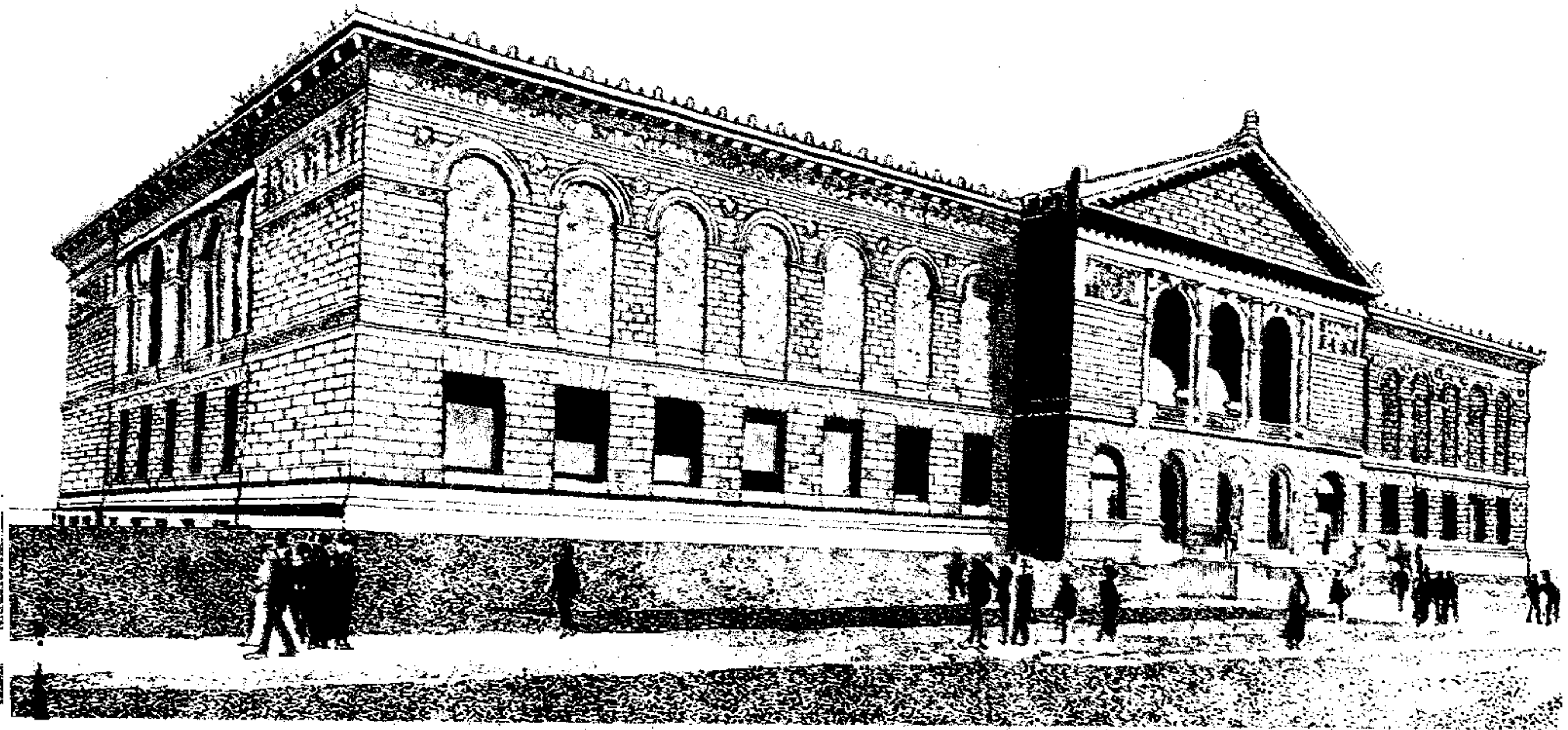




Prabuddha Bharata

or Awakened India



*"Upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance:
'Help and not Fight,' 'Assimilation and not Destruction,'
'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.'"*

*Closing Address by Swami Vivekananda,
Chicago Parliament of Religions, September 1893*



Editorial Office

P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office

5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014
Phone 44-0898



Rates of Subscription (inclusive of postage)

	Annual	Life (30 years)
India	Rs. 30	Rs. 500
Sri Lanka & Bangladesh	Rs. 120	Rs. 2000
U.S.A. & Canada		
Surface Mail	\$ 20	\$ 300
Air Mail	\$ 35	\$ 600
Other Countries		
Surface Mail	£ 15	£ 225
Air Mail	£ 25	£ 375

Cover: The Art Institute
of Chicago

Prabuddha Bharata

A Monthly Journal of the
Ramakrishna Order

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

MARCH 1993

CONTENTS

Divine Wisdom	...	...	121
Vivekananda in Kumaon—III —(Editorial)	...	...	122
Swami Trigunatitananda —Swami Chetanananda	...	...	128
City of Brahman —Pravrajika Brahmaprana	...	...	135
An Integrated View of The Yogas —S. V. Unnikrishnan	...	...	143
Thoreau As A Vegetarian —R. N. Lakhotia	...	...	145
Arise, Bharat of Himalayan Heights —Anthony Elenjittam	...	...	146
Ayurveda, Its Origin, Nature and Importance —Aparna Chattopadhyay	...	...	148
The Cosmic Form in The Gita —Vaijayanti Navangul	...	...	151
A Review Article —Dr. Rama Nair	...	...	154
Two Questions (A Poem) —Nobeena Ghosh	...	...	156
News and Reports	...	...	158
Review and Notices	...	...	160



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

Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. 98

MARCH 1993

No. 3

Divine Wisdom

EIGHT SLOKAS OF INSTRUCTION

तृणादपि सुनीचेन तरोरपि सहिष्णुना ।
अमानिना मानदेन कीर्तनीयः सदा हरिः ।

The Lord's name is to be always sung by one who is humbler even than a blade of grass, with more endurance than that of a tree and who being himself devoid of conceit bestows honours on others.

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं
कवितां वा जगदीश कामये ।
मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वरे
भवताङ्गितिरहेतुकी तदयि ॥

For neither wealth, nor retinue, nor fair damsels, nor even the gift of omniscience have I any longing, O Lord of the universe. May I have in Thee, O Lord, disinterested devotion life after life.

अयि नन्दतनूज किङ्करं
पतितं मां विषमे भवाम्बुधौ ।
कृपया तव पादपङ्कजस्थित-
धूलीसदृशं विचिन्तय ॥

Out of Thy grace, O Thou son of Nanda, pray consider me, Thy servant who is immersed in this mysterious ocean of the world, as the dust of Thy lotus feet.

नयनं गलदश्रुधारया
वदनं गद्गदरुद्धया गिरा ।
पुलकैर्निचितं दपुः कदा
तव नामग्रहणे भविष्यति ॥

When, in taking Thy name, O Lord, with tears of joy my eyes will overflow, words of prayer will be choked in my mouth, and all the hairs of my body will stand erect thrilled with joy.

युगायितं निमेषेण चक्षुषा प्रादृषायितम् ।
शून्यायितं जगत् सर्वं गोविन्दविरहेण मे ॥

In the state of separation from the Lord Govinda, even the wink of an eye seems to me a cycle of time, copious tears flow from my eyes like unto the rainy season, and all the world appears to me a void.

Sri Gaurāṅga

Vivekananda in Kumaon—III

In the third week of April 1896, Vivekananda came back to London from America for his second visit. During his first visit a year earlier he had already won many loyal friends and prepared a working field in London. A few days after his arrival, he began holding his classes in the City and in a short time his illuminating utterances and radiant personality won the admiration of highly cultured audiences of London. In addition to these classes he lectured also in many drawing rooms and in several well-known clubs and societies. Those who heard him once longed to hear him again. Many persons of distinction sought his acquaintance and visited him. The fame of Swamiji spread in the metropolis. Reporting these classes, "*The Queen*" commented as follows: "It is a great wonder, indeed, that the Swami has been able to attract, from the very commencement of the course of his Lectures, so many men in a materialistic society like London, where none cares a fig for religion, while politics reigns supreme in the minds of the people, especially now at the time of the London season—the season of balls, feasts, and all sorts of entertainment."¹ Well, not all were materialists, there were also earnest students of religion. A well-educated couple who were fervent seekers of truth chanced to hear from a friend that a certain teacher from India was expounding Eastern philosophy. The couple had sought in vain in so many ways to satisfy their spiritual thirst. They had tried

many sects, creeds, and attended many churches, but everywhere found to their dismay only soulless rituals and the narrow theological dogmas. They went to listen to the Hindu Yogi. They were captivated. Swamiji's words were packed with immense power and they lifted the listeners' minds to a higher state of consciousness. In one of his lectures he declared to a California audience: "You have heard that Christ said, 'My words are spirit and they are life.' So are my words—spirit and life. They will burn their way into your brain and you will never get away from them."

After hearing Swamiji for some time, the couple intuitively felt here was the man who they had been searching for. The philosophy of Advaita explained by Vivekananda made a profound impression on them. They were convinced that the pursuit of Advaita, without any compromise with dualism and its rituals was alone sufficient to reach the highest truth. One day, coming out of one of Swamiji's lectures, Miss MacLeod who did not know them, entered in conversation with the gentleman, who asked her, "Do you know this young man? Is he what he appears to be?" "Yes," said Miss MacLeod. "In that case one must follow him and immediately find God," said the gentleman. He went to his wife and asked, "Will you allow me to become a disciple of the Swami?" His wife said "Yes," and asked him the same question. They were Captain James Henry Sevier and his wife Charlotte. Captain Sevier was a retired officer of the British army. The very first time the Seviars met Vivekananda in private, he addressed Mrs. Sevier as "Mother" and asked her, "Would you not like to come

1. *Vivekananda in Indian Newspapers*, 1893-1902, Edited by Sankari Prasad Basu & Sunil Bihari Ghosh (Calcutta: Dineshchandra Basu, 1969) The extract was quoted in *The Indian Mirror*-1896, June 25th.

to India? I will give you the best of my realizations." She was known later in the Ramakrishna Order as Mother Sevier. Swamiji instantly knew the deep earnestness in their hearts and happily accepted them as his disciples. It was a great turning point in the life of the Seviers and till the end they never looked back. From that day onward they looked upon him as not only their spiritual guide, but as their son. They placed themselves and their resources at his service. The devotion and loyalty of these heroic workers to the Master was extraordinary. Vivekananda's second visit to London was thus memorable, he made an acquisition.

Due to his great exertions in London, Swamiji was tired. Captain and Mrs. Sevier had been trying to persuade him for some time to take some rest and proposed a long tour. Vivekananda was particularly interested to visit Switzerland and was eager to see the snowy mountains, and trek on their paths and glaciers. It was in these Alpine snows that he spoke to them of his desire to establish a monastery in the Himalayas, which would be a centre for work and meditation; and where his Indian and Western students would be trained to become preachers and workers imbued with the teachings of the Advaita. His words spoken amid the Alpine scenery proved prophetic. The vision of Vivekananda took hold on the Seviers, and their whole life henceforth was to be devoted to its fulfilment. Accompanying the Master, they came to India. In the course of their travels they came to Almora. But Almora, a district headquarters and a popular hill resort, was not quite suited for secluded and quiet monastery. Swamiji's idea was to have a whole hill, all belonging to the Ashrama and with a splendid view of the snow range. In order to give a concrete shape to this idea, the Seviers visited Hiradungri,

Kalamati, Sitoli, Devaldhar, Dudhapakra, and many other places in Kumaon. All of these places were no doubt finely situated, but none could satisfy them fully. Finally, in 1898, a densely forested and mountainous tea estate, with sylvan surroundings at an altitude of 6500 feet, was purchased. It was called Glen Gyle Tea Estate, an isolated place about nine km. from the small village of Lohaghat in the eastern part of Almora District. The hilltop commanded a magnificent view of the snowclad peaks in the distance—Nilakantha, Triśul, Nanda Devi, Nanda Kote and Panchachuli, extending nearly 500 km. east to west. The place was cut off from all other human habitations by a fortification of thick forest, mainly stately deodars, cedars, pine and large oak and rhododendron trees. The nearest railway station at that time was 105 km. off, about four days journey on horseback. The forest was inhabited by abundant wildlife such as barking deer, antelopes, pigs, bears and leopards. Their number has dwindled, but still one can see them. From the old records we get the accounts of tigers also.

In March 1899, the Advaita Ashrama was started and they rechristened the place 'Mayavati'. The office of *Prabuddha Bharata* and the small printing press were shifted from Almora. The Seviers and the editor of the journal, Swami Swarupananda, began their work in the new Ashrama, making additions and alterations to the existing buildings. In July of the same year, three other disciples of Swamiji: Swamis Virajananda, Sacchidananda, and Vimalananda joined as inmates of the monastery. During the beginning years they had to face many difficulties and hardships in this remote place. Though life was very austere it was not without its own charm, cheerfulness and fun. It was a period of strenuous work for the inmates, and intense meditation. Mr. and Mrs. Sevier did not

spare themselves either. On the contrary, they shared all the privations with a smiling face. They attended the scriptural classes conducted by Swami Swarupananda. Swamiji, who was in the West, was overjoyed to hear about how the new ashrama was running at Mayavati. In one of his lectures in San Francisco he mentioned, "...On the heights of the Himalayas I have a place where I am determined nothing shall enter except pure truth....There are an Englishman and an English woman in charge of the place. The purpose is to train seekers of truth and bring up children without fear and without superstition."²

Mr. and Mrs. Sevier were staunch advaitins, and it was also the desire of Swamiji to keep at least one centre free from all dualistic superstitions. His following words were embodied in the prospectus of the Ashrama:

"In Whom is the Universe, Who is in the Universe, Who is the Universe; in Whom is the Soul, Who is in the Soul, Who is the Soul of Man; knowing Him—and therefore the Universe—as our Self, alone extinguishes all fear, brings an end to misery and leads to Infinite Freedom. Wherever there has been expansion in love or progress in well-being, of individuals or numbers, it has been through the perception, realisation, and the practicalisation of the Eternal Truth—**THE ONENESS OF ALL BEINGS.** 'Dependence is misery. Independence is happiness.' The Advaita is the only system which gives unto man complete possession of himself, takes off all dependence and its associated superstitions, thus making us brave to suffer,

brave to do, and in the long run attain to Absolute Freedom....

"To give this ONE TRUTH a freer and fuller scope in elevating the lives of individuals and leavening the mass of mankind, we start this Advaita Ashrama on the Himalayan heights, the land of its first expiration.

"Here it is hoped to keep Advaita free from all superstitions and weakening contaminations. Here will be taught and practised nothing but the Doctrine of Unity, pure and simple; and though in entire sympathy with all other systems, this Ashrama is dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone."³

The hard work and austere life began to exert its price. Captain Sevier fell seriously sick and passed away on the 28th October 1900; he was fifty-five. He was affectionately called Pitaji (father) by all, Mrs. Sevier also referred to him by this name. Mayavati lost in Pitaji a brave soul, a true disciple who sacrificed himself to the cause of his beloved Master. It was a severe jolt to Mrs. Sevier who bore the brunt of bereavement and continued her work calmly and with equipoise. The body of Mr. Sevier was cremated at Mayavati, on the bank of a mountain stream, popularly known as Mayavati river. According to his wish, no monument was erected on the spot of cremation. In the November 1900 issue of *Prabuddha Bharata* the obituary noted:

"It is with the deepest sorrow that we announce the passing away on Sunday the 28th October last of Mr. J. H. Sevier, the joint founder of the Advaita Ashrama, and a tried friend of India and the Indians. A staunch follower of the highest

2. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989) Vol. 8, page 140.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 435-36.

Vedic philosophy, with the characteristic liberality and catholicity of mind towards every other form of faith of a genuine Advaitin, a man human and noble, and a heart loyal and true, while his absence in the body is loss irreparable to us, ours is not the wish to drag him back to the concerns of this shadow existence by selfish thoughts....By special desire expressed most emphatically all through life his remains were cremated, with Vedic rites, with new silk cloth, ghee, sandal-wood, camphor, etc.

Vivekananda intuitively felt while in the West that Mr. Sevier was on his deathbed. He became restless to return to India and see his devoted disciple. So he boarded a steamer and reached the Indian shore on December 6, 1900. On reaching the Belur Math the first thing he enquired about was Captain Sevier. Great was his grief when he heard the news of the passing. Much greater was his sense of disappointment, that in spite of all the hurry, he could not see him once more while living. On 11 December, expressing his anguish he wrote to Miss MacLeod, "I arrived night before last. Alas! my hurrying was of no use. Poor Captain Sevier passed away, a few days ago."⁴ In another letter he expressed to Mrs. Bull: "It was a tremendous blow, sure, I don't know the future of the work in the Himalayas. I am expecting daily a letter from Mrs. Sevier."⁵

Immediately on his arrival Swamiji felt the urge to visit Mayavati to console the bereaved Mrs. Sevier. He sent her a telegram informing he would be going, the exact date to be made known before starting. As Mayavati was a remote place in

midst of forest and many miles away from the nearest sizeable town or village, news was slow to travel. Not even a *katcha* road was there, but only bridal paths that snaked up and down around the hills. Mrs. Sevier was well aware of the difficulties, therefore she asked Swamiji to inform her the date of his arrival at least eight days before, to enable the inmates of Mayavati to make necessary arrangements. He could not do this and the news of his arrival at Kathgodam railway terminus on the 29th December reached Mayavati only on the 25th. Hurriedly, Swami Virajananda, a resourceful person, hired dandi-bearers and porters and reached the far away station, covering the 105 km. distance by long marches in two days. Added to these hardships, the winter season of that year was severe and Swamiji himself had been suffering from asthma and fever. Besides, all the hill journeys in those days were arduous. Swamiji, accompanied by Swamis Shivananda and Sadananda, having rested that day at Kathgodam, began his journey on the 30th December. Like a happy child Swamiji enjoyed the first day out. At noon they stopped at Bhimtal for their meals. Bhimtal is about 12 km from Kathgodam and at about 4500 feet altitude. On the bank of the lake there is a temple of Siva called Bhimeswar. Legend has it that the Pandava Prince, Bhimasena, constructed it, therefore the place is called Bhimtal. However, history says that a king of Kumaon belonging to the Chandra dynasty, Bajbahadur (1638-1678) built this temple. From Bhimtal they went on to Dhari in the evening for the night halt.

The next day morning it began to rain and snowfall seemed to be imminent. Late in the morning heavy rain started to lash and with it snow also began falling. On account of the heavy snow that covered the path the dandi-bearers slipped frequently.

4. *The Life*, by Eastern & Western disciples (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1981) page 561.

5. *The Letters of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama) page 441.

It did not worry Swamiji though, and he went on cheerfully cracking jokes and telling the men stories. The weather went on worsening and getting unbearably chilly. A wind blew too, causing more discomfort and slowing down their progress. Late in the afternoon, shivering and tired, they reached a small teashop, rather a hut, at Pahar-pani. As they could not proceed further, with great difficulty they spent the night in that smoke-filled leaky-roofed hut. The next morning on the 1st January, they arrived at the dak-bungalow of Mournalla. The snow was twelve inches thick. Here with a roaring fire and in a warm and comfortable room, their hearty meal lifted their spirits up. It made them forget their bitter experience of the previous night. The journey from Mournalla to Devidhura, a distance of about 35 km., was uneventful—the day was sunny and the snow thawed. On the 3rd January, when Swamiji caught sight of the picturesque Ashrama from the top of the next hill, he was joyous. Impatient to reach the Ashrama, he mounted a horse and came up the steep footpath at a brisk pace. The disciples had the Ashrama building decorated with flowers in honour of his visit and they were overjoyed at the sight of their beloved Gurudeva. Swamiji stayed a fortnight at Mayavati, mostly indoors due to the inclement weather and intermittent snow, and also because of his indifferent health. But he was fully active writing letters, articles for *Prabuddha Bharata*, inspiring the monks with his spirited conversation, meeting visitors and discussing the future of the Ashrama with Mrs. Sevier. He held Mother Sevier in high esteem and Captain was a martyr in his eyes.

Whenever the weather was clear and the day dawned bright he would go out for walks on the extensive land around the monastery. Some of the nearby hilltops

afforded spectacular views of the natural scenery. The beauty of the hills, even in the chill of January was charming. Specially the views of the distant snow range of the towering Himalayas filled his heart with admiration. In a letter to Mrs. Bull he wrote: "This place is very, very beautiful, and they have made it simply exquisite. It is a huge place, several acres in area and is very well kept. I hope Mrs. Sevier will be in a position to keep it up in the future. She wishes it ever so much, of course."⁶ One day, with others, he managed to climb up the Dharmagarh hill, the tallest in the vicinity of the Ashrama, about 500 feet higher than the Ashrama and about four km. away by the footpath, altitude 7000 feet. From there the view of the snow range is even more grand and Swamiji wanted to have a hermitage built there, where he could, in that absolute silence, immerse himself in meditation. A little distance away from the Ashrama there was a lake. He enjoyed walking by the side of the lake. While walking one day with others, he said with childlike joviality, "In the latter part of my life, I shall give up all public work and pass my days in writing books and whistling merry tunes by this lake, free as a child." Now the lake has dried up, wheat and other food grains are grown on the spot.

As Swamiji's health was getting worse, and the cold unbearable, he made up his mind to leave Mayavati to go down to the plains. He left shortly before noon on January 18, 1901 with others. Going across the hills by the forest footpath, about ten km., they stopped and spent the night in Champavat. Swamiji was in high spirits. He talked animatedly on Sri Ramakrishna and about *Īśvarakotī*-s the same night at length. *Īśvarakotis* are those who have taken birth whenever an Incarnation is born. They

6. *Ibid.*, 6th January 1901.

belong to the Incarnation's inmost circle of devotees. On the 19th, at noon they reached Deuri dak-bungalow, about 24 km. away. Next day they arrived at Tanakpur on the plains and they had to spend the night in great discomfort above a grocer's shop. The last part of the journey, to Pilibhit railway terminus, they covered on horseback. On the 21st evening, with his loyal disciple Sadananda, Swamiji boarded the train to Calcutta. This was Vivekananda's last visit to Kumaon and the region of the Himalayas, he never returned again. It is sad to remember that Vivekananda lived only a year and a half more after this. His visit to Mayavati was a delightful experience for him, and to his disciples it was a joy of heaven. He was reluctant to leave so early the abode of tranquillity and the supreme beauty of the home of Siva. In Kumaon, some places of scenic splendour are famous as *Saptaṣṭitapobhūmi*-s, places where the Great Sages practised spiritual austerities. Many of these stories are called legends, but in the beginning of this twentieth century, it is a recorded event, one of those great *Rṣis*, appearing in our midst, sanctified earth and specially Kumaon and Mayavati. His memory is still sacred in Mayavati and has caused the locality to become a hilly place of pilgrimage.

The immortal poet Kalidas, in many of his plays eulogized the importance and holiness of the Himalayas. There is the incident in the "*Kumāra Sambhava*" of Parvati's determining to marry Siva. The young girl renounces the world and goes into a deep forest to do hard tapas. To test her ascetic spirit and steadfastness, Śankara himself appears before her in the form of a brahmacharin with matted hair. He tells her, "Tapasi, if you are doing these severe austerities with the purpose of getting to heaven, your efforts will be useless, because your father's kingdom is in the sacred

Himalayas, which is the place of the gods, goddesses and sages."⁷

Mayavati Ashrama and the hundred or so hectares of land it owned was in the name of Mrs. Sevier. A year after the passing away of Swamiji, in 1903, she executed a Trust Deed for the Mayavati Ashrama. In deference to her Guru's wishes she made a stipulation in it, that no ritual except that of the *Viraja Homa*, the ceremony of the vow of Sannyasa, renunciation, would be performed on the premises of the Ashrama Estate. The Master's untimely death was the cause of immense grief to her, yet she bore it all with stoic patience and vow to continue the work in which he had inspired her. She went to England twice, once in 1901 and another time in 1908. She mostly lived in Mayavati. She helped to bring out the first edition of the *Life of Swami Vivekananda*, and the first edition of his *Complete Works*. She read the proofs of these and occasionally contributed articles to *Prabuddha Bharata*. Swami Swarupananda took special care of her. It was a severe blow to her again when this Swami suddenly passed away at Nainital in June 1906. Swami Virajananda, who took the place of Swarupananda, becoming the second president of the Centre in July 1906, was equally devoted in his services to Mother Sevier. Her life was a consecration and a service. Despite her age and frail body she engaged herself in some sort of work all the time. She was always serene and cheerful. She looked after the garden and orchards and kept the whole place spotlessly clean. Her sweetness and affection endeared her to everyone. Needy village people and Ashrama servants who

(Continued on page 134)

7. *Kumāra Sambhava*, V. 45 दिवं यदि प्राथयसे
वृथा श्रमः पितुः प्रदेशस्तव देवभूमयः ।

Swami Trigunatitananda

SWAMI CHETANANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

Swami Trigunatita was a genius. He planned the temple himself, combining ideas from a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Muslim mosque, and an American residence. It was designed by the architect Joseph A. Leonard, in a style generally called Pointed Architecture of Grecian and Roman origin. All the mouldings, ornaments, and the arches of the verandah are of Moorish style. The points of the domes, towers, and pinnacles, directed upwards to the sky, have a religious meaning—moving towards God, or rising higher and higher until we reach the very highest.

Shortly after the dedication of the temple, Swami Trigunatita was inspired to start a monastery for the young American students. He recruited ten and put them on the third floor and in the tower rooms on the roof. The young men were all engaged in various occupations and continued to earn their own living, contributing their share of the expenses of the monastery, until such time as each might be ready, in the swami's judgment, to take the first monastic vows.

These young men were subjected to strict discipline. They had to rise early in the morning, meditate regularly, and do household duties such as cleaning, sweeping, and gardening. The swami taught them that all works connected with the temple were holy, and if performed in the right spirit, would purify their minds and advance their

meditation. He himself joined the students in doing the household work; over and above that, he cooked all the meals so that the young men might eat pure, sattvic food, which is essential for spiritual growth. The meals began with a chant and ended with a few minutes of silent meditation. Each student in turn read from one of the scriptures of the world. This was followed by questions, with answers by the swami. Every meal indeed became a sacrament.

Swami Trigunatita was fond of teaching by means of forceful maxims. When someone at the table recited the great watchword of the American Republic, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," he made him repeat it. Some of the mottoes hanging in every room of the monastery were: "Live like a hermit, but work like a horse"; "Do it now"; "Watch and pray"; "Do or die—but you will not die." The swami believed in singing as a devotional exercise, and led his young male disciples in hymns and chants up on the roof of the temple, or down by the shore of the bay in the early morning, astonishing the fishermen and sailors.

Swami Trigunatita was an uncompromising ascetic. He taught his students through personal example more than through words. He was a consistent example of regularity and punctuality. He would go to bed last and rise before any of the other members

of the monastery. His office was his bedroom with no bed. He would spread one blanket on the carpet, put another blanket over himself and use the upper part of his right arm as his pillow. The swami strongly believed that through discipline one can form a strong character, which is absolutely essential as a foundation for spiritual life. To the genuine disciple he would say: "I don't mind if I break every bone in your body if I can drag you up to the shores of the ocean of Immortality and throw you in. Then my work will be finished."

Swami Atulananda left this eyewitness account:

Swami Trigunatita was a man of austere type. When he first came to San Francisco, he fasted once for three days—maybe to accumulate power to carry on the work. He was a strict disciplinarian. Once on Sri Ramakrishna's birthday he spent fifteen hours in worship from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and delivered three lectures, all without leaving the platform....He was a very jolly type of man and very active too. He encouraged others also to follow a tight routine—meditation, study, work, and so on. At lectures there would be no chairs on the platform. He had a desk only and, when speaking, he used to lean on it.

He ran a bookstall and he himself kept the accounts. One day he found the account five dollars short. He was worried, and for days together he worked, trying to make the account balance. Then at long last he wrote at the bottom of the page: "Five dollars short. However, let it go." In that way he tallied the account. He wouldn't take anybody's advice. Once he had to purchase a suit. He went to the market and the trade people sold him

a cheap suit. When he came home Mrs. Peterson said, "Oh, Swami, what have you done? It is the kind of thing that race track people wear. You cannot go out in this dress." Then a compromise was worked out in which the swami was permitted to wear the suit only at home. Another day he purchased a dark red collar, put it on, and came home all the way feeling quite proud of it. Seeing him with that collar, Mrs. Peterson exclaimed, "Oh, what have you done? These collars are used by gamblers. You cannot use it. I am going to hide it."

Swami Trigunatita had an undaunted personality. He boldly faced all the challenges of his life. In the ante-room next to the monastery kitchen there were several strings stretched across one end from wall to wall. Dangling from these were a number of lifelike spiders of different sizes and kinds. The young members were curious about it. First they thought they were there simply as decoration, but later they learned from the swami the mystery behind the spiders. Once while bathing in the Ganga he had been trapped by a swarm of water spiders. He had received such a shock that to overcome that phobia, or rather to make sure that it no longer existed, he hung up the artificial spiders where he could see them a number of times each day.

Swami Trigunatita also started a convent as a separate community at the earnest entreaties of some women disciples who wanted to live a life of discipline under the guidance of the swami. They did all their own cooking and household work in the spirit of worship and service to humanity, and faithfully adhered to the established rules. These women were all self-supporting, working in the daytime and then doing their duties in the convent in the morning and evening. In spite of their hard work,

they were happy as they felt they were on the path that would lead them to God-realization. Swami Trigunatita sensed that the convent might be the seed of spiritual awakening among American women, but for a number of reasons it came to an end in 1912.

The life of Swami Trigunatita was one long sacrifice, and those who were privileged to be in his presence found that their doubts and troubles melted away like snow before the sun. He veritably radiated holiness, for he always lived in the consciousness of the Divine Mother. However, he was overworked and his health was failing. So in April 1906, Swami Prakashananda was sent to assist him. The new swami took over the cooking and other monastery responsibilities, and he won the hearts of the members with his gentle and loving disposition. Nevertheless, from 1913, the membership of the monastery began to diminish, from death or other reasons, and finally it was closed after the death of Swami Trigunatita in 1915.

One of the members of the monastery, a Hungarian named Joseph Horvath, was a practical printer; and this gave Swami Trigunatita the idea of starting a printing press in the temple basement. A complete printing outfit was secured, and Mr. Horvath devoted all his time to the swami's publication projects.

In April 1909 Swami Trigunatita started a monthly magazine called *Voice of Freedom*. This magazine served as a channel through which the message of Vedanta reached many souls who either could not attend the swami's lectures or lived far away. Within three years the magazine was an established success with a growing list of interested friends and subscribers. The swami wanted to blend

the thoughts and culture of the East and the West through this magazine. It was mentioned in the prospectus of the first issue (April 1909): "This periodical is called *Voice of Freedom* because when Freedom is realized, its voice and power reign supreme everywhere, whether in heaven or on earth, or beyond; in every age, whether within the span of history, or before or after. The idea of freedom is inborn in man."

By special arrangement with M., the recorder of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Swami Trigunatita published an American edition of his *Gospel* in 1912, which was circulated widely. In 1914 Mr. Horvath left for Hungary to visit his parents and no one could be found with the necessary experience to take his place. However, the swami managed to print the *Voice of Freedom* with the help of another member of the society. The *Voice of Freedom* continued until March 1916, one year after his death.

While Swami Vivekananda was in America from 1899 to 1900, one of his disciples, Miss Minnie C. Boock, offered as a gift for the work a tract of land of 160 acres in the San Antonio Valley, eighteen miles southeast of Mount Hamilton, California, the site of the world-famous Lick Observatory. Swamiji accepted the offer and sent Swami Turiyananda to build a retreat for the American Vedanta students. Swami Turiyananda began the work with the help of a dozen students, and named the retreat *Shanti Ashrama*. However, he had to return to India in 1902 and Gurudas (later, Swami Atulananda) was temporarily placed in charge of the Ashrama. When Swami Trigunatita came to San Francisco, he took charge of Shanti Ashrama, but Gurudas continued to manage it.

Swami Atulananda reminisced: "I lived with Swami Trigunatita at Shanti Ashrama. For one month every year he used to come there with his students, thirty or forty in number, men and women both. He separated men from the women. Of course, even before, men and women used to live in separate tents. There were separate bathrooms for the two sexes. But the swami effected separate dining tables also. We used to make fun of it."

Swami Trigunatita planned a rigorous schedule for the retreat. From 3:45 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. the students were busy with chanting, meditation, and scripture classes, along with chopping wood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, and maintenance. They were also placed on a strict vegetarian diet. The swami provided plenty of relaxation in between work. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons were declared holidays, and a stream of genuine fun and merriment relieved the students from any monotony or strain that might have resulted from the rigorous routine. At night the swami would tell stories about Sri Ramakrishna, as well as stories about his own life, ranging from his adventures in eating, travelling and seeing ghosts to visions of God. On the full moon night the swami held a Dhuni Fire ceremony [a ritual where an aspirant pours oblations into the fire, signifying the destruction of his ego and worldly desires] on a hill under the open sky, and the students would sit around the fire and spend the whole night in spiritual practices.

Those who had the privilege of attending the classes at Shanti Ashrama could hardly forget their unique experiences. They were surcharged with the spirituality of Swami Trigunatita. On the top of the meditation cabin was a wooden flag bearing the inscription "Om Ramakrishna," carved in relief by Swami Trigunatita himself. The

same inscription appeared on a flagpole on the Dhuni hill and on the entrance gate to the Shanti Ashrama. The swami, in spite of his rheumatism and other physical troubles, kept the spirit of Vedanta and of Sri Ramakrishna alive in the minds of his American students.

Apart from Shanti Ashrama, Swami Trigunatita had a master plan for a Vedanta colony with a temple, library, orphanage, hospital, and an area where members could retire and live comfortably in their old age. So he bought 200 acres of fertile land on the outskirts of Concord, one and a half hour's drive from San Francisco. He kept twenty-five acres for the Society, and the rest was distributed among the members who wished to settle in the colony. Some members built houses, sunk wells, planted orchards and started crops. In addition to his regular duties in San Francisco, the swami went to the colony once every week to supervise as well as to inspire the members. Improvements continued until January 1914, but unfortunately after his passing away the colony project came to an end.

In 1915 the Panama-Pacific International Exposition was held in the Marina district of San Francisco, just inside the Golden Gate and only three blocks from the temple. In the preceding year in preparation for the great event, Swami Trigunatita had purchased the national flags of various countries for display, and had also installed a new system of electric lights which could be seen from the Exposition grounds and made the Hindu Temple look like a fairyland at night. The swami also got permission from the city of San Francisco to build a garden around the temple. An ornamental lattice iron fence atop the wall protected the plants and flowers from passers-by. Statues and other decorative features made

the garden one of the attractions of the neighbourhood and even today the Hindu Temple is a landmark in San Francisco. Unfortunately, the swami did not live to see the opening of the Exposition.

Swami Trigunatita was not a cloistered monk. He knew personally many distinguished people of San Francisco and neighbouring cities. They came to know him either through the business of the Society or through his lectures and classes. He was a likeable person and made friends with unknown neighbours as well as the mayor of the city. With his students he acted like an affectionate mother and also like a chastising father. He expected the best from them and trained them to give public speeches. The swami gave the following instructions to help the students prepare for a lecture:

1. The lesson or lecture is to be taken sincerely and faithfully as a spiritual service and religious practice for one's own spiritual advancement.
2. Sit in a sincere and prayerful mood.
3. Make the mind blank. Drive off all the desires and thoughts of the secular side of work.
4. Meditate on God.
5. Then meditate on the subject intensely.
6. Then offer the lesson or lecture as a sacred sacrifice to God.
7. Bow down in the spirit of thankfulness to God and ask for his blessing.
8. Finally, when you come to the platform to speak, remember that you are talking to God. God is the only audience.

Swami Trigunatita was a man of truth. Once he was invited to dinner by a noted clergyman. This man was a good friend and an admirer of the swami. After dinner the clergyman asked the swami, "Is the food all right?" The swami was reluctant to say anything. When the host insisted on knowing the swami's opinion, he replied: "It is hard for me to tell you the harsh truth. Truly, I don't relish this kind of food." The clergyman was a little shocked, but he appreciated Trigunatita's frankness and love for truth. He said to the swami: "I know you will not deviate from truth, even for the sake of social etiquette or friendship. But let me tell you, if you are invited by somebody in the future, please don't say such a harsh truth; otherwise, they will criticize you." Rather than be put in that position again, from that time on the swami never accepted another dinner invitation.

For the last five years of his life, Swami Trigunatita suffered constantly from rheumatism and Bright's disease. However, he continued to follow his routine punctually, did not deviate from his strict diet, and would not reduce his workload. As a result, his health broke down. Once he told a disciple: "A number of times during moments of excruciating pain, I would think, 'Let the body go, and end it all.' But I could not do it—the thought would come that the Mother's work must go on, and I set my will to force the body to carry on. This body has become a mere shell and may go to pieces at any time. For three years now I have held the body together by sheer force of will."

In December 1914 Swami Trigunatita asked one of his disciples to comment on his lectures. When the disciple pointed out to the swami that his voice quivered during the lecture, he replied, "I have tried my utmost to control it, but as I go onto the

platform, my Divine Mother appears to me and fills me full of such feelings of love that it is sometimes difficult for me to articulate."

The swami must have had a premonition of his end. On December 24, 1914 he said to a young disciple: "I want you to promise me that if anything should happen to me in the near future you will see to it that after my death my brain is removed and presented to a scientific institution to be preserved in alcohol for analysis." It was his belief that the brain of a yogi would be found to differ in size and structure from that of a worldly person, and that when this was demonstrated the scientific world would be compelled to acknowledge it. Thus he planned that even in death his body might serve the truth.

On Friday, December 25, 1914 Swami Trigunatita conducted the all-day Christmas service from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. This was composed of three lectures (at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m.), chanting and singing, reading and explaining the scriptures. It was a divine experience for those privileged to be present on that day when the advent of Jesus Christ, an Incarnation of God, was celebrated by a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, another Incarnation of God. The floral decorations, the illumination of Christ's picture, the fragrance of incense, the devotional songs and instrumental music, and the holy presence of the swami created an uplifting atmosphere. As on other occasions, the swami did not leave the platform even for a moment during the whole day. How he mastered his physical ailments and made his pain-racked body endure the fifteen hours, only he could say.

Two days later, on Sunday afternoon, December 27, 1914, Swami Trigunatitananda was lecturing from the podium of the Hindu

Temple of San Francisco. All of a sudden a mentally unbalanced young man threw a bomb onto the pulpit; there was an explosion and a cloud of dense blue smoke obscured the platform. When the smoke cleared it was found that the young man, a former student of the swami, had been killed and that the swami had received severe injuries. He was taken at once to the Affiliated Colleges Hospital. On his way to the hospital, the swami inquired, "Where is X, poor fellow!" Some time ago the swami had observed the man's mental condition, and had recommended that he find a job in the country, where the surroundings would be soothing. Even in the midst of excruciating pain the swami's mind was filled with pity for his mentally ill student.

A number of devotees visited the swami daily and reported his progress to the temple. In addition to regular nurses a male attendant was appointed to lift and carefully move the swami's heavy body. One nurse made a comment: "I have never seen such a calm, uncomplaining, and enduring patient in my life." From his hospital bed, the swami asked Mrs. Peterson to repair the damage to the temple. Accordingly, she collected the funds and his wishes were carried out. The doctor gave the swami a high dose of sleeping medicine to reduce his pain, and as a result he was not conscious all the time. But although he received the best medical care, it could not stop the infection from his wounds.

On the afternoon of January 9, the swami told one of his young disciples that he would leave his body the next day, which was the birthday of Swami Vivekananda, according to the Indian lunar calendar. And as he foretold, Swami Trigunatitananda, the great yogi and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, passed away on January

10, 1915 at 7:30 p.m. As soon as the news of his death spread, a large number of people, including the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious leaders of San Francisco, came to pay homage to the swami. His body was cremated according to his wishes at Cypress Lawn Cemetery; and on April 13, 1916, Swami Prakashananda carried the relics of Swami Trigunatita to the Shanti Ashrama and

installed them on the top of the highest hill, Siddha Giri, the "Hill of Realization."

Swami Trigunatita's ashes remain as a mute symbol of his vanished form, but his immortal message lives on after him: "Work hard. Discipline yourself. Build your character. Realize your Self. And be free."

VIVEKANANDA IN KUMAON—III

(Continued from page 127)

received her unbounded kindness, called her a 'goddess.' Therefore Vivekananda wrote about the Seviars: "Mrs. Sevier is a jewel of a lady, so good, so kind. The Seviars are the only English people who do not hate the natives."

Though she was an avowed Advaitin she had deep reverence for Sri Ramakrishna. Once she said about him, "Of all the perfect men that have appeared on earth, I consider him the greatest." Even while at Mayavati her deteriorating heart condition caused some anxiety in all the inmates. As her

health began to fail she left India finally in March 1916. When she was in England Miss MacLeod once asked her about her long stay in Mayavati, "Didn't you feel bored?" Mrs. Sevier simply answered, "I used to think of Swamiji." In England she suffered from her frequent heart attacks and at the age of eightythree she died, on October 20, 1930. At Mayavati, Mother's bungalow and Mother's kitchen garden are still visited by monastic inmates and devotees with her affectionate memory. As the Master was extraordinary, so were his chosen disciples.

City of Brahman

PRAVRAJIKA BRAHMAPRANA

The human body is called a city of Brahman. The Atman—Pure Consciousness, is felt by mystics in the centre of the heart. The author of this scholarly paper is a nun of the Vedanta Society of Southern California at Sarada Convent, Santa Barbara, U.S.A.

Within the city of Brahman, which is the body, there is the heart, and within the heart, there is a little house. This house has the shape of a lotus, and within it dwells that which is to be sought after, inquired about, and realized....Though old age comes to the body, the lotus of the heart does not grow old. At the death of the body, it does not die. The lotus of the heart, where Brahman exists in all his glory—that, and not the body, is the true city of Brahman.¹

Chāndogya Upaniṣad

In the Upaniṣads and Tantras we find many allusions to this mystical paradise—the City of Brahman. Our spiritual technology runs on the unlimited energy of the Atman, or Inner-Controller, the body's Ruler.

The Atman presides over seven metropolises, situated in the spinal column, from the Mūlādhāra, opposite the organ of generation, to the Sahasrāra, or thousand-petalled lotus in the brain. Each of these plexuses, or spiritual nerve centres, governs a specific level of consciousness in the body—from procreation to God-intoxication and final illumination.

The thoroughfare connecting these metropolises is the spinal column, wrapped in a serpentine fashion around which are two main nerve currents called the Idā and Piṅgalā. Through nerve fibers in the Idā and Piṅgalā, sensations are constantly sent to the brain and from the brain to the body, where they are translated into reflexes and motor actions.

In other words, the Idā and Piṅgalā constitute what is called the mind. Along them race the inhabitants of our kingdom—our thoughts and emotions. The Idā and Piṅgalā convey nerve impulses from the spinal column or brain to the periphery of the body, and equally from the body's periphery to the central nervous system.

In the Upaniṣads this movement is called Prana, and this Prana produces thought. To quote the *Praśna Upaniṣad*:

Prana is born of the Self. Like a man and his shadow, the Self and Prana are inseparable. Prana enters the body at birth, that the desires of the mind, continuing from past lives, may be fulfilled. As a king employs officials to rule over different portions of his kingdom, so Prana associates with himself four other Pranas, each a portion of himself and each assigned a separate function.²

1. Swami Prabhavananda and Frederick Manchester, trans., *The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal* (Hollywood: Vedanta Press, 1947), p. 119.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

In ordinary people, thought and imagination are weak, so only a small quantity of Prana flows unevenly in the Idā and Piṅgalā. However, in the yogi, Prana flows abundantly and smoothly in these two side channels—the Idā and Piṅgalā—abundantly, because the yogi has built a strong spiritual imagination, and smoothly, because spiritual thought is the foundation of a calm and steady mind.

But when the yogi, through sheer strength of will gathers the mind into one spiritual thought, the side channels become inactive. The two-way traffic of the Idā and Piṅgalā merges into a freeway flowing in one direction through the Suṣumnā, the normally untrafficked roadway in the centre of the spinal column. What happens? Sages who have refined their nervous systems and perception through yoga, say that the energy of the body becomes like a charged battery. Just as electricity flows in one direction, the yogi through concentrated thought of God forces the *Suṣumnā* open and impels the nerve currents to unite and travel upwards toward the brain in a single mental current. Swami Vivekananda, in his "Six Lessons on Raja-Yoga," explained the process:

The nerve centre at the base of the spine near the sacrum is most important. It is the seat of the generative substance of the sexual energy and is symbolized by the Yogi as a triangle containing a tiny serpent coiled up in it. This sleeping serpent is called Kundalini, and to raise the Kundalini is the whole object of Raja Yoga.

The great sexual force, raised from the animal action and sent upward to the great dynamo of the human system, the brain, and there stored up, becomes Ojas or spiritual force. All good thought, all prayer, resolves a part of that animal

energy into Ojas and helps to give us spiritual power. This Ojas is the real man...One in whom the whole animal sex force has been transformed into Ojas is a god. He speaks with power, and his words regenerate the world.³

The spiritual dynamics of the Kundalini explain the East's emphasis on self-control. To quote Swami Vivekananda:

Controlled desire leads to the highest result. Transform the sexual energy into spiritual energy, but do not emasculate, because that will be throwing away the power. The stronger this force, the more can be done with it. Only a powerful current of water can do hydraulic mining.⁴

The spiritual current that is felt in the spinal column when the Kundalini is awakened is referred to in the Upaniṣads as *Prāṇā*, and in the Tantras as the *Mahāvāyu*, or "Great Wind." In *The Serpent Power*, a reputable commentary on the Tantras, Sir John Woodroffe presents the relationship of the Upaniṣadic system of Prana to the Tantric system of the Kundalini at the time of superconscious vision:

Prana first enters the Sushumna. Apana unites with Prana in the Sushumna. When Apana reaches the *region of fire* below the navel, the *fire* becomes bright and strong, being fanned by Apana. The *heat* in the body then becomes very powerful, and Kundalini, feeling it, awakes from Her sleep "just as a serpent

3. Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VIII (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), pp. 45-47.

4. Swami Vivekananda, "Inspired Talks," *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VII (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), p. 69.

struck by a stick hisses and straightens itself." Then it enters the Sushumna.⁵

Words such as *heat*, *fire*, and *light* have been used by the yogis to describe the strange and powerful manifestations of the Kundalini rising. When Yama bestowed on Naciketā the boon of meditation on the inner fire, he said: "That fire which is the support of the world and is the means of attaining the infinite world is hidden in your heart."

There is an Indian saying that the inside of a yogi's body is like a blazing furnace. It is sometimes called "the fire of knowledge," or "the fire of renunciation"—such is the power that spiritual disciplines generate. In fact, one definition of *tapas*, or austerity, is literally "to generate heat." In incarnations of God, this definition is manifest to an extraordinary degree. Sri Ramakrishna said: "One day I was passing back of the kuthi [proprietor's bungalow] when my whole body burst into flames, as it were, like the fire in a homa."⁶ He went on to describe that fire:

The burning pain that one feels when one is separated from God is not an ordinary feeling. It is said that the fire of this anguish in Rupa and Sanatana [two great disciples of Sri Chaitanya] scorched the leaves of the tree under which they sat. I was unconscious three days in that state. I couldn't move. I lay in one place....The earth that had stuck to my body while I was lying on the ground had become baked.⁷

The fire of Caitanyā's renunciation was so great that when Sārvabhauma placed sugar on his tongue, it did not dissolve as the saliva had dried. Furthermore, the fire of anguish in Radha's heart was so intense, that it literally dried up the tears in her eyes!

This body that we are daily accustomed to grooming, feeding, and satisfying is, in fact, a temple of God—a perfectly constructed framework for housing and manifesting the indwelling Atman.

Christ said, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."⁸ The yogis know how to visit and dwell in those mansions. Based on their revelations, we can map out the City of Brahman and the roadways leading to castles of greater grandeur.

The Tantras' six cakras correspond to the Vedas' seven planes of consciousness and the so-called six stations of the Bauls, an Indian devotional school of thought. In *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, the Master gave a detailed description of them:

The first three planes of the Vedas may be compared to the first three Yogic centres, namely Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, and Manipura. With ordinary people the mind dwells in these three planes, at the organs of evacuation and generation and at the navel. When the mind ascends to the fourth plane, the centre designated in Yoga as Anāhata, it sees the individual soul as a flame. Besides, it sees light. At this the aspirant cries out: "Ah! What is this? Ah! What is this?" When the mind rises to the fifth plane, the aspirant wants to hear only about God. This is the Visuddha centre of Yoga. The sixth

5. Sir John Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1974), p. 210. Italics added.

6. M., *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Swami Nikhilananda, trans. (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1973), p. 868.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 747.

8. John 14:2.

plane and the centre known by the yogi as Ājñā are one and the same. When the mind rises there, the aspirant sees God. But still there is a barrier between God and the devotee. It is like the barrier of glass in a lantern, which keeps one from touching the light....After passing the six centres the aspirant arrives at the seventh plane. Reaching it, the mind merges in Brahman. The individual soul and the Supreme Soul become one.⁹

Though the system of the Kundalini is unique to the Tantras, it is not only compatible with Upaniṣadic and Yogic revelations, but with the visions of the world's great mystics. To quote Sri Ramakrishna:

Once a sādhu of Hrishikesh came here. He said to me, "There are five kinds of samādhi. I find that you have experienced them all. In these samādhis one feels the sensation of the Spiritual Current to be like the movement of an ant, a fish, a monkey, a bird, or a serpent."¹⁰

Saint Isaac the Syrian wrote, "The ladder to the heavenly kingdom is within you.... Immerse yourself within yourself...and you will find there steps by which you can mount to heaven." In *The Dark Night of the Soul*, by Saint John of the Cross, the saint speaks of the house of the body with its doors closed and the members of the household—senses and mind—asleep. The bride alone is awake. She finds her way with her own inherent light and climbs out of the house through a hidden ladder.

Furthermore, Saint Teresa of Avila in her book, *Interior Castle*, lays before us

the fortress of her own soul as seven mansions, each portraying a different level of consciousness.

In the first mansions, the soul—though aspiring—is in love with the venomous creatures of desire and is vulnerable to the attacks of the poisonous reptiles of the courtyard.

The fourth mansion corresponds to the heart centre, where mystical life begins. Saint Teresa describes the soul as a fountain built near its source—a spring—and the water of life flowing into it.

The fifth mansion resembles the Viśuddha cakra, as a state of spiritual betrothal. Herein the soul is completely possessed by God.

The sixth mansion, or Ājñā plane of consciousness, is where the lover and the Beloved see each other for long periods of time.

Finally, in the seventh mansion, spiritual marriage transpires. There is complete transformation and perfect peace.

What are the outer signs of inner spiritual travel? Swami Vijnanananda described in vivid detail how the Kundalini can manifest itself in the body of an incarnation of God. "Something that I saw in the Master has remained imprinted on my memory for all times."

From the base of the spine right up to his head, the whole column had become inflated like a thick cord. And the energy that rose upwards towards the brain seemed to be spreading its hood and swaying its head like a snake dancing in joy.¹¹

9. M., *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 245.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 829.

11. Swami Apurvananda, comp., *Swami Vijnanananda* (Allahabad: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1984), p. 88.

Overt physical changes from spiritual experiences vary with individuals. In *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master*, Swami Saradananda dispels misconceptions as he discloses this aspect of the science of yoga. "The aspirant gets wonderful bodily changes, spiritual visions, etc., in all kinds of spiritual states of consciousness," the Swami wrote, "in the higher non-dual state as well as in the lower Savikalpa states."

Again, these visions and transformations are seen to be different in different individuals; these changes are observed in some people after only superficial experiences; while very little of these is observed in others even when they have profound experiences. In illustrating this, Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "If a couple of elephants get into the water of a small pool, the water is thrown into a violent agitation and it overflows; but the water in a vast lake remains as still as ever even when scores of them get into it." Nor is it a fact that mere bodily changes, visions, etc., are inevitable signs of the depth of ecstasy. If, however, the depth of spiritual experiences has to be measured it must be inferred,...from one's steadfastness, renunciation, strength of character, the attenuation of desires for enjoyment, etc. It is by means of this touchstone alone and by no other means that the amount of dross in ecstasy can be assessed.¹²

The action of the Kundalini is not always detected, except in the experience it produces. "Where there [is] any manifestation of what is ordinarily called supernatural power or wisdom, there a little current of

Kundalini must have found its way into the Sushumna." declared Swami Vivekananda.¹³

The rousing may come in various ways, through love for God, through the mercy of perfected sages, or through the power of the analytical will of the philosopher.¹⁴

The Atman—pure consciousness and thereby, formless—pervades our entire personality. But when limited by our boyd-mind complex, it appears to have a specific locus, or centre, where its presence is most felt. The Hindu scriptures and saints of the world speak of the heart as that centre. But strangely, what and where that heart centre is varies from scripture to scripture. Some refer to it as the "cave of the heart" the "lotus of the heart," the "chamber of the heart," the "shrine of the heart," or the *hṛdaya ākāśa*, which literally means the "space of the heart."

As we enter deeper into our subject and leaf through scriptures for clues as to its whereabouts, we find some descriptions that are beautiful meditations, revelations that stir the imagination. For example, in the "Narayana Sukta":

At a distance of a finger span from the throat and above the navel lies the great altar of the universe illumined by a garland of flames...

In the *Vivekacūdāmaṇi*, Śankara also describes the heart centre:

Here, within the body, in the pure mind, in the secret chamber of intelligence, in the infinite universe within the heart, the Atman shines in its captivating splendour,

¹²Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda, trans. (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1952), III. 2. 8-9.

¹³Swami Vivekananda, "The Psychic Prana," *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972) p. 165.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 165.

like a noonday sun. By its light, the universe is revealed.¹⁵

Though Śankara presents some of the loftiest meditations on the heart, he places the spiritual centre within the anatomical heart. "The heart is a lump of flesh," wrote Śankara in his commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*,

shaped like a lotus-bud facing downwards with the stalk upwards, in which are apertures for numerous arteries. It is the receptacle of life and is familiar, being observed when the body is dissected.¹⁶

Christian mystics disagree amongst themselves as to the location of the heart centre—some say the anatomical heart, others the emotional heart. Saint Theophan the Recluse wrote:

Where is the heart? Where sadness, joy, anger, and other emotions are felt, there is the heart. Stand there with attention.¹⁷

What does Patanjali postulate? If we scrutinize the Yoga Sūtras, we find that his aphorisms are too sketchy to elaborate on directions to the heart. However, Patanjali's commentators do, and they vary widely in their opinions. Swami Hariharananda, in his annotations on Vyasa's commentary, places the heart centre near the emotional, rather than within the anatomical heart. Swami Hariharananda Aranya wrote:

The inner part of the chest wherein one feels pleasure if there is love or happiness,

and sadness, if there is unhappiness or fear, is called the heart. As a matter of fact, the location of the heart has to be determined by following the feeling.¹⁸

Swami Prabhavananda, in his commentary on the Yoga Aphorisms, presented another point of view. "The ancient yogis believed that there was an actual center of spiritual consciousness, called the 'lotus of the heart,'" the Swami wrote,

situated between the abdomen and the thorax, which could be revealed in deep meditation. They claimed it had the form of a lotus and that it shone with an inner light. It was said to be "beyond sorrow" since those who saw it were filled with an extraordinary sense of peace and joy.¹⁹

The Tantrikas disagree with all of these opinions. They say that the spiritual heart is found neither in the anatomical heart nor in the emotional heart. Furthermore, the spiritual heart is not one, but *two* hearts!

One heart centre is called the *Anāhata Cakra*—the sacred space wherein the ṛṣis have heard the unstruck sound, Śabda Brahman. This centre is pictured as a blue lotus with twelve petals and is situated in the spinal column.

Below or behind this lotus, located in the region of the anatomical heart, is another eight-petalled red lotus. Herein lies the seat of the *jīvātmā*, the reincarnating ego. And here the worship of the Chosen Ideal takes place on the jewelled altar—the

15. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, trans., *Śankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination* (Hollywood: Vedanta Press, 1947), Verse 132.

16. Śankara's commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* I:6.

17. George Maloney, ed., *Pilgrimage of the Heart* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 120.

18. Swami Hariharananda Aranya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali*, P.N. Mukerji, trans. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1977), I:28:1.

19. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, trans., *How to Know God: The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* (Hollywood: Vedanta Press, 1971), p. 71.

Manipīṭha. The *Mahānirvāna Tantra* calls this heart cakra the *ānanda-kanda*, which literally means the “root of bliss.”

One swami of the Ramakrishna Order explained the mystery of the two hearts: The Anāhata Cakra is within the Kundalini system, and the spiritual heart contains the Kundalini system.

“But how,” we may well ask, “is it possible that on so crucial a subject as the heart centre, there can be such diverse opinions as to its whereabouts?” In representing the Tantric school, Sir John Woodroffe postulates:

The Chakras themselves...are centers of Consciousness..., but the gross regions which are built up by their coarsened vibrations, which are subject to their influence, and with which loosely and inaccurately they are sometimes identified, have been said to be the various plexuses in the body....As the gross and subtle are thus connected, mental operation on the one will affect the other.²⁰

In *The Chasm of Fire*, when a disciple asked why heart palpitations are sometimes felt during spiritual practices, the Sufi master reiterated: There are two hearts—a physical and a non-physical one. When the latter is activated, the former is bound to feel it.²¹

No matter what school of thought may appeal to us, we as spiritual aspirants should only meditate upon that locus which the guru has instructed. Even a particular guru may vary his instructions according to the temperament of each disciple.

A good rule of thumb to follow whenever we find ourselves becoming too fastidious about metaphysical concepts is to remember that when we talk of Brahman, there is no universe—no you or I, cakras or sheaths, no front or back, high or low. Name and form cease to exist. For all practical purposes God is, as St. Augustine once said, “a circle whose circumference is nowhere and whose centre is everywhere.” In this connection, Swami Abhedananda related the following story to Swami Prabhavananda:

Sri Ramakrishna, Golap Ma, Lata Maharaj, and Swami Abhedananda travelled to Calcutta by boat. As they hadn't gone to any devotees' home, they felt hungry and thirsty. Golap Ma gave 5c to Abhedananda to go and buy something. They got puffed rice which Swami Abhedananda gave to Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna ate the whole thing and then drank the water from the Ganges. Swami Abhedananda said: “We watched him eat everything. When he felt satisfied, we all felt satisfied.” Swami Prabhavananda added: “The Master had fed the puffed rice to the Atman. He had centered himself in the Atman which is in all.”

Strange and fascinating qualities of the spiritual heart become manifest to a remarkable degree in the lives of the divine incarnations, and particularly in the Ramakrishna Incarnation. The Master's biographer-disciples, Swamis Saradananda and Mahendranath Gupta, cite numerous incidents in which Sri Ramakrishna passed his hand over a devotee's heart—touching the chest with either his hand or foot—thus altering not only the person's basic mindset, but also transmitting transcendental states of consciousness.

20. Sir John Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power*, pp. 161-62.

21. Irina Tweedie, *The Chasm of Fire* (Longmead: Element Books, 1985), p. 24.

Once with a touch the Master totally obliterated Mathur Babu's obstinate refusal to immerse the image of Divine Mother Durga after her special worship. Mathur, who was overcome by an intense fear of separation from the Mother, could not obey the strict scriptural injunctions. This alarmed everyone. Thinking that such an irrational stance was due to a deranged brain, the mistress of the house called Sri Ramakrishna. "The Master came," Swami Saradananda reported in *Sri Ramakrishna: The Great Master*, "and saw that Mathur was deeply absorbed in thought and pacing up and down the room with his face sombre and eyes red."

As soon as he saw the Master, Mathur came up to him and said, "Let them say whatever they like, 'father', I cannot bid good-bye to Mother before I breathe my last. I have told them I shall perform Her daily worship. How can I do without Mother?" Passing his hand over Mathur's heart, the Master said, "Oh! Is this your fear? But who says that you will have to be without Mother? Moreover, where will She go even if the ceremony of immersion be gone through? Can a mother afford to be away from her child? Sitting in the outer hall She accepted your worship these three days; She will now be nearer to you, sit in your heart, and accept your worship."²²

In describing his second visit to Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda presents us with another remarkable example of the Master's touch. "I found him sitting, deep in his own meditations, on the smaller bed," the young Naren wrote.

There was no one with him. As soon as he saw me, he called me joyfully to him and made me sit down on one end of the bed. He was in a strange mood. He muttered something to himself which I couldn't understand, looked hard at me, then rose and approached me. I thought we were about to have [a] crazy scene. Scarcely had that thought passed through my mind before he placed his right foot on my body.

"Immediately, I had a wonderful experience," the future Vivekananda reported:

My eyes were wide open and I saw that everything in the room, including the walls themselves, was whirling around and receding, and at the same time, it seemed to me that my consciousness of self, together with the entire universe, was about to vanish into a vast, all-devouring void. This destruction of my consciousness of self seemed to me to be the same thing as death. I felt that death was right before me, very close. Unable to control myself, I cried out loudly, "Ah, what are you doing to me? Don't you know I have my parents at home?" When the Master heard this, he gave a loud laugh. Then touching my chest with his hand, he said, "All right—let it stop now. It needn't be done all at once. It will happen in its own good time." To my amazement, this extraordinary vision of mine vanished as suddenly as it had come. I returned to my normal state and saw things inside and outside the room standing stationary, as before.²³

²². Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master*, III. 7.13.

²³. Christopher Isherwood, *Ramakrishna and His Disciples* (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1965), p. 197.

An Integrated View of The Yogas

S. V. UNNIKRISHNAN

The apparently conflicting statements of the Gita on the importance of different yogas are reconciled thoughtfully by the author. He is the finance director, Karnataka Power Corporation, Ltd. Bangalore.

Often we come across arguments about the prime teachings of the Gita—whether it is Karma, Bhakti, Jñāna or Yoga. There are passages in the Gita extolling each one of these as the highest. Here are some of them: “Verily there is nothing purifying as knowledge (*Jñāna*) in this world.” (4.38) “Therefore you too do work as these ancients did.” (4.15) “A yogi (one practising meditation) is superior to a man of austerity; he is superior to a scholar; he is superior to a ritualist too. Therefore, O Arjuna, be you a yogi.” (6.46) In Chapter 12, the Lord describes how the ideal bhakta is most dear to Him. Consequently, controversies have developed about the relative importance of these four main paths to Reality.

However, a study of the Gita reveals that it is not possible to have any rigid division among the different paths and they are closely inter-related, as we shall see from various passages in the Gita.

The Self is known by various means: “There are some who perceive the *Ātman* within themselves by the practice of meditation with a purified mind. There are also others who approach Him through the discipline of knowledge, or of work.” (13.25) All the paths are acceptable to the Lord: “O Partha, whosoever worships Me through whatsoever path, I verily accept and bless them in that way. Men everywhere follow My path.” (4.11) Thus all the paths are valid means of knowing Him. But are they independent? We shall consider each of the yogas.

Karma Yoga is extolled in Chapters 3 and 4. A true Karma Yogi has to be a jñāni and a yogi. The following passages would bring out this fact: “Offering all your actions to Me, your mind in unison with

the spirit and free from desires and egotism, you fight without the slightest touch of hatred or excitement.” (3.30) “He who sees work in ‘no work’ and ‘no work’ in work, he is wise among men. Even while doing all work, he remains established in yoga.” (4.18) “Whose undertakings are devoid of desire-born objectives, whose works have been burnt up by the fire of knowledge—him the wise call a sage.” (4.19) “Without attachment to the fruits of action, ever satisfied and free from calculation, he is verily doing nothing, even though engaged in action.” (4.20) “In the case of one who is without attachments and the sense of agency, and whose mind is fully established in the knowledge of God—his actions being done in dedication to the Lord, melt away with their very tendencies.” (4.23) Obviously, Karma is integrated with jñāna and yoga.

In verse 6.46 quoted earlier, a yogi has been highly praised and Arjuna was asked to be a yogi. However the very next verse says: “Of all the yogis, he is the most attuned in spiritual communion who worships Me with abiding faith and with his innermost self fused with Me.” (6.47) So, the yogi has to be a bhakta. In fact, the essence of the yogic meditation is “to sit in spiritual communion, meditating on Me, with Me as the highest end.” (6.14). But if bhakti is the essence of yoga, its culmination is the vision of the all-pervading Self, i.e., jñāna. “The man of spiritual insight, established in same-sightedness, sees the Self as residing in all beings and all beings as resting in the Self.” (6.29) “He who sees Me in all beings and all beings in Me—to him I am never lost, nor he to Me.” (6.30) “Established in the unity of all existence, a yogi who serves Me present

in all beings, verily abides in Me, whatever be his mode of life." (6.31) "O Arjuna, in my view that yogi is the best who, out of a sense of identity with others on account of the perception of the same Ātman in all, feels their joy and suffering as his own." (6.32) Yoga is thus fully integrated with Bhakti and Jñāna.

Now, what about Jñāni?—"I cherish the jñāni as My very own self," says the Lord. (7.18) The characteristics of Jñāna are extensively given in Chapter 13 (verses 8-12). One of the characteristics is "practice of unswerving devotion through contemplation on Me as one's own." (13.11) So bhakti is a very important component. The fact that the jñāni is a bhakta is reiterated in 7.17: "Among them (i.e., those who adore Me) the jñāni, ever-communing and single-minded in devotion, is the best." In 18.63, the Lord tells Arjuna: "Thus I have imparted to you wisdom (jñāna) which is more profound than all that is profound." And what is that most profound jñāna? It is this: "The Lord dwells in the heart of all beings.... Seek refuge in Him, making a total surrender of your being—body, mind and soul." So, to be a true jñāni is to be a true bhakta. Conversely, by bhakti, one attains jñāna: "By devotion does he come to know Me—both My extent and My essence. Knowing Me thus in truth and reality, he enters into Me at once." (18.55) As a result of jñāna, one worships God: "The high-souled ones endowed with virtues characteristic of Devas, understand Me to be the Immutable and the source of all beings, and adore Me with a mind undistracted by anything else." (9.13) "Strenuous and steadfast in their vows, these ever-integrated devotees worship Me with devotion, always singing My glories and prostrating before Me." (9.14) "He who knows Me in this way as *Puruṣottama*,

he understands the true nature of this Totality, and he loves and adores Me with his whole being." (15.19)

If a jñāni has to be a bhakta, the bhakta has to be a yogi and a jñāni. His characteristics are essentially those of a jñāni: "Friendly and compassionate to all and without any touch of hatred, devoid of possessiveness and arrogance, ever content and contemplative; alike in happiness and misery; self-controlled and firm in conviction; dedicated to Me with all his heart and all his soul..." (12.13-14) "who causes fear to no one, and whom none can frighten, who is thus free from the moods caused by euphoria, anger and excitement..." (12.15) "desireless, pure, resourceful, unattached, unworried, and without any sense of self-centred agency..." (12.16) "He who is free from elation, anger, sorrow and craving, who neither seeks the pleasant nor shuns the unpleasant..." (12.17) "Alike to friend and foe, alike in honour and insult, alike in heat and cold, alike in praise and blame—unattached, contented, homeless, and steady in mind." (12.18-19) These are the characteristics of a bhakta. They can hardly be distinguished from the characteristics of a jñāni. In fact, even to be a *guṇātīta*, one who has transcended the *guṇas*, a person has to be a bhakta: "He who serves Me through the communion of unswerving and exclusive devotion, transcends the *guṇas* and attains fitness to become Brahman." (14.26)

The above discussion shows that the ideal man of the Gita is a fully integrated person. The jñāni of the Gita is a bhakta and the bhakta is a jñāni. Contemplative yoga is common to both of them. And, the man of action combines the qualities of a bhakta and jñāni in himself.

[Note: The Gita passages in this article are from the translation by Swami Tapasyananda]

Thoreau As A Vegetarian

R. N. LAKHOTIA

The writer of this lucid short essay is a tax consultant in Delhi and has written many books on this subject.

One of the great personalities who inspired Mahatma Gandhi for his ideas on Civil disobedience and Non-cooperation was the American Philosopher, Henry David Thoreau (1817-1861). He was a practical philosopher. He only talked about what he had experienced firsthand. He believed in simple and wise living. To prove his point to himself and to the world, once he lived alone in the woods for two years in a house which he had built himself, on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Mass., U.S.A. There he earned his living by the labour of his hands. His pithy comments are quotable like, "Superfluous wealth can buy superficialities only." Thoreau never married. He lived alone. He refused to pay a tax to the State. He drank no wine. He never knew the use of tobacco. He ate no flesh.

It would be interesting to note how he developed dislike for flesh eating. He says: "I have found repeatedly of late years, that I cannot fish without falling a little in self-respect. I have tried it again and again. I have skill at it, and, like many of my fellows, a certain instinct for it, which revives from time to time, but always when I have done, I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. There is something essentially unclean about this diet and all flesh. The practical objection to animal food in my case was its uncleanness; and besides, when I had caught and cleaned and cooked and eaten my fish, they seemed not to have fed me essentially. It was insignificant and unnecessary and cost more

than it came to. A little bread or a few potatoes would have done as well, with less trouble and filth."

He did not like the tea and coffee. He believed that every man who wanted to preserve his higher or poetic faculty in the best conditions has been particularly inclined to abstain from animal food. He had great love for fruits. He did not use condiments in his diet. He advised his fellow beings to leave off eating animals. He said: "I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized."

Thoreau thought that there was no drink in the world better than water. He wrote: "I believe that water is the only drink for a wise man, wine is not so noble a liquor; and think of dashing the hopes of a morning with a cup of warm coffee or of an evening with a dish of tea! Ah, how low I fall when I am tempted by them."

Thoreau preferred a simple house to a furnished house. He was terrified to find that the three pieces of limestone on his desk had to be dusted daily particularly when the furniture of his mind was undusted. He, therefore, threw them out of the window in disgust. He preferred sitting in the open air because no dust gathers on grass. He made very interesting comments

(Continued on page 153)

Arise, Bharat of Himalayan Heights

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

India, a land sanctified by many spiritual giants, will never cease to live. Reverend Anthony Elenjittam is a forceful and perceptive writer. He has written many books and has been a contributor to this Journal for many years.

This motherland of ours, this Bharat of Ramas and Krishnas, of Yajnavalkyas and Valmikis, Gargis and Sitas, Buddhas and Mahaviras, Kabirs and Nanaks cannot be eclipsed from history, cannot grow decrepit nor die. India must arise; India will forge ahead, not as a domineering imperial and colonial power, but as the sacred land of the Advaita Vedanta, of Sankhya of Kapila, of the *Yogapradīpa*, and of all those schools of philosophy and Himalayan-high religion which still runs in our veins, which surges forth from the subconscious in the Indian blood arousing the lion of divinity asleep in us, and projecting the image of Divinity that is the real nature and substance of every human being of Greater India, which is not any longer Bharat of political history, Indonesia and Indo-china of Greater India, but that greater India which is humankind, the entire cosmic life, that *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam* which is our home in that *AUM* which is our richest heritage, our immortal treasure, our priceless *Kohinoor* gem.

Not one, but a thousand Vivekanandas will arise and sound the trumpet of freedom and emancipation of human beings from the chains that grind them down and weigh heavily on their shoulders. Sri Ramakrishna was not merely the Sage of Dakshineswar, nor merely one of the prophets of modern India. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda mission is the mission of India throughout the ages of recorded history since the days of Chandragupta Maurya and Alexander

the Great, and from the unrecorded millennia of the soul of India which uninterruptedly continues to pulsate and vibrate within us to this very day. Yes, India cannot isolate herself, cashing in on past achievements and glories, or taking pride on the 'Everest-High Advaita Vedanta' of the Upanishads and Sankara, Gaudapada and Badarayana and a host of others down to the days of Swami Vivekananda. India must act, and act today more than ever, as we stand on the threshold of the third millennia after Christ when epoch-making changes are taking place in the heart of humankind. We are not going to remain silent, much less remain as spectators of the historical scenes that are taking place before our very eyes; we are also actors on the stage of history, contributing our share in the making and moulding of the new humanity that is being born with a cosmic vision at heart, with a world citizenship as the corollary of the world culture and world-wide-vision we have today. Then India will not be confined to the geographical boundaries nor to the political frontiers that have remained after the political vivisection of the indivisible Bharat into India and Pakistan. Then India will be coextensive with the entire human family which is the dreamland of the great sublime Indian thought and philosophy which cannot shrink back from its eternal concept of *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam*—the family of God, God that is both pure unalloyed absolute Existence, and that God who vibrates within the heart of all existing

Three Generations of Small Savers.

There's One Thing They All Trust—Units.

Unit Trust has schemes to meet every need. Whether the need is for high growth or liquidity. Whether it's tax benefits or good returns coupled with insurance cover.

Unit Scheme 64

For security, 100% liquidity and growing returns. Plus pledging facility.

Unit Linked Insurance Plan (ULIP)

Life Insurance and free Accident Insurance coverage with high returns. Income Tax benefits under Section 88. Minimum age for joining the plan is now 12 years.

Children's Gift Growth Fund (CGGF)

The gift that grows more than 15-fold in 21 years with 14% assured dividend and attractive bonus dividends every 3 years. And get Gift Tax exemption too!

Monthly Income Unit Plan with Bonus (MIP)

Earn a regular monthly income while savings grow. Double your money in just 5 years with the cumulative option. Get bonus dividend and capital appreciation too.

Housing Unit Scheme

Opportunity to go in for a house worth at least 3 times your investment.

OMNI Unit Plan

A feeder scheme with good returns. Till you get a scheme of your choice.

CRTS '81

Exclusively for Charitable and Religious Trusts and Registered Societies. Offers security, high returns, tax exemption plus repurchase facilities. Non-deduction of tax at source. Dividend for 92-93 was 18%.

Master Equity Plan, a unique growth-cum-savings plan. Income tax benefits under Section 88.

Children's College and Career Fund Unit Plan (CCCCF)

A unique plan from UTI to meet the rising cost of education and career for your child.

Other attractive growth schemes too, such as: Unit Growth Scheme, Masterplus, Mastergain offering high capital appreciation on your investment. Munstershare, in which investor's gains have grown over 10 times in 7 years.

For details, please contact your nearest UTI Agent or Chief Representative OR



UNIT TRUST OF INDIA

(A Public Sector Financial Institution)

2 & 4, Fairlie Place, Calcutta 700 001

FOR YOUR BETTER TOMORROW

Corporate Office :

13 Sir Vithaldas Thackersey Marg
(New Marine Lines)
Bombay-400020 ; Tel. 2068468

Zonal Office :

2 Fairlie Place, Calcutta-700 001
Tel : 220-5322

Branch Offices :

- Asha Niwas, 246 Lewis Road
Bhubaneswar-751 014 ; Tel : 56141
- 2 & 4 Fairlie Place, Calcutta-700 001
Tel : 220-9391
- 3rd Administrative Building, 2nd Floor,
City Centre, Durgapur-713216, Tel : 543131
- Jeevan Deep, M.L. Nehru Road
Pan Bazar, Guwahati-781 301; Tel : 8102
- Jeevan Deep, Exhibition Road
Patna-800 001 ; Tel : 235001
- BOB Bldg, 1st Floor, Main Road, Bistupur,
Jamshedpur-831 001, Tel : 25508
- Jeevan Deep Building, Sevoke Road,
Siliguri-734401

Ayurveda, Its Origin, Nature, and Importance

APARNA CHATTOPADHYAY

Ayurveda in recent years is gaining importance. Its genesis and goals are discussed by the writer, who is a former Reader in History at Banaras Hindu University.

*Carakasamhitā*¹ begins with the following utterance of Atreya—"Now, I shall begin the discussion on the chapter on long life... (*dirgham jīvitīyamadhyāyam...*) (*Caraka Sūtrasthānam*, Ch. I, 1) And then we find that, desirous of long life, sage Bharadvāja went to Indra the lord of the immortals. (*Caraka Sū.* I, 3)

Caraka says that Āyurveda is the *veda* that is the science which increases longevity, that is *Āyu*. Caraka further says that it is a science in which life with its sorrows and joys, and beneficial and harmful things, is described. (*Sūtras*, Ch. I, 26, 40) About Āyurveda, Suśruta says that longevity or life *exists in this science*, and so it is called Āyurveda, or the science of longevity, or the science of life—*āyurasmin vidyate*. (*Suśruta Sūtrasthānam*, Ch. I, 15).

So the definition of Āyurveda given by Suśruta and Caraka shows that the span of human life can be lengthened with the help of Āyurveda. It is clear according to this definition that no living being has a fixed

time for death. This shows a very scientific approach the medical authorities of ancient India had towards human life. We find that destiny has no role to play in the matter of man's life and death. This point is made clearer in the following facts given by Caraka. More than fifty sages had gathered in the Himalayan region and they held a seminar for helping humanity, because diseases were causing troubles even to persons who were leading the life of asceticism, and who used to fast, study, and observe celibacy. The sages made the observation that good health is the very foundation of gaining *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*—leading of moral life, earning of legitimate pleasures and wealth, and in the end attaining spiritual liberation—and that diseases snatch away these desired objects and destroy life.² So life is ended by diseases. It does not end in a fixed hour ordained by fate or destiny. And diseases are destructive of man's hopes for *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*. In Caraka we further notice that a physician is the giver of life. A physician should always take care to increase his qualifications so that he can give life to human beings, *prāṇadah...* (*Caraka Sū.*, I, 131) So a physician not only saves life, he gives life. The master-surgeon Suśruta says that the physicians are the givers of life in this world, *prāṇadah bhuvi...* (*Suśruta Sū.*, III, 46)

1. "The golden age of Indian medicine, from 800 B.C. until about AD 1000, may be termed the Brahmanistic period. It is marked especially by production of the medical treatises known respectively as the *Caraka-samhitā* and *Suśruta-samhitā*, attributed, respectively, to the physician Caraka and Suśruta, traditionally a surgeon. Both these works were formerly regarded as being of great antiquity, and hence claims arose for the priority of Indian scientific medicine over its Greek counterpart."—*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition, Vol XI, page 824.

2. *Vighnabhūtā yadā rogāḥ prādurbhūtāḥ sarīriṇām...dharma artha kāma mokṣaṇāmārogyam mūlamuttamam.* (*Caraka Sū.*, I, 7-15)

Caraka says that *Āyu* (lit. life, longevity) consists of the body, sense organs, mind and soul. Synonyms of *Āyu* are *dhāri*, because it holds the body, sense organs, mind, and soul together; it is called *nityaga* because consciousness depends upon *Āyu*; and it is called *anubandha* because it links different parts of the body. (*Caraka Sū.*, I. 41) Since the very consciousness depends upon *Āyu*, and since *Āyu* links different parts of the body, *Āyu* means life, and so *Āyurveda* should be translated as 'Science of Life', and not 'Science of Longevity'.

Origin of *Āyurveda*.

According to *Suśruta* the author of *Āyurveda* was *Brahmā*, who composed the *Āyurveda* consisting of a hundred thousand slokas in one thousand chapters. And *Brahmā* had created *Āyurveda* before he had created human beings—*śloka śata sahasram adhyāya sahasram...* (*Suśruta Sū.*, I. 6) Regarding the origin of *Āyurveda*, Caraka says that *Brahmā* the Supreme Being imparted the knowledge of *Āyurveda* to *Dakṣa Prajāpati*; *Aśvins* learnt it from *Prajāpati*, and *Indra* learnt it from the *Aśvins*. And then sage *Bharadvāja* went to *Indra* to learn *Āyurveda*—*brahmaṇā hi yathā proktam āyurvedam prajāpatih...* (*Caraka Sū.*, I. 4-5) In *Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdaya* of *Vāgbhaṭ* we find that *Brahmā* is the healer of all diseases mental as well as physical. And the knowledge of *Āyurveda* was obtained by *Prajāpati* from *Brahmā*, and from *Prajāpati* by *Aśvins*, and from *Aśvins* by *Indra* and from *Indra* by *Ātreya* and other sages. (*Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdaya Sū.*, I. 1, 3)

In the *Mahābhārata* we find the following facts regarding the origin of *Āyurveda*. In the *Śāntiparvam* we find that human beings used to live happily without any ruler or law to chastise wrongdoers. But there was

degeneration in society and lawlessness (*mātsyanyāya*) prevailed. The gods were alarmed and they went to *Brahmā* for help. *Brahmā* then composed *Dandānīti*, that is, the Science of Polity, consisting of a hundred thousand chapters. This comprehensive treatise consisted of all the subjects necessary for human society and for the existence of human beings on earth, and these subjects included *Āyurveda* too. *Dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa* are entirely dependent on this *Dandānīti*. (*Mahābhārata, Śāntiparvam*, 59, 13-79).

It is noteworthy that according to Caraka, *Aśvins* because of their knowledge in medicine and surgery were honoured by *Indra* and other gods. Caraka says that the *Aśvin* brothers were worshipped by *Indra* the lord of heaven. (*Caraka Cikitsitāsthānam*, I, iv. 39) The gods in heaven who are immortal, ever young, intelligent and steady, along with their chief (that is, *Indra*) worship the *Aśvins*. (*Ibid.*, Sl. 48) Caraka points out that in a performance of sacrifice, if offerings are not made to *Aśvins* the sacrifice will remain incomplete and no benefit will be obtained out of such sacrifice. (*Caraka Cikitsitā*, I. 40-44) That *Aśvins* were masters of surgery and medicine is noticed in the following facts given by Caraka. *Aśvins* joined the severed head of 'Yajna' to the body. They gave treatment to the broken teeth of 'Pusa', and the lost eyes of 'Bhaga', and to the arms of *Indra*. They cured the Moon god when the latter was attacked with consumption and they restored the grace to Moon when the latter had lost it. And ṛṣi *Cyavana*, born in the line of *Bhṛgu*, lost his youth, complexion and voice due to excessive indulgence in sense-pleasures; the *Aśvins* restored youth to him by their treatment. (*Caraka Cikitsitā*, I. 40-43) For these reasons the *Aśvins* are worshipped by *Indra* and other great personages.

Caraka says that since Aśvins are held in such a high place by immortal gods including Indra, men who are mortal and who are victims of old age, diseases and death must worship the physicians. (*Ibid.*, 48-49) One is called *Prāṇācārya* who possesses good conduct, who is intelligent, and who is a master of Āyurveda. Such a person should be treated like a spiritual teacher by human beings—*guruvat pūjyaḥ...* (*Ibid.*, 50)

Nature and Sanctity of Āyurveda.

According to Suśruta, Āyurveda is eternal and sacred, the bestower of heavenly bliss, fame, longevity and subsistence—*sāsvataṃ puṇyaṃ...* (*Caraka Sū.*, I. 19) Caraka also says that Āyurveda is eternal and auspicious. (*Caraka Sū.*, I. 23) The sanctity of Āyurveda is made clearer in the view of Caraka in that the study of Āyurveda enables one to attain the highest bliss of human life, which consists of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. (*Caraka Sū.*, XXX. 27) For the attainment of these desired objects of life, Āyurveda should be studied by all says Caraka. Caraka explains how these can be attained through Āyurveda. One attains *dharma*, that is religious merit, by one's efforts to cure the diseases of spiritual people, founders of religious orders and expounders of virtuous ways of life, or diseases of one's mother, father, brother, relations and superiors. It is also obtained by one who practices meditation as described in the Āyurveda and acts accordingly. *Artha* is acquired by getting rewards from the rich and well-to-do persons by curing their diseases; *Artha*, that is worldly gain, is also obtained by protecting one's own self and also by protecting the life of one's

own persons—the lives of attendants, servants, etc. *Kāma*, that is pleasure, is obtained by the recognition by others of one's qualifications and respect won from the elite by one's fame and popularity as a healer of diseases for which people will approach one for help, honour and position in society. (*Caraka Sū.*, XXX. 27)

The knowledge of Āyurveda according to Caraka is beneficial for one both here and hereafter, that is, in this life on earth and in life after death—...*pūṇyatamo...loka-orubhayorhitam....* (*Caraka Sū.*, I. 42). That one acquires the highest religious merit by curing persons of diseases has been pointed out in the Purāṇic literature. According to Suśruta, no other act gives higher religious merit than giving treatment to the sick—...*cikitsitā puṇyatam na kiñcidapi....*³ The same views are forwarded by Caraka, who says that a physician desirous of obtaining highest religious merit should save the life of every living being with the feelings of a father. There is no greater gift than the gift of life. The aim of Āyurveda is the attainment of Supreme Knowledge and Supreme Bliss.⁴ (*Caraka Cikitsitā Sū.*, I. 55-61)

3. *Caraka Samhitā*, edited by Sri Jaydev Vidyānāṅkarā. (First Part) Published by Motilal Banarāsīdass, Seventh edition, 1963: Delhi, Varanasi, Patna., pp. 4-5.

4. The term Ayurveda should be rightly translated as science of life and not as science of longevity. In the Sanskrit-English Dictionary (page-85) and the English-Sanskrit Dictionary (page-267) by V.S. Apte, however, we find that both the terms Ayu and Dīrghāyu are given for longevity, life and duration of life. Both the books are published by Motilal Banarāsīdass, Delhi., 1965 and 1964 respectively.

The Cosmic Form in The Gita

VAIJAYANTI NAVANGUL

To instil confidence in the great warrior Arjuna, at a rare moment of weakness and hesitancy, the Lord reveals to him His Cosmic Form—showing the beginning and end of all manifestation. The author, who is of Baroda, Gujarat, discusses the great Vision from the point of view of divine grace.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* contains a message which is so universally human that it remains relevant to all ages and cultures. The *Gītā* abounds with a dynamic inspiration so simple and convincing that it moves and lifts up the heart and mind of the reader. We may read the Gita several times and think that we have exhausted its meaning, but when we read it again we get a new light which we never had before. It is quite well known that the *Gītā* has been interpreted by various scholars in the light of *Jñāna*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*. Different Acaryas have drawn upon it to support, bolster and establish their tenets of philosophy.

The central teaching of the *Gītā*, like that of the *Upaniṣads*, focuses on the Supreme Entity. The book follows the Upaniṣadic doctrine, namely, that a person achieves emancipation through the knowledge of the Absolute, the consummate goal of life, by becoming a *Brahmaniṣṭha*—*Srotriyam brahma-niṣṭham*, *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 1.2.12; and *Puruṣa evedam viśvam*, *Ibid.*, 2.1.10. Also, *Yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukma-varṇam...paramam sāmyam upaiti*, *Ibid.*, 3.1.3. The influence of the Upaniṣadic doctrines is found throughout the *Gītā*. However, the eleventh chapter of the *Gītā* expounds some additional features, which may be compared to some of the Upaniṣadic dialogues, but which reaches a great height of dramatic appeal. We shall discuss in this article, in the light of the *Upaniṣads*, the eleventh chapter as it speaks of God's Grace—*tatprasādātparām śāntim sthānam*

prāpsyasi śāśvatam—“By His Grace shalt thou attain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode.” (18.62)

The scripture glorifies the divine Form (*Rūpa*) of Kṛṣṇa. The chapter, “*The Vision of the Cosmic Form*”, deserves high esteem for its philosophy and example of divine grace. At the outset Arjuna expresses his desire to see the Lord's Cosmic Form, *Virāṭa Svarūpa*. He says: ...*Yogeśvara tato me tvam darśayātmānamavyayam*—“If, O Lord, Thou thinkest me capable of seeing it, then, O Lord of Yogis, show me Thy immutable Self.” (11.4)

In the preceeding chapters, Arjuna is represented as overwhelmed with affliction on the very battlefield. When the war was just at the point of commencing, desirous of having a last minute view of the opposing array, he asked Kṛṣṇa to place his chariot for a while amidst the rival armies. Kṛṣṇa did so and brought to Arjuna's notice all the heroes of the Kuru family assembled for war. Arjuna cast a glance around and then wanted to withdraw, since he saw friends and relatives on either side waiting to kill each other. In confusion and despondency he left aside his weapons and declared not to fight. He expressed the view that it would be better to live on alms, or even to die at the hands of the enemy, rather than to fight. Ultimately, Arjuna wanted to avoid by all means the destruction of the Kuru family, his cousins, and others. He found the situation too hard to tackle. His unwillingness to fight against

his elders and teachers, which comes up so unexpectedly, gives a dramatic turn to the entire situation. With greatly perplexed mind, he seeks desperately some divine guidance from Kṛṣṇa. Hence, Kṛṣṇa tries to motivate the valiant warrior with many arguments. The *Viśvarūpa-darśana*, the spiritual vision of the cosmos, and the argument from the standpoint of the Cosmic Order, was one of them.

Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself and shows to Arjuna His luminous, dazzling and terrifying Cosmic Form in which life and death are equally wonderful. The revelation of the vision of the cosmos to a devotee implies the boundless grace of God, because the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā* itself speak about this: *Nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā, na bahunā srutena: yamevaiṣa vṛṇute, tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām*—"The Atman cannot be attained by the study of the Vedas, nor by intellect, nor even by much hearing of the sacred scriptures; but by It is attained whom It chooses." (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 1.2.23) And

*Na vedayajñādhyayanairna dānairna ca
kriyābhirna tapobhirugraih
evamrūpaḥ sakya ahaṁ nṛloke draṣṭum
tvadanyena kurupravīra*

"(Except by you, on whom My grace has been bestowed), none in this world could see Me in this Cosmic Form, be it by Vedic study, by sacrifice, by good works, by rituals, or by severe austerities." (*Gītā*, 11.48)

The manifestation of Kṛṣṇa in the Cosmic Form is a boon (*Vara*) of divine grace to Arjuna. It is a favour of God to His devotee and friend. The boon that is granted is the vision of the whole universe all gathered together into one. The dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna can be thus compared with some of the dialogues occurring in the *Upaniṣads*:—in the *Bṛhadarāṇyaka* 6.2.5,

between Pravahana Jaivala and Aruni; in the *Kaṭha*, between Yama and Naciketas, and in the *Bṛhadarāṇyaka* between Janaka and Yajnavalkya, and so on, which are all 'boon-oriented'. The dialogues expound the knowledge about *Brahman* and the various means to acquire it. However, the *Gītā* not only proclaims the knowledge of the Supreme Self, but it goes beyond and says that when the Lord is pleased He reveals this Cosmic Form.

In the *Purāṇic* stories (*Viṣṇu-purāṇa*, *Matsya-purāṇa*, and *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa*) we come across instances of God revealing Himself to devotees when pleased with them. Viṣṇu revealed when He was pleased with Dhruva and Prahlada. But those manifestations of divinity, compared to that in the *Gītā*, were not of a Cosmic Form. In the *Purāṇic* narratives, the divine Form granted to be seen by the devotee was of the personified type, whereas the *Gītā* depicts the impersonal Cosmic Form and Its luminous nature. In it is seen vividly and simultaneously the coexistence of creative and destructive nature, daylight and darkness, life and death. The vision leads Arjuna to the conclusion that God is All-in-All—He is in birth, in life, and in death as well, the motivating factor in all beings, and all beings are instruments in His hand.

In the *Upaniṣadic* dialogues the teacher leaves the pupil to stand alone on his own legs when he has shown him the path and the Goal. There the teacher's duty is over. Thus, whatever is left to be done, the student is expected to proceed on his own. The aspirant then goes on to experience the truth with his efforts and knowledge. The Master enthusiastically expresses farewell after having explained the aim and path. In the case of the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa, through the *Virāta-darśana*, draws Arjuna's attention to how every gross and subtle object, and all beings emanate from God in the begin-

ning, and enter into His all-consuming Divine Mouth in the end. Thus He points out to Arjuna that He is the governing principle of the universe. Taking refuge in Him, and following Dharma, one should perform one's duties. Arjuna was a warrior and his duty was to uphold Dharma, even on the battlefield if necessary.

Further, it is remarkable to notice that there is a special purpose behind God's revelation. Observing Arjuna's hesitation to follow his own Dharma, and his passive attitude lurking in such expressions of his as *Svajanam*—'my kinsmen', 'my people', etc., Kṛṣṇa frequently encouraged Arjuna to fight, and the *Virāṭa-darśana* was a last attempt of the Lord to stress the fact that He alone is responsible for killing or non-killing, and Arjuna is only an instrument—*nimittamātra*. It meant also, as the Lord Himself said, that the warriors of the opposing side arrayed on the battlefield were already killed by the foreordaining mind of Providence.

The *Viśvarūpa-darśana* takes us to the celestial realm. The vision of the Cosmic Form of the Lord is a great finale to the dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa. The vision was rather momentary, but its effect was tremendous. Arjuna became thoroughly enlightened and calm, having seen by direct experience that the infinite Lord is the be-all

and end-all—the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer, of the entire universe.

Now, Kṛṣṇa's earnest devotee was not calm and quiet (*praśāntacitta*) before the God-vision, like Aruni-Gautam in the *Bṛhadarāṇyaka* or *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Arjuna's mind is wavering—whether 'to do' or 'not to do.' He is not in a position to take a firm decision. Therefore, the question arises whether Arjuna is entitled to see the cosmic vision. The great spiritual qualities for comprehending the Truth behind manifestation are not evident in Arjuna. Still, Arjuna is favoured by God. Probably by the bestowal of the grace of God-vision, the Lord means to uplift Arjuna's courage, remove his bewilderment, and make him a fit instrument to re-establish Dharma, righteousness, on the earth.

Thus God graced the devotee with Higher Knowledge. The boon falls in the category of a *Daiva*, or heavenly boon, as contrasting with other boons found in the *Upaniṣads* and *Gītā*, where mention is made that God is also the supplier of earthly blessings too. One is *Parā-vidyā*, also called *daiva*, and that which is connected with *Aparā-vidyā*, is termed *mānuṣa*, as in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* when King Yama offers Naciketas all the coveted objects—grandsons, herds of cattle, elephants, horses and gold.

THOREAU AS A VEGETARIAN

(Continued from page 145)

on city life which are valid even today. improved the men who are to inhabit them. He says: "While civilization has been It has created palaces, but it was not so improving our houses, it has not equally easy to create noblemen and kings."

A Review Article

DR. RAMA NAIR

HUMAN BEING IN DEPTH, A Scientific Approach to Religion, By Swami Ranganathananda. Publisher: Albany: State of New York Press, 1991, 159 pages.

Swami Ranganathananda's book *Human Being in Depth* is another glowing testimony to his vast and exact scholarship based on a meticulous concern for the practicalities involved in the development of a holistic consciousness. This book contains an explicit exposition of the similarities between the disciplines of Science, and religion as expounded in the Vedanta. As a spiritual teacher, the author is aware of the difficulties that arise in the path of spiritual awareness if it is strewn with theoretical abstractions, rigid dogmas, and prescriptive rituals. Swami Ranganathananda's spiritual stance is objective and dispassionate.

The distinctive characteristic of Vedanta is its ability to synthesise the basic premises of the physical sciences with that of religion. In a world that is becoming increasingly scientific, and cynical about the 'blind beliefs' associated with traditional religion, there is the need to revitalize the sagging consciousness of man with a new and reinvigorating mode of practical spiritual evolution.

Swam Ranganathananda's book provides a possible solution to the spiritual confusion of the twentieth century. He concentrates on the principles of the Vedanta, as exemplified in the Upanishads, and later, as analysed by Swami Vivekananda in the late nineteenth century. Vedanta is a spiritual science which takes the mode of scientific

inquiry to delve into the mysteries of the human soul and the cosmic Universe.

The book has three chapters. In chapter one, the Swami affirms that science and religion are becoming an indispensable component of the modern age. In the light of Indian philosophy, these two disciplines, when combined harmoniously, can yield positive results in the development of a spiritually integrated personality. But viewed separately, they can be counter-productive, leading to an increasingly truncated consciousness. This is evident, especially in the West, where the disastrous results of scientific development in the field of social and environmental problems has generated a deep suspicion about the effects of science and technology. But the Swami reiterates that science 'with its passion for truth and mindful of human welfare, will always remain one of our noblest pursuits.' (page 3) The author links the objectivity and precision of scientific thought and method to the 'science of the facts pertaining to our inner spiritual world as upheld in ancient Indian thought...', thus making religion itself a scientific study of immense significance. In contrast to Western philosophy, the Indian Upanishads emphasise that the spiritual aspirant is an experimenter, using the mode of 'scientific' enquiry into the nature of Brahman, or God, to arrive at a realisation of the highest Truth or Reality of life. To the author, Vedanta and modern science are spiritual disciplines. Just as different branches of the physical sciences study one and the same reality, so also the science of the 'within' and the science of the 'without' merge in a science of the Brahman, or total Reality. In fact,

the Vedanta views *Brahma-vidyā*, the science of Brahman, as representing the totality of Reality, both physical and non-physical.

In chapter two, the author explicates the nature of Faith and Reason in our scientific age. He emphasises that India has never experienced the conflict between faith and reason as has the West. The Indian approach was to view the individual as a whole. But in the West, a fragmented approach to life led to a divisive personality. It is faith or *śraddhā* that is important in the achievement of a holistic approach so essential for spiritual fulfilment. The author asserts that faith is common for spiritual fulfilment. He asserts that faith is common to both, science and religion. It means a faith in the inner meaning of the universe. Belief, both in religion and in science have to be tested and verified on the basis of experience and experiment. Vedanta stresses that *śraddhā* (faith) and *buddhī* (reason) whether in the physical sciences or in the science of religion, should complement each other.

In chapter three, Swami Ranganathananda deals with the nature of consciousness. The divinity found in man is the same divine consciousness that pervades the universe. Vedanta enquires into the nature of consciousness itself which is the basis of all experience. This has its parallel, according to the author, in modern physics, in Faraday and Maxwell's revolutionary concept of the unified field theory com-

prehending electromagnetic and gravitational phenomena. The Brahman-Ātman of the Upaniṣads is the unity of all experience and is similar to the unified field of modern science.

Swami Ranganathananda's lucid observations are authenticated by relevant references to the Vedanta and prominent Western scientists and philosophers. The book itself, is a fine example of objective enquiry into the inter-relationship between science and religion. The author's analytical mind is coupled with the *śraddhā* that "...all progress of knowledge in science and religion confirms that diversity is on the surface, but deep down is unity." (page 128) Once this truth is realised, then there will be no barriers between humanity and nature.

This well-documented and unique book is illuminated with Swami Ranganathananda's incisive perceptions and invaluable insights. His solution is not based on impractical theorising or moralising. Instead, it is compounded of practical wisdom, and an innate conviction in the possibility of humanity achieving the spiritual goal of an integrated personality through a scientific approach to religion.

This book has a concise Foreword by Janet A. Walker. It has an informative Glossary, a comprehensive Bibliography, and a useful index. *Human Being in Depth* is yet another tribute to Swami Ranganathananda's sagacity and learning.

Two Questions

NOBEENA GHOSH

Once or twice upon a time long long ago
there was a little bird,
Who to sing & to fly & to dream,
Or to live & to hope never tired.

The sky was a challenge, the clouds were a challenge,
The Sun was a challenge too ;
So with little wings & throbbing breast
She beat into the blue.

With every beat of heart & wing
The little bird flew along,
Every beat of heart & wing,
Set the rhythm to her wondrous song.

Higher & higher flew the little bird,
Higher & higher & higher ;
But not too-high enough, alas,
To fulfill her heart's desire.

The sky was conquered, so were the clouds,
And the song begun was done ;
But yet remained as far away
The dazzling beckoning Sun.

But she was not to be outdone, no not the little bird,
Who to sing & to fly & to dream,
Or to live & to hope never tired.

The day wore on, she soared on.
New songs begun, were eventually done.

So, Higher & higher flew the little bird,
Higher & higher & higher ;
But never too-high enough, alas,
To fulfill her heart's desire.

When her wings grew limp,
 And all her songs were sung,
 And she gasped for her very last breath,
 She said to herself again & again
 "The Sun will be mine yet".....

Now tell me dear friend
 Why this was to be ?
 And tell me also if you can,
 Which of the two were but untrue—
 Her faith or the Sun ?

ARISE, BHARAT OF HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS

(Continued from page 147)

common political demagogues or protagonists or fragmentations of nations and peoples and countries—acting in the name of religion, race, caste or creed.

Indian thought holds the key to open this new universalist vision, of which the latest exponent was our philosopher-statesman, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, who, once talking over a cup of tea in New Delhi, told the present writer: "Perhaps you and

I may be the last link with the traditions of India's perennial philosophy and culture. But that will depend on whether we are going to listen and act up to the clarion call of our Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and others."

Arise, India, awake standing on the solid and the sure foundation of the Eternal philosophy of Sanatana Dharma.

News and Reports

THE 83rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

*Synopsis of the Governing Body's
Report For 1991-92*

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at Belur Math on Sunday the 20th December 1992 at 3.30 p.m. Rev. Swami Bhuteshananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission was the chairman of the proceedings. A synopsis of the report of the Governing Body for 1991-92, placed before the members is given below: The report has stated the statistical data about the Ramakrishna Mission activities. By way of additional information it has given a brief outline of the activities of the Ramakrishna Math also.

✓ MOTTO

The Motto behind the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission is "*Atmano Mokṣārtham Jagad-dhitāya ca*" i.e. "for one's own liberation and the welfare of the world." This is the essence of *Sanatana Dharma* (Eternal Religion) viewed in the light of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. To give a practical shape to this idea, Swami Vivekananda founded Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

ACTIVITIES

Relief and Rehabilitation: In the year under report the Ramakrishna Mission undertook extensive relief and rehabilitation work—Distress relief in Rajasthan and West Bengal, Earthquake relief in Uttar Pradesh, Flood relief in Assam and Orissa, Fire relief in Bihar and Medical relief in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, and Rehabilitation projects in Andra Pradesh—spending a sum of about Rs. 60.37 lakhs. Besides, relief articles worth Rs. 24 lakhs (approx.) were distributed. The Mission also undertook massive relief and rehabilitation programmes in Bangladesh incurring an expenditure of about Tk. 178 lakhs. During the same period the Ramakrishna Math conducted Flood relief in Gujarat, Maha-

rashtra, Orissa and Tamil Nadu, Drought relief in Gujarat and Fire relief in Orissa, and Rehabilitation work in Gujarat and spent Rs. 11.07 lakhs for the purpose.

Welfare Activity: The Mission spent nearly Rs. 1.46 crores by way of providing scholarships and stipends to poor students, medical aid to poor patients, pecuniary help to aged and destitute people and sanitation facilities to thousands of poor families in rural areas. The ongoing slum rehousing project at Rambagan in Calcutta and the sanitation project throughout Midnapore District in West Bengal deserve special mention. This was in addition to the huge sums spent by the organization's educational institutions for the benefit of the poor students and by our hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of poor patients.

Medical Service: The Mission did commendable work through its 9 hospitals with 1,606 beds and 78 dispensaries including mobile ones. It served nearly 44 lakh patients spending a sum of about Rs. 6.04 crores. Under the Math 5 hospitals (with 365 beds) and 31 dispensaries including mobile ones served 1.10 lakh patients. Several free eye-camps, a dental camp, and a cardiology camp were conducted by some centres of both the Mission and the Math. Under the Mission two T.B. clinics and four Nurses' Training Centres, and two old age homes were conducted while the Math conducted one old age home during the year.

Educational work: Through its educational institutions of various types the Mission wanted to impart man-making and character-building education. True to the tradition, the academic results of the Mission's educational institutions were also brilliant. In 1991-92 the Mission had 5 degree colleges, 4 teachers' training colleges, 5 junior basic training institutes, 10 higher secondary schools, 4 polytechnics, 7 junior technical and industrial schools, 84 hostels and students' homes, 4 orphanages, 2 institutes of agriculture, 1 school of langu-

ages, 1 computer centre, 1 blind boys' academy, 1 librarianship training centre, 4 rural development training institutes and 8,750 non-formal education centres, night schools and the like. The total number of students in all these institutions was 1,85,034 of whom 71,960 were girls. The Mission spent a sum of Rs. 23.92 crores for this purpose. Under the Math centres 7,341 students were taught in 1 B.Ed. college, 1 Sanskrit college, 1 school of languages and in a total of 36 schools, students' homes and other educational institutions.

Spread of spiritual and cultural ideas: This was accomplished through a large number of libraries and reading-rooms, lectures and seminars, films of religious and cultural value, regular classes, public celebrations, occasional exhibitions, etc. The publication departments of the Math and Mission centres did appreciable work in this regard. The Math centres maintained temples, organized lectures, retreats and devotees' meets. Thousands of people were inspired to accept higher values of life by coming into contact with different Math and Mission centres.

Work in rural and tribal areas: Rural and tribal welfare work has come to occupy a prominent place in the scheme of services rendered by the Mission. With its limited funds and workers, the Mission has been doing its utmost for serving the poor and backward people as also tribal people in different parts of the country. This is accomplished in three ways: (a) through our centres located in rural and tribal areas primarily set up for this purpose; (b) through our urban centres which have taken up development projects in rural and tribal areas; and (c) through our educational and medical institutions in urban areas where rural folk form a significant percentage of the beneficiaries. The Mission spent a sum of about Rs. 2.65 crores specifically for rural and tribal development work, apart from the huge expenditure incurred by the educational and medical institutions located in rural and tribal areas.

The rural development training institutes at Narendrapur, Narainpur, Saradapith (Belur) as also the Krishi Vigyan Kendra

and Divyayan at Ranchi (Morabadi) trained youth for work in rural and tribal areas in modern methods of agriculture, dairy and poultry farming, etc. The centre at Ranchi (Morabadi) has taken up massive rural development projects by way of extension and follow-up of the training programmes of Divyayan. The centre at Narendrapur is conducting numerous integrated rural development projects in several districts of West Bengal. The centres at Cherrapunjee, Shillong, Along, Narottam Nagar, Itanagar and Narainpur have won the love and esteem of the tribal people of the respective areas for their educational and medical work. There was further advancement in the extensive tribal welfare projects undertaken by the Narainpur centre in the Abujmarh area of Bastar District, Madhya Pradesh. The centre in Bombay continued its comprehensive rural development project at Sakwar with vocational training, medical service and other programmes.

The Math centres in Bangalore and Mysore undertook integrated rural development projects. Math centres of rural and tribal areas also conducted medical and educational service activities.

Under the Pallimangal activities of the Headquarters, a pilot project, initiated in 1980, continued in 17 villages in and around Kamarpukur, Jayrambati and Bali-Dewanganj in West Bengal conducting soil-analysis, training of destitute women in weaving and in rolling of incense sticks, training in spinning in mini jute mills and medical services including eye-camps.

The statistics relating to these institutions are already included in the statistics under 'Medical service' and 'Educational work'.

Foreign work: The Mission centres in France, Switzerland, Mauritius, Singapore, Fiji and Sri Lanka carried on cultural work in addition to spiritual ministration. Some educational work was also conducted by a few of them.

In the Math centres in Argentina, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom and

(Continued on page 160)

Review & Notices

INDIAN ASTRONOMERS, by K. R. Krishnamurthi. Published by International Society for the Investigation of Ancient Civilizations, 102 Mount Road, Guindy, Madras 600-032. Rs. 30/-.

The present work deals with classical writers of *Jyotiṣa-vidyā* (astronomy) of India, providing a short biographic sketch of each *jyotiṣa*, the works written by each and their contents. Nowadays astronomy and astrology are differentiated from one another. Astronomy is said to be a science, whereas astrology is not. The author does not discuss this problem. He has introduced in Appendix I a topic ("Can Astrologers Ignore Astronomy") which can not remove all doubts.

Indian astronomy is really very old and developed. That tradition has been presented through the famous astronomers of India in the book under review. Agastya, Viswamitra, Aryabhatta, Lalla, Varahamihira, Bhaskara I, Brahmagupta, Sri Sankaranarayana, Vateswara, Munjaala, Prthudaka

Swami, Aryabhatta II, Sripathi, King Bhoja, King Dasabala, Brahmadeva, Sadananda, The Age of Bhaskara, Sridhara II, Mahadeva, Sri Parameswara, Daamodara, Gangadhara, Neelakanta Somayaji, Kesava Daivagnya, Chitrabhanu, Makaranda, Ganesa Daivagnya, Suryadasa, Gyanaraja, Viswanatha, Anantha Daivagnya II, Achutha Pisharoti, Ranganatha, Krishna Daivagnya, Govinda Daivagnya, Nrisimha Daivagnya, Balabadra Misra, Muniswara, Nityananda, Kamalakara, Krishna II, Manirama, Time Reckoning in Ancient India; I—Can Astrologers Ignore Astronomy, and II—Ancient Hindu Achievements in Trigonometry, have been added. Both of these are informative. Glossary in alphabetical order is very helpful.

The author is to be congratulated for throwing light in a comparatively unknown region of Indian achievement. The book deserves wide circulation.

Dr. Nirod Baran Chakraborty
Calcutta

NEWS AND REPORT

(Continued from page 159)

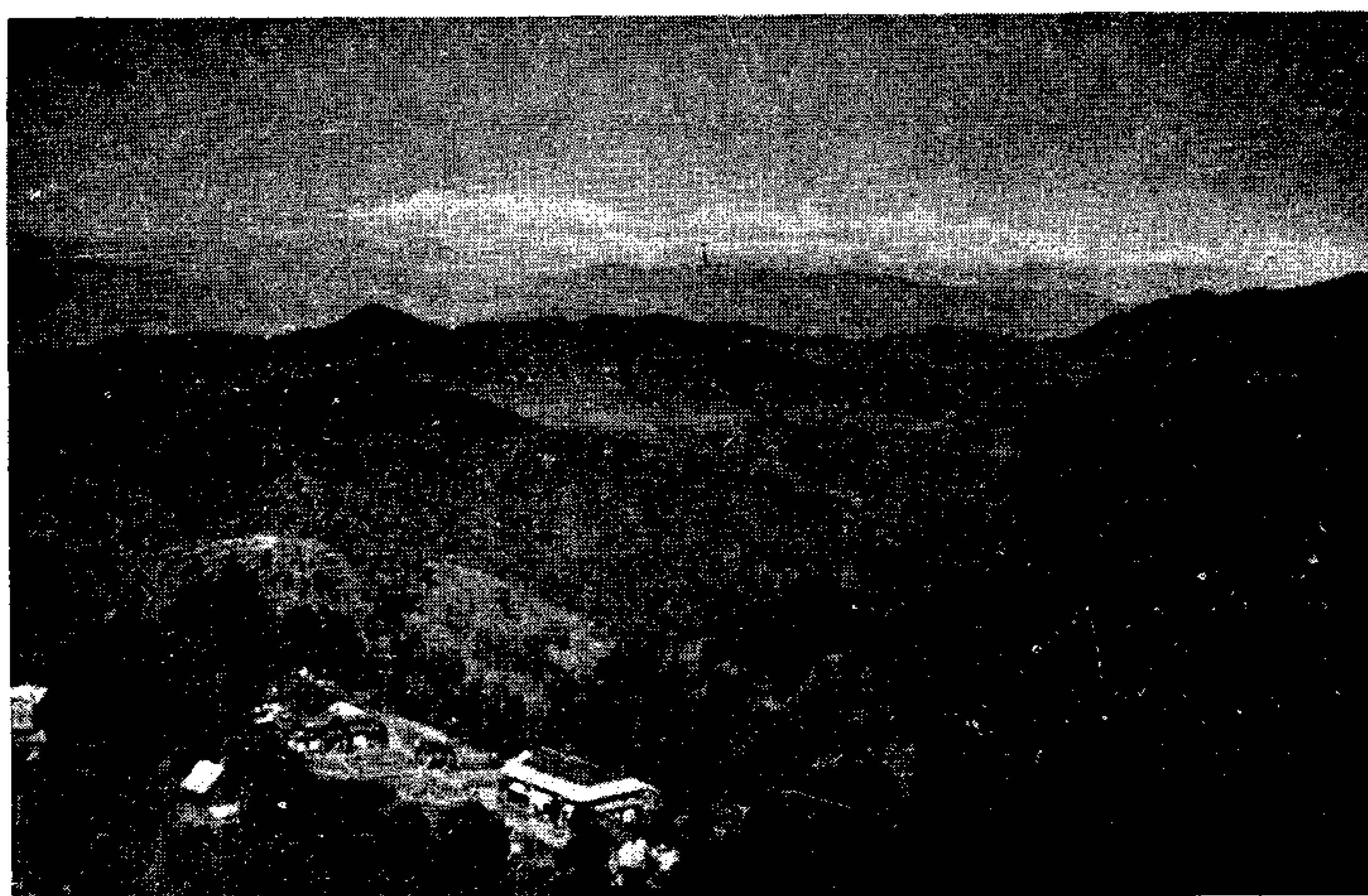
the United States of America our Swamis gave lectures at the centres and also in colleges, universities, etc. on invitation, conducted religious classes, observed religious festivals with special worship, organized seminars and held retreats. Some of them also brought out useful publications on philosophical subjects and spiritual teachings.

The 8 Math and 8 Mission centres in Bangladesh were engaged in conducting religious classes, discourses, daily worship and prayer, dispensaries, schools, students' homes, libraries and relief work such as distribution of milk, clothing, etc.

Excluding the Headquarters at Belur Math, the Mission and Math had 79 and 76 branches respectively, in India and abroad.



Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati (Himalayas)

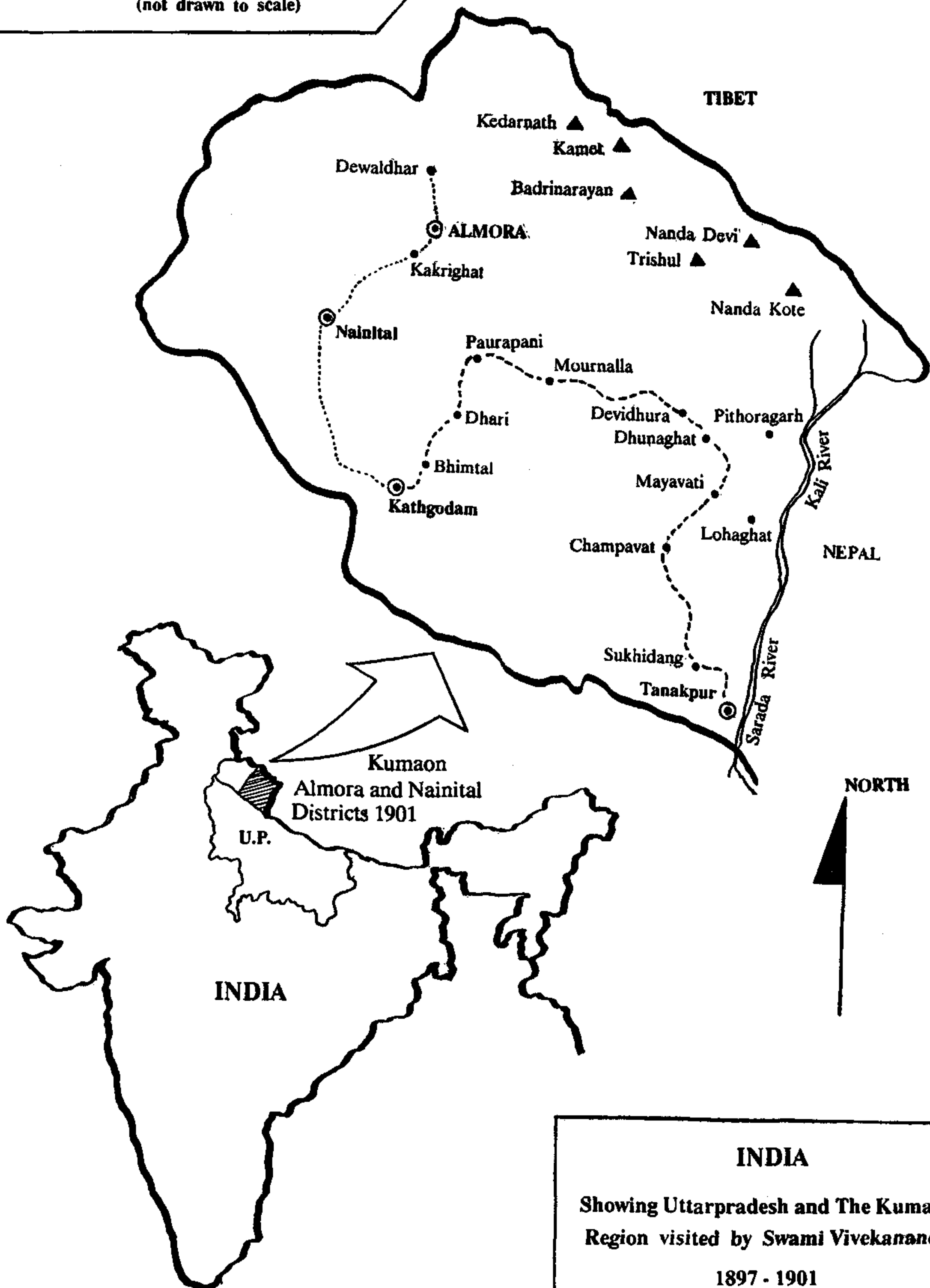


A panoramic view.

THE HIMALAYAS

KUMAON - and principal towns and villages visited
by Swami Vivekananda

1cm. approx 10 miles
(not drawn to scale)



INDIA

Showing Uttarpradesh and The Kumaon
Region visited by Swami Vivekananda

1897 - 1901