

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

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## LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

CHICAGO,

541, Dearborn Avenue.

DEAR DIWANJI,

Your letter pleased me extremely. I, of course, understand the joke but I am not the baby to be put off with a joke; now take more.

The secret of success of the Westerners is the power of organization and combination, that is only possible with mutual trust and co-operation and help. Now here is Virchand Gandhi, the Jain whom you well knew in Bombay. This man never takes anything but pure vegetable even in this cold terrible climate, and tooth and nail tries to defend his countrymen and religion. The people of this country like him very well but what are they doing who sent him over? They are trying to outcast him. Jealousy is a vice necessarily generated in slaves, again it is jealousy that holds them down.

Here were . . . . ., they were all trying to lecture and get money thereby; they did something but I succeeded better than they—why, I did not put myself as a bar to their success. It was the will of the Lord. But all these . . . except . . . have fabricated and circulated the most horrible lies about me in this country, and at my back. Americans will never stoop to such meanness.

. . . . . If any man tries to move forward, here everybody is ready to help him. In India you may try tomorrow by writing a single line of praise for me in any one of our papers (Hindu) and next day they would be all against me. Why? It is the nature of slaves. They cannot suffer to see anyone of their brethren putting his head the least above their rank. . . . . Do you mean

to compare such stuff with these children of liberty, self-help and brotherly love? The nearest approach to our people are the freed slaves of the U.S.A., the Negroes. Why, in the South they are about twenty millions and are now free, the whites are a handful, still the whites hold them down all the same. Why? Even when they have every right by law, a bloody war between the brothers has been fought to free these slaves? The same defect—jealousy, not one of these Negroes would bear to see his brother-Negro praised or pushing on. Immediately they would join the whites to crush him down. You can have no idea about it until you come out of India. It is all right for those who have plenty of money and position to let the world roll on such, but I call him a traitor who, having been educated, nursed in luxury by the heart's blood of the down-trodden, millions of toiling poor, never even takes a thought for them. Where, in what period of history your rich men, noble men, your priests and potentates took any thought for the poor—the grinding of whose faces is the very life-blood of whose power?

But the Lord is great, the vengeance came sooner or later, and they who sucked the life-blood of the poor, whose very education was at their expense, whose very power was built on their poverty, were in their turn sold as slaves by hundreds and thousands, their wives and daughters dishonoured, their property robbed for the last 1000 years, and do you think it was for no cause?

Why amongst the poor of India so many are Mohammedans? It is nonsense to say they were converted by the sword. It was to gain their liberty from the . . . zemindars and from the . . . priest, and as a consequence you find in Bengal there are more Mohammedans than Hindus amongst the cultivators because there were so many zemindars there. Who thinks of raising these sunken, down-trodden millions? A few thousand graduates do not make a nation, a few rich men do not make a nation. True, our opportunities are less but still there is enough to feed and clothe and make 300 millions more comfortable, nay, luxurious. Ninety per cent of our people are without education—who thinks of that?—these Babus, the so-called patriots?

Now let me tell you—still there is a God, no joke. He is ordering our lives and although I know a nation of slaves cannot but try to bite at the hand that wants to give them medicine, yet, pray with me, you one of the few who have real sympathy for everything good, for everything great, one at least whom I know to be a man of true ring, nobility of nature and a thorough sincerity of head and heart, pray with me :

“Lead us kindly Light  
amid the encircling gloom.”

I do not care what they say. I love my God, my religion, my country, and above all, myself, a poor beggar. I love the poor, the ignorant, the down-trodden. I feel for them. The Lord knows how much. He will show me the way. I do not care a fig for human approbation or criticism. I think of most of them as ignorant, noisy children—they have not penetrated into the inner nature of sympathy, into the spirit which is all love.

I have that insight through the blessings of Ramakrishna. I am trying to work with my little band, all of these poor beggars like me. You have seen them. But the Lord's works have been always done by the lowly, by the poor.



You bless me that I may have faith in my Guru, in my God, and in myself.  
 The only way is love and sympathy. The only worship is love.  
 May He help you and yours ever and ever !

With prayers and blessings,  
 VIVEKANANDA.

## THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The meaning of our life is bound up with the meaning of what we are. The materialists mistake for life that which is the limit of the spirit. People ignore the evidence for the real realm of their life. Because the visible and ever-changing world around them enchants their senses, and as such they cannot lift their eyes from the dale of earthly life to the peak of the soul. The *Kaicha-Upanishad* says : "The Self-existent One has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and therefore man sees the external and not the internal self. Only perchance, some wise man wishing for immortality turns his eyes inward and beholds the Self that resides within." The ordinary run of people need to know about the existence of the soul which alone can give their life meaning and direction. That the soul exists and that it is eternal can hardly be proved by means of arguments. Nor can it be defined in terms intelligible to common people. Besides, definitions are powerless to convince any man, however intelligent he may be, of the existence of the soul. Once in one of his private letters Leo Tolstoy pointed out the difficulty of definitions in this connection : "God and the Soul are known by me in the same way that I know infinity : not by means of defini-

tions, but in quite another way. Definitions only destroy for me that knowledge. Just as I know assuredly that there is an infinity of numbers, so do I know that there is a God, and that I have a soul. For me this knowledge is indubitable, simply because I am led to it unavoidably. To the certainty of the infinity of numbers, I am led by addition. To the certain knowledge of God I am led by the question, 'Whence come I?' To the knowledge of the soul I am led by the question, 'What am I?' And I know surely of the infinity of numbers, and of the existence of God, and of my soul, when I am led to the knowledge of them by these most simple questions."

The questions—"Whence come I?" and "What am I?" may be simple to those whose hearts are exceptionally pure and who are by nature spiritually inclined. But what is the way for the ordinary people who are engrossed in the fleeting pleasures of the world? The *Gita* advises such people to approach those persons who have realized the Truth. Those who have only theoretical knowledge of the soul are not meant here, but those who are seers and not mere thinkers. A sharp line of demarcation is always drawn between seers and thinkers. The seers are those who have realized the ultimate truths much more intensely than ordinary people realize

facts around them in their waking state. They are spiritual discoverers to whom the spiritual life is not merely book-learning but coming face to face with the truths that transcend the senses. The mere thinkers are more or less philosophers and metaphysicians who are occupied with subtle ratiocination and are satisfied with it. In one of his essays John Ruskin brings out the difference between the two classes of men : "The more I think of it I find this conclusion more impressed upon me, that the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion all in one."

Now, before an aspirant approaches a seer, he must possess certain qualities of the head and heart. The *Gîtâ* says : "Have the knowledge, by prostrating thyself, by questions, and by service; the wise, who have realized the Truth, will instruct thee in that knowledge." The first thing is humility, without which an aspirant can hardly be fit for acquiring self-knowledge. Sri Ramakrishna used to give some very apt examples showing the need of humility in one's spiritual life. The first example is that of rain-water; the second, that of the nest of the sky-lark; and the third, that of iron. Rain-water will never stand still on high ground, but will run to the lowest level. The nest of the sky-lark is on the earth below, but it soars high into the sky. Iron must be heated several times and hammered a hundred times before it becomes good steel. Then only it becomes fit to be made into a sharp sword and can be bent in any way one likes.

It is said that Sankarâchârya had a disciple who served him for a long time,

but he did not give him any instruction. Once when he was seated alone, he heard the foot-steps of some one coming behind. He called out, "Who is there?" The disciple answered, "It is I." Then Sankara said, "If the word 'I' is so dear to you, either expand it indefinitely or renounce it altogether."

The second qualification needed for an aspirant is questioning. One must have a strong yearning for the knowledge of the soul and put the question to a seer. As the child beseeches its mother with importunity, so an aspirant must be very earnest to know the Truth from a wise man.

The third qualification is service. Personal services to a preceptor constitute the holy company of a wise man and implicit obedience. Holy company sanctifies the heart of a neophyte, and implicit obedience trains his body and mind making them fit to receive the knowledge of the soul.

These three things, namely, humility, questioning, and service go to show that a spiritual aspirant cannot serve two masters in the very beginning of his career. The two masters are : the ego of the aspirant and the instructions of a genuine preceptor; the aspirant must choose the latter so long as his mind is not trained and his heart, purified.

In this connection it may be interesting to give an incident from the life of Jesus, which shows the spirit of a good teacher. One day Jesus said to his disciples : "Tell me, how do people understand my teaching?" And they answered : "Some think that you teach the same that John taught; others say that you teach what Isaiah taught; and others say your teaching is like Jeremiah's and that you are prophet."

"Yes," said Jesus, "but how do you understand my teaching?" And Simon Peter said : "I think you teach that the spirit of God lives in every man,



and that therefore every man is a son of God." Jesus said to him: "You are happy to have understood this, Simon. No man could have shown it to you, but you have understood it because God dwells in you. It is not I by my words that have shown it to you, but God, my Father, has Himself shown it to you." This is what Sri Ramakrishna used to say only in a different language. He used the similes of the gas-light and the rain-water. The gas-light shines unequally in different places. But the life of the light, namely, gas, comes from one common reservoir. So the true religious teachers of all countries and ages are like so many lamps, and through them is emitted the life of the spirit, flowing constantly from one source—God. Then, again, the rain-water, falling from the roof of a house, flows down to the ground through pipes having their mouths shaped like the head of a tiger or a bull, and appears to come out of a tiger's or a bull's mouth, but in reality it descends from the sky; even so the eternal truths that come out of the mouths of godly men are not uttered by those men themselves, but in fact, descend from the Kingdom of Heaven.

This is why the Hindu scriptures of all sects strictly enjoin the spiritual aspirants to look upon their preceptors as veritable representatives of the Divine Person.

## II

All the great teachers of the world have stressed the point that those who wish to follow their teachings must do so not in words but in deeds. Those who seek after the life of the spirit must be ready to give up any clinging to their bodily life and undergo infinite toils and troubles to save their true life. The best way to the spiritual life is to live in the world in a spirit of detachment.

Because attachment to the things of earthly life is the source of all our pleasures and pain. This does not mean an escape from the problems and dangers of our life in this world, nor does it mean a slinking away from our duties and responsibilities thereof.

Men get attached to the things other than those of the spirit due to their expectations. Therefore the *Gita* again and again asks the spiritual aspirants never to expect rewards of their actions. It points out that the secret of true success in one's spiritual endeavours consists in cultivating the virtue of unselfishness.

Once the disciples of Jesus said to him, "Your teaching is hard. Increase our belief that it will be well with us if we live as you teach us." Jesus understood that they wanted to know what reward they would win for living the life of the spirit, and he said to them, "Faith is not the belief in rewards; it is a clear understanding of what life is. If you clearly understand that your life is in the spirit of God, you will not expect any reward. A master does not thank a servant for doing his duty. And a servant, if he understands that he is a servant, is not offended at this, but does his work and knows that he will receive what is due to him. So you too should fulfil the will of the Father and understand that you are servants; and do not expect reward for doing your duty, but be content with what you get." Then Jesus told them a parable to show how seekers after the life of the spirit should live in the world: "A master planted a garden, and dug it and arranged it and did everything to make it yield as much fruit as possible. And he sent labourers into the garden to work, gather the fruit, and pay him according to agreement. And when the time came, the master sent a servant to

receive the payment; but the labourers had forgotten that the garden had not been planted and arranged by them and that they had come when it was ready; and they drove away the master's messenger empty-handed and lived in the garden as if they were the masters, not considering that the garden was not theirs and that they lived in it by permission of the master. Then the master sent his steward to remind the labourers that the payment was due, but they drove him away too. Then he sent his son. And the labourers thought that if they killed the son they would be left to themselves. So they killed him. What was the master to do? He could only turn out the labourers and send others in their place.

"The master is the Father; the garden is the world; the labourers are men; the payment is the life of the spirit; the messengers from the master are holy men who remind people that they should live, not for their bodies, but for the spirit. People who have gone astray imagine that life is given them for bodily welfare, and not for the fulfilment of the will of the Father, and they kill in themselves the life of the spirit and so lose their real life." This single parable of Jesus, self-explanatory as it is, speaks volumes to show clearly what the life of the spirit is and ought to be. The Father, spoken of in the parable, is the Supreme Soul and is the self-existent Principle dwelling in all beings and ruling them from within. The souls of all beings are just like the bubbles in the vast expanse of water. If a timber be thrown across the flowing Ganges, one side of the water will appear to be separated from the other. In the same manner, the ego makes the individual soul seem different from the Supreme Soul. In fact, there can be no division between them. To live in

the light of the Supreme Self constitutes the real life of the spirit.

### III

The Vedânta lays stress on three great requisites for the attainment of the life of the spirit. Firstly, a human body, since the human mind residing in the body is the nearest reflection of the Supreme Self. Novalis said: "There is but one temple in the Universe and that is the Body of Man. Nothing is holier than that high form. Bending before men is a reverence done to this Revelation in the Flesh. We touch Heaven when we lay our hand on a human body!" While commenting on this holy utterance, Thomas Carlyle remarked: "This sounds much like a mere flourish of rhetoric; but it is not so. If well meditated, it will turn out to be a scientific fact; the expression, in such words as can be had, of the actual truth of the thing. We are the miracle of miracles,—the great inscrutable mystery of God. We cannot understand it, we know not how to speak of it; but we may feel and know, if we like, that it is verily so." The mystics and seers of all times and countries bear testimony to the greatness of the human body as being the greatest sanctuary of the Supreme Soul.

The second requisite is the intense desire to be free from births, deaths, and so forth. This desire is the holiest of all human desires and is held by the Vedântists to be very essential in the life of the spirit. In this connection, Swami Vivekananda observes: "Though our means of realization vary according to the difference in sects and individuals,—though different individuals can lay claim to their special rights and means to gain knowledge, which vary according to their different stations in life,—yet it can be said in general without fear of contradiction, that



without this *Mumukshutvam*, realisation of God is impossible.”

The third requisite is the coming in direct contact with the great-souled men. This point we have already touched upon in our drawing a distinction between seers and thinkers.

#### IV

The life of the spirit is an art inasmuch as it aims at striving to attain the Beautiful which is latent in every man. In this sense, mysticism is an art which promises the unfoldment of

the Beautiful. The unfoldment of the Beautiful follows the art of life, because living in the plane of the spirit constitutes mysticism. Living the life in complete harmony with the transcendental order is the goal of the spiritual life. The true art of life culminates in the life of the spirit, the latter again consists in the conquest of nature by the spirit so that an aspirant may have the greatest chance of growing inwardly, and inner growth is the real growth of man.

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA\*

BY SWAMI PREMANANDA

In this incarnation the keynote of the Master's life is the complete absence of the expressions of supernatural powers or lordly qualities. In the life of all the previous divine incarnations we find, more or less, this expression of supernatural powers. As for instance, feeding five thousand people with only five loaves of bread, making rivers obey, going through the air, creating mango trees all on a sudden and feeding the fruits thereof to people, and the like. But this time we find their complete absence. It is a very interesting feature of this incarnation. Then again all the other incarnations “illumined the world with the lustre of their beauty”; but this time the physical beauty is conspicuous by its absence. Girish asked, “Why, sir, there's no beauty this time?” When the Master was engaged in spiritual practices, a unique lustre would emanate from his body, at which he implored the Divine Mother, “What need have I of physical beauty, Mother? Give me spiritual beauty.” Then most incarnations were great scholars, well-

versed in all the scriptures; but here is a different case. Sri Chaitanya defeated the all-conquering Pandits of the day and became famous as the foremost savant. What to speak of Śaṅkara-charya? Having learned all the Sâstras, Buddha despaired of Mukti (salvation). No doubt, he, like Sri Krishna, was the milker of all the *Upanishads*. But our Master? It is a wonderful affair—he could read and write somehow, that's all. But in philosophical discussions with him Pandits were confounded. How is that? There is a world of difference between understanding through discussion and knowing through direct perception or realization. How much knowledge of Benares can be gathered from a map? People hear him who had been to Benares. The Master had intuitive knowledge of even the innermost chamber of Truth. Once Swamiji was highly praising a man. The Master heard him a little and then passed his judgment on him, which, to the sur-

\* Translated from the original Bengali by Swami Satswarupananda.

prise of Swamiji, came out to be true. Our Master had a unique insight into things and persons.

Other Avatâras or incarnations have preached their philosophies and doctrines. But he has never done it himself openly. He would talk of them to those who had contracted a love for him and would go to him for the purpose. Sri Keshab wrote about him in his paper; at that he said, "If you do like that, don't come to me." One night I woke up at midnight and found him walking in the room in a semi-ecstatic state and making sounds of spitting and saying, "Don't, Mother, don't give me that hellish fame." It appeared to me, as if the Divine Mother was following him with a big basket of fame and saying, "My child, I have brought name and fame for you; do take them"; and the Master getting excited was walking about in the room and making sounds of spitting more and more loudly. And what signs of disgust did I notice in his face! He used to say, "Let the bud open, bees will come of themselves. Let character be formed, the world will be attracted by its beauty."

Everyone has said that his own doctrine is the best; and some have gone so far as to say that there is no salvation except through their religions. But our Master used to say, "There are infinite ways of reaching the Infinite and the doctrines are but the ways and not the goal." A blind man touched a leg of the elephant and at once jumped to the conclusion that the elephant is like a pillar; another felt its ear and concluded that it is like a winnowing fan. Both were right and again both of them were wrong. All quarrels were due to this. None felt the whole of the creature. The Master demonstrated it by his life that Truth can be reached through all the religions, which are but ways, and

that there is no necessity for quarrels—all religions are right. Then again he used to say, "The end of human life is to realize God." Failing to realize Him, life is all misery. So we must get Him—anyhow. What is the use of being conversant with all religions and doctrines? "You have come to eat mangoes, take them. What is the use of counting leaves and branches? What will it avail, except loss of energy?" Dry ratiocination, endless discussions as to whether the Lord has forms or not, whether rebirth is true or not! If you want to know what road leads to Benares, you must have faith in the words of those who have gone there. Then you will have to go there yourself and see things there with your own eyes. But instead of that if you shut yourself up in a room and make your brain dizzy with constantly thinking that Benares is such and such, you will have no real conception of the holy city. And what is that to me if there be any rebirth or not? My business is to realize God in this very life.

"If anyone knows the Âtman properly (i.e. realizes It), then the true significance of life is attained; if It is not known, then great indeed is the loss. Having realized the Âtman in each and all beings, the truly intelligent become immortal by transcending this world (of Avidyâ)". So to realize God in this very life is the aim of human existence. Doctrines and churches are no real helps in our spiritual life, rather they bring in fanaticism and retard progress. Know Him by knowing Whom all else is known. That's all.

"That by hearing which everything unheard is heard, by discussing which everything undiscussed is discussed and by truly knowing which everything unknown is truly known." Having realized God, having realized Âtman, the book of infinite knowledge opens to



one's view. For He who is knowledge itself is seated there in your heart. The Master became one with this Infinite Knowledge. Of what avail was book-learning to him?

He would say, "What is required is heart, intense hankering, sincere longing for Him. When, without Him, life would become quite unbearable, then alone, He will reveal Himself to such a soul." This is the essence of his teachings. During his Sâdhanâ days, when the day was drawing to its close and the sun was sinking down the western horizon he used to burst out in an agony of soul, "Oh! Thou art going away, what hast Thou done for me; I remain as the same unaltered man." And in this intensity of his agony he would draw out his tongue perforce and used to rub his face on the ground. This life appeared to him to be quite useless, because Âtman could not be realized. At the indefinite absence of the Lord, he experienced the burning pain of a venomous snake-bite. Just imagine the intensity of his dispassion; some grains somehow getting into the mass of his long matted hairs germinated, so oblivious was he of his body.

Other Avatâras were the incarnations representing particular ideals. Not that other ideals were absent in them; they had all the ideals in them but they publicly gave expression to particular ideals. Lord Gaurânga was the incarnation of Divine Love. He was love crystallized. So also Sankara was Knowledge itself, Buddha was the embodiment of renunciation, Sri Krishna was of selfless work. Sri Krishna synthesized all religions and philosophies. He showed that Karma, Yoga, Jnâna, and Bhakti were components of the great Sâdhanâ. To demonstrate this, he formed his life on the basis of selfless work. Selfless work purifies the heart,

and in the pure heart comes renunciation. With this renunciation came Buddha. Nothing he did for himself, not even for his own salvation; but everything for the good of others, for the suffering humanity. He would weep because he failed to discover the path to humanity's salvation. After renunciation comes Jnâna or Knowledge. Knowledge is followed by Love Divine and this Love was distributed broadcast by Lord Gauranga who was all love. But people came to think that all these paths were mutually contradictory. This apparent contradiction has been dispelled and all are brought under one grand synthesis by Sri Ramakrishna. The one grand austere Sâdhanâ of India throughout the ages has thus fructified, has thus reached its highest fulfilment in this ocean of synthesis, which is Sri Ramakrishna.

He was mercy incarnate. I cannot conceive the limit of his mercy. On his way to Benares on pilgrimage he, seeing the poverty and distress of the people, said to Mathur Babu, "Feed and clothe them well or else here stops my pilgrimage, I am not going to leave these people." Ill-treated and humiliated he did not give up showing mercy to all who came sorely distressed. If a day were about to pass without bringing in any new seeker after Truth, he would anxiously say, "How is it? No one has come today to seek Truth!" and cast longing looks over the road. Once Hazra took him to task and said, "Why are you mad after Naren, always enquiring about him? What necessity have you of him and his ilk? You are not of this earth. Why should you bother yourself about them?" Like a simple child he believed Hazra and thought he was wrong. Then he went to the Panchavati, the place where he had most of his visions. The Divine

Mother said to him, "What a fool are you! Have you come to the world for your own enjoyment? Shame!" Then replied the Master, "What do you talk, Mother? If for the good of humanity I am to suffer million times greater misery, that will I do most gladly." Six months hardly passed when he contracted cancer, he could not talk in whispers; he was suffering from hunger, but could not take anything. He felt no ease either in sitting or lying down. Day and night he felt a burning sensation all over his body. But in spite of all these terrible sufferings, this ocean of selfless mercy never stopped conferring his grace on whoever cared to come. This went on for a year and a half. If this be not crucifixion, I do not know what it is.

Now we find people whiling away time by sitting idle in the name of meditation and counting beads. That is surely of Tamas. He used to do much work. We have seen him with our own eyes doing the work of a gardener. Again he could not tolerate doing work in a slipshod manner. He himself used to do every work with a nice precision and gracefulness and taught us to follow him. He did all these, but how inward was he all the time! If any one of us got cheated when buying articles he ridiculed us and said, "I have asked you to be pious and not to be fools." We have heard him repeating many times, "Yoga is the skill in action."

He undertook all kinds of Sâdhanâ or spiritual practice and was blessed by realizing God through all forms of Religion. Seeing God in all creatures he was above all aversion or hatred. He was always beside himself with Divine Love, he was possessed with it, so to say. He had not the slightest desire of founding a sect or the like. What need has he

of a wall or a fencing—he, who has transcended the bondages of conventional religions, who has realized the Âtman, who is a paragon of Divine Love? Do you know when sects are created? It is when the heart is full of weakness, fear, and hatred. Know it for certain that the fate of our organization will be sealed when the idea of forming a sect will have crept into it. India has come to such a pass because of this sectarianism. The waters of little ponds and puddles become dirty but the flowing waters of rivers are never polluted. Beware of fanaticism. It must not enter our organization. "We are the followers of Ramakrishna", "There is no salvation except through Ramakrishna", "Hence you should worship Ramakrishna", "Ramakrishna is the greatest of Avatâras"—never lay hands on another's faith by such nonsensical talks.

He did not have the slightest touch of egotism in him. Only Mother made him keep the pious 'I'. We have seen with these eyes of ours the incarnation of perfect humility. Just hear, the Master took away the leaves, from which the beggars had taken food, on his own head. With his long locks he cleansed the filth of the servants of the temple. And all these, to drive away the least vestige of egotism from himself. Let this be an object-lesson to you to learn humility. One of his parables is: "The Guru asked the disciple: fetch the thing which you think is worse than you. The disciple resolved within his mind and finding nothing but filth worse than himself was about to pick up some filth when it rebuked him saying, 'Dont, don't touch me, you man; it is my contact with you that has made me so much degraded.' Hearing this, whatever little egotism the disciple had was gone. He came to know that there was nothing worse



than he." By telling such parables he used to teach us humility.

The scriptures speak of "absolutely unbroken continence". We would not have believed it, had we not seen the Master. By it, he came to have wonderful control over every nerve and muscle of his body. He suffered terrible pain from cancer, but when the time for washing it came, he simply asked us to wait a little and the next moment said, "Now wash". Then he felt no pain at all. Do you know how is that possible? The Yogins can at their will, have absolute control over the whole body; they can even stop the action of the heart. At their will they can take away Prâna or vital "energy" from any part of their body. Then that part of the body becomes dead to all practical purposes—it becomes dull to all sensations. If you drive a knife into it, it will not feel. These are not cock-and-bull stories, we have seen it with our own eyes.

But the incarnations, even though they always abide in the Self, keep a little portion of their mind on the body. Even that too they can take away whenever they like. But this is necessary, otherwise the body will cease to be. The Master used a simile: The copra gets separated from the rest of the cocoanut; but so long it is not broken open, it must be somewhere in touch with its outer covering.

He would say about the caste system: "The devotees form a caste by themselves; they need not observe the rigidity of the caste-system among themselves. He could take food from men of pure heart even though they were born of low castes; but could not do so from men of bad character, though born of high castes—so much so that he could not use a seat if it were spread by one of the latter class. Once he

took food of the same dish with another. The latter cried out, "Hold, sir, what are you doing? I have eaten today what the orthodox would not touch." The Master replied, "What does it matter? Your mind is pure." We have heard him say, "The man who takes the purest food sanctioned by the scriptures but has no love for the Lord and is worldly to a degree—that man's food is as good as pork and beef. And the food of a man who has devotion for the Lord and has faith in Him, even if that be not sanctioned by the scriptures, is as good as the purest food praised by the scriptures."

He was very strict regarding taking food from anyone and everyone. If anybody brought him food with any selfish desire, he could not take it. If the food were touched by a man of undesirable character or if a portion of it were given to some one else before it was offered to him, he would at once detect it and could not take such food. Again he would not allow devotees to take such food as would intensify desires or make for dullness. But he would add, "It would, however, not affect the Jnânins; still the novice in spiritual practices must be very particular about it."

The Master would poke fun at persons obsessed with a morbid mania for physical purity. He used to say that such persons, in their very attempts to keep themselves off from all impurity, live in a constant fear of being contaminated and thus get their minds enmeshed in impurity. So it is very difficult for them to think of God." From this you are not however to jump to the conclusion that by flinging all rules of cleanliness to the winds one realizes the highest spirituality.

The Master lived the life of complete consecration at the feet of the Divine Mother, and as he used to say, he gave

the power of attorney to the Mother. Girish Babu did it to the Master—he lay the whole burden of his spiritual progress on the Master's shoulders. It is a very difficult affair. One having the least touch of egotism cannot thus give a power of attorney to another. The Master used to say, "By this one is to live like a dry leaf at the mercy of the wind, or like kittens who remain wheresoever their mother pleases to keep them, sometimes on a bed, sometimes near the hearth, sometimes again on a heap of straw." He who can keep his devotion fixed like the pole-star in weal and woe, who in the midst of the most cruel heart-rending discharge of duty, can say calmly, "I do, O Lord, that which Thou residing in my heart, dost engage me in"—he alone has consecrated his all and taken shelter in Him; He too takes the responsibility of such a soul and frees him from all sins.

The Master encouraged us to read scriptures and books dealing with holy topics. He kept some books such as *Mukti O Tâhâr Sâdhan* with him and asked us to read them to him. This is because so long as we read or hear them, our minds dwell in Him. One cannot be meditating all day long. But then such studies are but secondary. What is of primary importance in spiritual life is the descent of His grace. "This Âtman is not to be attained by mere hearing or committing to memory the *Vedas* or (by their understanding) with the keen intellect. It is realized by him whom It chooses—to such this Âtman reveals Its real

nature." With the descent of His grace infinite knowledge opens before the mind; then books are redundant. There is a great difference between realization and mere book-learning. The Master would say, "So long as the southern wind does not blow, there is need for fan."

Pilgrimages stimulate holy thoughts. We are reminded of the Lord. It is true, but the Master used to say, "Whoever has not here (i.e. in the heart), has not there (i.e. in holy places); whoever has here, has there too." Holy men impart holiness to those places. It is the good-will of these great souls that the atmosphere of these places is filled with heavenly purity which soothes the contrite hearts. It is man who makes places holy, and not *vice versa*. Again with the increase of the current of evil thoughts there, their holiness decreases, just as easy conveyance has polluted the atmosphere of many places of pilgrimage. When their accessibility was very difficult, the devotees alone used to frequent them; but now whoever has money, goes there, whether for a change or for any other trivial reason.

So forget everything else and completely immerse yourselves in the thought of the Master. The Lord is not a subject for idle talks. He is to be realized. We must get Him anyhow. He must be made our own in this very life, at any cost. There is no other way to permanent peace for the suffering humanity except through God-realization. He alone is the solace of our burning heart.



# THE NATURE OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

BY PROF. JADUNATH SINHA, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

There is an elaborate treatment of the nature of æsthetic experience (rasa) in Sanskrit Poetics (Alankâra). Here we shall briefly refer to it. Visvanatha defines rasa as an æsthetic sentiment experienced by persons of taste as identical with the emotion of the person represented on the stage by an actor, or depicted in a drama and the like, owing to the predominance of sattva (purity) in them. It is, experienced as an emotion, entire or indivisible (akhanda), self-luminous (svaprakâsa), made up of cognition and bliss (ânanda-chinmaya), free from cognitions of other objects (vedyântarasparsasûnya), akin to the realization of Brahman (brahmâsvâdasahodara), and of the essence of transcendental wonder (lokottarachamatkâraprâna).<sup>1</sup>

(i) An æsthetic sentiment (rasa) is experienced as an indistinguishable mass of feelings, emotions, and sentiments. When it is actually experienced by a person he cannot distinguish the psychical elements involved in this unique and indivisible psychosis (akhanda).

(ii) An æsthetic experience (rasa) is not purely an affective state. It is a cognitive-affective experience since it is made up of cognition (chit) and bliss or joy (ânanda).

(iii) An æsthetic experience (rasa) is self-luminous (svaprakâsa) or self-aware. It is experienced by itself, and not by any other psychosis.<sup>2</sup> It contains an element of cognition (chit) which is

self-conscious. So the æsthetic experience is self-luminous.

(iv) An æsthetic experience (rasa) is free from the touch of cognitions of other objects (vedyântarasparsasûnya). When a person actually experiences an æsthetic sentiment he becomes unconscious of all other objects and is lost in his own æsthetic enjoyment.

(v) An æsthetic experience (rasa) is similar to the realization of Brahman (brahmâsvâdasahodara). The person of taste experiences an æsthetic sentiment even as the Yogin experiences Brahman.<sup>3</sup> Like the direct and immediate experience of Brahman the æsthetic experience is the direct and immediate experience of rasa free from cognitions of all other objects. In both the kinds of experience there is immediacy. Just as in intuitive realization of Brahman the subject is lost in Brahman, so in æsthetic enjoyment of rasa the subject is lost in the enjoyment. In both there is an ecstasy of joy (ânanda) in which the distinction of subject and object is lost.

(vi) Transcendental wonder constitutes the essence of an æsthetic experience (rasa). It is different from the ordinary sentiment or permanent emotional disposition of wonder (vismaya). It is extraordinary or transcendental (alaukika) in character because it is felt by the appreciative spectator (sâmâjika) who identifies himself with the person whose emotion is represented by the actor on the stage. Wonder is of the nature of expansion of the mind (chittavistâra). It always

<sup>1</sup> Sâhityadarpana (Jivânanda), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Sâhityadarpanavivriti, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Sâhityadarpana, p. 52.

constitutes the core or essence of an æsthetic sentiment. Only it is not ordinary surprise but extraordinary wonder.<sup>4</sup> Dr. S. K. De says, "This *châmatkâra* which has been compared to the 'wonder-spirit' of the modern critics, is described by Visvanâtha as a kind of expanding of the mind, of which another name is 'surprise', implying that the marvellous always underlies the *rasa*."<sup>5</sup>

(vii) An æsthetic sentiment is experienced when *rajas* (energy) and *tamas* (inertia) of the mind are suppressed, and its *sattva* (purity or essence) predominates over them. *Rajas* causes restlessness. *Tamas* induces unconsciousness. *Sattva* manifests conscious experience.

(viii) An æsthetic experience is distinctive in character. It is different from conation (*kriti*) and cognition (*jñapti*). It is a certain function of the mind called *svâdana* or realization.<sup>6</sup> *Rasa* is of the nature of realization or actual æsthetic experience (*âsvâda*). It is nothing but this realization.<sup>7</sup> It is chiefly an emotional experience.

#### VASANA—A CONDITION OF AESTHETIC ENJOYMENT

Visvanâtha points out that there can be no æsthetic enjoyment without the latent impressions (*vâsanâ*) or emotional dispositions like love, anger, and the like.<sup>8</sup> *Vâsanâ* is a particular psychical disposition<sup>9</sup> or emotional complex.<sup>10</sup> These *vâsanâs*, either innate (*prâktana*) or acquired (*idânîntana*), are conditions

of æsthetic enjoyment. The philosophers are incapable of æsthetic enjoyment since they are devoid of innate emotional dispositions (*vâsanâ*). Some affectionate persons also are incapable of æsthetic enjoyment since they are devoid of acquired emotional dispositions (*vâsanâ*).<sup>11</sup> Dharmadatta has truly said: "Only appreciative persons of taste endowed with emotional dispositions can experience æsthetic emotions. Those persons who are devoid of these dispositions (*vâsanâ*) are as good as the wood, the wall, and the stone in the theatre hall."<sup>12</sup> They are dead to all æsthetic enjoyment. Nothing can evoke æsthetic emotions in them. There must be an innate capacity for æsthetic enjoyment. It cannot be created but evoked.

#### THE PRAMATRI OF THE RASA—THE EXPERIENCER OF AESTHETIC SENTIMENTS

Only persons of æsthetic taste are the experiencers (*pramâtri*) of æsthetic sentiments (*rasa*). Just as the ecstatic bliss of realization of God is given only to the Yogins or adepts in divine contemplation, so the ecstatic joy of æsthetic enjoyment is vouchsafed only to persons of taste on account of their accumulated merits.<sup>13</sup> Persons devoid of æsthetic taste are incapable of æsthetic enjoyment.

#### THE PRAMANA OF THE RASA—THE PROOF OF AESTHETIC SENTIMENTS

Visvanâtha points out that an æsthetic sentiment (*rasa*) springs from the bliss of the Self (*âtman*) when it realizes the meaning of poetry and enjoys it. It is not distinct from this æsthetic enjoyment.<sup>14</sup> It can never be made known to others (*jñâpya*) because it can

<sup>4</sup> *Sâhityadarpana*, p. 51.

<sup>5</sup> *The Theory of Rasa in Sanskrit Poetics*, Sir Asutosh Silver Jubilee Volumes, Vol. III, Calcutta, 1925, p. 234.

<sup>6</sup> *Sâhityadarpana*, p. 53.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> A. B. Keith: *The Sanskrit Drama*, 1924, p. 818.

<sup>11</sup> *Sâhityadarpana*, p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 56.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52.



never exist apart from its being experienced by a person of taste.<sup>15</sup> It is incapable of proof because its existence is inseparable from its experience. The only proof (pramâna) of its existence is its experience by persons of æsthetic taste.<sup>16</sup> In other words, æsthetic enjoyment by appreciative persons is its own proof. It cannot be proved by any other kind of knowledge or experience. It is *sui generis*. It is unique and underived.

The proof of an æsthetic sentiment (rasa) is charvanâ or æsthetic enjoyment. It is not different from charvanâ. It is its own proof. Charvanâ, svâda, and âsvâda are synonymous terms. They mean actual enjoyment of an æsthetic emotion. An æsthetic emotion (rasa) is identical with its actual enjoyment (âsvâda). It is an actual concrete emotion. It is not a capacity for experiencing an æsthetic emotion. Nor is it a latent impression (vâsanâ) or emotional disposition. It is a concrete actualized emotional disposition felt by a person of taste as an æsthetic emotion.<sup>17</sup>

#### VYAPARA—THE ACTIVITY DIRECTLY PRODUCING ÆSTHETIC EMOTIONS

Visvanâtha holds that the various conditions which produce an æsthetic emotion in a person of taste (sâmâjika) can do it only through an activity (vyâpâra) which is known as sympathetic identification (sâdhâranîkriti). The appreciative spectator experiences the emotions which were actually experienced long ago who are represented on the stage by actors owing to the peculiar power (prabhâva) of the activity of the various conditions of æsthetic experience (vibhâva or determinant cause

etc.) which is called sympathy (sâdhâranîkriti). This sympathy enables him to identify himself with the represented persons and experience the same emotions in himself. Sympathetic identification produced by various conditions of æsthetic experience (vibhâva etc.) in the appreciative spectator of the dramatic performance enables him to experience the very same emotions of the persons represented transformed into transcendental (alaukika) æsthetic sentiments (rasa) the essence of which is a thrill of joy and wonder. If the conditions of æsthetic enjoyment fail to produce this sympathetic identification in the spectator they can never evoke an æsthetic emotion in him. There must be an illusory sense of identity (sâdhâranîkriti), a feeling of 'at-one-ment', projection and identification on account of which the pramâtri or experiencer feels an æsthetic emotion in himself as identical with the emotion of the person represented on the stage.<sup>18</sup> The permanent emotional dispositions or sentiments of energy (utsâha), love (rati), and the like are evoked in the appreciative spectator owing to this illusory sense of identity and they are experienced by him as æsthetic sentiments.<sup>19</sup>

In æsthetic enjoyment there is a peculiar sense of make-belief on account of which the emotion felt by the spectator is realized as his own and yet not quite his own, and as another's and yet not quite another's.<sup>20</sup> In this condition of the mind there is not a complete identification but an illusory sense of identification which is vaguely felt as illusory at the time. This is the characteristic of 'make-belief'.

<sup>15</sup> Sâhityadarpana, p. 61.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 54.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 64.

<sup>18</sup> Sâhityadarpana, p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p. 57.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 57.

# BENEVOLENCE

(DIARY LEAVES)

BY PROF. NICHOLAS DE ROERICH

When one remembers Bhagawân Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and all the leaders of the Ramakrishna Mission and its centres, there always comes to mind the concept of Benevolence. Benevolence is a powerful word. Both its constituent parts presuppose an accumulation of blissful force. *Bene* means the Good in its entire constructive sense. *Volence*, volition, is the power of thought and will. And when this immense high might is directed towards the upliftment of humanity, it represents the true essence of the Sri Ramakrishna movement. In this movement there is revealed so much of direct self-sacrificing labour. Precisely there is a constant benefaction, untiringly and gloriously penetrating into the hearts.

All these good words are easily pronounced but for the ordinary person it is not easy to manifest them in life. The very thought, the art of thinking, requires education and training. And only in the process of good-doing does Benevolence receive its vital significance. In the same good-doing is created a better future. This is not a truism, on the contrary, at present all nations should exercise the art of thinking in this direction. Let us beware that somewhere instead of benefaction there should not appear the ugly grimace of malefaction.

People sometimes think about the future, yet very often it does not enter at all into vital deliberations. Indeed, it is not entirely within human forces to determine the future, but each one

should strive for it with all his consciousness. And not to a beclouded future should one aspire but to precisely a better future. In this striving will already be the pledge of success.

On days of solemnity prayer is uplifted about the future. No misty abstractions does it affirm. In it are expressed three principles; realization of that which is most Lofty, building of world peace, and benevolence, as the fundamentals of existence. Without these three bases, construction is impossible; yet they must not be promised abstractly, but in their full and indefer-able reality. It would seem that the third mentioned principle ought to be the most ordinary feature of every day life. Only benevolence! Only good-will and altruism! For whom? Why, for people themselves. For those with whom the task has been set to pass over this field of life.

It is a fact that no deep studies and instructions are needed for benevolence. It would seem that it is already presupposed at each human encounter. Can it be possible to draw near to any human being without fundamental good-will? How, is it possible to meet the neighbour with hatred or suspicion, even with plotted villainy? Where then, in what sort of Covenants, written or unwritten, have malice and suspicion been ordained?

“Man is a wolf to man”. Surely this is one of the most malignant aphorisms. For, so much results from auto-suggestion. If one hears from the cradle about good, then it too will surely



remain a guiding principle. Even all the confusions of corrupted life will not eradicate the concept of good. Where man has been accustomed to live in good, there he values all the remarkable significance of the word benevolence. Surely this word is very imperative. Volition, formulated will . . . this is already something accomplished, done!

Volition cannot be only instinctive. It is promoted in full consciousness, in full responsibility. Perhaps each state council ought to be opened with the important question: "Is there benevolence?" And he who remains silent should take no part. It will probably be said that precisely the malicious will themselves cry out about benevolence. And here too an imprint of the human radiations would show the truth.

Heart radiations will show the true feelings, without the mask of insincerity. How mottled will be the radiations of the false, the insincere! The man who has not pondered upon the deep significance of benevolence will not often understand in general what is being spoken about here! Why underline words known to all and which moreover have never improved anything? Of course such monstrous opinions are possible.

Not seldom a vendor cries out something very useful, absolutely without thinking about the meaning of the words uttered by him. Does a scribe often know the contents of what he has copied? Sometimes even one who reads aloud to another thus frees himself, as it were, from understanding of what he reads. In such a manner, often the most valuable and urgent considerations become meaningless words.

Is a better future possible without benevolence, without benevolence in all its solemnly imperative meaning? What sort of peace will there be on earth without benevolence? And

where will be the "glory in the highest" without profound and unceasing desire for good?

A better future. You must be better today than yesterday. If there is no longing for this, then surely from that which is most important and already ordained only a negligible fraction remains. All the great signs may be in readiness. But if there be no desire for the sake of good to follow them, then what part of them will be perceptibly carried out? Who then has the right to vitiate or belittle that which has been composed by great paths? Surely this is no empty dreaming but the responsibility of the messenger.

Even a simple postman, in twilight and in darkness proceeds with caution in order not to stumble, in order that a branch may not lash him in the eye, in order to avoid wild beasts. Yet, he bears someone else's letter about which he knows nothing. When, then, man thinks about the future, when he takes into consideration all its conditions and all good wishes, how much more strivingly and carefully does he proceed, ready and alert. He proceeds vigilant and imbued with feeling. He makes haste in order not to pilfer an ordained hour, and in his heart sound glory in the Highest, and peace on earth, and benevolence for his neighbour.

Benevolence needs to be taught. Peace needs to be established. With every palpitation of the heart one should be enraptured by glory in the Highest!

Examples of the creation of a better future may be drawn from various domains. One of them has remained in memory from early school years.

We were all tremendously impressed by the story of Schliemann—the noted investigator of Troy. We were all entranced by how he from early years set

himself to the task of future researches and how he began to prepare himself in all branches of learning. How he tenaciously enriched himself with knowledge, yet at the same time and just as perseveringly, he amassed a fortune. Of course he maturely thought out all the resources which he would need.

After many years of conscious labour, he brought to science his precious offering, and remained the forefather of many brilliant investigators coming after him. One can imagine how in his time the business men shrugged their shoulders at the scholarly tasks of Schliemann. Likewise one can see how other scholars probably not once labelled him as an amateur, and made fun of his undertakings. Yet with originality and persistence he composed his own scientific future.

That which for another would have been attainment was for Schliemann only a means which had an applied relative value. In so many years of conscious labour is a large share of selflessness.

One can find in the history of the world many examples of such self-

sacrificing attainments. But why dig in ancient annals, when in our age we have the glorious examples of the lives of Bhagawân Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. In them is manifested the highest blissful benefaction and a lionine striving into a better future. And in what simple all-penetrating words were expressed their outlines of spiritual unfoldment. May everyone be blessed, who can speak of the Good in simple words. All the heaps of evil thoughts have deviated humanity from simplicity and constructive work. Every day people are accustomed to witness destructions and murders. It is shocking with what indifference people imbue the abhorrent stories, which altogether do not befit humanity. With every day these horrors and cruel-heartedness grow. Every place, where the word Benevolence is affirmed, becomes a true shrine and stronghold of a better future.

Thus again let us recall the beautiful word Benevolence. Verily, the conscious creators of a better future are filled with true Benevolence.

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## RICHARD MULCASTER AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

BY DR. DEBENDRA CHANDRA DAS GUPTA, M.A., ED.D. (California)

Richard Mulcaster, an Englishman, lived about 1582 to 1611 A.D. Scion of an ancient and honourable border family he was educated at Eton, Cambridge, and Oxford. He was appointed the first Headmaster of the famous Merchant Taylor's School in London. Here he carried on a successful work for twenty-five years. Later he was made Headmaster of the equally

famous St. Paul's School, in which position he continued for upwards of twelve years or until a few years before his death. Due to his work in these schools and to his educational writings Mulcaster came to be regarded as one of the foremost educators of his day.

Mulcaster's fame as a writer rests chiefly on two educational works the first of which, his *Positions*, appeared



in 1581, and the second, the *Elementarie*, was published in the following year. The former work is a comprehensive treatment of the principles which Mulcaster believed to be fundamental to an efficient educational progress. The latter deals with the correct use of the English language and constitutes an ardent plea for the use of the vernacular as opposed to a slavish adherence to Latin. "I honour the Latin tongue," he wrote, "but I worship English. I wish everything were in our tongue."<sup>1</sup>

In 1903 Mulcaster's educational writings were collected, arranged, and published in Glasgow by James Oliphant. This publication has proved an invaluable aid in the present study of Mulcaster's views with respect to vocational education.

Before passing to an account of Mulcaster's educational philosophy with respect to vocational education it may be well to state briefly something of his attitude toward the educational ideals and practices in vogue in his day. The age in which Mulcaster lived was characterized by the Renaissance movement in its decadent form. The formalized conception of education and life which had developed neglected the child and emphasized subject-matter. It was the custom among school-masters to exalt the classics. They sought to adjust school children to the curricula rather than the curricula to the children. It was against this practice that Mulcaster revolted with all the fervour of a crusader. He considered that before all else there should be respect for the individuality of the child on the part of both parents and teachers. He believed that education should be adjusted to the natural growth of the minds of children.

Although he revolted against the practices of the formalized Renaissance, Mulcaster was still in full accord with the ideals of humanism. He adhered to the conviction of other scholars of the time that the purpose of education was (1) to supply the commonwealth with a limited number of thoroughly trained gentlemen who should be the administrators of law and order in the state, and (2) to train by means of the apprenticeship method the poorer classes in the necessary trades and industries. In both the cases the ultimate end in view was the preservation of the state and the maintenance of the existing social and political order. This theory reminds one of the educational philosophy of Plato. Like Plato, Mulcaster attempted to insure the preservation of a political and social autocracy. To accomplish this he proposed to give the gentlemen or philosophers a thorough training in the liberal arts, and to give the labouring classes a training in trade and industry after they had obtained some familiarity with the three R's.

Concerning Mulcaster's theory of vocational education one may say that in general it is a continuation of the philosophy of Vives. Mulcaster and Vives both aimed at preserving the commonwealth through giving the upper classes a thorough, liberal and professional training. Both accepted individual differences in mental ability and wealth as the criteria for determining the type of education to be imparted. However, Mulcaster differed from Vives in that he made no provision for the informal training of gentlemen in a knowledge of the trade and industrial occupations as a part of their liberal education. Furthermore, Mulcaster made no provision for highly gifted poor people proceeding to the higher callings such as teaching and the ministry.

<sup>1</sup> James Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, pp. 183-184.

From this general statement of Mulcaster's educational philosophy in its relation to the educational situation of his day we may now pass to a consideration of certain educational principles advocated by Mulcaster which relate directly or indirectly to vocational education. In this connection it is necessary to note first the paramount importance he assigns to the state. Mulcaster regarded the interest of the individual citizen as always subordinate to the interest of the state. He believed that the individual existed for the state. Hence the education of children should be made subservient to the interest of the state. "Everyone," he wrote, "desires to have his child learned, yet for all that every parent must bear in mind that he is more bound to his country than to his child."<sup>2</sup> Even the number of persons to be educated was to be determined by the needs and demands of the state. If there should be an excess of learned men it would lead to discontent and perhaps to political uprisings. Therefore for the sake of the peace and safety of the state there must never be too large a number of persons allowed to proceed beyond the elementary stages of education: "I consider that it is a burden to a commonwealth on the one hand to have too many learned, just as it is a loss on the other hand to have too few, and that it is important to have knowledge and intelligence well adapted to the station in life, as, if these are misplaced, it may lead to disquiet and sedition."<sup>3</sup>

With this principle of the supremacy of the state in mind Mulcaster made the preservation of the state, the ultimate purpose of all education, vocation-

al and cultural alike. Gentlemen were to receive a training in the liberal arts and professions not only for honour and credit for themselves but also for the purpose of serving the state. Similarly, the common people would be moved by economic necessity to gain such education as would enable them to support themselves, and in thus preserving themselves they would be contributing to the preservation of the state. Concerning this Mulcaster said, "As I have already said, I know no better training for the gentleman than that which is provided under the proper conditions for the ordinary man; but while the latter learns first for necessity, afterwards for advancement, the greater personages ought to study for their credit and honour as well. For, what are gentlemanly accomplishments, if these be not—to read, to write, to draw, to sing, to play, to have language and learning, health and activity, nay, even to profess divinity, law, medicine or any other worthy occupation? These things a gentleman hath most leisure to acquire, and not being too much under the spur of necessity he can practise them with uprightness."<sup>4</sup> And again, "I do wish then that well-disposed young gentlemen would be pleased to betake themselves betimes to some kind of learning that is indeed liberal, seeing that their circumstances protect them from interested motives, and enable them to serve their country honourably."<sup>5</sup> According to Mulcaster then the education of a citizen, whether the gentleman philosopher or the commoner, was to be undertaken with a view to the preservation of the state.

Although Mulcaster limited the opportunities for professional and higher education to the aristocratic few, he

<sup>2</sup> James Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> James Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.



recommended that opportunities for elementary education should be provided for all classes of people, poor or rich, and for both sexes. He considered an acquaintance with the rudiments of the tool as an essential preparation for one's life work whether one be a peasant or noble. "Children, therefore, are to be trained up in the elementary school, for helping forward the abilities of the mind, in these four things, as recommended to us both by reason and custom: Reading, writing, drawing, and music.

Now, what quality of learning is there, deserving of any praise, that does not fall within this elementary course, or is not furthered by it, whether it be connected with the higher professions, or occupations of lower rank, or the necessary trades of common life?"<sup>6</sup> Moreover he was an ardent advocate of education for women, cultural, professional or home economics education according to social rank and need.

Mulcaster's theory of vocational education is seen most clearly in those passages in which he touched upon the various social aspects of education. For example, he maintained that each person was in duty bound to be a self-respecting and active member of society. He held also that each person had a right to earn a decent living at some trade. Moreover, each person, poor as well as rich, was endowed with some ability to do this, and it was the duty of the commonwealth to give to each person such opportunity as his ability could profit by. However, the poor people were to consider their first duty to be loyal to their country and were not to be too ambitious for themselves. Because they possessed ability was no reason why they should not be satisfied with their humble

position. A proper performance of even the humblest trades would require ability. "As for pitying the poor, ye need not wish a beggar to become a prince, though ye allow him a penny and pity his necessities. If he is poor provide for him, that he may live by trade, but let him not idle. Has he talent? Well, are artificers fools? And do not all trades require ability? But is he very likely to distinguish himself in learning? I do not reject him, he has his chances of being provided a public help in common patronage. But he does not do well to oppose his own particular will against the public good; let his country think enough of him, but let him beware of thinking too much of himself. Because God has often shown himself bountiful in conferring talent on the poorer sort, that does not prove that he has not bestowed great gifts on some of the upper class, though they may have failed to use them. The commonwealth, it is urged, must be prepared to give scope for ability, in whatever class it may be found."<sup>7</sup> In all of this Mulcaster was thinking of vocational education as something to be based upon the rigid caste system of his own time. He made social rank the primary criterion in occupational selection and ability a secondary one. The poor man, even though he had great ability, must remain forever in his humble status and was expected to be content with earning the bare necessities of life by means of some trade. He had a right to expect the state to supply the opportunity for doing this, but more than this he must not hope for. In the elementary schools he should secure a command of the fundamental tools of knowledge, but beyond this his education would consist of learning a trade under the apprenticeship system.

<sup>6</sup> James Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, pp. 42-44.

<sup>7</sup> James Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, pp. 22-23.

The higher places in the state were reserved for the members of the aristocratic classes. In order that these might become efficient leaders in society they were to receive a thorough training in languages, mathematics, and philosophy, after which a further training in some specific profession such as medicine, law or divinity, might be undertaken. He who will be perfect in his profession ought at least to have a contemplative knowledge of all that goes before.

From the foregoing remarks it is evident that Mulcaster had little to add to the theories of vocational education already developed by the educators of his time. He was a firm believer in the

political and social feudalism prevailing in England in the sixteenth century and advocated a system of education that would preserve this. Each person was to receive an education suited to his social rank. Mental ability was to be taken into consideration, but it was not to be the plea for any one to overstep the bounds of his caste. Gentlemen were to be trained in the professions, and the commoners in the trades. In all cases the welfare of the state was the supreme end in view, and the individual must be subordinated to that. It was, however, the duty of the state to educate all members of the commonwealth, whether rich or poor, according to their rank and ability.

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## ON CONTEMPLATING THE PICTURE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY DOROTHY KRUGER

This is the wonder : that a picture can  
Reveal such Godly peace, it lifts a man  
From bestial grovelling to eagle flight  
In search of Truth. That mirrored liquid light,  
Some choose to call a smile, can burn to ash  
The ageless growth of greed, in such a flash  
It is unseen, and so free man of all  
The weight of living, too, is wonderful.  
But that a likeness can so touch a heart,  
Under the brooding mind a counterpart  
Evolves, to move outside oneself and be  
A living Presence, there eternally,  
Who is all things to man, who fills each need—  
This is of wonders, wonderful indeed.

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# UNITY IN LIFE

BY HARIPADA GHOSAL, VIDYABINODE, M.A., M.R.A.S.

“What is Truth?” asked the jesting Pilate and would not stay for an answer, —Bacon writes in his essay on Truth.

This great question assails the mind of every man worth the name and disturbs from time to time the placid contentment of his mind. But such questions come and go, and the busy man of the world, distracted by mundane thoughts, has no time to wait and see where lies the golden key that opens the beautiful palace where Truth shines enthroned on its high pedestal.

Man has been on this great quest from time immemorial, and, ever since the dawn of recorded history, seekers have not been wanting to start on the great voyage. In some cases the voyage has ended in disasters and shipwrecks, but in others, it has landed ardent souls in El Dorado—the land of silver and gold, making posterity heirs of rich spoils, opening up new vistas before humanity and expanding its outlook on life and thought and ideas.

It is an admitted fact that the race-mind and race-culture of India attained a high pitch of excellence at a time when other races were grovelling in the darkness of ignorance. But even in India this culture was not brought into being in a day. It has a background of gradual growth and development through stages. This evolutionary process in the advancement of ideas cannot be rebutted, if we look on it with the eye of a historian, though there are others of the orthodox school whose Chauvinistic ideas lead them to contradict such a view.

In reply to the question which Pilate put two thousand years ago, the defini-

tion of the author of *Panchadashi* may be put forward in the apothegm : सत्यत्वं वाचराहित्यं—that which knows no negation is Truth. Truth or Absolute Truth is above any possibility of being ever contradicted. Appearance is not the ultimate reality, for appearance is and is not. Yet it can be given an amount of being or reality as it exists in relation to its beholder. As the appearance can be thought away, it cannot be called Absolute Truth. But we cannot think away Being or Existence in all states and circumstances, at all times and in all conditions. So Being or Existence is Truth. And as Existence is Consciousness, Truth is Consciousness. It excludes all relativity, for relativity presupposes subjectivity and objectivity.

The philosophic minds of India soared high in the sphere of transcendentalism and instead of flapping their wings in the empty void of the high elemental region of thought, have brought down ideas of ultra-mundane existence.

The permanence of Indian civilization through the disintegrating and convulsing forces of foreign invasions, raids, and domination, which have been India's sad lot for more than one thousand years, is due to the fact that she recognized, in the heyday of her metaphysical speculation, this great Truth—this essential unity of Man, God, and the World in all departments of life. Her seers never segregated society from religion, religion from philosophy, and philosophy from life. Religion, philosophy, and life were not regarded as separate departments but were harmonized with one another, and fused into Unity which lies at the root of all our experience.

The Vedânta preaches Unity, and the attainment of this sense of Unity is the *summum bonum* of life. This teaching of the most sublime philosophy in the world runs through all strata of the Hindu society. It has saved the nation from catastrophes in the most trying circumstances in its history. It has enabled her to keep her soul unsoiled and undefiled in the midst of military aggressions and revolutionary changes in her political history. Nothing has been able to crush it. The super-imposition of an alien civilization and culture by force of arms has been resisted in spite of temporary lapses. It has assimilated and absorbed races and cultures which, ladled in the mighty cauldron of Hindu culture, have been metamorphosed into something "rich and strange."

Society or state is not a mere conglomeration of independent units through ties of material interests as taught by our political historians and materialistic sociologists. If communities and men are considered to be mechanically united by material ties of self-interest, they are sure to be disunited and disintegrated when these artificial bonds are snapped asunder, when that loose cement of self-interest is slackened. But the higher pantheism of Vedânta has bridged the gulf between God, the soul, and the world by teaching that Âtman, through all the temporary aberrations of our earthly existence, is the sole Reality that upholds them all, sustains them all, and merges them all into one great Unity which is Life. Here science and religion do not stand apart, religion and philosophy are not antagonistic. Here the state and the individual are not categorical imperatives defying unification, but shake hands on the high table-land of thought, of the Ideal, where God or Bliss is the ultimate principle of life itself.

The recognition of this ultimate principle of life, of Unity, of Truth, prevents any conflict between science, philosophy, and religion on the one hand, and the state, the society, and the individual on the other. The satisfactory solution of these apparently conflicting entities is the greatest contribution of India's most sublime philosophy of the Vedânta to the world. That the whole world of men and things is upheld by the knowing subject—the Âtman in us, that the selfhood of man is identical with the selfhood of God, that the existence of the object is only in relation to the subject, have been delineated in endless dissertations with all the wealth of similes and anecdotes in the Upanishads and with marvellous logical acumen and metaphysical insight in the system of the Vedânta. Here science, philosophy, and religion have not been departmentalized into water-tight compartments as in the West. For the Vedânta is as much science as it is philosophy and religion, but in the West, philosophy is busy with speculations, and religion has dwindled into theology.

Modern science is in search for unity, but this sense of unity is far from being realized in the affairs of men. But it is alone in the Vedânta that the demands of the head are as much fulfilled as the requirements of the heart. The keen razor of discrimination dissects and analyses the apparent incongruities in the phantasmagoric raree-show of the world. It differentiates between a God of popular religions and the all-embracing Âtman or Self. The theistic conception of God who receives our worship and adoration is contradistinguished from the Self—the ultimate religious experience—of a truly wise man, where the object of knowledge, the subject of knowledge and knowledge itself—where the known, the



thing to be known and knowledge—the seer, the sight, and the object of sight—are fused into Absolute Unity; where all discordant notes and jarring sounds are merged into one universal harmony without restraint, without beginning, and without end.

It has been said that a man may gain the whole world but may lose his own soul. So Maitreyi asked her husband, “What shall I do with all these riches?” What good is it for a man if he religiously avoids and is afraid of advancing a step further and transcending the last duality? How useless is human life, if a man fails to attain the Anandam, the Immortal, the Blissful, if he does not feel a deep longing for deliverance, if his heart does not become the flute in the hands of the Master Musician of the universe?

This *Âtman* or the Self is a positive experience and knows no contradiction. It is not non-existence, nor annihilation, nor voidness. It is felt in the heart-cave. It is too deep, too profound for words. The necessity and universality of the conception—its all-embracing nature provides no room for discrepancies. It is the Truth—the whole truth and nothing but the Truth. It is wholeness, for Truth is wholeness. It is identical with Itself. It has no parts. All its parts are harmonious with Itself. Thus the theistic conception of a personal God viewed in this light falls below the standard, and though it may be of some use from the utilitarian standpoint for satisfying the apparent needs of suffering humanity, it lacks a positive background of rational explanation for the proper solution of this great mystery of life.

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## FRAY FRANCISCO DE OSUNA AND HIS “THIRD SPIRITUAL ALPHABET”

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

Fray Francisco de Osuna, the Franciscan monk, who like Diego de Estella and many of his contemporaries took his name from the place of his birth, is one of the outstanding figures of Spanish mysticism. Scarcely anything is known of his life. He is believed to have died about the year 1540, the date of his birth being unknown. Part of his life was spent in France, in Paris and also probably in Toulouse. Like most of the Spanish mystics he did all he could to popularize the practical aspects and means of mystic theology, and this even to such a degree that Juan de Aila warned people against studying his “Third Spiritual Alphabet”, saying, “One should not permit the third part

to be generally read, for it will harm people, tending, as it does, to suppress all thoughts entirely, and this is not suited to everybody.”

In spite of this warning the success of the “Third Alphabet” was very great during his days and later. It contains so many practical hints and such sound advice for the beginner that many an aspirant might study it with considerable profit even in these modern days of ours if it were better known in Spain and abroad, and more readily available for people not familiar with the Spanish language.

It is interesting and at the same time highly significant that the great Spanish mystic and reformer St. Teresa took this

book as her spiritual director, recognizing it to be a splendid introduction to the practice of contemplation and true recollection, one in which she found better advice than that given her by any of her confessors. She herself wrote the following lines about the effect, the study of this book had on her :—

“When I was on my way to Becedas, my uncle, who lived at Hortigosa-Farm about three miles distant from the town of Avila, gave me a book which is called ‘Third Alphabet’, dealing with the teaching of recollected prayer. But having read so many good books in my first year (i.e., of her novitiate) I did not wish to read more because of the harm they had done to me. Yet I did not know to proceed in this prayer and how to recollect myself. So I was very glad of it and determined to follow that path with all my strength. And the Lord having granted me the gift of tears and a liking for reading, I began to have periods of solitude and to confess frequently and to begin following that path having the book as my teacher, for I did not find a teacher, i.e., a confessor, who was able to understand me.”

The copy of the “Third Alphabet” that was given to St. Teresa can still be seen in the Monastery of San Jose de Avila.

Fray Francisco de Osuna wrote six treatises on the same subject which were published between 1525 and 1554, the last two after his death. Of these the “Third Alphabet” is of the greatest interest. It was published at Toledo in the year 1527. The author himself says about its contents :—

“In the Alphabet alone, without the commentary, the doctrine of recollection is abbreviated with great lucidity according to the opinion of men highly practised therein, but in the commentary you will find many things which

could not be explained in the brevity of the text itself.”

The text of the Alphabet is found in the headings or titles of the different chapters, using a letter of the Spanish alphabet for the beginning of each. The commentary is the explanation the author gives, and forms the major and most important portion of the work.

Although the whole book is written with a view to teach the earnest devotee the way to real contemplation, the subject, as such, is only fully taken up from the sixth treatise onward.

Fray Francisco de Osuna was a mystical writer who had personally practised what he wrote. Being a true son of his country and race, he was not given to theoretical speculations or fine theological distinctions, nor did he care for them. And this fact gives a greater value to his instructions. It must have been the inner warmth, this actual experience, as opposed to the empty words of those writers who only refer to the experiences of others, that had so marvellous and lasting an effect on the mind of St. Teresa, revealing to her things and truths of spiritual life which she had never thought of before.

Spanish mysticism has ever been eminently practical, and that is one of the reasons why even today those who really seek union with the Divine or some real progress in spiritual life can still profit by the hints and suggestions given in the works of its most prominent representatives. There is no doubt that this “Third Alphabet” by Osuna is one of the most important practical treatises on the mystic path ever published in Spain and even in the rest of Europe, and those who really take pains to study it thoroughly and reverently, will find many a valuable suggestion and get a clearer conception of spiritual life and of the ways and means advocated by those monks and writers who had them-



selves successfully practised them and attained a personal knowledge of the obstacles to be overcome and of the help to be found on the path and made use of, until the intellect gives way to true intuition. And as soon as this is attained there can be no real ultimate difference in the highest realization of the Westerner or of the Easterner, whatever religious fanatics may say and however hard they may fight against this truth.

Besides complete detachment from all earthly things and relationships Fray Francisco de Osuna very much stresses the point that we should bring God into everything, that we should let Him take part in all we do, give Him the honour in our honours, give Him the enjoyment in our enjoyment, call upon Him to help us in our work, have Him alone for our nearest and dearest comrade and friend, make Him the one and only end of all our actions and desires, the one target at which all the arrows of our thoughts and deeds are to be aimed, for then only shall we attain a state in which our hearts are lifted up to Him and resting in Him at all times and under all circumstances.

It is the attitude Sri Krishna teaches Arjuna when He says :

“With the heart serene and fearless, firm in the vow of a Brahmachari, with the mind controlled, and ever thinking of Me, let him sit in Yoga having Me as his supreme goal. Thus always keeping the mind steadfast, the Yogi of subdued mind attains the peace residing in Me,—the peace which culminates in Liberation.”

And further, reminding us of the attitude we find in Jesus Ben Sirach when he teaches : “Good is set over against evil, and life over against death; so is the sinner over against the godly. And thus look upon all the works of the most High; two and two, one against another,” and again : “Good things

and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God. Love and the ways of good things are with Him”. Fray Francisco de Osuna asks us to attribute everything to the will of God alone, whatever happens, taking Him to be the only agent in all that takes place in us and around us. He says, “I do not find a single thing thou mightest hear of, which thou couldst not attribute to God in some way or other.”

“Thou shouldst bring God into everything, receiving all things as from His hand, believing that all comes to thee by special permission of God. And this faith will enable thee to suffer all things with a balanced heart, be they prosperous or adverse.”

“Even with evil things thou shouldst mingle God, recognizing how it is He who permits them to happen so as to see whether thou lovest Him more than the delights and sins that tempt thee, which thou must conquer with God Himself, for with the help of the zeal of His Holy Love thou must guard thy person without the smallest stain of sin for Him and Him alone.”

In this way Fray Francisco de Osuna tries, as it were, to answer the desperate cry coming from the lips of the Sage when he says :—“O evil tendency, wherefore wast thou created, to fill the face of the world with deceit?” (Eccl. XXXVII, 3).

Now we shall begin quoting some passages which, in their incomplete way, may help the reader to form an idea of his teachings and thought.

“The first thing necessary is friendship and communion with God which are possible in this very life and exile. And not in a small measure either, but more closely and securely than bond ever was between brothers or even between mother and son.”

“Thou shouldst know that it is possible, and not very difficult in this mortal

life to attain to communion with the Immortal God, to a closer and more intimate communion between God and the soul, than ever was between one angel and another, however high they may be."

"Brother, if thou wishest to succeed, seek God in thine own heart, do not go out of thyself, for He is nearer to thee and more in thee than thou thyself art."

"There is no person whom earthly things vanquish less than one who most desires heavenly things."

"The heart of the righteous is a terrestrial paradise into which the Lord comes to enjoy Himself, for He says that His delights are to dwell among the sons of men. And to us, too, it is a paradise of delight, for in our heart we begin to taste the delight of paradise, and more so if God dwells therein, and this delight, which is tasted in the heart, as the Sage says, is greater than all worldly pleasure."

Fray Francisco de Osuna again and again stresses thought-control and the stopping of the random activities of the mind as the necessary preparation for communion with God, going even so far as to advise complete suppression of all thought which, as has been said before, Juan de Avila, his compatriot, found so dangerous in Osuna's treatises. For Osuna the first thing to be aimed at is the emptying of the heart not only of unnecessary anxieties and objects but of all that is not God, to make it become a fit dwelling-place of the Divine, as, in his opinion, neither our thought nor our heart may be given to two things at once, to God and to the world or worldly relationships, if we really wish to reach the summit of contemplation and real communion with the Divine. All outer things and every purely human love are but stumbling blocks which should be removed and avoided by all earnest aspirants. In

this there is much in common between him and Angela of Foligno, as both never grow tired of stressing the harmfulness of purely human love and purely human relationships. So Fray Francisco de Osuna says, "The Sage orders a threefold guard on our heart: as to actions: we must guard it by not doing anything contrary to its progress, as to words: if the heart is to keep silence, the tongue should do so first, and in the third place, we must guard our heart as to thought, and according to what the Sage says, this guard has to be general and with all watchfulness, emptying the heart of all that is created, so that from it may proceed all that life which is God. He does not come except only to give life to the soul and to unite it with Himself, just as the life proceeding from the heart vivifies and joins the body to the soul, according to which it is written, 'Thou must bind thyself to God, for He is thy life.' The life of the body lies in binding itself to the soul, and that of the soul in binding itself to God. And as such a life is the most necessary thing for us, the Lord said that the fountain should be in us, and it is the heart of which it can truly be said in the words of the Psalm, 'With thee is the fountain of life.' The fountain of life being so close to us that we need not go outside, it would be good if we entered into ourselves and cleaned this fountain of the heart, emptying it and after that guarding it with every care, so that from it may proceed life. This emptiness of the heart which must be brought about, as our letter says, in order to make room for the fullness of God, is shown in those empty vessels which were offered to the woman who represents Eternal Wisdom, and to Her we must offer our hearts empty of all creatures and of all that is created, so that She may put into them a drop of Her grace, which



will continue to increase there, till they are filled with it to the utmost. And this is what the Sage meant when he said, 'Write Wisdom in thy heart at the time of emptiness. He whose offices have decreased shall receive Wisdom to the full.' "

"This, thy body, is the garment of the soul which suffers from a vague and volatile leprosy when it is full of random fancies and imaginations that trouble the soul, for which, if it be negligent in expunging them, God will permit it to be burnt in the fire of evil cravings."

"The vessel which has no cover or is not tied up will be dirty. It is necessary to put on the cover of thy heart—which means separating thyself from all vain and superfluous pursuits—a strong cord which is the firm intent to persevere in thy concentration. Thou wouldst think him who rode an unruly horse without reins to be very unwise, for they must be short and strong to remedy such a defect. Thy fault, however, is worse, for if the other man endangers his body, thou art endangering both thy body and thy soul if thou dost not hold in the hand of discretion the reins of warning with which to pull up thine unruly heart, controlling its impetuosity and bridling its bad habit. Therefore the Sage admonishes thee, saying, 'He who but follows the words shall have nothing, but he who has full possession of his thoughts loves his soul, and he who is the keeper of prudence shall find treasures.' That man but follows the words, who runs after every fleeting thought which is but a word unspoken, and he shall have nothing, for the vessel of his heart is broken. But he who possesses his thinking, using the reins of prohibition for his thoughts, that man indeed loves his soul, for by this he seeks much good, which is expressed in what the Sage adds, saying, 'He who is the keeper of that prudence

which is acquired by calmness shall find many treasures,'—which he asserts somewhere else, saying, 'The certain memory is, as it were, a daily banquet which does not cease.' "

"Him thou canst call fortunate indeed who guards his heart with the same care and wisdom in the spiritual chase of which God is the quarry, as is bestowed upon a hawk, merely trained to catch birds."

"Ezekiel says, 'And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them. When they stood, these stood. And when they were lifted up, these lifted up themselves also: for the spirit of the living creature was in them. And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them.' 'Wheels' are our hearts which can scarcely find rest, which, if they desire to rise so as to be more secure than the cherubims, which are the high thoughts of God, must lift themselves up from the earth in order to place themselves in the place of the most High so as to survey and watch better, like a wine-grower who places himself in an elevated spot to be able to survey his vineyard."

"To follow the spiritual path thou must needs do away with all superfluous cares and obstacles, and must mortify thy passions which grow wings and gain a new life from the affairs and anxieties with which thou art occupied. For this reason thou art admonished to expunge all occupations and quarrels in order that thou mayest have less cause for dissipating thine heart."

"For those who make themselves blind in order to behold God, God Himself is the eyes, and it is He Who teaches them not to err; and hereby

their success is the greater, for God leads them where they could not go even if they had their eyes. Therefore the Lord speaks through Isaiah, 'I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.' "

"As harm may come to the heart from all sides, the Sage admonishes us to guard it well with every care, conformable to which the scripture admonishes us, in different places, to guard all the limbs of our body, because thus the heart is better guarded and more secure. The Sage says that our eyes should guard their ways, and this so that our heart may not err; and the Prophet Isaiah tells us that fortunate is he who guards his hands, and this, so that the heart may not commit any evil; and elsewhere we are told that we should guard our tongue, so that the heart may not feel the bad taste of gossip; and again elsewhere it is said that we should guard our feet, and this, so that our heart may not fall by the wayside; and St. Paul says that we should guard our body in chastity, and this, so that our heart may not become sullied; and Moses tells us that we should guard our souls in virtue, and this, so that our hearts may not be condemned with them."

"If we wish to engender in our souls the grace of the Lord through His favour, and to know how to speak gloriously of heavenly things, we must first be silent, as Gerson says, even in the interior of our heart, according to Jeremiah's words, 'Good is the Lord to those who wait in their souls that He seek them'. And in order to teach us how to seek Him, he proceeds, 'It is a good thing to wait in silence for the salvation of the Lord.' And to show how steady they should be in

this, he adds, 'A good thing it is for a man if he bear his yoke from the days of his youth; he must sit down solitary and be silent and raise himself above himself.' "

"All these words admonish us to be silent in our heart and to keep it in perpetual silence if we desire to climb to the summit of contemplation. That is why the commentary on this word says, 'Wait in silence.' And so greatly did the prophet benefit, that excluding and putting away all things appertaining to the world, he passed on beyond the angelic dignity so as to be able to find Him Whom he loved."

"It is well-known that we cannot put any liquid into the broken vessel of which every piece is separate, and that we consider it to be wholly useless for keeping anything in. Thy heart is divided into as many parts as thou hast cares. Every thought carries away its piece, and thou thinkest that God will put His grace in so useless a vessel? Ask the Sage about it. He says, 'The fool's heart is like a broken vessel which cannot contain any wisdom.' "

"In order to seek this Divine communion, by any means whatever, a great longing in the soul is necessary, one which does not give it any rest or respite, and which sets itself wholly to seek God. This intensity of longing cannot be well understood without similes taken from outside. We see that he, who has lost something, anxiously goes and searches for it, searching every place again and again, and not taking notice of anything which does not look like that which he has lost. He who is on his way to some goal, if he travels wisely, carries in his heart a great longing to come to the end of his journey and will plan everything accordingly. All the way he still goes walking on in his heart,



and his longing makes him rise early and dream at night that he has reached his destination. If he grows tired, the thought that he must arrive gives him new strength. He who digs for gold is so full of desire that every clod of earth seems to him to contain gold. At every thrust he expects to find something, and through his covetousness he does not stop till all luck leaves him. He who is fishing pays great attention to his bait to see whether any fish bites, not thinking of anything else but of those he has caught and those he hopes still to catch by great care. Without this intent and solicitous care I do not believe anybody to have found God by whatever way it be."

"Those who dwell in the region forsaken by God, which is Vice and Sin, never say 'It is enough', nor do they ever put an end to their evil deeds, for in that region there always reigns hunger and there the evil desire of the human heart is never satisfied."

"The more thoughts thou hast the hungrier and the more desirous for diverse things thou wilt be. This is affirmed by the Sage who says, 'The unbridled soul will hunger.' Dissolute and unbridled is the soul when it gives free rein to its thoughts and memory, so that they may go wherever they like with a wrong license. And if it so happens that they come back, they come already tired out and dead from hunger, carrying with them newly begotten desires and evil cravings."

"Scrutinize this fact closely, for thou thyself wilt confess it to be true if thou payest attention to thy vanity and thy loose-mindedness. From these follows a distrust of spiritual truths, so that it seems to thee that they do not exist in the world, but are a mere mockery, and that reading or hearing of them is tedious or an empty joke to thee. All this comes, believe me, from the looseness,

dissoluteness or weakness of the thoughts and the vagaries of thy memory, for as saith the Sage, "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely: but he that preserveth his ways shall be known." While thou art far away from cares and thoughts, it is evident that thy mind will be more upright, and it is a matter of experience that then thou wilt have greater confidence in the things of God."

The infinite, the perfect, being the very breed of our soul, Fray Francisco de Osuna gives the most prominent place to the practice of contemplation and prayer coupled with perfect detachment from and dispassion for all that is created. In his eyes, the aspirant who is not ready to detach himself from the sway of the phenomenal world, realizing its true nature of unending change, can never take to any higher form of life, nor can he ever reach a state of true meditation and communion with the Divine. And this detachment can only be attained through an act of the will, by being dead to our little self and renouncing all those worldly relationships, which used to occupy our mind and heart, so as to give these to God alone.

We generally fill our soul with human affection and love and feel attracted by persons and objects, instead of keeping it free for God and expanding it with the help of the presence of the Divine. There is no impediment greater than that of filling our mind and heart with creaturely love which makes our soul shrink and prevents us from reaching perfection or union with God, and none can progress in the spiritual path who is not ready to sacrifice his petty human attachments.

Here it is interesting to note the great similarity of the teaching of Christian mystics to that of the great masters of the East, so far as the preliminary conditions for the practice of meditation

and prayer are concerned. Both tell the aspirant again and again to become non-attached to worldly affairs and individuals, in order to be able to become united to the Divine and henceforth to be an instrument in His hands. Osuna very much stresses the point that for true contemplation and prayer three things are necessary : a place which is secluded, healthy, and quiet ; holy company and holy conversations ; and more than anything else the right disposition and preparation of the will that is continually to be kept open for the grace of God. He says, there are people who can be compared with bee-hives without honey, whereas the truly contemplative should always hold his heart and will as the spouse of the Canticle of Canticles did, who said, "My soul melted when my Beloved spoke." So in his eyes all our spiritual progress lies in the right disposition and preparation of the will and in detaching ourselves completely from all worldly concerns and relations. Summing up his instructions on what is most necessary for leading a life of prayer and contemplation, he says :—

"These three things are of great profit to the soul to approach God quietly, but the most essential one is the third, and of it one might say with the Psalmist, 'Life is in his good will.' The place, too, is of great importance, not that it suffices alone, for Lucifer fell down from heaven and Adam sinned in Paradise ; and in the house of God people do many evil things ; and Job was not impeded by the lack of a good place, for he could be holy on a dunghill. Company is very good, but it also is not sufficient, for Judas came to grief among the apostles, and Satan found himself among the sons of God, nor did the lack of good company disturb the spouse, and she is compared to the lilies of the field. So there are many who, having well prepared their will, as

is most needed, can live among bad people even as a rose among thorns or as a chestnut in its thorny cover, without having in themselves any thorn of sin."

"This I say in order that, if thou findest thyself in surroundings or scenes disturbing to the contemplative life, thou dost not think this a sufficient excuse for thee, because thou canst have the good will which none can take from thee if thou humble thyself, lowering thine eyes and acting as Saul did, of whom it is said that he dissembled as though he heard not the insults, nor gave them any importance."

"The door of Wisdom is Recollection, for we see that the student who is most recollected in the physical and in the spiritual, attains greater knowledge. And in all the things they learn, those men come out best instructed who by nature are silent and not occupied with other things."

"We who do not possess the eyes of an eagle that can look at the sun without blinking, must fix our bodily eyes on the ground, so that those of the soul may rivet themselves on God. In order that contemplative men may better understand the advice that is given in this letter, they should know that so as to profit most they must have two manners of recollection : one should be general, the other special. The first consists in the watch which a man should always have over his heart, like a person who continually holds the reins of an unruly horse firmly in his hands so as to curb it. Similarly, this general recollection makes a man continually watchful, keeping his heart pacified and enclosed, without human cares or anxieties, the first stone to be laid in building the house of true recollection being a spiritual emptying in which we recognise that our heart should do nothing but bind itself to God."



"And if thou dost manual work thou shouldst not cease from contemplation, but continue in it as much as possible both inwardly and outwardly, keeping in thee a perpetual mortification. Even if it sometimes happens that thou findest thyself wholly unfit for outward things, so that thou seemest to have lost all human skill as thou canst no longer light fire or a candle, or even cut a few slices of bread, but must depend on others to do what thou hast been asked to do, thou must not be dismayed nor cease from keeping up that general recollection. This is a state through which the soul passes, so that later on it may be wise in all things."

"Special recollection is when thou withdrawest thyself in secret to pray fervently to the Lord in silence, leaving entirely all other occupations and business to give thyself solely to recollection without giving part of thy care to anything else. Then thou shouldst think thou art dead to all other things, and that they neither belong to thee nor thou to them. And ask them all to leave thee as if they had never known thee, saying to them all, "Go away from me, for I am not he whom you seek, neither do I love you nor do I wish to be loved by you all. You have given me troubles enough in bygone days, so, now, leave me completely." "

"In this special recollection thou must withdraw thyself into thy heart and separate thyself from all created things for at least two hours: one before noon, and the other at the most quiet time thou canst find. And if it be possible for thee to withdraw secretly in order to pray longer, all the better."

"The two manners of recollection that have been spoken of are very necessary if thou wishest to profit in this path. Some say that the special recollection is more necessary, but to me it seems that thou shouldst practise both

with great care and assiduity, although first the general one, because it is a preparation for the special one. Thou thyself wilt find thyself at special prayer in that very state in which thou hast kept thyself when out of it. And in order that thou mayest guard general recollection, pay attention to the advice of our letter, which tells thee to remove all disturbance, showing thee the manner how to do this, saying that thou shouldst fix thy gaze on the ground, because as the eyes are the most used doors of the soul, a stricter watch should be kept on them."

Of course, Francisco de Osuna did not believe that by merely fixing our gaze assiduously on the ground, the task of removing all disturbances and obstacles to contemplation could be successfully accomplished knowing full well their number and varied nature. He himself says that they are like arrows flying lightly in the air to hit and injure us in all possible ways. We are so full of illusions and so little on our guard against the delusive charms of personal affections and of the created that we go on deceiving ourselves ceaselessly. Generally human love, worldly prudence and timidity become inseparable companions in our lives and help us in finding plausible reasons to justify our conduct with. All such worldly considerations take us more and more away from the Divine, making us lose His grace and fall into greater and greater misery. Innumerable disturbances and distractions prevent us from following the path of true recollection which is so narrow that only one thing can be in it at a time, and that is why, in Francisco de Osuna's opinion, we should struggle and fight all the more to gain the passage by removing the obstacles with great care and discernment. And for this, he says, greater discretion and circumspection are required than for anything else, what-

ever it be, fools being quickly troubled and swept off their feet like drunkards, so that the little wisdom they possessed before is lost. He goes on to say that the two other most important disturbances arise from food and from sleep, asking the one who wants to be contemplative to curb the cravings of his palate, and never to take more than is absolutely necessary for the proper nourishment of his body, and also to avoid all superfluous sleep which only tends to make him indolent and heavy.

"This mystery of recollection is so notable, excellent and Divine that it serves for all good things and is profitable for all, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. It is like the sun that shines on all and that is necessary for the generation of all good. For without recollection there is no one who can do anything well that is good. If a writer stops being attentive and absorbed in what he is writing, he will write many lies, and the same holds good of the reader. If the carpenter is not concentrated on what he is doing, he will injure his hand. And it is the same with all artisans; if they be not recollected and absorbed by what they are doing, it will not be well done. So all other things being equal, he who is less distracted by what does not pertain to the work he has in hand, will do any work, even manual work, better. And the more the painter has his mind absorbed in the picture he has before him, the more perfect this will be. Thus, if he wishes to paint a picture representing cheerfulness well, he himself should be cheerful. And if he desires to paint a sad one, he will be greatly helped in doing so by being sad himself, for thus he is more absorbed in what he is doing and almost transformed into it, recollectedness being a manner of transformation into that in which we are absorbed. That is why

greater recollectedness is necessary for the interior actions, because they are more excellent than the exterior ones, so that we may become all the more transformed into them. Thus those who wish to contemplate the passion of the Lord must withdraw themselves from all other things and transform themselves into it alone as if they were personally standing before the mysteries of that of which they are thinking."

"And if some one wished profoundly to investigate any mysteries with his intellect, he should recollect himself entirely for that which he desires to know, separating himself from all other cares as if there were no other thing to be done or seen but that with which he must be wholly occupied without giving any attention to other things. And he should never separate himself from what he wishes to know."

"He walks in the paths of his heart who endeavours to walk recollectedly, carrying his heart in great calmness with himself, acting like a snail that takes its house wherever it goes, or like a tortoise that walks under its shell. But when such a man has to speak or to negotiate with someone, he should pay attention to the focus of his eyes, keeping them well fixed on the ground, his whole mind riveted on God and His love so as to remove disturbances that come to him from the other person, for thus may be said of him what the Sage says, 'The king that sitteth on the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with his look.' 'King' or ruler, according to the explanation of this word, means a person who rules, and such is every recollected man who rules his inclinations and desires so as to bind himself to God. He should remain seated in the chair of judgment, which is discrimination and watchfulness. These he should always carry with him, and walk with his gaze fixed on the ground which, as I said,



dissipates and destroys all evil that might come to him through the eyes. This is much as the things most harmful to recollection enter by the eyes, and the soul becomes scattered through them amidst outside things."

"In this world the practice of contemplation cannot be brought to its end, but it can at least be begun. And that which induces man most to persevere in it is the love and holy fear of God, according to what the Sage says, 'The heart of him who fears God must become converted.'"

"If from pure love thou canst not persevere in the practice of contemplation, force thyself with holy zeal to enter through the narrow door of recollection, for God gives him the grace of power who has courage to persevere. I urgently advise thee to put away all things which impede thee, for then thou canst persevere with greater calmness. Do not be less careful in praying than thou art in sleeping. If thou makest all noise and occupation to cease in order to sleep, shutting thyself in and remaining alone, losing all the cares of the world, thou shouldst do the same in order to pray, turning wholly to spiritual things. Think that God did not create thee for anything else but to pray, nor does He ask of thee any other thing except that thou prayest to Him in spirit and in truth, because thus the wish to do thy duty will become vivified, and thou shalt become a master therein."

Side by side with the strenuous practice of contemplation and the steady and sincere withdrawal of the heart of the devotee from all created beings and things, Osuna stresses the constant remembrance of God, a practice taught by many mystics which greatly helps the birth of true detachment and prevents dispassion from becoming something purely negative. These mystics may not have been as definite in their teach-

ings on this important point as Sri Ramakrishna who taught that true *vairagya* is dispassion for the world and for the things of the world and love for the Divine, but the experience underlying such instructions must have been a similar one in all cases. As this great God-man of India taught, we shall attain to a state of blessedness and peace if we can somehow or other offer everything to the Divine, if we come to think of Him as our dearest and nearest, think every thought and do every action for His sake alone, or in the words of Sri Krishna, 'He who does work for Me alone, and has Me for his goal, is devoted to Me, is freed from attachment and bears enmity towards no creature, he entereth into Me, O Pandava.'

In Osuna's comparison of the soul to a bird in a cage which we wish to tame, we find another point of contact between the practical instructions of the Eastern teachers and some Western mystics. Just as the experience of the Eastern teacher showed him that the aspirant should be careful to treat his restive mind in the proper way, avoiding all violence, and rather resorting to kindly persuasion, cajoling it back to reason, as it were, Osuna says that no harsh words should be used when speaking to one's soul, as this would never produce the desired effect, and only tend to make the soul all the more restless and fluttered, whereas by being kind to it, it might easily be 'tamed' and become more drawn to its 'tamer'. Considering the rather loose and indefinite way in which the term 'soul' is used by Western mystics, we find that such teaching exactly corresponds to those of the East regarding the proper treatment of the unruly mind on the part of the beginner who is taking his first insecure and vacillating steps in the spiritual path.

The more we succeed in seeing the truth underlying such practical instruc-

tions, putting aside all doctrinal bias and all feeling of superiority in our own creed and way, the more shall we be benefited by our studies and the nearer shall we approach truth instead of allowing ourselves to become bound by a name or by a particular orthodox conception. These in most cases are nothing but fossilized relics of something that is no longer really alive in our hearts, but to which we cling all the more desperately because of that very petrification. They are, no doubt, important and interesting sign-posts leading to the past, but they can never be infused with a new life, so their inordinate admirers only run great risk of becoming petrified and lifeless themselves, desperately clinging to what is dead, and killing the life and light that are in them.

"Taking the example of a bird in a cage, it is clear, that it can be better tamed and domesticated by love than by rigour, and it is easier to pacify with kind words than harsh ones that terrify it. It is better to pass one's hand lightly and lovingly over its feathers so as to make it feel safe than to wound it or to make it afraid. Thus if thou feelest that thy soul becomes scattered in diverse and confused thoughts, do not make it more restless and afflicted, but correct it lovingly with a few short and affectionate words, as if thou wert saying to it, after feeling the distraction of its thoughts, 'Where hast thou gone flying, O my soul? What dost thou bring from where thou hast gone except half-heartedness? Knowest thou not that the Lord comes to those who stay with themselves, and separates Himself from those who separate themselves from their hearts? Do not be an idler roaming about the streets, but if thou wishest to be the spouse of the most High, thou must be very indrawn so that from this can be presumed thy honesty.'"

"In saying similar words to his soul a man will be kind, as a person of knowledge should be. And cloaking the past distractions he must remedy what might follow, removing every single thing which is the cause of its becoming distracted and scattered, and this he should do with the greatest possible love, for there is nothing which attracts us more to the object we are seeking than the love we cherish for it."

"The perfect remembrance of God is a practice of the greatest importance and is very much needed by those who follow recollection, for recollection presupposes this."

"This remembrance should be deep in the mind, seated in the heart, for if one is to have the remembrance of God, this should be as of our most special friend who is dearer to us than our brother or father, and only in this way will it be an easy thing to have Him always in our memory, for this close and intimate friendship will make His memory become deeply rooted in our heart and to continue in it. Then we shall offer Him all our works, remembering Him in them and doing them for love of Him, offering them as fruits emanating from the root, which is His Holy Remembrance."

"The reason why recollected men fear to go out of themselves, leaving recollection, is because they know from experience that God is the refuge against all evils, and that they go as far away from God as they go from the recollection of the heart in which our Lord truly dwells, and that that which the Lord values most under heaven is the approach of the soul which centres itself solely on Him. And thus it follows that nothing should be feared more by a man, if he be wise, than abstaining from that which is so pleasing to God."

"He who does not strictly follow the advice to guard his heart all day, or the greater part of it, should not say that he



follows recollection, and he who becomes distracted and drawn away from God on the very slightest excuse and occasion, should not pretend to be practised in recollection, for those who are practised therein are as much absorbed in God while doing some manual work in the house, as the novices are when kneeling in a secluded place."

If we try to sum up the teachings of the "Tercer Abecedario Espiritual" we might say they are: Detachment from the objects of the world, emptying the heart of all worldly affections, longings and concerns, and constant remembrance of God as the most efficacious means for leading our mind on to higher forms of prayer and contemplation. These naturally help each other, growing, as it were, along parallel lines. And with all other great mystics, Osuna sets forth the necessity of the destruction of vices and earthly attachments and of the elimination of desires for created things. This feature marks off true mysticism from its counterfeits and from the ideas formulated by all would-be mystics possessing only some theoretical knowledge of the subject, but who have never cared to follow the path themselves. Both in the East and in the West it has been the constant endeavour of all great teachers to stress the point that there can never be any real and lasting progress in spiritual life without some asceticism and mortification on the part of the aspirant. These, coupled with true inner detachment from worldly things and from all forms of worldly relationships, strengthen and greatly facilitate the steady remembrance of the Divine, and this again brings about a greater and greater detachment from all that belongs to the world and to merely human forms of love. And when the highest form of Divine Love is attained in this way, the aspirant reaches his goal and becomes united to Him Whom he loves and

Whom alone he desires. So the Hermit of Hampole, that great singer of the love of the Lord, says in one of his beautiful prayers:

"Lord Jesus, I ask Thee, give unto me movement in Thy love withouten measure; desires withouten limit; longing withouten order; burning withouten discretion. Truly the better the love of Thee is, the greedier it is; for neither by reason is it restrained, nor by dread thronged, nor by doom tempted. No man shall ever be more blest than he that for greatness of love can die. No creature truly can love too mickle. In all other things all that is too mickle turns to vice, but the more the strength of love surpasses, the more glorious it shall be."

Osuna, with most Western mystics, is a Bhakta and knows and teaches only the path of single-minded devotion to God and to a great extent to a personal Christ on Whom every thought and every single action of our life are to be centred, an attitude which has found one of its best interpreters in the great sage Narada when he describes the true nature of Love, saying, "Narada says that Love begins when all thoughts, words, and actions are surrendered and given to God, and when one feels the greatest misery in forgetting God," for the religion of Bhakti is eternal and universal as soon as it is freed from the many doctrinal bonds with which ardent devotees of a particular Divine Name and Form try to bind and limit it in all countries and ages.

Real Divine Love is freedom and bliss unchanging as opposed to all other forms of love, which are self-seeking personal claims and thus mean bondage and misery and change. And Osuna as well as all other great mystics knew well that in these there is no happiness or liberation, but only pain again and again to the end.

May the Lord Who is the one Source of our being fill us with true renunciation, discrimination, and perfect dispassion for all things worldly and all worldly attachments, so that we may long to find shelter and rest at His Holy Feet alone.

## THE IDEAL OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN INDIA

BY SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA

Man is a social animal. Ever since the dawn of his consciousness he feels and finds himself planted in a social environment. With the advance of his age and wisdom he appreciates the benefits and privileges of social life. A rational being as he is, he soon realizes that he too has something to do in return for the society. And the time comes when he considers social service to be the birthright of every man.

In a word, social service means labour of love. It is an act of philanthropy when accomplished without any motives and desires. Literally, a service is called social when it is meant for any particular society, national when it is done for all the societies belonging to a nation, and humanitarian when it is rendered to humanity at large without any distinction whatsoever.

Social service is one of the best means of self-evolution. Human life is an effort for the attainment of all-round perfection. Every effort, when true and sincere, soon transcends the social and national limits and finds its highest culmination in universalism.

Social service in India is not without its speciality. "The term has a somewhat different meaning in Great Britain and America." In India it is absolutely shorn of the sense of superiority and arrogance that are often the inevitable accompaniments of such acts of charity, and implies a spirit of love and reverence. The keynote of social service is

selflessness or sacrifice. In all acts of social service the spirit of selflessness must predominate; otherwise it is a positive disservice. Service without sacrifice is unthought of and unthinkable in India. It is inseparably or indissolubly combined with renunciation. Service and renunciation do not exclude each other but like body and soul are interdependent. Renunciation is the very soul of all kinds of service, in and through which it manifests and shines.

Social service, as such, should not be confused with socialistic service of the modern age. Socialism which is "essentially a doctrine and a movement aiming at the collective organization of the community in the interests of the mass of the people by means of common ownership and collective control of the means of production and exchange" has been invading country after country and influencing more or less the whole world for many decades. Modern socialists do neither support nor oppose religion. But social service in India is regarded as solemn and sacred as religion. Nay, it occupies an important place in every walk of religious life and is considered a part and parcel of religion itself.

Vast and various are the needs of this world. It stands in need of different kinds of service to fulfil the demands of different ages. That is why we find different kinds of duties enjoined in our scriptures for different Yugas. Manu while determining the Yugadharma says,



“The practice of penance is for the Satya, cultivation of knowledge for the Tretâ, sacrifice for the Dwâpara, and charity alone is to be performed in the Kaliyuga.” So the acts of charity, better called service, according as they minister to the physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual needs of the suffering humanity, may be classified as (i) material, (ii) mental and (iii) spiritual.

Every nation has an ideal of its own. “The national ideals of India are service and renunciation. Intensify her in these channels and the rest will take care of itself,” says the great and illustrious Swami Vivekananda. Service and sacrifice are the very backbone of India and her people. Her hopes and aspirations, peace and prosperity—all are based upon this lofty spiritual ideal. It is with this ideal that India once established her unique position in the world. It is now impossible for her to change it. Even if it be possible to change the course of the Ganges and make her travel back to her sources, it is not possible to change the hoary national ideal of India. With India it is as old as humanity. To say that the ideal of social service in India with its sparkling variety of forms is found to be in existence from the pre-historic period down to the present day is not an exaggeration.

If we look back to the Upanishadic age, of which the other subsequent ages are but echoes, we come across many a glowing reference to service. The *Chhândogya Upanishad*, which is regarded as one of the oldest of the Upanishads, declares in its first verse of Ch. XXIII of Bk. II : त्रयो धर्मस्कन्धा यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति प्रथमः—“Three are the branches of Dharma. Sacrifice, study, and charity are the first.” Another Sruti maintains : एतत् त्रयं शिञ्चेत् दमं दानं दयामिति :—“One should learn the triad—self-control, charity and compassion.” Mere inculcation of charity has not been

the only function of the Srutis, but they have laid down sufficient hints for its proper execution.

Charity and compassion were also extolled in the age of the *Mahâbhârata* although some limitations are found to have been put upon them. Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* (Ch. XVIII. 5) says, “Sacrifice, gift and austerity are purifying even to the wise.” He also makes a glowing reference to the ideal of service and sacrifice where he makes a clean distinction between the “divine and devilish attributes” (*Bhagavad-Gitâ*, XVI. 1—5). Though charity has its own restricted sphere, (*Gitâ* XVII. 20—21), the Lord speaks also of saints whose love carries away all in its sweep and who realize God and attain to absolute freedom. He says, “With the imperfections exhausted, doubts dispelled, senses controlled, and being engaged in the good of all beings, the Rishis obtain absolute freedom (*Gitâ* V. 25). Verily they only who having subdued all the senses and remaining evenminded everywhere are engaged in the welfare of all beings, reach Myself.” (*Gitâ* XII. 4).

From the age of the *Mahâbhârata* if we come down to the age of Buddha we find how the same national ideal of India was presented to the people with a new life and in a new garb. In this period we find the children of the soil, high or low, rich or poor, imbued with a higher moral principle. Of course, it is certainly in consideration of the demands of the days that Lord Buddha did not care to preach the theistic part of the Indian philosophy but laid great stress upon the ethical side. His powerful and passionate appeal touched even the hearts of mighty monarchs. The eminent emperors like Asoka, Kanishka, and Harshavardhana did not hesitate to lay their life and wealth, power and property, at the altar of the welfare of their

country and countrymen. The whole of the Indian empire, as a result, was ennobled and uplifted. And India once more rose to the highest pinnacle of glory in this period which forms one of the best and brightest chapters in the history of our country.

In later ages too we do not miss this golden link. Even the great Sankara whose massive intellect is adored and worshipped by all the savants of the world and who preached monism in its highest form did not fail to pay an eloquent tribute to the inestimable selfless services of those good souls who 'do good to others as does the spring, and who having themselves crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatever.' What then to speak of the still later ages when we meet such a personality as that of Sree Chaitanya who was selfless love personified and who with a view to ennoble and elevate the masses broke down the barriers that had been gathering round the different sects and societies of his time.

The present day social service movement which was initiated by the illustrious founder of the Ramakrishna Mission, the great Swami Vivekananda, during the closing years of the nineteenth century, has already made its mark in the world. The marvellous growth of the Institution within so short a time is no doubt due to its harmonious adjustment to the needs of the age. The service, which it inculcates, has also special characteristics of its own. The Upanishads teach : मातृदेवो भव, पितृदेवो भव, आचार्यदेवो भव—“Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god ! Let thy father be to thee like unto a god ! Let thy teacher be to thee like unto a god !” To these the great Swami added, दरिद्रदेवो भव, मूर्खदेवो भव—“Let the poor and illiterate be to thee like unto

gods.” This is certainly not a departure but a development of the ideas imbedded in the scriptures.

Selfless service is a great unifying factor in human character. It unites men of different classes and communities into a brotherhood. It is not only a man-making but a nation-building power, particularly in a land which happens to be the home of a number of different sects. The very soul and secret of such service is sacrifice. To infuse this idea into the hearts of all the spiritual aspirants, the Hindu scriptures in all their different aspects, philosophical, mythological, and ritualistic, have never failed to reiterate its need and importance in every walk of life. They provide sufficient scope for selfless work even in personal affairs with a view to expand our limited vision. For “all expansion is life and all contraction is death.” While one prays to the Almighty, we find how one prays for the expansion of his love to all beings. Every auspicious work of a Hindu family is preceded by a ‘Tarpana’ or offering of libation to the departed dear. And in the Tarpana or a Srâdha ceremony in which libations are offered to the departed relatives, the prayer not only breaks down the barrier of the world of relatives but includes the whole existence from the highest to the lowest when one has to chant :

आब्रह्मस्तम्भपर्यन्तं देवर्षिपितृमानवाः ।

तृप्यन्तु पितरः सर्वे मातृमातामहोदयाः ॥

—“Let the Devas, sages, the manes and men and also my relatives both on the father’s and mother’s sides—all beings from Brahman down to the blade of grass be appeased.”

Selfless service, if rightly rendered, is a double blessing. It benefits both the person that serves and the person that is served. It not only saves human society from all evils that are found to



eat into the vitals of the institution but worldly happiness, nor escape from ensures its growth and development.

But to the great saints with whom sacrifice has been the motto of their life nothing is greater and better than absolute denial of the self. They outgrow all limits of life and find the same Divinity everywhere. The prayer of Prahlada, when he offered all that one can possess and enjoy in this ephemeral world—

न त्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं न पुनर्धनम् ।  
कामये दुःखतप्तानां प्राणिनाम् आर्त्तनाशनम् ॥

“I do not want any kingdom, nor

rebirth; what I want is the cessation of the affliction of all beings tormented by the miseries of life”—is undoubtedly edifying to all. The great Swami Vivekananda who was ready to suffer thousand miseries and die hundreds of deaths also said, “Where dost thou seek God? Are not the poor and miserable gods?” Indeed this noble ideal of service, as expressed in the glowing words of the great patriot saint of India, is to be pursued by all social workers, in the interest of individual spiritual growth and also of the common good of humanity.

## SIVA MAHIMNAH STOTRAM

### THE HYMN ON THE GREATNESS OF SIVA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

सुरगुरुमभिपूज्य स्वर्गमोक्षैकहेतुं  
पठति यदि मनुष्यः प्राञ्जलिर्नान्यचेताः ।  
ब्रजति शिवसमीपं किन्नरैः स्तूयमानः  
स्तवनमिदममोघं पुष्पदन्तप्रणीतम् ॥ ३८ ॥

स्वर्गमोक्षैकहेतुं giver of heaven and liberation सुरगुरुं the Adorable of gods i. e. Siva अभिपूज्य worshipping नान्यचेताः with one-pointed mind प्राञ्जलिः with folded palms (सन् being) मनुष्यः a person यदि if पुष्पदन्तप्रणीतं composed by Pushpadanta अमोघं unfailing इदं this स्तवनं hymn पठति reads (सः he) किन्नरैः by Kinnaras स्तूयमानः worshipped शिवसमीपं to the presence of Siva ब्रजति goes.

38. After worshipping Siva, who is adored by gods and who grants heaven and liberation, if one with single-minded devotion and folded palms reads this unfailing<sup>1</sup> hymn, composed by Pushpadanta, one goes to Siva, being worshipped by Kinnaras.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Unfailing—sure of giving result, i.e. leading to Siva.

<sup>2</sup> Kinnaras—a kind of beings who have got a human form but whose head is like that of a horse,

आसमासमिदं स्तोत्रं सर्वमीश्वरवर्णनम्  
अनुपमं मनोहारि पुण्यं गन्धर्वभाषितम् ॥ ३६ ॥

गन्धर्वभाषितं composed by the Gandharva Pushpadanta ईश्वरवर्णनं describing the glory of god अनुपमं unparalleled पुण्यं sacred सर्व all स्तोत्रं hymn आसमास from start to finish इदं this मनोहारि fascinating.

39. This unparalleled, sacred hymn composed by Pushpadanta, and describing the glory of God is fascinating from start to finish.

इत्येषा वाङ्मयी पूजा श्रीमच्छंकरपादयोः ।  
अर्पिता तेन देवेशः प्रीयतां मे रुदाशिवः ॥ ४० ॥

एषा this वाङ्मयी of words पूजा worship श्रीमच्छंकरपादयोः to the feet of Siva अर्पिता offered इति तेन at this रुदाशिवः ever propitious देवेशः the Lord of gods मे to me प्रीयतां may be pleased.

40. This hymnal worship is offered to the feet of Siva. May the ever-propitious Lord of gods be pleased with me at this.

तव तत्त्वं न जानामि कीदृशोऽसि महेश्वर ।  
यादृशोऽसि महादेव तादृशाय नमो नमः ॥ ४१ ॥

महेश्वर Oh Great Lord तव thy तत्त्वं the true nature of thy being—कीदृशः of what sort असि thou art न जानामि I do not know. महादेव Oh great Siva यादृशः of whatever sort असि thou may be तादृशाय to that sort नमो नमः salutation again and again.

41. Oh Lord, I do not know the true nature of Thy being—of what kind Thou art. Oh Great God, my salutation again and again to That<sup>1</sup> which is Thy true condition.

<sup>1</sup> That . . . condition—implying that God will accept the worship of a devotee, though he may not know the real nature of the Lord.

एककालं द्विकालं वा त्रिकालं यः पठेन्नरः ।  
सर्वपापविनिमुक्तः शिवलोके महीयते ॥ ४२ ॥

यः which नरः person एककालं once द्विकालं twice वा or त्रिकालं thrice पठेत् reads, (सः he) सर्वपापैः from all sins विनिमुक्तः free शिवलोके in the abode of Siva महीयते is glorified.

42. The person who reads (this hymn) once, twice or thrice is<sup>1</sup> glorified in the abode of Siva, being free from all sins.

<sup>1</sup> Is . . . Siva—i.e. after death goes to the abode of Siva and remains there in great glory.



श्रीपुष्पदन्तमुखपङ्कजनिर्गतेन  
स्तोत्रेण किल्बिषहरेण हरप्रियेण ।  
कण्ठस्थितेन पठितेन गृहस्थितेन  
सुप्रीणितो भवति भूतपतिर्महेशः ॥ ४३ ॥

श्रीपुष्पदन्तमुखपङ्कजनिर्गतेन coming out of the lips or Pushpadanta किल्बिषहरेण destroying sins हरप्रियेण dear to Siva स्तोत्रेण by hymn कण्ठस्थितेन committed to memory पठितेन read गृहस्थितेन kept in the house भूतपतिः Lord of the creation महेशः great god सुप्रीणितो greatly pleased भवति becomes.

43. If a person learns<sup>1</sup> by heart, reads or keeps in the home this hymn, which came out of the lips of Pushpadanta, and which destroys sins and is dear to Siva, Siva, the Lord of creation, becomes very pleased.

<sup>1</sup> *Learns . . . home*—Three stages are mentioned—namely, committing to memory, reading from books and keeping the book in the home. Simply keeping the book in the home has some importance inasmuch as it will occasionally remind one of Siva.

इति श्रीपुष्पदन्तविरचितं शिवमहिम्नः स्तोत्रं समाप्तम् ।

Here ends the hymn on the greatness of Siva composed by Pushpadanta.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

In the *Editorial* we have stressed the essential requisites of spiritual life and shown that the realization of complete harmony with the cosmic order is the ultimate end of human existence. The article on *Sri Ramakrishna* by Swami Premananda, one of the monastic disciples of the Master, presents a realistic picture of the distinguishing traits of Sri Ramakrishna's synthetic personality. Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., of the Meerut College, discusses in *The Nature of æsthetic Experience* the various phases of æsthetic bliss (*rasa*), experienced by an aspirant at the different stages of his psychic unfold-

ment. The article on *Benevolence* by Prof. Nicholas de Roerich deals with the true spirit of blissful benefaction and heroic striving, which is nobly manifested in all the conscious creators of a better future. *Richard Mulcaster and His contribution to the Philosophy of Modern Vocational Education* by Dr. Devendra Nath Das Gupta, M.A., Ed.D. (Calif.), throws light on the educational views of Richard Mulcaster of England. Mr. Haripada Ghosal, Vidya-binode, M.A., M.R.A.S., shows in his article on *Unity in Life* that the realization of unity in the diversity of phenomena is the actual message of the Vedânta. Mr. Wolfram H. Koch's article entitled *Fray Francisco de Osuna and His Third Spiritual Alpha-*

bet gives a graphic account of the teachings of a Spanish mystic, incidentally showing their similarity to the universal gospel of the Gitâ. In *The Ideal of Social Service in India* Swami Sambuddhananda of the R. K. Mission points out the real spirit that underlies all social service in India.

### IS PATRIOTISM IRRELIGIOUS?

The Christian moralists have often found themselves in a quandary in reconciling the dictates of patriotism and the profession of religion. While religion teaches love, peace, and charity, patriotism, which is almost universally recognized as a virtue, is commonly supposed to sanction hatred, war, and violence of all kinds for the sake of one's country. Quite naturally, therefore, a few have come to regard them as incompatible. Many pacifists are inclined to endorse Johnson's celebrated definition of patriotism as "the last refuge of a scoundrel". Tolstoy sincerely believed that religion precluded patriotism and that patriotism precluded religion. But, do they really conflict? It does not need any great penetration to see that the word patriotism has taken on a bad odour in the modern age because it has almost become a synonym for large-scale brigandage.

Mr. Louis L. Mann, who sometime back wrote on the subject of patriotism and religion in the *Unity*, considers that notwithstanding the denunciations of the moralists patriotism is one of the loftiest sentiments of mankind. "Naturally," he writes, "there is patriotism and patriotism. There is the patriotism that is true and the patriotism that is false." Though the right kind of patriotism does not preclude religion, there are types of it, he points out, which are incompatible with religion. The latter embrace chauvinism, jin-

goism, *Decaturism*—by which is meant: "My country right or wrong"—, imperialism, and nationalism conceived not as a *means* but as an end. Our generation, he complains, has been wrongly 'conditioned' upon the subject of patriotism. We are totally blind to its 'peaceful' implications. Whenever the word is uttered it at once calls up the picture of war in our mind. "As if," he continues, "peace did not have her victories no less renowned than war! As if peace did not have need of patriotism as demanding and exacting as that of war! . . . As if those great souls who struggle to abolish poverty, to alleviate disease, to reduce crime, to eliminate ignorance, to free schools from the control of politics, who fight against graft and corruption and dishonesty in government, to say nothing of the 'microbe hunters' and the 'death fighters,' and the Red Cross and the Salvation Army who struggle to redeem the victims of misfortune from their lowly estate, are not patriotic!" The writer concludes his admirable essay with the following noble sentiments, with which every reasonable person will agree: "Patriotism must not be defined as a love for one's country in terms of a willingness to die for one's country. It must be redefined as a love for one's country expressed in a willingness to live for one's country—to live for one's countrymen—so that one's own country, one's national love, might contribute to all mankind that for which one's own country is best fitted mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually, to the interests of all men, everywhere. Such a patriotism would not be incompatible with religion. Such patriotism would be religion itself."

Epictetus, the stoic, remarked that everything has two handles by which it can be taken hold of. He meant that there is a point of view from which



almost everything can be justified and that there is another from which it can be condemned. We can use and abuse the same thing. Patriotism is such a virtue. Real patriotism teaches men not to love one's own country and to hate another's. It teaches the love of one's country first, because our immediate neighbours are the first claimants on our attention. As Ramakrishna used to say, love which is confined to a family, a group, or a country is infatuation, but the love which embraces all is the real stuff.

### YOGA AND REPRESSION

The unconscious is daily assuming more and more importance in the investigation of the psychologists. Psycho-analysis has undergone many changes of detail at the hands of both the originator of the theory and his followers. In all of them, however, the unconscious persists as the most powerful determinant of our conscious processes and activities. It is a kind of dark subterranean region into which all our desires upon which society frowns with disfavour find their way. Our desires are repressed and not killed. They hide themselves from our view and continue to exert their malignant influence on us in a still more ruinous way. There is no escape from the tentacles of this tyrant. It is unreasonable in the sense that conscious reasoning has no power of thwarting its activity. It is clear that such a theory aims a fatal blow at all our moral and spiritual ideals. For, if all our endeavours for self-discipline and purity only help to create an unhealthy background for our mental life and fail to eradicate the animal impulses, what good is there in the pursuit of virtue? Religion then

really becomes an 'illusion' as Freud believes it to be.

The force of the unconscious has long been recognized in India. The Yoga psychology paid great attention to it. This is also admitted in all the practical religious systems of the Hindus, which take for granted the Yoga psychology. Psycho-analysis has just re-discovered in this an old truth, which it has stated with a scientific clarity and precision. It is, however, yet to arrive at a further truth which Yoga has already found out. It is true that, when we deny our violent and impetuous desires their normal outlets of expression and harbour them inwardly, they recoil on us with all the malevolent power of an obstructed mountain stream. But there is such a thing as substituting one passion by another, impure thoughts by holy ones. Mind, like nature, abhors vacuum. You can no more take up a purely negative attitude in life than you can live on air. If we are anxious to escape the bonds of our worldly cravings, we must cultivate holy thoughts in their place. As Ramakrishna has said, our sincere cravings for a noble ideal eat up all our animal impulses. This is what Yoga says and what psycho-analysis has to learn. Yoga admits that our unsatisfied cravings go to form the fine Sanskâra-vâsanâ complex which is equivalent to the psycho-analyst's unconscious. But it further states that the steady arrest of a particular vritti (modification of the mind-stuff, i.e. thought) on the conscious plane has a subversive and annihilating effect on the heterogeneous Sanskâra-vâsanâ complex accumulated for a long time. The steady cultivation of a holy thought washes away all the accumulated dirt from the mirror of mind, which then images the Truth without any distortion.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**LECTURES ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA.**  
BY D. S. SARMA, M.A. *Published by N. Subba Rau Pantulu. Rajahmundry. Pp. 213. Price Re. 1-4-0.*

This book is a collection of six lectures on the *Gîtâ*, which were delivered by Mr. D. S. Sarma at the request of the Hindu Samaj, Rajahmundry, with a view to instilling into young minds a love for that scripture. It also contains an English translation of the work. Mr. Sarma has already acquired a reputation for his lucid and commonsense exposition of the message of the *Gîtâ*. By this present and admirable publication he has put the public under further obligation.

The series begins with a discourse on the way in which to read the *Gîtâ*. There are so many ways of approaching the *Gîtâ*, ritualistic, theological, scholarly, and the fault-finding way of the missionaries. These are rightly condemned. The *Gîtâ* has to be approached in an intensely religious and practical spirit. Only then it would bind in a common unity of purpose the manifold activities of our life. He is far from taking any sectional view of the work. The appeal of the *Gîtâ* is to the whole man and not to his isolated logical understanding. "The *Gîtâ* touches our hearts, convinces our minds and shapes our will. It covers the whole way of man's pilgrimage to the feet of God." He does not believe that the *Gîtâ* emphasizes any one path at the expense of the others. Rather, it maps out a graded and harmonious course of spiritual discipline for the entire humanity according to its need and development. Yoga or spiritual life as depicted in the *Gîtâ* "is like a hill whose base is action and whose top is contemplation. It is through right kind of action that we rise to contemplation." He dismisses the idea which is entertained by some that the *Gîtâ* is merely a gospel for social service or humanitarian work or a gospel of duty for duty's sake. It is absurd. "The *Gîtâ* no doubt, in a famous phrase, insists on the importance of work for the good of the world. But it insists much more on finding God who is the source of all goodness."

The author's observations on the attitude of the *Gîtâ* to spiritual life and to contem-

porary thought are illuminating, and his exposition of the Svadharma doctrine in the *Gîtâ* is eminently reasonable. The *Gîtâ*, he says, "recognises the force of natural disposition in man and teaches that every man should first be true to himself and should make the best of his natural gifts and utilise them for the service of God." In the last lecture he refutes the charge commonly levelled against Hinduism that it is otherworldly and apathetic to the idea of progress. He believes that the *Gîtâ* teaches us, in the words of Vivekananda, to steer clear of the Scylla of old orthodoxy on the one hand and the Charybdis of the mad career of modern Europe on the other. The excellent Foreword written by Sir S. Radhakrishnan has enhanced the value of the work. There are also three appendices containing the views of Tilak, Gandhi, and Malaviya on the *Gîtâ*.

### FRENCH

(1) JNANA YOGA ; (2) BHAKTI YOGA ; (3) KARMA YOGA ; (4) RAJA YOGA ; (5) ENTRETIENS INSPIRE'S. TRADUITS DE L'ANGLAIS PAR JEAN HERBERT. *Depositaires Generaux: pour la France: Adrien Maisonneuve, 11, rue Saint-Sulpice, Paris; pour la Suisse: Delachaux et Niestle, Neuchâtel; pour l'Inde: Bharata Shakti Nilayam, Pandichery.*

The interest in Vedânta philosophy is steadily growing in the continent of Europe. But, it was a pity that while the valuable works of Vivekananda, which contain the most authentic and popular exposition of the principles of practical and theoretical Vedânta in the modern times, have long been available to the English-speaking public, no translations of his works appeared in the principal continental languages until a short time ago. It is not a day too soon, therefore, that Mons. Jean Herbert of the League of Nations has undertaken to translate them for the benefit of the French readers. Mons. Jean Herbert has long taken an active interest in Hindu religion and philosophy and is, for that reason, eminently fit to grasp the significance of terms and view-points which often elude the subtle skill of otherwise learned translators. These translations of the four Yogas and the Inspired Talks cover the most important



portions among the works of Vivekananda. This rendering into French has been extremely faithful and lucid. We wish their wide circulation and feel little doubt that they will be eagerly welcomed by all who want to acquaint themselves with the real message of Vedânta.

### HINDI

**KALYÂN, SÂNTÂNK—IN 3 PARTS. VOL. 12. NOS. 1, 2 AND 3.** *The Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur. Price inland Rs. 3-8 as. ; foreign 7s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. (bound).*

The special numbers of the *Kalyâna* have already achieved a wide celebrity by reason of their rich and instructive contents. The present number which deals with the lives of saints in India from the remotest period of her known history down to the recent times fully maintains the usual standard of excellence. There are 825 articles on saints and holy men belonging to the different creeds and ways of life, which prevailed and prevail in India. Besides these, quotations from the sayings of many saints and four hundred and thirty illustrations of different kinds have greatly increased the attractiveness of the issue. The number is sure to form a valuable companion to all devotees.

**THE KALYANA KALPATARU. SRI-KRISHNA NUMBER. VOL. 4, No. I.** *Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 280. Price Rs. 2-8-0. Foreign 5s.*

Like all the previous special numbers of the *Kalyana Kalpataru* the present one also contains a feast of informative articles ranging over a wide area. There are over sixty contributions from the pens of different Indian writers of distinction upon various aspects of the life and teachings of Sri

Krishna. The volume is also enriched by a number of coloured and silhouette illustrations.

**GITÂ DHARMA, VISVA DHARMÂNK. GITA DHARMA KARYALAYA, BENARES. Price Rs. 2-8 as.**

This special number of the *Gitâ Dharma* on religion contains 157 contributions on the various branches and aspects of the Hindu Religion. There are also 24 coloured illustrations in the issue. This will serve as a compendious guide-book to those who wish to be acquainted with the various schools of Hindu religious thought.

**BHAKTI-YOGA. BY CHAUDHARI RAGHUNANDAN PRASAD SINGH. The Gitâ Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 699. Price Re. 1-2 as.**

The author has lucidly discussed all the different aspects of the practice of devotion in this elaborate work. Thanks to his remarkable acquaintance with the scriptures, he has been able to illustrate his topics which are over seventy in number by numerous quotations from the *Sruti*, the *Smriti*, the various *Purânas*, the *Bhâgavat*, the *Gitâ* and the writings of great commentators like Ramânûja and others. It is a very thorough piece of work and should be in the hands of every aspirant after devotion.

### MARATHI

**MAJHE GURUDEV. TRANSLATED FROM ENGLISH BY S. B. THOMBRE. Published by Swami Bhaskareswarananda, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, C.P. Pp. 97. Price 4 as.**

This is a faithful and clear translation in Marathi of Swami Vivekananda's well-known work in English, *My Master*, which deals with the life of Sri Ramakrishna in brief.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE AT THE BELUR MATH

#### AN APPEAL TO OUR COUNTRYMEN

Readers of the Life of Swami Vivekananda are aware that when he succeeded in finding a permanent home for the sacred remains of his great Master Sri Ramakrishna at the Belur Math, near Calcutta, in the year 1899, he heaved a sigh of relief as having discharged a heavy responsibility.

It was his firm belief that the Master would live in that sanctuary for ages to come, "for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many"; for did he not say to his beloved Naren, "I will live wherever you will carry me"? That the place has a peculiar attraction for men and women from all parts of the world holding diverse beliefs, is patent even to a casual observer who watches the ever-increasing crowds of visitors that gather there every day, parti-

cularly on festive occasions. A large percentage of these people come with sincere religious hankerings in their hearts, and never fail to experience an inward peace and blessedness. All this is attributable to the divine presence of Sri Ramakrishna, who was the embodiment of purity, love and spiritual power.

Swami Vivekananda had dreams of erecting a temple of Sri Ramakrishna on the grounds of the Belur Math. He had even prepared under his directions a plan and design of the temple, which was to be an imposing stone structure with a spacious Natmandir or prayer-hall capable of accommodating a thousand devotees. But he did not live long enough to carry out his project. The cruel hand of death cut short his eventful life in its very prime. The plan and design he left for his proposed temple remained a sacred heirloom with his brother-monks, who could not get together the necessary funds for such a big undertaking. Recently, however, an offer of help came from an unexpected quarter. Some self-sacrificing Western devotees proposed to contribute Rupees six lakhs and a half exclusively for this purpose, with a request that the temple be completed as early as possible. Accordingly, a plan and design of a part-stone structure consisting of a Garbhamandir (main shrine) faced with Chunar stone and a Natmandir (prayer-hall) partly faced with it, were prepared on the basis of the plan and design left by Swami Vivekananda, and construction started under the supervision of Messrs. Martin & Co., Calcutta. The edifice, when complete, will be a unique work of beauty and grandeur, which will harmoniously blend some of the salient features of Oriental and Occidental architecture, and be strong enough to withstand the ravages of time for centuries to come. It will certainly be the first one of its kind in Bengal, which possesses no stone temple worth the name.

But the promised donation from the West, although princely, has proved insufficient for the purpose, and needs to be supplemented by other contributions to the extent of at least Rupees one lakh and a half to finish the temple and to construct other necessary works connected with it such as a kitchen and store-rooms, a landing ghat and a protective embankment. The construction will be finished by March next. So the above sum has to be collected forthwith. It occurs to us that there may

be thousands of devotees and admirers of Sri Ramakrishna all over the country who sincerely feel that the temple erected in his honour at the Belur Math must be as strong and imposing as possible, and they would naturally like to contribute their quota in materialising the cherished project of Swami Vivekananda. We therefore consider it our duty to acquaint the public with the present situation regarding the temple and invite their kind co-operation. Our reticence in this matter has led many to conclude that the whole of the estimated cost has been subscribed and that consequently no further help is necessary. But it is not so. Now is the time for our countrymen to demonstrate their admiration and regard for Sri Ramakrishna according to their means. Here is an opportunity for them to join hands with our Western friends, so that both East and West may unite in paying homage to this great Prophet of the Harmony of Religions, whose advent was for the good of the whole world. Any contribution sent to the President, Ramakrishna Math, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, mentioning the Temple Fund, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
Acting Secretary,  
Ramakrishna Math, Belur.

1st November, 1937.

#### SWAMI SOMANANDA

It will be a painful shock to many to learn that Swami Somananda, one of the disciples of Swami Vivekananda, suddenly passed away at Bangalore on the 4th of October last. Inspired by the lectures of Swami Vivekananda, he first left his home in 1898 and went to Almora to sit at the feet of the great Swami. But when, on reaching the place, he came to know that the Swami had already gone to Kashmere, he, being penniless at the time, covered the whole distance from Almora to Kashmere on foot. Swami Vivekananda was highly pleased at his spirit of renunciation and intense yearning for God-realization, and sent him after some time to the Belur Math where he was admitted as one of the members of the Order. His silent and unostentatious life soon made him one of the most popular figures in the Math. After the passing away of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Somananda went to Bangalore, where



he lived almost a secluded life till the end. During the closing years of his life he undertook the moral and spiritual training of the convicts of the Bangalore Jail, and his inspiring teachings brought about a complete reformation in the lives of many of these criminals. Needless to say the R. K. Order has lost one of its most earnest souls in his passing away.

### SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

We record with a heavy heart the sudden passing away of Swami Gnaneswarananda, Head of the Vedanta Society, Chicago, U. S. A., from heart failure on the 14th of November last. For some time past he had been ailing from heart troubles, but none dreamt that the end of a life so full of youthful vigour and liveliness of spirit was so near. He was only 44 when he died.

Swami Gnaneswarananda, known in early life as Satindra Nath Chakravarty, came of a middle-class family in the village of Shekhnagar in the district of Dacca, Bengal. His zeal for all kinds of creative and philanthropic activities, which found so abundant an expression in his later years, was in evidence quite early in his life. Most of his time as a student was spent in nursing the sick, relieving the poor and the needy, organizing centres of physical culture and in learning music. In 1914 he graduated from the Jagannath College, Dacca and came into contact with Swami Premananda, one of the direct disciples of Ramakrishna. This proved a turning-point in his career, and his zest for work discovered a new channel of fruitful endeavour. And though he continued his post-graduate studies for two years more, they lost then flavour for him, and he was drawn more and more to the activities of the Dacca centre of the Mission, which came into being about that time. In 1916 he was initiated into real spiritual life by Swami Brahmananda, the then President of the Mission, and in 1917 he renounced the world for joining the Order. After staying a year at Dacca, he came to Benares, where he spent four years, devoting himself to the service of the sick and to study and meditation. Meantime he was initiated into Sannyasa in 1919 by Swami Brahmananda. From Benares he went to Patna at the request of a number of devotees and opened a centre there. By four years of strenuous and pioneering work he put the Ashrama on a

stable basis and came to command the great love and respect of the people there. Heavier responsibilities, however, called him to the Math, in 1926, from where he was sent to New York in 1927 for the work of preaching Vedanta. A couple of years after, he went to Chicago and organized a centre in that historic city where Swami Vivekananda first delivered the message of Vedanta to the American audience in 1893. There, by his patient labours, his kind heart and suave manners, his manifold accomplishments and talents, he drew round himself a band of sincere aspirants for spiritual life. Apart from the usual routine of a religious preached, his rich personality enabled him to instruct his students in various aspects of Indian art and culture. In the unbounded enthusiasm for his cause which he prized so much he taxed his energies too much and developed symptoms of heart trouble which eventually proved fatal. The tragic end of such a talented life full of the aroma of a kindly and genial soul has come as a great shock to all his friends, admirers, and devotees. May Lord kindly take unto Himself a soul which dedicated itself to His feet.

### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES CITY

#### REPORT FOR 1936

Since its inception the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service has been rendering medical and other forms of general service to one and all, irrespective of age, sex, caste, creed or colour. The steady expansion of the work of the institution is a tribute to its usefulness. The activities of the Home during the period under report can be divided as follows:—

*Indoor General Hospital:* There are 145 beds in all the wards together. The total number of cases treated during the year was 1,437. Of these 980 were cured and discharged, 113 were relieved and discharged, 124 were discharged otherwise, 106 died and 114 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The total number of surgical cases in the Indoor Hospital was 215, of which 73 were major cases.

*Refuge for the aged and invalid men:* Three permanent inmates were accommodated during the year.

*The Refuge for the aged and invalid women* contained nine inmates during the year.



*The Refuge for paralytic patients* accommodated eleven paralytic cases.

*Chandri Bibi Dharamsala Fund*: Under this head 118 men and women were given food and shelter.

*Outdoor Dispensaries*: The total number of new patients treated at the outdoor Dispensaries of the Home of Service was 61,206 as against 51,846 of the previous year and the total number of repeated cases was 1,12,225 as against 93,478 of the previous year.

*Outdoor help to poor invalids and helpless ladies of respectable families*: Under this head 184 persons received weekly and monthly outdoor relief in cash and kind.

*Special and Occasional Relief*: Under this head 11,416 persons were given help in the shape of either books for students, food for stranded travellers or similar relief as occasion demanded.

#### PRIZE-DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, BELUR

The Prize-giving Ceremony of the above School came off on the 18th September, at 5 p.m., with the Hon'ble Justice Mr. C. C. Biswas in the chair.

There was a select gathering and amongst those present were Messrs. H. P. Bhowmik, retired P.M.G. (Madras), Kumar Bishnu Prosad Roy (President of the Managing Committee), Babu Annanda Gopal Mukerjee (Chairman, Bally Municipality), S. N. Chakrabarty (Secretary of the Medical College), Swami Sankarananda (Acting Secretary of the R. K. Mission).

The meeting began with devotional music. The Secretary's report of the work done in 1935 and 1936 was read on his behalf by Swami Gambhirananda, a member of the Managing Committee.

The Chairman then gave away the prizes to the respective winners and in the course of his address he paid a warm tribute to the work of the Mission in general and that of the Industrial School in particular.

Swami Ghanananda of the R. K. Mission thanked the Chairman and the audience on behalf of the management.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE

##### REPORT FOR 1936

The activities of the Ashrama are mainly social and educational. During the year under report the Swamis of the Ashrama

took weekly classes on religious and moral subjects at nine different places in the locality. Besides these, every Sunday, a class for a large group of students was held at the Ashrama on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. During the year the "Study Circle" which was inaugurated in 1934 contained five members of the Order.

The Ashrama also maintains a Students' Home. The strength of the Home at the end of the year was eight, of whom one was given free board and lodging and another, free lodging only. The Ashrama also helped the social welfare work started in an adjacent village by the villagers themselves. It also observed the birthday celebrations of numerous saints during the year. The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary celebrations which were held in January, 1937, were a great success. The Ashrama also maintains a library for the use of the inmates and the members of the "Study Circle". There were a few additions in the number of books during the year.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR REPORT FOR 1935 AND 1936

The activities of the Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur, during the period under report were as follows:

*Preaching Work*: Several members of the Mission paid visits to the centre during this period and delivered lectures and held discourses on various religious subjects. The birth-day anniversaries of the various saints were celebrated. The weekly religious sittings were also continued as usual.

*Educational Work*: The Society maintained two free reading rooms and libraries and four free schools in 1935 and six in 1936. The total number of boys in the schools at the end of the period was 801. The Society also runs a Students' Home whose strength at the end of the period under report was 9. Of these five were free and four concession-holders.

*Social and Philanthropic Work*: During the period the Society nursed a number of patients, cremated some dead bodies and gave help in kind and cash to stranded and indigent people. It also co-operated with other welfare departments and philanthropic organizations whenever such co-operation was needed.

Receipts and expenses during the years were Rs. 10,994-1-6 and Rs. 10,982-14-8 respectively.



## THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL HOME AND SCHOOL, BELUR

REPORT FOR 1936

The Industrial School trains students in (1) cabinet-making, (2) weaving together with dyeing, and (3) tailoring. The courses are of different durations. After the completion of their respective courses, efficient boys are allowed further workshop training. With the exception of an admission fee of Rs. 5/- and a game fee of Re. 1/-, no other fees are charged for tuition in the school. The indigent among the scholars are also helped with stipends.

The number of students in the school at the end of the year was 40. Of the 8 students who appeared for the final examination of the school, all came out successful during the year under review. The students undergoing training in the Industrial School also put in some hours of training in the Agricultural Section to equip themselves thoroughly for a career in rural areas.

The strength of the boys in the Home at the end of the year was 23. The younger boys are imparted some general education in the morning and evening. The religious atmosphere of the Math also tends to benefit the boys morally and spiritually. Regular classes on the scriptures are held every evening. The boys are also taught devotional songs in groups. The boys are further encouraged to take part in various kinds of social and recreative activities and to take regular physical exercise.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BANKURA

REPORT FOR 1936

During the year under review, the centenary birth celebration of Ramakrishna was celebrated with great success by the Bankura Ramakrishna Math. As usual, regular classes on the scriptures were held in the Math premises. Several members of the centre also went to different places during the year for the purpose of propagating the message of Sri Ramakrishna.

The activities of the Bankura branch of the Mission during the year were as follows:

(1) *Education*: Seven students were learning homoeopathic medicine at the Mission dispensary, of them five were living at the Math. The free primary school run by it had on average 85 students during the year.

(2) *Charitable Dispensary*: Both allopa-

thic and homoeopathic treatments are resorted to in curing the patients. The number of patients treated during the period under report was 22,200.

(3) *Various kinds of relief work*: During the year the mission also undertook different kinds of relief work in areas where famine and epidemics had made their appearance.

## THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BHUVANESWAR

REPORT FOR 1935 AND 1936

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bhuvaneshwar, during the period under report were as follows:

(1) *Missionary*: The Swamis of the centre went to various places in Orissa on invitation with a view to propagating the ideas and ideals of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. The various anniversary and centenary celebrations in different towns and districts were a great success.

(2) *Educational*: The free primary school was run as before. Besides, many deserving and poor students prosecuting their studies in M. E. and High Schools were helped with books, school fees, etc.

(3) *Charitable Dispensary*: During the period under review the total attendance of patients was 69,053. The patients did not belong exclusively to Bhuvaneshwar proper, but a large number came from the surrounding villages and the remote districts of Orissa.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, CAWNPORE

REPORT FOR 1936

During the year under review the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, Cawnpore, were as follows:

(1) *Preaching*: A religious class was regularly held on Sundays at the Ashrama for the benefit of the workers of the Ashrama as well as the public. The Ashrama also celebrated various festivals and anniversaries and organized 21 public meetings which were addressed by the Swamis of the Mission.

(2) *Philanthropic*: The out-door charitable dispensary of the Mission treated altogether 26,550 cases during the year. Of these 100 were surgical. A large number of persons were also provided with food, shelter, and other requirements.

(3) *Educational*: The Ashrama runs the following three free schools: (a) Vivekananda

Vidyapith for boys, (b) free night school for labourers, (c) free village school at Behta in Unao district. The number of students in these institutions at the end of the year were 60, 18, and 50 respectively. The Ashrama also maintains a Students' Home which is a hostel for boys run on Brahmacharya lines. The inmates are made to pass through a regular routine calculated to benefit them physically, morally, and intellectually. Out of the 12 students accommodated during the year 9 were free, 2 half-free and 1 paying. Five boys who did not belong to the Home were helped with stipends for a part of the year.

(4) *Physical and Social*: The Vivekananda Institute is a popular branch of the institution. It has provision for out-door and indoor physical exercises and other entertainments, such as music and games. The institute is equipped with up-to-date appliances for physical culture. It was well utilized. The Ashrama has also another gymnasium, namely, Vivekananda Vayamshala, for Harijans. The average attendance of the *âkhara* was 40.

The pressing needs of the Ashrama are funds for the extension of the Dispensary Building.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, BANGALORE

#### REPORT FOR 1936

The Ashrama organized a series of lectures in different parts of the town by the Swamis of the Order. Besides these activities in the city, Swami Srivasananda also undertook a preaching tour in the Districts of Bangalore and Kolar visiting Bowringpet Goldfields, Mulbagal and Doddaballapur. The period under review also witnessed the steady extension of the educational and preaching activities of the Ashrama.

The Saturday evening discourses were continued up to May last and about 40 discourses were delivered on the *Bhagavad Gitâ* on Sunday mornings. The classes and discourses continued to attract a large number of audience. The centenary birth celebrations of Ramakrishna were celebrated with great success. The Ashrama also observed the birthdays of the great Acharyas and other world teachers.

### RAMKRISHNA ASHRAMA, FARIDPUR

The activities of the Ashrama fall under the following heads:

*Religious*: Besides daily classes for the benefit of the inmates of the Ashrama, Sunday classes were held for the public. Further, during the period twelve lectures were delivered at different places outside the town.

*Educational*: The Ashrama runs two schools, the Mahakali Pathshala for girls and the Metharapara Free Primary School for the boys of the sweepers. At the end of the period the schools had 54 and 24 students respectively on their rolls. The Ashrama also maintained a Students' Home, where poor students were supplied with free board and lodging. The strength of the Home at the end of the period was five. The Ashrama further maintained a free library for the public.

*Philanthropic*: Several needy persons were given help in cash or in kind. The Out-door Homœopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 19,674 patients during the period under review.

The Ashrama celebrated the birth centenary of Ramakrishna with great success. Its pressing needs are funds for the School, the Home, the Dispensary and the Library.