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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

## TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By M.

Three classes of men: the bound, the perfect, and the ever-perfect—Worldly people lack grit—On death—Advice to worldly people.

Sunday, April 8, 1883. (*Continued*).

The Master wanted to hear a few songs. Ramlal and a brahmin official of the temple garden sang :

Dwell O Lord, O Lover of Bhakti  
In the Brindavan of my heart,  
\* \* \*

The dark cloud of the summer storm  
Fades into nothingness,  
When, flute in hand and a smile on His lips,  
Lighting the world with His loveliness,  
Krishna, the Dark One, appears.  
\* \* \*

Master (to the devotees): ‘As the tiger devours animals, so does the tiger of ecstatic love for God destroy our passions, our lust, anger, and the like. Once this love for God grows in the heart, our passions entirely disappear. The Gopis of Brindavan had that state of mind because of their love for Krishna.

‘Again, this love for God may be likened to collyrium. Râdhâ said to

her friends, “I see Krishna everywhere.” They replied, “Friend, you have painted your eyes with the collyrium of love; therefore you see Krishna everywhere.” They say that when collyrium made from the ashes of a frog’s head is applied to the eyes, one sees snakes everywhere.

‘They are indeed bound souls who constantly dwell amidst lust and greed and do not think of God even for a moment. How can one expect noble deeds of them? They are like mangoes pecked by a crow. Such a fruit cannot be offered to the Deity in the temple, and men even hesitate to eat it.

‘Bound souls entangled in worldliness are like silk-worms. These worms can cut through their cocoons, if they want; but having woven the cocoons themselves, they are too much attached to them to leave them. And so they die there.

‘Free souls are not under the control of lust and greed. There are some silkworms that cut through the cocoons which they have made with such great care. But these are few and far between.

‘It is Mâyâ that deludes. Only a few have their spiritual consciousness awakened and are not deluded by the magic of Maya. They do not come under the control of lust and greed.

‘There are two classes of perfect souls: those who attain perfection through spiritual practice, and those who attain it through the grace of God. Some farmers irrigate their fields with great effort. Only then can they grow crops. But there are others who do not have to irrigate at all. Their fields are flooded by rain. They don’t have to take the trouble of drawing water. One must practise spiritual discipline laboriously in order to avoid the clutches of Maya. Those who attain liberation through the grace of God do not have to labour. But they are few indeed.

‘Then there is the class of the ever-perfect. They are born in each life with their spiritual consciousness already awakened. Take the instance of a spring whose outlet is somehow obstructed. While looking after various things in the garden, the plumber accidentally clears the outlet and the water gushes forth. People are simply amazed to see the first manifestation of an ever-perfect soul’s earnestness in spiritual life. They say, “Where was all this devotion, renunciation, and love?”’

The conversation turned to the spiritual zeal of devotees, as illustrated in the earnestness of the Gopis of Brindavan. Ramlal sang :

Thou art my All in All, O Lord,  
The Life of my life, the Essence of essence ;  
In the three worlds I have none else  
But Thee to call my own.

\* \* \*

*Master* (to the devotees): ‘Ah! What a beautiful song! “Thou art my All in All.”’

Ramlal sang again, this time describing the pangs of the Gopis at their separation from their beloved Krishna :

Hold not, hold not the chariot’s wheels!  
Is it on wheels this chariot moves?  
The Mover of its wheels is Krishna,  
By whose will the worlds are moved.

\* \* \*  
The Master went into deep Samâdhi. His body was transformed. He sat with folded hands as in his photograph. Tears of joy flowed from the corners of his eyes. After a long while his mind came down to the ordinary plane of consciousness. He mumbled something, of which only a word now and then could be grasped by the devotees in the room. He said to himself, ‘Thou art I, and I am Thou—Thou eatest—Thou—I eat! What is this confusion Thou hast created? I see like a man with jaundiced eyes. I see Thee alone everywhere. O Krishna, Friend of the lowly! O Eternal Consort of my soul! O Govinda!’

As he uttered the words ‘Eternal Consort of my soul’ and ‘Govinda’, the Master again went into Samadhi. There was complete silence in the room. The eager and unsatiated eyes of the devotees were riveted on the Master, a God-man of infinite moods.

Adhar Sen arrived with several of his friends. He was a Deputy Magistrate, about thirty years old. This was his second visit to the Master. He was accompanied by his friend Saradacharan, who was extremely unhappy because of the death of his eldest son. A retired Deputy Inspector of schools, Saradacharan was devoted to meditation and prayer. Adhar brought his friend to the Master for consolation in his afflicted state of mind.

Coming down from Samadhi, the Master found the eyes of the devotees

fixed on him. He spoke to himself, still in an abstracted mood.

Then addressing the devotees Sri Ramakrishna said, 'The spiritual wisdom of worldly people is seen only on rare occasions. It is like the flame of a candle. No, it is rather like a single ray of the sun passing through a chink in the wall. Worldly people chant the name of God, but there is no love behind it. It is like children swearing by God, having learnt the word from the quarrels of their aunts.

'Worldly people have no grit. When they succeed in some undertaking, they feel contented, but if they don't succeed, they scarcely bother about it. They feel the need of water and begin to dig a well. But as soon as they strike a stone they give up digging there and begin at another place. Perhaps they come to a bed of sand. Finding nothing but sand, they give up that place too. How can they succeed in getting water unless they continue to dig persistently where they started?

'Man reaps the harvest of his own past actions. Hence you read in the song :

O Mother, I have no one else to blame ;  
Alas! I sink in the well  
These very hands have made.

\* \* \*

'“I and mine”—that is ignorance. By discriminating you will realize that what you call “I” is nothing but Âtman. Reason it out : Are you the body or the flesh or something else? At the end you will know that you are none of these. You are free from attributes. In this state you will realize that you have never been the doer of any action, that you have been free from virtue and blemish alike, that you are beyond righteousness and unrighteousness.

'“This is gold and this is brass,”—that is ignorance. “It is all gold,”—that is knowledge.

'Reasoning stops when one sees God. But there are instances of people who have realized God and still continue to reason. Again, there are people who, after having seen Him, chant the name of God with devotion and sing His glories.

'How long does a child cry? So long as it isn't sucking at its mother's breast. As soon as it is nursed it stops crying. Then the child feels only joy. Joyously it drinks the milk from its mother's breast. But it is also true that, while drinking, the child sometimes plays and laughs.

'It is God alone who has become everything. But His greater manifestation is man. God is directly present in the man who has the pure heart of a child and who laughs and cries and dances and sings in divine ecstasy.'

Sri Ramakrishna became better acquainted with Adhar, who related the cause of his friend's grief. The Master sang, as if to himself :

To arms! To arms, O man!  
Death storms your house in battle array!  
Mount the swift chariot of devotion  
Bearing the quiver of knowledge.

\* \* \*

*Master* : 'What will you do? Be ready for death. Death has entered the house. You must fight him with the weapon of God's holy name. God alone is the Doer. I say, “O Lord, I do as Thou doest through me. I speak as Thou speakest through me. I am the machine and Thou art the Operator. I am the house and Thou art the In-dweller. I am the engine and Thou art the Engineer.” Give your power of attorney to God. One doesn't come to grief through giving responsibility to a good man. Let His will be done.

'But isn't your grief for your son only natural? The son is one's own self reborn. Lakshmana ran to Râvana when the latter fell dead on the battle-

field. Looking at Ravana's body, he found that every one of his bones was full of holes. Addressing Râma, he said, "O Rama, glory be to your arrows! There is no spot in Ravana's body that they have not pierced." "Brother," replied Rama, "the holes you see in his bones are not from my arrows. Grief for his sons has pierced them through and through. These holes are the marks of his grief."

'But all these are transitory : house, wife, and children. They have only a momentary existence. The palm tree alone is real. One or two fruits have dropped off. Why lament?

'God is engaged in three kinds of activity : creation, preservation, and destruction. Death is inevitable. All will be destroyed at the time of dissolution. Nothing will remain. Then the Divine Mother will gather up the seeds for future creation, taking them out again at the time of the new creation, even as the mistress of the house keeps in her hotchpotch pot cucumber seeds, "sea-foam", blue pills, and other miscellaneous things, in small bags.'

Sri Ramakrishna began to talk with Adhar on the northern verandah of his room.

*Master* (to Adhar) : 'You are a Deputy Magistrate. Remember that you have secured this position through the grace of God. Do not forget Him, but remember that all men must walk down the same path<sup>1</sup> one day. We stay in the world only for a couple of days.

'This world is our field of activity.

<sup>1</sup> Adhar Sen passed away eighteen months after this conversation. At the news of his death the Master wept before the Mother for a long time. Adhar was a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, who referred to him as his own relative.

We are born here to perform certain actions. People have their homes in the country, but come to Calcutta to work.

'It is necessary to perform some actions. But one must finish one's duties speedily. While melting gold, the goldsmith blows the fire with his bellows. He uses also a fan and pipe so that there may be the bright fire needed to melt the metal. After the melting is over, he relaxes and asks his attendant to prepare a smoke for him. All this while his face has been hot and perspiring; but now he can smoke.

'One must have stern determination; then alone is spiritual practice possible. One must make a firm resolve.

'There is a great power inherent in the name of God. It destroys ignorance. God's name may be likened to a seed. The seed is tender, and the sprout soft, but still they pierce through the hard earth. The earth breaks and makes way for the sprout.

'The mind is dragged down heavily if it constantly dwells in the midst of lust and greed. Therefore one must be alert. But monks don't have much to fear. The real Sannyâsi lives away from lust and greed. Through the practice of spiritual discipline one can fix one's mind constantly on God.

'True Sannyasis, those who are able to devote their minds constantly to God, are like bees, which sit only on flowers and sip their honey. Those who live in the world in the midst of lust and greed, may direct their attention to God; but sometimes their minds dwell also on lust and greed. They are like common flies, which sit on a piece of candy, then on a sore or filth.

'Always keep your mind fixed on God. In the beginning you must struggle a little; later on you will enjoy your pension.'

## RELIGION: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE

BY THE EDITOR

Many there are who are not privileged even to hear of It. Still others there are who cannot comprehend It even after hearing. Rare is the teacher and rare the pupil. Rare is he who attains realization under the instruction of an adept.—*Kathopanishad*, I. ii. 7.

### I

The world is mad after democracy, which seems to have affected every field of thought and activity. 'God is just and looks on all as equal;' argues the religious man, 'ergo we must have equality of treatment in all fields of activity and more so in the religious.' 'All men are intellectually equal, or at least they are potentially so;' thinks the modern psychologist, 'therefore he must be helped to attain the general intellectual level.' 'There can be no real difference between one man and another;'—so runs the modern political thought, 'and consequently all artificial barriers must be removed.' In other words, men now aspire for democratic equality in all walks of life, for what is sauce for the gander must be sauce for the goose as well.

We shall fain not enter into other fields of thought, and shall confine our discussion to that of spirituality alone. If we have adverted to others, it is only to hold before us the common trend of thought which underlies all modern generalizations about human capacity, viz, that when opportunities are equal, all are equal; and this is quite germane to our present investigation.

If absolute democracy in thought and action be the standard of judgement and if the gates of the highest realization are to be thrown open unquestioningly to all and sundry, then all the ancient religions as well as many modern ones will have to plead guilty. For they all treat the individuals differently and give more

attention to their real worth than to social or personal estimation. That is why Sri Krishna dissuaded Arjuna from the path of renunciation for which the latter thought himself fit, though on another occasion He encouraged Uddhava to embrace Sannyâsa.

Not only this, religious leaders make a distinction between esoteric and exoteric circles. There are the elite who are encouraged to transcend all modes of social difference and treat all equally. But there are the commonalty who are asked to follow the common walks of life rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. But the equality that the elite are asked to exercise must not be confused with dead social uniformity. Their only concern being with God, the points of contact with the world are reduced to the minimum. It is only brotherliness, love, courtesy, philanthropy, or such other relationships based on spirituality that they are allowed to recognize. The question of differential treatment on economic or political planes, therefore, seldom arises. Natural difference is taken note of when imparting spiritual prescriptions, but when dealing with purely worldly affairs the mystics accept established rules of conduct, though their spiritual endeavour for unity scintillates unawares through all forms of social contact, thus giving society an urge towards higher integration.

Be that as it may, the recognition of different spiritual levels obviates much of the difficulty in reconciling the

teachings of saints and prophets which too often seem self-contradictory. Not all teachings are suited for all people, nor are all people fitted for all teachings. Each must be taught according to his capacity, and each must accept according to his mental equipment.

Early Christianity recognized a distinction between esoteric and exoteric teachings. There are clear indications in the Bible that Christ in his spiritual ministration took for granted this difference of mental capacity and spoke accordingly :

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. (*Matth.*, 7. 6). And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. (*Luke*, 8. 10). He that is of God heareth God's words. Ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God. (*John*, 8. 47).

Truly does P. D. Ouspensky remark :

The idea of esotericism occupies a very important place in Christian teaching and in the New Testament, if these are properly understood. (*A New Model of the Universe*, p. 148).

That the church Fathers kept the creed secret can be gathered from what St. Augustine said,

You must not write down anything about the Creed, because God said, 'I will put my law in their hearts and in their minds I will write it.' Therefore the Creed is learnt by hearing and is not written on tablets or on any material substance but in the heart. (Quoted, *ibid.* p. 188).

As for Buddha, like a true Indian Yogi he clearly enunciates this idea in the *Samyutta Nikâya* (II.261) :

I also, brethren, have seen these things before, yet I did not reveal them. I might have revealed if, and others would not have believed it. Now, had they not believed me, it would have been to their loss and sorrow.

In another passage we read :

Conscious of danger in its depth, Brahmâ,  
I would not preach the Norm of Norms  
to men.

And Mohammed spoke in the same strain :

I received from the Messenger of God two kinds of knowledge; one of these I

taught to others, and if I had taught them the other, it would have broken their throats. . . . The Koran was sent down in seven dialects; and in every one of its sentences, there is an external and internal meaning. . . . The desire of knowledge is a divine commandment for every Muslim; and to instruct in knowledge those who are unworthy of it is like putting pearls, jewels, and gold on the necks of swine.

We cannot close this section without adducing Guru Nanak's evidence on this point :

It is useless to endeavour to instruct a fool, just as placing a light before a blind man or burning fifty lamps for him is of no avail.

## II

All the great saints and prophets thus agree in making a distinction between spiritual recipients and adjust their teachings accordingly. But this democratic age wants it otherwise, and so did also the democratic age of ancient India, the only difference being that while the culture-minded West wants its democracy on the physical and mental planes, the religious-minded Indians of the Buddhist age wanted it on the spiritual plane. Of course the process in India worked out in a way contrary to what it is doing now, although like two extremes meeting India finds herself, after her long ages of spiritual disintegration, almost in the same spiritual morass as the West. But the pity of it is that while the latter has at least some material advantages to counterbalance the poverty of the soul, the former stands robbed of both.

In early Christianity the individual was prominently in the forefront, and so also was he to a large extent in the mystic atmosphere of Europe's middle ages. But in the later years, in the Roman Catholic countries especially, institutionalism and priestcraft had the upper hand, individuality being considered only a clog in the vast machine. Against this tyranny, protestant Europe

revolted; but the revolution not only uprooted the blind faith in the priesthood and the church dogmas, it also engendered a great landslide in spiritual hankering. The spiritual void was filled up by an eagerness for scientific research and achievement. But individual initiative, though thus it found play to a great extent, was soon requisitioned by the State: and once yoked to political exigencies, European thought found itself strangely under a dictatorship that spread its tentacles in every sphere of life. As a consequence, religion in Europe now means State religion. The State now can rely on the church to prepare the spiritual front and wage a war of nerves on its behalf whenever the occasion demands.

In India, on the contrary, movements like Jainism and Buddhism came into existence, which thrived by broadcasting the highest spiritual knowledge without considering the receptivity of the masses. The original teachings were not so indiscriminate; but in later days the emphasis shifted from spiritual growth to the expansion of the different brotherhoods. Monks were admitted irrespective of their cultural, intellectual, and spiritual backgrounds, and the masses were taught to sing, 'Life is unsteady like water on a lotus leaf.' To them monasticism was the most rational, honourable, and covetable course of life. India thus lost not only a firm hold on the realities of life, but higher spiritual values also escaped her atrophied soul. All that remained were an unscrupulous priesthood which, ignorant itself, posed to save others spiritually while obstructing all social and intellectual growth,—some lifeless monastic orders which counted as nought in social esteem, failing as they did to infuse life in every field of human endeavour,—and a body of spiritual preceptors who revelled in all sorts of ignominious behaviour and

lived by exploiting the credulity of the unsophisticated masses.

Europe lost sight of the true spirituality through the glare of a material civilization, while India failed to see the higher light as the darkness around was too impenetrable: and both forgot that spiritual growth is intrinsically an individual affair. The scriptures declare, 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्—one should save oneself by oneself.' Others may be of help in spiritual growth, but the ultimate criterion will be personal endeavour. Besides, the growth must be gradual and from within. Spirituality cannot be injected from without, though by coming in contact with an illumined soul one may easily catch the glow. Instead of recognizing the importance of individual perfection the modern age has bent all its energy on mass movements for which mundane achievements are the only practicable ends. We forget that the contributions of religious organizations lie only in evoking the individual's latent worth, in protecting him from worldly allurements in his early growth, and in providing freedom from worldly worries in his later development.

But when organization for the sake of organization or for its material advantages is lauded to the sky, it not only works havoc with the mass mind but drags down the leaders too into the general welter. In organized religions the popularity of the leaders depends on the goodwill and unquestioning faith of the illiterate peasants, labourers, and women, the unthinking monied classes, and the unscrupulous politicians who see some advantage in a process of mass auto-intoxication engendered through rich, undigested spiritual foods. The leaders, in order to preserve their privileged position, think it wise to play the tune that keeps the masses best in humour. They naturally discourage a critical outlook. As such, it is ultimate-

ly the mass mind that sets the spiritual standard. As pointed out by Dr. Barbara Spofford Morgan :

The peculiarity of the collective mind is that in sharing it individuals drop to their own lower mental levels, and, therefore, when the collective mind asserts itself (either in crowds or groups) the advances of individual development are largely lost.

### III

While on this question of organized religious movements, our attention is drawn to the problem of conversion and specially to mass conversion. Conversion means the adoption of certain formalities and affiliation to certain organizations or churches. But the pertinent question is, In how many cases does it mean inner conviction? More often is it the case that social and economic advantages swing the balance either way. The real issue was brought before the public in all its bareness when one of Mahatma Gandhi's sons embraced Mohammedanism. The Mahatma denounced him as a moral wreck and exhorted the Mohammedan community not to court public opprobrium by admitting any unworthy person into its fold. In sheer self-defence at least, if not for higher considerations, the new convert was ultimately disowned.

Let us now see how social, economic, and political considerations play their parts irrespective of the moral and spiritual need of the converted. Islam was ushered into India by a glorious band of saints. But the political power did much to clear the way for them. And if historians are asked to give their impartial judgement on the relative importance of the two factors, so far at least as the number of converts is concerned, as distinguished from the enrichment of the Indian life through the influx of newer spiritual values, we have no doubt that the politicians and military geniuses will be awarded the pride of place. Then there is the inherent weakness of

the present-day Hindu society. The unenviable position of some of the lower classes of our society and the helplessness of the poor widows, for instance, are a constant source of depletion of the Hindu society now and again.

Until a generation ago, the British Government, which stands for strict religious neutrality, subsidized the Christian missionary schools and hospitals, which had conversion as one of their main planks. Moreover, people believed that they could reap economic and social benefits by embracing the religion of the rulers, for which they thus imbibed a love other than that arising from mere spiritual hankering. As in the case of Mohammedanism, there certainly were many conversions from conviction; but we believe that the greater number of them was the result of other extraneous considerations.

Whatever may be the justification for increasing one's following at the cost of others, people who are truly religious cannot overlook the fact that spirituality suffers in proportion as it puts other considerations in the forefront. Oftener than not conversion is pushed on out of a clanish spirit. The result is social and cultural maladjustments, which often have political repercussions as well. The Mohammedans and Christians complain that the Hindu social customs are surreptitiously making a havoc of their religious norms and socio-religious democracy. They accordingly clamour for protection against the Hindus. And yet it is much truer to say that their greater danger arises from their own unacculturated converts. It is easy to complain against the unorganized Hindu society which cannot retaliate. But, pray, why do you make inroads into our society without first making cultural *rapprochements*? Can you not please leave us alone till we can catch up with the modern world through our own



independent effort? If instead of granting this freedom the other communities pursue an aggressive programme, the force of circumstances will egg the Hindus on to following suit for sheer self-protection. Nay, we can already read signs of an aggressive ideological expansion among the Hindus. But this, we argue again, is the result of reaction. Nor is it altogether a bad thing. For when others cannot or will not mend their ways, it behoves their brothers to come up to the general standard if they are not to be pushed back to the wall to the ruin of the Indian national life as a whole. For India's progress lies in the uplift of all the sections; and a hearty co-operation between these sections cannot be ensured unless each has a true esteem for the others based on equality in every walk of life. Here, however, we are not strictly in a religious atmosphere. Conversion is an aspect of religion in its manifestation on the level of the mass mind, where different human interests get so inextricably woven together, that it is impossible to distinguish religion as such. Oftener is it the case that economic, social, political, and humane considerations with a sufficient emotional drive behind them are mistaken for religion. Religion may supply the motive power for many forms of group activity, but group activities need not necessarily be religion, though we call them so. People, however, seldom make this distinction when dealing with large-scale problems.

#### IV

And so we think in terms of the masses, and our democratic slogan is that the same coat must equally fit Shyam, Samsul, and Samuel. We forget that religion is not only the most democratic of all democratic human pursuits inasmuch as it takes no note of social distinctions but only the

intrinsic worth of a man, but it is also the most aristocratic of all aristocratic values as it totally escapes the mass mind in its higher manifestations.

Once we take note of this truism religion becomes primarily a personal affair; churches and dogmas then fade away or are left to the ignorant to fight about. Instead of this rational attitude we enthuse over the successes of our churches and hold this forth as a positive proof of the superiority of our own creed. Such a mentality could be understood in medieval ages, but when it survives and recurs evermore in the present age, one really despairs of the progress of the human race as a whole. What do we really gloat over? Is it real spiritual achievement or merely political and social gain through better organization, propaganda, allurements, and display of power? Social inducement may act as a bait for change of faith. Democratic slogans may instigate people to snap away from their wonted social, cultural, and family moorings. Religion in close alliance with these may engineer successful aggressive movements against other communities. But how will that be rated in the presence of God? By doing violence to the individual's natural course of progress do we advance either him or ourselves in the spiritual path?

True saints were never fanatics. Ibn al-Arabi, one of the most celebrated Muslim mystics, remarked :

God says, 'I am in my servant's opinion of Me, i.e., I do not manifest Myself to him save in the form of his belief.'

And the Gita declares :

In whatever way men worship me, in that very way do I fulfil their desires: it is My path, O Arjuna, that men travel in diverse ways.

But this individuality must not be confused with self-centred bigotry. Assertion of individuality in the secular spheres of life is synonymous with posses-

sion, a will to power, or an abandon in the midst of all that the lower nature craves for. In the spiritual field, however, it amounts to a progressive withdrawal from all these, and hence a greater love for fellow-beings welling out of an internal fullness and peace. In fact, as we advance more and more towards God, the source of all unity, our individuality becomes co-extensive with universality. This is as true theoretically as it is practically illustrated by the lives and teachings of mystics, saints and prophets. Says Mohammed, 'God is not merciful to him who is not so to mankind.' In other words man's path of progress starts from himself, but it widens indefinitely beyond him till it engulfs the whole of humanity. Truly does the Gita declare :

With the heart concentrated by Yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self.

Yes, religion is inextricably bound up with a man's personality. When in contravention of this, religious leaders lend their support to passing social or cultural moods the result is disastrous to both the individual and the group. This does not, however, mean that the individual is to be left to the tender mercy of every passing wind or that this personal freedom should be exploited by harnessing it to the designs of unscrupulous schemers. Let us look at some instances of wilful dereliction.

We often read in the newspapers of the conversion of students and the refusal of higher educational authorities to interfere on the plea of religious neutrality. But the cogent question is, When a school or a college goes out of its avowed path of imparting knowledge does it stand by that neutrality? The inexperienced students trusted to its care for general education, cannot be said to have full personal liberty there when the

atmosphere is one of communal aggrandizement. The students go there to acquire knowledge, but get denominational affiliation instead!

Take another case. In some backward tracts which are called protected areas, the Christian missionaries have almost every freedom of movement: but the tribesmen are denied the services of the missionaries of other denominations, since these latter are for all practical purposes debarred from entering those areas through stringent border regulations. This can hardly be called religious freedom.

Then, again, nobody can be tolerated when reviling another religion. At best he can state his own standpoint in the most affirmative way; but condemn he never should.

Apart from protecting against such misuse and exploitation of personal freedom, society has a responsibility for promoting it positively. We have to give up all static conceptions of religion and think of it as a dynamic movement from lesser degrees of universality to higher ones till the pinnacle is reached in God-realization. The highest truths, therefore, must be interpreted in accordance with the mental capacity of individuals in different stages of growth. Hindu culture believed in such a natural hierarchy of spiritual lives which by the very fact of their sincere effort for greater co-ordination, could never come into unnecessary conflict with others. This ensured social progress as well as protection against an usurpation of the cultural field by the lower instincts of men.

The Hindus were not certainly alone in this field. Every religion realized that individual perfection presupposes an ever increasing harmony with the world at large. They insisted on universal service and an expansive, universal outlook. No wonder that the

saints and prophets conceived of the whole of humanity as a single family and preached toleration in the most unmistakable terms. How beautifully does St. Peter state the Christian position !

Now of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him.

Buddha's voice rang out equally clearly much earlier :

Aye, let us practise love for all the world, upward and downward, yonder, thence uncramped, free from ill-will and enmity.

And Mohammed said,

Remember you are all brothers. All men are equal in the eyes of God. . . . To-day I trample under my feet all distinctions of caste and colour, and nationality. . . . All men are sons of Adam and Adam was of dust.

Guru Govind Singh who subscribes to this view adduces some reason for the apparent divergences between men who are conceded to be fundamentally equal :

All men are the same, although they appear different under different influences. The bright and the dark, the ugly and the beautiful, the Hindus and the Muslims, have developed themselves according to the fashion of different countries. All have the same eyes, the same ears, the same body, and the same build—a compound of the same four elements.

It is this solid fact of a diversified pattern wrought on the common ground of human unity, it is this recognition of individual spiritual initiative aimed at a practical synthesis, it is this gradual mergence of Swadharma into universalism, into Sanâtana Dharma that guarantees the future of social harmony and individual self-realization.

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## THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY

BY SAINT KABIR

All humanity, O Sâdhu ! is one in substance.

Think well in thy mind, no difference exists (between man and man).

The same skin and the same blood form the body of the brahmin and the body  
of the Sudra.

The same Invisible Person speaks through the form of man and the form  
of woman.

The same Being is the Guru giving the Mantra and the same Being is the  
disciple hearing his sermons.

Let each man take the path according to his understanding, his Sad-guru will  
meet him (along that path).

I proclaim aloud and without any reservation in my mind that the person who  
has pure knowledge is rarely seen.

\* \* \* \* \*

To style myself a Hindu is not proper, nor to style myself a Mussulman ;

Lo ! this is only a toy-machine of the five elements within which is sporting the  
Invisible Person.

—TRANSLATED BY PROF. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

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# THE BASIS OF UNITY

BY NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## I

A modern society or people cannot have religion, that is, to say, credal religion, as the basis of its organized collective life. It was medieval society and people that were organized on that line. Indeed medievalism means nothing more—and nothing less—than that. But whatever the need and justification in the past, the principle is an anachronism under modern conditions. It was needed, perhaps, to keep alive a truth which goes into the very roots of human life and its deepest aspiration; and it was needed also for a dynamic application of that truth on a larger scale and in smaller details, on the mass of mankind and in its day to day life. That was the aim of the Church Militant and the Khilafat; that was the spirit, although in a more Sâttvic way, behind the Buddhistic evangelism or even Hindu colonization.

The truth behind a credal religion is the aspiration towards the realization of the Divine, some ultimate reality that gives a permanent meaning and value to the human life, to the existence lodged in this 'sphere of sorrow' here below. Credal paraphernalia were necessary to express or buttress this core of spiritual truth when mankind, in the mass, had not attained a certain level of enlightenment in the mind and a certain degree of development in its life relations. The modern age is modern precisely because it has attained to a necessary extent this mental enlightenment and this life development. So the scheme or scaffolding that was required in the past is no longer unavoidable and can have either no reality at all or only a modified utility.

A modern people is a composite entity especially with regard to its religious affiliation. Not religion, but culture is the basis of modern collective life, national or social. Culture includes in its grain that fineness of temperament which appreciates all truths behind all forms, even when there is a personal allegiance to one particular form.

In India, it is well known, the diversity of affiliations is colossal, *sui generis*. Two major affiliations have to-day almost cut the country into two; and desperate remedies are suggested which are worse than the malady itself, as they may kill the patient outright. If it is so, it is, I repeat, the medieval spirit that is at the bottom of the trouble.

The rise of this spirit in modern times and conditions is a phenomenon that has to be explained and faced: it is a ghost that has come out of the past and has got to be laid and laid for good. First of all, it is a reaction from modernism: it is a reaction from the modernist denial of certain fundamental and eternal truths, of God, soul, and immortality: it is a reaction from the modernist affirmation of the mere economic man. And it is also a defensive gesture of a particular complex of consciousness that has grown and lived powerfully and now apprehends expurgation and elimination.

In Europe such a contingency did not arise, because the religious spirit, rampant in the days of Inquisitions and St. Bartholomews, died away: it died, and (or, because) it was replaced by a spirit that was felt as being equally, if not more, authentic and, which for the moment, suffused the whole conscious-

ness with a large and high afflatus, commensurate with the amplitude of man's aspiration. I refer, of course, to the spirit of the renaissance. It was a spirit profane and secular, no doubt, but on that level it brought a catholicity of temper and a richness in varied interest—a humanistic culture, as it is called—which constituted a living and unifying ideal for Europe. That spirit culminated in the great French Revolution which was the final *coup de grace* to all that still remained of medievalism, even in its outer structure, political and economical.

In India the spirit of renaissance came very late, late almost by three centuries; and even then it could not flood the whole of the continent in all its nooks and corners, psychological and physical. There were any number of pockets (to use a current military phrase) left behind which guarded the spirit of the past and offered persistent and obdurate resistance. Perhaps, such a dispensation was needed in India and inevitable also; inevitable, because the religious spirit is closest to India's soul and is its most direct expression and cannot be uprooted so easily; needed, because India's and the world's future demands it and depends upon it.

Only the religious spirit has to be bathed and purified and enlightened by the spirit of the renaissance: that is to say, one must learn and understand and realize that Spirit is the thing—the one thing needful—*Tamevaikam jânatha*; 'religions' are its names and forms, appliances and decorations. Let us have by all means the religious spirit, the fundamental experience that is the inmost truth of all religions, that is the matter of our soul; but in our mind and life and body let there be a luminous catholicity, let these organs and instruments be trained to see and compare and appreciate the variety, the number-

less facets which the one Spirit naturally presents to the human consciousness. *Ekam sat viprâh bahudhâ vadanti*. It is an ancient truth that man discovered even in his earliest seekings; but it still awaits an adequate expression and application in life.

## II

India's historical development is marked by a special characteristic which is at once the expression of her inmost nature and the setting of a problem which she has to solve for herself and for the whole human race. I have spoken of the diversity and divergence of affiliations in a modern social unit. But what distinguishes India from all other peoples is that the diversity and divergence have culminated here in contradictoriness and mutual exclusion.

The first extremes that met in India and fought and gradually coalesced to form a single cultural and social whole were, as is well known, the Aryan and the non-Aryan. Indeed, the geologists tell us, the land itself is divided into two parts structurally quite different and distinct, the Deccan plateau and the Himalayan ranges with the Indo-Gangetic plain: the former is formed out of the most ancient and stable and, on the whole, horizontally bedded rocks of the earth, while the latter is of comparatively recent origin, formed out of a more flexible and weaker ~~halt~~ (the Himalayan region consisting of a colossal flexing and crumpling of strata). The disparity is so much that a certain group of geologists hold that the Deccan plateau did not at all form part of the Asiatic continent, but had drifted and dashed into it: in fact the Himalayas are the result of this mighty impact. The usual division of an Aryan and a Dravidian race may be due to a memory of the clash of the two continents and their races.

However, coming to historical times, we see wave after wave of the most heterogeneous and disparate elements—Sakas and Huns and Greeks—each bringing its quota of exotic material, enter into the oceanic Indian life and culture, lose their separate foreign identity and become part and parcel of the common whole. Even so,—a single unitary body was formed out of such varied and shifting materials—not in the political, but in a socio-religious sense. For a catholic religious spirit, not being solely doctrinal and personal, admitted and embraced in its supple and wide texture almost an infinitive variety of approaches to the Divine, of forms and norms of apprehending the Beyond. It has been called Hinduism: it is a vast synthesis of mutiple affiliations. It expresses the characteristic genius of India and hence Hinduism and Indianism came to be looked upon as synonymous terms. And the same could be defined also as Vedic religion and culture, for its invariable basis—the bed-rock on which it stood firm and erect—was the Vedas, the Knowledge seen by the sages. But there had already risen a voice of dissidence and discord—that of Buddha, not so much, perhaps, of Buddha as of Buddhism. The Buddhistic enlightenment and discipline did not admit the supreme authority of the Vedas; it sought other bases of truth and reality. It was a great denial; and it meant and worked for a vital schism. The denial of the Vedas by itself, perhaps, would not be serious, but it became so, as it was symptomatic of a deeper divergence. Denying the Vedas, the Buddhistic spirit denied life. It was quite a new thing in the Indian consciousness and spiritual discipline. And it left such a stamp there that even to-day it stands as the dominant character of the Indian outlook. However, India's synthetic genius rose to the

occasion and knew how to bridge the chasm, close up the fissure, and present again a body whole and entire. Buddha became one of the Avatâras: the discipline of Nirvâna and Mâyâ was reserved as the last duty to be performed at the end of life, as the culmination of a full-length span of action and achievement; the way to Moksha lay through Dharma and Artha and Kâma, Sannyâsa had to be built upon Brahmacharya and Gârhashthya. The integral ideal was epitomized by Kalidasa in his famous lines about the character of the Raghus:

They devoted themselves to study in their boyhood, in youth they pursued the objects of life, when old they took to spiritual austerities, and in the end they died united with the higher consciousness.

Only this process of integration was not done in a day, it took some centuries and had to pass through some unpleasant intermediary stages.

And still this was not the last—it could not be the last—antithesis that had to be synthetized. The dialectical movement led to a more serious and fiercer contradiction. The Buddhistic schism was after all a division brought about from within: it could be said that the two terms of the antinomy belonged to the same genus and were commensurable. The idea or experience of Asat and Maya was not unknown to the Upanishads, only it had not there the exclusive stress which the later developments gave it. Hence quite a different, an altogether foreign body was imported into what was or had come to be a homogeneous entity, and in a considerable mass. Unlike the previous irruptions that merged and were lost in the general life and consciousness, Islam entered as a leaven that maintained its integrity and revolutionized Indian life and culture by infusing into its tone a Semitic accent. After the Islamic impact India could not be what she was

before—a change became inevitable even in the major note. It was a psychological cataclysm almost on a par with the geological one that formed her body; but the spirit behind which created the body was working automatically, inexorably towards the greater and more difficult synthesis demanded by the situation. Only the thing is to be done now consciously, not through an unconscious process of *laissez-faire* as on the inferior stages of evolution in the past. And that is the true genesis of the present conflict.

History abounds in instances of racial and cultural immixture. Indeed all major human groupings of to-day are invariably composite formations. Excepting, perhaps, some primitive aboriginal tribes there are no pure races existent. The Briton, the Dane, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Norman have combined to form the British; a Frenchman has a Gaul, a Roman, a Frank in him; and a Spaniard's blood would show an Iberian, a Latin, a Gothic, a Moorish element in it. And much more than a people, a culture in modern times has been a veritable cockpit of multifarious and even incongruous elements. There are instances also in which a perfect fusion could not be accomplished, and one element had to be rejected or crushed out. The complete disappearance of the Aztecs and Mayas in South America, the decadence of the Red Indians in North America, of the Negroes in Africa as a result of a fierce clash with European peoples and European culture illustrate the point.

Nature, on the whole, has solved the problem of blood fusion and mental fusion of different peoples, although on a smaller scale. India to-day presents the problem on a larger scale and on a higher or deeper level. The demand is for a spiritual fusion and unity. Strange to say, although the Spirit is the true

bed-rock of unity—since, at bottom, it means identity—it is on this plane that mankind has not yet been able to really meet and coalesce. India's genius has been precisely working in the line of a perfect solution of this supreme problem.

Islam comes with a full-fledged spiritual soul and a mental and vital formation commensurable with that inner being and consciousness. It comes with a dynamic spirit, a warrior mood, that aims at conquering the physical world for the Lord, a temperament which Indian spirituality had not, or had lost long before, if she had anything of it. This was, perhaps, what Vivekananda meant when he spoke graphically of a Hindu soul with a Muslim body. The Islamic dispensation, however, brings with it not only something complimentary, but also something contradictory, if not for anything else, at least for the strong individuality which does not easily yield to assimilation. Still, in spite of great odds, the process of assimilation was going on slowly and surely. But of late it appears to have come to a dead halt; difficulties have been presented which seem insuperable.

If religious toleration were enough, if that made up man's highest and largest achievement, then Nature need not have attempted to go beyond cultural fusion; a liberal culture is the surest basis for a catholic religious spirit. But such a spirit of toleration and catholicity, although it bespeaks a widened consciousness, does not always enshrine a profundity of being. Nobody is more tolerant and catholic than a dilettante, but an ardent spiritual soul is different.

To be loyal to one's line of self-fulfilment, to follow one's self-law (*swadharma*) wholly and absolutely—without this no spiritual life is possible—and yet not to come into clash with other lines and loyalties, nay more, to be in

positive harmony with them, is a problem which has not been really solved. It was solved, perhaps, in the consciousness of a Ramakrishna, a few individuals here and there, but it has always remained a source of conflict and disharmony in the general mind even in the field of spirituality. The clash of spiritual or religious loyalties has taken such an acute form in India to-day, they have been carried to the bitter extreme, in order, we venture to say, that the final synthesis might be absolute and irrevocable. This is India's mission to work out, and this is the lesson which she brings to the world.

The solution can come, first, by going to the true religion of the Spirit, by being truly spiritual and not merely religious, for, as we have said, real unity lies only in and through the Spirit, since Spirit is one and indivisible; secondly, by bringing down something—a great part, indeed, if not the whole—of this puissant and marvellous Spirit into our life of emotions and sensations and activities.

If it is said that this is an ideal for the few only, not for the mass, our answer to that is the answer of the Gita—*Yad yad âcharati shreshthah*. Let the few then practise and achieve the ideal: the mass will have to follow as far as it is possible and necessary. It is the very character of the evolutionary system of

Nature, as expressed in the principle of symbiosis, that any considerable change in one place (in one species) is accompanied by a corresponding change in the same direction in other contiguous places (in other associated species) in order that the poise and balance of the system may be maintained.

It is precisely strong nuclei that are needed (even, perhaps, one strong nucleus is sufficient) where the single and integrated spiritual consciousness is an accomplished and established fact: that acts inevitably as a solvent drawing in and assimilating or transforming and recreating as much of the surroundings as its own degree and nature of achievement inevitably demand.

India did not and could not stop at mere cultural fusion—which was a supreme gift of the Moguls. She did not and could not stop at another momentous cultural fusion brought about by the European impact. She aimed at something more. Nature demanded of her that she should discover a greater secret of human unity and through progressive experiments apply and establish it in fact. Christianity did not raise this problem of the greater synthesis, for the Christian peoples were more culture-minded than religious-minded. It was left for an Asiatic people to set the problem and for India to work out the solution.

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## THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF LIFE

BY PROF. D. N. SHARMA, M.A.

A life without self-examination is not a life for man.—Plato.

No profit is where is no pleasure taken; in brief, sir, study what you most affect.—Shakespeare.

There is no intelligent man in this world who has not asked himself the simple question, What is the truth?

In the absence of a suitable and adequate reply the vital problem of formulating some systematic and com-



prehensive scheme of values would remain a distant ideal—a hopeless task. There is a pathetic irony in the constant recurrence of this question in every age, nay in every generation. The contribution of each age to the world culture and civilization is judged and estimated from its reply to this elementary query which has haunted the human imagination since the dawn of civilization. It would be more appropriate to say that the inception and development of human intelligence have been mainly due to the universal search after truth and an intense craving to apprehend its real nature, scope, and function. Every departure from the existing state of affairs, every new idea, every fresh orientation of human values derives its worth and significance from its claim to interpret the various and diverse issues of life in the light of truth.

There are three classes of people who find it convenient to cloud this issue for purposes which do them little honour inasmuch as they tend ultimately to switch off humanity to a course of life which borders on the realm of animality. Firstly, there are those who hold that a solution of this problem is obviously far beyond the comprehension and grasp of the human intellect whose most legitimate function is to enable us to lead a happy and joyful life—a life full of worldly comforts and physical joy. They presume to base their conclusion on what they choose to call the undeniable fact that no two thinkers engaged in this 'impossible flight after delusions' have ever traversed the common ground or aimed at a common goal. The problem has never been clearly understood nor definitely stated in unambiguous terms. Lack of unanimity in the method of approach, clash and conflict of opinions created by the diversity of results

achieved, are enough to unhinge one's faith in the advisability of making fresh ventures in this region of uncertainty and vacuity. These diversities and divergences are made into reasons for rejecting the assumptions on which they are based. All theories are dubbed as useless and inadequate; all hypotheses are discarded as baseless and untenable.

Again, there are those who are content to live from moment to moment. Want of deep and penetrating imagination fixes their gaze on the *now* and *here*; it warps their vision and contaminates their intelligence with the inevitable result that they cannot step beyond the narrow confines of their limited orb. To this class belong the poor, ill-fed, and ill-bred labourers steeped in ignorance and poverty which clip their wings and make it well-nigh impossible for them to soar in the subtler regions of truth and reality. To this class also belong the idle rich who 'honestly' believe that such 'talks' or ramblings in the world of abstractions are mere figments of crazy and diseased minds that find in this intellectual luxury an avenue to employ their leisure, lacking as they do the efficiency to utilize it in some more useful or fruitful way. The poor being overworked cannot snatch time to ponder seriously over this problem as it cannot act as a talisman to bring them immediate relief; the idle rich are too idle to care for it or waste a few moments of their precious life over such idle fancies.

There is yet a third class of people who are like those lesser intellects who aspire to the 'second prizes', who take to the easy and cheap business of criticism after having failed in the more ambitious but adventurous realm of creativity. They make it a principle of their life to carry on a relentless crusade against the sacred campaign of disinterested and noble souls inspired

by the lofty ideal of rummaging and exploiting the rich storehouse of life-force, storming its strongholds and sharing their well-earned prize with their fellow human beings who are less gifted than themselves. Such people, due to the inadequacy of their mental equipment, narrowness of their outlook, and only a doubtful and precarious acquaintance with the potentialities of human spirit indulge in impious and malignant attacks on the sincere efforts of a creative genius and even go to the absurd extreme of questioning the sincerity of his purpose. Their imperfect sympathy is rooted in imperfect knowledge:

There is some concealed thing  
So each gazer limiting,  
He can see no more of merit  
Than beseems his worth and spirit.

They are beggars and want to befool humanity by trying to feed them with crumbs so industriously picked up by them from the tables of the spiritually rich. They are a libel on humanity.

The problem of truth cannot be disposed of so indifferently simply because there is a divergence of opinions on petty details or because certain minds cannot rise sufficiently high or are not endowed with a penetrating insight to understand its true significance and various implications. The so-called handicaps born of the limited capacity of the human mind to see things in their entirety and totality should not discourage and dishearten the seekers after truth.

The world is either a chance affair or the creation of a vital force or purposive consciousness, slowly but steadily striving towards a consummation in which it may find perfect satisfaction through a complete revelation and full manifestation of all its potentialities and possibilities. Or it may be a mere

illusion—a mere appearance of reality that is only faintly and inadequately revealed in and through it. Each one of these postulates has been passionately defended and ardently propagated through the ages by celebrated philosophers and thinkers. On our correct knowledge of the real origin and precise nature of the genesis of this universe of ours depend an intelligent understanding and proper evaluation of human life which is the last item in the series of evolution, blind or creative. The all-important problems of internationalism, world fraternity, and stable peace are but offshoots of and corollaries to this central theme which seems to have baffled all attempts at a satisfactory and lasting solution.

At the very start we need grapple with the issues involved in the first alternative, the difficulties that beset this course of inquiry, its apparent advantages and the nature of conclusions arrived at. The mind is stimulated to think only when it is confronted with irreconcilable opposites and irresolvable incongruities and inconsistencies which shake it from its submissive passivity and arouse in it a longing to know (1) whether the world which ought to be, by its very nature, a harmony or a balance, has somehow lost this characteristic or (2) that it is after all a mere aggregate of infinite objects somehow brought together in juxtaposition and accidentally arranged for the fulfilment of certain transient needs beyond which or besides which any combination or inter-linking would not only be ultra-necessary but positively superfluous and odd.

Ordinarily, one who is not trained in the art of consistent thinking and is consequently prone to taking things at their face value in the absence of some strong instinct or necessity to think otherwise, finds evidence enough to

believe that the world is a haphazard accumulation of objects and events without any harmonizing influence or integrating factor as an evidence of their common source or origin. He catalogues a host of facts to prove his hypothesis and to refute the existence of any purpose in life. Most noteworthy of these are:

(1) Great disproportion in the distribution of wealth.

(2) Lack of co-ordination between pleasure and intelligence or pleasure and morality.

(3) Utter disparity between innocence, purity, and righteousness on the one hand and success, prosperity, and progress on the other.

(4) Tyranny of one nation over another, the exploitation of one class by another.

(5) Discord between the thinkers and doers.

(6) The cruelty and apathy of red-toothed and red-clawed laws of Nature towards human ambitions.

(7) Absence of universal laws, customs, or conventions.

One naturally asks the most pertinent of all questions, Why should there be such astounding and bewildering irregularities and contradictions in a world said to be created according to a design by a conscious power with a definite purpose? A single exception is enough to create insurmountable difficulties in the path of a purposive scheme. Once we get into this frame of mind it is only a step further to believe that the basis of the universe can hardly be moral, far less spiritual. It is a game of opportunism, expediency, imposition, and deception. All laws, social, religious, or political, are man-made and the only link that binds them is his necessity to protect himself, or to rule over others.

As science made progress, the idea

gained strength that life-force or forces work on mechanistic lines. The goal of humanity is to win more power and strength. All the resources of man are to be employed in the achievement of this single object which alone is conducive to the achievement of the *summum bonum* of life—the maximum amount of pleasure. Man is a product of Nature, which has implanted in him certain instincts and impulses that crave for gratification. To carry out their behest is to be true to Nature which grants pleasure to its devotees as a reward for implicit obedience to its injunctions. To suppress the natural impulses is to lead an unnatural life. Follow the line of least resistance and be happy; if you dare to resist Nature, you invite a number of calamities to vex you at every step and make life miserable and intolerable for you. This, in brief, is the scheme of life advocated and preached by a materialist. This needs to be refuted if humanity is to be saved.

We cannot blind ourselves to the fact that materialism has a case to state. It has to be conceded further that it starts from right premises, though we have not the shadow of a doubt that it arrives at untenable conclusions whose absurdity becomes apparent the moment we perceive the faulty nature of the logic it chooses to employ. It takes its stand on the undeniable fact that life is characterized by and presents what look like irreconcilable contradictions. From this obvious truth it jumps to the hasty and unjustifiable conclusion that they (contradictions) constitute the whole of life; they are the final word on life. In practical life all we are expected to do is to reconcile and adjust ourselves to them and not to seek a reconciliation among them or a reconciliation between them and a higher and an all-inclusive unity. It

bases this conclusion on the specious argument that what *seems* is true and cannot be false ; it makes no difference between seeming and being. Any attempt to penetrate beyond the appearance is bound to prove futile and abortive. The whole view-point is so vitiated by lack of imagination that we would not have wasted much breath to demonstrate the shakiness and weakness of this position if it were not for the fact that it has a certain glamour and lure which enable it to pass for a genuine phenomenon. The whole structure of materialism crumbles to the ground like a house of cards when even science, which has only recently shifted its ground, confirms the view that reality is not limited by or confined to what actually meets the eye.

Materialism has its roots in and derives sustenance from the science of the late nineteenth century. Like science it claims to be cock-sure of its results; that accounts for its dogmatism. To a philosophic mind it is imperative to understand what it rejects as thoroughly as what it accepts. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things to know the implications of the materialist view of the universe. They are:

1. Free will is an illusion.
2. Mind is an emanation from the body, and the body is a product of material forces.
3. There is no purpose or plan in the universe.
4. There is no creator.
5. The law of cause and effect which operates in the world of matter is ultimate and applies also to life.

The materialists are prepared to renounce the notion that there is a whole of which a coherent account can be given. There is only an aggregate and the philosophy of an aggregate will be a catalogue of items rather than a

systematic doctrine deducible from one general principle. At best the materialist remains content with finding out what can be asserted with a fair show of truth with regard to a number of different and often isolated problems.

The position of a materialist may be boiled down to this. He sees, in fact, nothing but contradictions, inconsistencies, and oppositions in this world of experience—to him that is the only world worth talking about. He deliberately refuses to see that into the actual there enter, as belonging to its constitution, beauty and purpose, and an infinity of relations and meanings which the physicist or materialist cannot take account of and has not in his science even language to express. He has to shut out all but a limited set of the meanings that characterize Nature. The other examples of meaning that confront him cannot be rendered in terms of electrons or protons. About these last he can tell us much. But not as the result of direct observation. He tries abstract modes of reflection which give us what is highly valuable but not the less abstract, and which is, thus, short of the full character of the real. All such abstract modes are products of reflection, and are abstractions through which mind takes away from the actual as it appears. They do not exist for a dog, nor even for a savage. Their reality and truth lie in the fashion in which mind has given to Nature general significances that have no independent existence in the world as we directly apprehend it. They have vast importance, but this they only attain in so far as mind enters into and makes itself present in Nature. It is, therefore, that by the methods of the physicist one cannot get any adequate grasp of reality or take it in our experience in its fullness.

We shall not enter here into a

discussion of the bearing upon philosophical theories of recent developments in modern science. Suffice it to say that the implications of these advances are generally considered to be idealist and the general view which modern scientists seem inclined to take is that reality is mind or mental. It is important to bear in mind the fact that this view of the universe constitutes a complete change of front on the part of science. Philosophically, this view can be summed up in the eloquent words of Bradley: 'Outside of spirit there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and the more that anything is spiritual, so much the more is it veritably real.'

Notwithstanding the rich crop of 'isms' that bewilder and perplex a man of ordinary intelligence the eternal duel has always been between materialism or dogmatism and idealism or spirituality. Idealism has a distinct and obvious advantage over materialism. A system of thought which does not find or cannot apprehend the meaning or significance (purpose) of life, which cannot perceive the harmony and law which characterize life, must virtually be a hotbed of doubts and disappointments. A materialist mistakes the trees for the wood; he is for ever lost in the wandering mazes. Only a daring and adventurous spirit capable of higher flights can perceive the whole phenomenon in its entirety and find to his immense joy that for him the riddle has been solved. All his doubts evaporate as do the fantastic and grotesque combinations of perceptions and impressions of a dreamer on his waking from sleep. All contradictions born of a superficial and short-sighted view of the empirical existence take to flight on the dawn of spiritual light.

Idealism has another advantage over materialism. Whereas the latter leads to a blind alley and ends in confusion

and chaos, the former not only does not reject materialism with all its contradictions and confusion, but also defines and describes its real place in the scheme of values, and by pointing out its limitations reveals the world that transcends it. Any attempt to set up materialism as a rival of idealism would prove abortive. Materialism stands self-condemned as it offers no explanation of life; at its best it only points to a way of escape. It pins its faith in the multiplicity of facts and tries to study them either in isolation by segregating them from their associates, or, if at all, in juxtaposition to one another and never as parts of a single whole. Life, on the other hand, appears to be a flux, a movement, a dynamic flow in which no single fact can be taken out from the whole without distorting or disfiguring it or taking away something from its worth. The 'hard and stubborn facts' of a 'stern reality' lose their stubbornness and hardness in the mobility and elasticity of life in which there are no islands or submerged rocks. Idealism touches life at a higher point and reveals to view the substance and essence of reality which alone can explain facts, and remove contradictions that take to flight, bag and baggage, before the light of truth.

Materialism seeks to build reality on a study of details. Idealism begins at the other end—the right end. It strives to know that by knowing which all else is known. Then are all doubts removed, and contradictions do not present a thorny problem. The riddle of life—born of a myopic vision confined to petty details studied in isolation—is solved and all mystery is unravelled to one who has realized the unity in and of life. Complete intellectual satisfaction and spiritual enlightenment dawn on him and even the darkest cranny is invested with a light that

never was on sea or land. He begins to see new things or things in a new way.

It is the business of philosophy to know Nature and the entire world of experience as it is, to study and comprehend the reason of it. It does not stop short at the superficial, transitory, and accidental forms but goes forward to understand the nature of the underlying essence, harmony, or law. The things have a meaning, the processes in the world are rational, the planetary system is a rational order, the organism is rational, purposive, full of meaning.

The contradictions are meaningless appearances unless understood as parts of an organic, articulated system. It is, of course, the business of thought to explain contradictions no less than the meaning underlying them. Idealism does not explain them away: it studies them from a proper perspective to assign them a proper place. Reality is spiritual and its true nature can be known only spiritually—by a purified and exalted mind. No one wants his mind to be rid of science; it is a pity science should want us to be rid of the mind.

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## THE ETHICS OF WAR

BY PROF. H. D. BHATTACHARYYA, M.A., P.R.S.

(Concluded)

A clear distinction can be drawn between those who take up arms to defend or propagate an ideal and those whose sole aim is to increase the source of supply of material comforts. An attempt to establish a pure Aryan race, however misconceived, is certainly more idealistic than a desire to occupy the whole of Europe, and so Germany has combined both in her battle-cry. The converse claim to fight for establishing the rights of small nations against unscrupulous, powerful States certainly sounds nicer than the desire to keep the territories of those nations free from German domination and as potential thorns by the side of their ambitious neighbour. Behind many high-sounding principles would be found sordid designs, and promises made in the distress of war are seldom kept unless the party to which they are made is capable of enforcing them in times of peace. The triumph of ethics lies just in this that each struggling nation tries to show

that it is fighting for an ideal—before an imaginary bar of justice each nation feels itself arraigned to give an account of its conduct and each protests its own innocence. The old-world don't-care-ism is at least not the open creed of any advanced nation now, though often in effect it comes to the same, as when Japan swallowed up Manchuria in spite of the Lytton Commission. The Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere is being extended under an ethical caption but with an entirely different motive behind. The white man's burden in the East is being quickly unloaded in the name of the rights of the coloured races; conversely extra-territorial rights are being given back by the white races only when the territories in question have ceased to be occupied by them and a post-war claim is likely to lose valuable Asiatic friendship at a critical time. It would be wrong to suppose that warring nations who advance ethical principles in justification or attenuation of their

conduct have made up their mind once for all about their application to all nations and all countries—under one stress of circumstances the Atlantic Charter was announced and unless circumstances demand a similar declaration a Pacific Charter need not come into being at all. The truth is that blood is still thicker than water; and what may be promised to the white races of the West cannot be so easily promised to the coloured races of the East, for unfortunately the earth has been bounteous to those who bore for untold generations the heat of the tropical sun and niggardly to the denizens of the temperate and sub-arctic zones. What civilized nations are doing to one another in war they did to backward and defenceless nations of the tropics in peace—the occupation of Norway for its iron is not more or less justifiable than the occupation of the Malaya Peninsula for its rubber or Burma for its vast mineral wealth. The immediate moral objective of every warring nation is the winning of the war, and it justifies its conduct by the plea that victory is the first essential of a moral regeneration of the world as it conceives it—it does not matter what national rights are trampled under foot to attain that objective. So if the Axis Powers overrun one set of countries against the will of their inhabitants, the Allies forcibly occupy another set and both justify their action by putting forward the excuse that otherwise the high moral purpose for which they are fighting would not be realized.

Far more straightforward is the declaration that there is nothing unfair in war and love, and that the end completely justifies the means. But the superman's morality is slightly going out of fashion in these days, and so powerful nations have begun to advance a different ethical explanation of their

conduct. Thus it might be contended, not without reason, that, as ancestors of the coming race, each generation of mankind has a special responsibility to provide for its unborn descendants. A rapidly growing nation soon finds that its own possessions are not enough to meet the needs of the coming race and that more *Lebensraum* is wanted for its expanding population and more materials are needed for its comfortable existence. It is the duty of each nation, therefore, to make necessary provision in time for the incoming race just as it is the duty of parents to ensure in time the comforts of the incoming family. Now, logically, the elbow-room required for accommodating an expanding population should be wrested from neighbouring countries—and historical examples are not wanting about planting one's kindreds in contiguous areas till the emigrants outnumber the children of the soil, and then claiming to decide ownership by a plebiscite. The Sudetan problem will come readily to the mind in this connection and possibly also the occupation of the Ruhr. It is not difficult to justify such a course of action once you admit that the majority is what counts in determining the form of Government, provided you do not question the propriety of sending out one's own nationals to other countries as lambs and then inciting them to behave as lions. Matters would have looked less ugly if number alone had been the only consideration, for then the Indians in South Africa would have been in independent possession of some stretch of territory there. Cutting across the principle of population comes in the principle of colour, and sovereignty is reserved for the mighty in arms, proclaiming once again the absoluteness of the law of the jungle: 'Let him take who has the power and let him keep who can.'

But even neighbouring areas may not suffice, and it may not always be possible to possess them without a trial of arms. Then there is the continual risk of rebellion and invasion from other neighbours. Why not occupy the lands of those who are not able to resist and export there the enterprising surplus population? We need not refer to unoccupied regions, for they are not found anywhere. Thus begins colonial expansion of ambitious nations and needy nations alike—from the time when the Greeks colonized Asia Minor down to the colonization of America and Australia we have before us a panorama of alien domination of other peoples' lands. Here the ethical problem is not easy to solve. We have, on the one hand, men of low civilization who do not fill the land completely and who cannot utilize the resources of the land they occupy, and, on the other hand, races which possess the number to fill the land more adequately and the skill to turn to advantage the rich wealth of natural resources which it contains. If humanity were one family and had all shared equally in power and preferment, and had the immigrant races taken upon themselves the task of furthering the intellectual and spiritual progress of the indigenous population with the ultimate object of handing back to it a substantial portion of the wealth of which they took possession when it would be fit to utilize the same, perhaps the history of the world would have taken a different colour. As it is, power once grabbed has seldom been retransferred in part or in whole, and defensive wars and rebellions have been ruthlessly put down by conquering nations. Helots in their homeland, the intellectually backward, the peaceful, and the primitive races have been obliged to slave it away at the task of reclamation imposed on them by their alien masters with little profit

to themselves and their descendants. Their reaction to foreign occupation has often been rendered more hostile by the fact that many conquerors have enriched their own homelands at the expense of the occupied tracts and sedulously prevented intermixture with the conquered races. When the conquerors settle down in the land of their occupation and become one with the people, past injuries are often forgotten, for the victors and the vanquished work together at a later time as one nation. In olden times invaders came to loot spasmodically; in modern times conquerors loot systematically.

In fairness to a very large majority of those who take part in fight it must be mentioned that though war is no longer promoted by the greed or land-lust of princes it is still engineered by a few men at the top of the State. The ambitious politician, the manufacturer of arms and ammunition, the profiteer to whom war is a windfall, and such other persons have all their own reasons to welcome war. The army, the navy, and the air force contain men to whom war is a necessity; for if universal disarmament were to ensue, their occupation would be gone. Crime is still the best employer—if it did not exist, what a landslide would have taken place in those occupations which are connected with the apprehension, detection, trial, and confinement of criminals! So also war. All over the world are needed policemen to keep internal peace and soldiers to maintain external peace and internal quiet in troublesome times. Fighting has not only been an instinct—it has also been an occupation. Tribes, races, and nations without an adequate supply of strong men have gone under in the battle of life, since the animal in man has never been completely controlled at any time and the temple of Janus has never been com-



pletely closed at any period of the world's history. Those who wish to justify war as a biological necessity have not to ransack the pages of history to do so. In their own combative spirit they will find ample evidence of the tendency to fight whether that takes the form of actual quarrel or simple rivalry or jealousy. In our sports and games we are daily sublimating the instinct of fight and in championing causes we are constantly dividing ourselves into opposite camps. Street brawls would be rather out of fashion now, but party factions would be still accepted as a sign of healthy political life, though possibly not of social life. Wrestling and racing would be enjoyed even by those who cannot enter the ring or take a mount. Why should not war be looked upon as an international bout and the mounting of armaments an international racing competition? War would have been less tragic in its significance had it been waged between mercenary soldiers who deliberately accepted fight as their profession and had the sufferings been confined solely to them. A prize-fight may mean hard blows to the contestants but not loss of their liberty and very seldom of their life. We would deplore the condition under which men would be compelled to go into war for their living; but, unless forced by their own nationals, they have to thank only themselves if they turn hirelings and place their bodily strength at the disposal of any ruler who would pay them for risking their life. Compared with modern warfare some old-world methods of deciding issues were infinitely more humane, as when David and Goliath or Sohrab and Rustom went out as representatives of their groups to settle a dispute between two fighting units. But now war is not a matter of choice with any citizen—even nations that believed at one time in recruiting have

been obliged to adopt conscription to match the number of the opposing army, and in modern totalitarian warfare even women and elderly men have not been spared compulsory service. War has always fallen heavily on the manhood of a nation—it is not the old and the useless that are sent to the front but the able and the intelligent. Those who are left behind beget the new race—a process just the reverse of the eugenic. Broken homes, loose morals, faithless lives, cruel habits—these are the devastating effects of war on national life, and an unjust peace imposed on the vanquished sows the seeds of future wars and embitters international feelings. Where widows are not debarred from remarriage and yet monogamy is the only legal system of matrimony, the strain on mind, if not morals also, when the women, left after a war, outnumber the men, can be easily imagined. Even where polygamy is permitted, the consorting of many wives in a single home is not likely to produce a peaceful family atmosphere. The death of so many young men is bound to have an adverse effect upon running industries and developing lands, and women have to be forced into occupations for which constitutionally they are not well fitted. To prepare the nation for the next war, the birth rate has got to be raised, whether at the cost of maternal health or of national morality, and so long as the population remains in a depleted condition only the essential national services can be maintained and all beneficent schemes have to be postponed till men are available to work on them. True, war necessitates the development of diabolical cunning for planning instruments of destruction; but peaceful art ceases to flourish, and constructive schemes are shelved indefinitely till the return of tranquillity. The killed and the maimed, the

orphaned and the widowed, the injured and the insulted, the plundered and the morally ruined make up a dismal list of those affected by every war; but war so brutalizes human conscience that instead of recounting with sorrow the miseries suffered by men, tales of havoc caused in the enemy's country would be narrated with a glee of triumph by each belligerent nation. A maniacal frenzy seizes the war-possessed social mind, and primitive instincts are given full expression without any attempt to put them under restraint. Those who dare to put in mild words of protest or remonstrance, run the risk of being roughly handled, and they are accused of preaching a defeatist mentality and rousing the conscience of the would-be recruits against outrage upon human brotherhood, which is excellent morality but bad national sentiment. As war releases from restraint many of our unconscious anti-social desires, it is not always an unpleasant experience to the combatants—specially if they are victorious. But once defeat sets in, prudence begins to whisper counsels of propriety, and a spirit of vengeance against those who led the nation to war frequently manifests itself. A leader in disgrace has, therefore, much to fear from the wrath of a disappointed and disillusioned nation.

In judging of war guilt we must always keep in mind that national policies are determined in high quarters and that ordinary citizens merely execute the orders of the ruling authority. There was a time when complicity of ordinary soldiers was much greater, for they wilfully chose the path of fight as their life's vocation. But in countries where there is conscription, personal will does not count, and even conscientious objectors are put into jobs connected in some form with war effort, though they may not be sent to the

front to kill. If the whole nation decides to non-co-operate, then only an ugly situation arises; but concerted action of this type is generally not possible, and so those who object to war find themselves in a minority and are forced to take part in war by the majority. Had armies been manned by people who did not belong to the nation proper and had their families not been practically in the position of hostages, perhaps there would have been greater expression of personal opinion about the merits of any war, perhaps there would have been desertions on a larger scale. But war is now a matter between nations, and soldiers have their roots struck so deep in the national soil that they cannot easily afford to disobey or desert. The Jews are so much suspect because of the idea, which may not always be right, that they are not sufficiently loyal to the country in which they live and that their international mentality would enable them to tear off their national allegiance with ease and to plant it in another country without regret. No nation at war would allow the citizens of its enemy country to be at large within its own domain or permit them to cross over into its own territory: it is taken almost as an axiomatic truth that in these decadent days men think in terms of their own country and not in terms of universal brotherhood and that, therefore, it is unsafe to keep them abroad or credit them with good intention in the enemy country.

Proceeding on the principle that propaganda from press and platform and childhood training are the best means of preparing the nation for future wars, national leaders and influential thinkers sedulously spread ideas that are favourable for developing a war mentality. The necessity of war, the sacredness of the State, the duty of obedience

in all matters affecting the safety and integrity of the realm, the obligation to the future generation, the danger of a complacent attitude in national matters are all taught unweariedly till they sink unconsciously into the soul of the nation. Youth organizations, manly sports, parades, and pageants are systematically encouraged to accustom the nation to martial exercises, so that it might be easily switched over to struggle for national greatness. Histories and philosophies that fire the imagination and captivate the intellect are disseminated carefully to prepare a war mentality even among the young and the illiterate till they become infected with nationalistic ideas and become incapable of thinking in terms of the world as a whole or humanity at large. Self-laudation imperceptibly generates national pride till it becomes a point of honour to defend one's own country, right or wrong. The doping of the national mind is essential for the purpose of successful war, for blind obedience is the primary requisite in all campaigns—the soldiers are expected not to think but to carry out orders, and this is best achieved if they are brought up in categorical tenets about national greatness and national need. For the same reason nothing that will break the morale of the nation or the soldiery is to be made known; and so, as has been so often stated, truth is the first casualty in war. Losses and reverses are to be carefully hidden not only from the enemy but also from one's own countrymen. Conversely, the defeat of the enemy must be exaggerated as much to depress his countrymen as to cheer up one's own nationals. Neutrals must also be influenced in one's favour in that way, and specially wavering potential allies. Division must be made in the enemy's camp by setting one party against another or one nation against

an allied nation. *Suhridbheda* (dividing of friends) has been one of the recognized modes of winning a war from very ancient times and has lost none of its force even in modern warfare. The radio, which is far more quick and efficacious as a medium of propaganda than the press and the platform, is being used all over the world just now in suppressing the truth and suggesting the false. Lest foreign transmissions should correct errors or counteract propaganda or spread alarmist news, listening to them or disseminating their contents has been prohibited in many belligerent countries: nation above everything, even above truth, for there is nothing greater than national existence!

It is obvious that war in all its forms is fundamentally opposed to what the Indians of all religious denominations have considered to be the basic foundations of social life and private morality—*Ahimsâ* (non-injury), *Satya* (truth), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (continence), and *Aparigraha* (non-coveting). A war is not a bloodless revolution, and organized murder on a large scale of the actual combatants, and accidental or deliberate killing of enemy civilians outright or by inches cannot be avoided in any modern war. Truth has to be held back lest it should upset the national mind and give valuable information to the enemy. Forcible seizure of other peoples' territories, either temporary or permanent, has to be done to attain one's national objectives. Violation of women in enemy countries, laxity of sexual morals during and after war due to the absence or death of husbands, and unrestricted indulgence to replenish the lost population are all normal incidences of war. And, finally, national greed is at the bottom of all offensive wars. In this world of blind passion, intellectual

myopia, and sordid self-interest kind words have not turned away wrath nor have organized attempts been made to outlaw war. Collective security, creation of an international army, league of nations, and such other devices have all accepted war as an inevitable adjunct of national existence. With inflexible national boundaries, rigid racial prejudices, imperialistic ambitions, ideals of material comfort all gaining popularity, the still small voice of conscience has become almost stilled, and the efforts of saints and sages to link up the whole human race in the silken cord of friendship and love have been almost sterilized. Nations that have no quarrel with one another have to fight because they are tied to the chariot-wheel of other belligerents even though they do not share the ideals or the profits of their masters. Freedom to choose is denied to them and they are made unwilling participants in fights not their own. People have to lend their savings to protect the State in addition to offering the lives of themselves and their dearest ones for the sake of the country. They are not allowed to think except in terms of the one State to which they belong even though they may not form the ruling caste. To wish the enemy well or to help him in any way is high treason, for which the highest penalty under the law has been reserved. Those who belong to the army are even withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the civil law lest kindness in any quarter should be subversive of military discipline.

It has been frankly acknowledged in many quarters that God and Mars cannot be worshipped together—that by entering into the service of Mars man temporarily puts himself outside the jurisdiction of God and hands himself over, bound hand and foot, to the war lord whose order is law. The matter becomes tragic when men try to wor-

ship Mars and God together. When Christians fight Muslims, when Roman Catholics and Protestants fight one another, when Muslims and Hindus wage war against one another in the name of religion, then the sinisterness of war comes out in its true light. A religion is meant to be a message of peace, and yet what bloody wars have not been fought to propagate religion and put down heresy and free-thinking! There was a time when people thought that not only they but their gods also fought against the enemies and their gods, and victory meant not only human triumph but also divine triumph on their side. Now that all religions are actuated by the belief that we are all children of the same Heavenly Father, what a nice way war is to establish human brotherhood! The prophets and saints themselves suffered to make other people religious in their way; we make other people suffer to be religious in our way. We claim the monopoly of faith and the right to extend that monopoly over the whole world. We blind ourselves to the lessons of history that throughout the ages God has chosen to ennoble human lives in diverse ways and not by passing them through a uniform training. If to advance religious interest men can stoop to the methods of the jungle, how can the cruelties of secular warfare be ever stopped? The Army of God should use an entirely different weapon to win—the shield of suffering, the sword of wisdom, the flare of sympathy, and the cord of love. Righteousness has never compromised with wrong but it has never used violence, the weapon of evil, to overcome its adversary. Spirituality alone has the right to wage an offensive war with its proper instruments; secular interests may be defended, but not furthered, by taking up arms only if all other methods fail.

# BASAVA, THE FOUNDER OF VEERASHAIVISM

BY PROF. K. S. SRIKANTAN, M.A.

'Life on earth is far happier than life in heaven,' said Basava when a secure place in heaven was offered to him by the gods. Basava is, perhaps, the only prophet in the entire gamut of world history who had the courage to prefer earthly troubles to heavenly ease. To Basava this world was the testing house of the Creator. 'Whoever passed here, passed there. He who did not pass here could not pass there.' Thus his attitude towards earthly existence was intensely human and realistic. He did not refuse to live—on the other hand he demonstrated the 'liveableness of life'.

To have come after so many prophets about eight centuries ago was itself a great disadvantage, for apparently there was nothing that the other prophets had not said which Basava could say and thus carve out a place for himself in the galaxy of prophets. But it was the peculiar glory of Basava to have included in his teachings all that was best in the messages of his predecessors and to have anticipated the ideas of many a modern thinker. His message appeals to the modern mind so intensely and applies to modern conditions so vividly that one is almost tempted to forget the wide gulf of eight centuries that yawns between the age of Basava and the modern age. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that the message of Basava is like a reservoir into which all previous thoughts flowed in and all later thoughts flowed out. Kind like Buddha, simple like Mahavira, gentle like Jesus, and bold like Mohammed, Basava strikes us almost as a wonder of creation; but what attracts us to him are those teachings of him in which he anticipated

the greatest of modern thinkers—Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi.

The early life of Basava like the early lives of all prophets is shrouded in mystery. According to *Basava Purâna*, Basava was the son of Madiraja and his wife Madalambika, both belonging to the brahmin caste and residing at Bagewadi, identified with the town of that name in the present Bijapur District. To recompense the piety of this couple and to resuscitate the decaying faith in Shiva, Nandi, the bull of Shiva, we are told, was born on earth as their son at the command of Shiva. Whether one believes in this legend or not, no one can deny the fact that Basava struck his parents and his relatives as a boy of extraordinary intelligence. He was not even eight when he raised his standard of revolt against the established traditions and rituals. He refused to wear the sacred thread, considered so necessary for a brahmin even to-day, saying that for a true devotee such external symbols were quite unnecessary. Like Gautama, he left his home in search of happiness. After wandering aimlessly for some time, he settled down in the holy shrine of Sangameshwar at the confluence of the Krishna and Malapahari. In the beautiful and picturesque surroundings of that holy place he spent his time in divine joy and learnt his lessons of freedom at the very feet of Nature. To Basava, Nature was pervaded by a divine spirit and was the vesture of the Supreme Being. 'If Nature flirts', says he, 'with the soul and lures it to the false path, it is only for some time, and that too with the idea of giving greater strength and

energy in its onward march. Nature is appointed as a material instrument of the soul's salvation.' Basava was essentially a man of action and had a positive aversion to mere scholarship and book-learning. Says he, 'Real faith and service are greater than mere learning; service of God is the only thing worth while. Life in the world is of real value, as it fits us for a higher life.' Again, 'Shall I say, the Shâstra is great? It praises ritual. Shall I say, the Veda is great? It preaches the taking of life. Shall I say that law is great? It is still searching. You are not in any of these, my God, and are not to be seen except in the threefold service of Your servants.' He was in short a realist among idealists and an idealist among realists.

It is no wonder, therefore, that when the call came, he came out of his self-imposed seclusion and agreed to serve as the Prime Minister of the then ruling emperor Bijjala of the Kalachurya, Dynasty. Biographers of Basava, unfortunately, have not given us an adequate account of his career as a Prime Minister. In fact, Basava has every claim to be included among the best finance ministers of the world. So long as he was Prime Minister, his thoughts were entirely on the poor and he did his best to make the people feel that the State was primarily theirs. He abolished almost all those taxes, the incidence of which was on the poor people, and imposed several new taxes on the idle rich. He anticipated those principles of taxation which made many a financier famous in the nineteenth century. It is no wonder that Basava did so for he was not a believer in private property. To him wealth was for the welfare of humanity and nobody had any right to live more decently than his sisters and brothers. One may acquire wealth by the sweat of his

brow, but he must not hoard it up. He must utilize it in the service of humanity. Says he, 'Give unto the servants of God that which you possess. The house of the man who makes parade and worships and says he is worshipping continuously, is like the house of the public woman.' Again, 'Endurance in whatever happens were discipline; not to conceal what one possesses were discipline; to do without erring were discipline; to speak without uttering falsehood were discipline; when the servants of our God Kudala Sangama come, to give them what one hath as to the owners, that were the discipline of disciplines.'

Like Karl Marx he hated the capitalists; he saw no justification for interest. In his own words: 'The wealth you earn give to God's servants and lend not at interest. If it comes back, well; if it does not, doubly well. Whether it is there or it is here, it is employed in service of God. That which is God's goes to God and there is no thought of its having come to you nor pain for its going. Therefore, O my God, except to Your servants, money should not be lent out.' His own salary he distributed among his followers: 'If of my gold a single streak or of my clothing a single thread I want for to-day and to-morrow, I sin before You and Your ancient servants; except for the use of Your servants I desire nothing, my God.'

Sometimes Basava was generous to a fault. A follower of his, we are told, kept a mistress, who having heard of the magnificence of the attire of Basava's wife, desired it for herself. Hearing of this, Basava directed his wife to strip herself of it and give it to his follower's mistress. When some cows were removed from his house by the thieves, he directed his servants to take the calves and hand them over to the thieves wherever they might be.

During his short regime as minister, he put an end to corruption among officers completely and made every subordinate feel that he had also a soul not in any way inferior to those of his superiors. Like Karl Marx, again, he was a believer in the supreme value of labour. To do one's work and thus serve humanity was far more important than to aspire for heaven. What strikes us most in the teachings of Basava is the fact that he always spoke with his feet on earth. He never believed in attracting people by creating illusions. He did not ignore the problem of bread. On the other hand, he realized the dignity of labour and raised it to the rank of religious worship. Among his followers were men who followed the meanest of professions. One of them was Nuliya Chandayya who earned his livelihood by making ropes; Madara Channayya was another who was a tanner by profession; still another was Medara Ketayya who lived by making and selling baskets. Moliga Marayya was a dealer in fuel. Basava did not stop with making them his followers—but promoted matrimonial alliances between men and women of high and low castes; in short he did things which people are afraid of doing even to-day. He sowed the seeds of a social revolution through which we are still passing. He did not like those who would employ others to do things which they could do for themselves. Says he, 'Is it right to get done by another the duty to one's wife, or the feeding of one's body? A man should perform the worship of his God himself. How can he get it done by another? They do for show, they do not know You, my God Kudala Sangama.'

Basava's ministry was short-lived. He was himself more anxious to improve society than to overhaul the administrative machinery. Society at the time of Basava was caste-ridden and required a

good deal of overhauling. People were clamouring for a living and human religion—a religion of the heart and not of the head. Basaveshwar, who was the embodiment of this new spirit, gave such a strong and dynamic impetus to this new movement that ere long he was able to bring about a renaissance. He breathed new life into the chaos of human heart and brought it to symmetry and order. He infused an undying hope in the minds of the lowly and the downtrodden by scoffing at the idea that God-consciousness could be achieved only by the chosen few. He proclaimed that the gates of Heaven were open to all irrespective of caste and creed, provided one had the will and necessary discipline to achieve Godhead. Under his banner rallied thousands and thousands of men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified by the eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to courage by their sympathy for the poor, the fallen, and the downtrodden. These noble heroes of the new order went over the length and breadth of the land preaching his gospel of divine love. Society discovered its soul and surrendered itself to its spontaneity as this new message and the consequent awakening spread to all strata of society. The old order brooked all this as it felt itself helpless against the surging wave of awakened consciousness.

He insisted upon his followers to have an unquestioning faith in God. Says he, 'Dull of wit, I see not the way. Lead me as they lead the born-blind by staff placed in the hand. O God Kudala Sangama, teach me to trust, teach me to love the way of Your true servants.' Again, 'When I have said that this body is Yours, I have no other body; when I have said that this mind is Yours, I have no other mind; when I have said that my wealth is Yours, there

is no other wealth for me. If I have known that all these three possessions of mine are Yours, what further thought need I to take, O God Kudala Sangama?' In short there is no greater exponent of the cult of Bhakti than Basava. To him Bhakti or real devotion to the Lord was more powerful than the Lord Himself. Says he, 'Thine illusion surroundeth the creation. But my mind surroundeth Thee. Thou art stronger than all the worlds, but I am stronger than Thee. Even as an elephant is contained in a mirror, so art Thou contained in me, my Lord! Hearken ye, unto me: there are but two words resounding in the universe. Sayeth the Lord to the devotee, "I shall conquer thee." The devotee draweth and flourisheth the sharp sword of truth and marcheth victorious.'

Basava considered this body the living temple of the Lord to be ever kept pure and undefiled. To him a truly moral, disciplined, and orderly life was the first step in the realization of God. His compassion for all beings was unbounded. He asks, 'What is that religion that knoweth not compassion? Kindness should there be in all alike. Kindness is the root of all righteousness. Lord Kudala Sangamadeva has naught of aught else.' He vehemently condemned animal sacrifice perpetrated in the name of religion. He pathetically addressed thus the poor animal brought to the altar:

Weep, weep, thou innocent goat,  
Weep unceasingly that they would  
kill thee;  
Weep before those learned in the  
Vedas,  
Weep before those knowing the  
Shâstras,  
Thine wail shall be heard by the  
Lord and  
He will do the needful.  
To him true worship meant service to

humanity. He scorns those doing ostentatious worship without bestowing any thought on the poor and the needy: 'What a folly thou should'st worship the image inside the house when the Lord is at your very doors with all His insignia!'

He is amused at the incongruous ways of men who profess one thing and practise quite the opposite.

'Pour milk,' they say, seeing a lifeless  
snake of stone,

'Kill, kill,' they cry, when they  
behold a live snake.

'Avaunt!' they cry hoarse when the  
hungry being prayeth for food,

'Take food,' they beseech the image  
that hungereth not.

Courtesy and sweetness are virtues indispensable to those who strive for salvation. In fact he goes so far as to say, 'He is a devotee who folds his hands to another devotee. Sweet words are equal to all the holy prayers. Sweet words are equal to all the penances. Good behaviour is what pleases the God of eternal good. Kudala Sangama will have naught of aught else.'

Like other prophets he was never weary of telling the people about the importance of practising the virtue of truth. To speak truth, says he, is the world of the gods. To speak untruth is the world of the mortals. Next only in importance to this is purity of heart. Like Gautama he maintained that the value of a service depended upon the motive with which it was done. Says he, 'You may put an iron ring round a pumpkin. It gets no strength from it. It rots all the same. God Kudala Sangama, if a man whose mind is not reformed is given the baptism of Your servants, how will he get devotion?'

Thus to Basava man was the architect of his own fortune. His salvation was in his hands.



# WHITHER SITA?

BY MRS. C. K. HANDOO, M.A.

Sitâ the ever beloved heroine of Hinduism rules over an empire that monarchs may well envy. Though historically time has dimmed her figure yet ideally she shines enthroned in the heart of India's womanhood. The tale of her silent suffering retold at dusk under the village peepul tree to countless generations has shaped the very lives and destinies of the daughters of the land. Over and over again are little girls blessed: 'Be thou like Sita!' And as they hear these simple words their young hearts throb with expectation and happiness: for is this not their own cherished desire and secret aspiration? To her gentle influence we may trace the softness of the Indian woman—a softness that is yet so firm that it does not shrink to face the wrath of the mighty Râvana nor the hardships of the forest life. In her proud purity and stainless honour that calmly face the fiery ordeal and in the end prefer death to calumny, in putting aside her own happiness for ever without a murmur, do we not see the stamp Sita has left behind in the land of her birth?

For a long, long time the sun of Sita lighted up the Indian sky, and the women like dew-drops caught her reflection and sparkled joyfully in her incomparable brilliance; and in course of time India became studded with innumerable little Sitas that spread a golden hue throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent. But suddenly we find a cloud in the horizon which threatens to veil the sun and cast its gloomy shadow over the glistening purity of the morning dew.

The glamour of the West with its

material prosperity and comfortable living, its frank engrossment in the pleasure of the moment coupled with the so-called marvels of scientific invention has like wine intoxicated the whole world. We are drunk with life itself which is but a stage in our journey, a thing that once was not and will again cease to be. A life of enjoyment as opposed to a life of sacrifice, of the supremacy of physical well-being over matters of the spirit, of manners over morals, and everywhere the worship of economic success are the ideals that rule our modern world. Though the evil effects of a purely materialistic civilization are now apparent, a hundred years ago it was not so, and then there was a general and naive acceptance of this soulless culture, cruel and relentless in its pursuit for power and wealth, and greedy and selfish beyond measure. But now the world has come to such a stage that we are obliged to pause and think. 'We are taught to fly in the air like birds, to swim in the water like fishes, but how to live on earth we do not know.'—This in brief sums up the attitude of a perplexed humanity. But when one is pledged to a life of pleasure it is not so easy to draw back; even if there be a desire, the will is wanting. To replace old ways of thinking by new ideals, to see things in a different perspective means a complete change in one's angle of vision and mental make-up, and is the work of a lifetime. But where life is taken at its superficial value, and where there is no thought behind it, one is apt to be infected by the madness that has possessed the world and

be drowned in its rushing torrent. We are reminded of the Yâdavas of old who got drunk while making merry, and in a state of intoxication killed one another until the clan was completely annihilated.

At this critical hour in the world's history who will lead the way but India who has survived many a crisis worse than the present one and has seen many empires, nations, and civilizations flourish and die. Yet she lives and we are inclined to think that there must be a reason for it. Let us turn to the pages of the European scholars of the nineteenth century, and we are struck with their foresight and vision. In a little book called *India : What It Can Teach Us* we find Max Müller saying, 'If I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life not for this life only but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.' Still earlier we read of another German philosopher, Schopenhauer, who on reading an imperfect translation of the Upanishads was so impressed by it that he declared that 'the world is about to see a revolution in thought more extensive and more powerful than that which was witnessed by the Renaissance of Greek literature'. In our own country the Swami Vivekananda was the first amongst modern men to realize that India had a message for the world. He said, 'Here activity prevailed when Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of the modern Europeans lived in the forests and painted themselves blue. Even earlier when history has no record, and tradition dares not peer into the gloom of that intense past, even

from then until now ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every word has been spoken with a blessing behind it and peace before it.'

India never aimed at territorial conquest nor did she ever soil her hands with the blood of weaker nations. But now there is rising in her a consciousness of her own great past and a still greater future and she seeks deliberately to conquer the hearts of men so that the bleeding soul of humanity may find peace in her philosophy of life. She would fain give them a vision of the Universal to replace the narrow and parochial, of the essential unity of life which makes us one with the meanest living creature, and most of all of the immense possibilities of the human soul. She would beg the world not to sacrifice the highest object of life for the sake of life. To her death is but a new birth and time a mere shadow of Eternity, for it is the Infinite alone which gives meaning to the finite and fleeting things of life. 'Pleasure and pain, heat and cold are born from the contact of senses with their objects and are impermanent. The calm man whom these do not disturb is fit for immortality.' (Gita, II. 14-15). And this is the life for which India aspires. Her poets have sung, 'He who delights in the life of the Self cannot be deluded by the mirage of sense objects.' (*Shivamahimnah Stotram*). She would live like 'a pearl drop on a lotus leaf', a life free from the trammels of Nature. In more modern language we read that this 'freedom comes only to those who no longer ask of life that it shall yield to them any of those personal goods that are subject to the mutations of time'. (*Mysticism and Logic* by Bertrand Russell). Towards this goal India has directed all her energies; she has studied it systematically and practised it assiduously in her daily life.

Perhaps there is no more forceful example of how India combined her philosophy with action than the dialogue of the Gita which was spoken on a battle-field. Again in later times, as if to show that at no moment has this search for a higher life been abandoned, we find Tulsidas voicing the same spirit of India. In the midst of a fierce battle the devoted Vibhishana implores Râma to ride on a chariot like his powerful enemy Ravana. 'Listen to me O friend,' replies Rama 'the chariot that leads one to victory is other than this; courage and patience are its wheels, truth and good conduct its banner, strength, discrimination, self-control, and unselfishness are its horses, and the reins that control the horses are mercy, compassion, and even-mindedness; love of God is the clever charioteer, renunciation the shield, contentment the sword, charity the war-axe, intelligence the spear, and wisdom the bow; a pure and steadfast mind is its quiver, various disciplines its many arrows, and respect for the learned and wise its invincible armour. There is no method of gaining victory better than this, for he who has this spiritual chariot can conquer the most formidable enemy.'

The women of India have always been known for their discipline and sacrifice, their high sense of honour and devotion to duty. So far they have been the guardians of the home and have been content to lead secluded and sheltered lives. But we believe that the time has now come when they must leave their seclusion; their homes must be the wide world, and their pure and tender affection must be shared by the poor, the lonely, and the outcaste. Men may sometimes indulge in brute force and violence; but women rule supreme in the domain of mercy and compassion and all the qualities of the heart. We would even venture to say

that the golden chariot that Rama speaks of, and with which we wish to conquer the demon of materialism must be manned by the men of India; but in their vanguard must march the heroic women of this land—women to whom no cost will be too great, and no personal loss, however great, of any consequence. They will be the spiritual soldiers who will guide the world through paths of peace to a newer and more humane civilization.

So far woman has passively tolerated war and violence all over the world, and sometimes even actively participated in it; but, perhaps, she has never fully realized her own true sphere in life as the mother of man. She is the preserver of the race and on her in future lies the burden of preventing this wanton destruction of human life. All wars are a challenge to womanhood, for does she undergo the agony of child-birth only to be a helpless witness to the bombing of her little ones, and a wholesale massacre of the old? Can she bear to see the earth drenched with the blood of the flowering manhood of her sons? Motherhood lies desecrated and women weep for their beloved dead; but this is not the time for tears—not tears but action quick and prompt before human existence itself is wiped out from the face of the earth.

Womanhood in India is awake today; but she has forgotten to some extent her own great and glorious past, and so is often swayed like the corn by every passing breeze. She is getting much education and has comparatively greater freedom than her grandmother enjoyed, but there is in her a tendency towards competition and rivalry with man. Education in India at present has the sole object of qualifying men to earn a living, but on the men lies the responsibility of supporting large families. The women are free in this

respect and this adds greatly to their advantage. Let them utilize their leisure and education for a higher purpose than economic independence or mere equality with men. They are proud of their newly acquired freedom and jealous to guard it from outside attack; but there is a little confusion in their minds about its utility. Like the rest of the present-day world they are more concerned with the freedom that brings to them the evanescent pleasures of life than with the freedom that enables them to lead a higher and nobler life than that demanded by the deadening level of conventionalism. We would that they enter all departments of life as they are now doing, but let them not degrade themselves to the level of money-making machines. Let them be guided instead by an idealism such as has been their country's gift to them from ages gone by.

This idealism, if it is to take them in the right direction, must be deeply rooted in the past. They must stand like trees in the forest with their roots interlacing underground. And though the flowers on this tree will always be new, the sap must come from the same ground. Thus we are inclined to think that though Sita will ever embody the true seed of India's womanhood, the tree is destined to blossom again with a greater abundance and a sweeter fragrance than before; the flowers of this new generation will be neither a dead image of the past, nor a mere imitation of the West, but keeping intact the racial character the new age will bring forth women such as the world has neither seen, nor yet heard of.

When Macaulay, the father of India's present-day educational policy, said in his famous speech that the English education would 'form a class of persons who would be Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in

opinions, in morals, and in intellect', he was more than right. This great wrong which has been done to the nation must be undone in the same manner. The modern Indians—men and women—must again be Indianized through their own literature, both modern and ancient. Whereas their intellect will be developed and fed on all the modern sciences, languages, and arts, their spirits will continue to draw inspiration from that philosophy for which India is famous, and wherein she has achieved a harmony between thought and action, as well as reason and faith. After all, it is philosophy in the larger sense of the word which is the unseen foundation of civilization, and we cannot hope to build any new and enduring structure except on the basis of this same solid foundation. If women will accept the role of leadership then their past inheritance of a spiritual outlook on life will become an anchor in this their new and most exciting adventure. Modern education will teach them how to deal with the new problems of life, but the ancient will give them a breadth of vision and depth of character. It will also heal the breach that the present English education has caused between the educated and the uneducated, the rich and the poor, the liberal-minded and the orthodox.

In this manner we see that the task is many-sided, and those who would aspire to scale these Himalayan heights must be strong. Women have been weak too long; they have come to regard weakness as an inherent quality of their sex, but henceforth they must give up this idea as a superstition of the past. In respect of physical strength they are, perhaps, worse off than the women of any other country: and this they must cultivate. But this is not all. There must be strength of mind,

tenacity of purpose, the will to do though they fail at every attempt, to struggle though they stumble at each step, and to die if necessary for their ideal but to live most certainly for it—for the Himalayan heights are difficult to reach. And, perhaps, when their strength is exhausted, through the inspiration of their noble lives others will arise who will tread the same narrow and steep path and who will hold high the inextinguishable torch of India's message to the world. Thus will go on generation after generation, living ever in the vision of beauty their own ideals have fashioned and worshipping at the shrine their own hands have built; and when courage fails and hearts despair then the light these heroic women shed round them will hearten many a weary traveller on the path of life.

But let woman be only conscious of her mission in life. Let her understand that she was not born to be a slave to man's passion, a plaything of the hour to fill his moments of leisure and to be spurned and thrown away afterwards. Let not her love be imprisoned in the cage of her family, nor her actions be ordained by the social routine of those who live and die and never wake from their drowsy dream of life. Her love must know neither East nor West, caste nor creed, and she will in truth

be the mother of the world. Let her heart quiver and quake to see the misery of the world, and there will be born in her an infinite strength that will enable her to fight single-handed against all odds. Her very presence will be a blessing to mankind, thoughts of her will heal the wounds of the heart, and bring peace to the passion-tossed soul of man.

The Upanishads speak of the paths of 'Shreya' and 'Preya',—of the good and the pleasant—the choice of which every man is faced with. Though true for all times and for all people, it is particularly true at the present moment. We stand at a parting of ways: Will posterity look on the women of India with shame and regret for wasted opportunities and neglected moments or with pride and glory as has been done in the past? They cannot go on in a haphazard manner, for the world is moving rapidly; and they must either lose themselves in its fast current, or put up a strong fight against it. Let them pause awhile and ask of themselves: Whither go a hundred and fifty million Sitas of India—in the wilderness of selfish enjoyment called 'Preya', the pleasant path 'in which many men perish' or the blessed land of 'Shreya', which through the path of love, service, and sacrifice leads to freedom and immortality?

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## THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE

BY PRINCIPAL D. G. LONDHEY, M.A., PH.D. (LEIPZIG)

(Concluded)

We now proceed to study the principle of harmony in Indian medicine. The Indian system of medicine has as its aim a positive object, viz,

maintenance of health and prolongation of life. The very name *Āyurveda* is an evidence in point. It does not undertake as its main task only the negative

purpose of removal of disease. The latter is only a secondary function, the primary function being the maintenance of health and the prolongation of life. Life is understood as the full and free enjoyment of the body, the sense-organs, mind, and the soul. Health, according to the Ayurvedic point of view, is not simply a harmonious functioning of the body, but also of the subtle inner potentialities of the sense-organs : the mind and the spirit are also duly recognized to be the essential elements of that comprehensive system we call the individual man. Blindness is something less, a defect in the total and full enjoyment of life. Insanity is diminution of life, though apparently and superficially man seems to possess a sound body. Spirit, soul, or self is a constituent of life which is more comprehensive than mind. It is a matter of everyday experience that in sleep mind or consciousness in the ordinary sense is absent, though many involuntary processes such as digestion, respiration, and circulation of the blood continue. Spirit is probably that constituent of the unity which we understand as man, that is the substratum of the basic process beyond the control of consciousness.

It is a characteristic feature of the Hindu system of medicine that man, who is the subject of treatment, is not torn out of the context of Nature. Man is considered as a part and parcel of Nature. Thus it is that, we find in works on Ayurveda, a special chapter is devoted to the consideration of man in relation to the nature of the country in which he lives. Three kinds of the surrounding country are distinguished. (1) Dry and arid (Jangala) land is the kind of country which has sparse and scanty vegetation of stunted growth. There is a comparative scarcity of water. Hills are few and do not rise to

the dignity of a mountain. We are told that this country tends to increase Vâta in the body. Men living in such a country are susceptible to the diseases of Vata. (2) Forest (Anupa) land is the region marked by abundance of water, and hence vegetation is vigorous and prolific. Trees are tall and grow thickly. This country is mountainous. Such a region tends to increase phlegm. The people living in such regions are liable to suffer from the diseases of the disturbance of phlegm. (3) The moderate or the common kind of the country is the one in which both the extremes of scarcity or abundance of water and vegetation are avoided. The temperate country does not make its inhabitants liable to the diseases of the disturbance of any particular humour in any marked degree.

The doctrine of the classification of the countries may be followed in further details. Proximity to the sea is a factor which affects the inhabitants of that region in a specific manner. The people of a region far inland are subject to the conditions of a very different nature. The climate near the sea is moist and the soil produces rice in plenty. In the interior parts the climate is dry, and the food different. In this, much further development of this doctrine is possible. We should only recognize that the principle underlying this doctrine is very sound and valuable though it still admits of much elaboration.

The Hindu system of medicine lays special stress on the close liaison between man and Nature, particularly the plant world around him. Just as man derives his food from plants, he should derive the remedies of the disorders also from plants. Herbal medicines are the most natural medicines for man's ailments. In the Western system of medicine this principle is not sufficiently recognized.

Highly synthesized chemical medicines may produce undesirable after effects on the human body. There are no doubt some remedies in the Western system which are derived from plants, such as, quinine, strychnine, digitalis, and cascara. But these are few and far between, and must be regarded as exceptions rather than the rule. In the Ayurvedic *materia medica* herbal medicines predominate very markedly.

Another characteristic feature of Hindu medicine is found in the treatment of man with particular reference to the changes in his environment brought about by the cycle of seasons. The topic of the seasonal programme (Ritucharyâ), as also that of the daily programme (Dinacharyâ), strikes any casual reader as being very significant so far as man in relation to the time of the year and that of the day is concerned. This is naturally considered in the context of the fundamental hypothesis of the triad of the Doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha.

We are told that in the first four hours of the day (as also those of the night) phlegm is on the increase. In the second period of the next four hours bile is on the increase, and in the third period of the last four hours of the day Vata is on the increase. Coming to the different seasons, we are informed that in the rainy season (Varshâ-ritu) Pitta is on the increase, and Vata is disturbed (Prakopa), while Kapha is quiet; in the Sharad-ritu Pitta is disturbed, i.e., the process of increase during the Varsha-ritu becomes acute in this season, Vata is now quiet after its disturbance in the Varsha. In the Hemanta-ritu Pitta is quiet, but Kapha is on the increase, and Vata is disturbed. In the Shishira Vata is disturbed, Pitta is quiet, and Kapha is increased. In the spring Pitta is increased and Kapha is disturbed, Vata

being quiet. In the summer Pitta is disturbed and Vata is increased, Kapha being quiet. Thus it will be seen that as there is a cyclic order of gradual changes in Nature, so also there is a corresponding order of cyclic changes in the human organism. The practical rules as regards change in diet, habits, and the daily programme are only a corollary to this theoretical doctrine of the man-Nature harmony. Wisdom consists in suitable adjustment, which in its turn will help the maintenance of health.

The close liaison between philosophy and biology in the Ayurveda is illustrated by the fundamental doctrine of embryology. It is laid down that conception follows not simply from the coming together of the sperm and the ovum, but from the inception of the soul into the fertilized ovum. We read in the *Charaka* that the embryo is formed only when Jiva enters the physico-chemical constituents in the womb. This is still further clearly expressed in the *Sushruta*: 'The embryo is the conjunction of the sperm and the ovum in the womb enlivened by the Atman and the sixteen evolutes of Prakriti.' In the Hindu medicine the concept of the embryo is thus found to be spiritualized, while in the Western science it is conceived only on the materialistic model. At first sight the Hindu conception is likely to be brushed aside, as something simply speculative and superstitious. But revealing light has been thrown on this subject by the recent development in biology. The old-world mechanistic biology has admittedly failed to explain the different stages and the complicated processes of the embryonic development by purely physico-chemical concepts. The neo-vitalistic biology of Hans Driesch has proved on the basis of scientific evidence that we have to acknowledge the exist-

ence of a controlling and determining factor which is far from being materialistic, i.e., physico-chemical in nature. This biological factor is called 'entelechy' and is said to work not *in* space but *into* space. Recently biologists are inventing new names such as determinants, organizers, etc., for factors which perform functions which cannot be adequately described in physico-chemical terms.

The treatment of Ayurveda far from being sectarian and separatist represents a point of view which comprehends and synthesizes physiology, psychology, psycho-therapy, and religion. Modern scientists are becoming firmly convinced of the inadequacy of the purely physiological conception of the cause of human ailments and are becoming more and more inclined to supplement it from other spheres. For instance T. B. Scott writes: 'In scientific language, Biedl sums up the present position of our knowledge thus: two agents are concerned in ordering and maintaining the complex activity of the animal organism; in addition to the nervous communication which admittedly is the agent in effecting rapid readjustments, there is also a chemical correlation of the different organs; in accordance with the latter, each organ, each tissue, and even each cell by means of its specific secretory products acting through the agency of the blood stream, is enabled to exert a specific influence on other parts of the body. In this manner an equilibrium of the various parts is maintained. . . . To maintain this balance or to regain it, if it be for a time lost, is mercifully the divine order, the implanted tendency. We may so fight against or ignore the laws of Nature that this balancing is never perfect and it is thus that chronic disease arises and gains mastery. . . . Under the influence of great emotions

of joy and hope and also of religious fervour some of us seem to have the power of calling on our reserves and of increasing the output into the blood of all our home-made auto-coids; this often results in improvement of health and in some cases even of cure. It is surely not for us to throw on poor struggling mortals cold douche of cynical semi-scientific scepticism, but rather to encourage them in their spontaneous efforts, and to let them see that we can supplement our own natural powers from outside. With this new knowledge of "Vis Medicatrix" of its mechanism and of its chemistry, we must realize that our control over our disease is enormously increased and that there is far brighter and less suffering future for the sons of man.' (*Modern Medicine and Some Modern Remedies*, p. 137-40).

The Ayurveda takes three Doshas—Kapha, Vata and Pitta—as fundamental in the system of the human body. Some suppose that the triad of the Doshas is merely hypothetical. Others hold that they signify functions. Still others maintain that they are substances though minute and subtle. The task of interpreting the Tri-dosha theory in terms of modern Western science of physiology and medicine is a difficult one. That the Doshas are substances is probably the nearest approach to the doctrine of the Ayurveda as is seen by the description given in the medical works. But nothing in modern physiology corresponds to the concepts of the Doshas. Modern physiology is cellular physiology. We must look to the constituents or functions of cells if we can ever hope to discover the basic substances, viz, Kapha, Vata and Pitta. The process of oxidation in the cells must be identified with one of the Doshas. We know that every cell breathes, assimilates, and secretes. One



thing is certain. The Doshas are not humours as conceived by Hippocrates, the father of Western medicine. In the opinion of a close student of comparative medicine, 'the Tri-dhātu theory, on the other hand, goes many steps beyond the cell of the modern cellular theory. . . . In fact the Tri-dhatu physiology of the Ayurveda begins just where orthodox cellular physiology of Western medicine ends. Hence it seems to me that we cannot at present equate the Tri-dhatu theory exactly with anything known to modern Western physiology. But the time may soon come when such a comparison may become possible. The most recent researches in the West are leading the vanguard of our Western scientists into the regions which appear so "Ayurvedic"; already the biologist is looking beyond his original comparatively simple cell with its protoplasm, nucleus and, cnetosome, on to the complexity of chromosomes, Ids, Determinants, Biophors, and even the vital atoms (bio-atoms, if you please, so strongly reminiscent of Vata, Pitta, and Cough "corpuscles"); in the field of immunity the exponents of both the "cellular" and "humoral" doctrines have gone far beyond the original simple conception of the cell on to the complexities on complexities of Haptophors, Complementophile, Ergophore, Ambosceptors, Oponians, Agglutinins, Precipitins, Cytolysins, Alexins, Sensitization, Anaphylaxis, and so on—truly a bewildering array of Neologisms, wherewith to describe things and events, which are for the most part as specula-

tive as the Tri-dhatu theory itself, and also exhibit like it a distinct leaning towards "humoral" conceptions of colloids and bio-chemistry. Similarly in the field of endocrinology and psychology Western scientists have now begun to talk of body fluids (humours?) influencing, and being influenced by, emotional and mental states reminding us of the Ayurvedic view of Vata being responsible for enthusiasm, Pitta for intellection, and Kapha for forbearance, and so on.' (Shrinivasa Murthi: *Report of the Committee on Indian System of Medicine*, Madras Government, pp. 24-25 of Appendix 1).

Medicine is a never-ending quest. As man is one, the system of human medicine must be one. Eastern and Western medicine, Indian and European science of life and health are conventional concepts useful for the convenience of study only. Ayurveda promises to be a complete and harmonious study of man in all the aspects of his being.

In concluding this survey of the different departments of Hindu culture in search for the heart of harmony in them all, we must point out that we do not deny the phenomenon of struggle in human affairs. Struggle may be necessary in the sense that it is a necessary evil. But it is an evil and a malady, though necessary and inevitable as a means of establishing harmony. Harmony is the undeniable end and the ideal. Wisdom consists in recognizing what is ideal and eternal and in distinguishing the ideal from what is merely phenomenal and transient.

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

Sj. Nolini Kanta Gupta of the Sri Aurobindo Ashrama needs no introduc-

tion to the reading public. Any introduction needed will be furnished by his *The Basis of Unity*. . . . Professors Sharma and Srikantan, who are already

known to our readers, appear this month in apparently different roles. But on closer examination their themes converge to the same point. Prof. Sharma argues that science cannot for ever fight shy of spirituality. And Prof. Srikantan shows how in Sri Basava's life the eternal conflict of scientific and spiritual outlooks was actually resolved. . . . Mrs. Handoo, who has first-hand experience of work among women, points out the proper basis for their uplift.

#### COMMUNAL PARTIES

Indians are now quite familiar with and, perhaps, sick of political parties which exploit the religious susceptibilities of the ignorant masses in the name of religion. *The New Review* condemns this political stunt in no uncertain terms :

Under modern conditions, a political party on a religious basis does not appear desirable ; in fact wherever any such party was formed in western countries, it was a defence measure against irreligious laws. Once redress has been obtained in matters religious, the continuance of such a party is not without serious drawbacks. Most questions coming before a legislative body have no direct religious bearing, and it would be awkward to record the 'Christian' vote in favour of, let us say, buses against trams, or for one Chamber as against two Chambers etc. The real safeguard for religious minorities lies in the fair-minded respect of the majority for constitutional provision. This takes nothing away from the utility of having extra-parliamentary associations to watch over religious interests and enlightening legislators of all parties on religious grievances. In any case, let us have no kind of association in which, under the guise of securing religious tolerance, religious principles are diluted and vaporized.

But the *Review* leaves one important point out of consideration. When a political party becomes militant, assum-

ing a religious appellation with a view to blackmailing other communities, should other communities form similar parties in self-defence ?

#### ALEXANDER AND INDIAN IMPERIALISM

Mr. T. G. Subramanyam, M.A. writes in *The Indian Review* of March :

To exaggerate the Hellenistic influence of Alexander's invasion has been the tendency of a great many European scholars. . . . To say that the vigorous rule of the Mauryan administration was the outcome of Alexander's invasion, however indirectly, is to repudiate the capacity of the Mauryan monarchs. The Mauryan monarchs, just then wresting power from the Nandas, had to be vigorous and powerful in their policy and administration.

But the writer concedes that

It can be asserted that one marked effect of the invasion was the rise of a strong monarchy, with imperial ideas, in India in the place of small republican States. The easy subjugation of the small States by Alexander led to the realization of the need for a strong monarch in the country and this indirectly helped the rise of the Mauryan power and empire.

Before any such causal relation can be established, historians will have to find out where, how, and when the idea of a strong central Government arose. It did not certainly originate with Alexander, for his achievements belie such an assumption. His meteoric career was almost purposeless. On the contrary, the idea can be traced almost in all phases of its development in the Indian soil itself. The next question is, With how many Indian States did Alexander wage war ; and how many of them did he subjugate so that his invasion might have the necessary indirect influence ? History does not speak of any considerable number, we fear.

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*When thou rememberest God, do so with all thy heart wholly set on him. Let thy mouth speak no words. Shut all outward doors (the doors of the senses) and let open the door within.—Saint Kabir.*

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RAMMOHUN ROY AND AMERICA. BY MISS ADRIENNE MOORE, M.A. *Published by The Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 211 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. xii+190. Price cloth Rs. 2-8 and paper Rs. 2.*

This book is the thesis of Miss Moore for her M.A. degree of the Columbia University (U.S.A.), obtained in 1935. The first part of this work was published in *The Modern Review* for September and October 1936. Miss Moore became interested in Indian life and culture while she was a student in college, and in fulfilment of her long-cherished desire has been in India since 1940, studying the social, educational, and economic problems of the country.

The enthusiastic authoress took great pains to prepare this scholarly work. She consulted as many as seventy-six libraries in U.S.A. in order to get access to the literature on Rammohun and to find out periodicals containing articles on his thought and activities. The book is a successful attempt to show the possible influence of Rammohun in U.S.A. between 1816 and 1836, i.e., during the last two decades of his life. It, however, puts more emphasis on bibliography than on interpretation. Miss Moore devotes only about thirty to forty pages to offer her appreciative estimate of the Raja which like that of the Raja's English biographer, Miss Collet, is extremely interesting and deserves a perusal. The second part of the book contains an exhaustive bibliography of Indian, English, American, German, and Dutch editions of the works of Rammohun as well as a long list of several hundred articles in English and French dealing with Rammohun appearing in about eighty-nine periodicals published in India, America, and Great Britain. This essay, as the authoress rightly observes in the Introduction, may be considered as an excellent chart that will be very useful for reference and as a basis for further research.

Miss Moore points out that the great American thinker, Emerson, came to know of Rammohun while the former was still in college. Emerson's aunt, Mary Moody, wrote a letter to him inquiring if he had received the materials about Rammohun which she had sent to him. Miss Moore thinks that Rammohun was the first medium

through which oriental thought reached New England, the birth-place of American transcendentalism. She reiterates that even though it cannot be actually proved that Rammohun was the first contact of America with India yet it is certain that previous to New England's knowledge of Rammohun there was no sign of any influence of oriental thought on the American mind.

On account of the controversy over Christianity which he conducted with the Serampore missionaries, Rammohun then became so much a topic of discussion in America that all the major libraries at that time had acquired copies of his work, and Roy was for a brief time with the principal transcendentalists of New England the burning issue of the day, and articles about him had appeared in at least fifty per cent of religious publications of the eastern coast of the United States, especially in New England. The authoress deplors that she discovered Roy after tremendous labour only to be amazed that he was so soon forgotten in the West which had appreciated him even before his countrymen began to recognize his greatness.

Miss Moore, however, very thoughtfully remarks that though Rammohun during his lifetime was more esteemed by the West than India yet after his death he has been more appreciated in India which now acclaims him as the father of her renaissance. 'If Rammohun was influential during the generation after his death,' concludes Miss Moore, 'it was Rammohun the Hindu, shorn of Christian embellishments, who lived on.'

SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

PRAGMATISM AND PIONEERING IN BENOY SARKAR'S SOCIOLOGY AND ECONOMICS. BY MR. NAGENDRA NATH CHOUDHURY, M.A. *Published by Mr. R. C. Chakravartty, M.Sc., Chakravartty Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., 15 College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 152. Price Rs. 3.*

Mr. Choudhury opens his book with an interpretation of Sarkar's pragmatism. Dr. Sarkar is no believer in things extramundane. And as such he weighs all values,—even spiritual and aesthetic, in

the balance of their 'serviceability and usefulness'. His pragmatism, however, is not satisfied with the present order of things and broadcasts a definite philosophy striving for the progress of the world. 'All his ideas, ideals, theories, and precepts which currently pass as "Sarkarism", have been inspired by and shaped in the spirit of pragmatic idealism;' writes the author, 'He is not a Utopian but a practical idealist, a pragmatist.' But one is confused when one sees that a believer in progress does not admit a definite goal. 'Progress is not a thing about which one can say: "Thus far and no further"... The ultimate synthesis or Absolute of which certain philosophies in East and West talk *ad nauseam* is the greatest unreality conceivable in human affairs,'—said Dr. Sarkar in his Barrackpore lecture as is culled in the book. Well, is not a progress without a goal or standard or Absolute an inconceivable affair? What is the difference between regress and progress if there is no absolute standard? And this assertion of an unimaginable idea leads Dr. Sarkar to contradict himself when he explains his idealism: '. . . such idealism as can inspire educated men to shun the prospects of fame and career, and feel their *highest self-realization* in the spread of education. . . .' (The Italics are ours).

Dr. Sarkar, we are told, 'sees no virtue in eulogizing what is decrepit and moribund in India, neglecting what is fresh, growing and vigorous outside India. He does not confine himself to Hindu ideals and culture.' So far this shows the broad outlook of Sarkar. But when the author writes, 'to him, so-called Hindu ideals there are none; there is nothing exclusively Indian in Hindu culture,' one feels that he overshoots the mark. There may not be at present any ideal which the Hindus have not shared with humanity as a whole, and which could not have been evolved independently by others. But historically speaking, there are things that originated in Hindusthan with the Hindus and which have not as yet been fully assimilated by others. 'According to Sarkar the West is no less spiritual than the East and the East no less materialistic than the West. Spirituality is not the monopoly of the East.' This is only a general statement that leaves out of consideration preponderance of tendencies and historical sequence. Even Dr. Sarkar admits the predominance in the West of worldly progress. May not the

East go ahead of the West in creating spiritual values?

Notwithstanding some such points of difference none can cease admiring Sarkar for his forceful and comprehensive pragmatism that includes in its wide sweep the spiritual teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, though he studies them from his own standpoint. One also admires the true, self-reliant patriot in him. To him 'the basic foundation of freedom, democracy, and socialism, in education and culture, as in politics, is self-help, self-direction, individual initiative and individual creativity. Creative individualism is the life-blood of man as a moral agent.' But this creativity need not certainly be judged in terms of material achievements alone.

Mr. Choudhury was long in touch with Dr. Sarkar, and his interpretations of Sarkarism are true and valuable, though his comparisons and historical perspective are faulty. His graceful presentations are pleasant and easy.

RELIGION IN THE U.S.S.R. BY WILFRED C. SMITH. *Published by Free India Publications, Commercial Buildings, the Mall, Lahore. Pp. 35.*

The writer begins the pamphlet with a short account of the spread and development of Christianity in Russia and propounds that it could never replace the primitive form of religion but only produced an amalgam of the two. Then he narrates how the Church allied itself with the State in subjugating and exploiting the people and grew hopelessly corrupted. Reformist movements arose but fell far short of the requirements. At last came the Revolution. The Church joined hands with the Czarist Government and opposed the communists at every step. The Soviet Government, when it came to power, 'abolished the privileged and oppressive position of the Russian Orthodox Church and gave to all religious groups an equal standing, and to all men, religious, indifferent, and atheist, complete freedom of conscience and of propaganda'. 'Religion, under the socialist State,' says the author, 'has been reduced simply to conducting worship for those who wish to participate.' But the old ritualistic form of religion is slowly dying out, giving place to a 'dynamic, joyful urge for cultural and concrete creation'. All that the socialist regime has done to bring about such a state, is, through education and

other indirect means, to make it less likely for the people to hold the old superstitious beliefs.

In conclusion the author contends that religion, if it means creative goodness and belief in truth, beauty, and justice, flourishes more in the U.S.S.R. than in any other country. It is good so far as it goes. But religion means more than this. It seeks to discover the Supreme Verity of life in relation to which alone the relative values of life, such as goodness, justice, etc., can be determined.

The position of religion in Soviet Russia was hidden behind a dark screen of mystery, and the outside world had a very vague idea about it mixed with a feeling of distrust and fear. Interested propaganda made the situation worse still. The war that sweeps ruthlessly over Russia now has made it urgent for the good of the land to state facts clearly, and we are glad to welcome the present booklet which amply clarifies the present position of religion in Russia.

**HE FOLLOWS CHRIST.** EDITED BY J. P. GUPTA. *Published by Hamera Hindoostan Publications, 23, Hamam Street, Fort, Bombay. Pp. 44. Price 8 As.*

This booklet attempts to place before Christian Indians what Gandhiji stands for. According to the editor, 'Gandhiji's Satyagraha is Christianity in Action.' He would also place Gandhiji on a footing of equality with 'Christ, Mohammad, Bodh and Krishna', since 'Gandhiji embodies in his little person all those attributes of greatness which were possessed by' those teachers. Gandhiji is undoubtedly a great man, and the influence of Christ is palpably on him. But he will be the last man, we believe, to claim any kind of equality with Christ or any one of those prophets. But hero-worship is nothing if not hyperbolic in its language!

The above, however, is only a side-issue, and the demerit of the proposition does no real harm to the book itself, which contains Gandhiji's views on non-violence, Christianity, conversion, and other allied subjects. There are also articles by Mr. John Gunther and Prof. H. C. Mookherjee. The following articles are from Gandhiji himself: *Jesus of Nazareth, Tolerance, The Law of Love, Ray of Hope for World Peace, God Appears in Action, India's Message.* The booklet is highly instructive and very readable. It presents a phase of Gandhiji's life that has

a permanent appeal far beyond that of political vicissitudes.

**WHOSE FREEDOM?** *Published by International Book House Ltd., Ash Lane, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay. Pp. 61. Price 8 As.*

This is a very timely publication bearing on the problems of India and the East vis-a-vis England and the West. The colour bar and the Japanese slogan of Asia for the Asiatics fall within its purview. It brings to a focus apt quotations from recent writers like Hannen Swaffer, Dr. Felix Morley, George Kent, Bertrand Russell, Pearl Buck, John Gunther, and others whose pronouncements on the above problems are set against a background of high idealism preached by Tagore, Gandhi, Madame Chiang Kai-shek, Lincoln, and others. Japan's relationship with Korea has exposed the hollowness of her claim as the liberator of the East, and the outcome of the present war will show where the Euro-American world stands so far as the practical question of the freedom of all races is concerned. Freedom must be for all the oppressed people of the world. Short of such a high idealism the present war is only an unredeemed holocaust.

**THE SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF DEATH.** BY SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Published by Swami Prajnananda, Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Pp. 28. Price, not mentioned.*

'What is the most wonderful thing in the world?'—is a prize question which could only be satisfactorily answered by Yudhishthira: 'Every day, and day after day, animals and human beings are passing out of life, but we do not think of death; we think that we shall never die. What can be more wonderful than this?' Birth and death are facts of our everyday experience. Both are equally mysterious. Man has left no stone unturned to make his life happy and easy: he has shaken the very foundation of heaven and earth to conquer Nature—to become immortal. But all in vain. Death has its own suzerainty over all living beings. Birth presupposes death. And as such all living beings are slaves to it unless the real Life-force is known. Rightly laments the author that man dwells only in the present and seldom thinks of the 'why' and 'wherefrom' of his

coming to this plane and the 'whereto' of his march.

We congratulate the publisher on bringing out this thought-provoking and scholarly brochure of the famous monk at a time when death is more rampant than ever. We wish the book to rouse the question of death in every thoughtful mind—Eastern or Western.

**JOY OF THE SUN.** BY SAVITRI DEVI. *Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Ltd., Calcutta. Pp. 109. Price Rs. 4-8.*

Akhnaton who was also known as the Joy of the Sun, was the king of Egypt in the early fourteenth century B.C. He was a man of extraordinary intelligence, liberal outlook, and saintly character. His sacrifice for others and love of and faith in God were the envy of many. He fought against superstition. He was a rationalist. 'Superstition and mummery begin where reason ceases'—he said. But he was not a biased iconoclast. What he did he did for the better. The noble king lost his empire for Truth. He was ill-treated by the people. Nevertheless, when asked to retaliate, he replied: 'I don't want to return evil for evil.' He died an exile; but for that he did not lack the fullness of heart. When breathing his last (at the age of twenty-nine) he prayed to the Sun the Divine Light of which flooded him, and he felt full within. Such was his great personality, noble character, and faith in God!

But the public hardly knows his name. It is only very recently that two archaeologists, Weigall and Ayrton, in 1907, discovered the remains of the young king. They lie now in the Cairo Museum.

The book under review is a beautiful life-sketch of this king narrated in a simple and lucid language and covered within an attractive get-up. The book is meant for young people, for whom it is quite suitable.

**ALVAR SAINTS.** BY SWAMI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI. *Published by Anbu Nilayam, Ramachandrapuram, Trichy District. Pp. xvi+145. Price wrapper Re. 1-8, calico Rs. 2.*

'The Tamil expression Alvar means one who has taken a deep plunge into the ocean of Divine consciousness. An Alvar is a golden river of love and ecstasy which finds its dynamic peace in the boundless ocean of Sachchidānanda.' But the Alvars, though they confined their activities in

Tamil-nad, must be studied against an all-India background, for they were Indians first and Tamilians afterwards. 'An Alvar is a living Gita, breathing Upanishads, a moving temple, a hymning torrent of Divine rapture.' And as pointed out by Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar in his learned Foreword, 'We must not forget or ignore that all the heart-felt outpourings in the songs of saints all over India . . . would not have come into being but for the epic triad. . . the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Bhâgavata*.'

These Vaishnava saints, then, are as much of India as they are of the South, and when the history of the religious movements in India is fully reconstructed we shall come to know how intimately the North and the South acted and reacted on each other. In fact, there is a theory that devotion had its origin in the South. Be that as it may, the lives of the Alvar saints and the Achâryas deserve to be studied closely by every one who cares for Indian religions and culture. Swami Shuddhananda Bharati has done a distinct service to this cause by bringing out this handy volume, which not only delineates the main events in the lives of the Alvars, but provides for a peep into their minds by presenting some choice hymns in translation. A more elaborate presentation would, perhaps, help scholars, but the book, as it is, is a good guide to the general public.

**THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST.** BY S. K. GEORGE, M.A., B.D. *Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 104. Price 12 As.*

This book is a welcome addition to the series of Natesan's 'World Teachers'. The writer is a Syrian Christian who has moved away from orthodox Christianity, and brings to his work a freshness of outlook more in keeping with the modern view of religion as a way of life rather than a creed. If this is accepted, Indian Christianity cannot stand apart from the Indian life as a whole. 'It would mean a more complete identification of the Christian movement in India with the life and struggles of the motherland.' Mr. George is not satisfied with institutionalism, but exhorts the Christian Churches 'to sell all that they have, even their cherished Christologies, and find him (Jesus) afresh in the toils, the struggles and privations of real life.' He also recognizes the innate spirituality of India and holds that she has the 'right and

duty to assess and assign the right value to Jesus and his message'. The orthodox Christians will hardly endorse this. None the less the book deserves to be studied by all who make a distinction between culture and religion and hold that faith in a prophet need not necessarily mean conversion in the narrow sense of the term.

### SANSKRIT

AITAREYA BRAHMANA, WITH THE VRITTI SUKHAPRADA OF SHARHGURUSHISHYA. EDITED BY R. ANANTAKRISHNA SHASTRI. *Published by the University of Travancore, Trivandrum. Pp. xii+iii+638. Price Rs. 6-8.*

Vedic scholars are generally familiar with the commentaries of Sâyana on the *Aitareya Brâhmana*. The other glosses and commentaries, though existing in manuscript, are hardly available to them. As such, the University of Travancore has put all lovers of the Vedic literature under a debt by publishing this edition of the *Aitareya Brahmana* with the *Vritti Sukhaprada* of Sharhgurushishya which throws a flood of light on the meaning of the Brahmana texts and the intricate grammatical construction of the sentences. The writer readily admits his indebtedness to earlier commentators like Govindaswami, Krishna, and others. But he is rightly aware that the existence of other commentaries is not in itself an argument against writing a fresh one. Modern scholars will agree with him in this, their only regret being that there are not many more commentaries in existence, so that the Vedic lore might stand fully revealed. Sharhgurushishya has a fascinating way of expressing himself in short pithy sentences and summing up his comments and references in attractive verses, which fact keeps up the reader's interest and helps his memory.

The erudite editor has added valuable footnotes, adduced parallel passages from Sayana, Govindaswami, Bhatta Bhâskara, and others, traced the innumerable references in the gloss to their sources, given alternative readings, and explained difficult words in a way that does ample justice to his vast scholarship.

The printing in bold types is fine, and the arrangements of the text and the *Vritti* are helpful to readers. The book, as it is, is not complete. It contains only the first fifteen *Adhyâyas* out of a total of forty.

And we are told that a second volume will follow, in which will be added a note on the various editions of the *Aitareya Brahmana* as well as the author of the present *Vritti*. We shall eagerly wait for the same and so will all lovers of India's ancient culture. The South is ever noted for its Vedic scholarship, and the Trivandrum University will, we hope, keep bright the escutcheon by bringing out similar volumes.

### BENGALI

MAHABHARATI. BY JATINDRA MOHAN BAGCHI. *Pravartak Publishing House, 61, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 116. Price Re. 1-8.*

Poetry is defined as the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds by Shelley. And he concludes that poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world,—it redeems from decay the visitations of the Divinity in man. So all poets elevate and delight the readers to some extent according to their respective personality and Jatindra Babu is no exception to this.

The word *Mahâbhârata* may be made to mean the 'Vast India'. The poet sings the most enthusing and inspiring traits of the Indian heroes who are the representatives of Indian ideals and who have been installed as the living deities in the hearts of every true Indian, man and woman. Karna, Duryodhana, and Bhima of the *Mahabharata* open the pages of the *Mahâbhârati*. Personification of Nature and making Her one's own are essential poetic virtues. In this respect Jatin Babu's invocation of *Samiran* shows how beautifully he can make the ever-free Samiran, wind, wait to receive his greetings. True poetry, it is said, has a magic power, as it were, to effect any change in the mind of the reader. Poets first draw out the sympathy of their good reader and then carry him to where they like without his knowing of the journey. And thus poetry is the best vehicle to make appeals to man for remedies of vices that run riot in human society. Jatin Babu's apostrophizing of the *Sannyâsi* and his *Kashti-parikshâ* are good specimens of this poetic power. Speaking of poetry Milton said, 'Which is simple, sensuous, passionate. . . .' *Prâchinâr Pralâp* has virtually inherited all these qualities. But the omission of the few un-

chaste words from the ravings of the Prachina would have kept the demands of elegant style and refined taste of poetic art intact.

### HINDI

**CHICAGO VAKTRITA. (THIRD EDITION).**  
TRANSLATED BY BABU THAKUR PRASAD AND  
PT. UMA SHANKARJI, B.A. *Published by*  
*the President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama,*  
*Nagpur, C. P. Price 6 As.*

Chicago Vaktrita is the Hindi translation of the famous address on Hinduism and other short lectures delivered by Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in the year 1893. These lectures, which cast a wonderful spell on the Westerners, enshrine the fundamental truths of Hindu religion, the essence of which consists in the realization of absolute oneness in and through the manifested variety. Swamiji in his unique forceful style has dwelt upon the transcendent and immanent aspects of Reality and pointed out with the help of modern science that Advaita, or absolute non-dualism, is the only

rational conclusion at which man arrives through his contemplation as well as experimentation in the laboratory. It was in this address on Hinduism that Swamiji for the first time in the presence of a Christian audience exploded the idea of inherent sinful nature of man and declared with all the force at his command that man is fundamentally a divine being and that if ever there is any sin on earth it is to call man a 'sinner'. At the end of his address Swamiji struck the most wonderful note of harmony which is at once magnificent and heart-touching, all-inclusive and thought-provoking. He has thus presented to the world the cardinal principles of the 'Religion of Man' that will go a great way in shaping the future of mankind. Sahitya Shastri Prof. V. B. Shukla, M.Sc., P.E.S., College of Science, Nagpur, has rendered a great service to the Hindi-knowing public by successfully revising and re-editing the original Hindi Translation. The utility of the book is all the more enhanced by the inclusion of the Preface by one of Swamiji's leading disciples, Sister Nivedita.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### CYCLONE RELIEF

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK AND APPEAL

The cyclone relief-work of the Ramakrishna Mission, started in the last week of October, is being continued in 313 villages of the Midnapore, 24-Parganas and Balasore Districts. In the week ending 15th April, our 10 centres distributed 2,179 mds. 25½ srs. of rice, 77 mds. of paddy, 2,000 pieces of new cloth among 59,101 recipients, as well as 3½ srs. of barley and 4 srs. of milk for children and patients.

Our total receipts up to the 20th April are Rs. 3,58,001/- in cash and over Rs. 1,50,000/- in kind, and our total expenditure about Rs. 2,34,496/-, excluding bills for about Rs. 75,000/- due mainly to the Government of Bengal for rice supplied.

In spite of gratuitous relief administered so long, the condition of the sufferers is gradually becoming worse, since virtually famine conditions are prevailing in the affected areas. For want of funds, our work in the Balasore District has been closed, but with the free supply of food-stuffs from the Government it is being continued in Bengal. We have just undertaken on a very small scale the work of hut-

construction, which has become an urgent necessity in view of frequent nor'-westers and the approaching monsoon. The supply of cloth and good drinking water is another immediate need. We have already begun re-excavating tanks in certain areas. To combat the prevalence of diseases, however imperfectly, we have started homoeopathic medical relief in three of our centres.

These types of work have to be extended at once in order to save the people from premature death. For this large sums of money are required. We earnestly appeal to the generous public to make further sacrifices for thousands of our helpless sisters and brothers. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by:—

(1) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah; (2) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta; (3) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4 Wellington Lane, Calcutta. Cheques should be made payable to the "Ramakrishna Mission".

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission  
22. 4. 43.