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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

OUTPOURINGS OF A DEVOUT HEART*

BY JOHN MOFFITT

O Lord, must all my days be spent
In such unfruitful banishment ?
All day, all night, I keep alive
Solely in hopes Thou wilt arrive !

Yet Thou art Lord of every sphere,
And I but a luckless beggar here :
How can I dare to say to Thee,
“Dear Master, come Thou unto me ?”

I leave my heart's door open wide,
But still my poor heart weeps inside :
Wilt Thou not deign to enter there
And soothe her feverish despair ?

* Adapted from a Bengali song.

SIDELIGHTS ON HINDU CULTURE

BY THE EDITOR

I

A comparative study of the Eastern and Western thought-systems has placed at the disposal of modern scholars certain data which reveal in unmistakable terms the fundamental difference that subsists between the two people in their outlook on life and culture. The dominant feature of Oriental thought is its insistence on creative intuition, while the Western systems are characterized more or less by a greater adherence to critical intelligence. In the East both religion and philosophy are practical and more a matter of spiritual culture than of scholastic learning. They are identical in their ultimate aim and constitute the obverse and reverse of the same shield of life. They are not considered as mutually repellent forces, but are the creative expressions of an organic whole of being. In the opinion of Swami Vivekananda, religion in the East is a question of fact, not of talk. A man may believe in all the churches in the world, he may carry in his head all the sacred books ever written, he may baptise himself in all the rivers of the earth, still if he has no perception of God, he would be characterized as the rankest atheist. Religion, *in the true sense of the term*, belongs to the supersensuous and not to the sense plane. It is being and becoming. True religion does not consist in merely going to the church or putting external marks on the forehead, or dressing in a particular fashion; one may put himself in all the colours of the rainbow, but if his heart has not been opened, if he has not realized God,

it is all vain. "That is real religion which makes us realize the unchangeable One, and that is the religion for everyone. He who realizes transcendental Truths, he who realizes the Atman in his own nature, he who comes face to face with God, he who sees God alone in everything, has become a Rishi." Man must realize God,—that is what is meant by religion in the East.

In fact it is the attainment of spiritual freedom—the transcendence of the narrow and egoistic impulses of life and the ascent of the human soul to the vision of the Universal—which is fundamental to Hindu religio-philosophical thought; whereas an inordinate emphasis on reason and the powers of the intellect are the characteristic marks of the Western attitude to life. This tendency to neglect the perceptual basis is the besetting defect of the philosophy of the West. For, in such an over-accentuation on the powers of the intellect, we get a philosophy of arid concepts having nothing to do with the flowing stream of life. Truth becomes a dead conformity to certain logical conceptions and ideas with no prompting from life. In art technique gets the mastery over temperament. Morality comes to be of the drill sergeant type, insisting on nothing more than a blind unthinking obedience to the commands delivered. Rationalism thus murders reality to dissect it. We find a mechanical perfection in place of spiritual beauty, cold uninspired reason in place of the vivifying light of synthesis, logic in place of life. The

dire consequences resulting from the adoption of this exaltation of brain over the soul, in practical affairs of the world, we see to-day on the fields of Europe cf. Professor Radhakrishnan: *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*). With the exception of a few anti-intellectualists such as Plotinus, Eckhart, Locke, Bergson, Schopenhauer and the like, who advocate intuition as the proper organ of absolute knowledge, almost the whole host of Western philosophers have attempted to plumb the profound depths of the Infinite with the measuring rod of intellect and as such have to be satisfied with the very poor results of their speculative venture. Many have even described the supreme Reality as identical with the dialectical progression of human thinking,—a Reality which, in the words of Dr. Bosanquet, is ‘the correlative of thought and may be defined as the object affirmed by thought.’ But in India the conception of Reality is just the opposite. The Absolute, according to the Hindu view, is Transcendental and is the foundation and prius of all actuality and possibility. It is the presupposition of all reasoning, of knowledge and experience. It is the perennial Fount from which all the varied streams of human thought draw their vital inspiration. The immanent and transcendental character of this matrix of all life, all rationality, and activity has been indicated in more places than one in the Sruti: “All this is Brahman” (*Chhând. Up. III. 14. 1.*). “This immortal Brahman is before, is behind, is to the right and to the left; It is below and above,—is all-pervasive. Brahman is all this,—this infinite world” (*Mundaka Up. II. 2. 11.*). “Through Its fear blows the wind, through Its fear rises the sun, and through Its terror speed Agni and Indra, and Death as the fifth”

(*Taitt. Up. II. 8.*) “This Brahman is Existence, Knowledge and Infinity” (*Taitt. Up. II. 1.*). It would be a sheer mistake to think that this Brahman, being infinite in nature, will ever remain an unrealizable Entity to the spiritual genius of humanity. Had it been so, the Vedas and the Upanishads and other sacred Books of the East and the West that record the varied grades of the spiritual experiences of the seers of old would have been no better than mere myths and figments of a heated imagination, yielding no truths whatsoever, and the greatest saints and mystics from whose quivering lips ecstatic utterances have leaped up in moments of their spiritual exaltation, would also have been of no use to human society. But the Sruti is replete with eloquent passages that unmistakably assure the possibility of such a knowledge of the supreme Truth dawning upon the consciousness of sincere aspirants. So did an ancient seer of India declare, “Hear, O ye children of Immortality,—ye that reside on earth and in the region celestial! I have known that Infinite Purusha who is effulgent as the sun and beyond darkness. Thus knowing Him alone, a person overcomes death; there is no other road for obtaining liberation” (*Swetaswatara Up. 3. 8.*). “This Self was indeed Brahman in the beginning. It knew only itself as ‘I am Brahman’. Therefore It became all. And whoever among the gods knew It also became That; and the same with the sages and men. The sage Vamadeva, while realising this (Self) as That, knew, ‘I was Manu, and the Sun.’ And to this day, whoever in like manner knows It as ‘I am Brahman,’ becomes all this (universe)” (*Brih. Up. 1. 4. 10.*). “He, O Gargi, who departs from this world after knowing this Immutable, is a knower of Brahman” (*Brih. Up. 3. 8. 10.*). “Those who have known the Vital Force of the vital force,

the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, and the Mind of the mind, have realised the ancient primordial Brahman" (*Brih. Up.* 4. 4. 18).

II

But this transcendental Self-knowledge which is the very soul and basis of Indian thought and culture is not to be confused or equated with the truncated wisdom of the Western intellectualist. It transcends the limited boundaries of human reason without contradicting it, and gives immediate certitude and carries with it the guarantee of its own authenticity. When such a consummation is reached, the illumined one feels his own identity with the Supreme Truth and becomes a completely integrated personality. These geniuses give us a foretaste of what all human beings are destined to be. We acquire through their aid a heightened awareness of the meaning of life. They shake us out of our scepticism and their lives reveal the truth that cannot be refuted. Their influence is compulsive for they do not speak as the scribes but as those having authority.

Indeed it is these mystics and god-men who are the salt of the earth, but for whose presence this world with its endless strifes and struggles for pelf and power, with its sins and evils, would have been an arid desert unfit for human habitation. A Sri Krishna and a Buddha, a Zoroaster and a Christ, a Mahomet and a Ramakrishna are but so many shining lights in the vast wilderness of the world to illumine from age to age the trails to be followed for the realization of the ultimate end of human existence. If India is great today in spite of many a political cataclysm, if her culture is still a living force in the realm of human thought, it is because here on her sacred soil are being born since time immemorial those seers of Truth whose spiritual

wisdom travelling down the stream of time has been quickening into life the manifold phases of her synthetic culture. The annals of India are not merely a bundle of certain political phenomena hanging on the framework of chronology but a living record of broad movements in thought and morals, religion and philosophy as well,—displaying the efflorescence of a variety of creative forces into concrete facts of our collective life. The history of Indian culture is therefore in the main the history of the spiritual contributions of these master minds. To deny the certitude of spiritual perfection to these dynamic personalities—the best fruits of our culture—proves only our own intellectual limitation to realise the depth of their spiritual attainments. We can hardly hope to understand the real beauty and significance of a thing of which we have had no experience. Talk to a child of ten, as Dr. Das Gupta has aptly put it in his *Hindu Mysticism*, about the romantic raptures of love felt by a pair of lovers, or of the maddening intoxication of sense-cravings; what would he understand of it? Talk to a Greenlander about the abnormal heat of an African desert; will he be able to imagine it? When an experience is to be realised the powers of mere logical thinking or of abstraction or of constructive imagination are not sufficient for the purpose. Only another realisation of the same experience can testify to its truth—an experience which is non-conceptual, intuitive and ultimate.

III

This indeed is the most distinguishing characteristic of Hindu thought and culture, viz., its bold and unequivocal pronouncement that religion is a matter of spiritual culture, and the attainment of supreme realisation is possible even in this very body, if the aspirant

is sincere to the backbone and possesses the dogged tenacity of a Nachiketas. In the *Brihadâranyaka Upanishad* it has been distinctly stated, "When all the desires that dwell in his heart are gone, then he, having been mortal, becomes immortal, and attains Brahman in this very body" (IV. 4. 7; cf. IV. 2. 4; I. 4. 10). Acharya Samkara, in his commentary on this Sruti text, says that 'when all the desires, i.e., the various forms of yearning,—those well-known desires concerning this and the next life, viz., the desire for children, wealth and worlds, that abide in the intellect of the ordinary man and which fall under the category of ignorance, are destroyed together with their roots, the man of realisation becomes immortal, i.e., attains identity with Brahman (i.e., liberation), living in this very body.' In the *Chhândogya Upanishad* the very same fact has been emphasized, "Thus does this serene being rising above its body and having reached the highest light, appear in its own nature" (VIII. 12. 3). The *Bhagavad-Gita* also strikes a similar note when it declares, "Even here birth is overcome by those whose mind rests on equality. Spotless, indeed, and equal is Brahman; wherefore in Brahman do they rest" (V. 19). In fact when this supreme knowledge of the Self dawns, the illumined one transcends the standpoint of mere individualism and ascends to a synthetic and universal vision beyond the limitations of time, space and causation. Such a liberated soul (*jivan-mukta*) bursts forth in joy, "I have a tangible perception of the eternal Self; therefore I am blessed. The supreme felicity of Brahman is manifest unto me; therefore I am blessed. The miseries of earth-life touch me not; therefore I am blessed. I have nothing proper left to be done; therefore I am blessed. My desires have all been accomplished;

hence I am blessed" (*Panchadashi*, ch. VII. 292-295).

IV.

No further proof is needed to point out that it is this vision of the ultimate Reality which forms the corner-stone of the mighty edifice of Indian culture. It is this spiritual outlook on life which has lent an abiding grace and coherence to the varied forms of her life and thought. And this is one of the principal reasons why the civilisation of India, in spite of the manifold vicissitudes of her political fortune has been able to maintain its existence through shining scores of centuries. The West, despite her material prosperity and splendid conquests in the realm of Nature, cannot but feel dwarfed and insignificant before India's cultural glory. In India religion is the central pivot round which have revolved all her socio-political institutions from age to age and will continue to do so in time to come for the further enrichment of her cultural life. But, rightly says our Indian philosopher, "it is a bewildering phenomenon that, just when India is ceasing to appear grotesque to Western eyes, she is beginning to appear so to the eyes of some of her own sons! The West tried its best to persuade India that its philosophy is absurd, its art puerile, its poetry uninspired, its religion grotesque and its ethics barbarous. Now that the West is feeling that its judgment is not quite correct, some of us are insisting that it was wholly right! While it is true that it is difficult in an age of reflection to push men back into an earlier stage of culture and save them from the dangers of doubt and the disturbing power of dialectic, we should not forget that we can build better on foundations already laid than by attempting to substitute a completely new structure of morality, of

life and of ethics. We cannot cut ourselves off from the springs of our life. Philosophical schemes, unlike geometrical constructions, are the products of life. The heritage of our history is the food that we have to absorb on pain of inanition" (*The Heart of Hindusthan*, P. 149). It will indeed be interesting to note in this connection the splendid tributes paid to Indian thought and philosophy by some of the leading lights of the West. Schopenhauer, the illustrious German thinker, once remarked, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death." So did the celebrated French philosopher Dr. Cousin write, "When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical movements of the East, especially those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discern there so many truths, and truths so profound and standing in so strong a contrast with those mean results which, in later days, have satisfied European genius that we are tempted to bow the knee before the genius of the East, and see in that cradle of mankind the true home of philosophy." Dr. E. W. Emerson of America while writing to a friend made a similar observation, "In the sleep of the great heats there is nothing for me but to read the Vedas, the Bible of the Tropic. . . . It is sublime as heat and night and breathless ocean. It contains every religious sentiment, all the grand ethics which visit in turn each noble poetic mind." So did Max Müller, the illustrious English Savant, say, "If philosophy is meant to be a preparation for a happy death, or euthanasia, I know of no better

preparation for it than the Vedanta philosophy." No less eloquent and inspiring were the tributes of Thoreau who candidly remarked, "What extracts from the Vedas I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum,—free from particulars, simple, universal. It rises on me like the full moon after the stars have come out, wading through some far summer stratum of the sky."

It must not be forgotten that Hindu civilisation is founded, not upon the commercial and industrial interests of the people, but upon the eternal moral and spiritual laws which govern their lives. In India the foundation, the backbone, the life-centre is religion and religion alone. This nation lives; the *raison d'être* is because it still holds on to God, to the treasure-house of religion and philosophy. If the lofty ideal of this universal religion of Vedanta that permeates every phase of Indian culture is followed to the letter and spirit, it can never be productive of any evil in human life. On the other hand it will make every individual a nucleus of great dynamic force in the evolution of his socio-political organism. This is indeed the keynote of Hindu culture which is broad as the sky and deep as the ocean, and holds in its wide bosom an infinite variety of ideas and ideals hitherto evolved by the creative genius of humanity. This Hindu culture offers, as such, an unlimited scope to human life for its boundless expansion. And that is why it has been able to survive the shocks and changes of centuries and even now promises to play a glorious role in the enrichment of human thought and civilisation.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Sri Ramakrishna : Krishna told Arjuna, "Brother, you will not find me, if you possess even one of the eight occult powers." You may have a little power, for example the power to relieve and heal suffering by charmed medicines. It is like the Brahmacharin who dispenses medicines. Of course, it benefits the people to some extent. Isn't it so?

So I prayed to Mother for pure devotion only; I did not ask for the powers.

* * *

Sri Ramakrishna : Devotion to His lotus feet is the essence of all; everything else is false.

Mani Mallik : There is a saying of Tulasidas that the eight metals turn into gold at the touch of the philosopher's stone. Even so all castes, even the shoe-makers, the bhangi, are purified by uttering the name of the Lord. Again, "without the name of the Lord the four classes are Châmârs."

Sri Ramakrishna : The same skin which it is forbidden to touch can be taken into the shrine after it has been cleaned and tanned.

Men become pure by uttering the name of God. So one should practise the recitation of His names. I told Jadu Mallik's mother, "The same worldly thoughts will recur at the time of death. There will be thoughts about the family, children, the will, etc., and no thought about the Lord. The cure is to practise the repetition and recitation of His name. If this becomes a practice, His name alone will come to the lips at the time of death. The (tutored) bird will only shriek out when caught by a cat, it will not then utter "Rama, Rama" or "Hare Krishna".

It is good to be prepared for the time of death,—to retire into solitude towards

the end of life and to think of God and take His name alone. If the elephant is put in the stable after bath, he cannot any more bespatter himself with dust and mud. . . .

Why do I ask you to take His name in solitude? There is no peace if one dwells in the world always. Do you not find brothers killing each other for half a yard of land? The Sikhs say that all troubles and disquiet arise out of land, woman, and money.

You live in the world. What fear is there? When Rama spoke out his desire to renounce the world, Dasaratha became uneasy and sought Vashishtha's help. Vashishtha told Rama, "Rama, why should you renounce the world? Argue with me. Is the world without God? What will you renounce and what accept? There is nothing beside Him. He is appearing as God, Mâyâ, the individual soul and the world."

Balaram's father : Very difficult.

Sri Ramakrishna : At the stage of the *sâdhanâ* the world is a "structure of illusion"; again after the attainment of knowledge and God-realization this world is a "mansion of joy".

It is written in the Vaishnava literature that Krishna is realized through faith, but is very far from ratiocination. Only faith!

What tremendous faith Krishna-kishore had! A person of an inferior caste drew water from the well for him at Brindaban. He asked him to take the name of Siva, and drank the water when the latter had uttered the name of Siva. He used to say, "Of what use are expensive purificatory rites after one has taken the name of God? What absurdity!"

Krishnakishore would be astonished to find tulasi leaves being administered in disease.

At the talk about visiting a certain holy man Haladhari remarked, "What shall I go to see? It is no more than a case of the five elements." Krishnakishore flew into a rage and said, "Did Haladhari say such a thing? Does he not know that the body of a holy man is made up of Consciousness?"

At the ghat of the Kali temple he said to us, "Bless me, so that I may

pass my days by repeating the name of Rama."

As soon as I would go to his place Krishnakishore would dance on seeing me.

Ramachandra said to Lakshmana, "Brother, wherever you will see exuberance of devotion, know that I am there."

As for example, Chaitanyadeva. "He laughs and weeps, dances and sings of love." Chaitanyadeva was an Avatâra—God who has come down.

APPROACHES TO THE IDEAL

BY KALIDAS BHATTACHARYYA, M.A.

I

The ideal is often viewed as constructed from the actual. As such it loses two of its characters. First, it is no longer absolutely binding. For the ideal as a construct depends to a large extent on our attitude toward the actual, and it is a fact that this attitude is contingent being often determined by circumstances which scarcely have abiding values. Secondly, as a corollary of the first, there are no longer permanent ideals. What is an ideal to-day may be laughed away to-morrow as an illusion.

There are people who extol just this contingency and change. The seeming necessity and permanence of the ideal are, according to them, meaningless obsessions that run counter to life's adaptations. To cling to unchanging ideals and make fetish of these is conservatism which, they say, is worse than death.

This is positivism. In modern times it has its sway which it never had before. Sages from lofty towers may sound notes of warning. But no one heeds them. The reason is not far to

see. Cheap condemnations of positivism can seldom convince the modern man who sees all around the glories of positive science. The moderner has a strong ground to stand upon. This should first be appreciated. Then and then only can he be made to think what other possibilities there are. To measure his strength fully let us state his view as accurately as possible.

The ideal is said to be contingent and impermanent. But obviously enough this cannot be asserted all too easily. For the ideal immediately appears as necessary and permanent. When you try to convince yourself that justice is only a contingent virtue that might be suspended for a time, or the nature of which is not of a fundamentally fixed type, you fail. Whenever there is a talk of suspending justice it is only the suspension of a contingent means for the attainment of true justice, or true justice is suspended with full consciousness that what has been done is wrong. And whenever justice is said to be of differing types

what is meant is that one basic form is exemplified in diverse circumstances. The appearance of the ideal as necessary and permanent cannot then be avoided. And hence its contingency and impermanence should be described as what demand recognition through the cancellation of an appearance to the contrary. Let us see how far it can be justified.

The crucial point is why in spite of an unavoidable appearance its contrary is taken as real. The reply consists of two distinct steps. First, the unavoidable *as such* need not be real; and secondly, a notion of reality, other than unavoidability, is here employed, with which as the standard the seeming necessity and permanence are cancelled.

To take the first point. The unavoidable as such is only a necessary appearance or thought. Suppose a rope is misperceived as a snake. Now that the illusion is over, what can be said of the snake that appeared? Immediately there is no ground to say that the snake that appeared was nothing. Somehow or other we are compelled to admit an outside snake—we say we saw a snake there. But for whatever reason we are also bound to admit that the snake was not real. Here therefore there is an unreal snake necessarily, i.e., unavoidably, recognised as what appeared. This shews that the unavoidable as such is no more than a mere necessity that has not yet attained the status of reality or unreality. The necessity or permanence of the ideal then is, if there is no further consideration, a mere necessary appearance.

The unavoidable is that the absence or the contrary of which can never be entertained as believable. But this should not be taken to mean that the unavoidable is therefore believed. It is much too hasty to hold that because not-A is unreal therefore A is real. It

should be borne in mind that axioms, pure logical and mathematical principles are believed not on the simple ground that they are unavoidable. If mere unavoidability could guarantee reality the snake in the rope-snake illusion would have been real.

The unavoidable as such is neither real nor unreal. But what then is the real? Philosophers have given widely divergent ideas of reality. On a closer scrutiny however it will be seen that except in one case a distinction has always been drawn between something as essence and others as appearances, and essence has always been taken as the only real or at least as more real than appearances.

The meaning of 'essence' should be made clear with reference to some examples. Suppose a friend of mine, quite sane and virtuous, shoots down a man while aiming at a tiger. That he has killed the man is an unavoidable appearance. Nevertheless one who knows the *essence* of the friend, myself for example, will not admit that he *really* killed the man. Be it remembered that here there is no confusion between assertion of a fact and moral appreciation. This latter is only another name for the assertion of the *true* man. Essence is what abides in changing appearances. In man it is proximately his habits and dispositions, then his character and ultimately his self or a still more transcendent entity. In other cases essence is what is ordinarily called substance. If out of clay pots and bricks are made, the clay is the essence and pots and bricks are appearances. If a rubber band now expands and then contracts, the truth of the situation is the band itself as the essence. In the case of the rope-snake illusion the rope is the essence because it is abiding and the snake an unavoidable appearance; and because

the rope is the essence of the situation it is called real.

Be it remembered again that here we do not confuse value with reality. If essence is value it is nevertheless what is always posited as more real than appearances. Essence, in other words, may be more *valuable* than appearances; only this value is more metaphysical. Metaphysics may start with appearances; but it does not stop till the essence is reached. Further there is no discontinuity between what the oppositionist sets apart as value and reality—reality continuously develops into value. In the rope-snake illusion again no one would call the rope a value though it is real only because as abiding it constitutes the essence of the situation.

There are people who hold that the rope is real only because it is not contradicted. But not to be contradicted is no positive nature of reality. Those who hold that non-contradiction is the criterion of reality still believe that a content is real if it participates in the universal 'existence' or is necessarily applicable to what so participates. But this is because existence is the most abiding principle and therefore the highest essence. Existence is the highest universal; only the universal has to be understood not as abstract but as a substantive.

Others again believe that reality is only a contingent function of 'neutral stuff' or metaphysical entities which are neither real nor unreal. Apart from other objections to it, it may be pointed out that the neutral stuff has been taken as metaphysical only because it is said to be the essence of the situation.

There are still others who do not admit 'neutral stuff' and yet hold that a content is real if it satisfies the desire it generates toward itself. To them we put the question—how does the

content stand apart from this desire and its satisfaction? If it is an intellectual content, if, in other words, it has self-identity apart from the conative context, this theory is practically the same as one dealt with in the last paragraph. If, however, it is maintained that contents are necessarily in the conative context this is palpably false. No one denies that all contents *may be* taken in the conative context; and then pragmatism is only an alternative theory of reality. What we deny is that pragmatism is the only metaphysics.

Lastly, there are people who hold that a content is real if it is consistent with, i.e., forms a system with, other contents. But in this theory also it is presupposed that a *system* of members is more abiding than the members taken singly, and is therefore the essence of the situation.

Barring pragmatism then it may be maintained that essence is the truly real or ultimately metaphysical.

Now about the relation between the actual and the ideal. Those who deny necessity and permanence of the ideal, those, in other words, who call these characters unreal, believe that the actual is the essence of which the ideal is the appearance, or, better, a function. The idea is that if there are some specifically different entities which combined yield another entity this no doubt is not immediately unreal; nevertheless it is less real than those other entities from which it is produced, for these entities constitute the essence of the situation. This is why science speaks of atoms and ether as the real stuff of the world, and looks to the concrete world of manifold things of diverse shapes and sizes, of colour and beauty, as more or less unreal. This is why the material cause is often taken as the true originator, the efficient cause being more or less that

which counteracts preventive agencies. This is also the reason which led the ancient Indians and Greek philosophers to seek the essential stuff of the world.

Positivists take the actual as the essence (and therefore the ideal as the appearance). But why? Obviously because the actual is given to our senses or at least capable of being so given, while the ideal is not so. When an actual thing is perceived it is given to senses; when it is inferred it is believed only as capable of being perceived; and when something is known from the testimony of a reliable person we believe it only as given, or capable of being given, to the senses of that person. The ideal, however, is never given to senses; nor is it capable of being so given. Besides, whatever is believed as a concrete substantive admits of betterment; the ideal as the best cannot be bettered; hence it is not a concrete substantive. The ideal is then an abstraction; and an abstract entity cannot be the essence of a concrete one. Rather the concrete should be the essence of the abstract.

This is the real ground of positivism. The actual is preferred and the ideal is regarded more or less as an accidental by-product.

II

Spiritual philosophy is the direct opposite of positivism. It is religion or super-religion, and to it the ideal is the essence and the actual an ephemeral appearance. Let us see how this can be taught to a positivist.

The actual has been taken as the essence and the ideal its appearance or function. But what objection is there if some one chooses to take the ideal as the essence and the actual as the appearance? The actual no doubt is present concretely to sense, and from this point

of view the ideal is abstract. But why make a fetish of concrete presentation to sense? Essence, we have agreed, is that which abides in changing appearances. But has not the ideal presented itself, though not to sense, as most abiding, as universally valid and absolutely permanent? The positivist tries to brush off this necessity and permanence as mere appearances that demand to be negated. But this he is at pains to show only because he has the preconceived idea that the actual is the true essence. If then essence is the most abiding, the ideal has a greater claim to essentiality than the actual.

The positivist will no doubt argue that in relation to the actual the ideal appears as abstract and that the abstract cannot be the essence of the concrete. We admit the abstract cannot be the essence of the concrete. We also admit that the ideal appears immediately as abstract when contrasted with the actual. But if the ideal also appears as most abiding and satisfies thereby one criterion of reality, may we not revise our attitude toward it? May we not look to the ideal in such a way that it appears as concrete?

Let us take a simple case where by means of an effort the abstract may be made to appear as concrete. Suppose from the speeches and activities of a man we form an idea of his character. So far the idea is abstract in relation to the speeches and activities directly perceived as concrete. But on gaining intimacy of the man, may not his character be directly and concretely felt? The intimate friend of A is not guided by a mere abstract idea of his character. It is just the difference between a friend and a non-friend of A that the friend has got a direct and concrete knowledge of A which the non-friend has not. By closer association

then an abstract idea can be rendered concrete. This does not mean that the later concrete appearance is illusory. No one denies that the friend knows the character of A better than the non-friend.

Dhyâna is only another name for this closer association, and friendship one of its forms. The Upanishads preach that the abstract (*parôksha*) knowledge of the Absolute has to be made concrete through closer association. It may be said that any abstract idea can be so concretised. In Kant's philosophy we find how this can be achieved through imagination and moral will. The Vedânta and Yoga are just the methods of concretising abstracts. Indeed whenever philosophic vision is spoken of as a new method what is meant is that abstracts should be either cancelled or made to appear as concrete.

It is not our task here to shew *how* the abstract ideal can be visualised as concrete. All religions are ways of this concretion. Indeed religion may be adequately defined as the process of making concrete what appears at first as an abstract ideal. Religion is more than intellectual construction. It is the attempt to *visualise* constructs. Different religions are alternative ways of this visualisation.

But is visualisation necessary? Can we not stop with intellectual construction? Such questions may be asked by the positivist. The reply however is easy. If the real is wanted and the false is sought to be avoided, constructs have to be visualised. For intellectual construction does not by itself guarantee the reality of the construct. If on seeing a column of smoke on a hill we infer fire there, we believe in this fire not because we have constructed it; we believe it because we feel sure that if we go up to the hill we shall perceive

it there. For if perchance a man who is known to be truthful comes from the hill and swears that he saw no fire there at the time we inferred it, our belief in the fire will either cease immediately or at least demand to cease.

Further in an inference of the form "All M is P, all S is M, therefore all S is P", the conclusion, though appearing as "all S is P", is not really so. For if S is known as a case of M, its being P was foreknown, because we already know that all M is P. In other words if "all S as M is P" is not known to be true in some sense or other we could not have asserted the proposition "all M is P": The conclusion of the said inference is only 'this particular case of P'. "Wherever there is smoke there is fire, on the hill there is smoke, hence on the hill there is fire"—what is really inferred here is only a particular case of fire which we did not know before. The hill does not enter directly into the content of the conclusion. The hill that is perceived and the particular case of fire which is inferred are fused in an extra-inferential process much akin to what is known in Psychology as Fusion.¹

If then the conclusion of an inference is a particular case of P, how do we know its particularity? Elsewhere particularity is known directly by perception; or, better, perception is, for us, the *sine qua non* of the particularity of the content believed. Here also then it has to be admitted that a conceptual content, viz., fire-in-general claims to be visualised in inference.²

On the assumption then that we want reality and shun the false it has to be acknowledged that an intellectual con-

¹ Into the details of the controversy I do not like to enter. I state here my own convictions leaving the matter to those who study technical philosophy.

² *Ibid.*

struction necessarily demands to be visualised. There is, however, a class of thinkers who do not want reality at all. They believe that metaphysics is concerned with constructs only which are neither real nor unreal, reality or falsity being contingent pragmatic categories. Apart from other objections to it, it may be pointed out that to remain satisfied with what is immediately neither real nor false is absurd. That there are such entities cannot be denied—the snake in the rope-snake illusion appears so, the necessity and permanence of the ideal appeared so to a positivist. What we mean is that such entities involve a demand. The snake demanded to be ultimately negated; and similarly with the necessity and permanence of the ideal as to a positivist. There may well be cases where a neither-real-nor-false appearance may demand to be ultimately real, as is the case with the ideal in all its characteristics to a religiously minded man. He often fails to assert (also to deny) the full-fledged ideal immediately. But as most abiding it demands recognition of him as the highest essence and therefore as the truest reality. Also an appearance neither real nor false may claim to remain so for all times to come, as the small appearance of the moon or events in a dream. Anyway there is always a demand to visualise the appearance either as real or as unreal or even as neither real nor unreal. Visualisation being thus necessary all intellectual philosophy has to develop into religion. Otherwise it is a mere *play* with intellect, a kind of useless intellectual gymnastics.

III

Only a handful of sages have visualised the ideal. This, however, is not discouraging. Truth is known always to a few. These few are *rishis* and their

revelations pass as scriptures. Doubtless these few alone are justified to assert what happens when the ideal is visualised. Yet *we* can form some idea in analogy with mundane cases.

When the rope-snake illusion is over, the snake persists as a past appearance neither real nor unreal. And because the rope is taken as the essence of the situation the snake demands to be visualised as nought. In analogy with this it may be said that when the ideal is realised as the highest essence the actual stands immediately as neither real nor false, but demands to be visualised as nought in the long run. In spiritual realisation then there are two stages qualitatively different. First, the actual still persists as a necessary and yet indescribable appearance; and secondly, by a further effort this appearance has to be rendered nought. In the Advaita Vedânta the two stages have been distinctly stated. At the penultimate stage Brahman is realised; but the world as *mithyâ* still persists which has to be rendered *mithyâ* once again at the highest stage. Much dispute has centred round the point. It has been questioned whether double negation here does not reaffirm the original position. But as *we* have stated the point there need be no such difficulty. At the penultimate stage the world persists as neither real nor false, but as demanding at that very stage to turn out nought; it does turn out nought at the next stage. The penultimate stage is religion. The ultimate stage is a higher form of religion or super-religion. Super-religion then negates the actual.

At the penultimate stage the actual stands as neither real nor false. This means that at that stage the actual stands as an appearance or function of the ideal. The ideal is then the concrete

substantive; and whatever additional there seems to be in the actual is, either as imagined or as thought, less concrete, i.e., more abstract. Spiritualism then is the direct opposite of positivism.

But if in the refutation of positivism it has been said that all abstracts can be rendered concrete by closer association, may not the same thing be said here? May not a spiritualist at the penultimate stage turn round to the actual, and instead of negating it rather try to revisualise it as real by further closer association?

This option, I believe, is left to a spiritualist. He may by means of super-religious culture negate the actual and become One without a second. Or he may veer round and try to re-realise the world by a further religious effort. It is obvious that this re-realisation is fundamentally different from the positivistic realisation of the actual. To the positivist the actual was concrete in cotradistinction to the ideal as the abstract. But to a religionist the ideal stands already as the most concrete, and the actual is sought to be rendered concrete. When the actual will be made concrete the idea will lose nothing. Here there are three possible relations between the actual and the ideal. Either the actual will be incorporated in the ideal as its necessary and real mode, or both as co-ordinate will be systematised in a higher Absolute, or, as the exact reverse of the first, the ideal will be incorporated in the actual. This last possibility means that there is a return to a higher form of positivism.

Samkarâchârya advocates the first view, viz., that a spiritualist should transcend the stage of religion altogether, and wholly negating the actual become One without a second. Râmânûja advocates the second view, viz., that the actual has ultimately to be incorporated

in the ideal as a necessary but real mode. Hegel advocates the third view that both the actual and the ideal form a system each remaining co-ordinate in it. I know of no one who advocates the fourth view. But this, I believe, should be the view of one who after honest spiritualisation comes back to positivism.

There is yet another possibility. The actual that at the penultimate stage stands neither real nor false may demand to remain so for all times, so that at the highest stage there will be two principles, one of Reality, viz., the ideal, and the other of neither-reality-nor unreality, viz., the actual.

The actual standing at the penultimate stage as neither real nor false has been variously termed *Mâyâ*, *Avidyâ*, the principle of imperfection, of imitation or negation, etc. Samkara and some medieval thinkers of Europe take this as ultimately a cipher. Râmânûja and some other medieval thinkers take it as a function of God. Hegel and many Chinese and Greek thinkers take it as co-ordinate with God. (The peculiarity of Hegel, however, is that he conceives of another higher stage where the two should be comprehended in the Absolute that transcends God even.) Plato and Leibnitz believe that the principle of imperfection or imitation is neither real nor false for all times.

Higher positivism, i.e., positivism through spiritualism, shews that positivism and spiritualism are true alternatives, that neither can claim to be the only metaphysics to the complete exclusion of the other. Not that the two must combine. The two will remain eternally as absolute alternatives.

IV

In modern times people care little to find out the true relation between the

actual and the ideal. It is good if you are a staunch positivist and do not care for spiritualism, or if you are a staunch spiritualist and be a *sannyâsin* remaining aloof from the world. For positivism and spiritualism are absolute alternatives; and you may choose either; only do not spite others that fail to agree with you. It is good also if remaining in the world you do what the state and the society demand of you and yet remain disinterested in all that happens round you. For this is quite in keeping with the philosophy that the ideal alone is real and the actual is ultimately neither real nor unreal. But to have the full interest in worldly politics and yet to sermonise on the ideal is dangerous. *If you can* harmonise both, no harm: this is the Hegelian attitude which is quite correct. But the two are often notoriously at variance; the world often goes counter to the ideal. They preach non-violence as the ideal. But if you do not defend yourself often by violently opposing the enemy who is about to strike you will have to leave this world. Do they mean that it is better to die than live by violently opposing the violent foe? But then there is no room for politics. Politics is for those who live, not for those who die. Often again, it is said that if I remain absolutely non-violent my foe will in the long run cease to be violent. But who knows that this 'in the long run' will not cover the whole span of time? If cows prefer to enter the mouth of a tiger the tiger will one day cease eating the cow—*this sermon is for those who want spiritual guidance, not for those who want to liberate the country from bondage.* Either engage actively in politics and cease to talk of the ideal except as an expedient, or leave politics and speak as much on the ideal as your heart demands.

Then again about truth-speaking. There are many occasions when to save ourselves and our friends we have to tell a bit of lie. It is bad to tell a lie. But we are to live, and live among friends, there is no escape from it.

The clash between the actual and the ideal is there. It would be a happy state of affairs if either could be ignored. The fact is that we cannot combine the two satisfactorily. Yet we must combine them. To ignore either or harmonise the two is no doubt what philosophy demands. But if that could be done we were super-men. What then should we do?

The Gîtâ, as I understand it, preaches in one way what should be done. Its philosophy is spiritualism. But Srî Krishna knows too well that men of this world cannot be spiritualists before they have lived long enough in this world. So taking Arjuna as their type he exhorts him to leave neither the actual nor the ideal. The necessities of the actual have to be met; but the beacon light of the ideal must not be lost sight of. Srî Krishna urges Arjuna to kill men as that was necessitated by the circumstances—as he says, to fight is the duty of a *kshatriya*. But killing men cannot surely be an ideal. Hence Arjuna is asked to fight *dispassionately*. This means that though he must kill men he must not in the last resort be guided by worldly motives. The ultimate motive should be the ideal. This is *nishkâma karma*. *Nishkâma karma* cannot here mean motiveless activity, for either this is non-volitional or, if volitional, it is at a very high level of spirituality which it is very difficult for us, mortals in flesh and blood, to attain, and which therefore could not be taught by a sane man to Arjuna in a battlefield. Srî Krishna means that whenever something is done the worldly motive

has to be superseded by the ideal as the true motive. In other words, if the actual necessitates an activity which goes against the ideal it has no doubt to be done but with full consciousness that what is so done is wrong. This is the only way how an ordinary man can purify himself. The advice of Srî Krishna, be it noticed, leaves no room for hypocrisy. Whatever is done cannot mean whatever one is tempted to do. The actual necessity is determined by *dharma* or sociological necessities (which are ultimately biological) as already tempered as much as practicable by the ideal.

Supersession of worldly motives has

been sometimes interpreted as destroying these altogether, or as remaining uninterested in worldly affairs, or as making such motives part and parcel of the ideal. But considering the circumstances, Srî Krishna could not have said such things to Arjuna.

The teaching of the Gîtâ is one way of solving the puzzle. There is another, viz., the Hitlerian, if consistently pursued. The Gîtâ assumes spiritualism as the highest truth. But positivism is an alternative philosophy. And from its point of view the exact opposite of the doctrine of the Gîtâ may be taken as another solution of the puzzle.

REASON, REVELATION AND FAITH

BY PROF. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

“The sensitive soul oversteps the condition of time and space; it beholds things remote, things long past and things to come” (Hegel).

Religion is not the reflection on life. It is the sympathetic understanding of life. It is living experience. It is direct contact with the living Reality. It is its appraisal through every channel of experience, and therefore it emanates from the rhythm of our whole life. The full nature of religion is difficult to understand, for sympathetic understanding varies in proportion to our responsiveness to the rhythm of life. The differences in religion or spiritual experience emanate from the degrees of responsiveness. Spiritual life is insight, reception and responsiveness. It is very difficult to fix its form as we become responsive in the different parts of our being and with different degrees of intensity.

Religious experience is unique, for it proceeds directly from the wise passiveness of the soul; it is essentially identified with life, and the more the life opens into its sublime immensities, the more it yields its nature and reveals its reality. This living experience is not a matter for reason to judge or to appreciate, for in the finer vibrations and the genial currents, thinking has no place. Reason, frankly speaking, builds up a scheme of knowledge and can hardly envisage the spiritual heights of our being, and the richness of experience. Reflection on spiritual experiences is not religion. These reflections leave us cold and indifferent and cannot give the joyousness of spirit. It can only give us the intellectual map of spiritual life, which gives at best the foundation of faith in the light of reason. It has to forego the living foundation of faith. Reason examines the condition and the

possibility of faith and can enter into fruitless discussion whether the life of faith is consistent with the life of knowledge. But the controversy has its origin in the attempt at rationalising faith, quite ignoring that faith has a higher orientation than reason, as it is associated with life. Reason may find out and discover dynamic relativity involved in its nature, and in this can see the basis of a spiritual life. But to say that spiritual life has in it a polarity of the finite and the infinite and to accept it as the rational basis of faith does not go far to indicate the nature of that life. And it is naturally so, for reason cannot rise above its own nature and enter into the heart of things. Reason can see the setting, but cannot enter into the innate experiences imbibed in the life of the spirit. Understanding is the least part of religion. It is essentially experience, the sense of numen. And hence reason always falls short in giving the true picture of religion.

The conflict of faith and reason is the conflict between life and understanding. And this conflict is due to the enforced division between the two. Understanding apart from life can raise a schema of faith, but in this construction we forget that life has its inner movements which reason cannot penetrate into. To characterise religion as the emergence into eternal life in the divine is the least understanding of it. The touches and the impress of the divine upon the dedicated spirit cannot be appraised exactly by reason. It is a living experience.

Spiritual life is appealing because of its richness, because of its responsiveness to life in its majesty and fullness—it is essentially life in its finest and richest expression. Spiritual life develops its own understanding, an understanding that sees the immediate

presentation of experiences and their orchestral unity. And in it the joyousness and the security of faith goes with knowledge. Religious experience is the complete presentation of life and naturally religious life cannot be a life without a deep appeal to the foundation of our nature. And indeed it is a truism that in spiritual experiences our nature gets the fullest satisfaction, for here the faculties of the soul are presented in their best form and in their finest intensity.

Religious experience presents life in its integrity and completeness. It is a life which is rich in every way, rich in vividness of feelings and rich in magnitude and qualities; hence reason instead of building up a schema finds here in it a rhythm which can present the transcendental Truths. Life in its finest urges does not leave any side of our nature unrepresented; it exhibits the transcendental Truths and at the same time indicates life's movements towards the assimilation of them in life's completeness. Religion has no meaning, if it is detached from Truth; the life of faith and the life of reason in their rhythm combine to present and enjoy the highest Truth which is also the greatest Holy. They present the two sides of the integral experience; reason, the setting in its immediateness; faith, the core of spirit.

Religious life is the fullest life. It is the life of transcendental knowledge, beauty and holiness. It makes our life full and intense at every point, and the difference that is sometimes emphasised between these experiences emanates from the absence of integral faith and experience. When the fuller harmony of life becomes active, all the aspects of life become effective. Reason in its rhythm appraises Truth, faith in its rhythm finds the greatest security, love in its rhythm appreciates the finest joy,

eternal life and movement. The spiritual life does not leave any side of our nature blank, for it is fuller life, finer delight, and greater truth.

If spiritual life is assuredly a finer life and a wider experience, naturally it will go with revelation, for revelation is emanation of Truths from the deep recesses of being. The word 'revelation' in these days has an ill grace in it, since it is supposed to point to a supra-rational source of knowledge. And since revelation is associated with the life-history of a particular personality, it naturally loses its force because it makes great demand upon faith and credulity. In the great historical religions, save and except Hinduism, revelation takes place through some historical person, and hence naturally, with all the respect shown to their life, character and utterances, human reason has tried to find out the rational basis of faith, for revelation requires the surrender of reason and the ready acceptance of a truth not otherwise accessible. And sometimes the revealed texts give so diametrically opposite opinions concerning the fundamentals of life that it becomes almost impossible to assess their values properly.

Such difficulties are natural when the source of knowledge becomes extraordinary and uncommon. These difficulties are greatly enhanced by emphasising the externality of revelation and its source. The human mind is accustomed to think of revelation as a source of knowledge quite external to our mental formations and at times new truths visit us if it ordains and pleases God. The idea of a distant Divinity makes the revealed knowledge a matter of choice and caprice with Him; and the possibility of revelation more an accident—and a happy accident—than a possibility ingrained in our nature. This outwardness of revelation is what

reason finds difficult to grasp, for it enforces a division between human experience, human reason and divine wisdom. But this difficulty is immediately removed, if the inwardness of revelation and its inherent association with life is fully realised. If, instead of the conception of a distant Divinity sending forth His message in auspicious moments of life, life is looked upon as conceived and sustained in Divinity, revelation will mean a new flash in light, a new flow in life. Revelation is really the presentation of a finer and greater truth from the suprasensuous and the supra-mental but it does not mean that it is quite foreign to life; it is in it; and it emanates with the finer urges of life. The finest truths are set in it and they are given out where the movement of life is delicate, and the urges fine.

Revelation, indeed, implies the presentation of Truth not otherwise accessible, for the reason and sense cannot comprehend the layers of truths immanent in the recesses of being without a happy ascent to them. Life has its own indication, its own intuitions; and revelation reaches us from the height of life. Life has its inward guidance, and when the inward guidance emanates from the super-mind, life receives the light of revelation.

But all the indications of life are not revelations. Indications may proceed from our vital and instinctive nature. Indications may come from mind and higher intelligence.

But they are not revelations. They are formations in the different layers of our being. They do not proceed from the fountain source, from the encompassing mind. The impress of the super-mind upon life makes life radiant in joy, silent in peace, and luminous in knowledge. This super-mind contains supra-mental truths, which life constant-

ly aspires to realise; and the supra-mental impress makes life unfold its beauties and dignities. Revelation is, therefore, truly the supra-mental expression of life with all the possibilities contained therein.

Intuitions have great values, since they are the fine indications immanent in life. They reveal the secrets that are accessible in the ordinary course of development but revelations are truths that become accessible only when the supra-mental urge becomes active. Intuitions are possible to the sensitive, revelations, only to the elect. Revelation, therefore, implies a fitness where life can reveal its finest. Since this fitness is not everywhere present, revelation can be only possible in select cases.

Some form of psychism is implied in revelation. Revelation is the impress of the supra-mental truth but revelation is not psychic intuition. There are occasions where the psychic fitness exhibits some inner truths, the poetic, the artistic inspiration emanates from a psychic transparence and responsiveness, but that necessarily is not revelation; even the fine philosophic constructions are deep laid in the psychic layers of our being; but they are not revelations.

Revelation has direct connexion with our psychic nature and psychic harmony, but its essential character lies in its objectivity, and its objective impress. It is not a subjective intuition, or feeling. The self receives an impress from an inaccessible height. The psychic life in man is continuous with the cosmic life, and the psychic openings acquaint us with the radiations that emanate from the cosmic. And this accounts for the finer illuminations of revelations than psychic intuitions. The psychic intuition may proceed from the urges of our vital and psychic being; these urges are indications of the prospective vital or mental

growth; since the psychic life cannot ordinarily rise to a fineness to understand and feel the thread of connexion between it and the cosmic life. Psychic intuition cannot in every case reveal the supra-mental truths and purposes in the movements of life. But in cases where the psychic penetration is deep enough to be responsive to the cosmic urges, it reaches the wider range of knowledge, realises the greater possibilities of life and feels the deeper cosmic movements. Revelation introduces to us the aspect of life which is not otherwise accessible. The psychic fineness acquaints us with the vital and creative forces, with the idea-forces, with generic volitions. They emanate from the layers of our psychic life; but when the supra-mental intuition reveals the cosmic life, we are then entitled to get a glimpse of the transcendental Truths and the formations of the transcendental will. In revelation, therefore, the mind oversteps its own limitations and becomes free from the obscurities of its nature and with finer responsiveness it gets sure access into the Divine Wisdom. Supra-mental revelation, therefore, carries higher authority, for it originates from a source that cannot deceive, and received through an organ that cannot err.

The psychic fineness equally is not in every medium, and therefore every soul does not receive in the same way, and naturally there will arise divergence of opinion about revelations and all revelations will not point to the same Truth. Revelations proceed from the graded universes, for there is a vast range of cosmic life hidden before our eyes, and flashes from the universe reach us; and unless the psychic perception can reach the highest pinnacle of supra-mental life, the finest revelations cannot be obtained. The spiritual life appears, therefore, in the beginning as the growth of the finest possibilities, for the spiri-

tual life is really an opening to the finer ranges of experience; but unless the psychic life can catch the main spring of the cosmic life, life cannot enjoy the true revelations of spirit. Insight into graded worlds and revelations are, therefore, to be distinguished. The former are true to their respective spheres, the latter only to the Divine. The Divine Wisdom, therefore, must proceed direct from the divine source and not from any finer layer of being; these flashes open to us ranges of existence, but they do not reveal the divine life in its immanence or in its transcendence.

Life is exposed to error in almost all stages of its expression and naturally in our upward ascent, and unless the mind can distinguish the expressions and the divided urges from the main spring of the supra-mental current, it has every chance of mistaking the shadow for the reality. And naturally revelation is possible when the impress comes from the main spring of life and consciousness. This emphasis at once distinguishes revelations from the other urges of life, however finer and radiant. The tendency of the age to explain spiritual life as a sublimation of sex is an illustration of this usual fallacy.

The vital urges, however refined, cannot pass for religious life. The spiritual urges touch all parts of our being and can gradually transform the instinctive urges to its advantage and remove the

division of nature and being. The fundamental deficiency in the modern interpretation of religion lies in the enforced divorce of religion from its fountain source. To explain religion as the finer manifestation of the vital or the psychic urge is really to miss its true nature and import.

The spiritual urge is the finest urge in life. The vital and the mental expressions are obstructed expressions of life. It is easier to conceive the finer gradations of life as more original than to conceive them as evolved by pressing urge. This urge is rather the proof of a finer life, which is exhibited under resistance and pressure. But that does not mean that the fine is less original and newly evolved. The resistance felt by the finer urge for its expression is clear proof that creative expression is the moulding of the gross by the delicate impress of life. The ordinary dualistic consciousness conceives the moulding of life in this way, but really the fine and the gross are equally the urges of life, but the one is more expressive and elastic and the other less expressive and less elastic. Life is elasticity and expression, and where both of these indications are the finest, life has best exhibition and richest experiences. In ascending scale of expression, the restricting and the seemingly dualistic character is removed.

THE PROBLEM OF TOLERANCE*

BY PROFESSOR HENRI-L. MIEVILLE

Let us first of all distinguish between tolerance and what we might call broad-mindedness. Tolerance is of course hardly compatible with narrow-mindedness, but it does not consist in accepting all ideas, in non-discriminating, in not rejecting the false and untrue. It is less an attitude towards ideas than a certain disposition of mind towards men who hold those ideas. That state of mind results in a certain practical behaviour; a tolerant mind is not easily offended, is not shocked at meeting men who feel and think differently, and is unwilling to exert on those men the slightest pressure to make them alter their views.

Before going further into the problem of tolerance, I felt that I ought to investigate my own mind. I asked myself whether I was tolerant, and I discovered the answer was rather difficult to find.

First of all, there are different kinds of tolerance. There is the kind which costs nothing, because it necessitates the overpowering of no strong feeling, no passion. But is that tolerance proper? That seems to be the view of d'Alembert, who wrote to Voltaire: "Philosophy will not easily find another prince who is tolerant *through indifference*—which is the right way of being tolerant."

The right way it may be, but not the only one. Can we be tolerant even when the ideas which we tolerate do not leave us indifferent, even if those ideas

arouse in us feelings of disapproval or anger or scorn, even if we deem them harmful? It would seem that d'Alembert did not exclude the possibility of such a tolerance, but was rather sceptical about it. He rather seems to doubt that tolerance could be genuine when it consists in the suppression of other feelings which would naturally make us wish to fight certain ideas, certain beliefs, and to silence those who profess them. Can d'Alembert be right? Can there only be true and genuine tolerance in things which leave us indifferent? To be tolerant, when tolerance costs us nothing? A fine and meritorious victory indeed!

We cannot however view things only as psychologists. That attitude is helpful, and even necessary sometimes if we want to understand, and there are cases in which understanding may open the way to intelligent sympathy. But we are not and cannot be meant to live a purely contemplative life; we cannot refuse to form an opinion, to be for or against certain principles, certain beliefs which play a constructive part both in collective and in individual life. Unless we accept a *diminutio capitis*, unless we are ready to be less than men in the fullest sense of the word, we cannot seek refuge in an *integral* neutrality towards what we now call ideologies or what we might call the beliefs which

* Translated from the French by Mons. Jean Herbert. "This paper was read by M. Miéville at the annual gathering of Swiss intellectuals in the Castle of Oron, in 1938. M. Miéville who was the President of the meeting is a Professor of Philosophy in the University of Lausanne, and the author of extremely important philosophical books, in which a great effort is made to meet Eastern and particularly Indian wisdom, while strictly abiding by the methods and criteria of Western philosophy. It will be important for the Indian reader of this study never to lose sight of the meaning in which Professor Miéville uses the word "truth"; the relation of thought to reality."—Translator.

have a decisive influence on the life of nations and on the inner life of man.

I must admit that in those cases where I am not indifferent, where my emotions are affected, when I have opinions as to relative values, I feel that I am the prey of terrible intolerances. Attitudes which I deem unintelligent or brutal arouse in me irritation, a kind of dull anger, something like a will to destroy. I may note that the most violent reactions of intolerance are aroused in me by intolerant ideologies which I disapprove, and by their practical consequences, the revolting sight of which we hardly ever escape for a single day. To me injustice and violence are repulsive, and if I have a quarrel against unjust and violent people, it is not only on account of the immense sufferings which they cause in the world, it is also because they awaken in me—and probably also in many other people—old dormant instincts which would make *me* also violent and unjust, and I must afterwards exert a great effort to control those instincts. For violence brings forth violence, and injustice brings forth injustice. I admit that between feeling intolerant and being actively intolerant the way may be longer than between the cup and the lips—which is fortunate. But for all that, I discover in my own self all sorts of ferments of violence; and if they were given favourable conditions in which to develop, they would in all probability become virulent. In what we call our own “virtues”, what is the part played by circumstances, by our surroundings, by what is not “myself”? I am inclined to think that that part is extremely important,—which shows how fragile our civilisation is, and how necessary it is to make a constant effort to reconquer what we believe is our own. Spiritual values cannot be stored up in a cupboard like silver, everybody

knows that. But it may not be unnecessary to say it again and to act accordingly.

As soon as we leave the plane of the psychologist's researches and throw ourselves into the medley of ideas, tolerance becomes difficult to practise. There are several reasons one of which is purely logical. Whenever I declare something true, whatever that may be I exclude the possibility of the contrary proposition being true; that is only logical. Nothing is more uncompromising, and we might say more intolerant than truth. If yea is true, nay is false; we must make our choice. For that reason, feeling ourselves to be in the possession of truth does not make us inclined to tolerance.

Of course if we give words their narrow meaning, tolerance, as I have said already, has nothing to do with ideas, but is an attitude towards the men who hold ideas different from ours. But here we see a process which psychologists call a transfer. If we hate an idea, we are very near to hating the man who holds it, who stands for it, who incarnates it. Our disapproval for a certain way of thinking or of feeling is transferred to the man who thinks or feels in that particular way, and it thereby changes its nature. It tends to become moralistic in character, all the more so as our own feelings are more strongly involved: the mistake tends to become in our eyes a fault, or a sin. And since faults and sins are within the realms of morals, it will then appear legitimate not only to disapprove them, but also to suppress them. In this way we drop very easily—but not necessarily—from our belief in a truth which we think we hold into intolerance.

Such an intolerance may of course remain within us as a tendency, and be checked by contrary influences. But the fact remains: to believe that we

possess truth is not conducive to tolerance. That belief may even give intolerance a justification which is all the more satisfying as we may honestly think we personally have nothing to do with the matter, and by being intolerant we only serve truth, right or progress. That is most flattering to our vanity which as you know is not above camouflage.

But as a matter of fact our own self is always involved, whether we realise it or not. Whoever attacks our ideas attacks *us*, and imperils our self-confidence and our deep convictions. Intolerance in most cases is a kind of self-defence; *only strong people can be tolerant*. When we defend the truth as we complacently call it, we always defend also, and perhaps mostly, our own inner balance and peace of mind. I do not want to say that it can or should never be otherwise. I merely note a fact which explains in most cases why we are inclined to intolerance, and which removes from intolerance that halo of selflessness which it too often dons in our eyes.

The above remarks may also help us to understand why tolerance is so rare. We cannot be tolerant unless we can distinguish between the idea and the man who holds it, and unless we realise that our attitude towards a man whom we believe mistaken should not be the same as that towards the ideas for which he stands. The whole of the man is never to be found in his ideas, nor in the action he takes in pursuance of those ideas. In the man is a mystery on account of which we never entirely understand him—and he never entirely understands himself. “A man, as Lagneau put it, is always greater than what he does, and is always above what he knows himself to be.” How could one be tolerant unless one suspects that greatness, however low the man may

have fallen? I realise that it is not easy to retain always that faith in man, and still less easy to make it play when our whole being is shocked at the sight of perversity or cruelty. This is precisely when we can derive great help from the psychologist's attitude, which has no place for illusions, but no place for hate either. Our first impulse is to hold our neighbour responsible for his ideas and feelings as if he had chosen them, as if he had deliberately become what he is. What a childish mistake! Let us remember for a moment the infinitely complex entanglement of the influences which bear on a human being, the hereditary dispositions with which he is born, his possible incapacity of judging, the cruel way in which life may have treated him—and our attitude towards him will be bound to change. We may still hate what seemed to us hateful in his manner of thinking or of acting, but before mentally murdering him—let us not forget that intolerance finally leads to murder, or at least to a kind of mental murder—we may stop to think on the threshold of *his* mystery, and discover that *his* mystery is also ours. Are we after all so different from him, and so superior to him? Is it not something of our own which we hate in that man? Pharisees!

Tolerance further necessitates a certain kind of disinterestedness, of non-attachment to our own self and to a sort of intellectual comfort. Let us say that it presupposes our acceptance of a risk—which we can evade when we refuse to meet and consider ideas different from those which we have been holding. Our need for an absolute certainty above everything, and also the strength of habit are too often allowed to prevail over our disinterested love for truth.

Let us find out whether there are philosophical systems which favour

tolerance and give it a foundation and a theoretical justification, while others would be against it.

We often hear it said that the sceptic's attitude is specially favourable to tolerance. I believe that is a mistake. If no one idea is truer than another, why should I respect those who are mad enough to have convictions? They may be a nuisance. No, scepticism does not generate tolerance; it may generate indifference, but only within certain limits, and never tolerance in so far as tolerance is a virtue.

We now seem to have reached an impasse: faith in truth does not lead us to tolerance, and neither does scepticism! We might simply conclude that tolerance has nothing to do with logics, and may be only a moral behaviour quite independent of rational thinking. There is something true in that. But that gives no solution to the problem, for man is not to be subdivided into watertight compartments, and thought is not unconnected with other mental activities. If tolerance is a moral attitude, it should accord better with some intellectual attitude than with others.

If we make a closer study of the idea of truth, we see that it can be conceived in two different and contradictory ways. There is a static or dogmatic conception of truth, and there is a dynamic or functional conception.

We may view truth as something which *is* without needing our intervention; we discover it as the knight did the sleeping beauty. It lies there, perfect and complete, and waits for us to overcome what separates us from it.

We may also believe that truth is not a given fact which we may perceive once and for all times; we can only conceive truths mixed with error, because things appear to us in some definite perspective or other, which is limited by the capacities of our mind. In this case,

truth will still be the sleeping beauty, but we may never see it all at once, nor make it all our own. There is always in it a certain amount of mystery; in some way or other it always escapes us and invites us to continue our search.

Let us leave aside metaphors, which are never satisfactory. This particular one has a very serious drawback when we want to express the functional aspect of truth. Whenever we formulate a truth, of whatever kind, we always introduce subjective elements, i.e., a certain logical structure which cannot strictly be attributed to the object as such and which must be considered as the work of the seer. It means that the act of knowing implies a certain amount of creation, and that the mind cannot be compared to a mere object-meter, that the mind plays an active part in the act of knowing. It would therefore be a mistake to imagine the act of knowing as purely receptive, as a kind of vision in which the eye would play no real part, and have no influence, because the presence of the object would be everything.¹

But we should not be duped by the spatial illusion created by words. We should not think that by adding together all "partial truths", by sticking them together like pieces of mosaic, we shall ever reach total or absolute truth. The whole history of human thinking shows us that things do not happen in quite such a simple way. Those "partial" truths which we can reach are not simply fragments of the "total truth". For total truth does not exist as a given fact. What is given to us, what is for us a datum is reality, not truth; and *truth is the relation of thought to reality*. "Total or absolute

¹ That is how knowledge is being understood by two doctrines which otherwise are in opposition: conceptual realism and intuitionism.

truth", truth *in se* is only one of the leading lines of the mind—which does not deprive it of any of its importance, but rather adds to it. It is the ideal towards which thought labours, and it may be compared to an infinitely distant geometrical point. That point will never be reached, but that is precisely its use and object. It is not meant to be reached, but only to give a direction. Truth does not and cannot exist as a complete system of propositions, as a group of ideas capable of expressing the totality of being. But the idea of truth enables thought to undertake and indefinitely continue its work of elaborating and co-ordinating opinions and ideas in all realms where knowledge is possible.

We have just shown why it would be improper to speak of "partial" truths, the grouping of which would make up a "total" truth. There is a further reason why the phrase "relative truths" should be preferred to that of "partial truths": those "fragmentary" truths always and of necessity embody a certain amount of error, so that they have to be abandoned—in the form we have given them—when our view becomes fuller and more precise. At the time of Ptolemaeus, the geocentric hypothesis was *true*, we might say, for it expressed better than any other the relation which existed then between the cosmic system and the human intellect; it embodied better than any other all that had been observed up to that time. But further observations were added to those already existing, and it therefore became necessary, in order to account for them, to take up the heliocentric hypothesis; it became clear that the geocentric theory no longer grouped into a harmonious and co-ordinated whole all the facts which had become known. It had been true for the position as it existed for the human intellect at the time of Ptolemaeus, it was no longer

true for the new position which obtained at the time of Copernicus. The human intellect however cannot knowingly and intentionally retrograde towards its past. And stating that both hypotheses are equally true would be doing so. It is impossible to our mind to return to the point of view in which we could consider as true the theory of Ptolemaeus. We now *must* make a choice, and the idea of true or false does not mean for us anything more than the necessity of making that choice.²

This instance shows that philosophical relativism, far from destroying the opposition between the true and the false, far from being tantamount to scepticism, as might be wrongly surmised, rather enables us to give greater precision to those notions, and to understand that opposition in its true sense by connecting it with the *becoming* of human thinking as incessantly nourished and made fruitful by the contact of experience. To speak of the *absolute* truth of an idea would amount to eliminating all *becoming* and to stopping thought where it is—it would amount also to a perfectly arbitrary supposition that we can compare a certain system of ideas with reality as it is. Such a comparison would of course be entirely utopian; the very idea

² We must realise that the very idea of a logic other than our own is a contradiction in terms. Of course reality cannot be brought down to a group of judgments; there remains always something which escapes conceptual formulation. But that does not mean that there exists a logic fundamentally different from ours, since logic does not refer to *being*, but only guides the mind which attempts to perceive that being, and it is the only one capable of protecting the mind against error. Its function is not to express the nature of being, but to prevent the mind from mistaking what is not for what is. Beyond logic there is not another logic, but reality. If we suppose that there is another logic, we destroy thought and forbid it to affirm "being" under any form whatsoever.

is self-contradictory. It is therefore only through an arbitrary decision that we can declare such and such an idea to be true. Let us not embellish such a decision with the name of *faith*, even if it should bear on religious matters. The true faith is the courage to go forward and not the will to be entrenched in positions one has decided never to forego.

The essential difference between static truth and functional truth is that the first is considered as fundamentally outside thought, as a fact which owes nothing to thought, whereas truth conceived as functional is in each stage of the becoming of man the expression of the living and ever-changing relation between thought and reality such as thought has been able to perceive it. That had already been foreseen by Vinet when he said that "truth without the pursuit of truth is no more than one half of truth."

The advocates of intolerance—whether in theology or in philosophy—have always taken as a basis the static conception of truth. They believe that truth is given in the form of a dogma which for some of them has been revealed by the Deity and for others has been discovered and formulated by human intellect, once and for all, in a moment of inspiration.³

The practical consequences of that attitude are definitely against tolerance, since it tends to create a kind of exclusive privilege in favour of those who profess the "holy doctrine." Since they are in possession of absolute truth,

³ Let us recall how religious (Christian) orthodoxy conceives the inspiration of the Scriptures (*cum utriusque Testamenti unus Deus sit auctor*, as is said in a decree of the Council of Trent, God is the one author of both Testaments). The object is to safeguard the definitive and unchangeable form given to truth, and to remove any possibility of human co-operation.

they will consider as wrong and harmful any opinion which differs however little from their own ideas. They feel they must oppose it and if possible silence those who advocate it.

They therefore reach the position which St. Augustine had already taken: "What more disastrous death can there be for the soul than the freedom of error?" Such will always be the doctrine of all intolerant people. The Rev. Father Garrigou-Lagrange gave an excellent definition of it when he wrote: "Freedom can never be a right for error; as St. Augustine said, such freedom would be a freedom to be damned." And Leo XIII, in his encyclical letter *Libertas*, decreed that there must be no freedom for "lies," i.e., for doctrines contrary to the teachings of the Roman Catholic church, to whom God granted "the privilege of never knowing error."⁴

The formula chosen by Rev. F. Garrigou-Lagrange shows the crucial point in the debate, and the line of demarcation for the mind. The same idea is found in somewhat different forms in a number of theologians, and it also guides some philosophers. We know it was Auguste Comte's dream to

⁴ Protestant orthodoxies have not taken so definite a position, since Protestantism admits that it is for each individual to choose his own interpretation of the Scriptures, and the result was a great medley of doctrines. But in so far as it may want to remain orthodox, Protestantism keeps the idea of heresy which is consequential on the static conception of truth. In this sense it may be said to be only "attenuated catholicism" (F. Challaye). In its orthodox form, it really serves two gods, since it oscillates between two conceptions of truth: the static conception, and the dynamic or functional conception, this latter being the only one with which it is possible to see in the diversity of doctrines anything else than an unforgivable and incomprehensible series of errors. Protestantism is making great and vain efforts to unite those two conceptions into an impossible synthesis.

have the research work of scholars controlled by an official body armed with a power of repression; it would have been forbidden for instance to indulge in researches other than "positivist," e.g., to formulate theories, which could only be barren, on the chemical composition of celestial bodies. What gave Auguste Comte the inspiration to decree those intolerant and silly rules? A static conception of truth. As Meyerson remarked, Comte believed that in its main lines, the science of his times was definitive.

All that is perfectly logical. If truth, according to the static conception of it, exists without the concurrence of thought, the only thing left for thought to do will be to give or refuse acceptance, and it becomes quite natural to imagine the desirability of a kind of moral pressure on the minds of men. This will unavoidably happen when the idea of revelation understood in a certain way is superimposed on that of truth: to believe in the truth which has been revealed will be to obey God; to refuse to believe will be to disobey. Such is the terrible and naive position of religious orthodoxies. According to Thomas of Aquinas, "heresy is a sin for which one should not only be separated from the church through excommunication, but also removed from the world through death."⁵

Let us note in this respect that Luther, in spite of the numerous traces left in his mind of the static conception of truth, broke away from this manner of thinking on the essential and decisive point on which he really innovated: on the definition of religious faith: "*Es ist ein frei Werk um den Glauben, . . .*

ein göttlich Werk im Geist."⁶ For him faith is essentially the fruit of liberty. Of course I shall not be so credulous as to believe Luther had a clear idea of the functional nature of truth, but I maintain that it is on that ground alone that he was justified in granting the Christian devotee the right and duty to "inform" his own faith according to the lights which he had himself received. This is the logical implication of the famous "I cannot otherwise" which he said at the Diet of Worms.

This justifies an attitude which is exactly the reverse of that summed up by Rev. F. Garrigou-Lagrange. If you do not concede freedom to error, you deprive of its spontaneity the action through which mind gives it acceptance to what is true, and you degrade that action which will henceforth take place under a more or less open threat, and lose its purity; it will become mercenary. Let us therefore run the risk of error, and truth, when we reach it, will be ours in a much fuller and much more real sense! Truth will then become the object of our unfettered love, and the fruit of our experience. We shall know why we prefer it, and why it is truth. Is that nothing? Is that not the essential? We should not be afraid of stating it: the human mind cannot really obtain possession of truth unless it has been able to judge in full freedom, and unless that truth is in some way its own work, the flesh of its flesh and the blood of its blood.

At the origin therefore of the problem of tolerance we find the problem which is raised in the human mind by the notion of truth, and also the problem of the personality.

(To be continued)

⁵ As quoted by F. Challaye, *Le Christianisme et nous*, Paris, Rieder, 1932.

⁶ Ueber den Gewissenzwang (Von Weltlicher Ueberkeit, wie weit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig sei).

DISBELIEF : WHAT IT IS

By DR. SUSIL KUMAR MAITRA, M.A., Ph.D.

Disbelief is not mere absence of belief. To doubt is not to believe, but it is not disbelief. In ignorance there is no belief, but ignorance is not disbelief. Disbelief, in fact, is a form of belief : it is belief in the falsity of another belief. To disbelieve is to refer to another belief and to reject it as false. A disbelief is thus a belief that involves another belief as its point of reference. Whether disbelief can extend to all beliefs is a moot question of philosophy. Universal scepticism has usually been held to be self-contradictory. As the rejection of all beliefs it has been held to entail its own rejection as well. Whether such an attitude is psychologically possible is a much debated question. Buddhist *nirvâna* prescribes the extinction of all beliefs, but this will include also the *nirvâna* of Buddhism and Buddhistic beliefs. The Samkarite is not as thorough-going in his negative philosophy. His world-denial is itself based on the realisation of the consciousness which rejects the world-appearance as false.

There is no disbelief without prior belief. Where belief is impossible, disbelief is also impossible. Nobody believes in an obvious absurdity such as a square-triangle, a sky-flower, or a barren mother. Hence it is absurd to speak of one's disbelief in such absurdities. Just because nobody believes them, none can also disbelieve them. The Buddhists have a technical name for these absurdities : they are *vikalpa-vritti*, functions of *kalpanâ* or imagination, according to them. They represent imaginative combinations, attempted synthesis of incompatibles without ob-

jective counterparts. Two grades of such *vikalpas* may be distinguished. *Vikalpas* may be such imaginative combinations as "the hare's horn", "the sky-flower", etc. Here an objective counterpart is possible, though not actual. A higher grade is that of "the barren mother." Here we have an attempted synthesis of incompatibles or contradictories. One cannot be a "mother" and "barren" at the same time. These are the true *vikalpas*, imaginative combinations of incompatibles, mere attempts to think and no completed thought. In either case however there is no belief, and because belief is absent, disbelief also is impossible.

Disbelief is the negation of belief and as such may be expressed in the form of a negative judgment. But the negative judgment which expresses disbelief is not on a par with other negative judgments. A negative judgment usually expresses denial of a supposed connection. But disbelief is a denial not merely of a supposition but of a complete belief. When I say, "A is not B", I do not necessarily suppose any belief in "A being qualified by B" which I make the object of my denial. I am more concerned with expressing the objective incompatibility of B with A than with the denial of any subjective belief in such incompatibility. It is otherwise however with a negative judgment which expresses disbelief. Here I am concerned to deny both subjective belief and the content believed in. To say "A is B' is false" is not to say merely that "A is not B". The latter expresses an objective incompatibility which does not necessarily imply prior belief in compa-

tibility, but the former expresses a prior belief and rejects both the subjective belief and the compatibility which was believed in. Disbelief may therefore be logically characterised as correction of false belief, i.e., recognition of the false as false and its consequent rejection.

What, then, is the nature of the false appearance which correction rejects or cancels as false? We may summarily reject the Buddhist view that the false is the *asat* or unreal (*Asat khyâti*). The false cannot be the unreal or the imaginary like 'barren mother' or 'sky-flower', for the unreal is never believed and therefore cannot also be disbelieved. The Naiyayikas say that the false is the *elsewhere, elsewhen real* taken to be *real here and now*. The false snake is the elsewhere (jungle) snake taken to be real here and now in the locus of the rope. But this view offends against experience. When I reject the false snake I do not posit it as the jungle snake, i.e., as the elsewhere real snake. The deliverance of experience does not support the Nyaya view. My rejection is absolute and unqualified rejection: it is not mere displacement and redispotion. The false therefore can neither be the elsewhere real nor the absolutely unreal and imaginary. It is therefore other than reality as well as unreality—an indescribable positivity without reality, something that fills experience and yet does not share the character of a real determination. Disbelief is the recognition of this indescribable positivity. The logic of disbelief implies the indescribable as a category of experience.

We may briefly refer here to Bradley's account of negation in "The Principles of Logic". There is, according to Bradley, no objective counterpart to the denial in a negative judgment: the negative judgment does not assert any objective exclusion or objective repulse. When I say, "A is not P", I mean

merely that 'A is an (unknown) Q' which accounts for A's incompatibility with P. The objective counterpart to the judgment is the unknown positive quality which constitutes the ground of the subjective denial. The negative judgment thus resolves itself into a suggested qualification and a subjective withdrawing of the suggestion in view of the positive incompatibility (Q) in the subject A. There is no objective repulse of P from A, but only a subjective ascription or suggestion and a subjective withdrawing thereof.

Bradley's analysis of the negative judgment obviously does not cover all cases. It is manifestly inapplicable to disbelief which implies not merely prior suggestion or supposition but also prior belief. Further it does not provide a basis for the distinction between true and false disbeliefs. A true disbelief has an objective counterpart to it which a false one has not. And what may be the objective counterpart to it except an objective repulse or objective incompatibility which Bradley so rigidly shuts out from his theory of negation? In fact, negative judgments may be of various types. When we say, "A is not B", the negation asserted is the objective incompatibility of B with A. The content of the judgment here is an objective exclusion, i.e., the fact of B's exclusion from A. A negative judgment may also import both negated belief and negated content. When we say, "'A is B' is false," we assert prior belief in B's compatibility with A and we negate both the belief and the compatibility that is believed in. Lastly, negation may be negation merely of a suggestion or a possible supposition as distinguished from a complete belief or a content believed in. When we say, "It would be a mistake to take A as B," we are referring to a possible supposition and denying its tenability, but not referring

either to any actual belief or (excepting indirectly) to any objective incompatibility. Bradley's reduction of all negative judgments to the last variety ignores the intrinsic differences between the different classes of negative judgments.

The Naiyayika distinguishes between *antecedent*, *emergent*, *absolute* and *reciprocal* negation. Antecedent negation is the absence of a thing before it comes into being. For example, the childlessness of the childless man before a child is born to him is a case of antecedent negation. Antecedent negation is without beginning but has an end, e.g., when a child is born, the childlessness ceases, i.e., has an end. Emergent negation is the negation which emerges through the destruction or cessation of a thing. Emergent negation has a beginning but no end. For example, the man who becomes widower through the death of his wife, is a case of an emergent negation which has a beginning but no end, for though he may marry again and have another wife he can never have his former wife. Absolute negation is negation without any qualification or restriction as to time, i.e., negation without either beginning or end in time. For example, the absence of consciousness in a stone or block of wood is a case of absolute negation which holds for all time.

Lastly, besides the above three, we have contrariety or disparity which we may call logical or reciprocal negation. Reciprocal negation is the negation of the relation of identity between things and is not the negation of the things themselves. For example, when we say that "A is not B" we do not negate either A or B, but we simply deny that one can be identical with the other.

The question we have to consider here is whether disbelief as negation of belief will admit of being characterised as one or other of these different forms of negation. Some hold that disbelief being unqualified and absolute rejection of the believed content must also be unqualified and absolute rejection of the belief as well. Since the content is recognised as unreal, the belief therein must also appear as unreal, i.e., as mere semblance of belief. This view however does not agree with the deliverance of experience. When the snake is rejected as false appearance, there is certainly no rejection of our prior belief in it as a real snake. It would therefore be more accurate to say that disbelief, while it is absolute negation of the believed content, is only emergent negation or destruction of the primary belief. When we say that the 'snake' is not, we do not say that there *was* no belief in it as a real snake.

A BUILDER OF HUMANITY

BY R. RAMAKRISHNAN, M.A., L.T.

India has passed through many vicissitudes. Again and again she has been invaded and conquered. Many foreign dynasties have ruled over her. But still, in spite of these political upheavals and military turmoils, India has managed to keep her soul intact. Her soul has of course been enriched by her

contact with foreigners, but it has never been enslaved. Like those noisy, turbulent rivulets which enter a large, calm lake pushing away its waters, but then lose themselves in the depths of the great reservoir, these foreign influences have come to India threatening destruction, but in the end have always

mingled with the huge sea of Indian culture. Again like the ocean, Indian culture has received into its depths the varied waters of its tributaries, but has managed to keep itself in its original purity. In the 19th century, however, it seemed as if this ancient ocean would dry up. The shock of the impact of the West with all its glamour of achievement, its proud possession of power, and its promise of perfection in the field of material advancement and enjoyment, was so terrible that it shook our ancient civilization to the very foundations. The charm of the West was too very alluring to be resisted. The West became the measuring rod of our own ideals and performances. And since the whole course of our national existence was on lines greatly different from those of the West, our countrymen came to the disastrous conclusion that our national progress had been going on wrong lines, that our ancients were false prophets, and that India must re-start on new lines. Our religion was considered to be a mass of superstitions; our aim of achieving spiritual freedom was mocked at; they wanted to pull down the edifice of our past, and make a new beginning!

But India must live; and her life is never-ending; she evolves, but never dies. And so she gave birth to a hero in the person of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was born in Bengal in February, 1836. He lived just for fifty years, and passed away in 1886. But Ramakrishna's half a century of life on earth was truly an epic. In those short fifty years were concentrated the activities of many epochs of our national history. His sojourn on earth was alike the reflector of our hoary national past and the forerunner of the glorious days that are yet in store for us. Those who have read through his biography will be familiar with the main episodes of his

life. And yet no biography, however well-written, can ever give us an adequate portrait of a man whose every moment of life was an epoch in itself. The printed word is at best an indicator; it only draws a broad outline. Only those who meditate on his life can hope to have at least some idea of his unique personality. The lyrical charm of the days of his childhood, the tenderness and the pathos of his early ecstasies, the story of his divine madness which culminated in supreme realization, the heroic performance of the most difficult forms of penance, his practising of all the religious systems of Hinduism and also of Christianity and Islam, his wonderful capacity to explain the most abstract truths by means of simple homely illustrations, his modesty and good humour, his remarkable solicitude for the sinner and the down-cast, the abundance of his love for the seekers after truth, the immaculateness of his life—all these and many more of his characteristics draw us to Ramakrishna. And not only are we in India drawn towards him, but all the world over people also now know and adore him as a unique prophet. He satisfies all the needs of our souls. He calms storm-tossed minds, and offers shelter to weary wanderers.

Ramakrishna preached no new religion, and founded no new sect. His teachings were very simple, and therefore very profound. The great lesson that he taught or rather re-taught to the world was that man is a soul and a spirit and hence alone very great in the scheme of the universe. Christ preached the same truth, and many other prophets too, but man forgot it. Ramakrishna enabled man to rediscover his soul. Half the world's maladies can be traced to this forgetting by man of his real nature. It is only when he

forgets that he is essentially divine, that the springs of true happiness lie within himself ready to burst out at his effective suggestion, that his fulfilment and perfection are an inner process, and that he is heir to endless glory,—it is only when he thus loses contact with the reality of his existence, that man runs madly after passion and possession, and, in that mad onrush, makes of this earth a veritable hell. If only he takes his stand on the sure foundations of his spiritual nature, man shall truly establish the kingdom of God on earth. India's teaching to her children and to the children of other lands has always been this, that man is by nature pure and perfect and godly, and that he must never identify himself with the things that cover his real nature. India has always stood and fought for the assertion and freedom of the human spirit. Her genius has always refused to turn the course of the nation along lines which will take it away from the one aim of its existence, viz., search after the Reality. Political freedom and commercial greatness and social equality may be the ideals of other peoples, but while India has never said that these things must not be striven for, she has always attuned herself to the increasing realization of the thing knowing which all other things become known. Ramakrishna has a sure place among our nation-builders, because he showed us the path that is India's own. The gift of India to the world is the priceless gift of spiritual food to hungering millions.

There are not wanting ignorant critics who often point out that India's backwardness is largely the result of her caring overmuch for religion and things of the spirit. These critics are entirely mistaken. Religion must never be confused with otherworldliness. If India looks to the heavens, her feet are firmly

planted on earth. A mere external renunciation of worldly things, or flying away from the duties of manhood has never been preached in India. Renunciation is certainly the ideal of India, but service is its motive. The saint is enjoined not only to work for the liberation of his spirit, but also for the good of humanity. Ramakrishna did a great service to the cause of the correct interpretation of our national ideals when he laid particular emphasis on the need for worshipping God in man. The human soul was to him God Himself. Those who talk of social service and philanthropy will do well to understand the significance of his teaching. Social service must not be undertaken in a patronising attitude. The human soul being God, it does not stand in need of our so-called compassion; we must on the other hand adore and worship it. We must realize the Divinity as immanent in man. This gospel of regarding service as worship purifies our motives, and bestows a certain dignity even on the most unfortunate of human beings. Incidentally it helps to establish on earth a spiritual socialism wherein equality among human beings is based not on a temporary and artificial obliteration of inevitable differences, but on the ceaseless consciousness of an underlying changeless unity.

Equality between the sexes is now being fought for everywhere, and women are clamouring for a position of prominence in society. Ramakrishna did not fail to throw light on this problem of the status of women. In the realm of the spirit, first of all, there is nothing masculine or feminine. And because woman too is a spirit, the path of glory open to man is equally open to her. She has every right to claim and achieve the highest realization. What freedom can indeed matter more for woman than this freedom to march along with man on

the road leading to Infinite Glory? It is not wisdom on her part to try to drive away from her all womanly grace and charm, feminine tenderness and sweetness, and attempt to become masculine in feeling and outlook. She must keep to her own special field and achieve perfection therein. As a wife she must be the spiritual helpmate of her husband. Ramakrishna always preached against lust and carnality, but he always adored woman, even the most sinful woman, as a Goddess. He loved to adore God too as the Mother. Ramakrishna was married to a young girl, Sarada Devi by name. But his humanity was however too vast and deep for him to shun her when she sought to stay with him. He accepted her, and the story of their divine relation is a record of utter purity and immaculateness. He had also many women devotees whom he tended with as much care as he bestowed on his men devotees.

While Ramakrishna saved India from national degradation, and rethroned her on her seat of glory, his life was not

without significance to the world beyond. Ramakrishna is unique among the world's prophets, for while others reached God by one path alone, and drank of the divine waters at one particular spot, Ramakrishna explored every possible path leading to the City of God and drank divine bliss in all possible places. With the unquestionable authority of personal experience, he preached to a world weary with religious dissensions and sectarian quarrels that all religions are but different gateways to the Reality. Names differ, but all roads lead to the same goal. Just as water has different names in different languages, so too is God termed and conceived differently. Hence there is no need for the votary of one faith to try to convert others to his way of thinking and his mode of worship. We must hold on securely to the path which suits our nature best, but must treat as brothers the pilgrims who journey along other roads. Ramakrishna has the proud distinction of preaching to the world for the first time in its history this great truth of the unity of all religions.

WHITEHEAD'S CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY ANIL KUMAR SARKAR, M.A.

Every philosophy of evolution supposes that reality is a flowing creative process. It is a continual process with no destination. God is generally identified with reality. This is the character of Bergson's philosophy of creative evolution. His God is a creative process. Gentile's Mind is a reality manifesting itself in its creative acts. But Alexander does not like to make his God an entity, be it static or dynamic. To make God actual in any form is to deprive Him of His character of infinity. God to him is infinitely infinite. He is there-

fore "ideal". His philosophy is a philosophy of "emergent evolution." All existents are "emergents" from the Space-Time Matrix. Time is the creative principle bringing about all change and novelty. Emergent existents, from matter to mind, have come out from the restlessness of Time. But even after coming to the level of mind, the evolution is not stopped. The whole of Spatio-Temporal Matrix is "pregnant" with the quality of "deity", it is a "nisus" towards that quality. The quality of "deity" is thus "ideal",

having no particular existence yet having a "tendency" towards it. It is for this reason, May Sinclair, in her *Neo-Idealism*, says that Alexander, to keep the "infinity" of God, makes Him "ideal".

Lloyd Morgan, in his *Emergent Evolution*, points out that a rational philosophy of emergent evolution must be based on three "acknowledgements". There is a gradual evolution from the lower to the higher, and there is an all-pervasive relation, i.e., continuity and connection. The very conception of the evolution from the lower to the higher leads him to think of two principles, viz., involution and dependence. The process downwards is the process of involution, for the higher involves the lower, as mind involves life, and life, in turn, involves physico-chemical process, and so on, till we reach our conception of the physical world. This is the limiting concept in the downward process for his constructive philosophy. But if we follow upwards, the line of dependence, we come to a limiting concept, namely, that of ultimate dependence in terms of which the whole course of emergent evolution is explained. To quote him, "For better or worse, I acknowledge God as the Nisus through whose Activity emergents emerge, and the whole course of emergent evolution is directed."¹ The concept of involution must be supplemented by a concept of dependence. This only shows that the lower depends on the higher. So says Morgan, "If deity be an emergent quality, how a man lives depends on its presence or its absence."² Lastly he believes in a "Universal correlation", which, he says, "is a part of my creed—assuredly

beyond proof. And here my cry is: Back to Spinoza. Should this also be accepted it annuls the fatal gulf between the material and the immaterial aspects of the world."³ The position of L. Morgan with an inclination towards Spinoza, follows from an emphasis on God as 'being' as distinguished from God as a 'quality' to be found in the following expression of Alexander: "God actually possessing deity does not exist but is an ideal, is always becoming; but God as the whole universe tending towards deity does exist."⁴

The position of Boodin as expressed in his book, *God*, is that of Lloyd Morgan, when he thinks God as the Spiritual Field "in which everything lives and moves and has its being—the field which guides the cosmic process, though the parts must adapt themselves to the structure of this field in their own way, according to their own relativity in their moving finite frame of reference: God is the soul of the whole, suffusing it with meaning, making possible the advance of nature—the emergence of new levels as matter is prepared to advance. In this enveloping, pervasive spiritual medium, worlds of matter float like islands."⁵ So like Morgan he says: "The reality of the divine requires no proof—any more than the existence of the external physical world or of our fellow-men—and to the sophisticated it cannot be proved. Nothing of importance can be proved. Life always turns out to be a venture of faith."⁶ So we find sufficient reason for the "Acknowledgements" of Morgan from Boodin. Alexander emphasises the emergent quality of the deity more than the directive principle which leads to the varied emergent qualities

¹ *Emergent Evolution*, p. 86.

² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³ *Emergent Evolution*, p. 62.

⁴ *Mind*, XXX. P. 428.

⁵ *God*, p. 84.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

and allows a possibility for the emergent quality which is yet ideal. But Boodin emphasises the Spiritual Activity which breathes through all. So he says: "There is a quality of the whole present in all the parts, and this quality of the whole makes the stone more than a stone, a tree more than a tree, a man more than a man in the separatist sense. The part is suffused with the meaning of the whole, charged with the pattern of the whole, and must thus be comprehended if it is to be comprehended at all. As we live in the community of matter and the community of minds without being able to rationalise the fact, so we live in the community of the divine."⁷

He further admits that we cannot account for the advance in evolution without assuming a cosmic guiding genius. Everything moves within the field of divinity. "If God withdrew his activity, everything would lapse into chaos. Matter runs its course within the guiding field of spirit. The order of evolution is the genius of God. If the magnet attracts by producing an electromagnetic field, so God attracts the world to himself by producing a spiritual field."⁸ So for Boodin advance means only to become more and more attuned to the divine field.

God is both "transcendent" and "immanent". He is immanent in His activity, in His pervasiveness and control; but He is transcendent in quality with reference to nature and evolution, for nothing rises to the quality of God. So God is only the higher field, determining the lower fields. It is self-contained in its perfection. So we hear the beautiful expression of Boodin: "To have communion with God it is not necessary to be God. To commune with light it

is not necessary to be light. But in the communion with God we live God as we are able. The kingdom of heaven is always at hand. . . . But to live God absolutely means to have the quality of divinity."⁹

This communion with the divine tells us that love and friendship give us a more genuine insight into reality. Through them this drab world is lighted for a moment with a celestial light. By these we can rise to the divine field. Boodin says that without that fellowship our life would be a tragedy as the whole life of nature is a tragedy but for the divine love that pervades through all. Spirit is the life of the world. Its effort is to spiritualise the world. The individuals perish, but "The form remains, the function never dies; for it is of the spirit and lives in the spirit."¹⁰ God, the eternal creator, creates eternally. "There is always a joy of creation. There is always a chorus of the morning stars God creates hitherto and for ever in joy. In the immensity of the cosmos new worlds are born; and there is always a new world born with a new joy when a creative mind discovers and appreciates the master mind of creator."¹¹

This conception of God can save the world from its destruction of nature, and fill the universe with a light of creative joy and divine laughter. It can save the world from the crisis! We might end his view of God with the criticism that he makes specially against the views of Whitehead and Alexander in the following illuminating lines: A mere system of logic cannot save the world, whether it be a speculative absolute or a conceptual God (such as Whitehead's) which is supposed to furnish the principle of concretion in a

⁷ *God*, p. 25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹ *God*, p. 45.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

multitudinous world of occasions. Such a conceptual system is a mere impersonal abstraction. It has no reality, no value, except in the finite personalities which arrive at thought and appreciation. Nor can we worship a deity which emerges in the evolutionary process. We require a deity which is an active guiding factor in the process and through whose grace we can be saved. Let us now start with the view of God as held by A. N. Whitehead in the face of such a vehement criticism.

Whitehead's philosophy is a philosophy of relativity. So his conception of God must be grounded on this principle. So quite naturally his criticisms of other philosophies with regard to God will be like this: If other systems of philosophy have merely taken up the problem of God without a consideration of the world, or if they have resolved the difficulties regarding this problem, identifying God with reality, they have surely failed in understanding the relation between God and the world, or again between God and reality. The world is opposed to God as the "field" of His completion. He is opposed to the world, as a field of world's completion. The creativity or passage, which is the reality, is an advance to novelty and freedom. It points to God as giving novelty to the world, and points to the world as giving novelty to God. It is a philosophy which cries for "opposites" wherein lies their mutual completion.

Why is the world opposed to God, or God opposed to the world? It only points to their underlying relation. It only indicates the fulfilment of creative evolution. Why they are opposed leads us to their points of similarity and difference, for opposition involves both these conceptions. God is said to have a 'mental pole' and a 'physical pole' like an actual existent. But the difference lies in the fact of their priority. In the

case of God the mental pole is prior to the physical pole. In the case of the actual existents the physical pole is prior to the mental pole. Every occasion is a case of concrescence, or a self-realisation. There are two concrescent poles of realisation in each actual occasion—'enjoyment' and 'appetition'. The 'enjoyment' refers to the 'physical pole', and the 'appetition' refers to the 'conceptual' or the 'mental pole'. The mental pole accounts for the transition. All realisation, therefore, points to the continual darting towards "novelty" which is the soul of all creativity.

From this the character of God and the world can very well be drawn out. The priority of the mental pole in God, suggests that His appetitions or subjective aims are enjoyed immediately, though lacking in actuality. It is non-temporally enjoying the possible realisation, but its tendency is always towards actualisation. In the case of the actual entities, there is always a physical enjoyment, and there is a tendency towards "objective immortality" or appetition which gives them everlastingness.

Temporality is actuality. So God is non-temporal. Temporality is physical enjoyment, so God is different from it. God's conceptual realisation of all possibilities is perfect, bound by no limitation, for it is not actualised in a limited sense; but yet it is not a "nisus" towards actuality as Alexander holds it. God realises Himself in every concrescence. God's realisation is primordial, but it seeks temporalisation or actualisation, which is conscious realisation. The enjoyment of God is blind and unconscious, its fulfilment lies in conscious realisation.

In this way the reciprocity between the world and God is proved. The field of God's realisation of His primordial nature lies in the actual world,

which confers on Him His consequent nature. The world is a place or a field of "fluency", and God is a place or field of "permanence". The one passes into the other, for both perform the function of creativity whose essential character lies in passage to novelty. Fluency is novelty to permanence, and permanence is novelty to fluency. So we find that the function of God is to give novelty to the world, and realise His own novelty in the world. The function of the world is similarly to give novelty to God. In fine both are the functions of novelty wherein lies the true spirit of creativity and also relativity. So world and God are the opposed ways of realising one Creative Evolution. Whitehead's "Process and Reality" is a marvellous attempt to bring out this spirit in all its fulness.

Whitehead's book, *Religion in the Making*, speaks of a philosophy of creativity. Creativity is the soul of three kinds of entities: actual occasions, eternal objects or forms, and God. There is no gap in those entities, they pass into one another, for the one cannot be without the other. This is due to all-pervasive creativity. He then tells us that creativity is found in the creatures. In this sense the creatures are "self-creating creatures", i.e., they are unities of creatures with creativity. The creativity accounts for the passage of the creature. The creature is the ground and the creativity is the consequent. Throughout nature there is, thus, a relation of ground and consequent. There is the element of creative evolution everywhere.

But there is order in the passage towards creative evolution. There is also all-pervasive harmony and beauty. How can all these be proved without the supposition of an entity which accounts for order, harmony, and beauty?

The philosophy of organism shows everywhere "fusions" of different orders from electrons to man. The harmonious unities of the different orders of fusions mean the realisations of self-values. Whitehead says all unities speak of their "subjective aims" which are rooted in God's primordial nature.¹² They vary in intensity, so there are different orders of realisations. To quote Whitehead: "The wisdom of subjective aim prehends every actuality for what it can be in such a perfected system—its sufferings, its sorrows, its failures, its triumphs, its immediacies of joy—woven by rightness of feeling into the harmony of the universal feeling, which is always immediate, always many, always one, always with novel advance, moving onward and never perishing."¹³ So we find here a relativity between the primordial conceptualisation and consequent actualisation. This is how Whitehead clears his views on the two natures of God. As primordial, God is unconscious. And as consequent and as superject, he is not only conscious, but he has the 'tender care that nothing be lost.' In this function "he does not create the world, but he saves it: or, more accurately, he is the poet of the world, with tender patience leading it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness."¹⁴ We can also view the two natures of God in a different way. We can say that God needs intellectual realisation in his consequent and superject natures, which are conceptually realised in his primordial nature. From this we can draw another conclusion that conceptual realisation is not an intellectual or conscious realisation. This distinction marks the peculiarity of Whitehead's philosophy.

Here some may suppose that there is

¹² cf. *Process and Reality*, p. 373.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 489.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 526.

no need of supposing a world over against God, since everything can be proved from his own natures. But Whitehead does not like to advocate such false monism. He advocates, what Fries says in his article, "The Functions of Whitehead's God", in *The Monist* (January, 1936), a "Unified Pluralism". This is only possible, for it only fulfils the function of creativity. Creative flow does not start by itself, it is always with God and the world. None is without the other. Life-blood is given by creativity; God and the world are the fields of the realisation of the creative function. God is non-temporal, the world is temporal; God is one, the world is many. But the one is helpless without the many and the many is helpless without the one. God is permanent, the world is fluent, but both need each other, for both have the underlying link of creativity or passage. This is how Whitehead justifies his position of "Unified Pluralism."

Prof. Fries says that God's conceptual realisation of the possibilities in His primordial nature, forms His metaphysical functions, while his physical realisation in His consequent and superject natures, forms His ethical and religious functions. But as his philosophy is a philosophy of aesthetic realisation, all these functions are functions for aesthetic realisation. So the philosophy of creativity is a philosophy of aesthetic functions. All the varied realisations in this fluent world are so many aesthetic realisations in aesthetic orders.

If realisation is the end of the functions of God and the world, we have only to see how the metaphysical functions find their delight in religious and ethical functions. We have to feel here that these functions go together. God 'is a fellow sufferer' when He is in His consequent and superject natures,

He 'is a poet of the world', when He is in His primordial nature. We require God both as poet and as fellow sufferer.

Whitehead does not tell us of a disinterested God, but a God vibrating with us. He is present equally in our enjoyment and appetite. He is a mirror which discloses to every creature its own greatness. "He is the ideal companion who transmutes what has been lost into a living fact within his own nature."

The world is not a veritable evil. "The kingdom of heaven is not the isolation of good from evil. It is the overcoming of evil by good. This transmutation of evil into good enters into the actual world by reason of the inclusion of the nature of God, which includes the ideal vision of each actual evil so met with a novel consequent as to issue in the restoration of goodness."¹⁵ To continue further: "God has in his nature the knowledge of evil, of pain and of degradation, but it is there as overcome with what is good. Every fact is what it is, a fact of pleasure, of joy, of pain, or of suffering. In its union with God that fact is not a loss, but on its finer side is an element to be woven immortally into the rhythm of mortal things. Its very evil becomes a stepping stone in the all-embracing ideals of God."¹⁶

But for God the realm of nature would have been a tragedy as Boodin also thinks. It would have perished and ruined. But a physical entity, as already viewed, is not a pure physical entity; it is bipolar. So the saying of Whitehead is full of meaning when he says, "The universe shows us two aspects: on the one side it is physically wasting, on the other side it is spiritually ascending." This becomes very clear when Whitehead says that every event

¹⁵ *Religion in the Making*, p. 139.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 140.

in its finer side introduces God into the world. Through it his ideal vision is given a base in actual fact to which He provides the ideal consequent, as a factor saving the world from self-destruction of evil. The power by which God sustains the world is the power of himself as the ideal. He adds himself to the actual ground from which every creative act takes its rise. The world lives by its incarnation of God in itself."¹⁷

Though He is, thus, immanent in the world, He transcends the world determining its future ideal realisation, overcoming all imperfect realisations. So God, thus viewed, is not a mere abstraction, or a mere conceptual God, as Boodin says. But by providing the "ideal consequent", He not only saves the world, but carries it to higher syntheses, and higher realisations. He is thus performing the mission of creativity with the world. He has to vibrate with the world and the world with Him, thus reminding us of Tagore's thought in *Gitanjali* that the only freedom of human beings lies in functioning with the cosmic evolution.

The eternal objects or forms which account for the infinite possibilities of future realisations are not mere forms. They are actualised in God non-temporally, in the actual entities temporally. They are thus links between God and the actual world. To quote Whitehead, "Apart from these forms, no rational description can be given

either of God or of the actual world. Apart from God, there would be no actual world; and apart from the actual world with its creativity there would be no rational explanation of the ideal vision which constitutes God."¹⁸

This is the essential ring of the philosophy of creativity. God and the world are bound by creativity as serving its function. Our God is thus not an abstraction. He is that function in the world by reason of which our purposes are directed to ends. He is that element in life which helps us to quit our narrow boundaries of our limited selves. It elevates our limited judgments, our limited appreciation of values, our centred love and fellow-feeling. Thus this element widens our horizon from all sides. God is thus not the world, but the valuation of it. Our religious consciousness reveals to us all these functions of God with implied notion that He is the permanent side of the universe.

We are tempted to conclude our reflections of Whitehead's God with the charming words of Whitehead himself at the end of his epoch-making book, *Religion in the Making* thus: "The present type of order in the world has arisen from an unimaginable past, and it will find its grave in an unimaginable future. There remain the inexhaustible realm of abstract forms, and creativity, with its shifting character ever determined afresh by its own creatures, and God, upon whose wisdom all forms of order depend."

¹⁷ *Religion in the Making*, p. 140.

¹⁸ *Religion in the Making*, p. 141.

HABIB AJMI—THE MISER

BY AGA SYED IBRAHIM DARA

Habib Ajmi was a spiritual sage about whom a great Sufi writes, "He was the lord of Truth, the cleaner of the mirror of Oneness, the man of extraordinary courage and force of conviction, Khilwat Nashin (one who sits away from men), and the Kaba of a repentant heart." Numberless miracles are attributed to his great powers got by hard and devoted Tapasyâ. The story of his conversion is indeed touching and would throw a great light on the mysteries of the human heart that opens to faith and love.

Habib Ajmi was a strong man in his youth and a money-lender of the town of Basra. He was a Mohamedan, yet he took interest on the money he lent out to the poor. Not only that, he was noted for his cruel exactions and ill-treatment of those who could not pay the interest regularly. He used to go out daily to collect his dues of interest and if his debtor could not pay it he demanded from him his expenses of the trip, and with this money he returned home at night and bought the necessities of his family. As he put all his money into business he lived very poorly, almost like a beggar.

One day he called at the house of a poor woman living at a distance. Her husband was not at home and his wife wept and pleaded to him to let her go, for she had practically nothing in the house to give him. At last he got from her the head of a goat which she had kept for the nocturnal meal and returned with it to his house and asked his wife to cook it. The wife answered, "You have brought meat but there is no bread and not a bit of firewood in

the house for the fire." So Habib went out again and from another victim brought firewood and some bread for his dinner. The wife was a kind-hearted woman and always reproached him for living on interest which is strictly prohibited in Islam. She told him to fear God and think of the coming day (i.e., of the Day of Judgment), when he and she will be answerable before God for what they were doing. After her usual lectures and reproaches she went to the kitchen to cook the meat. Shortly after a beggar called at his door and said that he was starving. Habib threatened him and sent him away saying in a joke, "If I give you anything now I myself will turn a fakir". He then asked his wife to serve the meal and when the wife uncovered the boiling pot of the 'nahari' she found to her astonishment that it had turned into blood. The wife was frightened, and shouted to her husband, "See what your miserliness and sins have brought on us!" When Habib saw it he felt a fire burning in his heart. The faith in God seized his entire being. He wept and prayed for forgiveness and early next morning went out with the intention to call on his debtors. He decided not to realise from them the arrears of interest or to take interest any more. Yet he had in his mind the desire to take back the money he had lent out. It was Friday and some children were playing on the street. Seeing Habib coming they shouted, "There comes Habib, the miser! Get out of his way lest his shadow should fall on us and bring curse on us". Hearing this he felt hurt and his heart was touched. In a troubled state of mind he took the way to the

house of a Sufi sage Hasan Basari and sat amidst the devotees to whom he was lecturing at the time. It so happened that the theme of the day's address was just what Habib was pondering on since the night. The words pierced his heart and he once more wept and falling on the ground begged for forgiveness once again and returned home with a lighter heart. On the way he met a fisherman who seeing him made way for him. Habib replied, "Don't make way for me; it is I who should run from you lest the cursed shadow of such a foul sinner as myself should fall on thee and pollute thee." On nearing his house he met the same children once again but to his surprise they shouted playfully this time, "Move from the path of the great sage, lest our dust should fall on his holy person and make sinners of us." This again affected him greatly. He cried, 'O God, Thou hast accepted my repentance. Not only that, but in Thy great mercy Thou hast revealed it to me through the hearts of these children. If this is the reward of one day's repentance what wilt Thou not give for a life of Piety and Love?' Then on reaching home he gathered all his debtors and asked them not to think of returning their debts any more, and calling them inside he asked everybody to take away what he had deposited as surety with him. After they had all gone a man came and demanded from him his surety, and to him Habib gave his own cloak. To a female claimant, he gave his wife's cloth and by the end of the day the husband and wife were left penniless and half-naked in the house. Next they left the house too and shifted to a little cottage by the side of the river Euphrates. The wife as usual stayed at home all the day and Habib went out in search of work. He found that he had no more heart left for the work and his feet dragged him to the abode of Hasan Basari where he spent

the whole day in praying or hearing to the inspiring sermons of the sage. One day his wife informed him that the last pie had been spent and if he did not find work they would have to starve. Next day too he went to the sage and learnt holy practices, and on returning home he replied to his wife, "To-day I have found the work but the master is so kind and generous that I cannot demand any thing from him out of sheer shame. He himself said, 'When the time comes I will give you your wages abundantly.' " Some days after, to silence his wife, he said, "My master says that he pays on the tenth day only." On the tenth day he was returning empty-handed as usual and nearing his house he felt ashamed to enter it. But to his surprise he smelt the flavour of some cooking going on inside, and on his entering, his wife told him, "Who is this good and generous master whom you serve? See he has sent all these things to-day as your wages for the ten days and sent word that if you work better he will increase the wages." He saw that there was money as well as grain and other things, and he felt such a gratitude that tears came to his eyes. Habib thought to himself, "If a sinner for ten days' work is rewarded with all this Grace, what will God not give to one who gives his whole heart to Him?" Saying this, he renounced the world for ever and with utter concentration absorbed himself in his spiritual pursuits, and in the end on account of countless mercies of God he got his realisation and became one of the sages of his time.

In his later life Habib-i-Ajmi, as he was called, is supposed to have performed many miracles. I mention some of them, which are believable as illustrations.

One day Hasan Basari came to hide himself in his house when pursued by the king's officers. He hid him in his

prayer room. In the meantime the pursuers too arrived and asked, "Where is Hasan?" Habib replied, "In my prayer room." They rushed inside and not seeing him there came out and said to him, "You people are not treated unjustly by the king, for you deserve it. See, you told a lie." He replied, "I spoke the truth". They went in again and, not seeing him this time too, rushed onward elsewhere. When Khawaja Hasan Basari came out, he said, "You did not even care to protect your master, and told them where I was; why, couldn't you keep silent?" Habib replied, "It was my truth that saved you. I was praying all the time, 'O God, I leave Hasan to Thee to protect him.' That is why they could not see you. Had I told a lie we both would have been captives now."

One day Hasan Basari came to meet Habib and seeing that he was engaged in his prayers he too stood behind him but he found that his pronunciation was not correct. As he did not like the "words of God" to be uttered in a wrong way he stepped aside and said his prayers separately. That night Hasan Basari saw a dream in which God told him, "You got my grace but did not

value it." Hasan Basari asked, "How, O Lord?" Then God said, "Habib's one Namaz is equal to all your life-long prayers. It was our grace that you prayed behind him but not valuing the correctness of his heart you looked only to the correctness of speech and moved aside."

Habib Ajmi, as his name signifies, was from Ajam and could not understand the Quoran when read before him, yet he wept with devotion on hearing its words. One day some people asked him, "How can you be a sage when you cannot understand the Quoran?" Just then they heard a voice which said, "True, he is Ajmi (i.e. deaf), but he is Habib (i.e. a friend)."

The biographer ends the story with this couplet,

"Anan keh khak ra ba nazar keemya
kunand

Âya boad keh goshaic chushmai
bama kunand"—

Those who turn dust into keemya¹ by a
mere look

May they turn a corner of their eye to
me.

¹ Philosopher's stone.

MULAMADHYAMA-KÂRIKÂ

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

CHAPTER II

THE EXAMINATION OF MOTION

But it may be argued that when it is said that a path is being passed it only means that the path is merely capable of being passed and not yet actually connected with the act of passing, and therefore there is no occasion for the question of a double movement.

गम्यमानस्य गमनं यस्य तस्य प्रसज्यते ।

ऋते गतेर्गम्यमानं गम्यमानं हि गम्यते ॥ ४ ॥

गम्यमानस्य Of what is (capable of) being passed गमनम् (the object of passing) (इति this) यस्य whose (पक्षः contention) तस्य his (मते in opinion) गतेः of motion श्रूते without गम्यमानम् the passable प्रसज्यते becoming possible हि (यत्तः) because गम्यमानम् the passable गम्यते is being passed.

4. One whose contention is that what is (capable of) being passed becomes the object of passing also admits that the passable is (so named) without (being connected with the act of) passing since it is being passed.

It is contended that a path may be said to be गम्यमानम् (capable of being passed) even while one has not yet advanced a single step on it; in that the path is taken merely as passable and has not been necessarily connected with any movement at present. "Passable" may be taken here as a mere name substituted for the path. Just as a person is called a *pâchaka* (पचति इति पच्+न्वुल् or cook although he is not at the moment engaged in cooking; it is only an epithet for him who has the capacity to cook. Thus one is justified in saying that the passable (गम्यमानम्) is being passed (गम्यते) without involving thereby any double act of passing.

But this does not, however, obviate altogether the question of a double movement.

गम्यमानस्य गमने प्रसक्तं गमनद्वयं ।

येन तद्गम्यमानं च यच्चात्र गमनं पुनः ॥ ५ ॥

गम्यमानस्य Of what is (capable of) being passed गमने in the act of being passed गमनद्वयं double act of passing प्रसक्तम् follows (is involved) येन by which (act of passing) तत् that गम्यमानम् which is being passed च (expletive) अत्र here पुनः again यत् which गमनम् act of passing च also (अस्ति is).

5. A double act of passing is involved if one admits that what is (capable of) being passed is being passed: one act to style it as passable and the other to signify the (actual) act of passing at present.

Granting that passability is a mere quality of the path and does not necessarily connect it with any actual act of passing at this moment, it cannot, however, be denied that the very word "passable" must have some connection with the act of passing. For when we think of a path as passable we take it for granted that it satisfies all the conditions of passability and so it is invariably connected with an act of passing. Thus the path is once connected with passing to get the characteristic as "passable" and, again, when it is actually being passed. So one is invariably led to a double act of passing.

But what is the harm if there is a double act of passing? It will then involve the following defects.

द्वौ गन्तारौ प्रसज्येते प्रसक्ते गमनद्वये ।

गन्तारं हि तिरस्कृत्य गमनं नोपपद्यते ॥६॥

गमनद्वये प्रसक्ते (सति) Two acts of passing being admitted द्वौ two गन्तारौ agents of passing प्रसज्येते are involved हि (यस्मात्) for गन्तारं the passer तिरस्कृत्य ignoring गमनम् passing न not उपपद्यते becomes possible.

6. A double act of passing being admitted two agents become inevitable, as no act of passing is accomplished without an agent.

The question of the impossibility of a double act at a single moment is now viewed from a different angle of vision. It is an accepted fact that an action is invariably dependent on an agent (क्रियाश्रयः कर्ता), and if there are two simultaneous actions there must be two separate agents to perform them. When we say that one is passing a path which is (either "passable" or) being passed we have a double act of passing and consequently there must be two agents to accomplish it. But here is only one agent and therefore two acts are out of the question. So in the sentence "what is being passed (गम्यमानम्) is being passed (गम्यते)" one of the two forms of the verb (i.e., *is being passed*) must lapse for want of an agent, or the sentence will convey no meaning at all.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In our *Editorial* we have pointed out the fundamental difference that exists between the cultures of the East and the West, and dwelt at length upon the principal factors that constitute the essence of Hindu thought. In the article on *Approaches to the Ideal*, Mr. Kalidas Bhattacharyya, M.A., Lecturer on Philosophy in the Vidyasagar College, Calcutta, while pointing out that in modern times spiritualism will not be respected unless positivism is first thoroughly appreciated, has ably examined the relation between the actual and the ideal and shown that the Gita harmonises the apparent differences and solves the problem of life in a most satisfactory way. Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy in the Presidency College, Calcutta, in his learned article on *Reason, Revelation and Faith*, has dis-

cussed the true meaning of religion and analysed at length the relative importance of reason, intuition and faith in the discernment of the Highest Truth. In his thought-provoking paper on *The Problem of Tolerance*, Prof. Henri-L. Meville, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, has dealt with tolerance in respect of ideas and beliefs, and given a philosophical interpretation of what constitutes true toleration. The readers will find in *Disbelief: What It is* by Dr. Susil Kumar Maitra, M.A., Ph.D., Officiating Head of the Department of Philosophy, Calcutta University, a very able discussion on the Vedantic view of false appearance which is other than reality as well as unreality—something that fills experience and yet does not share the character of a real determination. The article on *A Builder of Humanity* by Mr. R. Ramakrishnan,

M.A., L.T., furnishes an interesting pen-picture of the varied contributions of Sri Ramkrishna to the thought-world of mankind. In *Whitehead's Conception of God*, Mr. Anil Kumar Sarkar, M.A., Research Scholar in the University of Patna, has given a lucid exposition of Prof. Whitehead's philosophy of Unified Pluralism. According to Prof. Whitehead, both God and the world need each other, for both have the underlying link of creativity. God, thus viewed, is not a mere abstraction, but, by providing the "ideal consequent", He carries the world to higher syntheses and higher realisations. The article on *Habib Ajmi—the Miser* by Aga Syed Ibrahim Dara of Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry, gives a delightful account of the life of a Sufi Saint.

"LONDON TIMES" ON THE WISDOM FROM THE EAST

It is now being increasingly felt that to-day life with its blatant exaltation of the powers of the intellect—of speed and war, and its sneering contempt for the deep wisdom and gentleness of spirit, has not given us real happiness—the final test of every social system. Men have lost the serene radiance and joyfulness of life. They have practically no faith to live by, no hopes to inspire, and no haven of peace to which they can look forward with confidence. Many ardent and sincere souls of the West have begun to reflect deeply on the tragedies of the modern world and, in their anxiety to find out a true anodyne for all the ills that have of late disabled and disorganised human society, are casting their searching eyes across the seas upon the rich content of the spiritual culture of the East. In an illuminating article on the "Wisdom from the East", the *Times Literary Supplement* (April 8, 1939) frankly states, "In our schools and universities we are led to suppose that all that is

finest in human culture is derived from Greece and Rome. In our churches we hear nothing of any other religion than the Christian. We are baptized into the Christian community while we are still babies and can know nothing about it. And even when we are confirmed we are taught only of Christianity and nothing of Eastern religions. Adherents of other religions are indeed regarded as heathen. Even followers of other Christian denominations than our own particular denomination are viewed with suspicion. So we are sent forth into the world of affairs, into professions, business, politics, even into Imperial administration, ignorant of the very existence of rich Arab, Persian, Indian and Japanese cultures. No wonder we have airs of superiority insufferable to those we meet in the East! No wonder the courteous East resent our crude attitude!"

The spirit of intolerance that characterises some of the prominent religions of the world is, to say the least, conspicuous by its absence from the sanctuary of Hindu thought and culture. Its outstanding spirit of tolerance has always kept it above all petty feuds and enabled it to appreciate and absorb in it what of good it can find in other religions. "As to Christianity," says the *Times*, "Hindus are deeply appreciative of the teaching and spirit of Jesus. He taught that oneness of beings which so appeals to them. And the gentleness, the mercy, the compassion, the love of neighbours, the use of sweet persuasiveness rather than of force which he preached were all in keeping with their tradition. So that only three months ago the Hindu magazine, the *Prabuddha Bharata* (vide "Christ on the Cross", December, 1938), declared that this oneness of being embodied in the gospel of Jesus must once more be brought home to

those who are making brutes of humanity—the clatter of arms must not be allowed to drown the voice of Jesus. To that sweet voice Indians will readily hearken. What grates upon the tolerant Hindus is the intolerant spirit and superior airs which have become associated with *later* Christianity.”

It cannot be denied that all religions are but the different expressions of one eternal Truth—different sprays, as it were, from the same inexhaustible Fount of Reality. It is the mystics—the supermen of all ages—who in their ecstatic communion with the Soul of all souls come to realise the fundamental unity of all faiths and the fellowship of humanity. The classic types of mystical experience disclose an astonishing agreement which seems independent of race, clime or age. The true mystical experience is an ecstatic consciousness in which one has a great sense of immediate contact with ultimate Reality. Figuratively speaking, the transcendental Self touches the eyes of the empirical self, and there breaks upon the man an experience, strange and wondrous, which quickens within him, lays hold on him and becomes his very being. The barrier between the individual self and the Divine Being is thus broken down, and the intuitively felt presence brings with it a rapture beyond expression, a knowledge beyond reason, a sensation more intense than that of life itself. This experience is the acme and fulfilment of a man's life. “All senses are gathered there, the whole mind leaps forward and realises in one quivering instant things inexpressible in words. Yet to be rapt in such rapture is not to pass beyond oneself but to be far more intensely oneself—not to lose self-consciousness but to be greatly conscious.”

All signs indicate, says the *Times*, that mysticism is likely to be the religion of the future, and “India would offer her strange, deep wisdom, her inner calm and gentleness of soul, mercy to all creation, an abounding humanity, peace and joy, ultimately derived from her intense realisation of the oneness of all being.” The West is not called upon to be anything else than Christian. But through vivid contact, contrast and co-operation with other religions the East expects Christianity, at long last, to become genuinely Christlike—to be less arrogant and more tolerant, appreciative and co-operative. This—and this only—can provide the finally effective answer to the challenge of power-politics so seemingly successful for the moment. “In every case”, the paper comments editorially, “the spirit has been obliterated by the overwriting of the letter, until no trace of the original inspiration remains visible. But if the world is to be saved, and there are many signs that, in this darkest hour of European history, we are approaching the first glimmer of dawn, we must begin by cleansing our palimpsest of all the overwritings that have obscured the original message. This may be a long and arduous task and to set about it we must begin with minds attuned in the first place to the humour of tolerance.” No truer words have been so beautifully said. The great religions should learn to cultivate this spirit of tolerance and widen their outlook and look upon themselves as partners in the supreme task of nourishing the spiritual life of mankind. This is the only panacea for the manifold ills which have been corroding into the vitals of every social organism. The sooner the import of these pregnant utterances of the *Times* is realised, the better for the West as well as for the humanity at large.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

EMERSON: HIS MUSE AND MESSAGE. BY RAO SAHIB V. RAMAKRISHNA RAO, M.A., L.T., PH.D. (CAL.). *Published by the University of Calcutta. Pp. 313.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the front-rank idealists in literature that the world has ever produced, was in many ways the foremost writer of the Transcendental School of New England. His philosophy has been derived mostly from German sources through Coleridge and partly from translations of Eastern scriptures, notably the Upanishads of our country. As an idealist he shed the light of spiritual illumination over the dark realities of life—and in this lies his greatest claim to the recognition of posterity. He is known chiefly through his prose writings. His poetry has been appreciated in a rather varying measure in his own country and abroad. That his poems are remarkable not simply on the ground of ideas, but as poetic expression of the first order, and that, therefore, they are quite as fit to be properly appreciated is the thesis of Dr. Rao here, diligently worked out for the Ph. D. degree of the Calcutta University. Dr. Rao has tried his best to prove the eminence of Emerson's poetic achievement but the attempt, in spite of good intentions, does not seem to be a successful one. Emerson's success as a poet was limited because the metal of his thought systematically failed to be transmuted into the gold of poetry.

The sage of Concord stands as a link in the chain between Wordsworth and Meredith in ideas. He is sometimes called the American Wordsworth, but Emerson as a revealer in verse of the spell that Nature cast on him is rather halting and unsatisfying when placed beside his great compeer on the other side of the Atlantic. Matthew Arnold has been criticized by Dr. Rao for not mentioning 'natural magic' in Emerson's poetry. Even remembering how erratic and temperamental Arnold sometimes was, it is difficult to see where that inevitability of expression which talks from the heart of Nature herself and which constitutes the essence of 'natural magic' could be found in Emerson's verse, except only in flashes here and there. Of 'moral profundity' he gives us good measure, pressed down and running over but that by itself cannot work wonders.

Except some of his last verses, which will live, Emerson's poetry is dull and flat, and very often the mechanical beat of his octosyllabics sounds strident even to ears that have grown used to so much that passes for poetry in modern times. Isolated passages and a poem or two may be irresistible in their revelation of beauty, and his thought, at any rate, rings true everywhere; but the architectonic skill is sadly lacking in him. There can be no doubt that Emerson always felt like a poet but poetry, technically so-called, was not his *métier*. The language of the book is ornate and throughout rapturously romantic. Our only regret is that so much of our author's enthusiasm leaves us cold. The attempt to rehabilitate Emerson as a poet was perhaps worth making only because Emerson as a writer of verse supplies a reader with the incentive to go to his prose in which he is always found to be a poet of great charm and tonic quality.

DAYAMOY MITRA, M.A.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS. BY MRS. SOPHIA WADIA. *Published by The International Book House, Ash Lane, Bombay, Pp. 260.*

This most interesting book is a collection of eighteen illuminating lectures delivered by Mrs. Sophia Wadia at different places under different auspices. It covers a variety of topics which tend to point out the striking points of similarity underlying the various religions of mankind. This harmony of religions that exists between faith and faith is not to be merely talked of but to be actually lived and practised. This is particularly necessary to-day in our country where communal riots resulting from religious fanaticism and creedal superstitions have become the order of the day. She suggests that not only a tolerance but a sincere appreciation of other people's religions is necessary and that a comparative study of religions undertaken with the honest purpose of perceiving the Truth underlying every religion will help to unite man to his brother man and nation to nation.

The prophets of different religions never meant to establish separate sects of their own, but they all reiterated the same uni-

versal truths in different ways to different peoples. By stages, the priest-class in every religion systematised these teachings into sectarian doctrines and organised religious creeds out of them. Self-discipline and Self-knowledge together with assiduous practice are necessary for the understanding and realisation of true religion. Spiritual growth is possible only through self-education, and self-education means transmutation of the lower animal self into the Divine Self, full of knowledge and wisdom. Speaking to a group of young students, she says, "Do not reject religion and become materialistic. Do not forget science and become superstitious. Make your religion scientific and your science religious." Her interpretation of the spiritual basis of Social Service will prove to be of special interest to all social service organisations. The aim of social service is the eradication of human misery and sorrow, and the proper way to do it is to remove the very causes of misery, viz., desire and passion, by working along truly spiritual lines as indicated in the Gita and the Dhammapâda.

Mrs. Wadia is an ardent Theosophist and a sincere friend and admirer of India. She has delivered these lectures with the main object of bringing peace and unity among "the warring elements in human society so that they may believe that all religions are one." We recommend this book to the followers of every religion and hope that a study of these lectures will help every man to live his own religion intelligently and rationally and become a brother to all human souls irrespective of their caste, creed, race or nationality.

A CATECHISM OF ENQUIRY. BY RAMANA MAHARSHI. *Published by Niranjanananda Swamy, Sarvadhikari, Sri Ramanashrama, Tiruvannamalai, South India. Pp. 30. Price 4 as.*

Maharshi Ramana of Tiruvannamalai is well known to many as a living example of a realised soul, whose self-realisation is based on the solid rock of hard Tapasyâ. These instructions were originally given in Tamil by the Maharshi to one of his earnest disciples. According to the author himself "the essence of the teachings contained herein is clearly: 'Realise perfect bliss by constant meditation on the Self.'" Some of the topics dealt with are: Enquiry into the Self, Self-realisation, Worship is only

Self-enquiry, the three states, and Renunciation. He lays particular emphasis on the metaphysical analysis of one's own Self, whereby each man can find out for himself proper answers to such burning questions as 'Who am I' and 'Whence am I'. The book will prove a helpful guide to earnest seekers after Truth.

A CATECHISM OF INSTRUCTION. BY SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI. *Published by Niranjanananda Swamy, Sarvadhikari, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai. Pp. 43. Price As. 5.*

This is a companion volume to the Maharshi's book "A Catechism of Enquiry", and contains some of his valuable instructions translated from the original Tamil. The subjects discussed are: Necessary qualifications of a *guru* and a *shishya*, correct method of *sâdhanâ* or spiritual practice, the experiences of the state of self-realisation and the character of firm abidance in knowledge. A lot of typographical errors have marred the beauty of this useful book.

THE MESSAGES OF DANTE. BY SUBODH KRISHNA GHOSAL, M.A. *Published by Chuckervertty Chatterjee and Co. Ltd., 15, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 31. Price As. 4.*

This is a public lecture delivered by the author at the Bengali Dante Society, in which he has briefly reviewed the very valuable contributions, to human thought, of Dante, the poet-philosopher-mystic of Italy (1265-1321). Dante has influenced to some extent the creative literature of Bengal, and the author shows how, in Madhusudana Datta's and Hem Chandra Banerji's works this spirit of Dante is traceable. The author examines Dante's views and doctrines in the field of philosophy and psychology as expressed in *Inferno* and other works. The lecture is very interesting and thoughtful inasmuch as it tries to discover the underlying identities between the deeper foundations of Hindu thought and Dante's spirituality. Dante's message was one of patriotism, nationalism and man-making like that of Swami Vivekananda of our own times.

GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA. BY SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN. *Available at Oxford University Press, Nicol Road, Bombay. Pp. 50. Price 3s. net.*

This illuminating lecture, on the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, is not only "on

a master mind from the East" but also by a master mind of the East, because the lecturer is none other than a distinguished Oriental thinker, the torch-bearer of India's ancient culture and civilization. In intellectual integrity, moral earnestness and spiritual insight Buddha is undoubtedly one of the greatest figures in history. The learned Professor has, in his characteristic and inimitable way, given a very able exposition of the four Noble Truths and the philosophy of Nirvâna or deliverance taught by Buddha. Hinduism cannot live without Buddhism, nor Buddhism without Hinduism. What is needed is the powerful combination of the highest intellect with the noblest heart and the wonderful humanising power as illustrated in the life and teachings of Gautama Buddha.

HINDI-ENGLISH

HINDI GRAMMAR AT A GLANCE. By SWAMI MADHAVANANDA. *Published by the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 19, Keshab Chandra Sen Street, Calcutta. Pp. 61. Price As. 6.*

It is written in the preface that "this little book is intended for the use of those who want to have a fairly comprehensive knowledge of Hindi Grammar, within a short compass, through the medium of English." In this the writer has achieved a great measure of success. The brochure is written on the same lines as the Swami's earlier one, *Bengali Grammar at a Glance*, and contains all the essential rules and forms of grammar necessary for a clear understanding of the Hindi as well as the Hindustani Languages. Besides, it affords useful information on the Hindi alphabets and their correct pronn-
ciation. The get-up is excellent.

NEWS AND REPORTS

MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY AND HOSPITAL

REPORT FOR 1938

The Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati was started by Swami Vivekananda—far away in the interior of the Himalayas—to be a suitable centre for practising and disseminating the Highest Truth in life. The Ashrama has not been, however, out of touch with life and society. It has got a publication department which has brought out quite a volume of religious literature; it has been publishing the *Prabuddha Bharata*, a high class monthly journal in English, dealing with Vedanta and different problems of Indian national life; and now and then it sends out preachers to different provinces and abroad. It has got also a dispensary forming a part of its activities.

The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary came into being as a sheer necessity—in fulfilment of the local needs. The condition of the villagers, mostly ignorant and poor, is so helpless in times of disease and sickness that even the stoniest of hearts will be moved to do something for them. The regular dispensary was opened in 1903. Since then it has been growing in size and importance. Now quite a large number of

patients come from a distance of even 30 or 40 miles.

The Dispensary stands within the precincts of the Ashrama, and is in charge of a monastic member qualified for the task. He has sometimes to go to the villages to call on patients who cannot come to the hospital. In the current year a medical graduate has been appointed to increase the efficiency of the work. Service is done in a spirit of worship, and as such irrespective of caste or creed. The efficiency with which the work is done has elicited admiration from one and all. Especially medical persons having the practical knowledge of running a hospital have appreciated the management of the institution situated in such a distant corner of the Himalayas.

Year before last we had to construct a new building—with 12 beds and an operation room—as the one already existing was found too incommodious for the purpose. But now we find even this new building is too small for the high demand on the hospital. For about six months of the year we had to make arrangements for about 20 indoor patients, though there are regular beds for only 12 of them.

In the year under review we fitted the operation room with most up-to-date equipments, so that almost all kinds of operation can be done here. This, we hope, will be a great boon to the people of this area, for in serious surgical cases they suffer most helplessly as they cannot afford to go to the plains—so far off—for treatment.

We have also started a small clinical laboratory, which is a rare thing in these parts. Now almost all kinds of medical help that one can expect in a city are available here.

We have made arrangements also for the amusement and recreation of the patients by buying a gramophone.

The following comparative chart will indicate the gradual evolution of the dispensary.

Year	No. of Patients	
	Outdoor	Indoor
1915	1,173	...
1925	3,162	35
1930	5,014	203
1935	14,344	189
1937	14,407	280
1938	15,426	243

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 15,426, of which 11,115 were new cases and 4,311 repeated cases. Of these new cases 4,546 were men, 2,411 women and 4,158 children. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 243 of which 192 were cured and discharged, 5 left treatment, 37 were relieved, 6 died, and 3 were in the hospital. Of these 157 were men, 53 women, and 33 children.

The total receipts including interests from investments was Rs. 4,754-8-8 and the total disbursement was Rs. 6,156-2-3.

We cordially thank all our donors, who by their continued support have made it possible for us to carry on this humanitarian work in such an out-of-the-way place. And we hope we shall receive from them such support and help even in future.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P. O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U. P.

SWAMI GHANANANDA SAILS FOR MAURITIUS

At the request of a number of Indian residents in Mauritius Swami Ghanananda of the

Ramakrishna Mission has been deputed to work among them as a religious and social worker. The Indians abroad are to-day confronted with grave problems which affect nearly every aspect of their life. And Swami Ghanananda has been sent after repeated and almost insistent appeals from a section of the Indian community in Mauritius. He sailed for the place by the S. S. *Gairsoppa* on July 2.

Mauritius, which is a British crown colony and over 700 square miles in area, lies in the Indian Ocean and is noted for its vast sugar industry. It has a population of about 400,000, over two-thirds of which are Hindus.

Swami Ghanananda joined the Mission nearly 19 years ago and has since been connected with a number of important activities in its different branch centres as well as in the Headquarters at Belur. While he was at Madras his services were of great help to the publication department there, and for sometime he was also in the editorial staff of the *Vedanta Kesari*. Afterwards he went to Colombo and was in charge of the Ashrama there for some years.

He came to the Headquarters at Belur nearly six years ago. He was a member of the Working Committee for the last two years and was connected with the organization of relief work and propagandistic activities.

His services as an impressive speaker and as a thoughtful writer have been of great help in spreading the ideas and ideals of the Mission in different parts of India. Recently he brought out a valuable book entitled, *Sri Ramakrishna and His Unique Message*, in commemoration of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ANNIVERSARY AT CHICAGO

To commemorate the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, the Vivekananda-Vedanta Society of Chicago held their annual banquet at the Hotel Maryland on Sunday, April 16th.

The guest-speakers were Swami Paramananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of Boston, Dr. Haydon, Head of the Department of Comparative Religions of the University of Chicago, and author of "The Quest of Man Through the Ages", and Dr. Schaub, Head of the Department of Philosophy of Northwestern University, and editor of the magazine "The Monist". Dr. George Lake, who was once a priest of

the liberal Catholic Church, was the toast-master.

There were a number of distinguished professors of both Universities present on this occasion. Dr. Braden, Head of the Department of Comparative Religions at Northwestern, Dr. Faris, Head of the Department of Sociology, Dr. McKuon, Head of the Department of Humanities, Professor Alfred Emerson of the Department of Zoology, Professor Morris and Professor Hartshorn of the Department of Philosophy, and a great number of members and friends of the Society enthusiastically participated.

Swami Vishwananda, Leader of the local Vedanta Society, at the outset welcomed the guests and said that the distinct contribution of Sri Ramakrishna to the world of thought was his discovery of the unity and harmony of religions and that it was in the fitness of things that on this occasion men and women of different faiths, denominations and creeds were gathered together to pay their reverential homage to this great Master from India.

Swami Paramananda, in the course of his address said, "Like Wrong-Way Corrigan, Christopher Columbus discovered America instead of India, but it is America that has discovered the imperishable spiritual treasures of India. It was at the Parliament of Religions, held in this very city in 1893 that Swami Vivekananda presented before the civilized world the spiritual legacy of India."

Dr. Haydon in his address said, "When a man surveys the civilization of five thousand years there are some men—great souls—who loom out from the mists of the ages; those who were probably above all limitations or bondages of the practical culture which created them. The man you honour tonight is one of these towering personalities. The fact is that he drank in the heritage of India, not from books but from personal contact of man with man, individual with individual, the call of the heart of the lowly and the pride and arrogance of the mighty, all teaching him,—from all of them came the thing that was Sri Ramakrishna. My interest tonight is in asking you to see him in the way that I envy him. In this Western world, tormented and tortured by projected over-realism, we must all indeed envy him in the realization of the magnificent, soul-stirring thing he had in his vision of all types and creeds and philosophic systems; in the way he tied all religions together into a unity; in the way he bound every single

human being into a single great, divine relationship. It is very lovely, and of all who came down the centuries he recognized the magnificent synthesis,—the faith and beauty of it. Since God is one, and since you cannot possibly know what God is in Himself, and since man is the manifestation of God, the only way in which you can really serve God is by serving man; the only way you can really worship God is in man; the only proof you can give that you love God is by your affection to man."

Dr. Schaub in his talk explained the deep, metaphysical significance of the simple saint, Sri Ramakrishna. Incidentally he propounded the philosophical truth behind the image of Kali, and showed the fundamental difference in the outlook of India and the West.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA SEVA SAMITI, SYLHET, ASSAM

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD, 1934-1938

The Sevasamiti was started 22 years ago, in the year, 1917, in Sylhet and since then it has been serving the public in various ways. Its activities may be summed up as follows:

Educational: The Samiti conducts seven schools for young boys and girls and the total strength of all the schools at the end of 1938 was about 350.

Philanthropic: The Charitable Dispensary conducted by the Samiti treated, during the year, 1938, 13,467 patients of whom 4,672 were new cases and the rest repeated cases. During the five years under review, the Samiti arranged to nurse about 50 helpless patients and to cremate about 10 dead bodies. The Samiti arranged relief work during the Bihar earthquake in 1934, during Assam cyclone in the same year, and during floods in the surrounding districts on several occasions.

Preaching: During the period under report, about 11 public lectures were arranged and about 43 classes on different topics were held. In the Ashrama readings from Scriptures and Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother were regularly held. There is a small library and free reading-room which are open to the public.

In the year, 1929 a branch centre of the Samiti was opened at Karimganj. This branch centre conducts a night-school for the benefit of the poor children of the locality, a primary school for boys, a free

library and a charitable dispensary. A Students' Home was started in 1935, which now contains 3 boarders.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA-SHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1938

The 38th annual report of the above Sevashrama shows how, since its inception in 1901, the Sevashrama has been trying its best to mitigate the sufferings of the people in various ways. The Sevashrama maintains an indoor hospital of 50 beds where patients are served with medicine and diet free of charge. The total number of indoor patients admitted was 1,283, of whom 1,107 were cured, 113 relieved, 41 died and 22 were under treatment at the close of the year. During the year under review, altogether 42,546 patients were treated at the Outdoor Dispensary, of whom 27,372 were new cases and 15,174 were repeated ones. The Sevashrama maintains a free Night School for imparting primary education to the children of the locality. There were 64 students on the roll at the end of the year, and, besides these, 15 boys under twelve years of age were getting education in a preparatory class. There is a small library in the Sevashrama for the benefit of the workers, Sadhus and Vidyarthi.

The Sevashrama organised relief work on a large scale during the Kumbha Mela held at Hardwar during the year under review. The Sevashrama opened branch centres at three different places, all of which together treated 13,347 suffering pilgrims. The main Sevashrama itself had to treat as many as 9,730 outdoor patients and 222 indoor patients during the Mela season. The touring relief department, consisting of doctors and workers who went round from camp to camp to find out such patients as were unable to move and come to the centres, treated 1,143 patients. Besides these, the Sevashrama gave shelter and food to about 600 pilgrims who had come for the Kumbha Mela and daily religious discourses were arranged and a free reading-room run for the benefit of the pilgrims.

Some of the immediate needs of the Sevashrama are:—(1) Rs. 1,40,000 for endowment of the beds; (2) Rs. 50,000 for the maintenance and upkeep of the institution; (3) Rs. 14,000 for meeting the recurring expenditure of the Night School, which comes to about Rs. 40 per month; (4) Funds for acquiring land and putting up more buildings to accommodate the workers; (5) Funds for purchasing instruments and Laboratory equipment for the Indoor Hospital. An earnest appeal is made to the generous public to come forward and help the institution in every way.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT KHULNA

The 104th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was performed here at the local Dharma Sabha on the 31st May and 1st June, 1939, with great pomp. In the morning of the 31st May, there were special Puja and Homa, readings from the Chandi, etc. In the noon, about one thousand Daridra Narayanas were fed sumptuously. Hundreds of people from distant villages joined the celebration. In the evening, there was a huge procession. On the 1st June, at 7 p.m. a big public meeting was arranged in the Dharma Sabha hall under the presidency of the Sub-judge S. J. Vishnu Ratha Sen. After the opening song, last year's annual report was read by S. J. Sudhir Kumar Mazumder, a distinguished local pleader. Then Swami Vamadevananda of the Ramakrishna Mission gave an illuminating address on "Sri Ramakrishna and Hindu religion" for an hour. Swami Kshemananda of the Bagerhat Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama spoke on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. A poem on Sri Ramakrishna was read by S. J. Sneha Shila Roy Chowdhury. Then the President in his concluding speech spoke beautifully on "Sri Ramakrishna and Divine Mother". Many distinguished persons including the Dt. Magistrate, Second Munsiff, Govt. officers, pleaders and others attended the meeting. The speciality of the whole function was that the lady volunteers took an active part under the guidance of S. J. Sarala Bala Roy, Secy., Sri Ramakrishna Samity, Khulna.