. Psychology, the analysis of the mind, shows the mind to be a compound, and every compound must be held together by some outside force; so the will is bound by the combination of outside forces. ...Will is subject to desire. But we are free; everyone feels it.

The agnostic says this idea is a delusion. Then, how prove the world? Its only proof is that we all see it and feel it; so just as much we all feel freedom. If universal consensus affirms this world, then it must be accepted as affirming freedom; but freedom is not of the will as it is. The constitutional belief of man in freedom is the basis of all reasoning. Freedom is of the will as it was before it became bound....The free can be only one, the Unconditioned, the Infinite, the Unlimited. Freedom in man is now a memory, an attempt towards freedom.

Everything in the universe is struggling to complete a circle, to return to its source, to return to its only real Source, Atman. The search for happiness is a struggle to find the balance, to restore the equilibrium. Morality is the struggle of the bound will to get free and is the proof that we have come from perfection.

Vivekananda

HAPPINESS AND ITS CONQUEST

EDITORIAL

I

Love for and quest of happiness characterize human life. From birth till death man is a seeker of happiness. What the Freudian school of psychology calls 'pleasure principle' governs with a ruthless hand man's motives, aspirations, and efforts. 'Pleasure and freedom from pain', declares John Stuart Mill, 'are the only things desirable as ends ...' About the pleasure-seeking nature of man, much to the same effect, Śaṅkara, the great Hindu philosopher-saint, remarks, 'All people naturally seek to attain what is desirable and avoid what is undesirable.' Although happiness is so much sought after, and people experience it so commonly in life, yet to define it, is extremely difficult. Maurice Maeterlinck cites an interesting incident which effectively makes the point: 'A friend of mine was recently trying to tell her small daughter what happiness is. After a long dissertation she asked the child, "Now do you understand?" Whereupon the little girl replied disarmingly, "Yes, Mother, except when you explain."' Definitions, to be sure, abound, but we feel we know what happiness is as long as we are not asked.

It is no wonder, then, that some philosophers and thinkers have propounded and popularized gospels of pleasure. For instance, hedonism, West or East, holds that whatever a man does is motivated by the desire for obtaining pleasure, and affirms that pleasure and pleasure alone is good or is the Good. Normally, human happiness is sensual and biological. So hedonists in practice concentrate upon the passional and appetitive parts of our natures. 'To tread the primrose path, to drain the wine-cup to the dregs, and to sport with Amaryllis in the shade'—these seem to make-up the universal life-pattern of those who believe in hedonism and practise its tenets.

Since the body is the basis of all their enjoyments, they urge that it should be regarded as an aeolian harp to bring forth delicate melodies and harmonies of feeling and sensation. 'Deliberately, by training and experience, the wise man tunes the harp, producing as a result harmonies of feeling still more exquisite, thrills of sensation still more intense.' [1]

But unfortunately the facts of life are, soon or late, bound to disillusion the hedonist. Either the strings of the harp go slack or snap, evoking disharmony or destroying the music; or the musician finds out that the aeolian harp is a weak, primitive instrument from which he cannot bring out the dreamed-of harmonies. The pleasure principle comes into head-on clash with the reality principle. Pain, disease, boredom, frustration, and fatigue follow in the wake of the pleasure-hunt. The hedonist sooner or later discovers that 'to seek to attain happiness by a succession of pleasures is as foolish as trying to keep up a light all night by striking successive matches'. Lord Byron, a great figure in English literature, was well known in his days for his life of romantic escapades and dissipation. He is reported to have confessed to a friend just before his death that he had known but three happy hours during his whole existence. From an anthology of 'Famous Last Words', we quote here those of Abd-Er-Rahman III (A.D. 891-961), Caliph of Cordoba, which make their own poignant appeal:

> 'I have now reigned about 50 years in victory and peace, beloved by my subjects, dreaded by my enemies, and respected by my allies. Riches and honour, power and pleasure, have waited on my call, nor does any earthly blessing appear to have been wanting to my felicity. In this situation I have diligently numbered the days of pure and genuine happiness which have fallen to my lot. They amount to fourteen. O man, place not thy confidence in this present world.'

Majority of human beings rarely make the psychological journey from childhood to adulthood where the reality principle is expected to prevail over the pleasure principle. And man has to go much further still. But nature is an unrelenting mistress. She will pursue a soul, life after life, until it learns its lessons thoroughly and ceases from seeking for happiness or ending of misery in the world outside.

II

It is indeed natural for man to pursue pleasure and seek to conquer misery in the external world, in nature's school. Man seems incurably a pleasure seeker. Though the schooling by nature is very much prolonged and painful, the lessons taught and learnt in the school are invaluable. One of the fundamental lessons taught by nature is that all pleasures are essentially and ultimately mental. Even the grossest physical pleasures thus have a deeply psychological quality about them. The real enjoyer is the ego in a person, and not the body. Therefore the quality and intensity of happiness depend more on the purification and refinement of mind and ego than external possessions and sensations. That mere possessions, enjoyments, and luxuries do not make a man really happy but contentment and freedom from worry do, is illustrated by this charming Persian legend about the happy man's shirt:

> 'The king, though powerful and wealthy, was very unhappy. He consulted his seers to find out what he must do to be happy. After diligent research they found a clue to the dilemma. "Your Majesty," they said, "you must wear the shirt of a happy man." There followed a long search and finally a poor peasant

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[1] C. E. M. Joad: *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics* (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1938), p. 409

> was found who was perfectly happy. He was a ragged fellow who wore no shirt!'

The story does not say how the seers cured the king of unhappiness in view of the non-availability of a happy man's shirt. What the king—and all those who were or are in a similar plight—really needed was the 'psychological shirt' of the happy man, namely, contentment. Bereft of worldly wealth and luxury, the poor man yet brimmed with happiness. He was happy in the possession of the real treasure of contentment. 'Contentedness', says the *Dhammapada,* 'is the best of riches.' 'From contentment', says the *Yoga-sūtra,* 'comes superlative happiness.' Unhappy as modern man is, despite his health, wealth, and luxury, he is in the greatest need of this time-honoured virtue.

Granted that human happiness depends to some extent on external things. Nevertheless it depends to a greater extent on our internal environment, the one we create by our habitual reactions to the external. Over the external factors, human and material, we have no control. They come and go according to the seeming whims of undercurrents in this vast stream of life. But we can control the internal factor, of our reactions to the external environment—human as well as material--, and are thus free to start on the sure path to happiness. A little study of our mental reactions to the external will reveal that a lot of unhappiness is caused by envy, competition, worry, fear, and hatred, among others. All these, while increasing our unhappiness, greatly decrease our practical efficiency. Some of them, notably competition and hatred, also adversely transform the external environment. Further, modern psychology has conclusively proved that these vices and defects readily create physical and nervous disorders. By convincing ourselves of the grave harm these unhealthy feelings do to us and by cultivating an attitude of love and friendliness to all around, we can earn a happiness which cannot be easily disturbed or destroyed by unfavourable circumstances and events. In his justly famous book, *The Conquest of Happiness,* Bertrand Russell has given some useful and practical hints for making our lives happy. Though he claims to have written the book as a hedonist, yet the conduct and acts and means he has recommended 'are on the whole the same as those to be recommended by the sane moralist'.[2] Russell has devoted a whole chapter each to 'Envy' and 'Competition' which shows that he reckoned these as great impediments in the way of achieving happiness. 'Whoever wishes to increase human happiness', says Russell, 'must wish to increase admiration and to diminish envy.' A little later he says, 'The habit of thinking in terms of comparisons is a fatal one.'[3] In a short, thoughtful essay entitled 'Look Over Your Shoulder', Maurice Maeterlinck says:

> 'I would not go so far as to say that it is given to all men to be happy in exterior things. External circumstances can do a lot; but it lies within the power of the least favoured amongst us to find a happy inner life by being *gentle and just and generous.* He should learn to look on his fellows *without envy or malice or futile regret, the things which most militate against true happiness.'* (italics ours)[4]

One other factor which militates strongly against true happiness is an outsized ego. A normal-sized ego, a healthy one, is a necessity in day-to-day life. But this ego has always a psychopathological tendency

---

2 Bertrand Russell: *The Conquest of Happiness* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Museum St., London, 1931), p. 246

3 ibid., pp. 86, 88

4 *Treasury of Philosophy* (Ed. by Dagobert D. Runes, Pub. by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York, N. Y., 1955), p. 767

to become oversized. In this unhealthy state it causes no end of trouble to oneself and to others—like the obese body. Expansion of consciousness, interests, and feelings is no doubt, the key to true happiness. But not the 'expansion' of one's ego! The expanded ego paradoxically constricts the horizon of one's consciousness and interests, makes itself the central sun of the planetary system of one's mental life. A self-absorbed individual—barring the genuinely spiritual man who is absorbed in the true Self—blocks off the outflowing currents of psychic energy; nor does he usually possess the techniques of sublimating them. A series of unhealthy symptoms develop which starts with the drifting from the 'reality' of the environment and culminates in profound unhappiness. Bertrand Russell, though not a moralist, rightly warns people against growing an oversized ego. He says:

> 'But over and above these self-centred considerations is the fact that one's ego is no very large part of the world. The man who can centre his thoughts and hopes upon something transcending self can find a certain peace in the ordinary troubles of life which is impossible to the pure egoist.'
>
> 'A too powerful ego is a prison from which a man must escape if he is to enjoy the world to the full. A capacity for genuine affection is one of the marks of the man who has escaped from this prison of self.'[5]

III

Religions in general, and Vedānta in particular, promise their adherents an end to their misery and acquisition of permanent joy or bliss. Studying the problem of happiness from the standpoint of Vedānta, we come to know certain interesting facts, psychological and spiritual. Vedānta declares that man's fundamental nature is blissful. Brahman, indwelling all beings as the Ātman, is of the nature of immortal bliss, enlivening the whole universe with Its blissful intelligence and existence. Without Its all-pervading blissful presence no being could live or breathe even for a moment. On a particle of Its bliss, all creatures, separated, as it were, from It by ignorance, live.[6] Man has this infinite mine of bliss within himself. But that bliss is overlaid by masses of ignorance, wrong conceptions, and impurities of the mind. Even when a person experiences joy on account of contacts with sense-objects, that joy is from within himself or herself. It does not belong to the outside object. For without being aware of the Ātman first of all, no one can know anything of the external world.[7] Vedānta tells us that the unlimited bliss within can and should be attained. That is the goal of human life. Conquest of happiness is complete and true only when this inexhaustible bliss is perpetually experienced within oneself.

In direct contrast to materialists and hedonists, Vedānta says that happiness can never really be got through sensual and appetitive indulgences. In fact, to get true and lasting happiness one has to withdraw one's senses from their objects repeatedly, turn the mind inward through discrimination and dispassion, control it, and concentrate it on the Ātman. All contact-born happinesses, says the Vedānta, are vitiated by two basic defects: they are short-lived, and they invariably bring pain.[8] The term 'contact-born happinesses' should not be restricted to the pleasures derived from direct physical contacts with the various

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[5] Bertrand Russell, op. cit., pp. 74, 183

[6] *vide Taittirīya-upaniṣad* (*T. U.*), II. vii. 1; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* (*B. U.*), IV. iii. 32

[7] *vide Pañcadaśī*, VI. 71

[8] *vide Katha-upaniṣad*. I. i. 26; *Bhagavad-gītā*, V. 22

sense-objects. It covers all other pleasures involving the nerves and mind. Pleasures derived by the fancies aroused through drinks and drugs of through aesthetic contemplation—are all included in it. It may be that some of these pleasures, as in the case of aesthetic contemplation, are of a nobler type. Nevertheless, they come under this grouping of 'contact-born happinesses', and are *ipso facto* fleeting, pain-bearing, and finally enslaving. Slavery in any form is constant misery.

Vedānta teaches that the seeker of true happiness should always practise discrimination between the impermanent and the permanent. While seeking and accepting the permanent, he should reject and move away from the impermanent. With this power of discrimination he can know that contact-born pleasures always weaken the senses, dim the intellect. They are like nectar in the beginning but turn out to be poison in the end, because they lead to 'loss of strength, vigour, complexion, wisdom, intelligence, wealth, and energy, and acquisition of demerit through which results sufferings in hells etc.'[9] Such a discrimination will help one discard even the so-called heavenly pleasures because these too are non-eternal and retarding to one's further evolution.

Another deep psychological truth taught by Vedānta is that attenuation of desires leads to increase of happiness. To the hedonist this may sound anything but sane. But from the Vedāntic standpoint, this is perfectly sane and right. While the hedonist is convinced that happiness abides in sense-objects, the Vedānta asserts that happiness is found only in one's own spiritual self, in the Ātman. Desires obscure this happiness and indulgence draws more covers over it. In two of the important Upanisads there is found a calculus of happiness.[10] In both of them the happiness of an intelligent, learned, strong, luxuriously wealthy, and incredibly powerful young man is taken as the unit. The happiness calculation proceeds from such a youth through an ascending hierarchy of demigods and gods till it reaches the highest of them all, namely, Brahmā, the creator. Happiness increases by a hundred units with each echelon of non-human beings. According to the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, the happiness of the creator adds up to a trillion units, and according to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* it is computed to be an awesome hundred million trillion! But all this when compared to the happiness attained by the knower of Brahman, a person absolutely free from all desires, is trivial like 'sea spray with respect to the sea'.[11] Śaṅkara further observes that this elaborate calculation, with the increasing of happiness by a hundredfold at every step up to the creator, is done 'with a view to enjoining desirelessness or dispassionateness as a means for the attainment of supreme Bliss'. Says the *Mahābhārata* very appropriately:

> 'The sense-pleasures of this world and the great joys of heaven are not worth one-sixteenth part of the bliss that comes of the cessation of desire.'[12]

In the supreme spiritual experience of bliss that a knower of Brahman obtains, one may wonder if there be any 'contact', however subtle. The Upaniṣads and the great non-dualistic teachers are emphatic in their denial of any such contact. That is an experience where all distinctions and differences are annihilated. Alone the Self remains. In one place in the *Gītā* it is said that the yogi, freed from sins, 'easily enjoys the touch of Brahman, which is exceeding

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[9] Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Gītā*, XVIII. 38

[10] *vide T. U.*, II. 8. 1-4; *B. U.*, IV. iii. 33

[11] *vide* Śaṅkara's com. on the passages referred in the previous f.n.

[12] XII. clxxiii. 47

bliss'.[13] Since this bliss is earlier declared to be 'beyond the reach of the senses', and since Brahman is by Its very nature infinite, the phrase 'touch of Brahman' has an altogether different and supra-sensuous meaning. Ānandagiri, a great non-dualistic commentator, interprets this phrase to mean 'homogeneity attained through identity with Brahman'. The Upaniṣads categorically deny all differences in that non-dualistic experience. Sage Yājñavalkya declares in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*:

> 'For when there is duality, as it were, then one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one speaks to another, one thinks of another, one knows another. But when everything has become the Self, then what should one smell and through what, what should one see and through what, what should one hear and through what, what should one speak and through what, what should one think and through what, what should one know and through what? Through what should one know That owing to which all this is known—through what, my dear, should one know the Knower?'[14]

Attaining the experience of this highest bliss in one's own inmost Self, a person truly conquers happiness. Necessarily and inevitably he conquers misery too. In such a conquest lies the fulfilment of all human endeavours and aspirations. Gaining that happiness, the sage, as the *Gītā* says, 'thinks that there is no greater gain', and being established in that state, he is 'not moved even by the heaviest of sorrows'.[15]

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[13] *Gītā*, VI. 28

[14] II. iv. 14

[15] VI. 22

LETTERS OF A SAINT

57 Ramkanto Bose's St.
1-8-18

My dear Doctor,

I am in receipt of your kind letter of the 21st ultimo just now. I received your other letter also dated 7/7/18 duly. I am sorry I could not write to you in reply any earlier. Swami Premanandaji, you will be grieved to hear, is now no more. He left his mortal coil on Tuesday evening at quarter after four and his body was taken to the Math where it was cremated after proper ceremonial. His end came so suddenly. On the previous Saturday morning he was brought here from Deoghar where he had showed signs of increased ill health. When he came here, he was in a very bad plight. The Doctor after examination found that he was suffering from advanced pneumonia. There was no lack of treatment or nursing or diligent care, but nothing was of any avail. Baffling everything, he expired and went to eternal peace, leaving all sorts of pains and sufferings—due to the long illness that he underwent—behind him altogether. The loss which the Math and the circle of devotees sustained from his absence is irreparable; but what could be done? The Lord's will comes to pass every time. All are in mourning now, and I cannot describe to you how they are feeling at this moment. His exalted soul must be enjoying unspeakable bliss with the Lord, but his friends here are sorely

dejected for not finding him in their midst. But the influence which he has left behind will be fresh in their mind for all time to come. I cannot write you much just now. I hope you will excuse me for this. I shall try to answer you again when I feel better. The Holy Mother and the Swamis are doing physically well.

My best wishes and love to you as ever,

Yours in the Lord
TURIYANANDA

---

57 Ramkanto Bose's St.
12-10-18

My dear Doctor,

I have received your letters of 30/9/18 and 1/10/18 together yesterday, and [am] glad to find that you are now free from all physical complaints and are doing well. I also was anxious for not hearing from you. It is gratifying to know that Swamiji's words in his epistles did so much for you. Yes indeed, Swamiji's words are very powerful and life-giving; they are not only able to remove ailments of body, but they can and do purify souls and lead them Godward. You have experienced how powerful his words are in doing away with physical pains. May you experience his power which leads people to the realization of the Godhead and perfect freedom...

With my best wishes and love to you as ever,

Yours in the Lord,
TURIYANANDA

Benares City
12/6/19

My dear Doctor,

I am very glad to get your letter of the 8th inst. this morning and it has given me great satisfaction to know that you have safely arrived at Mayavati after all. Never mind for the troubles on the road, but that you have reached your destination and have so much been pleased with the fine sceneries and surroundings of your much coveted place, is something beyond and above all complaints.

May you now engage yourself in the meditation of Her, who is the Mother of us all and whose single grace can make our lives full of bliss and free from all turmoils and vain vexations. May you be fortunate to gain your ends which you have in your mind and be blessed by the grace of the Mother for whom you have so much devotion and love. Throw yourself at Her feet wholly, and She will take you up in Her arms as a mother does her child when in extreme helplessness and bewailing.

I thought of not disturbing you with any letter at this moment but anyhow you have my cordial blessings and heartfelt love.

Yours in the Mother
TURIYANANDA

THE UNIVERSALITY AND RATIONALITY OF VEDĀNTA

SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

A. UNIVERSALITY

A. (1) From ancient times spiritual and cultural ideas have flowed from India to the outside world, Eastern and Western. For centuries Alexandria was the meeting place of Oriental and Western culture and thought. It is there that Plotinus, the Roman Neoplatonic philosopher, who was born in Egypt, imbibed Eastern views. According to some historians it was through Neo-platonism that India's spiritual ideas influenced the medieval mystics of Christianity.

In one of his books, *Mysticism and Catholicism*, H. Stutfield remarks:

> 'Especially does there seem to be a growing probability that, from the historical standpoint at any rate, India was the birthplace of our fundamental imaginings, the cradle of contemplative religion and the nobler philosophy.' [1]

Further:

> 'The mind of Plato was heavily charged with Orphic mysticism mainly derived from Asiatic sources. India, always the home of mystical devotion, probably contributed the major share.' [2]

According to many Western Orientalists, such as Horace H. Wilson (1786-1860), Sir Monier-Williams (1819-1899), Frederick Max Muller (1823-1900), and Paul Duessen (1845-1915), Indian literature has been continuously influencing the European scholars in Germany, France, and England from before the close of the 18th century.

Previous to the Vedānta movement initiated by Swami Vivekananda, Indian spiritual ideas influenced the scholars of the Concord group in Massachusetts, particularly, Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In his lecture on 'Plato; or, the Philosopher', Emerson observes:

> 'In all nations there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of the fundamental Unity. The raptures of prayer and ecstasy of devotion lose all being in one Being. This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly in the Indian scriptures, in the Vedas, the Bhagavat Geeta, and the Vishnu Purana.' [3]

A. (2) *The Universal Truths upheld by Vedānta. Human life anywhere must conform to them. Their recognition is conducive to world-unity urgently needed in the present age.*

In the Vedāntic view the one invariable Ultimate Reality underlies all diversities. This is the very perfection of existence. To realize this is the goal of human life. Here is the culmination of human knowledge. Human knowledge cannot go beyond the ultimate unity of existence. To find unity in diversity is the objective of every branch of knowledge. While every branch of physical science seeks unity in its limited sphere, philosophy seeks the unity of unities. Religion aims to experience the Ultimate One.

The Ultimate One is pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The Supreme Being is Supreme Consciousness and Supreme Bliss. This is the very perfection of existence, the Ideal Reality.

Says Swami Vivekananda:

> 'If you go below the surface, you find that Unity between man and man, be-

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1 Quoted by S. Radhakrishnan: *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (Oxford University Press, London, 1939), p. 133, f.n.

2 ibid., p. 149, f.n.

3 Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Representative Men* (Henry Altemus, Philadelphia, U.S.A.) p. 53

tween races and races, high and low, rich and poor, gods and men, and men and animals. If you go deep enough all will be seen as only variations of the One, and he who has attained to this conception of Oneness has no more delusion. What can delude him? He knows the reality of everything, the secret of everything. Where is there any more misery for him? What does he desire? He has traced the reality of everything to the Lord, the Centre, the Unity of everything, and that is Eternal Existence, Eternal Knowledge, Eternal Bliss.'[4]

Further, the all-transcendent One is the all-pervading Self of the universe. This shines within every individual as the inmost self. What is innermost in the universe is innermost in man. As declared by the Upaniṣad:

> 'The nondual self-effulgent Being is hidden in all that is created. He is all-pervading. He is the inmost self of all beings.'[5]

So the real self of man is the central principle of consciousness, self-evident, ever-shining, pure, free, immortal. This is ever united with the Supreme Self, although man is not aware of it due to a peculiar ignorance.

To realize the oneness of the individual self with the Supreme Self is the Goal of human life. There is the end of all delusion, all misery. Says the Upaniṣad:

> 'When to the man of realization all beings (animate and inanimate) become the Self, then what delusion and what sorrow can there be for that seer of oneness.'[6]

The basic urge in man is the urge for the Highest and Best, the urge for the Infinite. This is at the back of all his undertakings, even though he is not aware of it. Knowingly or unknowingly, rightly or wrongly, man is constantly struggling to reach That. This is why he can never be satisfied with anything limited or imperfect. He who understands this cannot but be sympathetic to all. Free from hatred or malice, he will try to help the wrongdoers as far as he can. Abiding peace dwells within him who knows the Supreme Goal of life and judiciously endeavours for that one end.

A great desideratum of the present age is the unity of humanity despite all diversities. Because of the unprecedented facilities of transportation and communication consequent on the advancement of scientific knowledge and technology, human beings of diverse races, religious beliefs, cultural standards, economic conditions, have been brought close together. The only way to mutual regard, love and harmony among men, on which rest peace and progress in life, is to find a common ground of human relationship that transcends all distinctions of colour, creed, nationality, rank, merit, and so forth. The recognition of the unity of the individual self with the Supreme Self provides such a ground. This is the way to universal love. This is the rationale of ethics and spirituality.

'Love thy neighbour as thyself,'[7] says the Bible. Why? Because your self is nondifferent from the neighbour's self, because of the essential oneness of both with the Supreme Self.

Explicit or implicit, four basic truths underlie all religions despite the differences of doctrines and practices. These can be summed up as follows:

1. Supreme Consciousness—Ideal Reality—is the All-pervading Self of the universe.

2. He is the indwelling self in every individual. 'The Kingdom of God is within you,' says Jesus Christ.[8]

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[4] *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. II (1963), pp. 153-4

[5] *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad*, VI. 11

[6] *Īśāvāsya-upaniṣad*, 7

[7] Lev. 19: 18; Matt. 19: 19, 22: 39; Mark 12: 3

[8] Luke 17: 21

3. The real self of man is luminous, pure, free, immortal.

4. To realize the unity of the individual self with the Supreme Self is the Goal of human life.

A. (3) *The Vedāntic view of religion. The necessity for harmony of religions.*

In all religions there have been great saints and seers who have realized God in the depth of the heart. Their words of wisdom and whole-souled devotion to God testify to the validity of their inner experience.

Vedānta looks upon every great religion as a way to God-realization. It stands for harmony of religions. In the present age it was the genius of Sri Ramakrishna to exemplify how different religious courses, including those of Islam and Christianity, lead to the same goal, the realization of God. From his own experience he declared: 'To realize God is the Goal of human life.' Each religion is a pathway to God.

Two essential requisites for realizing the unity of the individual self with the Supreme Self are the purification of the heart and the cultivation of devotion to the Supreme. Religious practices and spiritual disciplines vary according to the capabilities of the aspirants in conformity with these two basic requirements.

In the Vedāntic view different religions are varied expressions of one eternal religion—man's search for God and the realization of God. The avowed objective of different religions is the establishment of peace and harmony among men. How is it possible as long as bigotry, fanaticism, and feuds. prevail among them? By mutual understanding. and recognition of truths common to all, the followers of different religions should first of all reconcile all contradictions among themselves before they can set the stage for world peace. They must learn to look upon themselves as pilgrims to the same shrine of Truth.

One deficiency of the modern mind is its lack of acceptance of such fundamental truths despite its knowledge of many details of the psychophysical realm.

B. The Rationality of Vedanta

B. (1) *The efficacy and limitations of human reason.*

Modern man is inclined to reason. Unless rationally convinced, he will not accept anything to be true. Vedānta is also in favour of reason. It does not recognize irrational authority. Faith, according to Vedānta, is reliance on the trustworthy. It is not unreasonable to rely on the reliable. The words of such persons as are free from delusion, error, deceit, and deficiency of the senses and the mind are to be accepted as authentic. As a matter of fact, a major part of our knowledge is built on verbal testimony—oral and written words. We seldom verify the authentic sources from which we derive the bulk of our knowledge. Just as there are specialists in secular subjects, so are there also specialists in spiritual themes.

But reason has its limitations as well. It leads to inferential knowledge, which is indirect and as such lacks in definiteness. When we infer the existence of fire from the sight of smoke from a distance, we cannot be sure as to the nature of fire or its exact location. Reason does not unveil the object of knowledge to us. If it be true with regard to sensible objects, far more it must be true with regard to the suprasensible truths. We cannot deny the existence of the suprasensible, because the explanation of the sensible world is in the suprasensible. The universe as perceived by us is not self-explanatory. We need the knowledge of the unseen in order to understand the seen.

The truths declared by the Vedas such as the ultimate unity of existence, the im-

mortal self of man, the attainment of Liberation, are suprasensouous and suprarational. They are beyond the ken of the senses and the reach of reason. Speculative philosophy cannot determine them indubitably and far less unveil them. But although suprarational, they are not irrational. They admit of rational explanation. Being the basic facts of existence they explain the different aspects of life—physical, psychological, biological, aesthetic, moral, social, and spiritual. They evaluate and illumine the relative truths.

As regards the incompetence of reason to unveil suprasensuous truths Swami Vivekananda remarks:

> 'The field of reason, or of the conscious workings of the mind, is narrow and limited. There is a little circle within which human reason must move. It cannot go beyond. Every attempt to go beyond is impossible, yet it is beyond this circle of reason that there lies all that humanity holds most dear. All these questions, whether there is an immortal soul, whether there is God, whether there is any supreme intelligence guiding this universe or not, are beyond the field of reason. Reason can never answer these questions. What does reason say? It says, "I am agnostic; I do not know either yea or nay." Yet these questions are so important to us. Without a proper answer to them, human life will be purposeless. All our ethical theories, all our moral attitudes, all that is good and great in human nature, have been moulded upon answers that have come from beyond the circle. It is very important, therefore, that we should have answers to these questions.' [9]

B. (2) *The need of mystical experience. Its relation to reason.*

One may ask, 'How does man know the truths that are beyond the range of the senses and out of the reach of reason?' According to most religions, great saints and seers intuit these truths in a supra-conscious state above reason. As declared by Patañjali:

> 'In that state (of samādhi) knowledge can be said to be "filled with truth".'
> 'The knowledge that is gained from testimony and inference is about common objects. The knowledge gained from samādhi is of a much higher order, being able to penetrate where inference and testimony cannot go.' [10]

Many Eastern and Western philosophers concur on this point that the human mind can develop a suprasensuous and suprarational faculty of 'intuition', which is far superior to intellect and can penetrate facts that are otherwise inaccessible.

On the necessity of mystic intuition for the perception of truths beyond reason, Dr. Radhakrishnan observes:

> 'We have to pass beyond thought, beyond the clash of oppositions, beyond the antinomies that confront us when we work with the limited categories of abstract thinking, if we are to reach the real where man's existence and divine being coincide. It is when thought becomes perfected in intuition that we catch the vision of the real. The mystics the world over have emphasized this fact...
> 'According to the Upaniṣads there is a higher power which enables us to grasp this central spiritual reality. Spiritual things require to be spiritually discerned. The Yoga method is a practical discipline pointing out the road to this realization. Man has the faculty of divine insight or mystic intuition, by which he transcends the distinctions of intellect and solves the riddles of reason. The chosen spirits scale the highest peak of thought and intuit the reality.' [11]

But without undergoing the necessary spiritual disciplines none can develop the mystical intuition for the perception of suprasensuous truth. This is true for the

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[9] *The Complete Works*, Vol. I (1962), p. 181

[10] *Yoga-sūtras*, I. 48-9

[11] *Indian Philosophy* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1929), Vol. I, p. 176

seeker of Saguṇa-brahman[12] and for the seeker of Nirguṇa-brahman as well. As a result of following the preparatory courses including the study of the Vedic scriptures, when the seeker of Nirguṇa-brahman develops intense longing for Liberation, he has to approach a qualified teacher who is well-versed in the scriptural knowledge and is also a man of realization. After hearing from him the Vedic *mahāvākya*[13] he has to grasp through reasoning its import. Then through further reasoning he has to be convinced of the truth of the statement. Next he has to meditate on the truth—the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. Through intense meditation he succeeds in realizing the truth. Hearing the scriptural truth, reflection on it, and intense meditation on the same are said to be the threefold means of Self-realization. The scriptural text, reason, and the pupil's experience must be in conformity.

The seers' experiences corroborate the Vedic truths. They reinstate from their own experiences what the Vedas declare. Their lives of unsullied purity, their whole-souled devotion to the Divine Being, their selfless service to their fellow beings, their words of enlightenment, testify to the genuineness of their experiences and pronouncements.

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[12] Near the beginning of the author's article 'The Applicability of Vedānta to Modern Life', published in our March 1973 issue, readers can find a discussion of preparatory disciplines for those seeking Saguṇa-brahman.—*Ed.*

[13] In each of the four Vedas there is a *mahāvākya* (lit., great saying) which declares the identity of *jīva* (individual consciousness) and Brahman (Supreme Consciousness) according to Advaita Vedānta. (*vide* Swami Satprakashananda: *Methods of Knowledge* (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1965), p. 200 et seq.)

THE HEART OF THINGS

Kumbhakonam, 1897:

'It is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teaching on the Vedāntic truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the Soul of the Universe.'

—Swami Vivekananda (aged 34)

Lisieux, 1897:

'It is love alone that matters.'

—Ste. Thérèse (aged 24, on her death-bed)

LOVE OF GOD

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

IV

When we are persuaded that *bhakti* (love of God) is the one essential thing, and we really want to cultivate it, we inevitably face two questions:

(1) Can we really love God whom we have not seen?

(2) Should *bhakti* be deliberately cultivated, or does it come to us by sheer chance over which we have no control? If it is to be cultivated, then how?

(1) In regard to this question—like the little boy in a certain interesting story, many of us want God to behave before we will have anything to do with Him:

> 'Mother was rebuking Tom for not going to Church willingly. She said: "Tom, you go to the movie house for fun, and you go over to Freddie's house or down to Tommie's and have a nice time. Now, don't you think it only right that once a week you should go to God's house, just for an hour?" "But, Mummy", said Tom seriously, "tell me this; what would you think if you were invited to somebody's house and every time you went, the fellow was not there?"

The fact is, however, that the Fellow was and is always there, and everywhere else too. If you do not have *bhakti* you do not see Him. That is all there is to it. *Bhakti* is the eye with which we can see God. It is not that after seeing God you love Him. It is by having love for Him that you see Him.

Therefore, of necessity we must develop love for God even before seeing Him, for the very prerequisite to seeing God is love for Him.

Sri Ramakrishna says:

> 'God cannot be seen with these physical eyes. In the course of practising spiritual disciplines one gets a "love-body" endowed with "love eyes", "love ears" and so on. One sees God with those "love eyes". One hears the voice of God with those "love ears".'[1]

And there is nothing extraordinary in loving God before seeing God. Love is already there in every heart.

Swami Vivekananda says: 'There is Bhakti within you, only a veil of lust-and-wealth covers it, and as soon as that is removed, Bhakti will manifest by itself.'[2]

(2) Now, in regard to the question, 'Is *bhakti* to be deliberately cultivated?' the answer is an emphatic 'yes'.

In the manner we grow flowers, fruits, and vegetables in our gardens, we must also cultivate *bhakti* in the ground of our life. Rāmprasād, the great Indian mystic, sings:

> 'O mind, you do not know how to farm!
> Fallow lies the field of your life.
> If you had only worked it well,
> How rich a harvest you might reap!'

It is all a question of knowing how to farm our 'field'. Then every one of us can raise

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[1] 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600004, 1947), p. 42

[2] *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. V (1959), p. 314

a rich harvest of devotion from the now-fallow grounds of our life.

For successful farming we need know quite a few things. We need know how to till the ground, apply fertilizers, sow seeds at the right time, irrigate properly, remove weeds, fight the various types of pests, and harvest the crop when it is ripe.

In cultivating *bhakti* also we need know quite a few things. Firstly, we must know what *bhakti* itself is. 'Characteristics of *bhakti* are described [in the scriptures] variously on account of difference in viewpoints.'[3] But Nārada—whose way of Divine Love Sri Ramakrishna advises us to follow—'is of the opinion that the essential characteristics of *bhakti* are the consecration of all activities, by complete self-surrender, to God, and extreme anguish if He were to be forgotten.' Again, '*Bhakti* is intense love for God.' As Swami Vivekananda puts it:

> 'Bhakti yoga is a real, genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing and ending in Love. One single moment of the madness of extreme love to God brings us eternal freedom.'[4]

Nārada, nevertheless, acknowledges the fact that 'The intrinsic nature of devotion defies exact and precise analysis, definition, or description. It is like the experience of joy which a dumb man has when he tastes something sweet.'[5] This is not to say, however, that *bhakti* has no definite manifestation in one who has made himself fit for its expression, through the practice of proper disciplines.[6]

Basically there are two types of *bhakti*: (*i*) *Vaidhi-bhakti*, or preparatory devotion; (*ii*) *Rāga-bhakti*, or supreme devotion.

(*i*) In *vaidhi-bhakti* one strictly follows the injunctions of the scriptures and the instructions of the guru, for developing *bhakti*. This is cultivation of devotion according to rule and routine, but almost all must pass through such disciplines, fast or slow. One practising such devotion repeats the name of the Lord a certain number of times, worships Him with rituals, practises fasting if prescribed, makes pilgrimages, studies the scriptures, while living a moral life and dutifully discharging his duties of life.

It must be remembered that one who intends to cultivate *bhakti* is fundamentally a worshipper of the personal God, and not a seeker after the impersonal reality. The approach to the personal God is that of worship. And He has various manifestations; He can be worshipped through various symbols and images. There are many different scriptures in which the methods of worship, appropriate sacred mantras, etc., are detailed. Further, worship can be either mental or ritualistic. It can and should also be combined with meditation.

(*ii*) Through the practice of such devotion steadily, for a long time, and by God's grace, the devotee can develop *rāga-bhakti* —supreme love. This kind of devotion, which is also called *prema-bhakti*, develops through stages, usually birth-after-birth. Sri Ramakrishna says in this regard:

> 'First of all one acquires bhakti... It is very difficult to have unalloyed devotion to God. Through such devotion one's mind and soul merge in Him.
> 'Then comes bhava, intense love. Through bhava man becomes speechless. His nerve currents are stilled. Kumbhaka comes by itself. It is like the case of a man whose breath and speech stop when he fires a gun.
> 'But prema, ecstatic love, is an extremely rare thing. Chaitanya had that love. When one has prema one forgets all outer things. One forgets the world. One even forgets one's own body, which

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[3] Nārada: *Bhakti-sūtras*, I. 15
[4] *The Complete Works*, Vol. III (1960), p. 31
[5] Nārada: op. cit., IV. 51, 52
[6] *vide* ibid., IV. 53

is so dear to a man.'[7]

Sri Ramakrishna says elsewhere that when the devotee develops *prema-bhakti* or supreme devotion, 'The devotee holds the Lord, so to speak, under his control. God comes to him whenever he calls.'[8] The Holy Mother once said: 'The vision of God is in the palm of my hand. I can have it whenever I want.'[9] Such a statement could be made only by one whose *prema-bhakti* had become as spontaneous as breathing.

V

But for a practising devotee, *bhakti* naturally becomes coloured by the devotee's predominating *guṇa*. According to Hindu thought, every individual's psychophysical nature is constituted of three substantive forces or qualities called *guṇas*, namely, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Sattva* stands for balance or righteousness; *rajas* for activity or restlessness; *tamas* for inertia or dullness. In every individual's make-up, one of these *guṇas* dominates over the other two. Thus the characteristic nature of that person is determined.

Therefore, as pointed out by Sri Ramakrishna:

> 'Three kinds of bhakti are found, according to the nature of the man: sattvic bhakti, rajasic bhakti, and tamasic bhakti.
>
> 'Sattvic bhakti is known to God alone. It makes no outward display. A man with such devotion loves privacy. Perhaps he meditates inside the mosquito net, where nobody sees him. When this kind of devotion is awakened, one hasn't long to wait for the vision of God. The appearance of the dawn in the east shows that the sun will rise before long.
>
> 'A man with rajasic bhakti feels like making a display of his devotion before others. He worships the Deity with sixteen ingredients" [as prescribed in the books of Hindu ritual], enters the temple wearing a silk cloth, and puts around his neck a string of rudraksha beads interspersed here and there with beads of gold and ruby.
>
> 'A man with tamasic bhakti shows the courage and boisterousness of a highway robber. A highway robber goes on his expedition openly, shouting, "Kill! Plunder!" He isn't afraid even of eight police inspectors. The devotee with tamasic bhakti also shouts like a madman: "Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom! [invocations to Siva] Victory to Kali!" He has great strength of mind and burning faith.'[10]
>
> What!" he says, "I have uttered His name and yet I am to remain sinful! I am His son! I am duly entitled to the inheritance of His wealth!" Such is his vehement ardour.'[11]

Sri Ramakrishna is of the opinion that, 'In this iron age (Kali Yuga), the violent form of devotion is more suitable and brings speedier fruition than do milder forms of contemplation. The citadel of God must be taken by storm.'[12]

Christ also seemed to emphasize the same idea when he said: '...the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.'[13]

Further, we find a pointed instance in the life of the Holy Mother:

> 'One day a devotee walked a great distance to come to the Udbodhan [where the Holy Mother stayed] and was very hot. It was about three in the afternoon. Holy Mother had just returned from a devotee's house and was resting. Swami Saradananda [who acted as her "doorkeeper"] said to the devotee, "I won't allow you to go up now; Mother is tired."

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7 *The Gospel*, p. 259

8 *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna* (Madras, 1938), Saying No. 777 (p. 241)

9 *Sri Sarada Devi—The Holy Mother* (Madras, 1949), p. 155

10 *The Gospel*, pp. 449-50

11 *Sayings*, No. 769 (p. 237)

12 ibid., No. 770

13 Matt. XI. 12

With the words, "Is she just your mother?" the visitor practically pushed him aside and went to the Mother. Very soon he felt repentant for his rash act and prayed that he might avoid the Swami [for whom he had the greatest reverence] while going out. He also told the Mother about his improper conduct but was reassured by her. Sheepishly he came down the stairs and found Swami Saradananda seated in the same place. He asked his forgiveness for the offence. Swami Saradananda embraced him and said: "Why do you talk about offending me? Can one see Mother without such yearning?"'[14]

VI

On methods of cultivating devotion, we have further to remember that whatever spiritual path we may choose, we have always to practise certain basic ethical and moral virtues. And without these no foundation for the spiritual life can be laid. Prominent among them are: truthfulness, straightforwardness, compassion, non-injury, detachment, non-stealing, external and internal purity, contentment. Along with the cultivation of *bhakti* these virtues will naturally be strengthened. Again the excellence of one's *bhakti* will largely depend on the strength of attained virtues.

You may have noticed in the tender care that a mother takes of her baby, that there are two aspects—the negative and the positive. Negatively, she protects the baby from all injuries, hazards of weather, and all other forms of foreseeable danger. On the positive side she builds up the baby's body by giving suitable food, at proper times, in proper quantities, and that with all her love.

In cultivating devotion we have to behave towards ourselves like the mother towards her baby. The tender shoot of devotion must be saved from harms, and it also must be carefully nourished by proper food.

On the negative side, as Nārada points out, the aspirant wanting to grow in *bhakti* must avoid certain things:

> (*a*) 'Evil company...is fit only to be shunned by all means. For it leads to the rousing up of desire, anger, and delusion, to loss of memory, to loss of discrimination, and to utter ruin in the end. Though they [passions] rise only in the form of ripples in the beginning, they become like a veritable sea as a result of evil company.'[15]

Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava:

> 'Avoid promiscuity, avoid even the society of the lustful. No other association causes so much grief and bondage as that with the lustful men and women.'[16]

This is the unanimous warning of all spiritual teachers of the world to the devotee who wants to cultivate *bhakti*. The idea is this: all such situations, discussions, associations, and suggestions as may inflame the passions that lie within us, must be avoided—never even glanced at. For passion like a tiger can readily devour our *bhakti*, since in the early stages it is always the stronger of the two.

Nārada further says that stories or descriptions of women, wealth, or atheists, should not be listened to,[17] for they will make us prone to sensuality, greed, or godlessness.

(*b*) 'Pride, vanity, and other vices should be given up.'[18]

For these will effectively prevent the descent of God's grace, without which *bhakti* cannot be cultivated. One may live physically a pure life, but if he be vain and egotistic, *bhakti* will not grow within him.

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[14] Swami Nikhilananda: *Holy Mother* (Pub. by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, 1962), p. 268

[15] Nārada: op. cit., III. 43-5

[16] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam—The Wisdom of God* (Tr. by Swami Prabhavananda, Pub. by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1943), p. 257

[17] *vide* Nārada: op. cit., IV. 63

[18] ibid., IV. 64

(*c*) 'It is not proper for one to enter into a controversy about God, or other spiritual truths, or about comparative merits of different devotees.

'For there is plenty of room for diversity in views, and no one view, based upon mere reason, is conclusive in itself.' [19]

This is however not to say that teachings of the scriptures, especially those dealing with *bhakti,* may not be discussed. Indeed, such discussion can be very helpful.[20]

(*d*) One who seeks to cultivate *bhakti* should control his desire for material possessions, for this leads to distractions and entanglement, which are harmful to *bhakti*.[21] But this should not lead us to think that we can or should give up all our social activities. Nārada does not recommend this; he says: 'On the attainment of *bhakti,* or even for the attainment of it, life in society need not be shunned. But only the fruits of all social activities are to be surrendered to the Lord, while all such activities, as are naturally righteous and so bearing noble fruit, may be continued.' [22]

(*e*) Further, as Sri Ramakrishna and other great teachers have stressed, the aspirant should not make a display of his devotional attitude, but should keep it a secret, for it is an affair between him and the Lord of his heart. However, this can surely be discussed with one's teacher.

(*f*) Finally, the devotee must always avoid despondency. He must never lose faith in God's grace nor in himself. As long as life is there in the body he must not despair of seeing God. He has no right to do it. It is possible that he will realize God even at the moment of death. Though it would be wonderful to see Him long before, still, for the devotee, seeing God any time is seeing Him indeed.

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[19] ibid., V. 74-5
[20] *vide* ibid., V. 76
[21] *vide* ibid., III. 47
[22] ibid., IV. 62

On the positive side of cultivating *bhakti* —the side of our spiritual nourishment:

(*a*) Śrī Rāmānuja, a great teacher of *bhakti-yoga,* lays special emphasis on the devotee's selection of food. In the Upaniṣad it is said: 'When the food is pure, the mind becomes pure. When the mind is pure the memory becomes firm. When the memory is firm all ties are loosened.'[23] Here 'the memory' means the remembrance of the true nature of the Self. It also may mean remembrance of God.

Elsewhere in the same Upaniṣad it is said, 'Mind is manufactured out of food.' [24] It is only with a pure mind that we can properly think of God. The purer the mind, the deeper will be our absorption in God. Hence it is advised that the devotee take pure food. That food is said to be pure which is not contaminated by extraneous things like dirt, or stale or stinking; which has not been partaken of by another, or cooked or served by a person of low character.

Further, vegetarian food is said to be particularly pure and good for the cultivation of *bhakti.* But let us not be fanatics about it, for vegetarianism may also coexist with many things which are contrary to *bhakti.* Moreover, there are situations beyond one's control. Again, among meat-eaters there have also been great devotees.

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya on the other hand extends the meaning of the word 'food' in this Upanisad, to include whatever we take through our senses. He therefore advises that as much discrimination as we use about food should be applied also to whatever we see touch hear or smell; for everything influences our mind. It will not help a person in cultivating devotion if he eats vegetarian food while yet reading dirty novels, listening eagerly to all sorts of talk, or drinking liquor.

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[23] *Chāndogya-upaniṣad,* VII. 26. 2
[24] ibid., VI. 5. 4

(*b*) For getting a proper start in the life of devotion, one must first find a guru, or spiritual preceptor, and an Iṣṭa, or a Chosen Ideal—the form of God best suited for one's worship. As Sri Ramakrishna says, one who has the guru and Iṣṭa, need have no fear. He progresses on the spiritual path smoothly.

It is the guru who helps the devotee find his Iṣṭa, and also gives him the mantra, the mystic syllable or formula, representing the word-form of the Chosen Ideal which he is to worship. The repetition of this mantra is called *japa*. This as we shall see is one of the most basic disciplines in *bhakti-yoga*.

The most important thing in cultivating devotion is to establish an intimate relationship with one's Iṣṭa. It is through this personal relationship that one has to intensify one's yearning for God. And it is this yearning which can give flaming wings to crawling devotion, and lift the devotee above everything earthly and land him in the lap of God.

In the Hindu tradition, five such relationships (or attitudes) are well-known:

Śānta or the serene attitude.

Dāsya or the attitude of a servant to his master.

Sakhya or the attitude of a friend to a friend.

Vātsalya or the attitude of a mother to her child—or of the child toward its parents.

Madhura or the attitude of a woman to her lover.

Of these five attitudes, that of a servant to the master and that of a child to the parents are specially advocated by Sri Ramakrishna. He also warns us against cultivating the attitude of a woman to her beloved, for only an exceptionally pure person can safely cultivate this.

(c) The devotee, after getting fixed on his path by the grace of the guru, should practise devotions unflaggingly. Nārada goes so far as to say that he should not waste even half a second.

But how should he practise? Those who have received the guru's instructions should implicitly follow them. That is their spiritual discipline. They should not mix up things. For those who have not received such instructions however, there are these general directions in a famous verse of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:[25]

(1) To hear the names, praises and stories of the Lord;
(2) To chant and glorify these;
(3) To remember the Lord, as well as His names, exploits and glories;
(4) To wait on Him, offering Him personal service;
(5) To offer Him worship;
(6) To offer Him salutations;
(7) To dedicate one's every action to Him;
(8) To cultivate intimate friendship with Him;
(9) To offer one's body as well as one's dependents and belongings to Him.

These are among the traditional methods of cultivating devotion, arranged in a kind of progressive order.

Service to the devotees of the Lord and association with the holy, are also effective and potent ways of cultivating *bhakti*.

But of all such methods, the greatest stress has been laid by many saints on the practice of *japa*. Śrī Caitanya says that in order to take the name of the Lord effectively, one must practise utter humility, forbearance, self-denial, and respect for all.

In these days, in the way of life we 'have to' live, elaborate ritualistic worship and certain other forms of devotion cannot be practised even by many earnest devotees. But we can always and everywhere repeat the name of the Lord mentally. And in His name verily the Lord *is*, with all His love and power. It is the view of some mystics that there is nothing unattainable in spirit-

ual life by the devoted repetition of the Lord's name. *Japa* can, on the one hand, destroy all evil and sin and, on the other, awaken all the spiritual potentialities in the devotee.

When one takes the name of the Lord with all his strength and with love, without ever forgetting Him—so much so that even when he is asleep, involuntary repetition of the holy Name goes on, and that the Name precedes even breathing—then, soon or late the Lord will manifest Himself in that devotee's consciousness, destroying all his ignorance, misery, and bondage. He then sees the Lord within and without.

After that it is all song, all joy, all play—and all bliss.

VII

For the devotee still travelling on the path, there are certain signs by which he can know whether or not he is growing in devotion—notably:

He gradually develops a relish for God's name.

He yearns for the association of the holy.

He likes to listen to the glorification of the Lord's blessed qualities.

Nothing pleases him so much as worship of the Lord and service to His devotees.

He then becomes more and more concerned with the Lord Himself, and less and less with His glories and powers.

He feels miserable if his flow of remembrance of God is at all interrupted.

He does not any more fear God; he does not hide anything from Him.

Nothing gives him so much joy as self-surrender. He does not any more seek consolation from the world.

He seeks to be totally absorbed in God.

VIII

When *bhakti* grows in the devotee's heart to full maturity, he enters a new world, as it were, a world which he shares only with his Lord. Infinite are the sports there which he enjoys with his Lord. There is no end to the fun.

Again there are other mysteries which are too deep and intimate to be expressed.

In any case, if we practise the disciplines of devotion with unflagging enthusiasm, we ourselves shall one day see that the Lord really dwells within our hearts, and hears our prayers, and that we too can hear Him. Such are the assurances of authentic mystics of the world.

For love of God is of the God of love, too. Our love is only a faint response to what we have received. Nobody ever loved God a grain until he had received a world. Yet by this one grain He has to be loved. That itself will make life blessed.

(*Concluded*)

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25 *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* VII. 5. 23

A VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."' [1]

The history of the religions of Asia Minor —cradle of all the major religions of the 'West' today—echoes with great 'voices' from the wilderness. At least two centuries before this stirring prophecy of Isaiah, that same Elijah who overthrew kings and slew priests by hundreds, was driven to such despair that he mourned: 'The children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.' [2] Surely many others of these great souls must have felt often as acutely lonely as this: their lives combined the hard austerities of the *sadhus* of India, with a terrible sense of responsibility from God for reforming society; hence they were often outlawed, often killed by their own people.

But of them all it would seem that not even John the Baptist, regarded at least by Christendom as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, prepared so broad a 'highway for our God'—or so promptly—as did the camel-driver of Arabia whom millions and millions consider the greatest of them all: the 'Seal of the Prophets'. Yet on what did he have to build? It was Wilderness indeed!—physical, social, spiritual. Arabia is desert-land *par excellence;* and in the sixth century A.D. it was still peopled almost entirely by nomads plus a fringe of trade-and-farming areas near the coasts. Education was minimal, and very slowly were any traces of 'progress' filtering in from cultured nations thereabouts. Polygamy in the extreme, infanticide drunkenness, slavery, and brutality especially to women, were at a level which most of Asia and much of Europe had passed many centuries back. Mohammed's own father had been as a child intended as a sacrifice to the gods!

Details could be multiplied: it seems certain that no other founder of a living religion of the world, began with such bleak prospects. All the others inherited at *least* a cultural level approximating that of the then known world. Further it seems clear that Mohammed found pathetically little in the primitive religions of his land on which he could build. They had begun in nature-worship but had never risen above fetishism and idolatry. Thus the Prophet's towering achievements, religious and social, *seem* to have sprung from within himself: outer

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[1] *Isaiah*: 40, 3

[2] *I Kings*: 19, 14

foundations were flimsy beyond words.

But we must never forget, he was Voice. More—he was the result, the effect, of another Voice, from within, which he came to feel sure was from God. More than any other founder of a great religion, he succeeded in convincing his followers that 'he' was *not* God. And through these thirteen and one-half centuries, none of them has ever referred to him as that. And for months and years after the first whispers of that Voice, he was tormented by doubts as to whether even That was at all from God—or a delusion, maybe from the devil.

For, as Swami Vivekananda sombrely points out,[3] Mohammed was in no position to understand such a revelation: he as it were stumbled on it. Obviously there was no shred of helpful background in the local religions; and even in the stray teachings of Christianity[4] and Judaism which he had picked up mostly in his caravan-travels, there could hardly have been but hints of the disciplines, inner and outer, considered basic necessities by seers and saints world-wide. Thus the inward-looking tendencies noticed in him from early manhood, and their slow steady progression to the revelations which were to shake the world, were *his own* to a degree rarely if ever recorded elsewhere. As Max Muller well said of Sri Ramakrishna, he was 'a clean, original man'. Of course, as Vivekananda says so forcefully of Buddha and Christ, it seems to Hindus obvious that Mohammed must have worked, prayed, struggled for birth after birth to 'deserve' all this:

> 'The gigantic will which Buddha and Jesus threw over the world, whence did it come? Whence came this accumulation of power? It must have been there through ages and ages, continually growing bigger and bigger, until it burst on society in a Buddha or a Jesus, even rolling down to the present day.'[5]

In such a setting, again, it is beyond our hope to learn details of the wonderful process of preparation—unfolding, unveiling—of what Teilhard de Chardin well terms 'spiritual energy', inside this mere man of such inauspicious surroundings. For even the Prophet could only marvel at the spiritual treasures that began opening to him—what to speak of his contemporaries, lacking even second-hand knowledge of such phenomena so familiar to other mystics. We only know that he began seeking the solitude of desert or cave at least by the age of twenty; and even as a child he had stayed several years in the desert with Bedouins —much more than the usual customary visits by youngsters. Those who have lived in the desert tell of its overpowering impression of the *necessity* of God. No living thing: not a tree, a clump of grass to which the eye can cling; no refuge for the soul except lifeless sand or rock. Really, the most remote forests are never silent, never solitary; even their caves admit stray bird-calls, sighing of winds in trees, occasional animal visitors. Only the eternal snowlands—or outer space—can rival a desert's stark loneliness. There life's dreams, ambitions suddenly appear trivial; there the least thought of 'self-reliance' seems absurd where the tiniest hole in one's water-flask spells agonizing death unless by the will of God, or *kismet* (fate) one happens on a fellow-wanderer or an oasis. As in India the forest, the cave and the mountains have nurtured spiritual grandeur, so in the Near East has the desert.

Still, it is clear that Mohammed much of the time continued an active outer life,

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3 *The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.), Vol. I (1962), p. 184

4 It seems he never even heard of the Crucifixion or Resurrection, since the sect prevalent in these parts denied these great events in their creed.

5 *The Complete Works,* Vol. I, pp. 30-31

becoming known in Mecca his birthplace as 'Al-Amin' (The Trustworthy), marrying a well-to-do lady, to whom he was wholeheartedly devoted and who was to become his first disciple. He was kind to all in need, especially orphans and other children, even to animals. Later on he described charity as including not only almsgiving but even a kind word. Charity of the tongue is often hard even for the greatest; but Mohammed, despite his capacity for blood-chilling denunciations, is said never to have insulted any man. But he felt acutely for bodily sufferings also, and readily on several occasions when he himself was half-starved, gave his scanty food to another famished stranger. Even when he had become a revered ruler, his habits regarding food were extremely simple, and he was to be seen mending with his own hands his shoes and old garments.

His love for animals seemed to equal his love for man. Once two young birds from the nest were brought him. But he ordered them to be put on the ground, and soon the mother-bird joined them. 'I swear...,' said Mohammed, 'God is more loving to his servants than the mother to the young birds. Return these, O man, to the place from which you took them.... There are rewards for doing good to dumb animals. There is no beast on earth, nor birds...which are not ... like unto you. Unto the Lord shall they return.'

Though some of these observations were not recorded till later on, it is clear that the Prophet-to-be was building on the basic preparatory virtues cherished by spiritual aspirants everywhere. Further, his compassion for the suffering was powerfully stirred by the miseries all about him and those vividly recalled from his travels. It is said that the Buddha was impelled 'from below' by mankind's sufferings, more than drawn 'from above' by divine attraction: surely Mohammed notably shared this tendency.

Thus much we can glean of the influences moulding this gigantic soul towards realization of a Reality so profound as to change the face of the earth. He began about the age of forty to have intimations that God wanted to use him for some sort of high purpose. Now and then a voice within would whisper, 'Thou art the man, thou art the prophet of God!' Naturally, as a realistic seeker for truth, Mohammed was sceptical, alarmed. How to know whether the Voice were from God or Devil? Having no precedents, no teacher to turn to, he seems to have redoubled his austerities and long meditations in solitude; and one day in the desert the voice became more insistent: 'Recite in the name of thy Lord who created.' The Prophet became now even more agitated and confided to his wife, his most trusted adviser, the great problem. But she from the start believed that he was truly inspired; and it is likely that her faith saved even his life. For in the ensuing months—perhaps as much as three years—he received no more revelations, and fell into deep despondency. Can we even imagine that terrible suspense, being torn between—on the one side—his yearning for God and desire to help raise his suffering race, and—on the other—the fear for his own sanity, ruin for self and despair for them? From the time of Elijah perhaps the only story in history to equal this for sheer loneliness, is that of Christ's betrayal and death. Perhaps some mystics could compare to it their long 'Dark Night of the Soul'; but they at least had access to accounts of others who had endured and passed out of it.

At last, when the sufferer lay self-absorbed, on the verge of self-destruction, his flesh withered from austerities, came again the Voice. And this time it seems that with it was a tremendous Vision[6] described thus in

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[6] This was one of only three 'Visions' recorded

the Koran:

> 'The *Koran* is no other than a revelation revealed to him: One terrible in power [the angel Gabriel] taught it to him, endued with wisdom. With even balance stood he in the highest part of the horizon: Then came he nearer and approached, and was at the distance of two bows, or even closer,—And he revealed to his servant what he revealed. His heart falsified not what he saw.'[7]

Thus ended the long dark suspense: and soon the Voice began revealing to him the great Message beyond his vastest dreams. From this experience he returned a seer, a prophet. When he told something of it to his wife, she rejoiced, 'O husband, I see the same light that spoke through Moses and Jesus speak through you; fear not, you will be the prophet of Arabia.'

Now began to manifest especially one aspect of the Prophet's greatness—courage, fearlessness. For it was obvious that the Voice, though greatly reassuring, was impelling him to a quixotically dangerous course. The revelations as they poured forth embodied a moral standard so high, a social revolution so drastic, that the Prophet could expect little but a martyr's fate. As it was, the only thing that postponed this long enough for his momentous flight ('Hegira') to Medina was the ancient tradition that in the sanctuary city of Mecca no blood could be shed. So instead, the unregenerate masses of the city tried for two years to starve him into submission; finally after that was prevented by heroic help from friends, a 'community' decision was made to share the guilt of his murder. But the Prophet had anticipated even this, and was warned in time to barely escape, having already seen that his Message temporarily was falling on barren ground. And none of these terrors could daunt his tireless fierce crusade—showing in awesome detail the evils of the time and place, the inevitable justice of God on such, and the wonders of His grace to all who should repent.

But there were again periods when Mohammed must have felt singularly lonely. His first 'converts' were a tiny handful: his wife, a cousin, two or three friends. His wife's death (about two years before the Hegira) was a great blow. Even when a few more handfuls were attracted, most of them had to flee for years to Abyssinia for safety (not so the Prophet!) Most of those who came, these years, were of the lower classes, hardly to be classed as companions. And above all, Mohammed's *Allah* was apparently far-off: utterly *other* than man, never to be seen or heard—except through the awe-striking angel Gabriel. How aptly now do Vivekananda's stirring cadences on the needs of a real Reformer, apply to this Prophet:

> 'Are you sure that you are not actuated by greed of gold, by thirst for fame or power? Are you really sure that you can stand to your ideals and work on, even if the whole world wants to crush you down? Are you sure you know what you want and will perform your duty, and that alone, even if your life is at stake? Are you sure that you will persevere so long as life endures, so long as there is one pulsation left in the heart? Then you are a real reformer, you are a teacher, a Master, a blessing to mankind.'[8]

Surely, no one ever had more reason to be *not* sure. But by now the oft-recurring visitations by the Voice, with the steady progression of revelations which came to form the Koran, were enough to reassure even if the world *had* crushed him down.

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in his entire life: all his other revelations were auditory—from the Voice, identified as that of angel Gabriel.

[7] *The Koran* (tr. by Rev. J. M. Rodwell, pub. by Everyman's Library, London and New York, 1933), p. 69

[8] *The Complete Works,* Vol. IV (1962), p. 159 —Lecture on 'My Master'

And as all know now, it could not succeed in that. Further, during these years of struggle for bare survival, *Some*thing within this man was developing the grandest fusion of religion and social change in all history. To quote one[9] who was notably critical of the Prophet in many ways:

> In 'a great sermon to his people' which 'the world of Islam...receives to this day as its rule of life...the first paragraph sweeps away all plunder and blood feuds...the last makes the believing Negro the equal of the Caliph.... they established in the world a great tradition of dignified fair dealing, they breathe a spirit of generosity, and they are human and workable. They created a society more free from widespread cruelty and social oppression than any society had ever been in the world before.'

And after quoting at some length this sermon, H. G. Wells continued:

> 'Equally important is the uncompromising monotheism, void of any...exclusiveness....fairly proof against the theological elaborations.... All sacrifice was barred to the faithful; no loophole was left for the sacrificial priest of the old dispensation to come back into the new faith. It was not simply a new faith, a purely prophetic religion, as the religion of Jesus was in the time of Jesus, or the religion of Gautama in the lifetime of Gautama, but it was so stated *as to remain so.*' (italics ours)

Thus two bright strands of Mohammed's greatness — his yearning for God, for Truth, for Freedom, and his yearning for the raising of his people—came to unsurpassed fulfilment through the blessings of his inner Voice. And since 'no one can get anything unless he earns it', we have to finally call it his.[10]

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[9] H. G. Wells: *The Outline of History* (Cassell and Co., Ltd., London etc., 1924), pp. 312-3

[10] Sources of this 'Profile': (1) *The Brahmavadin,* 1898 (Vol. III), pp. 623 ff, 'The Prophet of Arabia', by Ananta.

(2) Erich W. Bethmann: *Bridge to Islam,* (Allen & Unwin Inc., London, 1953).

(3) Sister Nivedita: *The Complete Works* (Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, Calcutta), Vol. II (1967), pp. 200 ff. and 478 ff.

CONCERNING SANSKRIT LITERATURE*

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

TRANSLATED BY DR. S. SUBHASH CHANDRA

Though I admire very much the religious and philosophical works of Sanskrit literature, I have seldom enjoyed the poetry; indeed, at times, I was led to think that the poems were as much devoid of taste and as monstrous as the sculpture of the [Indian] people. Even their dramatic works I admire mainly due to the highly instructive explanations and illustrations of the religious beliefs and customs that they contain. All this [lack of appreciation] may be due to poetry being by its nature un-

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* Translator's Note:— It is well known that Schopenhauer (1788-1860) was profoundly influenced by the Indian heritage. All his writings are replete with renewed avowals of all that the German philosopher owed to the Indian wisdom. Frauenstadt, *Arthur Schopenhauer* (Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1881), p. XI, avers that in 1813 Schopenhauer was introduced to Indian thought by the Indologist Friedrich Majer. M. Méry, *La causalité phénoménale selon Schopenhauer* (Vrin, Paris, 1948), p. 13, disputes such an early impact, but fails to cite any evidence in support of his scepticism.

translatable....[1] Further since in Europe we have no dearth of appealing poetical works, but (lack) very much right metaphysical insights, I am of the opinion that Sanskrit translators ought to devote their labour less to poetry and more to the Vedas, Upanishads and (other) philosophical works.

... how difficult it is—in spite of the best and most carefully trained teachers and centuries-old philological works—to come to a genuine, correct, exact and living knowledge of Greek and Latin writers, whose languages indeed are our predecessors in Europe and the sources of still living languages! Sanskrit, however, was spoken a thousand years [and more] ago in distant India and the means of learning it are still relatively imperfect; and when I add to this the [poor] impression that the translations of European scholars from Sanskrit—setting aside very few exceptions—make upon me, then I am seized by the suspicion that our Sanskrit scholars understand their texts no better than our secondary school boys [grasp] the Greeks. But since they [the Sanskrit scholars] are no children but men of knowledge and understanding, then from what [little] they really understand, they put together the approximate sense, whereby naturally much of what they [Sanskrit texts] comprehend escapes them....[2]

On the other hand, when I consider that Sultan Mohammed Dara Shukoh, the brother of Aurangzeb, was born and educated in India and was also learned, reflective and desirous of knowledge, [I am sure] he must have understood Sanskrit as well as we know our Latin. Besides he had many highly learned pandits as assistants. All this gives me a high opinion of his translation of the Vedic Upanishads into Persian. Further when I see with what deep

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Undaunted by over 25 years of persistent indifference of the academic world to his philosophy as embodied in his great work *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Schopenhauer started working on a series of complementary essays around 1845. In 1851 appeared the two volumes *Parerga und Paralipomena* (A. W. Hayn, Berlin) and it is Chapter XVI of the Second Volume that contains the essay, 'Concerning Sanskrit Literature' (*Einiges zur Sanskritliteratur*). In Wolfgang von Löhneysen's edition of Schopenhauer's complete writings, *Samtliche Werke* (Cotta-Insel, Stuttgart/Frankfurt a.M., 1965), this essay is printed in Vol. V, pp. 467-76. The essay is divided into eight sections, viz. § 183-190 of *Paralipomena.* Since the 8th section (§ 190) consists of rather loose and unconnected sentences, I have chosen to translate only the coherently written first seven sections (§ 183-189) of Schopenhauer's essay.

Schopenhauer rejoiced in the writing of very long sentences, some of them stretching over two-thirds of a printed page! Since the German language thrives upon subordinate clauses, such lengthy sentences possess their own charm in the original text. But they become the despair of the translator. I have been forced at times to divide some very long sentences or modify the punctuation and put some dependent words and sentences within brackets.

[1] Translator's Note (T. N.) :— I omit here some general remarks of Schopenhauer about the impossibility of translating works of poetry.

[2] T. N.: I omit here an adverse judgment of Schopenhauer regarding European translations of Chinese books. By the way, among other problems, I had to contend with the one concerning the spelling of Sanskrit terms in Schopenhauer's article. As it is, the Indology being still in a nascent stage during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Sanskritists contemporaneous to Schopenhauer had not yet worked out any uniformity in the spelling of Indian words. The successive generations of German editors of Schopenhauer's writings have failed to work out any governing rule that would undo the anarchy of spellings. Since the scientific diacritical system did not exist at that time, it would amount to a chronological violence to impose it upon the great German. I have, therefore, decided to eschew both the spelling idiosyncrasies that Schopenhauer derived from Sanskritists of his time as well as the diacritical system used now. In my opinion, the best solution is to employ the English spellings commonly used in India for Sanskrit expressions.

and due respect Anquetil-Duperron has handled this Persian translation—rendering it word by word in Latin, strictly adhering to the Persian syntax in spite of the Latin grammar, leaving at their place all Sanskrit words untranslated by the Sultan and explaining them only in the glossary—, then I read this translation with complete confidence that is soon happily confirmed.[3] For how pervasively the 'Oupnekhat' [a transliteration of the original word Upanishad] exhales the holy spirit of the Vedas! Indeed, how very much is one moved in one's innermost being, when one has imbibed this incomparable book by a thorough study of it in Persian-Latin! Verily every line is full of solid, precise and entirely harmonious sense! And in every page we encounter deep, original, sublime thoughts; while a lofty and sacred earnestness permeates the entire [book]. Here it breathes of the Indian atmosphere and of primordial, natural existence. And oh! how is one's soul purged of all previously injected Jewish superstition and enslaving philosophy! It is the most rewarding and sublime reading—excepting the original (Sanskrit) text—possible in the world: it has been the solace of my life and it shall be the solace of my death....[4]

When I now compare [with Duperron's translation] other European translations of holy Indian texts or of Indian philosophers, then they [with very few exceptions, e.g., the 'Bhagavad-Gita' of Schlegel and some passages from Colebrooke's translations from the Vedas] make upon me the opposite impression: they provide phrases possessing a general, abstract, often hesitating and indeterminate sense and in a loose context: I receive mere outlines of the thoughts of the original texts, with additions whose alien character I notice. Besides many contradictions reveal themselves; it is all modern, empty, dull, superficial, senseless and Westernized: it is Europeanized, Anglicized, Frenchified and even (what is worse) obscured and dimmed in the German manner, i.e., instead of a clear and precise sense, just providing very loose words. Thus, for instance, the latest [translation] of Röer in the 'Bibliotheca Indica' (No. 41, Calcutta, 1853), wherein one clearly recognizes the German [author], who is used to penning in (*hinzuschreiben*) phrases leaving it upon others to think out something clear and definite: all too often one can feel the 'Jewish foetus' herein. All this weakens my confidence in such translations, and more so when I think that the translators pursue their studies in order to earn their bread. However, the noble Anquetil-Duperron did not seek anything for himself, but was motivated only by his love of science and knowedge; and Sultan Dara Shukoh [far from getting anything] as reward and honorarium had to pay with his life at the behests of his imperious brother Aurangzeb —'to the greater glory of God'. It is my firm conviction that a genuine knowledge of the Upanishads and consequently of the true and esoteric dogmatics of the Vedas is as yet only to be derived from the 'Oupnekhat'; one may well have read all other translations and still have no idea of the issues [involved]. It seems also that Sultan Dara Shukoh had before him better and more

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[3] T. N.: To the end of his life, Schopenhauer remained partial to Anquetil-Duperron's Latin translation, *Oupnekhat*. Seilliere, *Arthur Schopenhauer* (Bloud, Paris, 1911), p. 137, is eloquent hereupon.

[4] T. N.: I omit here Schopenhauer's reference to his remarks concerning the Upanishads in another of his books. F. de Careil, *Hegel et Schopenhauer* (Hachette, Paris, 1862), pp. 306-12, provides a living portrait of 'Schopenhauer and India' based on his personal acquaintance with the ageing philosopher. We owe to Hecker, *Schopenhauer und die indische Philosophie* (Huebscher, Cologne, 1897), the earliest full length book on the topic. Grenier, *Schopenhauer et l'Inde* (Annales de l'Université, Grenoble, 1925), is rather sketchy.

complete Sanskrit manuscripts than the English scholars.

However, the Vedic Samhita cannot possibly have the same authors nor belong to the same period as the Upanishads: one attains full conviction hereof, when one reads the first book of the Samhita of the *Rig-Veda* and of the *Sama-Veda* [respectively] translated by Rosen and Stevensen. Both consist of prayers and rituals that breathe of a rather crude Sabbatic doctrine. Here Indra is the highest God, who along with Sun, Moon, Wind, and Fire is prayed to. In all the hymns they [these gods] are prayed to with the most servile flatteries and among other things there are requests for cows, food, drink, and victory followed by sacrifices. The sacrifice and the offer of gifts to the priests are the only virtues praised. Since Ormuzd [who later on becomes Jehovah] really, according to Isaak Jakob Schmidt, is Indra and since Mithra also is Sun, the fire-cult of the sacrificers comes to them all through Indra.

The Upanishad is, so to say, the product of the highest human wisdom; it is also meant only for the learned Brahmins; hence, Anquetil translates *Upanishad* as 'secretum tegendum', 'a mysterious secret'. The Samhita, on the contrary, is exoteric; it is, though indirectly, for the masses, for the liturgy; i.e., public prayers and sacrificial rituals constitute its content. Accordingly, the Samhita provides thoroughly dull reading, when judged in terms of [generally] known passages. However, Colebrooke in his treatise 'On the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindus' has translated hymns from other books of the Samhita, which are animated by a spirit akin to that of the Upanishads; for instance, the beautiful hymn in the second essay, 'The Embodied Spirit', etc. of which I have given a translation in § 115.[5]

In those early times, when the great rock temples were hewed out in India, the art of writing was perhaps not yet invented and those numerous residing communities of priests were the living storehouses of the Vedas, whereby every priest or every school knew a part by heart and propagated it, just as the Druids too have done. Later on surely in these very temples, i.e., amidst most befitting surroundings, the Upanishads were composed.[6]

The Samkhya Philosophy, considered as the predecessor of Buddhism, as we see it in the *Karika* of Ishwara Krishna, translated by Wilson (though we still see as if in a fog due to the imperfection of even this translation), is interesting and instructive in so far as it presents to us in detail—and with the sublime earnestness with which for thousands of years they have been viewed in India—the main tenets of all Indian philosophy, like the necessity of deliverance from this unhappy [earthly] existence, [inevitable] transmigration according to one's actions, the [highest] knowledge as the basic condition of redemption, etc.

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[5] T. N.: Schopenhauer is here alluding to the famous *Purusha Sukta* (*Rig-Veda*, X. 90) that he has partly translated into German—with the help of Colebrooke's English version—in § 115 of *Paralipomena* (*Samtliche Werke*, Vol. V, pp. 263-4). Bossert, *Schopenhauer* (Hachette, Paris, 1904), pp. 250-1, recalls with sympathy Schopenhauer's affinities with the Upanishads. Of course, our best guide here is Paul Deussen, *Die neuere Philosophie von Descartes bis Schopenhauer* (Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1917), a book replete with observations concerning the great German pessimist and the Indian lore.

[6] Obviously, the great German savant has been misled here in his inference. The major Upanishads, almost all of which were composed centuries before the time of the Buddha, had nothing to do with the 'great rock temples'. Temple-worship in India is post-Buddhistic in origin. The Vedas seem to have been reduced to writing around 1,000 B.C. [*vide The Cultural Heritage of India* (Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta 700-026), Vol. I (1958), pp. 68-72] —*Ed.*

However, we see that this whole philosophy has been spoiled by a wrong basic concept, viz., the absolute dualism of Prakriti and Purusha. But this is precisely the point wherein the Samkhya deviates from the Vedas [Advaita Vedanta]. Prakriti is, manifestly, creative nature and at the same time the matter-in-itself, i.e., without any form, as it can only be conceived but not perceived. So understood [and] in so far as everything is begotten by it, it can really be viewed as identical with the creative nature. But the Purusha is the knowing subject: it is perceiving, inactive, a mere onlooker. Now, however, both are taken to be absolutely different and independent of one another. As a result, the explanation of Prakriti's motivation for exhausting the Purusha's desire for experiences that he may attain deliverance, becomes inadequate (verse 60). Further in the whole work it is taught that the redemption of the Purusha is the final goal; as against this (verses 62, 63), all of a sudden, the Prakriti is supposed to be redeemed! All these contradictions would fall apart, if one had a common 'ancestor' of Prakriti and Purusha, whereto everything points in spite of Kapila; or [if] Purusha were a modification of Prakriti—i.e., in either case, if the dualism were abandoned. For the understanding of the problem, I cannot but see in Prakriti the Will and in Purusha the knowing Subject.

A peculiar trait of pettiness and pedantism in the Samkhya consists of its enumerations, the counting and numbering of all qualities, etc.: this, however, seems to be native [Indian] custom, for in the Buddhist writings too one works [finds passages] in the same manner.

The moral sense of metempsychosis in all Indian religions is not only that every injustice that we do has to be atoned for in a following rebirth, but also that we must see every injustice that befalls us as being well deserved due to our misdeeds in an earlier existence.

That the three higher castes are called twice-born may after all—as it is usually stated—be explained with reference to the bestowal of the sacred thread, which confers adulthood upon the youngster and at the same time denotes the second birth.[7] But the real reason herefor being [seems to be ?] that only as a result of significant merits in a preceding life is one born in these castes: hence in that life one must have existed as a human being; whereas he who is born in the lowest or even humbler[?] caste might have been an animal previously.

You laugh at the aeons and *kalpas* of Buddhism! Of course Christianity has adopted a viewpoint wherefrom it can survey the whole stretch of time; but Buddhism [upholds a standpoint] wherefrom eternity, presenting itself within time and space, becomes its subject-matter.

Just as *Lalitavistara* [the life-story of the Buddha], in the beginning rather simple and unsophisticated, became more complicated and marvellous, through renewed editing during each of the succeeding councils; even so did it happen to the dogma too: its few simple and magnificent principles—thanks to more precise amplifications, spatial and temporal descriptions, personifications, empirical localizations, etc.—gradually became colourful intricate and complicated. For the mood of the vast masses prefers it so: they are interested in fanstastic preoccupation and are not satisfied by what is simple and abstract.[8]

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[7] Perhaps Schopenbauer was unaware that this ceremony traditionally comes not later than the age of eight in the case of brahmana boys, and bestows eligibility for Vedic studies. —*Ed.*

[8] T. N.: *Zwanzigstes Jahrbuch der Schopenhauer Gesellschaft* (Carl Winter, Heidelberg, 1933), pp. 231-2, contains significant remarks of the philosopher about Buddha's famous en-

The Brahmanic dogmas and distinctions concerning Brahman and Brahma, Paramatman and Jivatman, Hiranyagarbha, Prajapati, Purusha, Prakriti, and so forth (as one finds them so very well and concisely started in Obrys' excellent book, 'Du Nirvana indien', 1856) are basically mere mythological fictions, spun with the intention of objectively describing that which is essentially and as such only subjective Being.[9] Hence, the Buddha boldly abandoned these and stressed only Samsara and Nirvana. For the more the dogmas become intricate, colourful and complex, so much the more mythological [are they]. All this is understood best by the Yogin or Sanyasin who, methodically concentrating himself and withdrawing all his senses within himself, forgets the entire world and himself too: what then still remains in his consciousness is the Primordial Being. But this matter is easier described than realized.

The state of decline of the once so highly cultured Hindu is the result of the terrible oppression that they have suffered for seven centuries by the Mohammedans, who wanted to convert them by force to Islam. Now only one-eighth of the Indian population is Mohammedan (*Edinburgh Review*, January 1858).

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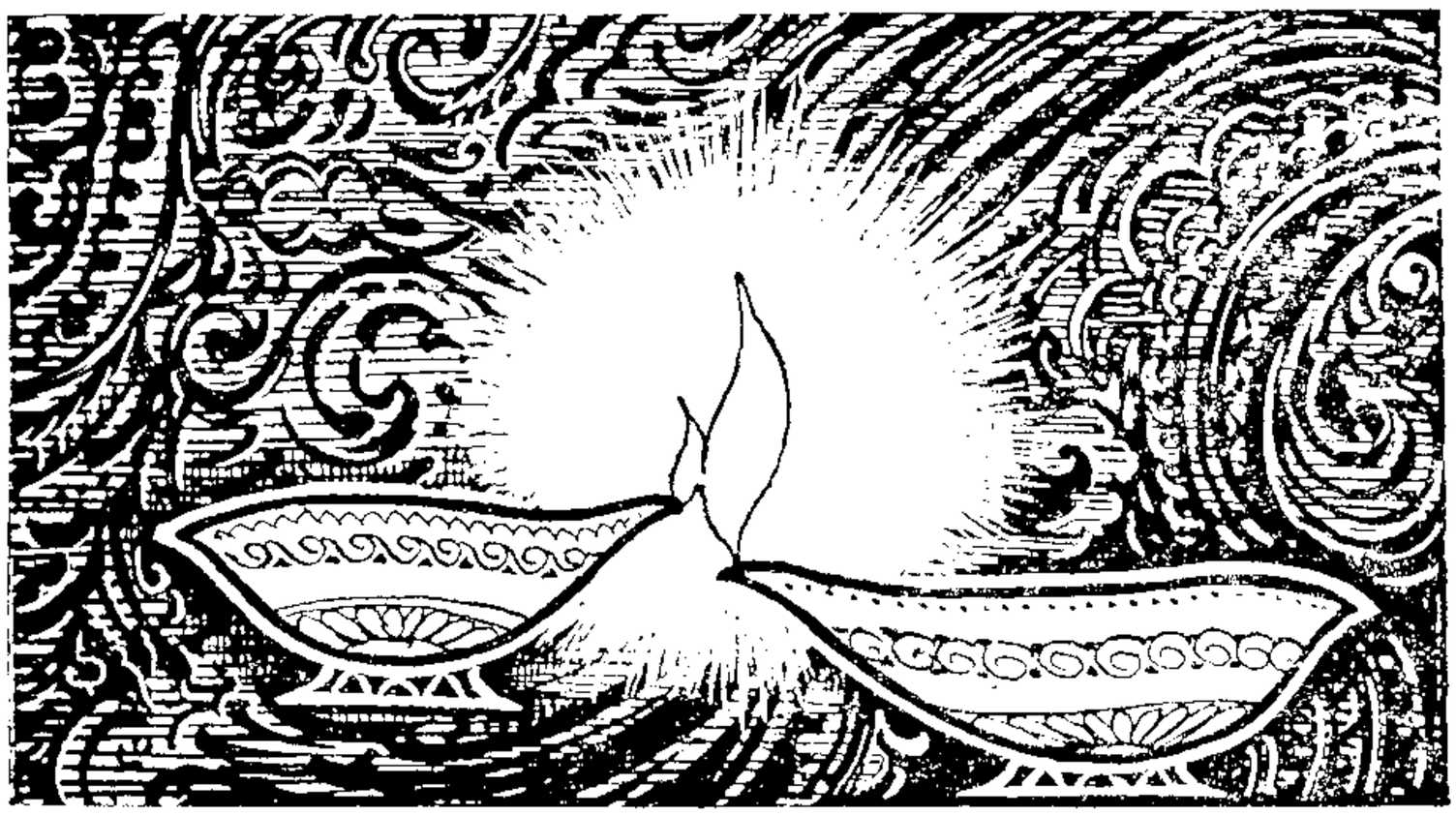
counters with disease, old age, death, and the serene monk. C. Muses, *Schopenhauer's Optimism and the Lankavatara Sutra* (Watkins, London, 1955), approaches the problem from the direction of Mahayanism.

9 Though from the standpoint of pure Advaita there is nothing besides Brahman, the formless Absolute, yet from the philosophical or empirical viewpoint, the concepts of Paramatman and Jivatman, Purusha and Prakriti, among others are acceptable to the Upanishads. They cannot be swept away by calling them 'mythological fictions'. —*Ed.*

A LIVING SACRIFICE

'And now, brethen, I appeal to you by God's mercies to offer up your bodies as a living sacrifice consecrated to God and worthy of His acceptance; this is the worship due from you as rational creatures. And you must not fall in with the ways of this world; there must be an inward change, a remaking of your minds, so that you can satisfy yourselves what is God's will, the good thing, the desirable thing, the perfect thing.'

—St. Paul (Romans 12, 1, 2.)



ILLUMINATING DIALOGUES FROM INDIAN LORE

BHARATA'S FRATERNAL LOVE—SRI RAMA'S UNSHAKEABLE RESOLVE

After the death of their revered father Daśaratha, Bharata undertook the long journey to Śrī Rāma's place of exile in the Citrakūṭa retreat close to the Mandākinī river to carry the sad news and to persuade Rāma to accept the throne which had been allotted to him (Bharata). With him came his younger half-brother Śatrughna, their mothers, and Rāma's mother Kausalyā, the sage Vasiṣṭha, and a vast retinue of the populace of Ayodhyā. When they approached the forest, Bharata ordered all to encamp and wait while he, with Śatrughna, their high-souled charioteer Sumantra, and Guha the great devotee of Rāma, proceeded to Rāma's hermitage. Overcome with grief at the sight of Śrī Rāma in his ascetic attire, Bharata rushed to him and fell at his feet, unable to utter more than 'O worshipful brother!' Śrī Rāma in turn became sad to see his brother pale, emaciated, shorn of royal attire; and raising him and embracing him enquired most tenderly:

Where, I wonder, has your father gone, my darling, that you have come all the way here, leaving him alone? I am glad to behold you after so long a time, although so hard to recognize in your exhausted state. Are you rendering proper service to our father? Is he keeping good health?

Thus, by way of questioning him, Śrī Rāma continued awhile instructing Bharata about the high duties of an ideal monarch. At last, to his repeated inquiries about Bharata's portentous visit, the latter replied:

Having had to do a most unpleasant thing (exiling yourself) at the demands of my mother, and stricken with grief at separation from his most beloved son (Rāma), our father has abandoned us and ascended into heaven. Now, seeing that her object—to gain the kingdom for me—cannot be gained, my widowed mother has become emaciated with grief and will descend into a frightful hell. Be gracious to me, your humble slave, and have yourself consecrated as king of Ayodhyā: and gracious as well to my widowed mothers who have come to entreat you, as well as to all the people of Ayodhyā.... Solicited by me with bowed head—your servant as well as younger brother and pupil—and by the entire body of your father's ministers whom you so much revere, you must not refuse our plea, O tiger among men.

Then again overwhelmed by emotion, Bharata fell weeping and clasped Rāma's feet. But, raising and again embracing him, Śrī Rāma replied:

How can one like myself, of noble lineage and having observed so many sacred vows, commit a sin for the sake of [the trifle of] a kingdom? Further, in you I

see not the slightest fault (which should prevent your being the monarch). Nor should you at all reproach your mother through ignorance: the scriptures permit freedom of action to our elders with respect to wife and children. And you should know that we are considered by the wise to be in the same position regarding our father as are the children or the pupils of any householder. King Daśaratha was perfectly within his rights to send me into the forest in ascetio garb—as much as to have installed me on the throne.

Again, the same degree of respect is due to our mother Kaikeyī as to our father whom all honoured, O jewel among the righteous! Thus, commanded by these parents to go into the forest, how can I do anything else? You are to enjoy the throne of Ayodhyā, and I to dwell in Daṇḍaka forest—for the Emperor Daśaratha ordained thus before ascending to heaven. It is he alone who is your authority: you must duly enjoy the share he allotted you, as I shall enjoy my share for these fourteen years here in Daṇḍaka forest. I consider that alone as my supreme good, even if compared with the state of Brahmā.

Yet Bharata rejoined:

How will the code of conduct prescribed for a king avail me, who stand outside that code (being disqualified, as only the younger brother)? Amongst us [our solar dynasty] it has always been the law that so long as the eldest prince lives, a younger cannot be king. Therefore return with me to Ayodhyā, and have yourself consecrated as king for the continuance of this race of ours. Though the king be a mere human being, the wise consider his conduct, devoted to righteousness as well as prosperity, to be superhuman; and to me he verges on the divine. While I was away in the kingdom of Kekaya, and you in the forest, the wise and pious monarch, esteemed by the virtuous, ascended to heaven.

But first, arise, O tiger among men: let water be offered to our deceased father, as I and Satrughna have already done. You are surely his most beloved: it was solely out of grief for your loss that he departed from this world, fondly remembering you alone.

At this pathetic news, Sri Rama fainted away, falling to the ground like a blossom-laden tree felled by the axe. When he finally regained consciousness he sadly said:

With Father gone, what shall I do at Ayodhyā? What least purpose of his did I serve, unable even to perform his cremation? Even when my exile is completed, I shall have no courage to return to Ayodhyā, destitute of its ruler. Without him, who will give me instructions (about my duty)? From whom shall I any more hear the pleasing words he used to say in approving my good conduct?

At last, Śrī Rāma proceeded to the bank of the Mandākinī with Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, and their trusted Sumantra; there he offered the traditional water and *piṇḍa* (balls of pulp of the *Ingudī* fruit which was the best they could find) to the soul of their father. Slowly returning to the hut, they began loudly lamenting their grief; and at the sound, Bharata's army as well as the throngs from Ayodhyā began hastening to the spot. Terrified by all this, animals and birds fled in all directions, even darkening the sky!

Śrī Rāma greeted his adoring friends as well as he could amidst his grief, for he well realized their sorrow too. Meanwhile the sage Vasiṣṭha was approaching with the three queens. When they passed the Mandākinī and its bathing places, Kausalyā thus addressed the others:

Here is the spot selected for bathing by those fatherless children now in exile amidst such hardships. Along this route, O Sumitra, your son Laksmana has been tirelessly fetching water for the sake of my son. Your son is wholly blameless, yet he

has undertaken such menial service to his brother. Let him now totally give up this painful work and the undeserved hardships (since Rāma will soon be returning to Ayodhyā).

Then observing the morsels of pulp offered by Rāma at the river-bank, she continued:

Behold here this offering made in accord with the scriptures by Rāma. But how will his father, that high-souled monarch who vied with the gods in glory and ruled over the whole earth, be able to partake of the crushed pulp of *Ingudī* fruit? Nothing seems more painful to me than that Rāma, to whom such riches belong, felt constrained to offer such things to his father's spirit. Why does not my heart break into pieces in agony at the sight? The popular saying that a worshipper's deities have to partake of the same food as he, is certainly true.

The other two—Kaikeyī and Sumitrā—did their best somehow to comfort her, and soon they reached Śrī Rāma's cottage. But at the sight of him shorn of all comforts they too broke into tears. And Śrī Rāma at once proceeded to clasp the feet of each of them, while they in turn wiped the dust off his back. Lakṣmaṇa likewise showed his reverence, and they treated him exactly as they did Śrī Rāma. Then when Sītā had also prostrated herself before them, Kausalyā embraced her, saying:

I wonder how the consort of Rāma, daughter of Janaka and daughter-in-law of the emperor Daśaratha, has undergone the suffering of the lonely forest. Seeing your face, like lotus scorched by sun, or a crushed lily, like gold soiled with dust or the moon covered by clouds, I am burnt to the core by grief, even as fire consumes the very substance which supports it.

Meanwhile Rāma had saluted Vasiṣṭha, holding his feet as if he were Bṛhaspati (preceptor of the gods) himself; then he took his seat near him. Soon Bharata came and sat down close to Rama, and Laksmana also joined them. The three brothers seemed to the multitudes who had gathered there, to be blazing like fires on a sacrificial altar. All were eager to hear what Bharata would be telling Rāma, requesting him to take the throne. But that whole night passed in silent sorrow; then beginning at dawn much japa and many prayers were offered and sacrifices performed, on the banks of the Mandākinī. Yet even after this, when the people again returned, there was long silence. At last Bharata began:

My mother has been consoled by you and this kingdom of Ayodhyā bestowed on me. I hereby return it to you. Please enjoy it in peace. As a dam breached by heavy rains cannot be easily repaired, this mighty state cannot well be controlled by any but you. The power to equal you is not in me, any more than a donkey can emulate the gait of a horse, or a common bird the flight of an eagle.

Hearing this submission by the celebrated Bharata, all the citizens and sages there assembled acclaimed it—'Well said!' But although distressed to see his grief, Śrī Rāma, undeflected, comforted his brother thus:

Freedom of action does not belong to the embodied soul, since this soul is powerless (of itself). Fate (Death) forcibly drags it hither and thither. All accumulations end in attenuation; all elevations, in degradation; all unions, in separation; all life has its end in death. As no fear awaits ripe fruits except that of a fall, so no fear except that of death here in this world awaits a man. Even as a house though supported by stout pillars collapses at last, so men fallen into the clutches of old age and death breathe their last.

The night that passes never returns; the Yamuna river meets without fail the all-sufficient ocean. The days and the nights

quickly end the life-span of all beings in this world, as sunbeams draw up water. Grieve for yourself alone: why do you grieve for another? Indeed, the life of each and every creature, at home or abroad, grows shorter each moment. Death ever walks with us, ever sits with us: death goes on our journeys and with us returns. When folds appear in the skin and hair turns grey, who can stay them? See how men rejoice at sunrise, and again at sunset, but do not even perceive the ebbing of life itself! How they rejoice each time a new season appears, as if it were for the first time—yet never recollect that with each change all lives are also waning. Even as two pieces of driftwood touch on the surface of the sea at a particular moment, then drift apart again at another moment,—so, wives and sons, other relatives, and riches part company after coming together. For inevitable is their separation. No living being in this world can escape its destiny when the time comes for it. Hence one mourning for another has not the power to avert even his own death. He is like one standing by the roadside, crying to a group of travellers, 'I shall also follow at your heels'—for he has already gotten into the inevitable path trodden by his forefathers, from which there is no escape—what meaning then has his 'mourning'?

Seeing thus the inevitable end of one's ebbing life, one should follow a pursuit leading to blessedness, for all beings are said to pursue happiness. Our noble father, given to piety, respected by the virtuous, has attained heaven, and is not to be grieved for, my darling! Having shed his worn-out frame, he is surely now happy in the highest heaven: no wise man such as you or I, should mourn for him now. Now, return to Ayodhyā as you were enjoined by him. I too shall continue to do his bidding: there is no least reason for me to flout his command. Through my action, I shall be obeying that very command of his which the virtuous respect most highly. One who seeks to conquer the other world must be kind-hearted and obedient to his elders. Keeping in view our father's righteous conduct, O jewel among men, direct your thoughts only toward the welfare of your own spirit in accord with your virtuous nature.

(*To be concluded*)

—Source: Adapted from Vālmīki's *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇam*, II. Cantos, 99—105, with the aid of the English translation published in *Kalyana Kalpataru*, December 1963.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Reminiscences are taken from 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, pub. by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 600004, 1947) and *Savings of Sri Ramakrishna* (Madras, 1938). References: *Gospel*: No. 1, p. 571; No. 2, p. 722; No. 3, p. 855; No. 4, 173; No. 6, p. 46; No. 7, p. 951; No. 8, p. 215. *Sayings*: No. 5, p. 318.

The words quoted in 'Onward For Ever!' are from *The Complete Works*, Vol. VII (1958), p. 48.

Pleasure, joy, delight, happiness, bliss, beatitude, so on—the terms indicating happiness of various kinds and degrees are legion. A hankering for happiness is at the back of almost every thought and venture

of man. While hedonism seeks to confine human happiness to man's peripheral personality, religion directs his attention to the centre, to the spirit. Nothing less than the Infinite can satisfy the soul of man. 'Happiness and Its Conquest' is an attempt to show that the popular hedonistic or Epicurean approach to happiness is very inadequate, and the right and supremely rewarding approach is the one pointed out by Vedānta.

To a seeker of transcendental reality who is not prepared to smother his rationality, Vedānta makes its greatest appeal. Vedānta asserts the existence of the absolute Reality, called Brahman, and allows full play to constructive rationality in the seeker. At the same time it points out that reason, being limited in its scope, should be outgrown to experience the transcendental Reality which is also the inmost Self of oneself and all creation. Because of its experiential character, Vedānta is non-antagonistic to all religions—it is able to perceive the mystical core in all true religions. 'The various philosophical schools and religious sects have mutual antagonisms,' says the great teacher Gauḍapāda, 'but Vedānta does not antagonize any of them.' In his 'The Universality and Rationality of Vedānta', Swami Satprakashananda highlights these basic Vedāntic characteristics with insight and erudition. The Swami is the founder and head of the Vedānta Society of St. Louis, U.S.A., and this article is a slightly edited section from a forthcoming book of his.

The Swami reserves the copyright of the article.

In this second and concluding instalment of 'Love of God' Swami Budhananda, while citing appropriate teachings from great saints and teachers, discusses the theme of *bhakti* in its practical implications—what to avoid and what to adopt in the deliberate cultivation of love of God. The first instalment of this 'Essay on Applied Religion' appeared in our August issue.

If any religious founder can be said to have started from scratch, it was the Prophet Mohammed. The desert country he was born in and wherein he travelled about for much of his life, seems to be symbolic of the spiritual dreariness that surrounded him. Yet Mohammed succeeded in founding a new religion, and as later history has shown, his success is hardly rivalled by the founder of any other religion. To be sure, this would not have been possible without the divine power that worked in him and a tremendous force of character that he had developed. Though numerous legends have been built around his life to present him to posterity as immaculately virtuous, through them all shine his faith in God, a tender heart, and adamantine strength of character. 'A Voice Crying in the Wilderness' is a profile about this great prophet.

Arthur Schopenhauer was a great admirer of Vedānta philosophy and the Upaniṣads. That he also had a keen interest in Indian culture and Sanskrit literature is evident from his various writings. 'Concerning Sanskrit Literature' brings this interest into bold and clear expression, although one may not agree in toto with all that this German philosopher says. Dr. S. Subhash Chandra, M.A. (Osmania), Dr. Phil, (Koln), Dr. Phil. (Paris), who is already familiar to our readers through his scholarly contributions on Henri Bergson as well as Schopenhauer, has translated this essay from the original German and has given ample notes to help our understanding of it.

Of the many moving scenes portrayed in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the meeting of Bharata and

Śrī Rāma at Citrakūṭa is one of the most pathetic. Devotees who regard Bharata as an ideal worthy of emulation, in his love for Śrī Rāma, derive great inspiration from this episode. The dialogues which take place between the two brothers and between Śrī Rāma and others, reveal on the one hand the love and devotion of Bharata and others for Śrī Rāma, and on the other, Śrī Rāma's indomitable resolve to follow his father's command. The *Rāmāyaṇa* says that gods and angels had gathered in the sky to hear the words of Rāma and Bharata. Well they might have, for the dialogue was profoundly educative. A summary of a part of this is offered to our readers in this issue under the 'Illuminating Dialogues'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, AND THE IMAGE OF MAN: By N. A. Nikam, Published by Somaiya Publications, Pvt. Ltd., 172 Naigaum Cross Rd., Dadar, Bombay, 400-014, 1973, pp. xviii+157, Price Rs. 30/-.

This is a collection of eighteen essays contributed by the author to various periodicals and learned societies in India and abroad. Since it is not a sustained treatment of a single problem or theme, it is not possible for the reviewer to give here anything like a summary of the entire contents. He can only pick and choose, omitting much.

The essays are divided by the author into four parts, dealing respectively with (1) Philosophy, (2) Hinduism, (3) History, and (4) The Image of Man. All are stimulating and readable.

Philosophy is defined as Inquiry. 'Philosophy', says the author, 'arises as a question and lives as a dialogue.' (p. 3) The philosopher is one 'who gives and takes reason'. The author refutes the Leninist view that philosophers only 'interpret' the world and do not change it. From Buddha down to Gandhi, all have been 'revolutionary spirits who changed their times on the principle, "what can be reformed need not be destroyed."' (p. 26)

The seventh essay, 'Appearance and Manifestation', was presented at a Symposium on 'Has Sri Aurobindo Refuted Maya-vada?' Summarizing the main principles of *The Life Divine*, in favourable contrast to Sankara's position, the author says, 'While Sankara's Advaita may be called Appearance-Theory, the Advaita of Sri Aurobindo may be described as Manifestation-Theory.' (p. 40)

Lest this trenchant contrast should suggest that there is no Manifestation-Theory in Sankara or that he was opposed to it, I feel it necessary to point out here that Sankara has given its fullest due to the Manifestation-Theory in so far as the world of *vyavaharika* (relative) experience is concerned. In his commentary on the *Brahma-sutra*, I. 1. 11, Sankara speaks of a progressive manifestation of the lordliness and power of the one eternal Brahman in an ascending hierarchy. In the same commentary, I. 3. 30, Sankara speaks both of a descending series and an ascending series in the manifested universe—a progressive concealment of the knowledge and power of Brahman from man downwards to a blade of grass, and a progressively larger manifestation of this knowledge and power from man upwards to Hiranyagarbha. Sankara only insists—and this is a challenging insistence—that the characteristics of our *vyavaharika* (relative and relational) experience, perfectly real and valid within its context, cannot be carried over to the *paramarthika* experience or the experience of the Absolute *qua* Absolute. Again, the *vyavaharika* and the *paramarthika* are not two numerically different orders of reality, but different experiences of the self-same Reality. There is no ontological 'dichotomizing' as Dr. Indra Sen accuses Sankara of doing (quoted on p. 40).

In the twelfth paper, 'The Neutrality of Science and...Fact-Finding...', the author discusses the alleged neutrality of scientific statements on the ground that they are value-free. He contends that 'scientific statements are not "value-free" statements...[they]...give us knowledge of things, and as knowledge is a "value", scientific statements are not in reality free from value-judgements. Knowledge is "better" than ignorance. This is a value-judgement.' (p. 98)

Further the author says that of the two sorts of value-statements, 'intrinsic', and 'instrumental', scientific statements involve instrumental values. In the discussion appended to this paper, B. Blanshard controverts the author's contention on the ground, among others, that 'Mr. Nikam...is confusing the content of the scientific statement with the value involved in its practical application.' (p. 105) Now, wherein lies the truth in the controversy? As far as I can see, Prof. Nikam is right in holding that knowledge, even scientific knowledge, is a value and that scientific statements 'are not in reality free from value-judgements'; but, 'not...free from value-judgements' can only mean that they *imply* or *involve* value-judgements—*they are not in themselves value-judgements.* That is the point of Mr. Blanshard and there he is correct. Because all knowledge is valuable, intrinsically, I say, not merely instrumentally, therefrom it does not follow that any scientific statement in its form of a factual or descriptive statement is also a valuational statement.

Further, why does Prof. Nikam relegate scientific knowledge to the position of an 'instrumental value'? As knowledge, it has like any other knowledge, 'intrinsic value', apart from the instrumental value which may accrue to it in consequence of its practical applicability.

In the thirteenth essay, 'Philosophy of Indian Culture: Metaphysic of the Idea of History', the author works out the concept of history in the background of Indian culture. The philosophy of history, he says, is the philosophy of time; and in the Indian culture, time is conceived as 'cyclical' and not as 'linear', so that nothing perishes absolutely and every end is a renewal. Death as the 'end' of life is its renewal and a condition of 'rebirth'. The author explains the concepts of *itihasa* and *purana* in Indian culture, thus (p. 111): the former is concerned with what 'was' and has dates; the latter with what 'was' and has no dates—with what happened once upon a time, 'what was ancient even in ancient times'.

The book closes with interesting essays on the Image of Man. The printing and get-up are excellent.

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MODERN AND OTHERWISE: BY PROF. SISIR KUMAR GHOSE, published by D. K. Publishing House, 73-B Anand Nagar, Delhi 110035, 1974, pp. 321, Price Rs. 50.00, $ 10.00.

The book, a collection of twenty-three essays, is an attempt to interpret the blinding phenomenon of the contemporary and the topical, the vogue and vagaries of the elusive and epochal concept called *modernity*. The title of the opening essay, 'The Malady of the Modern', may serve as a keynote to Prof. Sisir Kumar Ghose's none-too-optimistic view of the age. But he is on a quest for values with a definitive faith that he has known the cause of the malady. As he says in the Preface, 'What explains the lack on the modern scene, the road not taken, is the neglect of transcendentals and an indulgence in the modish and the untenable'. Such a quest, and such a belief adds a portentous quality to the book, emphasized and re-emphasized throughout the essays, creating an unmistakable *persona* for the author. 'The Image of Man Today: the Literary Evidence' contains the jeremiad of a seeker after an ideal world, who finds neither the literature nor the image of man cast therein to have come near his dream, and ends gloomily, 'We are still in limbo, moving through purgatory blindfold.' To such a gloom, one may find an answer in some words found in the same essay, 'the purpose of art is to represent order, *complementarity* and transcendence.' (italics added). This view has not been developed in the essay.

The philosophy of gloom that scatters its poppy over whatever it touches does not, however, take away from the sparkle of Prof. Ghose's style. He indeed has an enviable pen—crisp, ironic, and sometimes stooping ever so slightly to a mordant kind of wit. He stimulates and provokes, puns and pricks. He packs a sentence, when he chooses to, with a lot of pellets and they burst in several directions. He has a zest for fight and pricks fads and fashions with glee, and then glows with rueful and sceptic thought (see the essays named above). In the Preface, Prof. Ghose has called these essays of his those 'of a non-specialist'. But though he has disclaimed specialized scholarship, the essays nonetheless are admirably eclectic. Few attempt to develop a philosophic argument, but all of them smack of wide reading and a keen critical mind, which when added to his flair as a stylist make the essays provoke thought and response.

The essays present a varied spectrum of subjects, titular as well as in content. This width of vision goes well with Prof. Ghose's profession as a humanist. He seems asking for hard knocks in the socio-cultural milieu ('Two Cultures?' and 'The Secular Image of Man and Society'),

and at last settles the score with two provocative essays laying forth his personal faith in a style richly aphoristic, rather than expository or argumentative ('Mystics and Society', and 'Beyond Civilization'). A student of literature will be pleased to find more than half a dozen essays given to literary criticism (*Look Homeward, Angel*). Those on Yeats, Pound, and Eliot (pp. 83-129) are particularly worth reading. They are also pleasant to read. When Prof. Ghose is required to be informative but is cramped for space, he knows how to be concise and yet brilliant ('Bengali Writing Today: A Note'). 'Rabindranath and Modernism' is a welcome addition, particularly because of the need of men with Prof. Ghose's sensitive and native response to Tagore, to write on the poet in English. Two essays on aesthetics— '*Santarasa*: The Aesthetics of Tranquillity', and 'A Note on Medieval Aesthetics'—give further width to the book's range of topics and underscore the author's search for value and synthesis, a welcome quest. These essays, however, move tantalizingly away from the object. And if these were expository and objective, rather than reflective and discursive, a needful balance to the book could have been restored. But the author has disavowed any specialist approach, and ranges over the panorama of intellectual problems to deliver the burden of a certain faith. As he declares in the Preface, 'East or West, modern or otherwise, what matters is the struggle to be authentic and whole'. In the final analysis it is the intellectual zest with which this faith is pursued that constitutes the most remarkable aspect of this book.

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MYSTIC APPROACH TO THE VEDA AND THE UPANISHAD: BY M. P. PANDIT, Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras, 1974, pp. 125, Price Rs. 10/-.

The Vedas and the Upanishads have been in modern times interpreted from the standpoint of mysticism, notably by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Aurobindo, and Kapali Sastry. Veda means knowledge or wisdom, while one meaning of the word Upanishad is the mystic or secret doctrine imparted to the student by the teacher. That these scriptures have a basic mystical aspect has been accepted by the Indian tradition. The author of the present text first surveys the different views and then presents Sri Aurobindo's principles of mystic interpretation. We feel he ought also to have considered the principles of Coomaraswamy, for the latter tried to interpret the Veda as *philosophia perennis*. The second, third and fourth chapters apply Sri Aurobindo's principles to an interpretation of Vedic Soma. Here the author draws heavily from the writings of Sri Kapali Sastry and from the Tantras. Soma is interpreted as the 'sap of delight, rasa, the draught of all experience and life' (p. 41). But when Soma was offered in many rituals, did it have another, more earthly meaning? The author does not deny such a meaning (p. 47). He however insists on the symbolic rites.

The fifth chapter examines the legend of Shunah-Shepha, the *brahmachari* rescued from the clutches of Varuna by Vishvamitra, on which single Vedic passage some scholars have built elaborate discussions of 'human sacrifices'. The sixth and last chapter is devoted to the Upanishads, and this is the best chapter of the book.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

THE VEDAS—HARMONY, MEDITATION AND FULFILMENT: BY JEANINE MILLER, Published by Rider & Co., 3, Fitzroy Square, London, W. 1, 1974, pp. xxxvi + 240, Price £ 3.75

THE DEFINITIVE TAROT: BY BILL BUTLER, Published by Rider & Co., 1975, pp. 254, Price £ 2.50 (ppbk.), £ 4.50 (cased)

HINDUISM: BY SWAMI GURUDASANANDA, Published by the author, from Sri Janaky Matha Ashram, 15 Ganapathy Nagar, Thanjavur, 1975, pp. 95, Price Rs. 3.50

NEWS AND REPORTS

VIVEKANANDA ASHRAMA: SHYAMALA TAL (HIMALAYAS)

SIXTIETH ANNUAL REPORT : APRIL 1973—MARCH 1974

The Vivekananda Ashrama at Shyamala Tal was founded in 1914 by Swami Virajananda, as a place for quiet meditation and other spiritual practices for monks and sincere devotees. Within a few months, however, in response to the pitiable condition of local villagers, a Hospital and Dispensary were begun, later organized as the Ramakrishna Sevashrama. Presently the activities of the Centre are as follows:

(1) *The Ashrama.* There is a Shrine which is used by the inmates and devotees for meditation and where arati hymns are sung daily. For individual spiritual practices, the solitude of the Ashrama and its natural beauties are well suited. At a height of over 4,900 feet above sea-level, three miles from the nearest village (which itself is very small) overlooking the Kali (Sarada) River which divides India from Nepal, the Ashrama has on all sides deep forests with manifold animal, bird and plant life. For the convenience of visiting devotees and monks the Ashrama maintains suitable guest houses. The Ashrama routine includes scriptural classes for the inmates as well as frequent guests, celebrations of the birthdays of great teachers of the world, and conducting the free Library and Reading Room, where over 2,400 books are available.

(2) *The Charitable Hospital and Dispensary* (Ramakrishna Sevashrama), the only one of its kind between Tanakpur and Champawat which are 18 and 35 miles respectively from Shyamala Tal, meets an obvious and greatly appreciated need of the community. Patients often come, walking for 15 or 20 miles. There is a full-time, experienced and qualified doctor on duty. The services, being given in the spirit of worship, are irrespective of caste or creed. There are 15 beds in the Hospital; in the current year 101 Indoor patients were treated, as well as 6042 (new) Outdoor cases and 6184 repeat visits. All medicines were supplied free, as well as light food and diet in some cases. There is a patients' library with 216 books. A *Veterinary Department,* added to the Hospital in 1939, is likewise of great help both for humanitarian and economic reasons to the villagers. This year 230 animals were treated, some of them as Indoor patients. A small Dairy is being run, both for Hospital and Ashrama purposes, although it urgently needs enlargement.

Income: The permanent Fund created by Swami Virajananda for maintenance of this Centre yields annual interest of about Rs. 10,800/-, of which less than one-third goes for the Sevashrama. No Government grants are received; the Ramakrishna Mission Headquarters give no financial assistance to this or any other branch Centre; and in this impoverished Himalayan area few if any devotees can afford to give financial help. The Centre thus has to depend largely on contributions from more distant devotees and friends to cover its present annual expenditure of between Rs. 60,000/- and 70,000/-.

Immediate Needs: Major repairs to the residential buildings (which date from Swami Virajananda's time): Rs. 20,000/-. Improvement of Dairy: Rs. 10,000/-. Creation of Permanent Funds for the upkeep and improvement of the Sevashrama including Veterinary Unit, and for the Ashrama's activities in general: Rs. 50,000/-. For endowment of beds in Hospital: Rs. 4,000/- for each bed.

ERRATUM

Prabuddha Bharata, July 1975—p. 288, col. 2, line 6:

for scriptural study which can only *read* of the scriptures. In the rules