

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XL

NOVEMBER, 1935

No. 11



“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 15, 1900.*

This morning the lesson on the *Gītā* was grand. It began with a long talk on the fact that the highest ideals are not for all. Non-resistance is *not* for the man who thinks the replacing of the maggot in the wound, by the leprous saint, with “Eat, Brother !” disgusting and horrible. Non-resistance is practised by a mother’s love towards an angry child. It is a travesty in the mouth of a coward, or in the face of a lion.

Let us be true. Nine-tenths of our life’s energy is spent in trying to make people *think* us that which we are not. That energy would be more rightly spent in *becoming* that which we would like to be. And so it went—beginning with the salutation to an Incarnation :

Salutation to thee—the Guru of the universe,  
Whose footstool is worshipped by the gods.  
Thou one unbroken Soul,  
Physician of the world’s diseases.  
Guru of even the gods,  
To thee our salutation.  
Thee we salute. Thee we salute. Thee we salute.

in the Indian tones—by Swami himself.

There was an implication throughout the talk that Christ and Buddha were inferior to Krishna—in the grasp of problems—inasmuch as they preached the highest ethics as a world-path, whereas Krishna saw the right of the

*whole*—in all its parts—to its own differing ideals. But perhaps no one not familiar with his thought would have realized that this lay behind his exclamation, “The Sermon on the Mount has only become another bondage for the soul of man!”

All through his lectures now, he shows this desire to understand life as it is, and to sympathize with it. He takes less of the “Not this, not this” attitude and more of the “Here comes and now follows” sort of tone. But I fear that people find him even more out of touch at a first hearing than ever used to be the case.

He talked after lunch about Bengali poetry, then about astronomy. He confessed to a whimsical doubt as to whether the stars were not merely an optical delusion since amongst the million of man-bearing earths that must, apparently, exist, no beings of higher development than ours yet seemed to have attempted signalling to us.

And he suggested that Hindu painting and sculpture had been rendered grotesque by the national tendency to infuse psychic into physical conceptions. He said that he himself knew of his own experience that most physical or material things had psychic symbols, which were often to the material eye grotesquely unlike their physical counterparts. Yesterday he told me how, as a child, he hardly ever was conscious of going to sleep. A ball of coloured light came towards him and he seemed to play with it all night. Sometimes it touched him and burst into a blaze of light, and he passed off. One of the first questions Sri Ramakrishna put to him was about this, “Do you see a light when you sleep?” “Yes,” he replied, “does not everyone sleep so?”

One of the Swamis says this was a psychic something which showed that concentration was a gift with which he started this life, not to be earned during its course. One thing I am sure of, that gift of Swami’s of never forgetting any step of his experience, is one of the signs of great souls. It must have been a part of that last vision of Buddha.

When *we* get to the end, we shall not want to know our past incarnations. Maria Theresa and Petrarch and Laura will have no meaning for us, but the steps of our realization will. *This* is what he shows. I sit and listen to him now, and all appears to the intellect so obvious, to the will so unattainable; and I say to myself, “What were the clouds of darkness that covered me in the old days? Surely no one was ever so blind or so ignorant!” You must have been right when you thought me hard and cold. I must have been so, and it must have been the result of the long effort to see things by the mind alone, without the feelings.

Swami is all against Bhakti and Emotion now—determined to banish it, he says. But how tremendous is that unity of mind and heart, from which he starts. He can afford to dispense with either—since both are fully developed, and the rest is merely discipline. I fancy most of us will do well to feel all we can.

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# SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[IN HIS OWN WORDS]

While talking about spiritual realizations, Sri Ramakrishna used to say : "The Advaita is the last word in Realization. It is something to be felt in Samâdhi, for it transcends mind and speech."

"The mind and intellect can comprehend and put in terms of language the range of thought up to the Visishtâdvaita and no further. In its perfection, the Absolute and Manifestation are seen to be equally real—the Lord's name, His abode and He Himself are found to be composed of the one spiritual substance. Everything is spiritual, the variance being only in form."

"For the ordinary man with strong attachment to the senses, the dualistic forms of religion, in which are embodied some amount of material support, like music and symbols are useful."

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The following incident shows how even in his unguarded moments the Divine Mother protected Sri Ramakrishna :

Sambhu Charan Mallik had a dispensary for the poor in his garden. Learning that Sri Ramakrishna was a frequent sufferer from diarrhoea, he advised him to take a few doses of opium, and offered to give some before he left. Sri Ramakrishna accepted. But in the course of the conversation both forgot about it. After taking his leave, Sri Ramakrishna went a few steps, when he remembered about the opium. Coming back he found that Sambhu was busy. Not wishing to trouble him, Sri Ramakrishna took a little opium from one of the men in charge and again set out for the Kâli temple. But to his surprise

he found that though he was perfectly familiar with the locality, he kept straying into wrong paths. Casting his eyes behind, he could plainly see the path leading to Sambhu's place, but the way ahead was not clear. Wondering, he went back and again started for Rani Rasmani's garden, carefully noting the way. Again he became confused. He could not find the right path, and felt a backward pull as well. After repeated struggles it suddenly came to him that Sambhu had asked him to take the opium from him, not from his agent, who had no right to give it without permission. He might have been guilty of falsehood and theft if the Divine Mother had not deterred him! So he threw the package back through a window, calling out as he did so, "Look, I am returning your opium." Now as he set out for the temple he could see the way clearly—there was no spell over his mind—, and he safely reached it. Referring to this incident he said afterwards, "It is because I have placed my whole responsibility upon the Mother, that She holds me by the hand and never allows me to stray even by an inch from the path."

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Once there arose in the mind of Sri Ramakrishna a desire to see Sri Chaitanya's Sankirtan procession, to know what it was like. One day as he was standing outside his room, he saw in a vision a large concourse of men proceeding from the direction of the Panchavati towards the main gate of the temple-garden and gradually disappearing behind the trees. He saw that Sri Chaitanya, with his two greatest com-

panions,—Nityananda and Advaita, was slowly advancing in the midst of that gathering, beside himself with divine fervour, while the vast multitude was also caught in the vortex of that tidal wave of spirituality. Some were dancing wildly, while others were stupefied with joy. The mad scene of some four centuries back was again enacted before the eyes of Sri Ramakrishna. A few faces from amongst this congregation were clearly impressed upon his mind, and later on he identified them in some of his prominent disciples. This led him to conclude that these devotees must have belonged to Sri Chaitanya's group.

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Some time after the above incident, Sri Ramakrishna went to Kamarpukur, for the last time. While there, he paid a visit to several villages and joined in the Sankirtan which the Vaishnavas held. His ecstasy resulting in frequent Samâdhi during the chant attracted the people; the news went abroad, and many other Sankirtan parties came to the scene. The place where he was staying was thronged to its utmost capacity with men and women, and day and night the Sankirtan went on. This is his own description of the incident: "When I was staying at Hriday's, they took me to Shyambazar. Just before entering the village I had a vision of Sri Chaitanya, whence I understood that the people of the village were devotees

of Chaitanya. The attraction of the Sankirtan was so great that for seven days and nights there was constant gathering of people. All the time one could hear music and dancing, and nothing else. People climbed on the top of walls and trees to watch the scene. I stopped at Natabar Goswami's house where there was a similar gathering throughout the day and the night. In the morning I used to slip away to a weaver's home for a little respite, but there, too, the crowd soon found me out, and appeared with their tomtoms and cymbals. Again the same phenomenon! We used to bathe and have our meals at three in the afternoon! The report was noised abroad that there was a man who had died seven times during the day and who had come back to life as many times! Lest I should have an apoplectic fit, Hriday used to drag me to an open field,—but there also the same swarm of people, and the same noise of tomtoms and cymbals! Hriday rebuked them saying, 'What do you mean by dogging us like this? Have we never heard Sankirtans before?' From far-off villages people used to come and remain during the night also. It was there that I understood what divine attraction was like. In the Lord's play on earth as an Incarnation, the attraction is due to the influence of Yogamâyâ, the Lord's inscrutable Power, which throws a charm over the hearts of all!"

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## THE CULTURE OF THE RISHIS

BY THE EDITOR

I

India had her days of sunshine when the nations of old used to exclaim, "The Wealth of Ind!" The vast re-

sources of national wealth were not the only thing that could arrest the admiring attention of the then world. The Hindus had their positive sciences no



less developed even in the hoary past. Their knowledge of at least some branches of learning can keep pace with, or even excel in some respects that of the most advanced nations of today. They developed arts, crafts, and industries as much as could furnish the conditions of a civilized existence. They crossed the oceans with their ships and had business transactions with distant countries on the globe.

The real greatness of India lies in the cultural glory of the Rishis which has survived ravages of time and foreign exploitation of every description. The message of the Rishis, however age-worn it might be, has a permanent bearing on the life of men, individual and collective. It requires no patronage for its spread and influence in the world. So long as the world endures, it will continue to prove a blessing to mankind as a whole. It is irresistible in its sway, because it is founded on the eternal rock of Truth. It is so wide as to cover all the nations that now exist on earth and all that will come in future. It underlies the fundamental principles of life and religion, hence it leaves no ground for narrowness and bigotry. Victor Cousin said, "When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all, those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth and truths so profound, and which make such contrast with the meanness of the result at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy."

If we closely examine the ancient wisdom of India, we find that the main trends of thought therein are more synthetic than analytic, more contem-

plative than speculative. We come across lofty and comprehensive views of life, so common to the Rishis of old. This peculiarity of thought is the chief characteristic of the Indian soil and it even now largely permeates the Indian literature. The Indian genius strained its every nerve to understand the truth behind all phenomena of nature and human mind. It tried to arrive at the highest generalization, leaving the details to be worked out afterwards. We find a Rishi enquiring: "What is That, knowing which we shall know everything." It is not possible for a man to know all the details of the universe, so the Rishis sought after unity in variety. They worked hard to grasp a generalized principle behind all ideas and things, and they succeeded at last in arriving at the same which they knew to be the substratum of everything. This they called Truth and they discovered numerous ways of travelling towards It. All men are not of equal constitution, so they prescribed various methods suiting individual tastes and temperaments. Swami Vivekananda said, "To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun." This wide outlook and spirit of toleration has made the position of the Rishis unique in the spiritual history of man. Besides, the Rishis did not rally round the banner of any particular person or persons, yet they maintained equal respect and homage



for all men of realization, to whatever race or country they might belong.

It is a mistake to think that the Rishis were idle dreamers. They did not rest content with the abstract philosophy. They lived it and found out means for making it practical in everyday life. They realized that the highest type of civilization can be found only in the individual, so they put forth all their energy in discovering methods of conquering the little self in man. Therefore, the culture of the Rishis is pre-eminently spiritual and they made the material conditions subservient to the spiritual. It was their experience that man is essentially a spiritual being and that his chief aim in life is to labour for the manifestation of the spirit in him.

## II

The teachings of Hindu scriptures are interwoven with the daily life of the Hindus. It is no exaggeration to say that a Hindu eats, sleeps, rises in the morning and does his daily round of duties in a religious manner. A pious Hindu looks upon his parents, his guests and his preceptor as the veritable manifestations of the Divine. His attitude towards everything around him is permeated with spiritual consciousness. The four stages of life, namely, those of the student, the householder, the mendicant and the hermit were meant for leading a man through a progressive scale of Self-realization. The aim of these stages of life was to mould the character of the people so as to qualify them for a life of peace and bliss and ultimately to enable them to overcome the trammels of birth and death. The Rishis laid stress on the fourfold attainments of life, e.g. Dharma (Duty), Artha (Wealth), Kâma (Desire), and Moksha (Liberation). The scheme they made for the

well-being of all men was deliberate, and far-reaching in its results. Buddhism and Jainism made the ascetic order too prominent and admitted men of all classes and conditions in the fold of anchorites. This unnecessary and, at the same time, unnatural step degenerated the Indian masses not only in secular but also in religious aspects of life. The Rishis expected renunciation of the world in the mendicant and hermit stages of life as the natural result of a long discipline undergone in the student and householder stages. Of course, there may be found men in all ages, who on account of their tendencies in past lives feel an uncompromising desire for renouncing the world even in boyhood or youth. In such cases, however, the Rishis sanctioned renunciation. Such people are few and far between and they conquer the desire for progeny, for wealth and possessions, and even for heaven, and embrace the life of renunciation as homeless mendicants, subsisting by the strength which the knowledge of Âtman alone gives; then they devote themselves to contemplation till they are ultimately merged in Brahman. These people say like the seers of the Upanishads, "What shall we do with offspring, we who have this self and this world of Brahman?" This is the culminating point in the message of the Rishis whose chief aim in life was to know Brahman and to teach Its knowledge to mankind.

## III

The Rishis used to spread their message of spirituality through educational methods, residential schools, conferences, and even through royal courts. They made even kings the chief exponents of their culture. The ancient kings like Janaka, Ajâtasatru, Pravâhana Jaivali, and Asvapati were



not only their patrons but they themselves were knowers of Brahman and teachers of Upanishadic doctrines. The Rishis practically ruled the kings of ancient India as polity was subordinated to spirituality. Men like Vasishtha and Visvâmitra were really the controllers of political administration. Thus we see in ancient India the spiritual fervour dominating the secular aspects of life. The life of the king was regulated according to strict codes of morality and religion. We find in the *Mahâbhârata*: "The king rose early in the morning and after performing his ablutions in clean robes, and sitting towards the east with his hands joined together and following the path of the righteous, mentally said his prayers and then entered the chamber where a blazing fire was kept. There he performed his ablutions to the Fire, and then met the Brâhmanas well-versed in the Vedas. They uttered in distinct voices agreeable benedictions and the king made them presents of money, clarified butter, auspicious fruits, horses, cows, etc. . . ." Besides, a king had to be free from atheism, untruthfulness, keeping evil company, idleness and many other defects. When kings lived so virtuously, naturally their councillors and subjects had to live a high standard of life. So the atmosphere in the country was mainly spiritual and as a matter of fact, peace and good will prevailed more than what we can dream of now.

If we read the immortal epics of the *Râmâyana*, and the *Mahâbhârata*, we are struck with the mighty civilization that the ancient Hindus had. In them, we find the lofty ideals of a king, a citizen, a hero, a father, a son, a mother, a wife, and so forth. In these days of national turmoil, when Indian traditions are set at naught, it is worth our while to see how far we can imbibe the ideals to suit the needs and demands

of modern India and those of other countries in the present-day world.

The nation that could produce or picture an ideal king like Râma, a hero like Hanumân, a chaste and devoted lady like Sitâ was not lacking in the virtues of chivalry, valour and the like. The nation that could make or dream of a civilization in which a galaxy of mighty characters like Krishna, the five Pândavas, Bhishma, Karna, and Drona appeared was not wanting in heroic actions and virtuous deeds. It is in the literature of such a nation that a Goddess speaks out her chivalry in the following strain: "Whoever can vanquish me in the strife, whoever can humble my pride, whoever can stand as my equal—I would choose him as my husband." It is in the philosophical treatise of the *Gîtâ* that we find one hero exhorting another to fight a righteous cause in accents like these: "Yield not to unmanliness, O Son of Prithâ! It does not befit thee. Cast off thy mean faint-heartedness and arise, O Scorcher of enemies! . . . . Dying thou gainest heaven, or by conquering thou enjoyest the earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti, arise resolved to fight . . . . Therefore do arise and obtain fame, vanquish thy enemies and enjoy the vast kingdom."

If we leave aside the supernatural phenomena and exaggerations of the poetic mind, we shall find in the stories of the *Râmâyana* and the *Mahâbhârata* many things that would prove highly instructive and of practical interest even to modern men. They are invaluable to thinkers and builders of modern India. Sister Nivedita said, "What philosophy by itself could never have done for the humble, what the laws of Manu have done only in some small measure for the few, that the epics have done through unnumbered ages and are doing still for all classes



alike. They are the perpetual Hinduizers, for they are the ideal embodiments of that form of life, that conception of conduct, of which laws and theories can give but the briefest abstract, yet, towards which the hope and effort of every Hindu child must be directed."

#### IV

The different philosophical systems show the spirit of independent thought and bold assertion of the Rishis from various angles of vision. They may appear to be conflicting at the very outset, but behind the variety there is, what we may describe in the language of Max Müller, "a common fund of what may be called national or popular philosophy, a large Mânasa Lake of philosophical thought and language." Although the systems start with different categories and means of knowledge, they represent only the varying approximations of the truth. They set forth various models of thought to clarify our intellect and vision. The Nyâya helps us in making our faculty of reason sharp and critical—which is so essential for the attainment of correct knowledge. The Vaiseshika gives us a scrutinizing analysis of the physical nature and thereby we can get into the mystery of things around us—which is no less important in the pursuit of knowledge. The Sâmkhya with its cosmology and psychology serves as a key, as it were, to unlock the doors of the cosmos. The Yoga with its researches into the realm of the human mind teaches us means for the conservation of our energy and the concentration of our mind—which are so essential for the conquest of external and internal nature. It gives practical hints to the attainment of the superconscious state in which alone we can know the real nature of our self. The Vedânta gives us a profound and rational explanation

of the riddle of the universe. It affords a cogent interpretation of the supreme Reality. All these different philosophies were regarded as so many steps to the highest and final Truth. Each of them has a provisional value and is intended for a critical analysis of things and thoughts—ultimately leading one to the existence of one supreme Truth.

Philosophy was not a luxury of life with the Rishis. It occupied an important place in their practical life. It was not with them the "thinking consideration of things" as in the West. The Truth that they directly experienced permeates even now the whole cultural life of the Indian people. The Vedânta, which is regarded as the crown of Hinduism stands for the unity of all religions, sects, nationalities, the unity of all souls and the divinity of all beings. The Rishis found the keynote of individual freedom and world peace in the practical aspect of the Vedânta philosophy.

#### V

It is not, as generally supposed, vain to talk of India's cultural heritage even in her present condition. There are two reasons in favour of the revival of Indian culture: Firstly, modern India needs the fundamentals of the ancient culture for her resuscitation. Secondly, the modern world requires the wisdom of the Rishis to save itself from its present chaos and future ruin.

Today India is on the cross-roads of her own culture and that of the West. The majority of the educated men and women have lost the link of their great traditions on account of the influences of alien cultures. The social and national ideals are fast disappearing from the land. The present generation is horribly swayed by materialistic ideas of the West and the culture of the Rishis is



being set at naught in every phase of life. However, it is a happy sign that the sober and thinking section of the Indian people are straining their every nerve to change the course of imitation and infatuation towards the glorious culture of India. The political status of India, whatever it might be, remains in the womb of the future. The revival of home-industries, the endeavour for rural reconstruction, the communal unification, the emancipation of women, the campaign for removing untouchability and the cry for national education are undoubtedly valuable propaganda for the amelioration of the country's condition. But amidst all these movements, if modern India fail to keep vigilant eyes

on her national ideals, she will drift along the political currents of the West and the condition of the Indian people will be more miserable than ever.

To the modern world, the message of the Rishis is to unite mankind on a cultural basis. The secret of that culture lies in the practical application of Vedantic truths in the social, national and international spheres. In these days, when a fierce spirit of competition and rivalry is dominating the life of men and the destiny of nations, it is worth our while to pay heed to the words of the Rishis: "Common be your desires; united be your hearts; united be your intentions; perfect be the union amongst you."

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## SENSITIVENESS

BY PROF. NICHOLAS DE ROERICH

It is said that water having performed its work in a mill, gives the impression of having less force, than that water which flows on to the wheel. As if it is presupposed that besides the coarse physical conditions, some sort of energy has escaped during the tension. Of course this is illusion; likewise is it said that a book new and unread as yet, contains greater potentiality, than a read book. As if many eyes could extract from the pages some sort of potentiality.

Yet, at the same time, it is justly said of objects which have been prayed over, of objects which have been enwrapped and thus strengthened by thought. It consequently seems that if something can be imparted to an object through thought, as if something added to the object, then it would appear that likewise by means of thought and energy, one could deprive

an object of something and take it away from the same.

We have heard that someone on opening a book that was returned to him, said: "It is even unpleasant to take it into one's hands; probably some scoundrel read it!" Perhaps this exclamation was caused by suspicion, but perhaps some influence was indeed felt.

Thus often some unexplainable enmity and sometimes some indescribable goodwill is felt in space itself. Again some sensitive people will say: "How heavy it is to be in this room!", or on the contrary: "How easy it is to breathe here!" If even ordinary photographs at times bear the most unexpected impressions, if a chemical analysis of space is ready to disclose many things, why should we then be astonished, if the finest human apparatus can fully feel the presence of such or other energies?

At times a stringed instrument seems to resound to influences imperceptible to the human eye. At times a porcelain vase will break of itself from vibrations, almost inaudible to the human ear. Sand assumes the most remarkable designs from vibrations almost imperceptible. Likewise the presence of many influences will not be expressed by words, but will be felt by the inner human apparatus.

This will not be superstition nor superficial suspicion. This precisely will be straight knowledge. No amount of verbal explanation will dissuade a man, who has clearly felt the contact of these energies. Just as you would be unable to persuade a person in that he has not seen something, which he has definitely and attentively seen with his own eyes.

It is at times considered even a shameful weakness to admit these definite perceptions, and yet they will quietly mention that the food seemed too salty or bitter, whereas their companion has not found it to be so. For one this quality was not worth noticing, while the other fully sensed it. If only people would just as naturally and fearlessly pay attention and report to their near ones their impressions, how many more new and valuable observations would enrich earthly life and would bring a greater eagerness to the transmutation of these sensations into knowledge!

It is impossible to place the means of acquiring knowledge into some predetermined boundaries. Truly the messenger comes unexpected. Not without reason do all the teachings point so definitely to these unexpected higher realizations. Yet people always insist that the messenger should come at the hour appointed by them through

a definite door, bringing news expected by them and probably should speak to them in that tongue and in those expressions, which are anticipated by the expecting one.

Every change in this self-appointed programme would introduce confusion and perchance would even lead to negation. How could this happen, when I did not expect it? Again this unfortunate and limited "I", which desires to command in a narrow self-assured way within the boundaries of the visible and audible world. And what if suddenly the most pompous turns out to be a complete nullity before the smallest manifestation of the subtle order? Can one limit that, which will not be restricted into any definable bounds?

How many messengers could not altogether enter, because having approached the doors, they already knew that it was not they, who were expected! Repeating to themselves the most God-given and inspiring message, the messenger already knew that it would not be accepted in this tongue. How much of the already constructed and near-at-hand was arrested by haughty narrow-mindedness. But if you try to define the bounds of this narrow-mindedness into any dimensions, you shall never find its limits; to such an extent it is thoroughly insignificant.

Thus amidst the most remarkable illuminations and inspirations, intrude—as if grey dust—innumerable fragments of ignorance. Let every particle of dust be imponderable in weight, but a layer of them can darken the most exquisite flower. The common work, the common care, should be that in every household there should be as little as possible of this dust.



# SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO VEDIC CULTURE

BY PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

NON-ARYANS, "LOWER CLASSES" AND SUDRAS IN VEDIC POLITY

(Concluded from the last issue)

The *Taittiriya Brahmana* (III, 4, 2, 13) describes the artists, craftsmen and other professional groups, many of whom belonged to the "lower classes" and perhaps non-Aryan communities. The professional classification of the *vis* is to be seen in the *Purushamedha*. In II, 4 hypnotizing and mesmerizing is described as the profession of the Nâgas, the Râkshasas are known to be skilled in the art of harlequins, and unfair war methods described as the characteristics of Pisâchas. Among the "five newly created Vedas" mentioned in the *Gopatha Brahmana* (I, 10) of the *Atharva Veda* are to be found the following names: *Sarpa* (Nâga)-*Veda*, *Asura-Veda*, *Pisacha-Veda*, *Itihasa* and *Purana*.<sup>1</sup> Vedic literature in some of its branches is thus the literature dealing not only with the Aryans but with the non-Aryans as well and indicates at the same time different stages of cultural rapprochement between the two.

The folk-element and along with it the secular and socio-economic element of the Vedic age are represented not only by the so-called Dâsas (non-Aryans) and Sudras but also by the Nishâdas, who are known to be the fifth of the Panchajanah (i.e. five classes of men) of the *Rig Veda*. The *Brihaddevata* (VII, 69) knows this fifth class. The *Yajur Veda* also in its *Rudradhaya* chapter enumerates them along with Vrâtyas (nomads?), Takshans (carpen-

ters), Rathakâras (chariot makers), Kutalas (potters), Kârmâras (blacksmiths), Punjisthas (fowlers), Svânins (dog keepers) and Mrigayus (hunters). It is to be noticed that certain economic groups are mentioned along with a tribal group, the Nishâda. The Vedic Aryans did not leave this tribal group in splendid isolation. The performer of the Visvajit (world-conquest) sacrifice was required in the *Panchavimsa Brahmana* (XVI, 6, 7), for instance, to live for three days among the Nishâdas. Chiefs also could be made out of Nishâdas by Brahman priests by offering certain sacrifices (*Katyâyana : Srauta Sutra* I, 12, and *Jaimini : Mimamsa Sutra*, VI, 1, 51-52). Vedic society was not so one-sided in economic or social morphology or philosophico-religious outlook as is made out by many indologists.

This interpretation, based as it is on Yâska's *Nirukta*, Aupamanyava and Sâyana (*Rig. I, 7, 9*) is evidently wrong, says Zimmer in *Altindisches Leben* (Berlin 1879 pp. 110-120). The five Janasah, Jata, Kritayah, Kristayah, Manusah etc. of the *Rig Veda* refer according to Zimmer to the five leading Aryan races, Yadu, Anu, Druhya, Turvaca and Puru. But the reference to the complex of four castes plus Nishada is not without significance for it indicates the orientations of scholars during the period of Yâska's *Nirukta* (c 500 B.C.).

The position of the Vrâtyas, and their assimilation to Aryan institutions are

<sup>1</sup> S. V. Venkatesvara: *Indian Culture Through the Ages* Vol. I. (London 1928) 62-63.



notable instances of liberal tendencies in Vedic ideology, as we shall see later.

Vedic polity, Vedic thought, or Vedic culture is not the work of a generation or two but covers at least a millennium. The terms of language and categories of thought as well as the contents of categories i.e. the meanings of terms were getting transformed from generation to generation along with the military exploits of the *vis* (folk) groups as well as the territorial and socio-economic expansion of the diverse races or tribes. An aspect of all these expansions was to be seen in the fusion between the colonizers (Aryans) and aboriginals (Dasyus) in the earliest period of the Rig Veda. Even during the epochs when Panchajanya referred to "five tribes or races" and not to the complex of four castes *plus* Nishâda friendly relations are known to have been established with the Non-Aryans, among other things, through inter-marriage perhaps for military reasons.

We can watch the operation of Durkheim's principle of the "division of labour" in the processes leading to the expansion of the Vedic *vis* (folk). The contacts between the aborigines and the Aryan immigrants had to become very intimate on account of economic necessity. The Aryans were not known anywhere in ancient times to display any great taste for manual professions.<sup>2</sup> These were relegated by the Greeks and Romans to the slaves. In India also the Aryans, established in villages as they were and practising the pastoral industry as they did, were not much moved to adopt the manual professions. These had to remain in general in the hands of the aborigines or of those classes of the population whose hybrid or questionable origin

placed them in the same category. It is the arts and crafts that may be said to have contributed to a great extent to the assimilation of the new comers and the old inhabitants of the soil and therefore to have led to the impact of the materialistic, folk and democratic tendencies on the general culture.

The propaganda of the Vedic Rishis was laid on an extensive plan. The "societal planning" of those sacrificers and colonizers comprised conscious attempts to enrich themselves with the original inhabitants. Efforts to meet them half way are to be seen in many of the institutions and ideas of Vedic literature from epoch to epoch and region to region. Sociologico-anthropologically the entire mass of Vedic literature may be treated as a huge and age-long series of attempts to Aryanize the Sudra (and the non-Aryan) and Brâhmanize the Vrâtya (or non-Brâhmana Aryan). It is wrong to treat the Vedic texts as documents exclusively of Aryan life and thought. The impact of Non-Aryans, "lower-classes" Sudras and Vrâtyas on Aryans, the attempts of the latter to meet the former half-way, the *rapprochements* of the Aryans and Non-Aryans, the culture-contacts, race-fusions, professional interdependence and so forth, all these have gone to the making of Vedic literary stuff. To ignore or overlook these non-Aryan and non-higher elements in the structure of Vedic literature is to misinterpret the urges of life operative on the personality of the men and women in question.

Vedic polity is on the one hand the polity of *Rassenkampf*, of interracial and intra-racial conflicts. On the other hand, it is the physiognomy and morphology of race-co-operation and class-solidarity that we see in the demographic structure of Vedic society. Vedic India was a melting pot of races, and its culture like that of other areas

<sup>2</sup> Senart: *Les Castes dans l'Inde* (Paris 1927) p. 226.



has to be interpreted as by all means a hybrid. Champions of "pure races" will be disappointed if they approach this culture with their hypothesis of race-segregation such as is condemned by Hankins in the *Racial Basis of Civilization* (New York 1924).

#### THE VRATYA IN THE VEDIC MILIEU

It is questionable how far the category caste can be used in connection with the diverse periods of Vedic literature. Probably the category race is more appropriate when we have to speak of the diverse Vedic social or professional groups. It should not be reasonable always to take Sudra as Dasyu, Dâsa and Non-Aryan. To what extent the Sudra-"lower classes" is also problematic. In any case the Aryan-non-Aryan *rapprochement* or race-fusion and group-mixture is an outstanding theme of the Vedic texts. In the *Purusha Sukta*, as we have seen, the Sudra is either not a Non-Aryan, or, if so, is already assimilated to the Aryan.

Among the many racial or social transformations that the literary documents of the Vedic complex exhibit none is more important than the elevation of the Vratyas to the Brâhmanical fold or the Brâhmanization of the Vratyas. This item is to be treated as distinct from the incorporation of the Non-Aryans into the Aryan community as well as the assimilation of the lower classes by the societal organization. The impact of the Vratya on the Vedic institutions represents new liberal tendencies of the Vedic authors.

The Vratyastoma ceremonies<sup>3</sup> are calculated to introduce such Aryan communities as are however not yet subject to Brâhmanistic institutions to

the Brâhmanic community, etc. The Vratyas belonged to such communities and could not therefore be described as outcastes.

The Vratyas of the Vedic complex are not to be understood in the sense of later lawbooks like, for instance, those of Baudhâyana (I, 9, 15), i.e. as offsprings of Varna-samkara (caste fusion).

The Vratyatâ or Vratya life consists in observing inappropriate manners (*Âchârahînatâ*) and following a life of nomads. The Vratyas, however are known to be related to the gods who because of appropriate sacrifices succeeded in reaching heaven. But in the condition of their Vratyatâ they do not prosecute Brâhmanical studies, and do not practise agriculture or trade.

The purification ("Suddhi") of the Vratyas and their elevation take place through the Vratyastoma sacrifice. The Vratyas purified become full-fledged Brâhmanas.

According to Manu (X, 20-23) who preserves the old Vedic tradition each of the three Brahmanical orders can have Vratyas. So there are (1) Brâhmana-Vratyas, (2) Kshatriya-Vratyas and (3) Vaishya-Vratyas.

The following races or castes belong to the Brâhmana-Vratyas: Bhrija-Kantaka, Avantya, Vatodhana, Puspa-saikhara. Among the Kshatriya-Vratyas are mentioned Jhalla, Malla, Licchivi, Nata, Karana, Khasa, and Drâvida. The Vaishya-Vratyas comprise Sudhanvan, Charya, Karusa, Vijanman, Maitra and Sâttvata.

The *Jaiminiya Brahmana* (II, 22) and the *Tandya Maha Brahmana* (XVII, 1-4), both belonging to the *Sama Veda Samhita*, admit the Vratya to Brâhmanism after the Vratyastoma sacrifice on condition that he gives up his Vratya mores.

<sup>3</sup> Hauer: *Der Vratya* (Stuttgart 1927), pp. 5-6, 58, 62, 75, 82-87, 297.



According to Hauer (p. 334) the divine heroes or saints of the Vrâtyas were parallel to the Rishis in importance. They were recognized in the *Sama Veda Brahmanas* but were unknown in the *Brahmanas of Rig* and *Yajur Vedas*. The Vrâtya Book of the *Atharva Veda* (XV) was of course their special literature. The other three Vedas did not mention them at all.

The religion and philosophy of the Vrâtyas with their Mahâvrata (great sacrifice), mysticism and Ekavrâtya (Rudra-Mahâdeva or highest God) constituted the subject-matter of Book XV of the *Atharva Veda*.

The *Atharva Veda* may have been originally the *Veda* of the Vrâtyas. At any rate Book XV of this *Veda* is the embodiment of Vrâtya glorification. The association of the Vrâtyas with the *Atharva Veda* raises its importance as a document of the demographic and ethnological structure of the Hindu polity of the earliest epochs.

#### SAKYA THE BUDDHA, A RISHI WITH A NON-VEDIC UPANISHAD

The ascendancy of Sakyasimha the Buddha (B.C. 563-483) in the sixth century B.C. is an important landmark in the evolution of Vedic culture. It indicates that the assimilation of the Eastern region to the Vedic system was incomplete. East of the Sadanira (Gandaki) River the Vedic tradition was not strong enough to withstand a powerful exponent of somewhat non-Vedic or extra-Vedic, nay, anti-Vedic norms. Then, again, the race or the caste to which Sakya belonged as a native of the Bihar-Nepal frontier was likewise not much subject to the Vedic institutions and ideals.

And, finally, Pali or Prakrit, probably the language of the people in Eastern

India had not been reduced to nothingness under the domination of Sanskrit. Rather it was powerful enough to be used as the vehicle of a new moral and social philosophy.

Altogether, the attempts at *rap-prochement* between the *Madhyadesa* and "the East," between Aryans and Non-Aryans, etc., that had been going on through the ages broke down by the sixth century B.C. And among the thought systems and moralizings of the innumerable sophists, metaphysicians, Sannyasins, mystics, philosophers, social reformers, moralists and so forth the *Upanishad* which succeeded in conquering the mind of India was not one of those which grew up in the schools associated with the Vedic complex. It was rather the one which in the sayings of Sakya the Buddha was born out of the urge for a new racial, regional and moral solidarity such as the Vedists of the time could not offer.

Sakya the Buddha may be taken to be a professor of one of the *Upanishads*, so to say, and thus to be one of the last of the Vedic Rishis. By harping on the doctrine of Sila (right conduct) he served virtually to restore the Rig Vedic concept of Rita (right way) and inaugurate a Renaissance in Vedic culture. What the Vrâtyastoma of the *Atharva Veda* did in the matter of raising the Vrâtyas to a higher status that the Sakyan doctrine of Sila did in regard to thousands of other kinds of Vrâtyas, so to say, inhabiting as they did the Eastern regions. The "Aryanizing," "Brahmanizing" and assimilative work of the older Vedic Rishis was thus continued by Sakya in a novel guise. From Madhuchchanda, Brihaspati, Vasishtha and Visvâmitra to Sakyasimha we have but one tradition, namely, that of the *Brahmana* (VII, 15) ideal of conquering and to conquer. In Sakya's tactics we



encounter but another item in the pluralistic make-up of the Vedic complex.<sup>4</sup>

The Brâhmanizers of the Vedic complex succeeded in Brâhmanizing the Vrâtya among many other non-Brâhmanic elements in Eastern India as elsewhere. But they failed to adapt themselves adequately to the racial and regional features such as ultimately found self-expression in the "eightfold path of the Aryan" as unfolded by Sakya the Buddha (*Digha-Nikaya, Sutta 22*).

The Rishis of the *Yajur Veda Black School Taittiriya Samhita* (I viii, 3) had been ideologically quite akin to Sakya the Buddha when they in a mood of self-criticism propagated the penitential formula for the "remaking of man" as embodied in the following verse:<sup>5</sup>

"The wrong we have done in village or  
wild,  
In the assembly, in our members,  
The wrong to Sudra or Aryan,  
The wrong contrary to the law of either,  
Of that thou art the expiation; hail."

Incidentally it should appear perhaps to be plausible to presume in this "melioristic" Sutra that the Sudra is an antithesis to Aryan and therefore anti-Aryan. In that case the *Taittiriya* social polity should in this passage at any rate be treated as liberalized enough to comprehend the Sudra in the Vedic *mores* and thus to furnish but another instance of the racial fusion in culture.

But the word Aryan in the text is not to be taken as equivalent to Arya. The commentary renders it as equivalent to Svami (master) or Vaisya. In that case Sudra cannot be taken as Non-Aryan. The verse points to the

social conditions under which the Vaisya as well as Sudra are likely to be discriminated against by the privileged classes. But the "reformist" tendency of the hymn is evident all the same and we understand that the privileged classes are making a clean breast of what they may have committed against the unprivileged. In any case, the verse embodies an ideal of societal reconstruction according to somewhat more democratic and humane lines. And that is a strand of Vedic thought to which the Sakyan ideology is the most akin.

#### DIVINITY DUE TO KINGSHIP, NOT KINGSHIP DUE TO DIVINITY

The terms about gods and kings or rather the contexts in which the gods and kings are brought together in Vedic literature have been the source of much trouble in Indology. Very often scholars are led to interpret certain passages from the *Rig Veda*, *Atharva Veda*, *Taittiriya Samhita*, *Satapatha Brahmana* in such a way as to ascribe kingship to divine origin or base the king's authority upon his divinity. Many of these texts should mean, however, exactly the opposite, namely, that divinity itself comes from kingship.

The import of the story of the *Taittiriya Brahmana* (II, 2, 10, 1-2)<sup>6</sup> should be properly understood. There Indra is a god and therefore he is naturally made a king by Prajâpati, the chief of gods. But the case of Indra's elevation to kingship by "divine sanction," should such an expression be used, cannot be taken to be normal for the kings of men in Vedic literature. Kingship in the Vedic texts is as a rule human and secular. In the case of Indra, again, it is not "divine sanction"

<sup>4</sup> See the chapter on "The Peers of Sakyasimha" in B. K. Sarkar: *Chinese Religion Through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai 1916) pp. 50-53.

<sup>5</sup> Keith: *The Veda of the Black Yajus School*, Part I. (Cambridge 1914) p. 115.

<sup>6</sup> R. L. Mitra: *Taittiriya Brahmana* (Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1862), Vol. II. pp. 460-461.



but the sanction by the *head of his race* that we find in the story. The main noticeable feature in it is the absence of election by Indra's peers, i.e. the gods.

The texts as a rule tell us in so many words that a person becomes divine through certain actions, ceremonial or otherwise, and that divinity is but a consequence and not the cause or antecedent. We are to understand that Trasadasyu or for that matter any body becomes a Varuna or an Indra as soon as he becomes a king or rather is consecrated. But we are not told that somebody becomes king because he is divine, godlike, descended from the gods or so forth. As soon as a person becomes a king he becomes a god. Quite pharaohnic, as it is, a proposition like this is the exact antipodes to the position of those scholars who on the data of Vedic literature want to establish the general thesis that there is such a thing as king's rule by virtue of his divinity.

In the *Satapatha Brahmana* (V. 1, 5, 14) there is an account of the political sacrifice, called the Râjasuya. In this connection the Râjanya or king has to practise a ceremonial shooting as he is likewise called upon to do many other ceremonial things.<sup>7</sup> The ceremony requires seventeen shootings. It is by seventeen shootings that the king can win or become Prajâpati who is "seventeenfold" or is the outcome of seventeen drums, whatever all this may mean. In any case, we get the following equation :

King = Prajâpati (Speech or "lord of creatures").

But in order to get at this equation the Vedic text does not want us to undertake any esoteric or mystical exercise. There is nothing transcendental about it. No external authority, no

divine power, raises the king to the level of or makes him identical with, Prajâpati. It is by certain feats of his own,—the seventeen shootings,—that he wins or becomes Prajâpati.

We shall now take a passage from the *Taittiriya Samhita* (II, 2, 11, 6) where the result of certain offerings by the King is described as follows :

"To him becoming Indra his fellows recognize as superior, he becomes the best of his fellows." The passage is very simple. The king becomes Indra, not Indra becomes king. His becoming Indra in this passage is identical in import with his becoming Prajâpati in the previous context.

In neither case is there anything to suggest that the king's authority is based upon his divinity or that the king rules because of his divinity. From passages like these we derive certain categories relating to the king, as follows :

1. The King, Râjanya or Kshatriya is the "best", "rules over many" (*Sat. Br.* V. 1, 5, 15), "is apt to thrive amongst many creatures" (*Sat Br.* XII, 13, 8).

2. The king acquires his Indrahood and becomes the "most visible form" (*Pratyakshatamâmn*) of Prajâpati (call it divinity) because of the ceremonial functions. In other words, he is divine because he rules and not *vice-versa*.

3. As incidents in the ceremonies the king has to offer an "additional oblation" (*Sat. Br.* XII, 13, 8) or to shoot. The shooting and the oblation he has to practise because of the ceremonies and not because of his divinity.

And the ceremonies he has to undertake because he is a king, and not because he is a god. As a matter of fact the fellow does not become a god until and unless he has undertaken the ceremonies and offered the oblation or practised the shooting. Everything is

<sup>7</sup> J. Eggeling: *Satapatha Brahmana* Part III (Oxford 1894) p. 25.



to be traced back to kingship. Indeed, we may look upon these passages as but providing us with a definition of the king.

In this connection it is worth while to call attention to a very important consideration about the concept of divinity in the Vedic *milieu*. Almost everything is often found endowed with alleged divine attributes in the *Vedas*. Every body who is entitled to the Srauta sacrifice becomes divine. The status of divinity is a privilege to which the Brâhmana, the Kshatriya and the Vaishya are entitled because of participation in the sacrifice. Only, the Sudra is to this extent disqualified. That is why one should not treat the king as specifically divine in Vedic thought.

#### VEDIC ORIGINS OF HINDU POLITICAL SPECULATION

It is possible to trace back to ancient "gnomic poetry," nay, to the Vedic complex, many of the first principles of the later Artha and Dharma sciences.<sup>8</sup>

The theories about (1) the origin of kingship, (2) the Matsyanyâya or logic of the fish (Kautalya, Manu etc.), (3) the interrelation between taxation and protection (Kautalya, Gautama, Baudhâyana, Vasishtha, Visnu, Manu, Yâjñavalkya, Nârada), for instance, thus acquire a parentage as old as anything in India.

As old as the *Vedas*, again, are (1) the ideas of the *Dharmasastras* about the king's duty of fighting and (2) the conception about the attainment of heaven by those who die in the battle (Kautalya, Gautama, Âpastamba, Baudhâyana, Visnu, Manu, Yâjñavalkya).

In other words, whatever be the date of the actual compilation of the treatise

as we have it today, a treatise, say, like the *Sukraniti* has at least some of its roots deep in the philosophical speculations of the Bhâratas and Yadus.

Back to the Vedic complex is likewise to be traced the popular doctrine of the "sea-to-sea empire", world-state, etc. of subsequent political literature.<sup>9</sup>

The Sakyan (Buddhist) *Chakkavatti* or *Chakravarti*, the Kautalyan Chatur-anta, the Samrât of the *Mahabharata*, and the Sârvabhauma of the *Sukraniti* are as old as the *Aitareya Brahmana* (VIII, 1, 30), and the *Satapatha Brahmana* (XI, 3, 2, 16).

In connection with the *Atharva Veda*<sup>10</sup> it deserves mentioning that in one of its appendices (*Parisishtas*), namely, the Charanavyuha, no matter what be its date, the *Arthasastra* is described as an *Upaveda*.

Back to the *Vedas* go not only the politics of the *Artha* and the *Niti sastras* but the morals as well of the Epics, the Sakyan Buddhist *Suttas* and the Jaina *Siddhanta*. Nay, the social philosophy of the *Puranas* can be traced to its Vedic roots. It is, again, the rites and ceremonies, the sacrifices described in the Vedic *Samhitas*, *Brahmanas* and *Sutras* that govern the daily life of men and women among the Hindus of today.

The *Chhandogya-mantra-bhashya*<sup>11</sup> by Gunavisnu is a medieval work (c. 1200).

<sup>8</sup> R. K. Mookerji: *The Fundamental Unity of India* (London 1914) pp. 87-89. See the chapter on the "Doctrine of Sarvabhauma" in Sarkar: *Political Institutions* etc. (Leipzig 1922) p. 222-226.

<sup>10</sup> M. Winternitz: *Geschichte der indischen Literatur*, Vol. III (Leipzig, 1922) p. 505.

<sup>11</sup> Edited by D. Bhattacharya (Calcutta 1930). See also his paper in Bengali on "The Cultivation of Vedic Studies in Bengal from the Earliest Times (c. 800 A.C.) to the Seventeenth Century" in *Haraprasad Samvardhana-Lekhamala* (Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, Calcutta, 1933) Vol. II. pp. 203-226.

<sup>9</sup> M. Winternitz: "Dharmasastra and Arthasastra" in the *Sir Ashutosh Memorial Volume* (Patna 1926-28) pp. 44, 45.

As the title indicates, it is a commentary on the Vedic *mantras*. This treatise is used in present-day Bengal and parts of Bihar for the purposes of domestic ceremonies.

#### VEDIC ETHICS THROUGH WESTERN EYES

It is interesting to observe that according to Sylvain Levi<sup>12</sup> nothing is more "brutal and materialistic than the theology of the *Brahmanas*". There is said to be "no morality" in it. The sacrifice which regulates the relations of man with the gods is alleged to be a "mechanical operation." Its efficacy is considered to be due to the "magical action of the priest." The imitation which regenerates is supposed to be a "faithful picture of conception, gestation and child-birth." A religion so crude and coarse, says he, implies a people of semi-savages (*une religion aussi grossière suppose un peuple de demi-sauvages*). The notions are alleged to be marked by "savage realism."

While Levi sees nothing but "savage realism" and semi-savage men and women in the *Brahmanas* Hillebrandt has found legion of parallels and identities between the people of India and those of Europe on the strength of the domestic and other ceremonies.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Levi: *La Doctrine du Sacrifice dans les Brahmanas* (Paris, 1898), pp. 9-10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ritualliteratur in Grundriss der indoarischen Philologie und Altertumskunde*, III, Band, 2. Heft. pp. 2-8.

According to Hillebrandt the general opinion among scholars to the effect that the rituals owed their origin to the megalomania and egotistic interests of the priests is wrong. He takes an anthropological viewpoint and observes that this ritual arose out of the customs and rites of the folk. The ceremonies belonged to the people and were developed by them as parts of their life. The priests only systematized them. Their contribution to the tradition by way of new creations is very little.

It is possible to think of morality in Vedic India in other terms than those of "savages." "The laws of the gods are expressed," says Hopkins,<sup>14</sup> "in the regular rotation of seasons and their corresponding sacrifices, for the sacrifice is ordered according to days and seasons. Each day illustrates the "laws divine" incorporate in the sacrifice, and pious men are like gods in 'not diminishing the laws,' which give security and peace. Very likely, there was the feeling that the sacrifice even helped to preserve the order of the universe, as later it was seriously believed that the sun would not rise unless the morning rite was performed. But what is more important is the recognition that the laws of the gods effect peace and security on earth as in heaven."

<sup>14</sup> *The Ethics of India* (New Haven, 1924) p. 37.



# NOTES OF CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI SIVANANDA

BY A DISCIPLE

*23rd March, 1919.*

Some college students had come to see the Belur Monastery. Swami was sitting on the eastern verandah of the main building overlooking the Ganges. The students had just finished their University examinations and were preparing themselves to go home for the vacation.

*Swami.* You have a long vacation before you. How are you going to spend it? What is the use of spending it in merry-making and playing at cards? Having come to this place take a few of our ideas and try to work them out. Raise a small fund amongst yourselves, buy a few homeopathic medicines, and when you go home serve the sick and the poor of those parts by giving them medicines free and by nursing them. Freely mix with the depressed classes and inquire about their welfare and their wants. If you do this and in addition nurse them when they are ill and give them medicines, then they will feel very much obliged. Run a night school also for them. Give them oral instruction in history, sanitation, hygiene; and tell them about Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. In this way give them education. They have to be raised if the country is to rise. At first, probably, they will be suspicious about your ways and means. But in time, when they will find you have no selfish motive, they will be won over. You also try to be selfless. It is only by doing selfless work in this way that the mind gets purified. And when the mind is purified, even the slightest suggestion

would fill your heart with devotion for the Lord. If the mind be not purified, you may practise Japa to any extent, nothing will result by way of spiritual progress. What can Japa do if the mind is full of selfishness, jealousy, hatred, etc.? It is because the country is engrossed in Tamas that Swamiji has prescribed work as a means to raise it up. If you cannot give up your selfishness for the good of the many, of what use is it getting merely degrees? What is the use of joining service? You are the descendants of the ancient Rishis, the pure Hindu blood is in your veins,—are you not ashamed of this slavery? You talk of patriotism, what else can be greater patriotism than this love for and service of the poor?

If you want to really love your country, do as I have said. Arise, awake, shake off all lethargy, be firmly established in truth and spread education, sanitation, etc. amongst the masses, in every village, sub-division, and district. Seeing your spirit of renunciation and of service others will follow suit, and soon the country will be raised. Spend every vacation in this way, then something permanent may be done. Of course, along with it you will have also play and recreation. But merely idling away the whole of the vacation and singing patriotic songs will not materially help the country.

*7th July, 1928.*

Swami has been ill for some time. One of the devotees asked him, "How are you, sir, this morning?"

*Swami.* Not quite fit. But then nothing better can be expected. This

body has become old. Anyhow I am pulling on through His grace. And why should we, after all, be anxious about the body? I am not anxious about it at all. If it just serves for my spiritual practices that is sufficient. The Sâdhu who is anxious about his health or is afraid of death, is no Sâdhu at all. He is only preparing himself to be one; he has not as yet become a Sâdhu. I shall be satisfied if it goes on in this way. Let Him keep this body as long as He likes, if He thinks of getting anything done through it. As for myself I am always ready for His call.

*13th January, 1930.*

A devotee first paid his respects to Swami and then went to the shrine. At this Swami said: "That is not proper. First one should go to the shrine and worship the Lord and then come here. 'With His light all this shines'; 'He shining everything else shines'—these trees, plants, flowers, devotees, myself, and everything belong to Him. Their existence depends on His Existence. Apart from Him nothing exists. He is Existence Absolute. In Him exists this manifoldness particularized by names and forms as various objects—as Hari, Râma, the sun, moon, etc. Because He exists, these depending on Him exist. He is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. If Existence has no Knowledge it is no Existence at all. What is Existence is Knowledge. Again where there are Existence and Knowledge, there is Bliss also. For what is misery? It is the absence of real Knowledge. So where there is Knowledge there is no misery but Bliss.

*14th January.*

*Swami.* If one practises regularly meditation and Japa along with work

then there will be no trouble. We have to work, that is certain. But then if one does not along with work practise meditation, Japa, etc. then one will not be able to do work in the right spirit. The whole trouble is with 'me' and 'mine', which always seeks comfort. Meditation and Japa are absolutely necessary—there should be no lapse in it. Then only can one hope to progress. When you meditate, think that you and He alone exist and forget everything else—work, Order, Math, etc. Gradually you have to forget even your own existence. If work makes the mind impure, it is not good work but evil work.

The right kind of service is possible only when one sees God in the person served. But it is difficult to have this knowledge at the outset. So to start with one has to depend on the words of his Guru and take it on faith. We must have faith in Swamiji (Sw. Vivekananda) who has propounded this doctrine of service. The Master's life is the aphorism, as it were, and Swamiji is the commentary on it. Swamiji formulated this doctrine of service, seeing God in everything and from several incidents in the Master's life. The Master had on more than one occasion made Mathur Babu serve the poor.

Mahâraj (Swami Brahmananda) used to say that if one devotes a small part of his mind to work and gives the rest to God even then one can turn out enough work. You must be constantly thinking of Him. Tulsidas says, 'Let the hands work but let the lips utter His Name'.

*26th January.*

*Disciple.* How to avoid low thoughts?

*Swami.* Low thoughts will come and go. Don't mind them. Through His grace, as a result of constant practice you will get strength. Devote your



whole mind to Japa, meditation, worship, and study of the scriptures, whichever appeals to you for the time being. The Lord will set everything right. Sri Ramakrishna never liked one-sidedness. He was always for many-sidedness.

*Disciple.* Does an Incarnation continue to live in the subtle body for the good of the devotees after the gross body falls off?

*Swami.* Certainly. He continues to live in that way till the end of the cycle. How long does the gross last after all? The subtle existence is absolutely necessary.

*Disciple.* How to meditate?

*Swami.* One has to meditate on the different centres in the Sushumnâ (the nerve current through the spinal column). In the heart one has to meditate on one's chosen Deity as sitting on a red lotus with twelve petals, and in the head on Guru as seated in a white lotus with thousand petals. These meditations help Japa and therefore should be practised.

8th January, 1930.

Hearing that a few were practising hard austerities Swami said: "You cannot realize God through Tapasyâ, sacrifice, charity, or study of the scriptures. He alone realizes Him on whom descends His grace. But then you have on the other hand, 'This Âtman cannot be realized by the weak.' One who is weak and effortless cannot realize Him. The *Gîtâ* lays stress on personal effort (Purushakâra). 'The self must be raised by the self, so let not one weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself.' One has to liberate oneself from bondage, one should never be despondent. Here self means mind, intellect, etc."

21st February.

*Disciple.* Does dispassion (Vairâgya) depend on spiritual practices?

*Swami.* No. It depends upon past impressions (Samskâras). One gets it only when one is free from all desires and not otherwise. If any desire is left in the mind one does not get this spirit of renunciation. It comes through enjoyment tempered by discrimination. And of course there is need for spiritual practice too. But the one thing necessary is His grace. That is why the Master used to pray: "O Mother, I do not know any spiritual practice. Please be gracious to me." Without the Lord's grace no spiritual practice is possible. No one works independently. Everyone works as directed by Him. He is the mechanic and the rest are mere machines. But it is very hard to remember all this. If one has this idea then one gets beyond all good and evil. If the Mother is gracious, then everything is possible—dispassion, spiritual practice, etc. The Lord has two powers, Vidyâ Sakti (knowledge) and Avidyâ Sakti (ignorance). If He removes from us the influence of the latter and helps with the former, then everything goes on well. So pray, "Mother, be gracious unto me." If there is Her grace, nothing is impossible.

22nd March.

Seeing one despondent in his spiritual practices Swami said: "That is not good. Don't yield to despondency. It makes the mind restless. Always think that you are all blessed, that you are the children of the Lord. If evil thoughts come in your mind, don't pay any heed to them. There are impressions of past lives in the mind and now and then they come to the conscious plane. Have strength. There is no fear, you will get everything in time. Mere mechanical Japa does not help

much. You must have love for the Lord. But then even mechanical Japa has some results, for after all it is the Lord's name that is being repeated. But the main thing is love for the Lord with the idea that He is our father, mother, friend, master, everything. You must have some such relationship. While practising Japa you must sit at ease and be calm."

2nd April.

A devotee who was in foreign countries for long, came to see Swami. Seeing Swami's broken health he burst into tears.

*Swami.* When Buddha was about to attain Parinirvâna, Ananda was overwhelmed with grief. At this Buddha said, "Why are you crying, Ananda? This life lasts for fifty or sixty years

or at best hundred years. But I am going to attain eternal life after this."

The topic drifted to the vexed question of caste and Swami replied: "Let caste remain in society. What is that to me? But the Master used to say that there is no caste among devotees. They all belong to a separate caste. We are Sannyâsins and so have nothing to do with caste."

*Disciple.* What is the relation between Guru and Ishta? Are they one?

*Swami.* Guru and Ishta (chosen Ideal or Deity) are one. But then so long as you are in the relative world, within name and form, you have to accept them as separate. But when knowledge comes, you will find that the two are one. This knowledge one gets after hard ansterities.

## ZEN AND YOGA

BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

Zen, like Yoga in the Hindu world is the most mystic and esoteric cult of Buddhism in the Far East. Though Zen had originated in India it attained its maturity in China. According to Dr. D. T. Suzuki<sup>1</sup> Zen is the product of the Chinese soil from the Indian seed of Enlightenment. Of the twenty-eight patriarchs of Zen in India, Sakya Muni is regarded as the first and Bodhi-Dharma the last patriarch by the orthodox school.

The traditional origin of Zen in India has the historical basis too. Philologically, Dhyâna and Zen have the same signification. Zen is otherwise known as the Dhyâna School of Mahâyâna or Sanskrit Buddhism prevalent in China

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Zen Buddhism*—by Dr. D. T. Suzuki. Vols. 1 and 2.

and Japan. In Hindu Yoga too Dhyâna is the seventh Anga or aspect next to which is Samâdhi or superconscious illumination. Zen is a Japanese word whose Chinese equivalent is Chan, which again comes from the Pali Jhâna, derived from the Sanskrit word Dhyâna. Buddhist Zen and Hindu Yoga have close similarities, and when their technique is translated into a third language they become indistinguishable.

Zen is said to be a "special transmission from the Buddha outside of his doctrinal teaching and Zen historians have extended this transmission even beyond Sakya Muni, as there were other Buddhas prior to Him. Hindu Yoga also believes that though Patanjali is the first systematic expounder of its philosophy, he was the lineal descendant



of a long line of predecessors. There is a legend of the Indian origin of Zen. Once Sakya Muni during a discourse to a congregation of his disciples on Gridhra Kuta Parvat did not resort to the usual verbal discourse but lifted a bouquet of flowers presented to him by a lay disciple. He stood speechless; not a word came out of his mouth. Nobody understood the meaning of his message. Only the venerable Mahakasyapa comprehended the full purport of the teaching. The Enlightened One perceiving this opened his lips and said solemnly "I hand over to you, venerable Kasyapa, this moment the most precious spiritual treasure." Hence Zen claims to be the inmost essence of Buddhism.

It was Bodhi Dharma who first introduced Zen in China in the first-half of the sixth century A.D. There were, after him, five more prominent Zen fathers in China. But unfortunately very little is known about Bodhi Dharma the first patriarch of Zen in China. Like great Yogins of India his activities are lost in obscurity. He was the third son of a great Brahmin king in South India. From his boyhood he was exceptionally intelligent and wise. The only ambition of his life was to be a monk, and master the doctrine of Mahâyâna which, in his opinion, was the inmost mind of Buddha. As a Bhikshu he was very much grieved over the decline of the true religion of the Blessed One in countries outside India and so went to China to preach the Dharma. He had there an interview with a Chinese king the greatest Buddhist patron of his time. Then he retired into a solitary monastery and practised meditation there for long nine years. He was known there as Dhyâni Brâhmana. He also disciplined sincere Chinese monks in the mysteries of Zen and made them the true teachers and trans-

mitters of Zen to others. He lived to a quite old age but his death is enveloped in mystery and it is not certain whether he passed away in China or India. There are diverse records of Bodhi Dharma's teachings. He however recommended the *Lankâvatâra Sutra* to his first disciples as containing the central gospel of Zen. This book, in which we can have a glimpse into the teaching of Zen as well as Bodhi Dharma, has fortunately been translated into English by Dr. D. T. Suzuki. The essence of Zen may be summed up in the pronouncement of Bodhi thus :

"A special transmission outside the Scriptures,

No dependence upon words

and letters,

Direct pointing at the soul of man

Seeing into one's nature and the

attainment of Buddhahood."

Zen is the science of intuitively looking into the nature of one's being. It is the great way to Freedom of the Infinite from the bondage of the Finite. It is more mysterious and intuitive than discursive and logical. Zen therefore does not depend on the intellect for the solution of its deepest problems.

The object of Zen is the attainment of Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi or supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Zen being a sect of Mahâyâna, its goal is naturally that of Mahâyâna. Mahâyânism on the other hand may be designated as the religion of Prajnâ *par excellence*. The central doctrine of Mahâyâna is that all beings are potential Buddhas, and this supreme Truth is realized in the Anupâdhishesha Nirvâna, in one's inmost self. A Buddha can alone understand another Buddha. What makes a mortal Buddha is Zen. After the enlightenment Buddha was reluctant to reveal the entirety of his inmost spiritual experience (or Praty-



âtma Jnâna according to the *Lankâvâ-tara Sutra*) to others thinking them incapable and wished to pass away into Mahâparinirvâna without attempting to propagate the Dharma. But he abandoned the idea out of infinite mercy for the suffering humanity at the request of the great Brahma Deva. It is said Buddha realized Sanbodhi in the Sâgar Mudrâ Samâdhi in which the whole universe reflects in the mind as the moon in water. Sâgar Mudrâ Samâdhi, Mahâparinirvâna, and Anupâdhishesh Nirvâna of Zen are equivalent to Yogic Nirvikalpa or Asamprajnât Samâdhi.

Dr. Suzuki says, Zen has a great deal to do with the practice of Dhyâna or meditation which has been carried on from the beginning of Indian Culture. Dhyâna is the continuation of one kind of divine thoughts like the unbroken current of oil when poured from one pot to another. It is continuous meditation on a truth or thought so that it may be thoroughly comprehended and deeply engraved in the mind. Truth is perceived through meditation alone, and hence meditation is the gateway to realization. Allusion to Dhyâna abounds in Indian Yogic literature and Âgamic texts of the Chinese Tripitaka. "To sit alone in a quiet place and to devote oneself to meditation exclusively" is the phrase one meets everywhere in Yogic and Zen scriptures. Samâdhi and Dhyâna are to a great extent synonymous and interchangeable but strictly speaking Samâdhi is a psychological state realized by the exercise of Dhyâna. The latter is the process, the former is the goal. The Buddhist Scriptures make references to as many as one hundred and eight Samâdhis. These spiritual exercises are not strictly Buddhistic; they were taught and practised more or less by all Indian philosophers and mendicants. The Yogis have been

great adepts in them long before Zen. Anuttara Yoga-kshema of Nirvâna (incomparable security) is the term applied to the Enlightenment by Zen.

There is a kind of fiery baptism in Zen which is to acquire a new point of view of life and things. It is called Satori by the Japanese. Satori is the alpha and omega of Zen. Zen devoid of it is like a sun without heat and light—pepper without pungency. It is a sort of intuitive awakening with the dawn of which begins the life of Zen. It is the whole of Zen discipline. It is the opening of the mental eye, a spiritual enhancement or 'conversion' in the words of the *Psychology of Religion*. As the flower blooms out of its inner necessity, so Satori opens as the outcome of one's inner fulfies. It cannot be attained by any artificial means. Yogis call this the opening of the third eye (Jnâna Chakshu), supposed to be situated in the forehead. It is a kind of 'extra-retinal vision' or 'second sight' in the term of mysticism. So spiritually ever-awake Siva, who is considered to be the Lord of Yoga, or Jogeswara is known as Trinetra or the three-eyed. Like Yoga Zen also believes that this can take place when the minds of the master and the disciples are merged in each other.

The gospel of Zen is that men are transcendently all Buddhas and by seeing directly into our nature we will be as enlightened as the Sakya Muni. Like Yoga Zen also marks the stages of spiritual unfoldment. Progress of spiritual development of Zen is pictorially illustrated in the ten cowherding pictures.<sup>2</sup> The cow has been worshipped by the Indians from the early times, and allusions to cows are found

<sup>2</sup> Yoga Sâstras too describe symbolically seven planes of the mind in the form of seven lotuses or Padmas, all situated in the spine.



in both the Hindu and the Buddhist scriptures. Hence Zen has used cow as the symbol of mind. To control the mind requires as much dexterity and patience as to herd the cows. It is well known that like the Zen teachers, the mystics of all religions are fond of paradoxes and parables to expound their teachings.

The Zen masters have very many practical methods of instruction, both direct and indirect. One form in which Zen expresses itself is the denial of the opposites somehow corresponding to the mystic *via negativa*. Zen thinks that truth can only be reached when it is neither asserted nor negated. The whole emphasis of its discipline is placed on the intuitive grasping of the Absolute Truth deeply in our self. It cannot be imparted to others by any kind of dialectical formulas. Only 'Truth-thirsty' aspirants will be blessed with its light, and then the mind transcends and dualistic conception of time and space, body and mind, I and you. In the words of Blake, the mystic poet, the Zen experience is

"To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour."

That the teachings of all the Buddhas exist in one's mind is the verdict of Zen.<sup>3</sup> When one's mind is free from multiplicity and reaches absolute oneness, one instantly becomes Buddha. "The infinitely small is as large as can be when external conditions are forgotten. The infinitely large is as small as can be when objective limits are put

<sup>3</sup> Yoga also believes in the omniscience of the mind. According to Yoga philosophy all knowledge and wisdom is within; as Socrates says, "All knowledge is a remembrance."

out of sight."<sup>4</sup> In Absolute Truth or oneness, which is attained during cessation of all mentations "there is neither 'other' nor 'self' ", we can only say 'not two' (Advaita)", says a Zen adept. The *summum bonum* of Yoga is also to realize the Advaita, the one without a second, which the sages describe variously.

Ideals of Zen discipline are very hard. Every Zen monastery has a meditation hall in which monks are accommodated. A monk is allotted in it a little space, and most frequently he finds no bedding there; for a Zen monk is supposed to pass his night in deep meditation like a Yogi.<sup>5</sup> He sits upright all night in the contemplation of Koan exercises. Their possessions are next to nothing. They wear a piece of Kashâya (yellow robe) and have a few books etc. The entire property moves with the owner. "One dress, one bowl, under a tree, on a stone" was the graphical description of the monk in India. According to Dr. Suzuki, Zen as a school of Buddhism insists more or less on the rigour of Hindu discipline. They call their diet "medicinal food." Before, after, and during meals they recite Sutras and invoke the grace of the Buddhas and Bodhi Sattvas. The Yogis too follow the same plan. Followers of Zen and Yoga live a life of strict poverty, purity, and prayer.

During Wassa they devote their time exclusively to concentration. Wassa is the same as the Châturmâsya of the Hindu Yogis. It is the four months of the rainy season in which both the Yogis and Zen monks retire to a suitable

<sup>4</sup> Compare the Upanishadic text: "It is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest."

<sup>5</sup> To a Yogi, the night being most favourable time for meditation owing to the calmness and quietude of nature and inactivity of man, the night becomes the day, and the day the night.



place, where alms is cheap, for a solitary life of protracted meditations. In order to tranquillize the turbulent mind the Zen masters distinguish eight kinds of Dhyâna. The first Dhyâna is an exercise in which the mind thinks of one object to the negation of everything else. In the second, mind is concentrated on one point. In the third stage perfect serenity obtains and in the fourth spiritual tranquillity—absolute composure—reigns supreme. The further four stages of Dhyâna are called Arupa Vimoksha. The first is to contemplate on the infinity of space, the second on the infinity of time or the eternity, the third is meant to go still further beyond the destruction of space and time and the last totally eliminates the trace of analytical intellection of non-distinction. They are practised to reach the highest stage of concentration in which the dualism of the one and the many vanishes like darkness before light. Apart from them there are about twenty subjects for Zen meditation, tranquillization, and recollection, such as Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Death, Breathing, Impurity of the Body, etc.

Yoga too prescribes the forms of Holy Ones as objects of meditation apart from formless objects such as light, or the luminosity of objects, sky, odour, beauty, silence, etc. The thought of death is inseparable from Yoga practice, as the goal of Yoga is to conquer death. Plato rightly defines philosophy as the preparation for death. The science of breathing or Prânâyâma is an essential part of Yoga as of Zen. It is known as Anapansati in Pali Buddhism. Yoga teaches as many as eighty-four Âsanas or postures of the body to attain steadiness and stability in prolonged sittings at a stretch for deep meditations. When Asanas are mastered, the mind is not assailed by the extremes. To develop capacity and concentration of

the mind, Dhâranâs are practised by the students of both Yoga and Zen.

The slightest trace of attachment to anything outward or inward must be removed. The eightfold idea of attachment is "I am, I am that, I shall be, I shall not be, I shall have a form, I shall not have a form, I shall have or have not thought." The Yogic emphasis on absolute detachment is proverbial.

The Koan is the most important technique of Zen discipline. It is a special development and unique contribution to practical spirituality. A Koan is a mystic formula or aphorism to be solved by protracted concentration and meditation. It is said there are 1,700 Koans to be solved by the Zen student before he can be called a fully qualified master. The universe itself, according to the Zen masters, is a great living, threatening Koan, challenging our solution; and when the key to this great Koan is successfully discovered all other Koans solve themselves. Again they say, that the universal Koan is compressed in a nutshell into everyone of these 1,700 Koans. When one is understood in a most thorough-going way, all others give up their secrets. The goal of the Koan is to know the mystery of the whole universe itself. Hindu Yoga has innumerable spiritual exercises like the Zen Koan. The Upanishadic seers used to give such problems to the aspirants for the solution. They would say, "Silence is Brahman," "You are He," or "Know that by understanding which everything else is understood," and the truth-seekers would meditate on them for days and weeks to fathom their meaning. The Yogic Mantras are nothing but what is known by Zen as the Koan.

Dr. Suzuki asserts that though Zen is the native product of the Chinese mind and does not coincide with Indian



Dhyâna, yet he admits, that in Zen practice the same bodily posture is assumed. The Zen technique of practising meditation is most identical with that of the Hindu Yoga. Regarding the Zen monks it is said, "His food should be regulated, neither too much nor too little; and his sleep also should be moderate, neither too long nor too short. It is reminiscent of the Yogic injunctions given in the *Gîtâ* as follows: "Success in Yoga is not for him who eats too much or too little—nor, for him who sleeps too much or too little," "To him who is temperate in eating and recreation, in his effort for work and in sleep and wakefulness, Yoga becomes the destroyer of misery."

The process of meditative posture in Zen is given as follows according to one scripture: "When the monk wishes to practise meditation, let him retire into a quiet room where he prepares a thick well-wadded cushion for his seat, with his dress and belt loosely adjusted about his body. He then assumes his proper formal posture. He will sit with his legs fully crossed, that is, place the right foot over the left thigh and the left foot over the right thigh. Next, he will place the right hand over the left leg with its palm up and over this have the left hand, while the thumbs press against each other over the palm. He now raises the whole body slowly and quietly, moves it repeatedly to the left and to the right, backward and forward, until the proper seat and straight posture are obtained. He will take care not to lean too much to one side either left or right, forward or backward; his spinal column stands erect with the head, shoulders, back and loins, each properly supporting others like a Chaitya. But he is cautious not to sit too upright or rigidly, for he will then feel uneasy before long. The main thing is to have the ears and shoulders, nose

and naval stand to each other in one vertical plane, while the tongue rests against the upper palate and the lips and teeth are firmly closed. Let the eyes be slightly opened in order to avoid falling asleep. When meditation advances the wisdom of this practice will grow apparent. "When the position is studied and the breathing regular, the practice will now assume a somewhat relaxed attitude."

The *Gîtâ* also, which is considered to be an authoritative Yoga Sâstra gives the following instructions to the practitioners of Yogic meditation in the chapter on Dhyâna Yoga, "The Yogi should constantly practise meditation, retiring into solitude, alone, with the mind and body subdued, free from hope and possession. Having in a clean spot established his seat, firm, neither too high nor too low, made of cloth, a skin, and Kusha-grass, arranged in consecution. There seated on that seat, making the mind one-pointed and subduing the action of the imaging faculty and senses, let him practise Yoga for the purification of the heart. Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and still, (with the eye-balls fixed, as if) gazing at the tip of his nose, and not looking around." The Upanishadic conception of Yoga is the firm control of the senses and freedom from all mental vagaries. The *Katha Upanishad* says that the Yogi must restrain the senses from functioning and fix the mind in the contemplation of Truth. He must not indulge in the wanderings of the mind. The definition of Yoga according to Patanjali is almost the same. He defines Yoga as the cessation of all mental activities.

Zen aims at Nirvâna; so also the goal of Yoga is to enter into Samâdhi. Patanjali says, "Yoga is Samâdhi." But Samâdhi in the Upanishad is thus described, "The Sun does not shine

there, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When he shines, everything shines after him; by his light all this is lighted."

Bhagavân Buddha describes Nirvâna in 'Udan' as follows: There is neither earth, water, wind, fire nor any element. The Sun and the stars or the moon do not shine there. The darkness never enters there. The silent Brâhmana realizes that state in absolute silence. In this transcendental state the Muni goes beyond the form and the formless, joy and sorrow.

According to Prof. J. H. Woods of Harvard, Patanjali flourished not later than the 5th century. The Sutras might have been recorded as early as the 3rd century in his view. Bodhi Dharma, the founder of Zen in China, lived in the 6th century and the *Lankâvatâra Sutra*, which he handed over to his Chinese disciples as the authoritative treatise on Zen, was almost contemporaneous with the Yoga Sutras. In the *Lankavatara Sutra* the Zen practitioners are known as Yogis, the name used by the Hindus. As in the Yoga

Sâstra so in the Zen scriptures the ultimate truth realized in Samâdhi or Nirvâna is called Paramârtha Satya or Absolute Truth as opposed to Samvriti, Vyavahârîka, or relative Truth. So it is quite possible that Zen is a branch of Yoga or both having had common origin are parallel developments. As regards the essentials both have not only uniformity but sameness. Only the externals differ in minor aspects. If Buddhism is a 'rebel child' of the Vedic religion, Zen may most probably be the part and parcel of Yoga; for, about a thousand years the growth of Zen in India was inseparable from Yoga.

The true signification of Zen and Yoga are identical with the ultimate fact of all philosophy and religion. Zen or Yoga is not necessarily the fountain of only Buddhism or Hinduism. It is the essential core—the esoteric doctrine—of all religions. It is common to all and not the monopoly of any religion. Buddhist Zen, Hindu Yoga, Islamic Sufism, Christian Mysticism, Alexandrian Gnosticism, and Neo-Platonism have very close similarities and identities.

## 'ACTUAL' IDEALISM

BY HARIDAS CHAUDHURI, B.A.

It will not be too much to say that the history of philosophy is the history of Idealism in its different forms and applications, in its shifting of emphasis on diverse factors of experience and in its struggle with a host of reactionary doctrines and tendencies. Neo-Idealism is the name which has been given to the most recent formulation of the idealistic movement of thought. In the present article I propose to devote my attention to the most interesting

development which Neo-Idealism has attained in Gentile's hands.

Gentile calls his philosophy 'Actual' Idealism which signifies his conception of reality as unique and infinite spiritual act conceived as eternal present. The full significance of the designation will however be revealed progressively in course of my exposition. The singularly attractive manner in which Gentile approaches all the baffling problems of thought and reality and his remarkable



boldness of outlook will afford, we hope, sufficient justification for the present article. I should like, first of all, to give as faithful a representation as possible of the most outstanding features of Gentile's philosophy and then offer some brief criticism on his central contention.

The beginning and end of Gentile's philosophy is his thorough-going anti-intellectualism, understood in every sense of the term. The common presupposition of all forms of intellectualism is, Gentile points out, an absolute objectivity with which the intellect is confronted and which it is the business of the intellect to reconstruct or re-realize. Intellectualism supposes cognitive activity to be a passive and otiose contemplation of a finished and self-complete reality. What then, asks Gentile, is the use for this meaningless endeavour of the intellect to recognize an already cognized reality—to re-make a *fait accompli*? Is not philosophy thereby condemned to be a vain and useless duplication of reality? Intellectualism which reduces all philosophic endeavour to such a ridiculous absurdity must be totally rejected in favour of a more sober conception of reality and reason.

Gentile starts with a complete re-orientation of the conception of reason or intellect. The intellect is not an *ab extra* spectator of a finished reality, it is eternal creativity. The life of the intellect consists in creative and constructive process; it lies not in *being* but in *becoming*. The intellect or pure subject creates its object, and what it creates is unified in the concreteness of its activity. This concrete intellect or transcendental 'I' which generates for itself all positivity or objectivity is the whole of reality. Now, a moment's reflection will show that intellect conceived on Gentile's lines as pure activity

becomes one with will and freedom. So his anti-intellectualism which proves to be true intellectualism now shows itself identical with true voluntarism. It is an abstract and imperfect type of voluntarism which separates the will from the intellect and thus renders it intellectualistic in character by assigning to it a transcendental world of its own (cf. Kant's Practical Reason having a transcendent world of God and Immortality confronting it). True voluntarism knows no distinction between intellect and will and makes intellect itself volitional. Gentile's conception of mind breaks down the dualism of reason and will as also the dualism of reason and reality. Reality is, according to him, mind as pure act,—it is eternal creation, that which is created being an ideal moment of its creative activity.

Gentile develops his conception of mind as absolute freedom out of his elaborate criticism of the various forms of Idealism from Plato down to his own time. According to Plato, the empirical world of particulars is an unreal realm of fleeting shadows. It is an object of opinion and not of knowledge, torn that it is between being and non-being. True reality comprises that transcendent region of Universals, Forms, or Ideas which constitutes a graded hierarchy. Gentile complains that in so far as the Platonic realm of Ideas forms a pure objectivity, timelessly real, it is impenetrable by the light of knowledge. The indispensable condition of knowledge is self-creation. We understand only that which we create. We understand a line or a triangle so perfectly well because we ourselves construct it in our imagination; a line or a triangle nowhere exists in nature or on paper. Therefore in so far as the world of Ideas is pure objectivity, it is unknown and unknowable,—it is nothing to us. If however it is declared to be an object



of knowledge, it at once becomes an ideal moment unified in the living activity of thought, and thus loses its Platonic significance. The world of Ideas as independent objectivity is a limit to the cognitive activity. But by the very act by which the mind thinks of a limit, it also transcends it. The apparent limit to thought is only an abstract element in the activity of thought. If objectivity be affirmed in its pure abstractness, mind is flatly denied, for it is reduced to a passive and otiose spectator, and therefore all talk of Idealism is rendered meaningless. There is no passage from the abstract to the concrete (this is the complete reversal of the Hegelian maxim). There is, however, a quite intelligible mode of transition from the concrete to the abstract, because objectivity, both ideal and material, can be well deduced from, and understood as an abstract moment of, the concrete activity of the mind.

The fundamental defect of Plato's philosophy lies, Gentile goes on to argue, in conceiving reality as thought *thought* and not as thought *thinking*. Starting with (abstract) intellectualism according to which reality is the antecedent of thought, Platonism necessarily ends in naturalism which conceives reality as the opposite of mind. Nature does not necessarily mean crude materiality. It may be made of the stuff of Ideas or universals and yet it is dead nature inasmuch as it is made to limit and obstruct the activity of thought and thus to mark the death of spirituality. Plato's realm of Ideas which is regarded as eternally realized is a dead mass of objectivity, transcending and confronting the activity of thought. So it is indistinguishable from nature. His so-called idealism is no better than naturalism!

The above criticism to which Gentile

subjects Plato's philosophy furnishes us with the key to the main line of thinking which he boldly and faithfully pursues and which is the animating principle of his whole metaphysical superstructure. Out of his relentless criticism of Plato, he draws out the moral that naturalism is the inevitable consequence of intellectualism. Thought thought is nothing but dead abstraction or brute nature. Now, it is not difficult for him to turn to the other idealistic systems of thought and to exhibit how the radical vice of naturalism contaminates them all.

Berkeley lays his finger on a very important truth when he declares that the essence of things consists in being perceived—*esse est percipi*. When I think of a flower smiling in joy and emitting its sweet fragrance in a dense forest, unseen and unknown, what is it, he asks, that really happens? The matter is very simple. I construct in my imagination the 'idea' of a flower, and I neglect at the same time to count the agency which effects this construction. It is indeed absurd to think of anything apart from thought; it is impossible to posit anything apart from spiritual activity. The very act of positing anything is the affirmation of the immanence of the object in the activity of the subject. So far Berkeley is on the true path of Idealism. But he abandons this fundamental idealistic principle of immanence the moment he declares his belief in the existence of finite selves and God transcending the activity of the ego. Reality is conceived by him as consisting of an eternally realized God and finite spirits; so it comes to be identified with a dead fact and not a living act. This means the death of mind and spirituality. For, mind is freedom and eternal activity, whereas reality, in this conception is something which is eternally realized and not in



process of realization. Thus the sworn foe of naturalism unwittingly betrays himself into the wily arms of his opponent. Even the bold speculative effort of Berkeley could not free itself from the natural Platonizing tendency—the tendency of transcendentalism—inherent in every man.

Does then Gentile deny the plurality of things and beings? Does he mean to explain away the unlimited expanse of this universe with its infinite wealth of forms and endless variety of irreducible types? That would indeed be a rash attempt. With a long history of futile attempts to annul variety and diversity in favour of blank identity Gentile cannot betake himself to that desperate course. It is completely unavailing to contend that the world is a mere illusion, because even illusion which is a stubborn fact of our experience requires to be explained, and reality must be made to account for it. So Gentile admits the reality of plurality; but plurality is real, he tells us, not apart from but as inextricably bound up with the living activity of the mind. Plurality is plural only in so far as it is unified as an ideal moment in the concrete unity of the transcendental 'I'. Unity and plurality are two inseparable moments of mind conceived as creative process or development; they have their meaning only as they are unified in the transcendental 'I'. This transcendental 'I' should be carefully distinguished from the empirical ego. The empirical ego as a member of plurality is an ideal moment of the concrete activity of the mind. The transcendental 'I' comprises in its bosom the whole field of plurality, i.e. the plurality of empirical selves and objects, and lives in the process of transcending the positive with ever fresh creations. There remains now no difficulty to understand how Gentile can admit without the least hesitation the

reality of empirical selves and objects and yet maintain his firm conviction in the unique and infinite reality of mind as spiritual act.

We are now in a position to understand how Gentile meets the charge of mysticism brought against him by his dear friend and contemporary Croce. Croce complains that the former abolishes all ordinary distinctions and thus commits himself to the standpoint of mysticism. But Gentile replies that he abolishes not the reality but only the shadow of the distinctions of life. Distinctions when abstracted from the activity of mind cannot retain their distinctive character; being unreal and illegitimate, they are swept away into one unknowable region of darkness. Diversity is real only as a product of thought; it is an indispensable moment of the act of thought. So in positing mind as creative process, Gentile cannot eliminate diversity. Moreover, mysticism is shown by Gentile to be affiliated to intellectualism itself. It is true that mysticism opposes intellectualism by declaring that Reality is not Knowledge but Love, and that it is therefore accessible not to reason but only to will, feeling, or faith. Yet mysticism accepts without hesitation and, what is more, accentuates the fundamental tenet of intellectualism. It agrees with the latter in conceiving the Absolute as a transcendent reality confronting the subject and calling upon it for its total absorption. So it falls back upon the notions of fate, grace, etc. It is thus made clear that actual idealism is as far removed from mysticism as from intellectualism.

Let us then turn our eyes with Gentile to that masterly system of thought namely, the logical idealism of Hegel. In order to explain the sphere of experience or the realm of nature, Hegel excogitates Logos or the nexus of



the categories of thought which is pure thinkability. Nature which is the dark and obscure region of sensible particulars can be understood only by the light of categories. But then how can there be any passage from Logos to Nature? If Logos be real, Nature can add nothing to it. Endowed with full reality Logos has no need and no way of bursting forth its limits and passing over into Nature. It then follows that Nature as the region of individuality forfeits its title to existence. So Logos defeats its own purpose,—being excogitated to explain Nature it threatens to cancel the very existence of Nature. Nor will it however do to give up Logos, because it is Logos which converts the opaque impenetrability of Nature into the translucent inwardness of knowledge. The fundamental antinomy of reality may therefore be expressed thus : If Logos be real, Nature must be cancelled; if it be unreal, Nature must be left in despair as a sealed mystery.

The reply from the Hegelian Camp to the above criticism must be evident to all students of Hegel. We almost hear it urged in reply : “You presume too much. Logos is not real apart from Nature; Nature is not real apart from Logos; both Logos and Nature are unreal abstractions apart from their indissoluble union in concrete spirit. The relation that obtains between them is not one of chronological sequence, but of logical distinction” (See McTaggart’s *Studies in Hegelian Dialectic*).

Gentile, however, possesses too penetrating an insight as not to see through this Hegelian device. When Hegel identifies reality not with pure Logos but with the concrete unity of Logos and Nature, he indeed affirms the need of explaining the aspect of concreteness and individuality which characterizes reality, but he cannot satisfactorily explain it,—he cannot weave the indivi-

dual into the texture of his own system. For, what intelligible meaning can be assigned to the Hegelian phrase “the unity of Logos and Nature”? Is not Logos which is pure thinkability endowed with self-sustaining reality? How can Absolute Idea contain any necessary relation to a dark region of impenetrability. It is no use only reiterating that Absolute Idea is not self-complete but stands in need of manifestation. Be it noted here that in his criticism of Hegel, Gentile joins hands with the great Eastern thinker Sri Sankaracharya. For, Sankara also maintains that Brahman does not require any world for self-realization; there is no necessary symmetrical relation between the two. Jagat presupposes Brahman but Brahman does not presuppose Jagat—the relation is strictly asymmetrical. Bradley also maintains that the world of appearance cannot be logically derived from Reality. Appearance must be accepted, he contends, as an ultimate fact of existence which should not be further subjected to the enquiries like Why and How.

Having thus shown that though Hegel postulates the need of vindicating the rights of the individual, he cannot properly do so, Gentile now offers to solve the problem in his own unique way. Individual and universal are not, he repeatedly tells us, a couple of static and fixed concepts. They are what they are only in the content of the living activity of thought. Whatever is made the object of thought is individual. The universal is the act of thinking which penetrates the object of thought with light and significance. Let us illustrate the point by considering the notion of ‘being’ which is commonly accepted to be a universal. Gentile holds that whether ‘being’ is universal or particular depends on the capacity in



which it figures in the activity of thought. If I turn my eyes to the moon in the sky and declare "The moon is," 'being' is then identified with the mind's act of affirmation and is without doubt a category. But when I make this notion of 'being' itself an object of my reflection, it at once becomes particularized and distinguished from other notions. "A Universal

becomes a particular the moment it is stared straight in the face." So Logos and Nature are not two self-identical static concepts; they are two ideal moments of the activity of thought. Hegel's whole difficulty arises from his conceiving of dialectic, in consonance with all ancient philosophers, as thing thought and not as thought thinking.

(To be continued)

## AVADHUTA HAD TWENTY-FOUR TEACHERS

(Adapted from the *Bhāgavatam*)

BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

Seeing a wise, young Avadhuta, wandering fearlessly, Yadu, who was versed in the Scriptures, said to him :

"O Brāhmaṇa, thou art indeed free from ego. Tell me please, how didst thou attain thy vast wisdom, which enables thee, a wise saint, to roam free from care like a child, over the face of the earth.

"Most often men seek for religion and desire for knowledge with the ulterior motive of gaining success, fame, and prosperity.

"But thou art clever, talented, learned, with many openings for success, and withal, art a pleasing speaker. Why dost thou not work or make the least exertion for thine own good? It is as if thou wert an idiot or a lunatic.

"While people are being scorched by the strong fire of lust and greed, thou dost remain untouched by its heat.

"O Brāhmaṇa, do tell me how thou, though living a lonely life, dost find delight in thy Self alone, untouched by the miseries of the world."

Being thus questioned by the intelligent Yadu, the noble Brāhmaṇa replied :

"O king, I roam on earth, a free soul,

having received wisdom from many teachers. Listen who are my teachers :

"The earth, air, ether, water, fire, the moon, the sun, the pigeon, the pythoṇ, the sea, the moth, the bee, the elephant, the honey-gatherer, the deer, the fish, the courtesan Pingalā, the osprey, the child, the maiden, the arrow-maker, the snake, the spider, and a particular insect known as Vramara-kita.

"These are the twenty-four teachers from whom I have learnt great lessons and have gathered my wisdom. I will recount my lessons, and will tell thee from whom I have learnt and how. Listen :

"From earth I have learnt forbearance and doing good for the sake of good. Never should a man of steady wisdom swerve from truth and lose his poise even when oppressed by others. The trees and mountains always yield good to all. So should a wise man live only for the good of others. His very birth must be for the good of the many, for the happiness of all.

"We must live, not for the sake of sense-enjoyments but for illumination by the control of mind and speech.

"Like the *air*, which remains unaffected by good or bad odour, a wise man, though moving amongst sense-objects of diverse characters, should remain untouched by good or evil. Even though living in an earthly body and associating with its limitations, a truly wise man, with his consciousness fixed on the illimitable Divine Self, remains unaffected, as the air is unaffected by odours.

"Like the all-pervading *ether* is the *Ātman* (Self) pervading the animate and inanimate. Thus should the wise, even though living in the body, having realized his unity with Brahman, meditate on the omnipresent *Ātman*, pure and free.

"As ether remains unaffected by the clouds driven by the wind, so does a wise man remain untouched by the changing phenomena of the universe.

Like *water*, pure, soothing, sweet, and purifying, is the sage; and like water, he purifies all who come in touch with him, or associate with him, and revere him.

"Bright with divine glory, shining with heavenly lustre arising from Tapas, fearless, is the wise man of self-control. Though moving amongst objects, like *fire*, he remains unaffected by the evils thereof.

"His divine power at times remains hidden, but becomes manifest before those who adore him, desiring for the Truth. He accepts their offerings of worship and in return, like the all-consuming fire, burns all their impurities and evil Karmas of the past or the future.

"As fire doth take the form of combustible things, so hath the all-pervading Lord assumed the forms of all beings and things.

"As there is rise and fall of the flames and not of the fire itself, so birth and

death belong to the bodies and not to the Self.

"With the revolving of Time, change is seen in the phases of the *moon*, and it does not in reality affect the moon; so do the changes such as birth and death, pertain to the body, and affect not the *Ātman* (Self).

"Just as the *sun*, though one, appears as many when reflected in different vessels on the water, so does the one *Ātman*, reflected in many individuals, appear to be manifold.

"Be not morbidly attached to anyone. This is the lesson taught by the *pigeon* who was smitten with affliction.

"There was a pigeon who lived with a female in a nest on the branch of a tree. They loved each other and lived in close companionship.

"In due season young ones were born to them and the happy pair reared them tenderly.

"One day while the pair were away in search of food for their young, a fowler happened to catch these young pigeons in his trap. When the pair returned, the mother bird was beside herself with grief, and though knew it to be sure death, fell into the trap of the fowler. The poor male pigeon, seeing the plight of his whole family, lost all senses and at once fell into the trap himself.

"Thus the miserable man, whose senses are uncontrolled, who has no poise, and is tossed up and down with the currents of life, and who is, without discrimination, attached to family and family possessions, ultimately comes to grief with all his possessions.

"Having attained human birth, which is like an open gateway to Brahman, one who, like the pigeon, remains attached to the ties of the world is not fit to be called human.

"Sense pleasures can be had in all lives. Leave them to the brutes. The wise man never yearns after them.



"Food comes of itself to the *python*. He is satisfied with what chance bringeth. So should the wise remain satisfied with whatever food chance bringeth unto him, be it well-cooked or ill-cooked, sumptuous or meagre. He struggles not for the mere maintenance of life, because all his energy, fortitude, and strength are rightly applied to keep his mind united with God, the supreme Goal of life.

"Like the *ocean*, calm and placid, the wise man is calm, tranquil, poised, profoundly deep in knowledge.

"The brimful ocean does not overflow, neither do the rivers dry up; similarly the wise man, with his heart united in God, remains poised in the midst of the opposites of life.

"The person of uncontrolled senses resists not the temptations of sex, the strongest tie of worldliness, and thus falls into abysmal darkness, like the *moth* into the fire.

"The fool with his vision blinded is attracted to the transitory and therefore illusory enjoyments of lust and gold and is verily destroyed like the moth.

"Look not with lustful eyes upon any. One who is lustful is caught in the trap as is the *elephant* because of the lustful touch of the she-elephant. Shun like poison, therefore, all promiscuity.

"Like the *bee*, gathering honey from different flowers, the wise man accepts the essence of different Scriptures and sees only the good in all religions.

"Hoard not wealth as the bee hoards honey. One who does so is destroyed with his wealth like the bee.

"Like the *honey-gatherer*, stealing honey from the bee-hive, there are many who make a business of taking the hoarded wealth from those who themselves are greedy and miserly, and who neither enjoy the wealth themselves nor permit any good to be done for others with it.

"The wise man should never listen to sensuous music, but should take lessons from the *deer*, who being enamoured by music, is caught in a trap.

"The ignorant and greedy, whose organ of taste is not under control, meets with death, like the *fish* caught on a hook.

"The organ of taste is the most difficult organ to control. One who has control over it has control over all other organs.

"In days of yore, there lived a courtesan named *Pingalâ* in the city of Videha. I have learnt a great lesson from her. Listen to it, O king.

"One evening the courtesan, attractively dressed, stood as usual at the door to conduct any lover to her trysting place. She was passionately greedy for wealth, and as she watched men coming along the street, she cast her lustful eyes upon every man, considering him a possible source of income. But they came and passed by. She fondly hoped that some rich man would come and give her a large amount of money, and she continued her watch at the door. It was past midnight and she was tired and restless. She felt a disgust within herself; a clear light shone within her and she saw her own folly.

"She said to herself :

" 'Alas for me ! How deluded am I, without the least of self-control. I am indeed a fool to expect satisfaction of desire from men.

" 'There is near me, my God, who is eternal, who is the true lover, in whom is delight and satisfaction, and in whom is all wealth. Leaving Him, I have been a fool to court man, who can never satisfy my desires, who, on the other hand, causes misery, fear, disease, grief, and delusion.

" 'Oh, in vain have I afflicted my soul by this despicable mode of living. I

have sought wealth and pleasure in vain by selling my body to men, who are themselves greedy and slaves to lust. In this city of Videha, perhaps I am the only foolish person, of wicked heart, who seeks enjoyment in such a gross physical way.

“The Lord alone is the delight within; the unchangeable reality is He. He is the friend, He is beloved, the master, nay, He is the very Self in all embodied beings. I will find delight in Him and live in Him for ever and ever, by renouncing the pleasures of the body.

“The sense objects which have a beginning and an end can never give true enjoyment. What woman ever found the highest good by depending on men, who are changeable and subject to death?

“Surely have I found the grace of the Lord, since out of vain hope has arisen this happy disgust in me. My misery has taught me the way to find peace. Through the grace of the Lord, do I renounce the vain hope of finding gratification in sense objects and take refuge in Him alone. Through His grace I shall live content with whatever befalls me, and shall take delight only in the company of my Beloved, the Lord of Love. He alone can save me, fallen as I am into the bottomless pit of evil, robbed of true vision by my worldliness.

“When one sees this universe as ephemeral, one gains true discrimination and turns away from worldliness. The Self becomes the Saviour of itself.”

“Having gained true discrimination, Pingalâ gave up all vain hopes, composed herself, and attained peace and tranquillity.

“Hope is the cause of greatest misery. Abandoning hope is the highest bliss.”

The Avadhuta continued :

“Attachment leads to misery. Non-attachment brings endless bliss. This

is the lesson I have learned from an *osprey*, who was attacked by other stronger birds and was followed so long as he carried a piece of flesh in his mouth. As soon as he gave up the piece of flesh, he became free and was happy.

“Praise or blame are alike to me. Care or anxiety have I none like those who are attached to family and possessions. I find my playmate in the Lord, I take delight in the contemplation of the Self; and like a *child*, gay and happy, I wander about freely.

“The extremes look alike. The child who is ignorant seems to be free from anxiety and is happy. But the wise man, who has gone beyond the domain of the Gunas, is truly free from all cares and anxieties and is immersed in supreme bliss.

“I have learnt a lesson from a *maiden*. Hear thou that from me.

“Once upon a time a young man with a retinue came to a maiden to seek her hand in marriage. The maiden was husking paddy at the time, and she did not want her companions to know about her secret. But as she was husking, the conch bracelets on her wrists made a great noise. She was a clever girl. To stop the noise she threw away the bracelets one by one till only two were left on each arm. As she went on husking, even these two produced the tinkling sound. So she removed one of these also. Thus there was no noise from the single bracelet.

“This have I learnt from her :

“Where many dwell in one place, there is noise and quarrel; and even when there are only two people, there is a chance of gossiping. Therefore, should one live alone and singly, like the bracelet of the maiden.”

The Avadhuta continued :

“Seated firmly in a posture, controlling the breath, shaking off all lethargy,



one should gather the scattered forces of the mind and practice concentration steadily. Steadiness comes from repeated practice and from following the ideal of non-attachment.

"The mind, steady in divine contemplation expresses Sattva, overcoming Rajas and Tamas. No more is there the feverish attachment to worldliness. There is tranquillity in a heart which has no cause for restlessness, just as the fire becomes tranquil when there is no more fuel to add.

"One with such a concentrated mind, while in divine contemplation; rises above the noises of the objective world, and also of the subjective world, like the *arrow-maker* having his mind absorbed in the arrow.

"The *snake* enters and lives happily in a hole made by others. What home can bind a sage? Wandering alone, he resorts to caves. He makes no show of his spiritual worth and is reticent of speech, for he speaks only words which are beneficial to others.

"As the *spider* weaves the thread out of its own mouth, plays with it, and then withdraws it again within itself, so the eternal, unchangeable Lord, formless, attributeless, who is absolute knowledge and absolute bliss, brings the whole universe out of His *Mâyâ-sakti*, plays with it, and again withdraws it within Himself.

"As a man thinketh intently, whether through love, or hate, or fear, so doth he become. The cockroach, being attacked by a *Vramara-kita*, thinks upon it intently, and as a result, without losing its identity, becomes transformed into a *Vramara-kita*.

"All this I have learned from these different teachers. Now hear what my own *body* has taught me.

"Reflecting on the nature of the body as subject to birth and death, causing suffering and misery, I have awakened within myself dispassion and discrimination. Knowing myself separate from the body, I have learned with its help to meditate on the Eternal Truth. Hence do I roam about freely.

"This very body, for the sake of whose pleasure and comfort, man takes to wife, builds a home, holds possessions, and painfully accumulates wealth, withers and falls away like the tree.

"As many wives undermine the morale of the man, so the different senses, remaining uncontrolled, undermine the very manhood of man.

"The Lord through His divine powers created various forms, such as trees, reptiles, beasts, birds, insects, and fish, but was not satisfied in His heart with these. Then He created the human form, which is the vehicle best adapted for realizing Him; and God was pleased.

"Having obtained this rare and blessed human birth, conducive to the highest good, the wise man should strive only to know God, before this ephemeral life passes into death. Leave vain things to the vain.

"My worldliness dispelled, with the light of knowledge as my guide, I roam over this world, established in Self-knowledge, free from attachment and egoism.

"Verily one can learn the truth from many teachers. Brahman, though One without a second, is expressed variously by the sages."

Thus taught by the Avadhuta, king Yadu also became free from attachment and attained peace and tranquillity.

# CHILDREN OF THE DAWN

BY PROF. E. E. SPEIGHT

*I know my soul hath power to know all things*  
Sang an old English poet long ago,  
Sad that with all this power men should show  
Blindness and ignorance who should be kings  
Beyond all sovereignty, unfold their wings  
And soar into the more than known, the flow  
Of being itself, a part of them, and so  
Share in the song that all creation sings.

But words like these are powerless to suggest  
What men are now in sight of, spite of all  
The timorous feel. We rise, and shall not fall  
Back to the shadowy ways of ancient rest :  
Our life is but beginning, we were born  
Conquerors of darkness, children of the dawn.

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## MERCY

BY S. GANGULY

We call God "The Merciful". We may call Him merciful when He is bounteous in His gifts, gives a timely rain yielding a rich harvest, brings a ship back from stormy seas loaded with merchandise, bestows health and prosperity, grants long life to our children, secures peace and happiness in hearth and home. But can we really call Him merciful when He inflicts a famine or an epidemic, smites us with poverty and disgrace, numbs us with a biting winter, or deluges our homesteads with torrents of rain and floods? When He takes away the child from its mother's arms, kills our kings and armies, throttles us with the tyranny of foreign rule, beclouds us with sorrow and despair, denies us our daily necessities? We cannot. Even when we yet call

Him merciful, we do so through fear, lest He might send us greater doles of misery and devastation. But all this is due to our want of knowledge. We have not yet learnt the definition of "Mercy." We ascribe mercy as we humans understand, to the Super-human. We empower Him with human might, and call Him the Almighty. We clothe him with our raiments, and call him "Oh Lord! let Thy will be done." This is anomalous, untrustworthy. We have not yet learnt to evaluate the mercy of God. The mercy which we know, and God's mercy are different things. The starving man's rich neighbour is unmerciful, the flogging cartman is unmerciful, the alms-denying people are unmerciful, the man-eating cannibals are unmerciful. These give



our ideals of mercy. But there is another mercy which is God's mercy. It is His *Will* which imagined universes, formed nebulae, liquified the mist into water, solidified the water into earth, impregnated the earth to grow grass and vegetation, decomposed their leaves to germinate life, and trained the planets to circumgyrate and create the seasons, and thereby infuse in the living the urge to evolve and express. God's mercy is His original *Will* to create and its pervasion in and through all Creation. The energy which revolves the earth and creates the seasons, initiated men to clothe and house themselves, to grow corn and live by eating, to industry and art, to conquests and commerce, to social systems, to science and philosophy. Death and destruction are as good events in this great shuffling and reshuffling of things as life and prosperity. If we have known that to live is God's mercy, then we must also know

that to die is none the less so, for by His Will we live, by His Will we die. His Will is Creation, and Destruction is but the other name of Creation; for without destroying the equilibrium of the Unbounded Eternity which was coeval with God, by placing in it the nebulous beginnings of systems of universes, there could be no Creation, and we could not have existed. And if our existence is His mercy, our death is His mercy too. The definition of mercy is that it is God's unending *Will* or *Energy* which has created this universe and is maintaining it, and is leading it onward to the path of progress and realization. It is the essence which pervades and permeates all Creation, all that we see and feel, and all that we do not see and do not feel, all that we imagine and cannot imagine, all that was, all that is, and all that will be, in the eternal Space, and in the co-eternal march of *Time*.

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## TOWARDS A TRUE EDUCATION

BY MRS. LILA RAY

Much has been written and much has been said about education. Yet our schools remain deplorable. Those who protest loudest against our present system of instruction quietly send their children to the nearest schoolhouse because, as George Bernard Shaw says, children cannot be sent to institutions that do not exist. For all practical purposes it is no comfort to an Indian parent to know that somewhere in the world there are certain individuals who have given form to their thinking in sensible schools. The established practice, bad as it is, is the only one available to most of us. Under the circum-

stances criticism of it is useless unless an alternative can be organized and an effort made toward securing its general adoption.

Private enterprise, although it can never reach the mass of our children, can provide the opportunity for experiments by means of which a method adapted to Indian conditions and Indian children suitable for general adoption can be evolved. Private schools must pioneer, must be used as laboratories in which to test the soundness of educational theories and systems and their possibilities in India.

In any attempt to make a beginning

it is essential to be very clear and definite as to what is needed. It is not enough to try to revise the old ways. We must start entirely anew on a completely different, and psychologically sound, attitude towards the child. The child must be recognized as a person, an individual in its own right, with distinct needs, distinct opinions, distinct desires, and distinct rights. It has the right to do, to think, to make, to be, and to break (as Shaw puts it) anything it likes just as any other human being has within the limits imposed by social necessity. It will not be out of place here to quote the Declaration of Geneva regarding the rights of children.

1. The Child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually.

2. The Child that is hungry must be fed; the child that is sick must be nursed; the child that is backward must be helped; the delinquent child must be reclaimed; and the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succoured.

3. The Child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress.

4. The Child must be put in a position to earn a livelihood and must be protected against every form of exploitation.

5. The Child must be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of its fellow-men.

It is the function of education to recognize and provide for the first, the third and fourth part of the second, the first part of the fourth and the fifth of the Rights. Of Education, then, is demanded these four things;

1. That the child be given the means requisite for its normal development both materially and spiritually.

2. That the child that is backward be helped; that the delinquent child be reclaimed.

3. That the child be put in a position to earn a livelihood.

4. That the child be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of its fellow-men.

No parent is justified in demanding less from the school for his sons *and daughters*.

Let us make these Four Requisites the four cornerstones of our new education. The next consideration, then, is how best to meet the obligations implied in them.

What means are requisite to the normal development of a child? Normal means natural, unforced. Normal development therefore means the unhampered expression of the innate possibilities of the child. The work of the teacher is thus reversed from the positive attitude of the cane, "I'll teach you!", to the quiet removal of obstacles, to passive yet alert observation of the difficulties the child experiences in order to mitigate them as much as possible. In short the granting of freedom to the child. The teacher becomes the unobtrusive strong *friend* who helps to liberty.

Nothing that is incompatible with the liberty of the child, therefore, is admissible to our new school. The child must be free to run about, to sit, to read, to play, to work, to sleep, and to make. It must have freedom of access to the earth, to the air, to water, to animals, to other children, to books, to laboratories, to pictures and collections, to music, to farms, to factories, to as many as possible of the multiple activities of man and to the whole of accumulated culture. The school must provide all these things, and the teacher must help the child to be at ease among them, to the knowledge of the proper use of them, and to the freedom that skill of mind and hand alone can bring.



Only such a school can claim to have fulfilled the first requisite.

The backward child and the delinquent child must be cared for in institutions other than the ordinary schools. For them the specialized care of highly trained medical men and women is necessary. In an article purposing as this one does, to deal with general education for the mass of children, passing mention will suffice.

The system prevailing in our schools at present does very little indeed towards putting every child in a position to earn a livelihood. For girls it does not pretend to do so. For boys, worse yet, it does have pretensions. How hollow these pretensions are is painfully evident in India where there is so much work waiting to be done and no one to do it despite an unemployed multitude of perfectly useless "educated" young men.

Madame Montessori has compared the period from birth to puberty to the pre-natal period in the womb. She calls it has gestation of the child in the exterior world, the incarnation of the soul in the flesh. The delicate nature needed by the child is comparable to that needed by the embryo and the child also "obeys a rhythm of activity which has no common measure with that of the adult," to quote Madame Montessori. Only upon the attainment of puberty, the child's second birth, can it be expected to take its place beside adults in obedience to the same laws they serve.

Nature has protected the embryo from external interference as completely as possible. The child also has some defences but physically and spiritually it is much more at the mercy of the world. Hence the need for even greater care on our part. Only highly skilled, sensitive, and intelligent people can be entrusted with the care and education

of children. These people need to be quite as competent, as those to whom we entrust the lives of pregnant women. The established practice is just the opposite of this. No one is a school-teacher who *can* be anything else. Thus we have derelicts from life given charge of the most delicate and important work of teaching children upon the worthy fulfilment of which rests our hope for a better humanity.

Nothing seems more natural to me than that the normal development of the child should recapitulate the experiences through which humanity itself has passed in the elaboration of civilization. Everyone knows the very young child is at heart a perfect nomad, restless and mobile. In many children we find this bursting out into belated expression when they acquire the liberty to come and go from school. Too great repression at home is the probable explanation. Normally this phase should have passed its most violent stage before the school-going age.

Nomads had their flocks before they settled down to till the land and every child adores pets. The proper care of animals by little children, both in groups and singly, has great educative value. Like the nomad the child needs space to run and shout in, space to raise his pets in, space in which to exercise to the full his rapidly expanding bodily powers.

The garden follows by a scarcely preceptible transition. If given the proper tools and a companion, work in the garden will be a delightful and instructive pastime for the child. But a healthy spirit instinctively rebels against the person who brandishes a stick and shouts, "Weed that cabbage-bed!" It will not take the child long to master the principles of sound scientific agriculture in a sympathetic environment.

Care of a garden involves numerous

simple acts of construction from the making of props to the splitting of bamboo fence-rails and the simple interlacing of thin bamboo strips for trellises of lattice-work. Tools are also mended and in some instances made. Gradually the children can be taught the carpentry of garden benches, of sheds for implements, and lastly of a garden house, men's first dwelling. Passing in easy stages from the crude to the complex the children, with proper guidance, will almost teach themselves the arts of building.

Transport is intimately involved in both agriculture and building. From the making of wheel-barrows, carts, and boats from hollowed trunks of trees to the examination and construction of models of the newest and most complicated locomotives, airships, steamships, and automobiles is a natural evolution. Neither is it as difficult as may be supposed for keenly interested boys.

Thus secure in a knowledge of and certain skill in the three great essentials of civilization each child can, during its subsequent time at school, devote its self to the elaboration, perfection, and adornment of whatever special craft appeals to it the most. For about

agriculture, building, and transport centre all the arts of civilized man. The child will have reviewed the whole of the possibilities open to it. It will have an accurate idea of what the world wants done. It will also have had ample opportunity for testing its own talents and tastes by practical experience. Having thus been enabled to choose and become trained for a vocation sympathetic to its nature and needed by society it will be fully equipped to earn a livelihood in the exterior world.

A group of children, working together in the manner I have described, would not need to be told that their talents must be devoted to the service of their fellow-men. The complex inter-relationships of man and man, of farm and factory, of supply and demand, would be an every-day experience for them. They would know how little one man alone can do without help from others. They would not have the difficulty of their parents in understanding that civilization is the product of humanity united and that only in those things in which we can unite with each other are we civilized. They will know that man has never lived singly, finding for himself alone, and that he could not long survive if he attempted to do so.

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## THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

### CHAPTER IV

#### Section II

In this section the path of the gods, by which the knower of Saguna Brahman travels after death, is described. With this end in view it begins with the exposition of the successive steps by which the soul passes out of the body at death.



*Topic 1: At the time of death the functions of the organs are merged in mind.*

**वाङ्मनसि, दर्शनाच्छब्दाच्च ॥ १ ॥**

वाक् Speech मनसि in the mind दर्शनात् because it is so seen शब्दात् from scriptural statements च and.

1. Speech (is merged) in mind, because it is so seen and there are scriptural statements (to that effect).

“When, my dear, the man departs from here, his speech merges in mind, mind in Prâna, Prâna in fire, and fire in the Supreme Deity” (Chh. 6.8.6). This text describes what happens at the time of death. It says that speech gets merged in mind, mind in Prâna, and so on. Now the question is whether the organ of speech as such gets merged in mind, or only its function. The opponent holds that as there is no mention in the text about the function of speech getting merged, we have to understand that the organ itself gets merged in mind.

The Sutra refutes this view and says that only the function of the organ of speech gets merged in mind. Mind is not the material cause of the organs, and as such they cannot get merged in it. It is only in the material cause that the effects get merged, and as mind is not the material cause of the organs, we have to understand here by speech not the organ, but its function. A function of the organ, unlike the organ itself, can get merged in mind, even though it is not the cause of that function, just as the burning property of fire, which has its start in wood, becomes extinct in water. The scriptural statement therefore refers to the function of speech, the function and the thing to which it belongs being viewed as one. We also notice that a dying man first loses his function of speech, though his mind is still functioning. So we have to understand from experience also that the function of speech, and not the organ itself, is merged in mind.

**अतएव च सर्वाण्यनु ॥ २ ॥**

अतः एव For the same reason च and सर्वाणि all ( sense organs ) अनु after.

2. And for the same reason all (organs) follow (mind, i.e. get their functions merged in it).

For the same reasons as stated in Sutra 1 the functions of the remaining organs follow, i.e. get merged in mind. “The fire is verily the Udâna, for they in whom the fire has been extinguished, go for rebirth with their organs absorbed in mind” (Pr. 3.9). This text shows that the function of all the organs get merged in mind.

*Topic 2: The function of mind gets merged in Prâna.*

**तन्मनः प्राणे, उत्तरात् ॥ ३ ॥**

तत् That मनः mind प्राणे in Prâna उत्तरात् from the subsequent clause ( of the Sruti ).

3. That mind (is merged) in Prâna, (as is seen) from the subsequent clause (of the Sruti cited).

That mind in which the functions of the different organs get merged, in its turn gets merged in Prâna, for the Sruti cited in Sutra 1 says, "Mind in Prâna." The opponent holds that here, unlike the case of the organs, it is mind itself, and not its function, that gets merged in Prâna, isasmuch as Prâna can be said to be the material cause of the mind. In support of his contention he cites the following texts: "Mind consists of food, Prâna of water" (Chh. 6.6.5) and "Water sent forth earth" (Chh. 6.2.4). When mind is merged in Prâna, it is the same thing as earth being merged in water, for mind is food or earth, and Prâna is water. Hence the Sruti here speaks not of the function of the mind, but of the mind itself getting merged in Prâna. The Sutra refutes this view and says that this relation of causality by an indirect process does not justify our understanding that mind itself is merged in Prâna. So here also it is the function alone that gets merged, and this is justified on the same grounds as given in Sutra 1, viz. scriptural statement and experience. We find that mind ceases to function in a dying man, even while his vital force is functioning.

*Topic 3: The function of the vital force gets merged in the individual soul.*

सोऽध्यक्षे, तदुपगमादिभ्यः ॥ ४ ॥

सः That ( Prâna ) अध्यक्षे in the ruler ( Jiva ) तत्-उपगमादिभ्यः on account of ( statements expressing ) approach to that etc.

4. That (Prâna) is merged in the ruler (Jiva) on account of (statements expressing) approach to that etc.

In the text cited in Sutra 1 we have, "Prâna (is merged) in fire." How then can it be said that the function of Prâna is merged in the individual soul, asks the opponent. The Sutra justifies its view on the ground that statements about Prânas coming to the Jiva etc. are found in scriptural texts. "All the Prânas approach the departing man at the time of death" (Brih. 4.3.38). Also, "When it departs, the vital force follows" (Brih. 4.4.2). The text cited in Sutra 1 does not, however, contradict this view, as the following Sutra shows.

भूतेषु, तच्छ्रुतेः ॥ ५ ॥

भूतेषु In the elements तच्छ्रुतेः from Sruti texts to that effect.

5. In the elements (is merged) (the Jiva with the Prânas), as it is seen from Sruti.

It we understand, "Prâna (is merged) in fire" as meaning that Prâna is merged in the individual soul first and then in fire, there is no contradiction between this text and what is said in the last Sutra. So Prâna is first merged in the individual soul and then the soul together with the Prâna abides in the fine essence of the gross elements, fire etc.

नैकस्मिन्, दर्शयतो हि ॥ ६ ॥

न Not एकस्मिन् in one दर्शयतः (both) declare so हि for.

6. (The soul with Prâna is merged) not in one (element only), for both (Sruti and Smriti) declare so,



At the time of death, when the soul leaves one body and goes in for another, it, together with the subtle body, abides in the fine essence of all the gross elements and not in fire only, for all the elements are required for a future body. *Vide 3.1.2.*

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

In the editorial we give in a small compass the fundamental ideas that are found in *The culture of the Rishis*. . . . Prof. Nicholas de Roerich dwells upon the inner psychology behind *Sensitive-ness*. . . . Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar concludes his article on *Sociological Approaches to Vedic Culture*. . . . Swami Sivananda was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Some *Notes of Conversation* recorded by one of his disciples are given in this issue. . . . Swami Jagadiswarananda gives us some details of comparison and contrast between Hindu Yoga and the esoteric cult of Zen as found in Buddhism. . . . Mr. Haridas Chaudhuri is a new contributor. In '*Actual*' *Idealism* he shows the course of development which Neo-Idealism has attained in Gentile's hands. . . . Swami Prabhavananda describes how Avadhuta made twenty-four Gurus. The story adapted from the *Bhâgavatam* shows the receptive and sincere attitude of a genuine seeker after Truth. . . . *Children of the Dawn* is a fine piece of poem from the pen of Prof. E. E. Speight. . . . Mrs. Lila Ray attempts to point out how one should start on a psychologically sound attitude *Towards a True Education* of the child.

### HOW THE UPLIFTING OF THE INDIAN MASSES CAN BE EFFECTED

Which one is better—to have a small minority of refined taste and culture by the side of an overwhelming majority

steeped in ignorance and squalor, or to make all fit the Procrustean bed even at the cost of culture and refinement? This has to be solved if India is to rise. For there is no third alternative, which will give us, all at once, a happy combination of both, viz. a highly cultured mass of people.

Let us first have a clear idea of the goal, and the solution will offer itself without much difficulty. None is so foolish as to ask us to forgo culture—a highly refined, noble culture. For nations are judged not by the amount of food they consume or the load of dress they wear but by their brain-activity and culture of heart. Granted culture, next comes the question, "For whom?" India has a Gandhi, a Raman, and a Tagore; India has an intellectual class which is in no way inferior to that of any other nation; but has she risen on that account in the estimation of other peoples? We cannot be so audacious as to say that the world has no sense of justice and that we alone have a monopoly of it. Hence we see that the culture must be the culture of the whole nation and not of a microscopic minority.

So it comes to this. Whatever culture India or a section of her people has must be given liberally to all who do not have it. And who are competent to give? Certainly those who have it. So the cultured or the Brâhmanas, or whoever they might be, must give it to the people down to the Pâriâhs. But how can true culture be truly imparted without mixing with the

people? The cultured must live in the midst of the uncultured, must share their sorrows and joys, must feel the pinch of their disabilities and difficulties. The uncultured must have the opportunity of studying the cultured at close quarters and in their dealings with them. They must see living examples of cleanliness, good behaviour, self-control, self-confidence, and self-reverence; so that they might imbibe these noble qualities themselves and thus raise the entire nation with them.

No doubt this will somewhat degrade, or at least impede the progress of, the cultured. But there is no help. For the good of the entire nation, this will have to be borne. But if the progress of culture be stopped or the acquired culture be degraded, how is honour abroad possible? Why should other nations admire us, when the real object of admiration is gone? So there is danger on both sides, from which we are to protect ourselves and at the same time we are to reap the good fruits of both.

This can be done in two ways, both of which ancient India attempted with a brilliant success but which she has forgotten long since. One section of the people must be set apart for the cultivation and propagation of culture—this section must be solely devoted to these and incessantly work at them under all circumstances. And in the history of the nation there must be alternate periods of the preponderance of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The barriers of orthodoxy must be broken now and then to distribute liberally the wealth of culture to all from whom it has been kept well hidden. But when this distribution has been effected there must come another wave of orthodoxy—much wider than the past one, but certainly not nation-wide. These periodical dammings and breakings of

dams prevent bloody revolutions and make for rapid, peaceful evolution. They make accumulation and distribution natural. Without dammings-in accumulation would not be rapid and hence distribution too will have to be deferred. But if the dams are not cut now and then, accumulation will be too heavy and the dams will burst and be swept off.

But who cut the dams? How does orthodoxy yield to heterodoxy? It is all the work of saints and prophets. And they effect it sometimes by the power of their brains but often through their hearts and force of character. Their magnetic personalities attract able people from orthodoxy, who freely mix with the masses and devote their lives in uplifting them. The cream of the cultured section, men of wealth, brain, and heart thus come over to the hungry depressed souls and serve them as the devotees serve their Lord. The orthodox scream and beat their hearts, but to no avail. While parents and guardians cling to orthodoxy, their own children—the best of them—come and join the other camp. At last love conquers all, and opposition subsides, and the breaking of the dam is complete.

The culture of the nation does not suffer in the least. The free mixing of the cultured with the uncultured does not bring about any unpleasant situation. This is all due to the unique love and force of character of these saints and prophets and their earnest followers. But for this force of character and this burning holy love, the inevitable would have happened, the culture of the land would have been lost. But even today it stands and stands improved and more glorified. This gives us the clue as to what to do. It is not enough to have the zeal of reformers. There are many fools who would readily jump into the vortex of



reforms without the necessary qualifications and would degrade themselves as well as those whom they want to improve. The cultured minority must mix with the masses and mix without any reserve; but before that, they must have the strength of character for the task which is not free from grave dangers. Moral force more than intellectual force or sentimentality is what is needed.

### SAVAGE LIFE AND CIVILIZATION

The savage and the civilized seem to be antitheses. And so they are in many respects. But there are certain aspects of character in which there seems to be no distinction, or if there be any it is the savage who is on the vantage ground.

In the sphere that concerns the heart the savage seems to be superior. He is noted for his hospitality. He goes so far in emergency cases as to give courteous shelter to white women in temples, which are absolutely taboo to all women. When these wild tribes fight fiercely among themselves, if they have a white guest among them, he is left absolutely unmolested, nay, every care is taken to make him feel at home.

Then again in primitive societies we do not find "criminals, degenerates, the genuinely low types that Western civilization produces so generously." So long as they do not come in contact with the civilized men, there is to be seen a sort of moral pride about these primitive people—they would not stoop to any immoral act. An air of innocence is always found in their faces. They are never spontaneously cruel. Unless harmed or threatened with harm, they never become dangerous. In their character the elements of love, patience, and geniality preponderate over those of cruelty, aggression, and pugnacity.

What we civilized people are and how we treat these children of nature is eloquently borne out by the following facts. The dirty trade of "blackbirding" is an unpardonable offence against these innocent people. "They (independent schooner masters) would simply lie at anchor until, drawn by curiosity or by the music of a sailor's concertina, the island blacks would paddle out to them in canoes, gather courage, and come at last aboard. The blackbirders would be patient. By gifts and friendliness they would swell the shell-dressed gabbling crowd on the foredeck until it numbered twenty, thirty or half a hundred able men. Then on some pretext the whites would get the blacks below, down the hatches, up-anchor, and away." "Explorers have been known to help themselves to the whole contents of a village garden, thereby condemning a whole township to starvation . . . . Fanatics have forced their way into sacred chambers and smashed all that they found there."\* These are the index of our civilization. There are more heinous immoral acts perpetrated upon these unfortunate peoples by their civilized sisters and brothers.

The modern whites, however, are not the only people who are to blame for such atrocities. All civilized peoples, ancient or modern, have treated the less favoured human beings in more or less similar ways. The vanity of civilization is, as it were, bound to express itself in such ways—as if there was no escaping from it.

Civilization up to the present time is based on force solely directed to the selfish enjoyment of individuals or groups of men. Despite the exhortation

\* The quotations are from Mr. J. W. Vandercook's "The Misunderstood Savage" in *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1935.



of saints and prophets, and the moral injunctions born of the accumulated experience of the cream of human society, the directors and promoters of civilization have always been the worshippers of Mammon, with an inordinate passion for grabbing. Civilization never lent its ears to the prayers of men of high idealism. Realists and materialists have always been its high priests.

Hedonism has been its moral theory. It has given civilized man his efficiency but has taken away his goodness, his softness of heart. He has been made strong and hard as stone, but he has forgotten how to feel.

The savage feels but is powerless, almost helpless; the civilized man is almost omnipotent but has lost his heart.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY STUDIES. Vol. XI. *Senate House, Allahabad.* pp. 486. Price Rs. 7/8.

This volume contains 14 papers—7 in the Arts section, and 7 in the Science section—, most of whom are well-written. Chemistry again has proved the most prolific, contributing as many as five papers. The three papers, viz. "The Original Inhabitants of the United Provinces: A Study in Ethnology" by Amalananda Ghosh, "The References to the Brâhmanical Religion in the Pali Canon" by Devaresh Chandra Sharma, and "Materials for the Study of the Pustimârga" by G. P. Tandon—seem to us to be the most interesting of the lot. Mr. Tandon deserves special thanks from all students of Comparative Religion for his praiseworthy labour and success in this rather arduous task of collecting materials for the Pustimârga Study. The paper of the philosophical section, "Some Aspects of Philosophy of Religion," though in itself not unworthy of the volume, has suffered badly from careless proof-reading. On the whole it is a welcome volume that has kept up the fame of the University.

MAKERS OF THE ARYA SAMAJ. Bks. I-III. By Diwan Chand Sharma. Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London. pp. 84+68+108.

These series contain the lives of Swami Shraddhanand, Mahatma Hans Raj, Pt. Guru Dutt, Pt. Lekh Ram, and Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Samaj—all are names to conjure with. They are all men of action and devotion, of whom the country might well be proud. Every Indian student who has the noble urge to do something for

his country would do well to read these lives, which will tell him what qualities are necessary for being real leaders of men. The lives are written in simple idiomatic English. The spirit of catholicity and sense of proportion are noticeable throughout. The typography and general get-up of the books are good. Every school library ought to have these series.

THE YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO. By Suddhananda Bharati. *The Bharata Shakti Nilayam, Pandicherry.* Pp. 202. Price Rs. 2.

There is nothing essentially wrong with the book. But those who do not love hyperboles and too much use of the note of exclamation will find it rather difficult to read the whole of it. The author of this book has not made its main subject any the clearer than Sri Aurobindo has done in his own book "Yoga and its Objects." As such the value of the book lies elsewhere, viz. in the facts of Sri Aurobindo's life, which it just touches cursorily.

SAGE OF SAKORI. By B. V. Narasimha Swami. *Manager, Sri Upasani Baba's Asram, Sakori, Rahata P. O., Ahmednagar Dt.* pp. 177. Price As. 8.

The life is an illustration of what a really capable Guru can make of his disciple.

AN IDEAL HAPPY LIFE. By Khushi Ram. pp. 198. Price Rs. 1.

### SANSKRIT

ADVAITA - SIDDHANTA - SÂRASAN-GRAHAH. By Sri Narayana Ashrama. *Panduranga Jabji, Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay.* pp. 60. Price As. 6.



Pt. Manges Ramakrishna Telang has indeed done a very great service to Advaita Vedanta by publishing this short but important book. He got a very ill-preserved manuscript bearing a date equivalent to A.D. 1571. All attempts to procure another MS. failed. So the editor had no other alternative but to get it printed from the only MS. he had, after correcting minor inaccuracies and supplying small lacunæ as best as he could. Under such circumstances the faithfulness of the printed copy to the original writing of the author cannot be ascertained. But this much can safely be said to the credit of the editor that there is no break or inconsistency of thought in the copy before us, except one break in page 37. We hope the publication of the book will encourage people to seek after more MSS., in the light of which some improvements in the second edition of the book will be effected. A casual reading of the contents of the book will convince its readers of the wonderful ability of the author to explain the knotty problems of Advaita Vedanta in so brief a compass. Written as it is in the complicated language of the Navya Nyâya, though much simplified by the author, this edition could have been made much more attractive and useful, had the editor added some more footnotes by way of explaining important technical terms. As it is, the book has every chance of being popular with the followers of the Advaita philosophy.

#### BENGALI

**HOMA-SIKHÂ.** By Raghunath Maiti, Kâvyatirtha, Vaidyasâstri. Messrs. B. Singha & Co., 209, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. pp. 64. Price As. 8.

The book is a collection of some twenty poems mostly dealing with the social inequities in the Hindu society. The author's appeal for justice goes direct to the heart. The author has feeling and language; his metres, though sometimes halting, are on the whole good. What he lacks in, is a sufficient sense of the becoming. Certainly, an illiterate tanner in a remote village of Bengal is not reminded of Robinson Crusoe, when the thought of self-help crosses his mind. Nor is it becoming of the village boys or youths to be so reminded. The beauty of the poems, however, lies in the domain of pathos in the creation of which the author is greatly successful.

**PUJA-PADDHATI.** Published by Swami Kaivalyananda. Sri Ramakrishna Advaita

*Asrama, Luxa, Benares City. Pp. 112. Price As. 12.*

The book contains various methods of Pooja to different gods and goddesses, as inculcated in Hindu scriptures. It is written in a lucid manner and in simple Bengali.

**SAHAJIA SAHITYA.** By Manindramohon Basu, M.A. *The University of Calcutta.* 190 pp.

The book, as its name implies, is a collection of the literature of the Sahajiâ sect—a sect of post-Chaitanya Vaishnavism of Bengal. The sect traces its origin through the Goswami disciples of Sri Chaitanya to him and regards him to be the highest divine manifestation, in fact, the very goal, of its Sâdhanâ—its highest authoritative scripture is *Chaitanya Charitâmrita*. It is a religion of love and love alone; and its highest conception of God is Man, who is considered higher than the Brahman of the Upanishads. It holds that love being natural to man, being his inborn and inherent quality, it is the best and easiest path to reach God. Man in his quest of God must start with love and ultimately end in Love, which is God. But as he cannot form any conception of that transcendental Love, he is to start with finite earthly love, which is not essentially different from that real Love. Man and God are not really different; they are one in Love, only the former has become Anu (small) through ignorance. Their essence is the same love or rather Rasa, whose manifestations are love and lovely forms and bliss enjoyed in the act of love. Creation has come into being through the act of love of Râdhâ and Krishna, and Brahman is the emanating light of the body of Sri Krishna. Its adherents are worshippers of forms, not of idols but of living human beings.

This book is a fairly large collection. And the author assures his readers of the presentation of a further collection. Apart from the poetical beauties of the pieces, they give us a very high notion of what real man is and what love, adulterated and defiled by the touch of its earthly ectype, can achieve, when it is linked with the divine prototype. Whatever might be the actual moral and spiritual status of the majority of its adherents and whatever might be the philosophical value of the highest entity preached by it, the doctrines of the sect, its higher Sâdhanâ, and its



vehicle the literature have a permanent value of high order. And our present author has done a really good service to the Bengali-reading public by bringing out in print, perhaps for the first time, such a fairly comprehensive collection of the literature of this interesting sect. The introduc-

tion is as informative as the few notes, appended here and there, are illuminating. One should only wish that the introduction were a little longer, giving the public the philosophy of the sect in some details. The printing and get-up of the book have left nothing to be desired.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA BACK TO INDIA

Swami Prabhavananda and Sister Lalitâ (Mrs. Carrie Mead Wychoff) were given a farewell address by the members and friends of the Vedânta Society of Hollywood, at the Vivekananda Home, 1946 Ivar Avenue, on Sunday, August 18th, 1935, on the eve of their departure for India.

Dr. Percy Huston, Vice-President of the Society, presided and read the following address on behalf of the members of the Society :

"The departure for India of our beloved Swami Prabhavananda and of our beloved Sister Lalita marks the end of the first stage in the history of The Vivekananda Home.

"It was in 1927 that Swami Prabhavananda, then stationed in Portland, Oregon, first came to Los Angeles. He came here to lecture on the Hindu religion. During his stay here Sister Lalitâ, together with some other devotees, asked him to form a center in Hollywood. Her pious wish was not immediately fulfilled. Later, in 1929, she prevailed upon him to carry out her desire. She offered him her home, where we are now gathered together, as the home of the new Mission. Her offer was accepted, and 1946 Ivar Avenue took the name of our revered Swami Vivekananda.

"Swami Vivekananda was to Sister Lalitâ far more than a name, far more even than the author of religious writings, for she had known him personally. In the year 1900, she became a devotee of the Vedânta, and entertained its great apostle in her home.

"A year ago, not content with what she had already done for the cause of Vedânta in the West, she made a legal gift of her house to our society, which then for the first time became formally incorporated.

"Of Sister Lalitâ what now shall we say as we bid her farewell? She has become

for us the symbol of what Vedanta may do for Western women. Under its benign influence her life has been a fitting ideal towards which other women may strive, and in her egolessness, her humility, her sweet simplicity, and her love, she has been a shining example for all.

"Concerning Swami Prabhavananda, likewise, we must unburden our hearts. He has been these many years our constant inspiration. From the depths of the brooding East, mother of religions, he has brought us words of highest truth. From his lips we have understood as we could never have understood from the pages of books alone. In him we recognize the *guru* of immemorial tradition, the teacher, the master, the indispensable medium through which the hard-won secrets of divine wisdom are transmitted from generation to generation. From his lips we hear the precept; in his pure life we see the precept embodied. Words and works in him are one. The man as he lives among us is therefore proof and illustration of the doctrine he inculcates. Our debt to him is great—greater than we can ever repay; and because of him our debt to India is likewise great, in that she has sent him to us, one of her noblest sons. Because of him we understand India better, love her more deeply. . . ."

Swami Prabhavananda's reply was as follows :

"Words seem inadequate to express the gratitude and thankfulness for all the love and kindness I have received at your hands. I came to America a stranger in a strange land; but never for a moment did you and your people make me feel that I was a stranger. You accepted me as a brother of your own. I have also adopted your country as my mother country, and I have learnt to love my adopted mother as much as I love my own Mother India.



"An Englishman wrote a verse, which has unfortunately been oft-quoted: 'East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.' But I assure you from my long experience in the West that this is not true. If only we lift the veil of ignorance and prejudice, we shall find the same human heart beating in the breasts of all.

"True it is, however, that the cultural life of the East and that of the West moved along different lines. But the greatest thinkers of the East and of the West believe to-day that the time has come when the East and the West must meet together and for the betterment of humanity, must join hands and assimilate the culture of each other. We of the East have to learn of material things from you, and you of the West have to learn of the Spirit from us.

"This message of the Spirit and of Soul Consciousness, I brought to you from India and I have given this message to you in my humble way.

"As you are aware, since the dawn of civilization, India has held on to the belief that God can be realized, that the Kingdom of Heaven within can be reached in this life. India has always felt this summons of the Infinite and at no time in her history has India been without great souls who have actually realized God.

"Again, a greater awakening has come in India in the past hundred years, since the advent of our Great Master Ramakrishna—perhaps greater than the greatest awakening India has ever witnessed. Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples have brought a new era in the history of India. . . .

"In conclusion, I must say, I am glad I am going to India, but I will be glad again to be back, for you have become very dear to my heart."

In conclusion, Dr. Houston added these remarks:

"May I say personally how very much the association with the Swami has meant to me? Not only have I profited by attending his lectures, but I have a close friendship with him which I hope will be permanent. I have come here week after week to enjoy lectures which sweep clear away the emotionalism which perhaps we have been used to in our churches, and strike at the root of truth itself. Not only has the Swami clear perceptions of spiritual truth, but he has a fine mind. And not least of the pleasure I have had in hearing him, is a delight in a beautifully developed piece of

reasoning. I hope he will return to us full of added inspiration for our future benefit."

The Swami arrived in Calcutta on the 15th October last after his long and useful career as a preacher of Vedānta in the United States of America for about twelve years.

#### ACTIVITIES OF SWAMI GUNATEETANANDA

Swami Gunateetananda of Sri Ramakrishna Asrama, Bombay, was invited by the public of Nipani in the district of Belgaum, to deliver a series of lectures. The Swami visited Nipani at the end of July, 1935 and delivered the following lectures during his stay of about a fortnight over there: (1) Religion, (2) The necessity of Religion, (3) Preliminary steps towards Realization, (4) Place of devotion in Religion, (5) Faith as the Foundation of Religion, (6) Highest Realization of Spiritual Life. Besides these, he gave two more lectures, specially arranged at the local Jain Temple and the Samādhi Math; and the subjects of lecture were respectively (1) Goal of human life, (2) Rites, Rituals, and Absolute Reality. On his way back to Bombay, the Swami visited Kolhapur at the request of the members of the Vivekananda Samgha and delivered a lecture on the "Teachings of Vivekananda" in the local school, Arya Samaj Gurukul. Later in the evening another meeting was arranged at the Public Library where the Swami gave a discourse about "The significance of the Incarnation of Ramakrishna."

All the lectures were largely attended and a keen appreciation thereof was evinced.

#### CELEBRATION IN LONDON OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

On June 12th, 1935 about sixty people met in a lecture hall at the International Fellowship Club, Lancaster Gate, to celebrate the anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, in response to the invitation of the newly formed Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society, London.

Apologies for absence were read from High Commissioner for India, who was in Geneva at the time; from Mrs. Rhys Davids, Dr. Stede, and others.

Mr. E. T. Sturdy presided and made the main speech of the evening, telling us some incidents of Swamiji's (Vivekananda) life



which are not to be found in books. He also dwelt on the spiritual contributions of India to both ancient and modern nations.

Other items included a report of Swami Avyaktananda's work in England to date ; a reading of two Sri Ramakrishna's parables and a poem of Swamiji by Miss Hankins ; a short speech by Mary B. Clark ; and Swami Avyaktananda's address.

The deep fundamental unity and reality of all religions and denominations was the dominant note of the evening.

### RAMKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE AND FLOOD RELIEF

We have already informed the public of the acute distress prevailing in the Bankura district consequent on the repeated failure of crops. We are continually receiving reports from several Thanas of the district that thousands of poor families are actually facing starvation, so much so that unless they are immediately provided with food, many people are likely to die. Under the circumstances, in spite of the extreme paucity of our funds we could not help starting two famine relief centres at Kapistha and Chagalia in the Gangajalghati and Onda Thanas respectively, along with our flood relief work elsewhere. From the 3rd to the 19th October, 30 mds. 2 srs. of rice were distributed from these two centres in 63 villages. The amount of rice distributed shows how meagrely we are able to relieve the distress of the people.

Our flood relief work in the Champadanga and Bhangamora centres of the Hooghly district is still continuing, only the construction of huts being attended to at present. A report of this work will shortly be published.

The work in the Khandaghosh and Oari centres of the Burdwan district and that of the Sansar centre of the Bankura district were discontinued on the 11th October, after

giving some little help towards hut-construction. The last week's report of the work of these three centres is as follows:—

From the Oari centre on the 28th September, 28 mds. 27 srs. of rice were distributed among 845 recipients belonging to 323 families of 14 villages.

From the Khandaghosh centre on the 29th September, 45 mds. 14 srs. of rice were distributed among 875 recipients belonging to 571 families of 15 villages ; and on the 6th October, 42 mds. of rice were distributed among 754 recipients belonging to 539 families.

From the Sansar centre on the 30th September, 21 mds. 35 srs. of rice were distributed among 538 recipients belonging to 197 families of 7 villages.

At Oari, materials for hut-construction with or without cash were given to 296 families and two schools ; at Khandaghosh, to 340 families and two schools, and at Sansar, to 131 families.

The funds at our disposal are exhausted, while the sufferings of the people are extremely great. We have repeatedly said that the construction of huts in the flood-stricken area is an urgent necessity and cannot be delayed any longer. The quantity of food distributed in the famine area must also be increased at once. Unless sufficient funds are immediately forthcoming, it will not be possible for us to cope with the situation even cursorily. In the name of suffering humanity we earnestly appeal to the generous public to send us liberal contributions, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission,  
P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama,  
4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.  
(SD.) SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
*Acting Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.*  
24-10-1935.