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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

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## REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

New York,  
July 24, 1900.

Swami is also a visitor in this house where I am staying.

I have just wound up my stay in America by writing a comforting letter to the Rev. Mother,\* telling the dear soul how all his luck has turned, and he is looking like a god and leaving her to infer that all earth's crowns are at his feet.

But indeed it is all true ! As he is now, nothing can resist him.

This morning at 11, he is to lecture on *Mother-Worship*, and you shall have every word of that lecture, if I have to pay 10 dollars to get it taken down. It was mentioned by someone yesterday to me, before him, and he turned and said, smiling, “Yes—Mother-Worship—that's what I am going to lecture on, and that is what I love.”

The other morning I offered him advice that struck him as wrong. I wish you could have seen him ! It was worth the offence to catch such a glimpse !

He said, “Remember that I am free—free—*born* free !” And then he talked of the Mother and of how he wished the work and the world would break to pieces that he might go and sit down in the Himalayas and meditate. That Europeans had never preached a religion, because they had always

\* Mother of Swami Vivekananda

*planned*; that a few Catholic Saints alone had come near to this; that it was not *he but Mother* who did all, and *whatever* She might do was equally welcome to him. That once Siva, sitting with Umâ in Kailâsa, arose to go, and when she asked him why, He said "There, look, that servant of mine is being beaten. I must go to his aid." A moment later He came back and again She asked him why. "I am not needed. He is helping himself," was all the reply.

And then he blessed me, before he went, saying "Well! well! You are Mother's child." And I went away much moved, because the moment was somehow so great.

## SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[IN HIS OWN WORDS]

The following incident illustrates how repugnant the idea of planning things for the future was to Sri Ramakrishna. For some days he noticed Hriday busying himself with a calf,—tying it here, moving it about, and so on. Being curious, he asked Hriday what he was going to do with the calf. "Why", answered Hriday, "I shall take it home; in a few years it will grow into a fine animal for the plough." No sooner did the Master hear it than he fell into a swoon. Recovering from it after a long time he exclaimed, "Just look at the spirit of hoarding in worldly people! Now it is but a calf,—it will grow big,—and then help to till the fields! They plan so far ahead, and do not lean upon God! Ah, this is Mâyâ!" He likened the shock he felt on this occasion to a blow on the head.

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Once there arose a tremendous longing in the mind of Sri Ramakrishna to meet his devotees—the pure souls whom the Mother had already shown him in spiritual forms during his transcendent visions. The time had come to train the instruments that were to give his message to the world, and he was burning with desire to pass on his

realizations to the favoured children of the Mother. About this he would say later, "There was no limit to the yearning I had then. During the day time I managed somehow to control it. The secular talk of the worldly-minded was galling to me, and I would look forward wistfully to the day that my beloved companions would come. I hoped to find solace in conversing with them and unburdening my mind by telling them of my realizations. Every little incident would remind me of them, and thoughts of them wholly engrossed my mind. I was already arranging in my mind what I should say to one and give to another, and so on. But when the day came to a close, I could not curb my feelings. The thought that another day had gone and they had not come, oppressed me! When during the evening service the temple rang with the sound of bells and conch-shells, I would climb to the roof of the building in the garden, and writhing in anguish of heart cry at the top of my voice, 'Come, my boys! Oh, where are you? I cannot bear to live without you!' A mother never longs so intensely for the sight of her child, nor a friend for his companion, nor a lover for his sweetheart, as I did for them! Oh, it



was indescribable. Shortly after this yearning the devotees began to come in."

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One day, as Ramachandra Dutt was coming with some sweets for Sri Ramakrishna, a street-boy clamoured for a share. He gave him a bit, and after arriving at Dakshineswar put the basket in its usual place. Towards evening Sri Ramakrishna felt hungry, and Ramchandra offered the sweets to him. He touched them with his left hand, looked upward, shook his head as he broke some and replaced them, after which he washed his hands, to the mortification of Ramachandra. When he came to Dakshineswar again, Sri Ramakrishna said, "When you bring anything for me, don't give any of it to anybody else. I cannot take anything without offering it to God, and I cannot offer anything to Him that has been defiled by being already offered elsewhere."

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Referring to Rakhal's coming to him, Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Just a few days before Rakhal's coming, I saw in a vision the Mother putting a child into my lap and saying, 'This is your son.' I shuddered at the thought and asked Her in surprise, 'What dost Thou mean? I to have a son?' Then She explained with a smile that it would be a spiritual child, and I was comforted. Shortly after this vision Rakhal came, and I at once recognized him as the boy presented by the Divine Mother."

He had another vision about him. One day he saw that Krishna, as the lovely shepherd-boy of Brindavan, was standing on a full-blown lotus in the midst of a lake, and by His side stood the boy Rakhal looking at Him playfully. This vision led Sri Ramakrishna to identify the devotee before him as

one of those pure souls who had been incarnated as playmates of Sri Krishna.

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Sri Ramakrishna used to describe the vision he had, before Narendra's arrival at Dakshineswar in the following way: "One day I found that my mind was soaring high in Samâdhi along a luminous path. It soon transcended the stellar universe and entered the subtler region of ideas. As it ascended higher and higher, I found on both sides of the way ideal forms of gods and goddesses. The mind then reached the outer limits of that region, where a luminous barrier separated the sphere of relative existence from that of the Absolute. Crossing that barrier, the mind entered the transcendental realm, where no corporeal being was visible. Even the gods dared not peep into that sublime realm, and were content to keep their seats far below. But the next moment I saw seven venerable sages seated in Samâdhi. It occurred to me that these sages must have surpassed not only men but even the gods in knowledge and holiness, in renunciation and love. Lost in admiration, I was reflecting on their greatness, when I saw a portion of that undifferentiated luminous region condense into the form of a divine child. The child came to one of the sages, tenderly clasped his neck with his lovely arms, and addressing him in a sweet voice, tried to drag his mind down from the state of Samâdhi. That magic touch roused the sage from his superconscious state, and he fixed his half-open eyes upon the wonderful child. His beaming countenance showed that the child must have been the treasure of his heart. In great joy the strange child spoke to him, 'I am going down. You too must go with me.' The sage remained mute, but his tender look



expressed his assent. As he kept gazing on the child, he was again immersed in Samâdhi. I was surprised to find that a fragment of his body and

mind was descending on earth in the form of a bright light. No sooner had I seen Narendra than I recognized him to be that sage."

## THE TASK FOR MODERN INDIA

BY THE EDITOR

### I

Whether we look from the national point of view or from the individual, it must be said that what India badly needs today is the development of national character without which a nation can hardly live in the world with any amount of dignity and honour.

A nation cannot live long with high aspirations alone. It requires strength enough to live up to its ideals and dreams. Unless there is practical wisdom, idealism ends in mere sentimentalism. Practical wisdom presupposes deep insight, sober judgment, and immense control over emotions. When a nation becomes weak, it gives way to more talk and less work, more theories and less practice, as it is very often seen in the case of a weak individual. These are the defects on account of which the masses fall an easy victim to the sway of sentimental leaders. As a consequence thereof, people get unsteady within a very short time in carrying on national propaganda.

The work of nation-building in India suffers a good deal today owing to unsteadiness that prevails in all spheres of national life. Modern India requires such men as would remain hidden to the public eye and vitalize the nation from within by dint of their silent and patient toil in the work of promoting the cause of home-industries, village-reconstruction, or mass-education even

on a very small scale. It is not always the big plan that counts in the long run, but it is the small beginnings undertaken with utmost tact and sincerity that really build up a nation. Now-a-days we hear so often that educated men and women should go to villages and begin the work of nation-building from there. But how handful are the people who are actually doing the work of rural reconstruction! Most of the educated people are unable to give up the luxuries and enjoyments of the town. Modern education has rendered them apologies for human beings. Therefore the first thing that is all essential is that our young men should be trained for the work in villages. There should be a network of schools and colleges which can supplement the university education by a thorough and systematic home-training calculated to develop the character and efficiency of our young men and women. To make the work of nation-building a success, what an Indian youth can individually do is to focus his attention upon some fundamental points. Firstly, he must develop strength in his nerves and muscles together with some positive ideas for moulding his character and for the regeneration of his country. Secondly, in however small a corporate body he might belong to, the first thing he would practise is the virtue of implicit obedience to the authority of that body. Thirdly, he must avoid



jealousy and self-sufficiency. Fourthly, he must have adequate knowledge of Indian culture and traditions.

## II

What is necessary for the national life of India is to see how people of different provinces and communities can co-ordinate their wills and concentrate their scattered energies. The consciousness of one nationality is of utmost importance for the solidarity of the nation. The danger of local and communal patriotism is a great bar to national unity and harmony. The provincial and communal interests should be sacrificed at the altar of greater interests of the nation. Instances are not rare in modern India, in which we find people stunting the growth of Indian nationhood for the sake of personal, communal, and provincial interests. If national problems become more weighty and powerful, the linguistic and communal differences are sure to lose their force and will sooner or later be submerged in the surging tide of national aspirations. The inter-dependence of the different provinces is of great importance, so far as agricultural and industrial interests are concerned. It is not possible for each province to be self-contained in all respects. Each province should look to the general economy of national life, as the good of each depends on that of the others. The provincial and communal jealousies are a stumbling block against the fruition of nation-consciousness. If these be not guarded against, any improved political status will only increase provincial and communal animosities. Since jealousy is the bane of a fallen nation, Swami Vivekananda asked the people of India to worship their countrymen as the first Gods, instead of being jealous of each other and fighting each other.

Therefore the crying need for the people of India is to feel the unity of the nation at first, before they expect any amount of national progress. India is now passing through chaos in every phase of national life. In every field, the clarion call to the children of the soil is: "Unite, Unite!" In these days, the value of united action can hardly be over-estimated. Nothing can be done on a great scale, unless people speak with one voice and act like one man. The chief aim of every national worker should be how to keep up unity and integrity in the collective body he belongs to. Sister Nivedita observed: "If the whole of India could agree to give, say ten minutes, every evening at the oncoming of darkness to thinking a single thought, 'We are one. We are one. Nothing can prevail against us to make us think, we are divided. For, we are one, and all antagonisms against us are illusion',—the power that would be generated can hardly be measured." If this idea be translated into action in every small or big organization in the country, there is sure to grow an atmosphere for united action and all healthy movements will not die on account of party strifes and want of co-operation.

The lure of the leader is at the root of many evils that have retarded India's progress at the very critical moments of her struggles and aspirations. The age of cheap leadership has gone by. A leader has to combine a massive intellect with a mighty heart. He must be above the last infirmity of a noble soul and should be perfectly selfless. He must be imbued with the great ideals and traditions of India, at the same time he must chalk out before the country a definite line of work suiting to the country's genius and modern conditions. There are now leaders, not a few in number, who neither have a



first-hand knowledge of Indian culture, nor do they themselves lead Indian styles of living. Still they venture to lead the country according to their mistaken ideas and ideals. Therefore it is for the leaders to see wherein lie their own drawbacks, and it is for them to attempt how the different forces in the country can be united for the common good of all provinces and communities.

### III

It is a mistake to suppose that those who do not want to take part in political movements of India cannot help in her work of regeneration. There are so many ways to serve India on philanthropic and cultural lines. Swami Vivekananda thought long ago over it, and his plan for the regeneration of India may briefly be summarized as follows :

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

2. "My plan is to start institutions in India, to train our youngmen as preachers of the truths of our scriptures, in India and outside India."

3. "Preach the idea of elevating the masses by means of a central college and bringing education as well as religion to the door of the poor by means of missionaries trained in this college."

"Impress upon their minds that they have the same right to religion as the Brâhmanas. Initiate all, even down to the Chândâlas, in these fiery Mantras. Also instruct them, in simple words,

about the necessities of life, and in trade, commerce, agriculture etc."

4. "Meddle not with so-called social reform, for there cannot be any reform without spiritual reform first."

5. "We must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our own hands, and it must be on national lines, through national methods, as far as practicable."

6. "Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way."

"Studying the present needs of the age, it seems imperative to train some of them up in the ideals of renunciation, so that they will take up the vow of life-long virginity, fired with the strength of that virtue of chastity which is innate in their life-blood from hoary antiquity."

"Any attempt to modernize our women, if it tries to take our women apart from that ideal of Sitâ, is immediately a failure, as we see every day."

7. "The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself."

The great Swami had the vision of a glorious, future India and believed that India has her own quota yet to give to the world. He never believed in the political methods of the Western nations, and always emphasized upon the characteristic course of India's cultural life. Because he knew that if India has to rise, she must stand upon the spiritual inheritance of the race. His warning to his countrymen was : "If you succeed in the attempt to throw off religion and take up either politics or society or any other thing as your centre, as the vitality of your national life, the result will be that you will be extinct."

The programme of work as laid down by the Swami requires no political



movements or radical reforms in society. It is to have faith in the national ideals of India and to work sincerely according to one's own capacity. So far as the problems of education and philanthropic activities are concerned, our work may suffer owing to economic conditions, but it is certain that the little we can advance with the ideals in view, so much is the solid work for the amelioration of India's condition.

#### IV

Of the many evils that modern education has brought in its train, the greatest is that the educated people have become luxurious and have fallen far below the Indian ideal of living. The simple and wholesome modes of living that could make the Indian people strong in health and happy in mind, some fifty years back, are absolutely forgotten by the educated folk of today. The result is that in trying to imitate the Western methods of life and living, they have lost their health and virile sentiments. Even in modern villages of India, luxury and costly fashions have entered with all their hideousness in the midst of abject poverty. There prevails everywhere a general moral turpitude of the people as in other parts of the world. The literatures of many Indian vernaculars are getting filled with novels and magazines of bad taste. There is rapidly growing an abominable liking for a materialistic outlook on life. People are found to indulge in things that are detestable, and they enjoy them in the name of social freedom and sometimes in the sacred name of Art. The ideals of domestic life that are time-honoured, and the peace of Indian homes that was proverbial are fast disappearing from the land of the Rishis. Since the educated people forget their national and social ideals, and imbibe the things foreign to their culture and

genius, the masses are naturally misguided along the paths that are harmful to them. It is now the duty of the educated people to turn the tide of imitation and infatuation towards a happier and healthier state of things. In meetings or social gatherings, in trains or other means of conveyance, in stations or in public places where the educated people have chances of coming in contact with the masses, it is worth their while to move and behave in such a manner as may improve the general conduct and moral tone of their own people. This is the thing that may appear very insignificant to the men who talk big and think of bigger plans. But the work of nation-building should begin with these rudimentary things. Then national workers may hope for better results in future.

A nation truly lives so long as there are men of selfless action. The actual death of a nation begins when noble and unselfish deeds gradually disappear among its common people. History has numerous instances for it. It will be a difficult task for modern India to regenerate itself, until the masses do not develop a spirit of self-sacrifice for the general good of the nation. Men like Vivekananda, Gandhi and others do not represent the real character of the modern people of India. They are unique products of time and circumstances. The real character of the nation need be reflected in the behaviour of the ordinary people. Therefore, those who seek for the well-being of India should, first of all, educate the masses on nation-making lines. What is the best preparation for nation-making? It is to awaken in the masses a strong civic consciousness. The traditional teaching of the Indian scriptures is to sacrifice the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the country,

and the whole world for the spirit. "The man who would not stir a finger," said Sister Nivedita, "to help his village to the recovery of grazing-rights is not the man to bleed and die in the country's cause. The man who will not suffer some slight risk and discomfort for national good, is not the man to whom to entrust the

banner of an army. By civic duty we are tested for national responsibility. By the widening of the smaller accomplishment, we immeasurably extend the possibilities of the larger." The civic consciousness and the spirit is the thing essential, more than anything else, in the work of national regeneration for modern India.

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## SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

By MISS PEGGY DAVIDSON

Giovanni Bernadone, known to the world as St. Francis, the sweetest character among Christian Saints, was born at Assisi in the year 1182. He was the eldest son of Lady Pica, the gentle wife of Pietro Bernadone, a wealthy merchant, who carried on many of his business activities in France.

It is said that just before the time of Francis' birth, Lady Pica suffered greatly but could not be delivered of her child, until a man in pilgrim's dress appeared and told her that she could only give birth to her infant in a stable and on straw, as the Virgin Mary had done. A chapel now stands on the site of the stable where Lady Pica was successfully delivered; it is called "San Francesco, il Picolo."

Francis was sent to the priests' school of San Giorgio, and there received the usual medieval education. He was far from a diligent student, and he often said of himself that he was quite ignorant and unschooled; but he could read Latin, and acquired a knowledge of French, as befitted a gentleman's son.

Francis was a gay youth, spending his time as ring-leader of the revels held by the wealthy young men of Assisi.

He went around sumptuously dressed, spending money lavishly on himself and his friends, and though his father grumbled, he indulged Francis and delighted in seeing his son in noble company, looking and acting like a prince among them. However, the poor always knew him for his generosity; he gave them alms and did many acts of kindness, but always under cover of darkness, for fear of being laughed at by his frivolous comrades.

There was a feudal rebellion among the people of Assisi in 1202, and in the conflict that ensued with the republic of Perugia, the young Francis was taken prisoner. He was very courageous and gay during his confinement, boasting that he would become a prince among men after his release, which occurred the following year. As a result of the hardships that he endured in the Perugian prison, he suffered from a violent fever at frequent intervals; but whenever his health permitted, he would resume his merrymaking with redoubled vigour.

After this period of illness, Francis had visions of some future glory; so, interpreting them as a call from chivalry, he armed himself richly and joined the army of Count Walter of



Brienne, to win his knighthood. On his way to Naples he had another vision, telling him that he had misunderstood the first, and that the call was from God, commanding him to lead a life of spiritual glory. So, without any explanation for his strange change of mind, he retraced his steps to Assisi. He had undergone a complete revolution of thought; turning from external pleasures and amusements, he became introspective and sought the intoxicating joy of self-communion. From this moment on, he expressed a disgust and loathing for worldly things, and dedicated himself to the service of the sick and the poor.

During the years 1207-1209, Francis applied himself to the restoration of St. Damian's chapel, inspired by a voice issuing from the Crucifix, which bade him rebuild the house of God. He interpreted this literally at the beginning of his religious life, but later he took it as a call to rebuild the Church itself.

One day, during the time of the restoration of the chapel, he took a bale of cloth from his father's warehouse and sold it in the market; then he took the money to the priest living at St. Damian's, for use in the restoration. When his father heard of this escapade, he was terribly enraged and had Francis locked up in a tiny room under the front stairs of the Bernadone home. But while his father was absent on a business journey, Francis' all-forgiving and gentle mother, who encouraged his generosity and foretold his future greatness, released him. She begged him not to go into excesses of piety and to try not to anger his selfish but loving father, who had indulged him so much. While his father was still away, Francis once again left home. His father, upon his return, was thrown

into great wrath at the disappearance of his son; but as he could not find the prodigal to pour forth his indignation, Lady Pica suffered in consequence.

Francis, after a while, came forth from his retreat in a hillside cave, and took courage enough to come to Assisi. Seeing how pale, wan and dishevelled he was, the inhabitants of Assisi hooted and jeered at him, as they did at madmen, and even threw mud and stones at him; but he bore all these insults meekly, thinking of the way in which Jesus had borne the insults of men for the benefit of suffering humanity.

Bernadone, being told that his son was being made an object of derision and scorn in public, was furious; but this time Francis presented himself boldly before his insulted and enraged parent and said that he cared neither for his blows nor shackles, and that he would suffer all kinds of injustice and indignity willingly in the name of Christ. His angry father had him taken to the Magistrate's court to bring him to reason; but they referred him to the Bishop's court because of the extreme delicacy of the situation. His father, when he saw that all pleading, reasoning and commanding were in vain and that Francis would not bow to his will, demanded a return of all the money Francis had and the renunciation of his parental inheritance, all of which Francis did willingly. Francis promptly stripped, and even then was seen to be wearing a haircloth shirt next to his skin. He threw his clothes down at the feet of his father, exclaiming, "Until this day I have called thee father on earth; but henceforward I may boldly say, 'Our Father, which art in Heaven' in Whom I have placed all my treasure and all my confidence." Then Francis donned a poor shepherd's cloak, rudely chalked



it with a cross and went forth bravely on his mission. This happened in 1208, when St. Francis was twenty-six years old.

In the period following, he subjected himself to all kinds of penances, such as scourging himself and fasting. He went around begging for stones to complete St. Damian's, and was treated with contempt by many people in the course of this self-imposed beggary; but others were greatly moved by his obvious sincerity and humility.

The priest of St. Damian's used to feed him, but one day St. Francis soliloquized thus: "Will you find everywhere a priest who has so much compassion on you? This is not the sort of life you have chosen; go then, henceforward, from door to door as a poor man, and solicit food for the love of God, with an empty plate on which you will put whatever may be given you. For it is thus you must live for the love of Him who was born poor, who lived poorly, whom they affixed naked to the Cross, and who was put after His death into another man's tomb." Henceforth he always begged his food and ate that which he received, no matter how wretched, with prayers of thankfulness for the "delicious" meal. He told the priest that he had found an excellent cook and purveyor of food, who would feed him always—that is, Lady Poverty, his accepted ideal.

His father, when he met him in the streets, always cursed him; so, when Francis went into Assisi, he used to ask a friendly priest to go with him and to bless him every time his father cursed him; in those days people thought that curses were valid in Heaven's eye, and St. Francis was no exception to the rule.

At that time, Francis also restored two other chapels—that of San Pietro

and that of Santa Maria degli Angeli, or Santa Maria in Porziuncula.

One day, while he was praying in the chapel of St. Damian's, he heard a voice that bade him possess nothing, so he cast off his hermit's tunic, shoes, leathern belt and staff, which a friend had given him, and adopted what is now the Franciscan habit.

In 1209, St. Francis started gathering followers about him. His first disciple was Bernard of Quintavalle, one of the noblest, richest and wisest men of Assisi. He had watched St. Francis with growing admiration, and finally invited him for a night's visit. During the night, Bernard was so deeply touched by the devout prayers of St. Francis and by his holiness, that he begged him to accept his services. Following the words of Christ, Bernard sold all his property, gave his riches to the poor of Assisi, and joined St. Francis in the ways of poverty, service and contemplation of God.

Retiring to a deserted hut near Assisi, on the Rivo Torto, St. Francis attracted a number of earnest souls who wished to follow his disciplines and instructions. He did not let them enjoy for long the peace of prayer and solitary meditation but soon sent them out to preach to the people. Their preaching seemed to be inspired, but people nevertheless insulted them. Later on, however, they were held in great esteem because of their very obvious virtue and their eloquence. Peter of Catania, Fra Giles, Sabbatino, Morique and John de Capella, were among the first to follow St. Francis.

Zeal for the salvation of souls induced Francis to move the small group into the Valley of Rieti, which he thought more suitable a place for meditation. There they lived in an abandoned hermitage. Among the instructions that Francis gave his dis-



ciples, he laid great stress on the unswerving service of Poverty and made them beg for their food and other necessities. Here, while in meditation, St. Francis had a very encouraging vision about the future;—he saw that he would become the founder of a great Order and that many foreigners, French, Spaniards, Portuguese, Germans and English, would join their numbers, from all over the world.

Francis, seeing how the numbers of his followers had increased, desired to go to Rome with them, to receive the sanction for the founding of an Order from the Pope, and also sanction for a Rule which he had drawn up, requiring Chastity, Poverty and Obedience of those who desired admission to the Order, with the chief emphasis on Poverty as their ideal. On the way to Rome a soldier named Tancred joined the group, and made the number of disciples twelve, just like the Apostles.

The Pope was doubtful about admitting the new Order, for at that time the Church was very weak on account of agitators who professed the same ideal as St. Francis, but condemned the clergy and the Curia, and drew many people away from the Church. The most dangerous of these agitators were the Cathari or Albigeses, who believed in the existence of two Gods: one good, who had created souls, and one bad, who had created the material world. It was therefore essential, according to their teachings, to hold aloof from the material world. In theory, they condemned marriage, family life and all that could not be considered purely spiritual, and to preserve this purity, the most zealous among them starved themselves to death. In practice, marriage was allowed for the great mass of the Cathari, and often the severe self-denial broke loose into unbridled sensuality.

The Cathari were, therefore, with their entire philosophy as well as with their practice, born enemies of the Catholic Church. The war which the Church now took up, and which on the part of Rome was carried on as long as possible with spiritual weapons, was a fight for one of the most valued possessions of Christian culture—for theological monism. The unity of God—this was the truth for which the Church fought and which it saved by fighting. Rome had to decide on which side of the abyss Francis and his brethren stood, whether their strange asceticism was a product of the pride of the Cathari or of evangelic Christianity.

A vision and the advice of Bishop Guido of Assisi and Cardinal Ugolini, persuaded the Pope to sanction the Rule and Order of St. Francis. In the vision, the Pope beheld the mighty Papal church of St. John the Lateran tottering and about to fall, when a small, frail-looking, ragged man came and put his shoulder to the wall and, growing as tall as the church itself, set it aright again by his own single effort; and while he lay gasping before the vision, the wondrous man turned his face toward him and he saw that it was the face of St. Francis, haloed and shining with a light so great that the Pope had to close his eyes. After that vision he had no doubts whatsoever about admitting St. Francis; so he blessed the twelve and their leader, and gave his verbal approval to the Rule. Greatly cheered, St. Francis and his faithful followers turned their faces again towards Assisi.

The hut which St. Francis and the disciples occupied, was claimed one day by a peasant for stabling his ass, so they meekly gave up their abode. The Abbot of Subasio, the richly endowed monastery of the Benedictines,



granted St. Francis and his brethren the chapel of Santa Maria in Porziuncula which St. Francis had repaired, on condition that if the new Order should become more extended, this church should always be considered the place of its origin, and the chief monastery,—to which condition St. Francis agreed gratefully.

The brethren built wattle and daub huts about the chapel and settled there. The new habitation was less confined than that of Rivo Torto and therefore enabled Francis to receive many newcomers; among these were Leo, Rufino, Masseo of Marigan, and Juniper. Leo, St. Francis chose as his confessor and secretary. Francis called him, perhaps with wilful opposition to his name Leone (lion), *Frate Pecorella di Dio*, “Brother-Little-Lamb of God.”

It was together with him that Francis, according to the ‘*Fioretti*,’ held the following conversation, as they were walking one winter day from Perugia to Porziuncula, and the great cold affected them severely. Francis called to Leo, who was going ahead, “Brother Leo, even if we brothers over the whole earth give good examples of holiness and edification, mark it well and write it down, that in that is not the perfect happiness.”

And he went on a little and called out loudly: “Brother Leo, even if we brothers spoke all tongues and knew all wisdom and the whole of the Scriptures, and were able to reveal the future and the secrets of the heart, so mark thou, that in that there is not perfect happiness.”

And Francis went on a piece more and then called with a high voice: “O Brother Leo, thou God’s Little Lamb, even if we brothers spoke with the tongues of angels and knew the courses of the stars and the powers of herbs, and all the treasures of the earth were

revealed to us, and all virtues and powers of birds and beasts and fishes and also the properties of mankind and of trees and stones and roots and water, mark thou this still, that in that there is not perfect happiness.”

And Francis went on a little further, and then said with a loud voice: “O Brother Leo, even if we brothers knew how to preach so that all the faithless would be converted to the faith of Christ, mark thou still, that in that there is not perfect happiness.”

And thus he talked for more than half the way. But at last Leo said with much wonder, “Father, I beg thee for God’s sake to tell me where perfect happiness can be found.” And Francis answered him:

“When we come to Porziuncula and are wet through with rain, and frozen with cold, and dirty with the mud of the road, and overcome with hunger, and we knock on the convent door, and the porter comes and is angry and says ‘Who are you?’ and we say, ‘We are two of thy brothers;’ and he says, ‘You do not speak the truth, but are two highway robbers who go about and deceive people and steal alms from the poor; away with you!’ When he speaks thus and will not open the door for us, but let us stand out in the cold, snow and water, in hunger, and the night falls, and when we endure such abuse of words and such a wickedness and such treatment, and endure it without becoming angry and without quarrelling with him, and when we instead think in humility and love that the porter knows us as we really are, and that it is God who lets him talk against us—O Brother Leo, mark thou, that is perfect happiness!

“And if we keep on knocking, and he comes out and is angry and treats us like a pair of thieves and hunts us away with evil words and ear-boxing,



and says to us, 'Get out, ye shameless rascals, go to the lepers, here you will find neither food nor lodging' and we bear this too with patience and cheerfulness and charity—O Brother Leo, mark thou, that therein is perfect happiness.

"And if we, driven by cold and hunger and by the night, knock again and beg him with bitter tears that he for God's sake will let us in, if only across the threshold, and he gets still more angry and says, 'You are certainly shameless vagabonds, but now you will get your deserts,' and he runs out with a knotted stick, and seizes us by the hoods and throws us to the ground and rolls us in the snow and nearly kills us with the stick; and if we endure all this so patiently, and think of the sufferings of Christ, the All-praised One, and of how much we ought to suffer for the sake of our love of Him—O Brother Leo, mark thou, that in this is perfect happiness.

"Now hear the end of all this, Brother Leo! More than all grace and all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which Christ vouchsafes to his friends, is the conquering of your self and the willing endurance of suffering, injustice, contempt and harshness. For of the other gifts of God, we cannot take any credit to ourselves, for they are not ours but come from God; so that the Apostle says: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received? But after you have received it, why do you take credit for it, as if you had it of yourselves?' But of trials and sufferings and crosses we can take the credit to ourselves; therefore the Apostle also says, 'I will take credit for nothing except for the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' "

Among his disciples, Francis loved Brother Rufino for his purity, Brother Masseo for his mildness of manner and

eloquence in preaching, and Brother Juniper for being an example of evangelical simplicity and self-contempt. Each member of his little group was characterized by some special virtue. But the influence of Francis spread beyond the narrow walls of the Porziuncula.

In 1211, one day a young girl named Chiara or Clare, at that time eighteen years old and the eldest daughter of the Count of Sasso, who owned a palace in Assisi and a castle on one of the slopes of Mount Subasio, was among the people listening to Francis preach in the cathedral. Before she was born, her mother had had a vision that she would become as a queen among mankind; so she named her daughter Clare or 'Light.'

From her youth, Clare had been of a contemplative nature and had wanted very much to lead the life of a nun. When she was six she already wore a haircloth shirt next her skin, and among the townspeople she was widely known for her piety and generosity—so, when she heard St. Francis preaching, putting her ideal into words, and saw in him the living example of that ideal, she was greatly inspired and was anxious to make his acquaintance.

As Francis had heard of her piety and also wished to meet her, one day, accompanied by a female relative, whom tradition calls Bona Guelfucci, she met Saint Francis; and in due course of time, he advised and persuaded her to follow her conviction and give up the world, and dedicate her life to God.

In the same year, on the night following Palm Sunday, Clare secretly left her father's castle and went down to the church of Santa Maria in Porziuncula, the mother-church of the Franciscan Order. She exchanged her rich garments for the brown tunic and rope of the Franciscans, her shoes and stock-



ings for wooden sandals, and her head-gear for a black veil. St. Francis sheared her golden hair himself and laid it on the altar, and thus he received her into the Order. St. Francis afterwards founded a special branch of the Order for nuns, under the name of the 'Poor Clares.' He first sent her to the Benedictine convent for women, where she stayed despite her father's efforts to bring her back.

After sixteen days, her younger sister, Agnes, followed and joined her. When Agnes left, the rage and chagrin of the Count of Sasso, who had already arranged a brilliant marriage for her, knew no bounds. He sent one of his brothers with a group of armed knights to get her back by force. They came and dragged her by the veil despite her violent and valiant efforts to free herself; she shrieked to St. Clare for assistance, and Clare, who was in her cell telling her rosary, prayed to God for aid. Her prayer was answered, for Agnes suddenly began to grow heavier and heavier, and finally no one could move her. Clare came out shortly after, and the knights left poor Agnes, more dead than alive, in her care. The family made no further attempt to prevent the two girls from following their chosen path; later, Clare's youngest sister, Beatrice, joined them, and after the Count's death, Clare's mother also took the veil in their Order.

The Benedictine convent could be only a temporary abode for Clare and Agnes and a few pious ladies who came with them. They were not Benedictines and did not wear the habit or follow the Rule of the Benedictines. St. Francis sought his old benefactors who had given him the Porziuncula, and to his joy they gave him St. Damian's and the little convent attached to it. With Agnes and the few other nuns, Clare took possession of

the building within whose walls she remained for forty-one years.

The guiding principles of the Poor Clares were the same as those of the Franciscans, though the chief work of the nuns was the care and education of poor girls.

We read the following description of St. Clare in "The Saints of Italy": "Clare was of noble family, a fact which, perhaps, fitted her the better to bring to the Franciscan life of Poverty a certain queenly dignity, which was not without its influence in fostering the ideal conception of Lady Poverty. Clare's devotion to St. Francis was undoubtedly the chief determining influence of her life. Francis was her guide and spiritual director; but he was more. He entered into her life as a living expression of her own soul's aspiration and ideal. He himself was an actual likeness of that which alone she loved and desired; and in consequence she gave him something of that reverential affection and worship with which she yearned towards Jesus Christ in the mystery of His earthly poverty and loneliness. And this explains how her attachment to St. Francis was at the same time personal and impersonal: impersonal, in that her worshipful thought went always beyond him to that of which his life spoke to her; yet personal because it was he who thus spoke, clearly and imperatively, of the Divine God of all her desire."

After St. Francis had got the Poor Clares safely settled and cloistered in St. Damian's, he was inspired by the spirit of martyrdom, the yearning to yield his life for the sake of his Lord Jesus Christ. As he always considered the Pope the visible representative of Christ on this earth, he went to Rome to ask his permission to travel to the lands of the Mohammedans and Tartars



the interpretations and views of others are unsound and untenable—those advanced by the Vedistic realists (*Mimamsakas*), the creationistic realists (*the Vaiseshikas and Naiyayikas*) and the advocates of the doctrine of *Bheda-bheda* (difference-cum-identity) like *Bhartriprapancha*.

The older meaning of the term *Upanishad* is 'Secret word' or 'Secret import' or 'Secret doctrine.' As long as it was understood in this sense, the emphasis was on the mystic and ultra-rational aspect of philosophical thought. When, however, Sri Dramidacharya, one of the pre-Sankara thinkers who commented upon the *Upanishads*, and Sri Sankara, following Sri Dramida, interpreted the term *Upanishad* as standing for the realization of *Brahman-Atman* identity (*Brahmavidya*), which annihilates the beginningless nescience called *avidya*, or as standing for the ancient text helpful in that realization, the emphasis was shifted to the harmony between the inner mystic vision of the unity and universality of *Atman* as the absolute being-spirit-bliss (*sachchidananda*) and the philosophical conclusion that may be reached by a proper use of logic and dialectics. It is necessary to bear this in mind in endeavouring to appraise justly the philosophical and exegetic worth of Sri Sankara's commentary on the *Brihadaranyaka*.

This great *Upanishad* consists of three *kandas*—the first being called the *Madhu-kanda*, the second the *Yajnavalkya-kanda* or the *Muni-kanda*, and the third *Khila-kanda*. The first *kanda* conveys the main teaching of the *Advaita* doctrine and is of the nature of *upadesa*; the second embodies the logical argument and explanation showing the soundness of the *Upadesa*; and the third deals with certain *Upasanas* or modes of meditation.

The first two chapters of the *Madhu-*

*kanda* deal with the Vedic rite, *Pravargya*, which forms a part of the ritualistic section (*Karma-kanda*) of the Veda; and according to Sri Sankara, the *Upanishad* really begins with the third chapter of the *Madhu-kanda*. In this chapter, the phenomenal superimposition of the world on Brahman is set forth and its origin, its full reach and its acme are indicated; and all this is presented as *adhyaropa* or supposititious positing. The fourth or the concluding chapter of the *Madhu-kanda* exhibits in a telling manner the supposititious positing of the world in the preceding chapter and elucidates the nature of the *Brahman-Atman* realisation which is invariably and synchronously concomitant with the sublation; and all this is *apavada* or sublation through the stultifying realisation of truth.

According to Sri Sankara, *adhyaropa* and *apavada* constitute the chief means of fully realizing the absolute reality called *Suddham Brahma*. All the details of Vedic rituals, all the forms of meditation associated with them, even the greatest of them—the horse-sacrifice (*asvamedha*) and the meditation associated with it, and all the results accruing from them—all these constitute the province of nescience (*avidya*) and even the highest achievement of the *Hiranyagarbha-loka* or *Brahma-loka* is but a part, though the acme, of the immense cycle of transmigration (*samsara*). This is the substance of the account of *adhyaropa* in the third chapter of the *Madhu-kanda*.

In the fourth *Brâhmana* of this chapter, the great rewards of activities and meditation are described so that a pure and disciplined mind may see their impermanence and detach itself from them; the undifferentiated Brahman (*avyakrita*) representing the



God's creatures in Him, for her. St. Francis, at this time, also founded the Third Order for Tertiaries, who, while living in the world and doing their ordinary work, were in sympathy with the ideals of the Order and gave themselves as much as possible to contemplation and works of mercy. This expansion of the Order widened its influence enormously and was a leaven for good in the secular world.

Shortly before his death, Francis retreated to Mount Alverno, where he prayed that he might feel in his body the agony Christ suffered in His Passion, and in his spirit the love by which He was willing to endure such anguish. As he prayed, there appeared before him the vision of Christ crucified, protected by a Seraph, who imprinted on the hands and feet and in the side of St. Francis, the Five Wounds, which he bore until his death.

At last, exhorting his followers never to desert the Porziuncula, he was laid near it, without his tunic, on the bare ground, that he might return to Mother Earth, true to his vows of poverty, the true bridegroom of Lady Poverty, possessing nothing. Two of the brethren sang to him that part of the canticle in praise of Sister Death, and he felt her approach with joy—"Welcome, Sister Death, for thou art to me the gate of life."

After his death, he was borne over to St. Damian's so that St. Clare and her sisters could have a last look at him, and kiss his Blessed Wounds.

His body rests at Assisi, in the rock on which the church of San Francesco stands, a shrine enriched with all that art and money could devise to make it a worthy resting-place for "the little poor man of Assisi." How far from the ideals of Francis! And yet, speaking to one of his friars who predicted with

what pomp and splendour his followers would surround his body, he said, "Thou sayest truth, since so it will be for the praise and glory of my God."

The spirit of St. Francis lives still in many an Umbrian village. As we walk up the steep, narrow streets of Assisi, or along the mountain tracks, or across the broad valley of Spoleto, where he walked, we cannot but feel his influence, the wonderful nature of his Christlike spirit that gave to everything he did a fragrance of holiness. He lived in such close fellowship with God that the voices of Nature were intelligible to him. He understood the beauty of air and sea and sky, of flower and tree, he felt the comradeship of all created things. All beauty was to him a visible expression of God.

St. Francis felt the presence of God as a "heavenly melody, intolerably sweet"; he insisted on the joy of religion. "It is not fitting," he said, "when one is in God's service, to have a gloomy face or a chilling look; always show a face shining with holy joy." But he was sharply aware of the sin of the world. He felt a painful contrast between the clear light of God and the darkness of sin and self. He believed in repentance and penance, in subjecting the body to discipline. But that was a private matter between the soul and its God. Though a penitent, wore a hair-shirt and practised austerities, his outward appearance must not display anguish of body, rather rapture of spirit. Sin was to be fought and overcome in cheerfulness.

The mystic tendency in the art of Tuscany and Umbria may be traced to his influence. He inspired Dante and Giotto, and the greatest artists of Italy, who lavished their skill on his tomb for more than three hundred years. He is generally represented in the dark brown habit of the Order, bearing the



Stigmata and having the attributes of a skull, a lily, a crucifix or a lamb, in reference to his once having found a lamb feeding among goats, when he said, "Even so was Jesus among the Pharisees." A man passing by and seeing his distress, bought the lamb and

gave it to him. From that time on it always followed him, till, when he was in Rome, he gave it to his friend, the Donna Jacqueline de Settesoli.

So ends the story of the Troubadour of God, who sang his way all through life and into death.

## NOTES OF CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA

The Swami opened the conversation addressing a monk of the Order who conducted a Vedânta class.

*Swami*: "You had the Vedânta class today?"

*A.*: "Yes, sir."

*Swami*: "What was the topic? तत्सुसमन्वयात् — 'That Brahman (from which the origin, subsistence, and dissolution of this world proceed) is to be known from the scriptures, for It is the main purport of all Vedânta texts?'"<sup>1</sup>

*A.*: "Yes, sir. We had the discussion about 'changelessly eternal' and 'absolutely eternal.'"

*Swami*: "The very expression 'changelessly eternal' sounds like 'hot ice.' It is, I think, the Sâmkhya view. Prakriti consists of the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas (balance, activity, and inertia). It is these which undergoing modification lead to creation. Dr. S. one day asked me this very question. He said, 'The three Gunas make up Prakriti. So, if the Gunas undergo modification, does not Prakriti verily cease to be itself?' I replied, 'The whole of Prakriti is not of course undergoing modification, but only a portion of it. There is Prakriti, and there is also the modified Prakriti. As for instance, when milk is coagulated

into curd somewhere, all the milk in the world does not turn into curd—there is yet milk somewhere or other. Vedânta describes Purusha and Prakriti as identical. (*Pointing to his own body*) Even here don't you find both Prakriti and Purusha<sup>2</sup> existing together? . . .

"Even in a single grain there are two halves.

पुरुषो प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणान् ।

कारणं गुणसंगोऽस्य सदसदीनिजम्बसु ॥

"Purusha resting on Prakriti experiences the attributes that spring from the latter. The attachment for the Gunas is the cause of the soul's being born in higher and lower bodies."<sup>3</sup>

य एव वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भ्रूयोऽभिजायते ॥

"He who thus knows Purusha and Prakriti together with its Gunas, is never subject to rebirth, howsoever he may live."<sup>4</sup>

"Well, what is spiritual practice but purifying this Prakriti? The Vaishnavas say, Krishna alone is Purusha,

<sup>2</sup> As 'Kshetra' and 'Kshetrajna'. The body and mind are changing but the Self is always remaining unaffected by the changes.

<sup>3</sup> *Gîtâ* 13.21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.23.

<sup>1</sup> *Vedânta Sûtras* I.i.4.

all else is Prakriti.<sup>5</sup> Sri Chaitanya used to say, 'Being a Prakriti, why should one accost another Prakriti?'<sup>6</sup> Does Prakriti ever court Prakriti? We must make Prakriti be attached to Purusha. Mirâ Bâi, when she went to Brindâban, wanted to see Sanâtana,<sup>7</sup> but the latter refused to grant her an interview on the ground that she was a woman. He was, you know, a man of great renunciation. Thereupon Mirâ replied, 'At Brindâban I know of only one Purusha and he is Sri Krishna. And who is this second man that has come? Well, I must see him!' Then they met. Both were advanced souls, so they were in raptures. Sanâtana saluted Mirâ with the words: 'She through whom Sri Krishna manifests His divine sport, and from whom I have been born.'

It is almost useless to read Vedânta unless one compares notes with one's own experience."

A young man hailing from East Bengal came and saluted the Swami. He had received initiation and Brahma-

<sup>5</sup> The terms Purusha and Prakriti, in Sâmkhya philosophy, mean the soul and Nature which, in its broad sense, is the material cause of the universe. Purusha is intelligent, unchanging, eternal, and infinite in number, and experiences happiness and misery etc. through falsely identifying itself with Prakriti which is insentient, everchanging, and eternal, and contributes to the experience of the Purusha. Both are independent. In the culmination of its experience Purusha knows that it is eternally aloof from Prakriti. This is Kaivalya or Liberation.

The words Purusha and Prakriti have also got a second meaning—male and female.

<sup>6</sup> The words quoted form a part of Sri Chaitanya's rebuke to one of his disciples, Haridâs (junior) who happened to beg some rice for his master from a distinguished old lady devotee.

<sup>7</sup> A great Vaishnava saint—a disciple of Sri Chaitanya. He was formerly the minister of the Nawab of Bengal, but renounced everything for the sake of the Lord.

charya from a great spiritual man of that part and had been practising Sâdhanâ for the last eleven years. He had recently come to Benares with the object of spending his days in Sâdhanâ and holy company.

*Swami:* (To the new-comer) "There are signs of Vairâgya (dispassionateness) visible on your person. Well, what sort of Vairâgya have you got? Is it real Vairâgya or Vairâgya from some exciting cause? If it be due to some cause, Vairâgya disappears as soon as the cause ceases to exist. Were you interned?"

*The youth:* "No, sir."

*Swami:* "Anyway, it is good fortune to have Vairâgya. And what is Vairâgya but the discrimination between the Self and the non-Self? 'Discrimination between Purusha and Prakriti' is another synonym for it."

Being asked whether he intended to stay at Benares, the youth replied that if circumstances were favourable he would like to stay.

*Swami:* "If one lives a good, moral life, one can live in any country, not to speak of India. 'The whole earth is the Lord's, where is there any obstruction (Atak)<sup>8</sup> in it for anybody? He only who has scruples in his mind meets with obstructions outside.'

"This is the utterance of a very great man. Do you know whose? It was uttered by Hari Singh, the general of Ranjit Singh. The Afghans began to create disturbance in the frontier, and when chased, they would retreat and halt just beyond Attock. It became quite a problem to subdue them, as going beyond Attock meant the losing of one's religion. Then Hari Singh was called in and being asked what was his

<sup>8</sup> There is a pun on the word 'Atak' in the original Hindi verse which means both 'obstruction' and the town Attock in the Punjab.



advice in this critical matter, he uttered those words. He crossed Attock and taught the intruders a sound lesson. Hari Singh was a Vaishnava, but how like a Jnâni he spoke! Being good and moral you may live anywhere you like—you will live happily. Well, He alone is the Real—the Good, there is nothing besides Him which is real or good.

“Let me tell you a short story. While Râma and Lakshmana were wandering in the Dandaka forest after Sitâ had been stolen, they saw a delightful place. Wishing to spend the four months of the rainy season there, Râma said to Lakshmana, ‘Brother, just go and look if there is anybody here. Without the owner’s permission how can we stay here?’ Lakshmana searching hither and thither in the forest came across a Siva temple, but found no trace of man. Upon his coming back and reporting the matter to Râma, the latter said, ‘It is excellent, Siva is the presiding deity of the place. Go and get His permission.’ In pursuance of the order Lakshmana went to the temple and asked for the permission, when there emerged from the image of Siva a radiant being who went on dancing for some minutes in a wonderful posture, and then disappeared. Lakshmana, unable to make any meaning out of it, came back bewildered and reported all that had happened. Hearing it all Râma said, ‘Build the hut. We have got the permission.’ ‘How is that?’ asked Lakshmana. Râma replied, ‘Keeping the palate and the sexual instinct under control, you may live happily not only here, but anywhere you like.

पृथिव्यां यानि भूतानि जिह्वीपस्थनिमित्तकम् ।

जिह्वीपस्थपरित्यागे पृथिव्यां किं प्रयोजनम् ॥

“Every creature on earth seeks the satisfaction of the palate and the sexual

instinct. To one who gives up the craving for these, of what avail is the earth itself?’

“Well, the whole trouble is due to these—the palate and the sexual instinct. In the Himalayas there are lots of solitary places suited for spiritual practices, but why can’t Sâdhus live there? Owing to the urge of the tongue. The craving for delicacies drives them out of those places. And why is it that Sâdhus cannot live in peace at one place? Either they have a rude tongue and quarrel with others, or they hanker after dainty dishes, or it is the sexual instinct. Hence if a Sâdhu can live at a place peacefully for twelve years, he is said to have ‘perfected his seat.’ A twelve years’ restraint is not a joke!

“Perfect mastery over the sex impulse is a very difficult task. ‘The woman will die and her ashes be blown to the winds, then only can one sing her praises.’<sup>9</sup> There is a story to illustrate this. One day Emperor Akbar said to his minister Birbal, ‘Go and enquire of your mother if she has got rid of passion.’ The lady was then over eighty years of age. Besides how could Birbal ask his mother such a question? Yet that was the Emperor’s mandate. Birbal was in a fix, and gave up food and sleep in his anxiety. His mother was a highly sagacious lady—she was Birbal’s mother, you must remember—and she guessed it all. She said to her son, ‘Don’t you worry, my boy. Have your food and take some rest. When you go to the Durbar, take from me the answer.’ When it was time to go to the Court, Birbal’s mother gave her son a device of ‘Twenty boxes,’<sup>10</sup> with instructions to

<sup>9</sup> A Bengali proverb.

<sup>10</sup> A toy common in places like Benares. The inmost box is sometimes of the size of a pea.

hand it over to the Emperor. On receipt of the box the Emperor opened it. There were numerous boxes one within the other, all empty. Only in the inmost one he found a little ash! The point of the answer is clear enough.

“All trouble is over if the tongue and sex impulse are controlled. When Sri Chaitanya went to Kesava Bhârati to take Sannyâsa from him, the latter seeing him remarked, ‘You are in the heyday of youth and are so surpassingly handsome. Who will be bold enough to initiate you into Sannyâsa?’ Sri Chaitanya replied, ‘Sir, you examine an aspirant before conferring Sannyâsa on him. If you find me qualified enough, you will naturally be inclined to initiate me also. So please examine me and see whether I am fit for it.’ Bhârati said to Sri Chaitanya, ‘Show me your tongue.’ On the disciple’s putting out his tongue, the Guru put some sugar on it. The sugar was left as it was, without being moistened in the least, and was scattered in the air the moment it was blown out. There was no more need to examine the sexual instinct.

तावज्जितेन्द्रियो न स्याद्विजितान्धेन्द्रियः पुमान् ।  
न जयेद्रसनं यावज्जितं सर्वं जिते रसे ॥

“ ‘A man who has controlled all other senses except the palate is not to be considered a master of his senses. When the hankering of the palate is controlled, everything else is controlled.’<sup>11</sup>

“When the palate is controlled the sex impulse is also controlled. Unless the senses are brought under control there cannot be any spiritual progress. Throughout the *Gîtâ* there is repeated mention of this : ‘Therefore, O best of Bhâratas, control thou the senses first, and thereby kill this sinful propensity

of lust, which destroys one’s Knowledge and Realization.’

“Even if a single organ remains uncontrolled, all austerities, all efforts after spirituality become useless even as when there is a single hole in a pitcher, all the water escapes through that. You know that parable of Sri Ramakrishna, of the peasant irrigating his field. All the water escaped through a subterranean passage and not a drop of water reached the field!

इन्द्रियाणां हि सर्वेषां यद्येकं चरतीन्द्रियम् ।  
तदस्य चरति प्रज्ञां दृढेः पात्रादिवोदकम् ॥

“ ‘Even if a single organ is allowed to run out, that alone destroys the aspirant’s illumination, like water from a cracked leathern jar.’<sup>12</sup>

“रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्टं निवर्तते—‘Even the craving for sense-objects leaves an aspirant when he realizes the Lord.’ Control of the senses is not to be brought about by a violent effort. Only by realizing Him is it perfectly achieved. But at the outset one must struggle for this end. Afterwards it becomes quite natural. Still one should not be over-confident. Just as the intelligent hunter catches a deer and ties it up, so after succeeding in controlling the organs one should be on the alert, and continue to hold the mind and organs in check.

“(Pointing to the young visitor) He appears to be a lad who is practising Sâdhanâs. Don’t you all detect this? I see it quite clearly. One test of the steadiness of mind is the steadiness of look. As soon as the mind gets steady the look also gets steady. No more is there any restiveness in one’s looks and movements.

“(To the youth, smiling) What do you want? You don’t want powers, I hope?

<sup>11</sup> *Bhâgavatam*, 11.8.21.

<sup>12</sup> *Manu*, 2.99.



“(To others) All’s well that ends well. It is very difficult to hold on to the last. Powers sometimes come of themselves to the spiritual aspirant, but the moment he pays attention to them he is gone—his further progress is stopped. These powers, again, do not last. Not to speak of using them for selfish purposes, even using them for other ends one loses them. A man set out from his home in search of gems of the sea. When he came to the sea-shore he found variously coloured pebbles and shells scattered there and he set himself to fill his pockets with these—he forgot all about the gems in the sea. The Divine Mother deludes all so as to make them forget their ideal. In the Kathopanishad Yama says to Nachiketas :

“ ‘These damsels, with chariots and musical instruments, are never accessible to men. I give them to you. Have them attend on you, but don’t ask me about what comes after death, O Nachiketas.’ And see what Nachiketas replies : ‘O Death, all these are but transient and they weaken the vigour of the senses of mortals. Even the biggest span of life is but short. So let these chariots and music and all remain with thee. A man is not to be satisfied with riches, and when we have met thee, we shall have riches enough, and live too, as long as thou wilt rule. So I crave that very boon and nothing else.’

“Just as Yama is trying to delude Nachiketas so the Divine Mother is deluding all. What is there in these powers? Sri Ramakrishna used to say, ‘It is priding oneself upon others’ things, as the washerman does.’ What matter these to you? They all belong to the Lord, only He is making them pass through you, that’s all. The case is analogous to Sri Ramakrishna’s par-

able<sup>13</sup> of the elephant killed and brought back to life. (To the young man) No, no, one must not have leanings that way. We want Bhakti. If one has but Bhakti, what else is needed? Nârada was once undergoing great austerities when he heard a voice from heaven :

अनर्हद्विद्यं हि हरिस्तपसा ततः किम् ।

नानर्हद्विद्यं हि हरिस्तपसा ततः किम् ॥

“ ‘If the Lord is ever present inside and outside, then for what object should you undergo austerities, subjecting the body to various hardships? And if He be not inside and outside, of what avail will these austerities be?’ In other words, we must go through them, be-taking ourselves to God. In our country, however, there is now a sad dearth of austerities. One no more hears nowadays of rigid austerities as of old. Well, this is the result of undigested Vedânta. Is it possible to understand the truths of Vedânta without undergoing austerities? *Vichârsâgar*<sup>14</sup> is a misnomer now. Pseudo-Vedântism has spoilt the country. They simply talk big—‘He only exists,’ ‘The universe is

<sup>13</sup> A spiritual aspirant acquired some supernatural powers which made him proud. But he was a sincere man. So the Lord came to him in the form of a Brâhmana and praising his powers wanted to have some test. An elephant was passing by. The man, gratified by the request, took some dust and uttering some Mantras threw it on the elephant, which immediately fell down dead. Then the Brâhmana wished to see if he could bring it to life again. This also the aspirant accomplished in a similar way. After witnessing all these the Brâhmana said, ‘Well, sir, the elephant died and then revived. But what spiritual advancement have these powers brought to you?’ Saying this he disappeared, and the aspirant was brought to his senses.

<sup>14</sup> A celebrated Hindi metrical treatise on Advaita Vedânta by Nischaldâs, extensively read by up-country Sâdhus, many of whom make a travesty of its teachings in their everyday life.

non-existent, in the past, present as well as in the future,' and so on. Nonsense! Do they mean anything by

uttering those things? Vedânta cannot be understood except through austerities."

## THE KINGDOM OF BLISS

BY PROF. SHEO NARAYAN LAL SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

### I

BLISS IS THE GOAL AND QUEST OF LIFE

The life of every man, or for the matter of that, of every living creature, is consciously or unconsciously, a continual pursuit of happiness. Knowledge, wealth, power, everything that we seek in life, is sought only as means to happiness. The will to live, the root impulse in life, is not merely that but a *will to live happily*, a desire for an unending happy existence. If life did not hold the ever-alluring promise of happiness, nobody would ever fear death; on the other hand, death would be regarded the most welcome means for escaping the tortures of existence. But no! even after innumerable sufferings in life, even after witnessing life's darkest tragedies, man is loath to make his departure from the House of Sorrow. There is a hidden and ineradicable faith in the depths of man's soul that *somewhere* unknown to him, happiness which he has been seeking is *there*, and if life goes on continuing he may have a chance of some day hitting upon the as yet undiscovered treasure. The very desire to live, the irresistible impulse to continue existence, is in itself a stout refutation of pessimism, if by pessimism we mean a theory of life which holds that happiness is wholly non-existent in life and is for ever unattainable. "Who could have lived, who could have breathed, were there not this ether of bliss?" says the

*Taittiriya Upanishad*. It is the most unpardonable travesty of Indian thought to call it pessimistic. Indian thought is never pessimistic; it only tells us that we do not seek bliss where we should. We go astray and suffer.

But we all go astray; and life as we live it always exhibits want and misery. We miss happiness; though we have an unassailable faith that life holds it *somewhere*. Any man who looks into his own life, will find that the *ideal of happiness* which he always cherishes in his heart ever remains an unrealized ideal, a mere ideal, a *focus imaginarius*, a mark ever aimed at and ever missed. "Want" is the inseparable companion of life.

But want is also the negative condition of a positive pursuit. To escape want, there arises in the human heart a silent search for the fullness of bliss, the state of perfect wantlessness, more happiness, more bliss, is the eternal yearning of life. The amount of happiness attained ever falls short of the amount of happiness desired. The amount of happiness that seems *possible* of attainment looms infinitely large against the background of limited happiness in present possession.

Unlimited bliss which is life's perpetual quest, recedes like the horizon farther and farther away, the more life labours to approach it. Because greater possessions seem to promise greater happiness, an Alexander after conquering the whole world, thinks of



conquering other planets. Contentment with the present lot of happiness is a sheer impossibility. The ceaseless *cry* of life, which nothing short of Infinite Bliss can silence is, "More bliss! more bliss!!" Life ever gapes its mouth for more and more. The quest of man is always happiness, whether his search be in the sphere of physical objects, or in the spiritual domain. Whether his interests centre in the physical world or in the spiritual, it is the quest of bliss that is at the bottom of all man's striving. *Of no man can it be said that he does not seek bliss.* Even the saint who withdraws himself from the enjoyment of physical objects, does so, because he finds fuller and more lasting bliss in spirituality. All our pursuits, scientific, philosophical, and religious, overtly or covertly, aim at the attainment of bliss.

#### EVERLASTING BLISS—THE GOAL OF ALL RELIGIONS

The city of Perpetual Bliss is the goal promised by all religions. Were it not for this shining prize, the world would long since have ceased to run the race of religions seeking with so much enthusiasm. Even an apparently nihilistic religion like Buddhism which declares the annihilation and passing away of everything experienced, is redeemed from utter nihilism by its conception of Nirvâna as a positive state of ineffable calm and bliss. Were it not for the Buddha's positive characterizations of Nirvâna, Buddhism would long since have disappeared from the face of the earth. Truth to tell, no religion can afford to be nihilistic. A gospel of complete nihilism can never satisfy the human heart. Call the Ultimate State void (Sunyam) or what you will, so long as it is indicated

as a State of endless bliss, millions will stand up to strive after it.

So far, then, as the Goal is concerned, Buddhism and Vedântism are in substantial agreement; the difference being that the latter having a philosophical interest laid down positive conclusions about the nature of Ultimate Reality; while the former avoided metaphysical determinations as being of no avail, but rather baneful to the ethical life of man. Both point to Bliss as the end.

## II

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF ÂTMAN—THE ABODE OF INFINITE BLISS

Where, then, is infinite and abiding bliss to be found? This is one of the perennial questions of philosophy and religion—a question which man shall ever be asking. For, will not man forsake everything on earth, if he knew that by doing so he would gain access to that bliss which knows no limit or decay?

Now, the abode of infinite and everlasting bliss can only be a reality which is itself infinite and imperishable and above all accidents of nature. The Hindu sages declare that the Âtman within man and within everything else is that Infinite and Imperishable Reality whose *very essence* is Bliss Absolute.

What is the Âtman? It is the inmost self in man which is identical with the First Principle, the Root Reality or Brahman. Let us go a little into the philosophy of it.

If we begin our philosophical enquiry into the nature of ultimate Reality with the most general observable feature of the world of our experience, we find that our whole experienced world, the entire objective universe so called, is *there* or *exists* as the object or content of an all-perceiving consciousness, an

all-comprehending and ultimate intelligence. "No truth, therefore," writes Schopenhauer, "is more certain, more independent of all others and less in need of proof than this, that all that exists for knowledge, and therefore this whole world, is only object in relation to a subject, perception of a perceiver, in a word, idea. This is obviously true of the past and the future, as well as of the present, of what is farthest off, as of what is near; for it is true of time and space themselves, in which alone these distinctions arise. All that in any way belongs to the world is thus inevitably conditioned through the subject and exists only for the subject. The world is idea."

Taking this line of thought, taking the primacy of consciousness over all that is comprehended as its *content*, the Hindu thinkers posit consciousness in its primordial and absolute form as the First Principle or Brahman—"That perceiving everything exists." Primordial Being is identical with Primordial Consciousness. It is this Primordial Consciousness, the root principle in reality, that is designated as the *Âtman*. It is the ultimate comprehending consciousness in man, his inmost Self for which all objects exist, the Unchanging Witness of all this rolling pageant of the ever-changing universe. Being the constant witness of all change, it itself is never subject to change; and being the ultimate subject of all that is objective, it itself is never presented as an object. It is ever distinguishable from an "object" or anything that is comprehensible or meanable by it as "this". Thus construed, the true self of man is different from his body or his mind or his sense-organs, which all fall into the sphere of the objective. The self construed as the subject of experience is simply identical with the foundational principle of consciousness, the *ground*

of the entire objective universe. Herein comes a crucial point, one on which Eastern and Western philosophies in general largely differ: Is the self finite or infinite? Both construe the self as the subject of experience; but while the former equates the subject with the ultimate consciousness or Brahman, the stay and foundation of all; the latter takes the self to be essentially a *finite centre of consciousness* rooted in Infinite consciousness or the Absolute or God as it is called in theistic systems. Now, Vedantins maintain that the self *qua* consciousness is by its very nature infinite; for all limitation being *within* consciousness, consciousness itself cannot be limited. The perceiver of all limitation must surely *transcend* limitation. Consciousness of finitude is not finitude of consciousness. The I-consciousness, egoity or *Ahamkâra* is not the transcendental self which is consciousness, but a modification of the *Antahkarana* the internal mental being which has simply received the reflection of consciousness. When the *Antahkarana* ceases functioning as in deep dreamless sleep, there is no I-consciousness, though there is consciousness. The I-consciousness in Indian thought, is only a mode of consciousness, a modification of the *Antahkarana*, a psychosis, and not the self beyond all psychoses. The "I" as we know it has only an empirical status and can lay no claim to metaphysical reality. If we really carry the subject-idea of the self to its logical terminus then we have to go beyond all that is physical or psychical. It is easy enough to go beyond the physical, but there is a sinister temptation to posit the self somewhere in the psychical sphere, taking it either to be a collection of certain psychoses or some central core of the psychic being. Bradley, in his *Appearance and Reality*, has well exposed the hollowness of any



such idea of the self. So we see that in Indian thought, the self of man is nothing short of the Infinite consciousness, the Primal Existence. That is the *Ātman*.

Now, the next step in Vedāntic thought is to understand that the *Ātman* is the sole Real, the absolutely Real, and that all this changing pageant of the objective universe is but an accidental *Vivarta*, a phenomenal appearance.

Indian Vedāntic thought upholds spiritual realism in the truest and most thoroughgoing sense; spirit alone, one without a second, is the abiding Real, while all that is given as its objective content has no *substantive* reality, but is of the nature of *ideal* affirmation. The *ideality* of the world allows it only an empirical reality and leaves the spirit as the sole Real in the absolute sense. But how do we know that the world is only an ideal affirmation? The nature of experience indicates it. The entire objective universe, as we said before, exists in the medium of knowledge, spreads out in knowledge; and all that we could call real in any way communicates its reality to us through knowledge. So all that we call real is there *in knowledge*; and as we shall see presently *as knowledge*.

Having conceded (as Western idealistic thought also does) that reality communicates itself to us and can communicate itself to us only *through knowledge*, it follows but as a necessary corollary that such a reality must itself partake of the nature of knowledge. No reality which has not knowledge as its essential nature could ever be comprehended through the medium of knowledge. There cannot be utter disparity or radical antagonism between knowledge and the 'known'. A community and continuity of nature between knowledge and the known is an

indispensable presupposition of the very possibility of knowledge. The possibility of knowledge is *in itself* a refutation of dualism between knowledge and the known. The 'object' or what is known, reduces itself in the last analysis to a congeries of ideas. Nature or the sum-total of our objects of knowledge, is not a self-closed system of physical or *material* objects, but a continuum of knowledge.

It is a happy augury for philosophic idealism that modern science is also coming to this very conclusion. The eminent scientist Sir James Jeans, as President of *The British Association for the Advancement of Science* for the year 1934, said in his presidential address: "The old physics imagined it was studying an *objective* nature which had its own existence independently of the mind which perceived it—which indeed had existed from all eternity, whether it was perceived or not. It would have gone on imagining this to this day, had the electron observed by the physicists behaved as on this supposition it ought to have done. But it did not so behave, and this led to the birth of the new physics, with its general thesis that the nature we study does not consist so much of *something* we perceive as of our *perceptions*; it is not the object of the subject-object relation but the relation itself. There is, in fact, no clear-cut division between the subject and the object; they form an indivisible whole which now becomes nature. This thesis finds its final expression in the wave-parable, which tells us that nature consists of waves and that these are of the general quality of *waves of knowledge* or of *absence of knowledge* in our own minds."

The entire reality, then, is of the nature of knowledge or *ideal*; and as such can have for its source and support only spirit. We have an intuit-



tive certainty of the origination of ideas *from spirit*, so that we are not going beyond the verities of experience when we say that the whole world which is ideal in character, is spirit-based and spirit-created. Another principle that follows from the ideality of the universe is that the universe *qua* ideal, can only have a relative, dependent, and transient reality, so that spirit alone is left as the abiding Real. Spirit, the ultimate perceiving Consciousness, we have already seen is one and infinite, illimitable by its very nature. This Supreme Spirit, we have called the Âtman. The Âtman, then, is the sole Real, the one without a second, the Illimitable and the Immutable. Infinite Bliss can only be found in an integral and immediate experience of the Âtman, for no bliss can be higher than the consciousness of undivided and illimitable existence. The true Being, the Âtman alone is Bliss. Bliss in the true sense can only be found where there is perfect wantlessness; and perfect wantlessness can only be in an existence which is eternally *complete* and immutably real. Nothing limited can be the seat of bliss in the true sense, for the simple reason that nothing limited can be above *want*. The Âtman alone is bliss *in excelsis*, the highest beatitude, the supremest puissance. There is no bliss short of getting over limited existence. To gain an entrance into the kingdom of Bliss, the petty individuality shall have to be dropped and all limitations thrown overboard. The knower of the Âtman alone goes beyond all grief.

The doctrine that the only pathway to real bliss is *transcendence* of individuality or shaking off the trammels of a limited self, seems to be characteristically Indian. The Western thinkers in general are gravely apprehensive of the loss of individuality and are inclined to think that beyond individuality,

there can only be a blank nothingness. Indian thinkers on the other hand, have always declared that bliss worth the name, is only in the illimitable and not in anything limited or finite. This, however, is not unimaginable even when we take our stand upon common experience. When a man recollects a supremely happy experience, he says: "I was *beside myself* with joy." In all rapturous experiences, as in those of aesthetic delight, the self is put aside as it were; and this as Duessen argues, is a warrant that beyond individuality, there is not a negative blank, but a positive delight, the exuberance of which cannot be described in words.

### III

ALL THAT IS PLEASANT OR DEAR, IS SO  
FOR THE SAKE OF THE ÂTMAN

We thus see that the Âtman is the root Reality, the sole Real, the Inexhaustible Whole, the Infinite Existence-Consciousness from which all that appears to be real derives its reality. The Âtman is the Highest Reality, the primal or initial fact, the source and matrix of all. That being there, everything is. Adopting the well-known Spinozistic phraseology, we may say that the Âtman according to Indian thinkers is both the *ratio essendi* as well as the *ratio cognoscendi* of all that is. As the Âtman is that *for which* everything exists, so also it is that *for which* all blissful objects and experiences exist; as such it is the primal source of bliss, nay, bliss itself in its absolute form.

We cannot think of the absence of bliss in that *for which* alone, all blissful objects and experiences are there. Could the self which *apprehends* bliss be itself devoid of the element of bliss? "The like apprehends the like", as Plotinus said. Nothing unblissful



could apprehend bliss. Objects are for the realization of bliss and not otherwise. Things are sought for happiness, not happiness for things. Things are means to an end, viz. happiness; but happiness is an end in itself, and not means to a further end. Happiness is desired for its own sake, it is not *for* anything else; and the line of philosophical thinking we have taken indicates that the Âtman alone is not for anything else, for it alone is that *for which* everything is. Hence the Âtman alone is bliss absolute.

The question that is most likely to arise here is: Is not misery also *for* the self as much as happiness? Misery also is for the self, why then, not misery, instead of bliss, be taken to be the essence of the self? Misery is not *for* the self in the same way as happiness is. The self is not primarily and essentially misery-seeking or pain-seeking, but bliss-seeking. We do not resort to anything or do anything *for the sake of* pain or misery, but always for happiness. Even when we take up weapons to inflict pain on others (enemies), we do so either positively for our happiness or for relieving ourselves from misery. In no case our undertaking has pain to others as its sole end.

A further question crops up here: Do we seek happiness or bliss primarily for its own sake, or, secondarily as negation of pain? Are our undertakings for our happiness or for the avoidance of misery? Schopenhauer, the pessimist adheres to the latter view. Pain, he says, is positive and pleasure negative. "Whatever is opposed to our will," says he, "thwarting and resisting it, that is, whatever is displeasing and painful—of all this, we are directly sensitive, at once and very distinctly: [On the other hand] we do *not feel* the healthfulness of our

whole body, but only the One Spot 'where the shoe pinches'; so also we do not think about the state of our affairs in general, so long as all goes perfectly well, but only about some insignificant trifle or other that annoys us. On this ground is based the negativity of well-being and happiness in contrast to the positivity of pain, upon which I have so often insisted." Pain, then, being the positive fact of life, pleasure is sought only as an escape from pain. Pain becomes the primary fact and pleasure secondary; pain the *ratio essendi* of pleasure.

Now, a little reflection will show that the reverse is the truth. We want to get rid of pain, misery or want, because these do not constitute the essence of ourselves. In pain, misery, or want, we feel a *loss* of the self, a diminution or crippling of our real nature. I agree with Schopenhauer that pain is distinctly felt, but felt as what?—felt, I believe, as a self-amputation, a crushing out of the true dignity and nature of the self. We seek bliss, because we *are* bliss. The bliss-seeking of the soul is its endeavour to return to a consciousness of its real nature. Misery is intolerable because it dislodges us from our real dwelling, deprives us of our real estate. Misery is the constant attendant of *loss*. We feel misery when we *lose something*. All misery is a *losing* of our real nature, our true self.

It is our own self the Âtman that is the inexhaustible fountain of bliss. If I were not blissful, what object could be blissful to me? It is because the divine aroma of the Âtman is afloat everywhere and perfumes all objects that objects appear blissful to us. Objects are blissful not *in themselves*, but *for the Âtman*. "Not for the sake of the husband," says Yâjnyavalkya, "is the husband dear, but for the sake



of the Ātman is the husband dear; not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear, but for the sake of the Ātman is the wife dear; not for the sake of the son is the son dear, but for the sake of the Ātman is the son dear; not for the sake of wealth is wealth dear, but for the sake of the Ātman is wealth dear; . . . All that is dear, is dear for the sake of the Ātman."

We have, perhaps, never paused to think that pleasure does not come from objects. It is only when *we are pleased* that objects are pleasant to us; not otherwise. It is a matter of common experience that the same objects do not please us always and on all occasions. A beautiful sunset landscape by the riverside will throw a man who has no cares into transports; but imagine the tragic effects of the same sight on a mother who has lost her only child or on a wife who has accidentally lost her husband. All pleasure has reference to the self; short of this reference, objects are neither pleasant nor unpleasant. In the Ātman alone is all bliss. Life bears abundant testimony to this. A state of happiness properly analysed is revealed to be a state of self-elevation, self-expansion, self-joyousness, and self-enrichment. The joyousness of experience increases in abundance, the more we become conscious of our identity with the Ātman, the Supreme Spirit. We are happy when the befogging clouds of want and misery are cleared away, and the self shines in its pristine luminosity. Every feeling of happiness is a feeling of self-expandedness, a *sense* of the purer and the larger self in us. So, we do not *derive* happiness, as we usually say, from external objects; but we simply *become* happy, which is another way of saying that we become *intensely self-aware*. Happiness is an intensified and heightened

state of self-awareness or self-apprehension; it is a *spiritual experience*, a stir in the soul which is nothing but spirit. The more spiritual we become, the more happy we shall really be, the more intensely we shall be feeling the surging ocean of bliss in the very depths of our being. The dawn of happiness comes with the vanishing away of the night of the delusion of littleness and limitation. Analyse any happy experience, and you shall find that it is enlivened by a touch of the greatness of the self. Happiness is the bright glow of the soul, when the ashes of false limitations and wants are brushed away from it. Even in common life, we feel more happy at what we *are* than at what we *possess*. Were it not so, rich men would never care for honour and status in society.

#### IV

#### CONCLUSION

All bliss then, is *in* the Ātman; and the bliss of the Ātman knows no limit. The apprehending subject necessarily exceeds all that is *apprehended*; the self that apprehends bliss will always *exceed in its own blissfulness* all that is *experienced as blissful* can compare to the blissfulness of the bliss-experiencing self. The bliss of the Ātman is unbounded and all-exceeding.

To sum up, the Ātman within man is the Pleroma of Infinite and Inexhaustible Bliss. Objects are not pleasant *in themselves* but *for* the Ātman. The Ātman alone, being the All, the Full, the Complete, is free from *want* and as such the seat of real bliss. The amount of bliss that any man is capable of realizing is directly proportional to the intensity of his spirituality, his spiritual growth or his inward absorption in the Ātman, the radiating centre of all bliss.



Spiritual growth takes the line of centripetal movement, an inward move towards the *Âtman within*; and the greater our progress, the greater our bliss. What a tremendous mistake we make when we seek for bliss in things *outward*! The mine of everlasting bliss, O man! is within you. Not in the endless and ever insatiable pursuit of sense-stirring objects, but in the calm repose in the very depths of our being, shall we find the true haven of bliss.

The modern world, in a somewhat frenzied mood, is running a hot race for the conquest of nature and for the discovery of means to increase the material comforts of mankind. The physical sciences are progressing with rapid strides, and mechanical contrivances are growing in superabundance. Yes, all these are necessary for the alleviation of human suffering and the amelioration of mankind; but *these* can never offer to man that *bliss of spiritual repose* which the human heart is ever craving for and perpetually searching after. Give man all the imaginable physical comforts you can, give him all the benefits of modern scientific inventions and mechanical appliances, but take away from him all opportunities of a *repose in himself*; and you will find that life is more bitter to him than death. A

society which has crushed all opportunities for the healthy spiritual growth of its members, howsoever rich in the means of material comforts, is nothing but a charnel vault for human beings. The greatness of a civilization is judged, not by the complexity and multiplicity of its mechanical appliances, its aeroplanes and submarines, but by the richness of its spiritual culture. The call of the spirit within is irresistible, and nothing is more ruinous for human society and human happiness than to refuse to respond to it. But, alas! this is precisely what we are doing today. "We are aghast", said Sir Radhakrishnan, "when there is a food for famine in the country; but the more important famine of spirit passes unnoticed." Happiness worth the name is impossible in any society unless that society has a spiritual basis and inculcates an earnest spiritual outlook in its members. If the Orient, from her agelong experience, can give any lesson to the Occident today, it is, I believe, this. To world-weary nations, who have drunk the cup of material happiness to the very dregs and are still missing the felicity of life, the message of bliss and solace in the spirit will be as refreshing as sunshine after heavy torrents of rains.

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## 'ACTUAL' IDEALISM

BY HARIDAS CHAUDHURI, B.A.

(Concluded from the last issue)

We have seen how the formative notions of Gentile's philosophy were derived from his searching criticism of the three great idealistic philosophers—Plato, Berkeley, and Hegel. It is not further necessary to bring other philo-

sophers on the scene and exhibit in detail their speculative shortcomings. The besetting sin of all philosophizing,—the Platonizing tendency latent in every man,—has been dragged into light and destroyed. It will now be a

smooth sailing to approach and successfully grapple with the other perplexing problems of philosophy from this new standpoint of pervasive illumination. Truth lies, we have found, not in *factum* but in *feri*—*Verum et fieri convertuntur*. Reality is not *deed* but rather its ceaseless negation, it is eternal *doing*. Does then Gentile agree with Burgson in identifying Reality with Time as pure duration and as such devoid of all spatiality? Would he be prepared to join hands with that great French philosopher in exalting Time into a category of cosmic application, endowed with ultimate metaphysical significance? Let us carefully consider the question and indicate in brief Gentile's attitude towards space and time.

Far from disengaging time from all contact with spatiality, Gentile maintains that time is already a spatial manifold. The essence of space consists in the mutual exclusion of the elements of the manifold. Time in so far as it consists in the reciprocal exclusion of the instants of succession is a sort of spatialization though in a different direction. Creation consists in self-multiplication. Space and time are the necessary forms of this self-multiplication. They are two co-partners in the multiplication of the act of mind; space inevitably requires the help of time in giving completion in a sense to the work of multiplication which it begins. Space means the co-existence of a manifold of points in relation to a determinate point. Now abstract this point from its relations to the surrounding plurality and concentrate your attention upon its single self. It will at once be lifted above the region of plurality and become non-spatial. What we call space is nothing but the spatialization of this non-spatial point or act of mind. But can we really escape from plurality

and arrive at an absolutely non-plural point? A closer inspection seems to return a negative answer. As soon as we withdraw a point from its membership in a spatial manifold it is found to be an element in another manifold, we mean, the manifold of succeeding instants. Withdraw a point from the here-and-there series, and you will find it immersed in the now-and-then series. Every point is a point of intersection of two straight lines which may be schematically made to represent space and time. This is true even if we take space as a whole and concentrate our attention on it as a point. To withdraw a point from the spatial manifold is at the same time to posit it as an element in the temporal manifold. So it will not be difficult now to understand Gentile when he defines time as "the spatialization of the unity of space."

The manifold of space and time is the antithesis of which mind is the thesis. The concrete reality of mind however does not lie in this thesis considered in abstraction from the antithetical multiplicity. The concreteness of both thesis and antithesis lies in a living synthesis which is original and not supervenient in character. This means that the synthesis is not a *tertium quid* which supervenes upon mind as unity and upon space-time as plurality and reconciles their opposition. It is that living reality apart from which neither thesis nor antithesis is real. The essence of multiplicity both spatial and temporal lies in multiplication; and multiplication derives its meaning and significance from the mental activity Gentile calls *fieri*.

In Gentile's opinion, the story of creation is not the story of the many becoming one (abstract Pluralism); nor is it the story of the one becoming many (abstract Monism). Both the above theories abstract unity from plurality and make the desperate attempt to de-



rive the one from the other. Nor is the story of creation that of the passing over of the infra-relational one-in-many into the supra-relational one-in-many through the intermediate stage of relational self-mediation (Absolute Idealism of Bradley and Bosanquet). The above view reduces dynamism to a subdued aspect of the Real. The true story of creation is, in Gentile's view, the story of an endless and beginningless process of which unification and multiplication are the twin aspects. It is the story of mind as development understood in the right sense—development of which unity is neither at the beginning nor at the end, but of which unity is at every stage as the animating principle of multiplicity.

It is needless at this stage to mention that mind as concrete synthesis is not temporal,—it is not a present situated between a past and a future. It is a timeless present; it is eternity which unifies in its focus all the dimensions of time, the past, the present, and the future.

The drift of our discussion seems to have brought us face to face with one of the deepest problems of existence, a problem which has proved to be of perennial interest to all men, in all ages and in all countries,—we mean, the problem of Immortality. Gentile approaches this problem from different angles of vision and exhibits in diverse ways how immortality necessarily follows from the right conception of the spirit. We have already shown that the reality of space consists in spatialization and that the reality of time consists in temporalization. This means that space and time are not two immobile receptacles of forms but dynamical principles of spiritual creation which consists in self-multiplication. Kant has the credit of discovering for the first time in the history of philosophy that space and

time are functions of the spirit and not rigid structures outside or inside the mind, existing prior to mind's activity. But Kant could not work out this conception to the full,—he could not realize the full significance of his discovery. He still supposed space and time to be forms of representing a pre-existing manifold. Gentile points out that Kant courts an evident absurdity when he conceives of a non-spatial and non-temporal manifold confronting the spirit. To posit a manifold is at the same time to posit it in space and time. So mind can have nothing confronting it, no pre-existing limitation except what it itself creates. From this it follows that mind is absolutely free, and is infinite and immortal. Far from constituting limits to the mind, space and time are only aspects of spiritual activity.

Space in so far as it is an object of thought is a limited datum. But we cannot conceive of a limit to space without at the same time positing a wider space transcending the limit. This shows that space is not infinite but indefinite, i.e. we cannot assign any definite limit to space. The indefiniteness of space points to the infinity of mind, i.e. the mind's unlimited power of eternally overcoming that which is posited. Being infinite with regard to space, mind is also infinite with regard to time. For, time also is a kind of spatialization, and all spatialization receives its significance from mind's act of self-externalization.

The immortality of mind can be proved in still another way. What mind affirms is affirmed to be true. Truth is eternal. Therefore thought to which eternal truth is revealed is also eternal. The immortality of the transcendental ego is immanent in the absoluteness of its affirmations.



The critic may here object that what is affirmed to be true is not necessarily truth but may be error. But he should be reminded that error can never be the content of the mind's act of affirmation. Error is never affirmed but only recognized. It is always a thing of the past. It always belongs to that which has already been posited and which now exists as an element of some truth which alone is the content of my present act of affirmation. Error is no error unless it is an element of some truth. It is the non-being of mind, mind lives in ever transcending error and realizing truth by putting forth new affirmations. Mind is value; error is the negation of value.

Nature as nature, as pure objectivity, is mortal because it is unreal and unthinkable. Nature as real and thinkable lives with the living activity of mind. Such a nature or objective world necessarily participates in the immortality of mind. Gentile puts it thus in his usual paradoxical manner: "The immortality of nature consists in its eternal mortality." This means that the objective world (and that includes the plurality of empirical selves), the reality of which lies in the objectification of mind, must lose its abstract objectivity before participating in mind's immortality.

We have tried to give above a short but faithful representation of the most leading ideas of Gentile's philosophy. For fear of inordinate length we have refrained ourselves from discussing his reflections upon many other interesting topics. Before however closing this article, we should like to submit to examination Gentile's central contention and to indicate in brief our own attitude towards it.

That which furnishes the corner-stone for Gentile's entire system of thought is his penetrating analysis of the epistemological problem of subject-object

relation. Gentile maintains that the object of mind in so far as it is affirmed by the mind is reduced to the status of an ideal moment of mental activity. For the mind to affirm an object and yet to hold that the object transcends the mind's act of affirmation is absurd and self-contradictory. It may be objected here that Gentile ignores an unavoidable implication of the act of knowledge. At the very same moment that the mind affirms an object, it also postulates that its object is numerically distinct from itself. The affirmation of an object and the postulation of its transcendence are two irreducible aspects of mind's cognitive activity. In view of the above consideration, the simple hypothesis of Neo-Realism that the relation of knowledge is the most elementary relation of bare co-presence which does not in the least affect the intrinsic nature of the object may appear to be an act of emancipation. Moreover, Gentile has to suffer a crushing attack even from the idealistic camp. Dr. Bosanquet, while reviewing Gentile's position in his "Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy", holds that the latter exaggerates a sound principle of idealism into an extravagant error. Idealism takes its stand upon the most legitimate conviction when it asserts that transcendence of experience as a whole is meaningless and barbarous. But Gentile construes this wholesome principle of immanence in the sense of non-transcendence of immediacy. Hence the charge of Dr. Bosanquet. He enters an emphatic protest against Gentile's distortion of the sound idealistic principle and maintains to the contrary that transcendence is the very rule of life. In the simplest act of knowledge or of volition there is transcendence of immediacy and of isolation. Everything that is noble and great can be achieved only by transcending self-containedness,



narrowness, and exclusivity. Dr. Bosanquet is never tired of emphasizing the sovereign importance and universality of this law of transcendence and calls it "the fundamental logical structure of reality."

Now, the question is: Does Gentile deserve all this shower of criticism which has been bestowed upon him? The realist's objection to Gentile's analysis of the situation of knowledge does not carry conviction to our heart. The legitimate demand of the mind that the object is other than itself is fulfilled in Gentile's philosophy in so far as he admits the plurality of empirical minds and objects. The object of knowledge, Gentile has no hesitation in admitting, transcends the subjective state of the empericized form of one's mind. When he says that the object is immanent, all that he means is that it is immanent in the activity of the transcendental self which posits the world of plurality. The same consideration cuts the ground from beneath the objection of Dr. Bosanquet also whose criticism has been, so it appears to our mind, wide of the mark. By denying transcendence to the object, Gentile does not mean to deny its transcendence of immediacy but its transcendence of the transcendental 'I'. The real point of divergence between Absolute Idealism and Actual Idealism is that while for the former, Reality is a supra-relational, individual Experience, the latter identifies Reality with an eternal spiritual Act. We shall presently see what the precise implication and full bearing of this distinction is.

Gentile's account of reality as thought in Act leaves room for doubt and explanation. From the function that he ascribes to the transcendental 'I', it appears that he identifies the 'I' or reality with discursive thought. For the world of distinction and plurality is surely the work of discursive reason

which is creative and constructive in character. This is the meaning which Dr. Bosanquet rightly assigns to Gentile's thought in act in his "Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy". But if this be Gentile's real meaning, he is at once landed in unmitigated Dualism. For, where does the world of feeling and immediate experience fall, even if we set aside the question of will which Gentile identifies with intellect? If, however, Gentile maintain on the contrary that reality as spiritual act is not relational working, even then he has no escape from Dualism. For, where would then reason with its creation of terms and relations fall? But let us be still more sympathetic. Let us suppose that according to Gentile relational working is a subdued factor of spiritual activity. What then? Well, a moment's reflection will show that Gentile has abandoned his original position and embraced the faith of his opponent.

Gentile is constant in his belief that reality is thought in act and that knower, knowledge, and known are only ideal elements of mental activity. But then the question is: Where does discursive reason which is productive of the relational complex 'knower-knowledge-known' fall? If it be not admitted to be a function of the Real, it must be placed alongside the Real, and the result is Dualism. Thus the fatal defect of Actual Idealism leaps to our eye. So we adhere fast to our conviction that the relational unity of knower, knowledge, and known is a logical but imperfect expression of one supralogical Experience. Reason is Reality's organ of self-manifestation in the ideal sphere.

Again, Gentile's solution of the problem of the one and the many does not appear to us to be quite satisfactory. He maintains that plurality is unified by the very act of its being affirmed and



known; that unity is the intelligibility of plurality. But to our mind it appears that the act of knowledge does not reduce plurality to pure unity but only subdues it to the aspect of totality. So reality for us is not unity as plurality or plurality as unity, as Gentile maintains; it is a non-relational spiritual whole of plurality—non-relational, because, reality cannot be attained, we are convinced, at the relational level.

We now pass on to consider a bit carefully Gentile's contention that Reality is an Act and not a Fact. Reality is, he is never tired of emphasizing, continual creation; it is perpetual realization of values. Mind as already realized is not mind but nature. In reality as realized there is no room for evil, pain, sin, etc., because they are not the negation of what is, but the negation of what *ought to be*,—they are the non-being of values. They are the ideal moments of reality as realizing. Evil is the position which in realizing the good, we pass from and discount. So Gentile contends that Reality must be conceived as an eternal process of the passing over of the ideal into the actual.

With all fairness to Gentile we must admit that he is not an apostle of becoming as mere becoming. That would make reality a meaningless process. He has the vision to realize that there is no point in clamouring for change and activity unless that be directed to the creation of values. But then the question immediately presses itself on our mind: Are values *ex nihilo* created? Or, are they realized by way of being revealed in the arrangements effected by the spirit? The former supposition is contrary to the very nature of values.

They can never be created but only given manifestation to. We never create value but only bring about its revelation. What we do create is, from the very nature of the case, not value, whatever else it might be. But the second alternative, viz. the supposition that value is realized only through being revealed involves the notion of values as self-identical eternal verities, against which notion Gentile's whole philosophy is one sustained polemic. In Gentile's philosophy, there is no room for any eternal fact conceived as supreme reality.

The inevitable moral of the whole discussion is that there is something fundamentally wrong about Gentile's conception of reality as a creative process. Activity, change, becoming are without doubt very important and indisputable facts of our experience. But they cannot be regarded as the final truth of the universe. They are true *within* the universe; they cannot be true *of* the universe. Reality cannot be conceived as the continual passing over of the ideal into the actual but only as the concrete unity of the actual and the ideal. Gentile's meliorism is the necessary consequence of his rendering the moral point of view absolute. But moral experience itself points, by its inherent self-contradiction (e.g. self-contradiction involved in the ideal of "endless approximation"), to a wider and more inclusive standpoint to which it is subordinate. Reality is not endless progression, but self-complete and self-coherent experience; endless progression is only an expression on the relational level of the completeness and richness of being which characterizes the Real.



# UNTIL I HEAR YOUR FOOTSTEPS IN THE SKY

BY DIANE ROBBINS

Until I hear your footsteps in the sky  
And hear your deep voice sweetly calling me  
And know that on the wind that rushes by  
Ride rapturous echoes of your ecstasy  
And feel your press of love upon my heart  
With promise of an all-enduring bliss  
In which ephemeral measures have no part  
The devastating plunder of your kiss!—

Ah, fabulous dreams! Where can they find a place?  
What earthly vale can bear their purity?  
Almost I see the beauty of your face,  
I glimpse our meeting in eternity—  
Until you come, and come my love, you must,  
I wait here silent in the roadside dust.

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## THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD

BY PROF. AKSHYA KUMAR BANERJEE, M.A.

### DEMAND FOR THE EXPLANATION OF PHENOMENA

In the normal conditions of our faculty of knowledge, we have direct experience only of diverse orders of phenomena, within ourselves as well as outside of us, subjective as well as objective. But such is the constitution of our reason that it cannot rest satisfied with accepting them merely as they appear to our senses, whether internal or external. The phenomena are always found to be finite and relative, always found in a state of modification and transformation. But in their modifications and transformations they have got no freedom. Not to speak of the changes and movements, even the character of a phenomenon cannot be determined except in terms of its rela-

tions to other phenomena. The nature of each phenomenal object of experience is found to consist in its actual and possible relations to other objects as well as to the subjects and their instruments of knowledge. No phenomenon is found to be self-explicable, self-accountable, self-moving, self-revealing, and self-existing.

The human reason is urged from within to seek for an explanation of the phenomena, which the senses present it with. In order to be adequately acquainted with the nature of a phenomenon, it has to go beyond it. It has to take the help of other phenomena, which also for their own explanation depend upon their relations to other phenomena, and so on. When our reason moves outwards in this way from



phenomena to phenomena, it gradually realizes that the perfect understanding of the true nature of each phenomenon is possible only by reference to the totality of phenomena,—the entire phenomenal universe. All the phenomena of the objective world are inferred to be organically related to one another. The entire world of actual and possible experience, external as well as internal, is inferred to be, not a mere aggregate of a plurality of phenomena, but one organic system, in which each phenomenon is what it is in relation to the whole, in which the nature of each phenomenon is determined by the place it has to occupy and the function it has to perform in relation to the entire system. The reason is led to the idea of unity in plurality.

But what ideas are involved in this conception of unity in plurality? What is meant by the necessary relationship among the diverse kinds of phenomena, which constitute our world of experience? What is implied by the idea of the organic unity of the objective world? Is this world as a whole self-explicable, self-accountable, self-moving, self-revealing, and self-existing? If so, what must be the nature of its self? If not, how else can the reason form an adequate conception of the world process to the perfect satisfaction of its inner demands? The human reason, in course of its gradual self-awakening and its progressive acquaintance with the nature of the phenomenal world, is inevitably troubled by such interrogations coming from within.

#### THE IDEA OF POWER BEHIND PHENOMENA

The unity in plurality,—the universal inter-relationship determining the characters of the diverse orders of phenomena,—necessarily leads to the idea of a Power that unifies them and

makes them what they are. All changes and movements, all modifications and transformations, all actions and resistances, that appear to our sense-experience, imply in the reflective view of the human reason the existence of a Power operating behind them and determining their courses and characters. The human reason cannot adequately account for and understand them except as expressions of Powers underlying them. Every form of change is necessarily conceived by it as the working of a Power. Power, again, means that which produces or has the possibility of producing change. Change cannot be understood except in terms of Power, and Power also cannot be understood except in terms of change. Power is the cause and change is the effect, and the two are correlative ideas. Power is the potentiality of change, and change is the actuality of Power. Change unmanifested is Power, and Power manifested is change. The two ideas cannot be separated. Phenomena are characterized by changes. When any phenomenon is analysed, no immutable element can be actually found in it, so far as our direct experience can go. It consists of changes in relation to other changes. All phenomena are therefore conceived by the human reason as the creations, or self-manifestations or self-transformations of Powers, and Powers as the realities behind them.

#### THE IDEA OF UNIVERSAL POWER

When all the diverse orders of phenomena are discovered to constitute one inter-connected system,—when the true nature of each phenomenon is found to consist in its relation to the entire system of the universe,—when all the changes, all the actions and reactions, all the productions and destructions, are apprehended as occurring in strict con-



formity to the plan of the whole world process,—the reason finds itself face to face with one Universal Power, that manifests itself in this great ordered system of the objective universe, that gives unity to, and determines the character of, all the diversities of phenomena within it, that alone can satisfactorily account for the phenomenal world of experience being what it is.

If it be held that this universal Power is a mere fiction of the human mind, unwarrantably attributed to the diversified phenomenal world of experience, then the unity of the world system also must be rejected as fictitious,—the interrelation among the phenomena, the order and adjustment prevailing in the objective world, the determination of the character of each phenomenon by its relations to other phenomena, must as well be rejected as illusory; that is to say, the world as we experience and understand it must be regarded as having only a subjective existence, and no objective reality. If these facts are to be accepted as real, that, in the absence of which a rational explanation and an adequate understanding of these facts would be impossible, must also be accepted as real. If the universal Power be a creation of the human mind, the entire world system would be a creation of the human mind. As the world system is what the human mind *finds* and *does not create*, so the universal Power also is what the human reason discovers, and does not create. The human reason, in course of its sincere search for the truth underlying the constantly changing and uniformly appearing phenomena of sense-experience, actually perceives the presence and operation of one Absolute Universal Power as the Ground, Cause, and Reality of the phenomenal universe.

#### THE NATURE OF UNIVERSAL POWER

This Universal Power, being conceived as the sole ground of explanation for all orders of inter-related phenomena of all times and places in this beginningless and endless world, must be thought of as eternal and infinite and omnipotent. This Power is analogous in nature to what we perceive as the physical, chemical, magnetic, electrical, and other forces of the world, in so far as they transform themselves into, and determine the character of, particular classes of phenomena, but It is essentially different from them in Its inner nature. These forces are all finite and relative; they themselves are produced and are therefore of the nature of effects or phenomena; they transform themselves into their respective effects and interact with one another in a uniform and orderly manner in strict accordance with some higher powers and laws; they are spent up in the effects produced by them. They have no capacity to take any initiative or to create any order of phenomena, and their operations are externally determined. Their characters, operations, transformations, and the orders and adjustments among them demand explanation in terms of a higher Power.

The Ultimate Power must be autonomous,—must be governed by Its own law; Its self-transformations must be determined by the inner urge of Its own essential character and not by any form of external control; there can be no idea of compulsion or constraint involved in Its operations. It must therefore be conceived as absolutely free to take the initiative, to create the diverse orders of phenomena, to determine their characters and courses, to govern them in accordance with the laws of Its own nature. The unity and uniformity in the phenomenal universe



follow naturally and necessarily from the essential character of this one absolute Universal Power. This Power is therefore more analogous to our *will*, in which alone we experience the existence of a relatively free and autonomous power, transforming itself by its own creative effort into a variety of phenomena without spending itself up in them. The Universal Power may be conceived as the Absolute Will, which is perfectly free in Its self-manifestations, with no kind of limitations whatsoever.

#### THE UNIVERSAL POWER CONCEIVED AS A SELF-REVEALING GODDESS

As the harmonious system of the diverse orders of phenomena in the universe cannot be consistently explained except as the product of the one autonomous Universal Power, the character of this Power also cannot be understood except in relation to the phenomenal universe. The more intimately we become acquainted with the nature of the phenomena and their relations, the more fully does the character of the Universal Power reveal itself to our reason.

The more and more systematic study of the different departments of Nature in relation to one another has led to the conception of the world as an organic system, in which all kinds of phenomena are centrally regulated, in which all events occur to serve some purpose of the entire system, in which one life pervades the whole and every part and determines the character of all changes and all processes of evolution. However bewilderingly complex the courses of events in Nature may be, Nature reveals itself to be one, evolving from within itself the diversities of phenomena, manifesting its infinite potentiality in space and time through

this unending flow of diversities, and governing and unifying them by the Life-Power operating within itself. The character of the Life-Power is to multiply unity into diversity and at the same time to organize the diversity into more and more concrete unity. This conception of the phenomenal world has led to the conception of the Universal Power, which is the ground and cause of the world,—which has transformed itself and has been transforming itself into this everflowing phenomenal world process,—as the Absolute Life-Power pervading, organizing, and centrally regulating this harmonious system of countless diversities. This Power may thus be conceived as the Life and the world its embodiment, and the two are to be taken together. Nature thus reveals itself to our reason as the one magnificent Life-Power embodied in the great phenomenal world system. We are then face to face with an all-inclusive living Goddess, to whom nothing is external and who shows herself in all that is and becomes. The entire Nature appears in a new light;—every touch, every sight, every sound, gives us a sense of that Infinite Life-Power,—that self-revealing Goddess.

#### THE UNIVERSAL POWER CONCEIVED AS THE SELF-REALIZING ABSOLUTE SPIRITUAL WILL

The conception of the phenomenal world as a living organism is not, however, an adequate idea of what it is. A deeper and thorougher insight into the modes of the operations of the phenomena and the forces of this world of experience discovers that it is a *teleological* order,—that there is a higher Ideal operating within its bosom than the mere development of Life. With the growth of the moral and æsthetic consciousness and its influence



upon the viewpoint of the human reason, man learns to enter into the inner heart of this evolutionary order of the phenomenal universe, and discovers that it is a *moral and æsthetic order*,—that it is a systematic process of the progressive realization of Goodness and Beauty. At this higher stage of the development of the human reason, Truth is discovered to be essentially good and beautiful, Reality is identified with Goodness and Beauty. This Supreme Ideal, which consists in the identity of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, is then perceived to be the immanent regulative Power determining the characters and courses of the diverse orders of phenomena in the world and to be progressively realizing itself in and through them.

This implies that the Universal Power which transforms Itself into and is embodied in the organic system of the phenomenal universe is a self-conscious and self-determined Spiritual Will, eternally realizing in progressive stages and various forms the Supreme Ideal of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, immanent in Its essential nature. In this process of self-transformation It does not require to make any exertion, for there is no rival power to offer any resistance. This process of self-realization does not presuppose any previous state of imperfection in Its essential character, for the Spiritual Will is above time, space, and phenomenal circumstances, while the process is in time and space. What is eternally real in Its essential nature is progressively realized in Its self-expression in the phenomenal world of space, time and relativity. If the Supreme Ideal had not been eternally real in the bosom of the Absolute Universal Power, It could not have been the regulative principle of Its phenomenal self-transformations. In the nature of the Spiritual Will above time,

space, and relativity, there is no distinction between the actual and the ideal, between 'is' and 'ought.' In Its essential nature there is nothing ugly, nothing bad, nothing false, nothing imperfect, that requires to be conquered or transcended for the realization of Perfect Beauty, Goodness, and Truth. It is in Its transcendent nature eternally in the enjoyment of perfection. To transform Itself into the phenomenal world of progressive realization of the same perfection is therefore Its Leela—a play of Its nature, an expression of Its freedom. The moral, æsthetic, and rational order of the phenomenal universe cannot be explained and adequately comprehended without recognizing the eternally perfect and blissful, rational and moral, æsthetic and spiritual, transcendent nature of the Universal Power, which is its absolute ground and cause.

#### PROGRESSIVE SELF-REALIZATION INVOLVES A STRUGGLE

The progressive manifestation of this nature of the Universal Power in the phenomenal world necessarily implies an apparent struggle between rational and irrational, moral and immoral, beautiful and ugly, spiritual and materialistic, unifying and diversifying forces, in which the Universal Power exhibits Itself, and a gradual conquest of the irrational, immoral, ugly, materialistic and diversifying forces by the rational, moral, beautiful, spiritual and unifying powers. The forces which are meant to put obstacles in the path of the full realization in the phenomenal world of the essentially perfect, glorious, and blissful character of the Universal Power, and to preserve thereby the continuity of the *process* of progressive realization, are called the *Tâmasika* and *Râjasika* forces, which are created



to be progressively conquered and vanquished by the Sâttwika powers, which thereby lead to the fuller and fuller realization of the rational, moral, and æsthetic perfection of the inherent nature of that Absolute Creative Power in Its self-manifestations. The more are these Tâmasika and Râjasika powers subdued, the higher is the stage of evolution in Nature, and the fuller is the unfolding of the Sâttwika—Daiva—wisdom and strength, prosperity and tranquillity, beauty and goodness, peace and happiness in the phenomenal world.

When the human reason learns to take a comprehensive and consistent view of the phenomenal universe, extending from the beginningless past to the endless future, from the closest proximity to the boundless distance, it perceives it to be a spiritual system,—a sublime and beautiful harmony of the diversified self-expressions of one Absolute Spiritual Power,—in which all the forces that apparently tend to disturb the harmony, vitiate the character, and overshadow the beauty and goodness of the system are being always conquered and subdued by the forces of harmony, beauty, goodness, and truth, and turned into instruments of the fuller and fuller manifestation of the inner glory of the essential character of that ultimate ground and cause. All the phenomena which seemed to be aberrations in Nature and to create havocs of various kinds, now appear to be necessary, measured, and rhythmical steps in the process of the self-fulfilment of the plan and purpose of the system and to contribute to its beauty, grandeur, and goodness. The essentially beautiful and blissful Spiritual Power is now found reflected on every object of experience, and the entire Nature is perceived to be dancing in pure spiritual delight.

#### THE IMAGE OF DURGA REPRESENTING THIS UNIVERSAL POWER

This grand conception of the good, beautiful, and blissful Spiritual Power, embodied in the eternally developing organism of the phenomenal universe, is most wonderfully represented in the magnificent image of Durgâ, that is worshipped in Autumn and Spring by the Hindus in general, and by the Bengal Hindus in particular. After the scorching rays of Summer and the ravaging torrents and floods of the Rainy Season, the life and vigour, the wealth and grandeur, the youth and beauty, the joy and happiness of the physical as well as the mental Nature reappear in the month of Âswini with striking freshness and purity. All the forces that seemed to overshadow the glories of the essential character of the ever youthful Nature appear to be conquered and subdued and made subsidiary to her self-expression and self-enjoyment. This is also the case with Spring, after the biting and imprisoning cold of Winter. It is in the fitness of things that in these seasons the rational, moral, æsthetic, and religious consciousness of the Hindus should be inspired by the idea of the one Absolute Spiritual Power embodied in this Nature.

#### (a) THE LADY STANDING ON THE LION AND SUBDUING THE ASURA

This Absolute Spiritual Power, which is eternally transforming Itself into the universe of diverse orders of phenomena, pervading and governing every part of it, and organizing and developing all its departments with a view to the progressive realization of the Absolute Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Bliss inherent in its essential character, is represented as a Lady, who is perpetually in the full bloom of youth, in whose appearance the most attractive beauty and awe-



inspiring sublimity, motherly affection and kindly justice, overflowing benevolence and iron-handed discipline, halo of wisdom and brilliance of courage, undisturbed joy and dignified solemnity, are all combined in perfect harmony. With smiling eyes and lips She is standing in a dancing pose with one foot on the back of the submissive Lion and another on the head of the rebellious Asura.

The Lion, the king of beasts, represents all the subdued forces of the phenomenal world, that are consciously or unconsciously carrying out without any resistance the plan and purpose of this Universal Power and are contributing to the realization of harmony and beauty, goodness and purity, truth and peace in the universe. The great Asura, on the other hand, represents all the apparently rebellious forces, that appear to be seeking to assert themselves instead of contributing to the plan and purpose of the whole system, that appear to be desirous of exploiting the resources, placed at their disposal by the system itself, for their own self-aggrandizement instead of placing themselves in the loyal service of the Absolute Power to which they owe their existence, that appear to emphasize the diversities in preference to the unity and to create disturbances in the harmonious system. The Supreme Lady has kept the Asura under Her foot;—this implies that all these apparently rebellious powers are doing their seemingly anti-cosmic works under the ultimate control of that Supreme Spiritual Power and that they also are instruments for the achievement of the cosmic purpose. These forces, however, are not intended to be outwardly submissive, but are meant to be perpetually *in the state of being subdued*. The Lion and the Asura are both doing *Her* works, but in two different ways; and the Absolute Power

—the Supreme Lady—transformed Herself into these two different kinds of forces for these two different kinds of works.

#### (b) THE MOTHER WITH TEN WELL-ARMED HANDS

The image of Sree Durga,—this all-creating, all-governing, all-pervading Mother of the universe,—stretching over Her ten hands in ten directions, teaches us to see Her hands on all sides of us in everything that happens within the range of our experience. The weapons adorning Her strong and beautiful hands are the rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual forces,—the forces of truth and love, kindness and benevolence, service and sacrifice, honesty and sincerity, non-violent courage and all-conquering generosity, etc.,—that are progressively subduing the Âsuric forces evolved in the world process and securing victory for the Supreme Ideal.

#### (c) FOUR PRINCIPAL CHILDREN OF THE MOTHER

This Mother of the universe reveals Herself in all Her glories to us with four principal divine children within Her arms,—Kârtika and Ganesa, Lakshmi and Saraswati,—that represent the four main Sâttwika expressions of the Supreme Power in this phenomenal world and that are exhibited more and more Power in this phenomenal world and that are exhibited more and more brightly and beautifully in the higher and higher stages of its evolution. Kârtika is the presiding deity, i.e. the perfect embodiment of true strength, courage, fearlessness, and all the manly virtues and visible powers, that lead to the preservation and development of peace and harmony, and the conquest and subordination of the forces of disharmony and discord in the phenomenal world. The apparently calm and quiet



Ganesa is the god of destiny, being in control of all the forces that operate invisibly from behind the scene of the causal relations actually experienced in the human, the superhuman, and the sub-human regions of the phenomenal world. The favourable attitude of Ganesa depends upon the reign of justice and benevolence in the world. He is Dharma incarnate. He, with his elephantine head and eyes, but with a body of enormous size and strength, seems to be unconscious of his power. He is also conceived as the god of the masses—the dumb millions of the world,—sincere service to whom is the real worship of Ganesa, and whose contentment and satisfaction is regarded as a good indication of the favourable attitude of the invisible forces, the reign of Dharma and the brilliance of destiny. Kârtika and Ganesa, the two great sons of the Universal Mother, are preserving from Her two sides the harmony of the phenomenal self-transformations of the Mother and contributing to the realization of the Supreme Ideal in and through them.

Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth and prosperity, representing the evolution of the objects of intrinsic value and sources of permanent enjoyment, which are hidden in Nature in times of inordinate greed and prevalence of the Âsuric forces of disharmony and discord, and are manifested in better and higher forms in times of peace and harmony. Happiness constitutes one of the principal elements in the nature of the Supreme Ideal, and it is embodied in its purest and most permanent form in the beautiful image of Lakshmi, the beloved daughter of the Supreme Spiritual Power, creating and governing the universe. It is significant that Lakshmi is born of the Divine Mother, when the universe progresses into a

garden of Lotuses,—the emblem of harmony and beauty.

Saraswati, the all-white blissful daughter of the Supreme Mother, is the embodiment of wisdom and knowledge. Having passed through various stages of evolution, she has now attained complete purity and perfection, and the entire phenomenal universe has become to her a hundred-petalled beautiful lotus, on which she dances in the fullness of joy. She has two aspects,—Aparâ-Vidyâ and Parâ-Vidyâ,—the former representing the knowledge of the universe, the manifestation of the Universal Power, and the latter representing the realization of the Absolute Ideal—Real Substance of this Power.

According to the stages of the development of the essential characteristics of humanity, the human race has been divided into four broad classes or Varnas, viz. Brâhmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra. Each of them is indispensably necessary for the peace, harmony, and progress of society. The builders of the constitution of Hindu Society based it on this principle, and having classified the different sections of people included in this society into Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, entrusted them with distinct duties and responsibilities, and conferred on them corresponding rights and privileges for their own self-realization and the good of the entire society. Each of them is expected to pursue its specific ideals,—or rather specific aspects of the Supreme Ideal,—and in and through the culture of this Swadharma, to render valuable services to the other sections and help them in the pursuit of their distinctive ideals. It is in this way that all the sections of society, however widely different in respect of capacities and inclinations, can be expected to approach with the



co-operation of each other towards the ultimate goal of Perfect Truth, Perfect Beauty, Perfect Goodness and Perfect Bliss.

Now, Saraswati, Kârtika, Lakshmi and Ganesa are the embodiments of the specific ideals of Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras respectively, and they are all represented in the grand image of Durgâ as Her children, i.e. the display of the four main aspects of the essential nature of the one Universal Spiritual Power, the Mother of the universe, and they are playing their parts in harmonious relationship with one another within the arms of the Mother. Their essential characters are more and more clearly revealed with the conquest of the Tâmasika and the Râjasika forces or self-transformations of the same Mother. In the end, they are all found perfectly unified in the nature of the Mother.

Round about the image of the Mother, all the gods and goddesses,—all the secondary powers and causes of the universe, all the subordinate ideals and regulative forces of the phenomenal world, all the physical and moral, natural and spiritual laws and principles—are represented as revolving, singing and dancing in perfect harmony and concert.

#### (d) SIVA, THE SOUL OF THE MOTHER

When the complete image of the

Universal Mother, with all the glories eternally present in Her womb fully displayed, reveals itself to the spiritual experience of the devotee, it becomes perfectly transparent, and Siva, the Absolute Spirit,—the Ultimate Substance, in whom, by whom, and for whom the Universal Power exists and exhibits Itself,—the Noumenal Self of the phenomenal universe,—the Eternal Husband of the Eternal Mother,—who was so long only peeping from behind His Power, now shines by Himself and reveals Himself as the sole Reality. The entire universe is now experienced as the diversified manifestation of Siva. Every phenomenon of experience is now illumined with the goodness, beauty, truth, and bliss of Siva. The devoted seer himself becomes identified with Siva. Nothing exists other than Siva. Siva, the one without a second, shines in all His eternal, infinite, inherent perfection.

Thus the entire Vedantic outlook is wonderfully represented in the image of Durgâ, whom every Hindu is taught to worship, and the significance of this worship lies in the realization of the Supreme Reality, in whom Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Bliss are eternally unified, through the attainment of deeper and deeper insight into the character of the system of the universe.

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*“Divine Mother, also called Prakriti or Kali, is represented by a female figure standing with feet on a male figure, indicating that until Maya lifts, we can know nothing. Brahman is neuter, unknown and unknowable, but to be objectified He covers Himself with a veil of Maya, becomes the Mother of the Universe and so brings forth the creation. The prostrate figure, Siva or God, has become Sava, lifeless by being covered by Maya. The Jnani says, ‘I will uncover God by force’; but the Dualist says, ‘I will uncover God by praying to Mother, begging Her to open the door to which she alone has the key.’”*

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



# THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

## CHAPTER IV

### SECTION II

*Topic 4: The mode of departure from the body up to the way is common to both a knower of Saguna Brahman and an ordinary man.*

**समाना चासृत्युपक्रमात्, अमृतत्वं चानुपोष्य ॥ ७ ॥**

समाना Common च and आ सृति-उपक्रमात् up to the beginning of their ways अमृतत्वं immortality च and अनुपोष्य not having burnt ( ignorance ).

7. And common (is the mode of departure at the time of death for both the knower of Saguna Brahman and the ignorant) up to the beginning of their ways ; and the immortality (of the knower of Saguna Brahman) is only relative, not having burnt (ignorance).

For the knower of Nirguna Brahman there is no departure at all. Leaving his case, the opponent says that the mode of departure from the body for the knower of Saguna Brahman and the ignorant ought to be different, as they attain different abodes after death, the former reaching Brahmaloaka and the latter being reborn in this world. This Sutra says that the knower of Saguna Brahman enters at death the nerve Sushumnâ, and then goes out of the body, and takes to the path of the gods, while the ignorant enter some other nerve and go by another way to have rebirth. But till they enter on their respective ways, the method of departure at death is common to both, for it is something pertaining to this life, and like happiness and misery it is the same for both.

*Topic 5: The merging of fire etc. at death in the Supreme Deity is not absolute merging.*

**तदाऽपीतेः, संसारव्यपदेशात् ॥ ८ ॥**

तत् That आ अपीते up to the attainment of Brahman through Knowledge संसार-व्यपदेशात् because ( scriptures ) declare the state of relative existence.

8. That (fine body lasts) up to the attainment of Brahman through Knowledge, because (scriptures) declare the state of relative existence (till then).

In the text cited in Sutra 1 we have, "And fire (is merged) in the Supreme Deity." The opponent argues that as fire and the other elements are merged in the Supreme Deity, which is the cause of these elements, this is only the final dissolution, and so everyone at death attains Liberation. This Sutra says that this merging is not absolute merging, but the one we experience in deep sleep. Only the function of these elements is merged, and not the elements



themselves. The final dissolution does not take place till Knowledge is attained ; for scriptures declare that till then the individual soul is subject to relative existence. "Some souls enter the womb to have a body" etc. (Kath. 2.5.7). If the merging at death were absolute, then there could be no rebirth.

**सूक्ष्मं प्रमाणतश्च, तथोपलब्धेः ॥ ९ ॥**

सूक्ष्मं Subtle प्रमाणतः as regards size च and तथा so उपलब्धेः because it is experienced.

9. (This fine body) is subtle (by nature) and size because it is so experienced.

The body from the essence of the gross elements in which the soul abides at the time of death is subtle by nature and size. This is understood from scriptural statements which declare that it goes out along the Nâdis (nerves). So it is necessarily subtle or small in size. Its transparency explains why it is not obstructed by gross bodies, or is not seen when it passes out at death.

**नोपमर्देनातः ॥ १० ॥**

न Not उपमर्देन by the destruction अतः therefore.

10. Therefore (the subtle body is) not (destroyed) by the destruction (of the gross body).

**अस्यैव चोपपत्तेः एष ऊष्मा ॥ ११ ॥**

अस्य एव To this fine body alone च and उपपत्तेः because of possibility एष this ऊष्मा (bodily) heat.

11. And to this fine body alone does this (bodily) heat belong, because this (only) is possible.

The bodily heat observed in living animals belongs to this subtle body and not to the gross body, for the heat is felt so long as there is life and not after that.

*Topic 6: The Prânas of a knower of Nirguna Brahman do not depart from the body at death.*

**प्रतिषेधादिति चेत्, न, शरीरात् ॥ १२ ॥**

प्रतिषेधात् On account of denial इति चेत् if it be said न not so शरीरात् from the individual soul.

12. If it be said (that the Prânas of a knower of Brahman do not depart), on account of Sruti denying it ; (we say), not so, (because scripture denies the departure of the Prânas) from the individual soul (and not from the body).

This Sutra gives the view of the opponent.

"His Prânas do not depart" (Brih. 4.4.6). This text refers to a knower of Nirguna Brahman. It says that his Prânas do not depart at death. The opponent holds that the denial of the departure of the Prânas is from



the soul and not from the body. It says that the Prânas do not depart from the soul—not that they do not depart from the body, for in the latter case there will be no death at all. This is made all the more clear from the Mâdhyandina recension, which says, “From him” etc. Therefore the soul of one who knows Brahman passes out of the body with the Prânas.

स्पष्टो ह्येकेषाम् ॥ १३ ॥

स्पष्टः clear हि for एकेषाम् of some (schools).

13. For (the denial of the departure from the body) is clear (in the texts) of some schools.

This Sutra refutes the view of the previous one by connecting the denial to the body and not to the soul.

That the Prânas do not depart from the body is made clear from such Sruti texts as “‘Yâjnavalkya,’ said he, ‘when this (liberated) man dies, do his Prânas go up from him, or do they not?’ ‘No!’ replied Yâjnavalkya, ‘they merge in him only’ ” etc. (Brih. 3.2.11). Therefore we have to take even the Mâdhyandina reading ‘from him’ to refer to the body. It is not true that if the Prânas do not depart there will be no death, for they do not remain in the body, but get merged, which makes life impossible, and so we say in common parlance that the person is dead. Moreover, if the Prânas did depart with the soul from the body, then a rebirth of such a soul would be inevitable, and consequently there would be no Liberation. So the Prânas do not depart from the body in the case of a knower of Brahman.

स्मर्यते च ॥ १४ ॥

स्मर्यते Smriti says (so) च and.

14. And Smriti (also) says so.

“The gods themselves are perplexed, looking for the path of him who has no path” (Mbh. XII.270.22) which thus denies departure for the knower of Brahman.

*Topic 7: The organs of the knowers of Nirguna Brahman get merged in It at death.*

तानि परे, तथाह्याह ॥ १५ ॥

तानि These परे in the Supreme Brahman तथा so हि for आह (scripture) says.

15. These (Prânas) (are merged) in the Supreme Brahman, for so (scripture) says.

This Sutra describes what happens to the Prânas (organs) and the fine essence of the gross elements in which they abide, in the case of a knower of Brahman when he dies. These organs and the elements get merged in the Supreme Brahman. “The sixteen digits of this witness, the Purusha, having their goal in Him dissolve on reaching Him” (Pr. 6.5). The text, “All the fifteen parts of their body enter into their causes” etc. (Mu. 3.2.7) gives the end from a relative standpoint, according to which the body disintegrates and goes back to its cause, the elements. The former text speaks from a trans-

cidental standpoint, according to which the whole aggregate is merged in Brahman, even as the illusory snake is merged in the rope when knowledge dawns.

*Topic 8: The digits (Kalās) of the knower of Nirguna Brahman attain absolute non-distinction with Brahman at death.*

अविभागः, वचनात् ॥ १६ ॥

अविभागः Non-distinction वचनात् on account of the statement of scriptures.

16. (Absolute) non-distinction (with Brahman of the parts merged takes place) according to the statement of scriptures.

“Their names and forms are destroyed, and people speak of the Puruṣa only. Then he becomes devoid of digits and immortal” (Pr. 6.5). The digits get absolutely merged in the Supreme Brahman. The merging in the case of the knower of Brahman is absolute, whereas in the case of an ordinary person it is not so; they exist in a fine potential state, the cause of future rebirth. But in the case of the knower of Brahman, Knowledge having destroyed ignorance, all these digits which are but its effects, get merged absolutely, without any chance of cropping up again.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

In *The Task for Modern India* we have dealt with some rudimentary principles of nation-building which are essential for the regeneration of India. . . . Miss Peggy Davidson is a new contributor of ours from the United States of America. The way in which she has delineated the character of *Saint Francis of Assisi* will be profitable reading to our readers. . . . We present to all seekers after Truth the illuminating *Notes of Conversations with Swami Turiyananda*. . . . Prof. Shrivastava gives us the oriental conception of *The Kingdom of Bliss* in his usual scholarly way. . . . Mr. Chaudhuri concludes his article on ‘*Actual*’ *Idealism* by showing that there is something fundamentally wrong about Gentile’s conception of Reality as a creative

process. . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee dwells upon the philosophy behind the Hindu conception of God as the Great Mother, in his article on *The Motherhood of God*. . . . In this issue we are giving the last instalment of the translation with notes of *Brahma-Sutras* by Swami Vireswarananda as the complete translation of the whole treatise will be ready in book-form by February next. From January we shall take up *Atmabodh*, a minor work of Sri Sankarâchârya.

### WHY THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION SUFFERS

Who can effectively solve the problem of education in India? It is surely the students. The national leaders and the government have proved their incapacity to tackle the



problem. It now rests with the students of the country to show their mettle. By repeated sacrifices they have demonstrated their willingness to serve the country. Many times they gave up their studies at what they understood to be the call of Mother India and gathered round the banners of political leaders. And as many times they were disbanded by their leaders. Some have yielded to despair, some have grown too wise. But there are still others whose number is more than sufficient to educate a vast sub-continent like India. But nothing is being done. Why?

It is because there are some very dangerous obstacles that stand in the way and prevent students from giving their best to the country. The greatest of them is the mode of living, they get accustomed to, in schools and colleges, and specially in hostels. It is not only too high and artificial but can justly be termed "cruel." It kills the guardians and starves families. Children make merry when parents and guardians die by inches for their sake. But this is the least dangerous part of it. This irresponsible style of living makes the students quite unfit for being national workers. The true field for nation-building in India is the villages. The students must go there if they want to work for India. They must live and move as the villagers do and must not play the stranger at every turn. They must suffer and enjoy with these simple folks, whom they want to serve. But with their high-class, refined urbanity the students cannot do this even if they want. Their very mode of living, almost unknown to themselves, has made them think of villagers as "rustics." They have read in books of village goodness, have seen some with their own eyes, have a sort of sympathy and admiration for the folks and even a sincere desire to work for them; but

in spite of all these they find it too difficult to adjust themselves to rural conditions. There are so few points of contact between them and the villagers that they feel lonely and bored when they go to serve villages, and long to return to towns.

The next obstacle is the romantic view of life, which they come to have from ultra-modern novels and dramas and cinemas. These give a dream-land picture of life and make the inexperienced youths highly sentimental. And the perverse view of morality and spirituality that is being lavishly served by a set of irresponsible writers in the name of art is spoiling by hundreds those who might have become fine national workers and leaders. The baneful effect of the wild-fire spread of this kind of literature is already being felt by society. It has been spoiling our boys, it has lately begun to spoil our girls. Preaching against discipline and rigour of all kinds as tending towards the suppression of personality, this literature is making our youths invertebrate. They are fast becoming creatures to morbid sentimentalism and are losing whatever little will they had. Sustained strenuous work is becoming a terror to them. The more they are living in this fool's paradise, the farther away do they go from stern real life.

Those of our students who are fortunate enough as not to fall a prey to this Satanic literature have another obstacle to overcome. It is the excessive love of one's family members and the desire to make them as happy as possible by earning money for them. This is in itself not bad and in the normal condition of any country it is even desirable. But the present condition of India is far from being normal. Without the life-long sacrifice of hundreds of its youths, the country cannot possibly be lifted up. For the



sake of India, parents and relatives will have to suffer a little; children will have to forgo a little the satisfaction derived from serving parents and other dear ones. As it stands, parents and guardians are unwilling to part with their boys for such a cause; they would rather feed an unemployed youth on their scanty fare than allow him to devote his life for the nation's cause. And the boys too, would be moving about in search of "service", hoping against hope; rather than take to the disinterested life of a national worker. Happily for the country, this misdirected love is taking its proper orientation.

If our students can overcome these three great obstacles, they can serve the country in a way which will surprise our leaders as well as the Government. The country badly needs an organization which will have nothing to do with politics and which will devote all its energies in imparting education to the country. And the education which such students of sound morals, stoic habits, and deep thinking will impart will be a real type of education that will give health, wealth, and peace to the country. A country steeped in ignorance and poverty cannot afford to have any party strife; hence such an organization must rise above all such narrowness and shall have no other aim and motive but to serve the country in the noblest possible way. Will such an organization ever be formed?

### WHERE HAS SVADHARMA GONE?

The word 'exclusion' is foreign to Hinduism or Brahmanism. Whoever wants to be included in its fold is welcome, provided he is catholic enough to give absolute freedom of faith to others and sincerely tries to be moral in his conduct. This does not mean that all Hindus are actually so. But this is

their ideal and many of them try to be true to it. And their social order, seen through the eyes of the ancient Rishis, is such as is best calculated for the natural development of the individual to this universalism.

But circumstances have compelled and are still compelling its adherents to draw a circle, though extremely pliant, around it, and thus to exclude temporarily a section of humanity from it. In every age, past, present, and perhaps future, new fanatic peoples come to, or narrow bigoted sects arise within, the country, whose iconoclastic tendencies compel the peace-loving Hindus, naturally inclined to universal love, to keep these pugnacious peoples at a safe distance, lest their impatient hands destroy its unique beauty acquired through centuries of experience.

When, however, their bigotry is somewhat softened down, the Hindu monks, the vanguard of this universal religion, take steps to open the gates of entrance to them. Ever ready to learn, open to all wholesome thoughts and activities, these monks imbibe all the noble qualities of the newcomers or the new sects, arrive at a sublime synthesis, devise the best natural method of infusing it into the people and then hand it over to society and retire. This is the Hindu monk's eternal duty—to digest the poison himself and pass on the nectar, carefully prepared, to society. The society remains at a safe distance, carefully consolidating what has been acquired; the Sannyâsins absorb new thoughts and cultures and reverentially hand over the wholesome synthesis to society. Thus goes on the universalizing work of Brahmanism.

But who stands against the idol-breakers? Gross, heavy hands must be opposed by strong arms. The monks are a misfit here. There the Kshatriya is needed. When places of worship are



threatened with desecration, when the honour of women is unsafe, when the physical existence of the race is jeopardized—then the monk has no place; there the Kshatriya must reign supreme. A society which fails to produce this true type of Kshatriyas cannot maintain its culture, far less improve it or spread it for the good of the world. The Hindu society and with it the Hindu religion would have been wiped off the earth, had the Rājputs, the Sikhs, the Mahrattas, the Bengal Bhuniās, and others not risen as the defenders of their faiths.

So we see the Kshatriya is as necessary for the upkeep of society as the monk; but their spheres of activity are quite different. And if they meddle in each other's business, they will surely bring society into a terrible muddle. Similarly, if the Vis or the populace give up their trade and commerce, arts, crafts, and social service and take to arms, society will be equally in danger of a collapse. No question of superiority or inferiority can come in here. The monk, the Brâhmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, the Sudra—each and all of them are equally important in the society. But each has his own set of duties or Svadharma to follow, each has his own peculiar way of serving the country or society. This is the highly

eulogized Svadharma cult of the *Gītā*.

The Hindus have forgotten this idea of Svadharma and universalism. The different classes are at loggerheads with one another clamouring for their rights and forgetting their duties. Imbued with selfishness they have forgotten that their existence is for a common purpose of the whole Hindu world. So also the different sects in Hinduism—Saivas, Sâktas, Vaishnavas, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Arya Samâjists, Brâhmos—are fighting with one another, thus undermining the unity of the Hindu society. Similar is the case with the Hindus of different provinces. Provincialism is rampant, the net result of all these is that the Hindu society is in a state of torpor; and one section is indifferent to the welfare of the other section in it; and this want of unity and co-operation is making the Hindu Society lose grounds in the struggle for existence. Even the monks, who have renounced everything, we find, do not rise above petty jealousies and combine for God's sake. How then can we expect other sections of the Hindu society to rise above selfishness and unite for the sake of the Hindu culture? If the Hindu society fails to reorganize itself into one corporate whole, we are sorry to say, dark days are before it.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

THE CATUS-SUTRI BHASYA OF SRI MADHVACHARYA. By B. N. Krishnamurti Sarma. *The Madras Law Journal Press, Mylapore, Madras. pp. xxxii & 136. Price Rs. 2-8. Foreign 6sh.*

The book contains not only the first four Sutras of Vyâsa but the next Adhikarana containing seven more Sutras as well. The Mâdhva Bhâshya itself is followed by three commentaries, two of which are contemporary

to it and are written by the immediate disciples of Madhva, and as such have a unique value to the students of comparative philosophy. The third, the brilliant commentary of Jayatirtha needs no introduction. These text, commentaries and glosses are preceded and followed by the editor's learned introduction and notes, which reveal a vast and critical scholarship worthy of an editor of such an undertaking. Almost all the



references in the Bhâshya and the glosses have been traced and indicated. Parallel passages from other books even of different and rival systems of philosophy have been cited. Notes, specially on topics where Madhva differs from other commentators, are mostly brilliant and critical, though not always free from the bias of an enthusiastic follower.

It was a pity that whereas Sankara and Ramanuja had so many editors and translators to publish their works, the other Âchârya, by no means inferior to them, should have almost none to bring his works to the wider circles of readers. Mr. Sarma has done a really great service to Indian philosophy by bringing out this fine edition of the most important portion of the Mâdhva Bhâshya. The way in which he has acquitted himself of this labour of love deserves admiration of all. And it is rather disappointing that he should stop with only the fifth Adhikarana and would not proceed further. Before the world arrives at a critical estimation of the true import of the Sutras it needs to acquaint itself with what the enthusiastic followers of all the systems developed out of them have to say. And Mr. Sarma and Dr. R. N. Sarma have been supplying the world with the logic and informations of the Mâdhva system. Students of comparative Indian philosophy would feel it a distinct loss if the present work is not carried through to the very last Sutra. We draw the attention of the followers of Madhva to the importance of this work.

**THE DEAD-SEA APPLE. A VIEW OF THE INDIAN REFORM BILL.** By a Harijan. *The Book Company Ltd., Calcutta.* pp. xxiv+102. Price Re. 1.

The book is, as the author has mentioned in its sub-title, an aetiology of the "Safe-guards" of the Reform Bill. His reasons based on facts duly attested by authoritative quotations have led him to the conclusion that the forces that stand against the granting of the Dominion Status to India are not really those born of the unwillingness of the British public or even so much of the parliament, but are those rooted in the very exclusive nature of Christianity or rather the Roman Catholic Church or more particularly the Church of England and the arrogance and *hauteur* of the Indian Civil Service recruited from the Public Schools of England, where they receive training in a manner which can

never lead them to have sympathy for the country they are sent out to govern. And these two sections of the British public, with whom has joined the third, viz. the "resident English community," have, according to the author, entered into a covenant against the Dominion Status goal of India. The Muslims of India have all along been made the cat's paw by these interested people. This is, in short, the diagnosis of the author of the entire political situation of India. And his prescription is the building up of a powerful compact body of the Hindus wherein the Harijan and the Brâhmana will have such equal rights and duties as will give them a natural urge to work and suffer for the great cause. We, laymen, are not competent enough to sit in judgment on the author's diagnosis. But that he is right in his prescription, there is no doubt about that. And this is not merely for the petty gain of political freedom but for the continuance and expansion of its culture and spirituality of love and goodwill for the entire humanity. All Hindus must combine in love and fellow-feeling not against any body of people on earth but for the working out of the salvation of all human beings. And by Hindus we mean what it really means, viz. the Sanâtanists (not the inaugurators of the very recent movement of that name), the Arya-Samâjists, the Brâhmos, the Sikhs, the Jains, the Buddhists, those who are miscalled the Animists, and all who care to come under Hinduism. When that glorious day comes—come it must—, a new era of universal love will dawn.

For this conclusion of the author we recommend the book to all lovers of peace.

HINDI

**GITÂVALI.** BY GOSWAMI TULSIDAS-JI. Translated in Hindi by Munilal. *The Gita Press, Gorakhpur.* Pp. 445. Price Re. 1. Bound Re. 1/4.

This collection and translation in standard Hindi of the sweetest lyrics of Tulsidasji's Râmâyana is indeed the best gift of the Hindi language to India. The peculiar provincial tone of the original songs, though all the sweeter on that account, debarred many from fully appreciating the passionate love of the poet-devotee. Their translation in standard Hindi following each song has removed this long-felt want. The translation is lucid and has finely drawn out the hidden beauty. The volume will no doubt be a treasure to many.



## NEWS AND REPORTS

### REPORT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY COMMITTEE

A fairly good number of meetings have been held in different parts of India in which distinguished men have spoken on the Life and Mission of Sri Ramakrishna and stressed the importance of a fitting celebration of the Centenary all over. Of these the activities of the Centenary Committee of C. P. and Berar and of the Sannyāsins and general public of Benares and of the Professors and students of the Hindu University deserve special mention. We are glad to announce that Mandaleswar Srimat Swami Swarupandaji of Mrintunjay Math, the leader of the well-known Giri sect of Sadhus has kindly consented to join the panel of Vice-Presidents of the General Committee. His Highness Maharaja Sir Aditya Narain Singh Bahadur, Kt., K.C.S.I., of Benares has been kind enough to preside over the meeting of the Citizens of Benares; he has also consented to be one of the Vice-Presidents of the General Committee as well as to be the President of the Local Committee. The Pro. Vice-Chancellor of the Hindu University and Mahamahopadhyaya Pramathanath Tarkabhushan were elected Vice-Presidents of the Executive Committee for B. H. U. Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration in a mammoth meeting of the staff and students held in the Arts College Hall. In C. P. and Berar distinguished men like Messrs. M. S. Aney, Ghanashyam Singh Gupta, N. B. Khare, S. G. Patwardhan, W. R. Puranik, Pt. Kunjbiharilal Agnihotri and others are taking great interest in the matter. At Patna too a general as well as a working committee has been formed with some of the distinguished men of the province as members.

The activities of the Foreign Celebration Sub-Committee have been published in the papers from time to time and we are sure, the members are also somewhat familiar with them. First, we have got in touch through correspondence with several distinguished men and women of European countries, who have become members of the Foreign Celebration Sub-Committee and are trying to make the celebration a success.

Secondly, we have sent Centenary and Mission literature (in pamphlets) to nearly 30 Universities in Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Jugo-Slovakia and other countries.

Thirdly, Swami Yatiswarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, who has been sent to Europe on Missionary work and is touring through Germany, Switzerland, France and other neighbouring countries, has been asked to organize the European celebration work. He is getting in touch with noted people through correspondence and personal interviews and is lecturing and organizing small celebrations wherever he is going. He is about to publish several books, mostly translations of Swami Vivekananda's writings in German, French and Swiss. This, we believe, would lay the foundation of a more permanent work.

In England too, there is a Swami of the Ramakrishna Order, Swami Avyaktananda, who has recently opened a centre in London and is giving lectures and interviews to the public. He is organizing the celebration work in England. The London Celebration Committee has already been formed with some of Swami Vivekananda's friends and admirers in it.

In America, the Swamis in charge of the 10 different centres are taking an active part and Celebration Committees have already been formed in New York and other places. Besides, nearly 130 important people in Ceylon, S.S., Siam, China, Japan, Aden, Fiji, Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Tanganyika, S. Rhodesia, S. Africa, Mauritius and S. America, have been approached through correspondence and literature.

Below are given some of the names of distinguished persons who are taking very keen interest in the celebration:—Mr. Leona Smith of San Francisco, Prof. H. V. Glassenopp of Koingsberg, M. Manrice Magre of France, Prof. O. Stein of Czecho Slovakia, Mlle M. Chovin of France, Mrs. G. T. West of California, Mr. Kathedeen E. Davis of San Francisco, M. Alphonso de Chateaubriant of France.

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