

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX

SEPTEMBER, 1944

No. 9



“उत्तिष्ठ जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

PILGRIMAGE AND LOVE OF GOD

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

How far the trip to Badrinarayan is going to be practicable is no doubt a matter for serious thought. It is extremely difficult, and I have seen quite strong and well-built persons on their return looking thin and worn out and far from their old selves again. So you can well imagine how a delicate body like yours will fare. Do not then persons like you go? Not so. Without doubt there is joy even if there be suffering. And it happens, too, that many persons get totally cured of their diseases after this pilgrimage. Wherever you may remain, if you take refuge in the Lord, there will be no more cause for fear. The day is spent to profitable end only if it is spent in contemplation of Him; nothing else is of any good. One should look upon Him as mother, father, brother, friend, and companion, one's near and dear one; if one can have the firm conviction that He is the only near and dear one, one is saved from all fear and gains peace and happiness. There is no other way. It is necessary to resign oneself wholly to His lotus feet. There will be no more worry left then. It is of no avail unless one can give oneself up entirely

to Him. Everything is possible through His grace. Always pray to Him, and try your best to act in accordance with your prayer; He is sure to be merciful in that case. His mercy is always there, only we do not feel it. All misery ends when we have the firm conviction that He is good and is doing only good to us.

‘In the Vedas and in the *Râmâyana*, in the Purânas and in the *Mahâbhârata*, both in the beginning and in the end and also in the middle the Lord has everywhere been sung.’

There is no other goal but God, for He alone is true and eternal, everything else is false and transient. So reliance on them not only bears no fruit but makes suffering inevitable. But the Lord's *mâyâ* is so strong that it hides this simple truth. So the Lord has pointed out the way saying, ‘Whoever takes refuge in me crosses this (ocean of) *mâyâ*.’

There is no other way but taking refuge in Him. ‘Take refuge in me alone.’ May the Lord through His mercy keep us devoted to His feet. This is our only appeal and sincere prayer to Him.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE

BY THE EDITOR

I

Hindu scriptures insist that for spiritual guidance a Guru or a spiritual teacher is absolutely necessary. There may be a rare soul that can progress by itself; but, for the generality of aspirants, guidance is unavoidable. This necessity of spiritual guidance is not only admitted by Hinduism but also by other religions and in fact by all people who think rationally. For as in mundane affairs so also in spiritual matters adepts should be allowed to advise, guide, forestall difficulties, and help with necessary equipments. There may be some who challenge even such a truism. For our present purpose we leave them out of our purview and proceed to the sociological bearings of such spiritual ministration. This latter problem, too, is by no means free from controversy, which ranges from utter rejection to the fullest acceptance. Generally speaking, people who have deeply imbibed Western culture, are chary of *guruvāda*, the theory of spiritual guidance, not because it is repugnant to spiritual progress (which question they have no occasion to concern themselves with) but because it works against social mobility, reform, and general well-being; nay, often enough, in their estimation, it is anti-social, irrational, and retrogressive. According to many modern thinkers, therefore, society should get rid of this nightmarish institution. Let us state the reasons for such a position more fully.

To follow a Guru means to surrender oneself heart and soul to him. One has to efface one's personality—all rational thinking, all independent inquiry, all initiative come to a standstill. Following a Guru means following tradition, and tradition is proverbially inimical to progress.

Besides, allegiance to a person engenders an anti-democratic spirit which is the bane of all backward communities. A Guru, in the last analysis, symbolizes privilege, vested interests, and autocratic rule, which are antithetical to the rise of the proletariat. It is notorious that Gurus gravitate towards alliance with the established political order.

Moreover, the guidance of a Guru tends to be all-inclusive in the sense that he not only sees to the disciple's spiritual welfare, but he also extends his influence gradually over a wider range of life's interests, till at last the disciple is totally under his Guru's guidance in all his domestic and public affairs. As, however, in the eyes of a Guru all mundane affairs should subserve spiritual progress, social well-being is assigned a secondary, and very often a negligible, position, so that society stands to lose on all counts inasmuch as no single person can really be equally at home in so many multifarious interests of life. As a result, a person guided by a Guru is bound to suffer and lose in his life's pursuits.

Again, Gurus are often deified in the estimation of their followers. But undeserved worship spoils these false deities, who drag down society along with themselves.

It is also noticed that the Gurus tend to form distinct groups around themselves, which crystallize into exclusive communities waging wars of supremacy over one another. Moreover, these are often at cross purposes with the national State and society as a whole. To crown all this, the Gurus are in time replaced by a hereditary priesthood who mislead society and become mere economic drags.

There are other reasons which we desist from taking into consideration

here, since they are levelled against not really the spiritual teachers but against religion itself, which fact raises a much bigger issue than can be properly dealt with here. We shall, therefore, examine the few objections stated here, and we feel that these among themselves cover most of the ground common to those who oppose spiritual ministration.

II

In our article on *Mysticism as a Social Force* in October, 1942, we dealt with some of the positive contributions made by mystics to social welfare. Hence we shall not repeat here that aspect of the question. The point at issue here is that, though individual mystics may exert all sorts of indirect influence, which society may not consciously take note of, yet when such spiritual stalwarts assume leadership or are recognized as Gurus by others, the matter takes the shape of a social problem. The arguments of modern sociologists, as we have already seen, are directed against the harm accruing from such leadership and are not concerned with the positive benefit resulting therefrom. Our endeavour will be to show that this leadership is not just a negative and avoidable social factor, it is a positive and unavoidable institution which may have its drawbacks, frailties, and foibles, but has also its merits, perfections, and successes. Besides, the arguments against the institution are often overemphasized, since the defects are not peculiar to this alone, but are shared by many others, being due to the weaknesses that men are heir to.

So long as inequality of intellect, environment, and achievement persists, leadership is bound to continue in some form or other. Even in the most democratic countries they talk of the masses and the classes, and though the political stalwarts do not go to the length of dictatorship, they are *leaders* none the less. The masses hang on their words and cluster round their conference tables. Any insubordination is put

down with iron hands. The party has its isms, which must not be questioned. Free-thinking is strictly circumscribed by rules and regulations and declarations of policy. When political issues are at stake social predilections must not be too obtrusive—if need be these must be sacrificed for the sake of party cohesion. Such parties are oftener than not very exclusive and often foment political fracas. Occasions are also not rare when party differences reach such a pitch that the integrity of the State is threatened. The party system engenders graft, nepotism, apostasy, and treason.

In comparison with the depths to which political bungling can lead huge sections of humanity, other downfalls pale into insignificance. Matters do not differ intrinsically but only in degrees in other fields of human activity. If, therefore, a case is to be made against religious leadership, it should first be directed against leadership as such. For so long as there is leadership, there will be failures, which will be degrading in proportion as earthly considerations—such as name, fame, pelf, and power—are at stake. In that respect religious leadership is partly free in so far as it is not swayed by these worldly considerations. The remedy lies in raising the moral and spiritual worth of the leaders and the led, and in this respect there is nothing comparable to the ideal spiritual leadership.

Every leadership is subject to misuse, and so is religious leadership. But if the public are thoroughly educated about the qualifications of a true Guru, there will be fewer chances of abuse. The difficulty is that the public, though educated in the accepted sense of the term, are mere babies in matters spiritual. Any dogmatic theory asserted with a certain authoritative tone and show of religiosity can sway them. Besides, they run after miracles, and any promise or possibility of these make them follow swindlers like dumb, driven cattle. As a consequence, when frauds

are exposed, religion incurs public opprobrium along with the fall of false prophets, though when the right type of spiritual leadership is kept in view, not one of the criticisms enunciated earlier can be hurled against it.

III

In speaking of true Gurus the *Mān-dukya Upanishad* says,

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् ।

समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं ॥

• • •

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक् ।

प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ॥

That is to say, a true Guru is one whose life is perfectly regulated by the accepted canons of morality, who is conversant with the highest truths, and who is firmly established in Brahman. These are the minimum qualifications of a Guru, and these are powerful safeguards against misleading. Now, there are three factors in this definition of a Guru, which must be considered separately, for each is replete with social possibilities : a Guru must be morally strong, he must know his own business, and he must be in intimate communion with the Deity.

To take the last factor first, it is senseless to accept anyone as a Guru unless one is Godly and can inspire others to be so. But realization of God is a thing which does not admit of any external proof : it is, as the scriptures put it स्वसंवेद्य, knowable to oneself and not परसंवेद्य, demonstrable to others. When a man asserts that he has seen God, his sincerity, veracity, intelligence, and past history are the only external guarantee that he speaks the truth. So a sociologist, who is bent on an objective study, cannot be sure of this so long as he does not develop the requisite insight, for we have to remember that even in the absence of God-realization these moral and intellectual equipments may easily become the misleading appendages of a spiritual robot

which can strike us with wonder but cannot give life. True spirituality comes from above : it cannot be built up from below. Râvana of the *Râmâyana*, for instance, wanted to reach heaven with the help of a ladder, but we know how miserably he failed. His mechanical civilization turned the earth into a hell, whereas the touch of Râma transformed it into heaven.

Nevertheless, a sociologist has to rely on the second factor, i.e., on moral excellence for his guidance, and this for two main reasons. First, goodness is a concomitant of a spiritual life. An aspirant has to pass through a strict moral discipline for attaining Divinity. And though in the highest state he transcends morality, so much so that he may often attach little importance to social norms and forms inasmuch as he rivets his attention on inner sincerity rather than on outer decorum, to true spirit rather than expression, yet when he assumes spiritual leadership, particularly amidst social surroundings, he cannot altogether ignore the long-accepted modes of moral behaviour. For his first task is to speak to the people in the language and through the symbols that are most familiar to them as expressive of well-defined and edifying ideas and things. Secondly, from the point of view of the commonalty who lack the necessary training for recognizing spiritual verities, moral excellence is the surest hall-mark of a spiritual guide.

In the foregoing discussion we have made a distinction between ordinary men of realization, and those among them who assume leadership, for not all can be leaders; and we have conceded that though some men of realization may behave strangely, the Gurus cannot afford to do so in any social milieu. We further concede that with particular disciples the Guru may have some esoteric relationships and may lead them to spiritual experiences in strange ways, but he cannot do so with the generality of his followers. In short,

from the sociological point of view a Guru will be a perfect embodiment of moral excellence. This idea is emphasized in the Gita where Shri Krishna says,

One should not unsettle the understanding of the ignorant, attached to action ; the wise one, (himself) steadily acting, should engage (the ignorant) in all work (Gita, III. 26).

We now come to the remaining factor—a Guru should not only be a good man, but also a good medium of transmission of the spirituality he possesses. A good man, or for the matter of that a learned man, need not necessarily be a good teacher. Teaching is both an art and a science in which not all can excel. In comparison with the onerous task of leading others, self-realization is comparatively an easy task. Shri Ramakrishna used to say that for committing suicide a needle may often suffice, but to kill others, one requires a sword, a shield, and many other paraphernalia. A Guru should, therefore, know the science and art of his profession.

We find that when the qualities of a Guru and his task are thus defined, there is little scope for misuse. It will not do to say that morality is a relative thing and that morality has no sure standard of judgement. For apart from social customs there are certain modes of conduct and attitude which are universally recognized as good. In the Vedanta philosophy these have been enumerated thus: restraint of the senses and the mind, indifference to worldly things, endurance, meditation, discrimination, non-attachment to fruits of work, and hankering after salvation. Some of the outer signs of a man of realization are elaborated in the Gita (vide ch. II, *shls.* 55-72), where we come across some of the finest human qualities which all people admire. It will be admitted on all hands that the possession of any one of these qualities is immensely beneficial to society; and when all these are possessed together and pressed into service, the Guru becomes a natural leader, a centre of dynamic

social good, by the force of circumstances.

IV

Thus far we have seen that spiritual ministration of the highest order can hardly be subjected to adverse criticism either from the social or individual point of view. But as all scientific truths are subject to misapplication by unworthy persons, so are spiritual truths subject to profanation by selfish or self-deluded persons. Society has every right to be critical of such misappropriation of higher roles. Thus as a true Guru is a fit channel for the descent of Divinity on earth, it is very tempting for ambitious souls to preach and believe that they are Divinely 'commissioned', and thus demand all kinds of immunities, prestiges, and privileges. Society can easily discover these impostors by the emphasis they lay on personal advancement rather than on spiritual growth for the disciples.

There is a second kind of false Gurus who claim omniscience as a natural corollary of their identity with Godhead. For this, however, their foolish followers who want their Guru to do all the thinking for them, are not a little responsible. Thus, often enough, an ill-informed and ill-advised Guru will make the most solemn political declarations, of which he little knows the pros and cons. His assumed omniscience is little short of self-delusion. To get rid of such mischief, society should not unnecessarily mix up different issues. A Guru stands or falls by his spirituality. Even if we grant that he is a very advanced soul in that field, his political or other mundane pronouncements should be judged by standards of the particular fields concerned. If he has political acumen, economic sagacity, or scientific insight, his opinions may be given due weight in those particular fields; otherwise his declarations need not be given any greater weight than commonsense views. All-round growth is a rare thing indeed!

A consideration of the two terms *sarvavid* and *sarvajna* clearly brings to light the distinction we are aiming to make clear here. In commenting on the *Mundaka Upanishad* (I.i.9) Shankara says that though these two terms mean omniscient, there is this distinction that while *sarvajna* means one who knows all things in general, *sarvavid* means one who knows all the particulars as well. Now, this is very important. The point is emphasized in the *Yoga-sutras* as well where we learn that though a Yogi may develop a potentiality for knowing all the particulars, its actualization depends on the concentration of mind on those particulars, that is to say, they have to be learnt individually and specifically; and this few Yogis will condescend to do as they like to concentrate the whole mind on Divinity alone. To expect, therefore, guidance from Gurus on all questions of earthly existence, is highly reprehensible inasmuch as that makes an unholy demand on a holy man, and bespeaks too much of soft-brained reliance on others for personal problems.

Another way of dragging down a Guru is to expect from him miracles. The ordinary people are often thoughtless sensation-mongers. Their eagerness for the supernormal makes insistent demands on the Guru to give proofs of such powers till at last he takes some

false steps during weak moments and caters to their curiosity. Nay, the credulity of the followers may even tempt him to make a show of such powers. Society, in such cases, should not tolerate any transgression, and in general the Gurus should be expected to keep within their proper spheres.

The elect are naturally very limited in number. Spirituality is *par excellence* an aristocratic thing. It can neither be subject to mass production nor popular demonstration. Once we do that, spirituality is lost in the process.

A society can best ensure its well-being by creating a favourable atmosphere for the emergence of the elect, or, to put it in another way, the descent of spirituality, at the same time that it trains itself for properly assimilating the higher values; for unless spirituality is vouchsafed from above, society is bound to stagnate and disintegrate. As Aldous Huxley puts it in his *Grey Eminence* (p. 82):

Where there is no vision, the people perish, . . . if those who are salt of the earth lose their savour, there is nothing to keep that earth disinfected, nothing to prevent it from falling into complete decay. The mystics are the channels through which a little knowledge of reality filters down into our human universe of ignorance and illusion. A totally unmystical world would be a world totally blind and insane.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

I

Dear Brother Hari,

What's the matter? K. has sent a long letter. . . . Do please pacify him a little, and write fully what the trouble is. I am relieved to learn that your leg has healed. I am also informed that you are doing good work. . . .

I am in quite good health. The long and short of it is that I fall ill whenever I pay too much attention to the body. At present I cook, eat whatever I get, work day and night—so I am all right and have long sleep!

I shall be in New York within a month.

* Originally written in Bengali.

Has Sarada's magazine¹ stopped publishing? It doesn't come to me nowadays. The *Awakened*,² too, seems to have gone to sleep. They don't send it to me any more. Well, the country is being ravaged by plague, and there's no knowing as to who is still alive and who is dead!

By the way, I have a letter from Achu³ today. He hid himself so long at Ramgarh within the State of the Rajah of Shikar. Somebody told him that Vivekananda had died—so he has written a letter! I am sending him a reply.

I am quite well. Please let me know how you and he are doing.

Yours in service,
VIVEKANANDA

II

Dear Brother Hari,

A bill of lading has come to hand just now from Mr. Banerjee. . . . He has sent rice, pulses, or some such thing. I am forwarding that bill to you. Please hand it over to Miss Waldo. She will take delivery and keep it when it comes.

Next week I shall leave for Chicago, from where I shall proceed to New York.

I am so so. Are K's troubles over or not? Please let me know where you are staying and how you engage yourself.

VIVEKANANDA

III

6 Place Des Etats Unis
Paris, France
13th Aug. 1900

Dear Brother Hari,

Your letter from California has reached me. It's not bad that three persons fell into trances. That, too, is of much help. The Master knows. Let whatever comes happen. He best knows his work; as for ourselves, we are mere servants.

I am sending this letter to San Francisco care of Mrs. Aspinel.

I have just got a little news from New York. They are keeping well. K. is out of the city. Please let me know how you are and what you are doing at San Francisco. Also don't be careless about sending the money to the Math—there must be monthly remittances from Los Angeles and San Francisco.

I am keeping fairly well and shall soon start for England. I am getting news of Sarat. He had recently an attack of dysentery. Others are keeping well. There was hardly any case of malaria this year—the banks of the Ganges are generally free from it. Owing to scarcity of rain, famine is apprehended in Bengal, too, this year.

Brother, go on working under the Mother's blessings. It is a matter between you and the Mother—I am free. I now proceed to take rest.

Yours in service,
VIVEKANANDA

¹ *Udbodhana*.

² *Prabuddha Bharata* or *Awakened India*.

³ A scholarly *sannyâsin* named Achyutananda Saraswati.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT JNANA-YOGA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Among all the uncertainties of the world the most certain thing is death. The fact that no one can escape death, that death awaits every one as the most inevitable thing in life, has disturbed inquiring minds since the beginning of civilization, and has roused in them a desire to solve the mystery of existence by searching for the Reality that transcends both life and death. There are of course persons who are either too light-hearted to undertake such a search, or who consider it to be futile. These go on merrily through life, building 'castles in the air', making plans and nursing hopes, when suddenly there comes a shock. A beloved friend or relation dies. Where has he gone? No one can say. He was working with such zeal and enthusiasm, with never a thought of death; but all of a sudden he drops down; the curtain falls, and he is to be seen no more on the face of the earth. Such a happening sets even a matter-of-fact man of the world thinking. 'Is the world real? If it be real, why does a man suddenly disappear without leaving the slightest trace behind him? And if the call may come at any moment for each one of us to leave the earth, why should we cling so much to our worldly activities? If death be the end of everything, why should we toil so much in life?' Such thoughts may temporarily paralyse one's activities and make one unfit for the world. But is there any doubt that there are good grounds for these disturbing questions?

To the average modern mind the question whether the world is real or unreal conveys no meaning. For him there is absolutely no doubt that the world is real. He treads the earth, sees the sun and feels the air: how can any doubt arise that these are not real? Even if the shadow of a doubt does

arise, it must be immediately suppressed in order that there may be no hampering of his worldly activities. His philosophy of life is: 'Have ambitions; have newer and newer forms of desires and employ your best energy to fulfil them. Life is full of conflicts and struggles which are ingrained in the very nature of things. Face them boldly; and do not spoil your career by too much of analysis or dreaming!'

But this is asking us to see life in a partial aspect only and not to face it in its completeness. Just as a hare in danger buries its head under the sand and considers itself safe from pursuing dogs, the unthinking pleasure-seeker deludes himself into the belief that he is perfectly secure in his day-to-day existence in the sense-world. He *dare* not think deeply; because, if he did, the result might be alarming. It is a common experience to be frightened at one's own thoughts. But, however much we may avoid thinking, we cannot escape the stern facts of life and death. The Wheel of Nature turns, and brings before us its unending procession of phenomena, whether we like them or not.

A Jnâna-Yogi, however, is not afraid of facing anything in life, or even the spectre of death. He is prepared to see all the aspects of life—pleasant and unpleasant—but, at the same time, he devises means to guard himself against its pitfalls. People glibly say that religious men are afraid of life; but this is far from the truth. Truly religious men are not only not frightened of life, but they also consider death to be only a counterpart of life, and their aim is to go beyond both.

All the activities of man—his desires and ambitions, his hopes and fears—rest on the idea of 'I-ness'. A man

feels: 'I exist; I think; I desire;' and from that feeling starts the wheel of activities of his life. Never for a moment does a man inquire what that 'I' is. If even for five minutes we close our eyes and try to think about this 'I' which is the basis of all our feverish activities, we get into a hopeless difficulty. Hands and feet are not 'I'; eyes and ears are not 'I'; even the mind is not 'I'—for when we say, 'My mind', we at once admit that we are separate from the mind. Nevertheless, we put so much faith in and build so many hopes on our 'I' and 'Me'! One says some angry word and we get offended; another brings some good tidings and we feel happy. Modern physics is no longer sure whether what we see as solid matter is really material at all; whether, in the last analysis, 'matter' does not reduce itself to thought, or to some symbol. But still there is the illusion of the material world before our eyes. In the same way, though we do not find any solid basis for the 'I' and 'Me', we nevertheless feel all the time that we exist; and it is on this feeling that the whole citadel of our life rests.

Jnâna-Yoga says: 'Reject what is false; and with a keen sense of discrimination seek what is true.' The *jnâni*, like a valiant fighter, refuses to identify himself with anything that is unreal. He analyses everything belonging to the sense-world as '*neti, neti*—not this, not this', and, with a sheer effort of the will, keeps himself unattached to anything that is of a transitory nature. Because he finds on analysis that all earthly desires and relationships possess only a temporary value, he guards himself constantly against the danger of succumbing to their influence. Knowing that his physical body will perish sooner or later, he always tries to kindle in himself the consciousness of his separateness from the body. When a person thus rejects everything that is *not* real, what remains as the residue is the Self or Reality.

Instead of employing straightaway

the method of rejection, an aspirant following the path of Jnâna-Yoga may start with a positive idea, viz., that he is the Self as distinguished from the body. In spite of countless failures he repeats to himself this potent idea; until one day his 'cloud of unknowing' suddenly clears away and in a flash he actually realizes that he is the Self. At night the stump of a tree is sometimes mistaken for a ghost; but a friend comes along and tells the frightened traveller that it is a tree and not a ghost. The traveller has this idea imprinted upon his mind; and, as he goes near, he finds that what he imagined to be a ghost is in reality nothing but a stump. This illustrates to some extent the process of Jnâna-Yoga.

Anyone who attempts to follow this difficult path must be a fearless spirit endowed with almost a superhuman strength of mind. His body must obey his highest thoughts as spontaneously as a supple twig bends at the touch of the wind. But how many can sincerely say that they possess such courage and strength of spirit—rare qualities that, perhaps once in a century, mark out a Swami Vivekananda from his fellows? The average person, with human weaknesses, finds his actions almost always at variance with his ideals and aspirations. Recognizing this fact, the Gita says: 'Harder is the task for those who aspire after the Unmanifested. Those who have not risen above the body-consciousness will have to suffer if they try to realize the Unmanifested Brahman.'

How difficult it is to eliminate the body-idea! You may repeat a thousand times that you are not body but the Spirit. It requires only a slight headache to draw away all your thoughts again to your perishable body. That is the tragedy of life. The story goes that a patient in a hospital began to repeat the Gita loudly in order to imbibe the idea that he was one with the eternal Brahman; but as soon as the surgeon came with his knife, the

poor man forgot Brahman and began to quake with fear. This is the experience of almost all of us in life.

The Hindu scriptures, therefore, enjoin certain preliminary qualifications for those aspiring to practise Jnâna-Yoga. The chief of these are a keen sense of discrimination between the real and the unreal; the absence of a desire for enjoyment of this world or the world to follow; the acquisition of certain powers like control of the mind, control of the senses, the capacity of withdrawing the mind from external objects, the power of physical endurance; supreme faith in one's own power combined with receptiveness to the instructions of the Guru; and, above all, a sincere longing for liberation from the bondage of human existence. No one can deny that these preliminary qualifications, taken together, make an almost impossible demand on the capacity of an average human being. The ordinary mortal is bound to be in despair if he is to be judged by these standards before he is considered fit to practise this form of Yoga. The scriptures, accordingly, suggest that only those who have been able to master these preliminary disciplines in their past lives would have some hope of success in the path of Jnâna-Yoga. However that may be, it is also true that if one, in spite of his past *samskâras*, sincerely and constantly tries to obtain strength from the source of infinite power that lies hidden within every being, there will at last come a time when the spring of all power and strength will be revealed to him and he will be flooded with a great illumination. Even the weary process of acquiring the preliminary virtues will be automatically hastened if the aspirant honestly tries, from day to day, to live up to the conviction that he is the eternal Self, and not the perishable body. It has been proved by experience that all thoughts—good and bad—have a tremendous influence on one's life. If, therefore, you always think yourself to be strong, strength

will gradually be developed in you, almost without your being aware of it. In the same way, if one can really imagine oneself to be the timeless Self, a subconscious process will be set up by which the weaknesses of the flesh or of the temporal body will gradually vanish. If an aspirant after Jnâna-Yoga sincerely follows this method and perseveres in it in spite of repeated failures, he is likely to succeed in the long run. The scriptures advise that a disciple should know from a Guru, who has directly realized the Self, the true nature of his being. He should then meditate upon that idea until one day he has himself a direct experience of Reality. This is illustrated by the story that a tiger cub which happened to be brought up among a flock of sheep, came to believe that it was also a sheep. One day a tiger which fell upon the flock was surprised to find a little tiger living with the sheep. When the cub was told that it was *not* a sheep but a tiger, it refused at first to believe this. Then the tiger took the cub to a pond and showed it its reflection in the water along with his own reflection. This at last convinced the cub that it belonged to the same family as the tiger, and removed its obsession that it was a sheep. In the same way, a disciple with the help of a Guru may come to realize that in reality he is not a bundle of flesh, bones, and blood, but the eternal Self.

This does not mean that it is easy for an ordinary mortal to act on the belief that he is the eternal Self. Just as Shri Ramakrishna used to ridicule the claim of some conceited persons that they performed their duties in the spirit of the great Karma-Yogi, King Janaka, so he often exposed the sham of those who pretended they were *jnânis*—at one with the deathless Brahman! There are some who dupe themselves into the belief that, because intrinsically, they are the Self, no bad effects can follow from any wrongful acts they may commit. They console themselves with the

idea that since the world is after all a dream—*mâyâ*, it matters little what they do. In support of their thesis they glibly quote the Gita which says that the Self which is deathless does not kill, nor can it be killed. All war, violence, and bloodshed may be defended on this basis; but that is equivalent to the 'devil quoting the scriptures' for his own purpose! The search for the eternal Self involves a degree of renunciation which no war lord would ever be able to impose on himself; because if he did, he would suffer unbearable agony every time he injured another for his own advancement.

It follows that the hard discipline of Jnâna-Yoga can be successfully undertaken only by a person who is endowed with an exceptionally strong and keenly analytical mind. Without such equipment an aspirant may either make a mess of his whole spiritual life or, what is worse, develop a false, egoistic philosophy of the kind described in the foregoing paragraph. It is not enough for the aspirant to have only an intellectual conviction that the path of Jnâna-Yoga is best suited to his temperament. He must also be prepared to fight out his spiritual battle all alone—in an open field as it were, and under the open sky. He will have to wrestle constantly with human weaknesses and the subtle tricks which the mind always plays in such cases, and will find no respite from the grim struggle until he reaches a state of mind where he is, to some extent, safe.

It must not, however, be thought that this Yoga of Knowledge prohibits or spurns aid from any of the other three Yogas. A budding *jnâni* need not eliminate all elements of *bhakti* from his life. He may actually invoke strength by prayer to God and devotion to his Guru. When, in the beginning, the aspirant longs for light and finds nothing but darkness before him, the help and blessing of a Guru may be his only source of strength and hope. Similarly, unselfish work of some kind, undertaken

in the spirit of a Karma-Yogi, may often be a useful preliminary to the practice of Jnâna-Yoga. In the very nature of things it is well-nigh impossible for an average person to embark straightaway on the arduous path of Jnâna-Yoga. He has hundreds of desires and innumerable forms of attachment to pull him back from the straight and narrow course; and it would be foolish to expect him, all at once, to crush such desires or to become completely detached. By engaging himself in some form of activity in the service of his fellow-beings and by cultivating non-attachment, he may gradually rise above desires and attain the degree of self-purification necessary for the practice of Jnâna-Yoga. The greater the self-purification one can achieve, the fitter he will be for the exacting demands of the Yoga of Knowledge. Again, strict control of the mind and a high degree of concentration are essential for the practice of Jnâna-Yoga, and these can best be acquired by the methods prescribed by Râja-Yoga.

A sceptic may well ask: 'Can any man born of the womb of a woman actually realize that he is a bodiless spirit—the eternal Self? Does not the very idea sound impossible and fantastic? Has any human being ever experienced that condition and if so, does history bear testimony to such an experience?' Yes, history does testify, in more than one case, that such a state has come within the domain of human experience. It is said that when Alexander invaded India he came across an old sage whom he wanted to take with him to Greece. But as the wise man refused to accompany the great conqueror, Alexander at first entreated and cajoled him, and at last threatened to take his life if he persisted in his stubbornness. At this the wise man burst out into a fit of loud laughter and said: 'I have never heard a greater lie than that. For you can never kill me who am birthless, deathless, and ever-existent.' This incident has passed

into history and can be found in Greek accounts. Nearer home, and at a later period, the great saint Shankaracharya also realized that unity with the Ultimate Reality which is the final goal of the Yoga of Knowledge, as of the other three Yogas. This philosopher-saint's writings bear ample evidence to the fact of such a realization. Therein, he has analysed and described in great detail the state of super-consciousness of the person who experiences this unitive knowledge of God. It is also beyond doubt that some of Shankara's disciples similarly experienced the truth of his philosophy in actual life. Thus Shankara and other great *jnânis* have not only proved by philosophical reasoning that there is only one Existence on which human ignorance weaves the dream of manifoldness, but have also unmistakably shown that the fact of such an Existence, outside the ambit of time and space, can actually be experienced by a human being possessing the requisite spiritual insight and power.

This experience of the timeless, spaceless Reality must necessarily be beyond thought and speech; for, when there is only the One, who will speak or think about whom? The person who has actually experienced such a state can, after coming down to the normal plane, only vouch for the fact of that experience; but it would not be possible for him to describe, within the limitations of time and space which are now imposed on him, *what* it actually was. Superficially, the highest state experienced by a *jnâni* may be compared to the condition of deep sleep, because when the sleeper awakes, he also cannot describe that condition except as one of complete forgetfulness of the universe. There is, however, a great

difference between the two conditions, inasmuch as the man who realized the Ultimate Truth is so transformed by his experience that his every word and action thereafter bespeak the highest wisdom and spiritual insight. A fool goes into deep sleep and comes back a fool; but when a *jnâni* ascends to the highest state of knowledge, he comes down—if at all he can do so—armed with a vision that is of supreme value to humanity.

It has often been asked whether a man can survive the state during which he realizes that he is the Eternal Spirit, and *not* the body or the mind. When a person has transcended the body-idea, it naturally follows that the body will fall off; and it has been recorded that, ordinarily, a *jnâni*, after realizing the Supreme Reality, does not long survive that tremendous experience. There are, however, exceptional beings, like Shankara, who even after the supreme realization retain the noble desire to teach humanity the means of attaining such a state. These souls voluntarily sacrifice the eternal freedom from bondage which they have attained in order to bring salvation to others. To them the portals of the highest experience remain for ever open; but they refuse to enter those gates until they can take along with them some at least of those who, suffering and heavy-laden, struggle hard for light and illumination. These are the great prophets, seers, and mystics who keep the torch of the spirit burning when infinite darkness threatens to envelop humanity. It is they who by simply living arrest, at least for a time, the headlong descent of a weary world into the abyss of ignorance. They are the representatives of God on earth.

MALEBRANCHE AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY

BY P. S. NAIDU

Among the much neglected contributions of the minor European thinkers to the development of Western thought those of Nicholas Malebranche deserve special mention. It is an error of the first magnitude to look upon the speculations of Malebranche as constituting a half-way house on the road leading from Descartes to Spinoza. One little historical fact is sufficient to overthrow the half-baked hypothesis that Malebranche's metaphysics is merely Spinozism in a nebular form. Spinoza's masterpiece, *The Ethics*, was published ten years before the *Dialogues* of Malebranche, and we have ample evidence to prove that Malebranche was fully acquainted with the fundamentals of Spinoza's speculations. How then can we accuse the French philosopher of having entertained vague ideas which were later clarified by the Spanish mystic?

CONTRIBUTION TO PSYCHOLOGY: VISION

'Malebranche's researches, on the nature of light and colour,' says Professor Dawes Hicks, 'have a distinct title to recognition in the history of physics and his psychological theory of vision is. . . a great advance upon any earlier theory, in some respects even an advance on Berkeley's.' Considering the very imperfect state in which psychological investigations were in those days, it is remarkable that Malebranche should have made such striking discoveries regarding the nature of vision, and the perception of the third dimension.

Helmholtz in his monumental work on *Physiological Optics*, makes three distinct references to Malebranche while giving a historical account of the researches into the perception of depth,

and into the influence of the apparent distance on the judgement of absolute size.

Although Malebranche treats of only one sense, vision, yet he deals with it in a manner which is remarkably modern. He discusses the physiological and psychological factors that contribute to the perception of distance. 'The distance of an object is judged according as the intensity of the light and sharpness of the image increases or decreases.'¹ He speaks of the changes in the visual axes and also takes into account the factor of accommodation showing that the idea of space arises from a co-operation of sight and touch sensations. In 1629 he published a pamphlet setting forth his researches on colour perception and visual illusions.

EMOTIONS

Malebranche's theory of emotion is noteworthy. He points out clearly that there can be no 'passion' without the bodily concomitants. He gives a simple tripartite classification of the 'passions'. 'The number of the passions is not to be multiplied according to the number of objects, which are innumerable, but according to the principal relations that can exist between them and us.'² On this principle emotions are to be classified into (1) those that incline towards good in general, (2) those that incline us towards particular goods, and (3) those that incline us towards those with whom we live. 'The mother passions are love and hate. These produce the general passions, desire, joy, and sorrow. All other emotions are made up of these.'³

¹ Hollander: *In search of the soul*.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

ATTENTION

Malebranche's treatment of attention is truly remarkable. No doubt his analysis will not appeal to the modern psychologist. But we must remember that he was dealing with the function of attention. 'The discovery of truth can only be made by the labour of attention . . . ' because it is only the labour of attention which has light for its reward. . . . The attention of the intellect is a natural prayer by which we obtain the enlightenment of reason. . . . This labour is at first great, and the recompense scanty, while at the same time, we are increasingly solicited, pressed, agitated by the imagination and the passions, whose inspiration and impulses it is always agreeable to obey. Nevertheless, it is a matter of necessity, we must invoke reason to be enlightened; there is no other way of obtaining light and intelligence but the labour of attention.'⁴ Malebranche contends that it is through the concentration of attention that we think away all that is contingent in perception, and attain ultimate clarity in the pure perception of the idea.

In discussing the nature of the 'causes' of action, Malebranche brings out clearly the capacity of attention. God acts in us, it is true, but He acts only by means of general laws. The occasional cause for His action is the group of the particular states of practical consciousness. This group may be designed by the term attention. 'We have', he insisted, 'the power of dwelling upon our motives and impulses, and thus of comparing them with that illumination extended to us in reason or in the conception we have of the Divine order. And through attention we acquire a control over our action.'⁵

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EPISTEMOLOGY:

ESSENCE AND EXISTENCE

For the first time in the history of philosophy emphasis was laid by Male-

branche upon the difficult metaphysical distinction between *existence* and *essence*. Because Descartes and Spinoza failed to draw this distinction they were involved in endless metaphysical tangles. As the result of this distinction, Malebranche constantly kept in view the contrast between the act of cognizing and the content cognized, a contrast which subsequent writers frequently ignored but which is of importance for clear philosophical thinking.

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

A striking testimony to the originality of Malebranche's speculation is the nature of his reflections upon self-consciousness. The self, he asserts, is never the object of thought. It is only apprehended through feeling. We *feel* the existence of the *soul* and *know* the essence of *objects*. We do not know the essence of the soul, nor do we feel the existence of objects. We may in this connection mention the fact that Malebranche had a clearer grasp of the nature and function of intuition than his predecessors.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Malebranche's masterpiece, *De la Recherche de la Verite* is in fact a dissertation on the nature and causes of error. After analysing, in his *Recherche*, the capacity of the soul into pure perception, sensuous perception, and volition, and after pointing out that the essence of the soul is thought, which is independent of imagination, sense, and volition, and which can only be felt through the '*sentiment interieur*', Malebranche comes to the conclusion that knowledge is merely our vision of all things in God. Bodies, in themselves, cannot be known, because knowledge can result only from the intimate union of that which is known with the soul; and material bodies cannot come into contact with the immaterial soul. Moreover, the passivity of the soul precludes the possibility of its knowing bodies as they are. Malebranche denies the existence of innate ideas, because the presence of a plurality

⁴ *Dialogues on Metaphysics* translated by Ginsberg.

⁵ *Ibid.*

of these innate ideas conflicts with the divine nature. The view of ideas as divine archetypes, which are representative in their function, overcomes this difficulty. But at this point we come across a peculiarly difficult conception. In God, says Malebranche, there is not a plurality of ideas in which all things are seen, but only an intelligible extension. And this extension is present in Him not formally but eminently, that is, in a spiritual manner. Arnauld launches a virulent attack against Malebranche's conception of extension. If we concede that God contains figured extension, then it follows that God Himself is figured. This is not an acceptable conclusion. Hence we have to assume that intelligible extension is present in God only potentially and that there are no actual figures in Him.

Malebranche holds that ideas of extension alone are clearly and distinctly revealed. Hence in our search after truth we should employ the method of the physical sciences. This method consists in analysis and synthesis, in decomposition and composition, by which ideas are first pulverized into their elements and then synthesized into a system which reveals the truth. In such an operation we have only a series of perceptions and no inference. Malebranche reduces knowledge to a mere process of perceiving a plurality of ideas without showing how this diversity contributes to the development of thought.

Malebranche declares that sense perception is not knowledge, but asserts at the same time that there is present in sensation a dim awareness of the occasional cause producing the sensation, and that this dim idea is the archetype of the body causing the sensation. But sense-perception is relative and the idea contained in it is really not the idea of the archetype but is based on the relation between the perceiver and the

occasional cause. Even so sense-perception can be trusted to give us ideas of the existence of bodies and of their relation to us. It is to establish this type of relative validity of sense-perception that Malebranche brings in occasionalism. But he is arguing in a circle when he bases the validity of natural revelations through sense-perceptions on the doctrine of occasional causes and finds that to distinguish occasional causes he has to assume the validity of natural revelation.

According to Malebranche error is not real. It is only the privation of truth and has no independent nature of its own. Our understanding sees only ideas and so cannot fall into error. Error again does not issue from the will. Error, therefore, is to be found in judgement which arises out of the co-operation of the understanding and the will.

Malebranche accepts the Cartesian principle of certainty, but he shows that what is established by the application of the principle is not self-existence, which can only be apprehended immediately and intuitively, but the existence of the vision of God. Knowledge is thus the revelation in the soul of the ideas contained in God.

Inference finds no place in Malebranche's system, since he does not admit the possibility of development of implication in judgement. We know what we see and what we see are self-identical ideas separated from all others. The discreteness of each pure perception leaves no room for implication. The theory of representative knowledge is established by the doctrine of vision in God. Divine veracity is the guarantee of the truth of representative ideas. But here again Malebranche does not seem to be clear in his notions. Ultimately the guarantee for the truth of ideas is to be found in the faith in sense-perception as natural revelation.

WHY DO WE PRAY ?

BY CHUNILAL MITRA, M.A., B.T.

The Sanskrit rendering of the term prayer is *upâsanâ* whose derivative meaning is approaching God. It is to place our seats near God (*upa-âsana*). Hence worship comes to mean preparing ourselves to be on the same level with God.

But the more fundamental thing is that before approaching God we must first approach ourselves. We must learn to know our own Self. The Socratic dictum 'know thyself' should be the persistent talk of all theologians. In this sense, perhaps, there is hardly found a man—nay, not even a staunch atheist—who does not pray. Every man, of all sects, ranks, and communities, of all climes and ages must pray for something in his retired, pensive, and solitary moments. For in a more concrete and practical sense, praying means attempting to have a hold upon one's inner Self—to have an understanding of one's Self as such and as it-is-in-itself. It is to cancel what one falsely is, and to be what one should be. Because one is not what one should be, one's actual self is at constant collision with one's ideal Self.

Praying, with me, therefore, means not so much approaching God as approaching myself. As He is within and identified with me, He is not an extraneous something in the form of an excrecence. The Vedantic generalizations—'I am Brahman', 'He is Reality,' and 'Thou art That'—mean the same thing. Not only art thou thy petty self, but thou art everything. All things are, because the Self is.

Though praying differs from man to man, country to country, age to age—praying is there everywhere in every being. Not only do we pray, but we cannot but do so. Because, though others may construe my Self as identi-

cal with and exhausted in the social, political, individual, or cultural life, yet I know that I am not wholly found in any of these. They are only particular phases of my self-expression. And as the states of consciousness are not myself, I pray to be what I am in reality. I am there in those states to be sure, but I am something more than they. Any arithmetical addition, logical juxtaposition, or statistical conglomeration of facts, ideas, or states cannot give me a total idea of myself—or an idea of my whole Self. Though my private and platform lives are apparently different they are essentially the same. Since, however, my knowledge of myself in active life is obscure, vague, and indefinite, I pray to know myself clearly, intimately, and definitely. I pray to be good, pure, and just, to win the hearts of others and even to be victorious over injustice. In fact, I pray to be everything that is true, good, and beautiful, for the Self is the essence of truth, goodness, and beauty. I am Brahman, though covered by ignorance and imperfection, so I want to be unified with It through knowledge and perfection. The like alone can know the like, and knowledge of the like means progressive unification with it. Besides, I have a hankering for perfection for the like is attracted by the like. So as God is not only omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, but He is everything good, true, and benevolent in their superlatives, I like and pray to be so too. There is another point to note. It is not absolutely necessary to have even an extraneous object of prayer. We may and are able to divide ourselves into two halves, into subject and object—the praying self and the prayed Self, the actual self praying to be the ideal Self. This is

the be-all and end-all of ethics—the alpha and omega of morality. In my weak or wicked moment, angry or greedy mood, I happened to be wrong, unjust and cruel; but I am essentially right, just, and kind; nay, I am not only human and humane but I am also Divine. So I pray to be what I am in reality. Ethics begins and ends with this eternal strife between myself-as-I-am and myself-as-I-should-be. Man seeks an equilibrium, but ever stops short of it. It is a triad movement from thesis to antithesis and thence to synthesis—from affirmation to negation and thence to a higher affirmation. Thus I run towards the cessation of my apparent self, cancellation of my actual self; and when I actually reach that goal, I cease to be my little self and hence there is left none to realize. In that state both morality and religion lose all their urge and value. So, nothing can be more true than this that ‘morality aims at the cessation of that which makes it possible’. But on the lower planes praying is not only the eternal quest of man but the urge for the progress of humanity and civilization. Though we pray to be more than what we are, we are what we are at any moment because of our prayer. But for prayer humanity would relapse into barbarity. Thus by praying we are not only doing good to ourselves and others but saving at once ourselves and humanity.

The significance of prayer lies there. But then, to be of any use and fruition, prayer must carry with it our belief in our immense possibility. We cannot pray for anything if we do not think in our heart of hearts that we can be what we pray to be. We must first possess not only the initial capability but the requisite faith in and eagerness for the ideal. Faith presupposes honest preparation and leads to further effort. A student should not pray for his success nor a soldier for his victory if the one has not studied well and the other is not strong enough and fit in the art of

warfare. Thus our prayer for something simply because we *like* to get that thing, is nothing but wishful thinking and wild conjecture, if we cannot rely on our capacity to win what we like. True prayer aims at calling up the latent powers of a man. Aptly has it been said that while praying, the devotee addresses himself—he calls for an awakening of his inner veiled being and its dominance over his surface, dirty being.

Besides self-purification, there are other uses of prayer. Praying is needed for the assimilation of the sayings of the scriptures and sages. For mere association with the good or hearing good talks from the saints is not enough. We are to realize those utterances, and for this prayer is of utmost necessity. The Guru may only prescribe the path, but it is up to the pupils to dig up the treasure and enjoy eternal bliss. That is made possible only through prayer.

The Gita tells us that just as nothing is reflected on a dirty mirror, or as fire covered with smoke cannot burn, so our ignorance, greed, and passion cover our knowledge, and make it ineffective.¹ To remove this covering we are to take stock of our purity, innocence, and knowledge through prayer. Scriptural utterances are better understood by deliberation and concentration on them. This may otherwise be called prayer. The Gita further tells us that only one in a thousand craves for knowledge and only one out of a thousand of the latter knows the truth.² In short, it falls to the lot of very few to be the possessors of knowledge. It is prayer that makes us immortal heir to this rare possession. Again, the low

1 धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥

(III. 38)

2 मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥

(VII. 3)

and the ignorant follow in the track of the high and the learned.³ Hence, it is up to the rich, the high, and the literate in our society to see that they are praying both individually and col-

3 यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ (III. 21)

lectively, since, to repeat once again, prayer is not only a means of self-purification but a saviour of ourselves and humanity as a whole. It is the panacea of all ills of our society. It preserves social solidarity through personal integrity.

TRANCE, SAMADHI AND VISIONS

BY SWAMI SARADANANDA

V

To worshippers of God with form, the Master said, 'While meditating, think as though you are tying your mind to the lotus feet of the Deity with a silken cord, so that it may not rove. I speak of a silken cord, for those feet are very soft.' Again he said, 'Why should one think of the Deity during meditation only and forget Him at other times? Some portion of the mind should for ever be directed that way. Have you not noticed how a sacrificial lamp is kept constantly burning during the worship of Durgâ? There should always be a lamp by the image, which should not be allowed to go out, lest it should bring ill luck to the worshipper. Similarly, placing the Deity on the lotus of the heart, a lamp of meditation should ever be kept burning there. During intervals of domestic work one should look in to see if the light is still burning.'

Again he said, 'Well, in those days, before I sat down to meditation, I imagined as though I was washing clean my mind, for there is a lot of dirt and refuse (thoughts and desires, etc.) in the mind. I imagined, as though I was washing away all that and placing the Deity there. You, too, should do like that.' And so on.

As to thinking on God, with form or without form, Shri Ramakrishna once told us, 'Some proceed to the formless through form, while others attain to form through formlessness.' Once a

friend of ours (Devendra Nath Bose) asked the Master at the house of Balaram Bose, 'Sir, which is greater—God with form or God without form?' To this the Master replied, 'There are two conceptions of formlessness—the ideal and the commonsense. The ideal conception of formlessness is undoubtedly the highest; it has to be approached through forms. As for the commonsense conception—it is like seeing everything void on closing the eyes, as in the case of the Brahmos.¹ The Master had besides these another class of followers who as a result of Western education wanted to base their spiritual endeavour on such a commonsense conception of formlessness. The Master warned them against intolerance of all morphological conceptions of God like the Christian missionaries, or denunciation as idolatrous or blind believers of all those who wanted to advance through some concrete image, etc., of God. He said, 'Well, He is not only with form and without form, but much more

¹ Although we narrate this here for the sake of truth, it should not be hastily concluded that the Master denounced the Brahmo Samaj, or the Brahmos. We have heard him off and on uttering the following words while saluting the followers of all creeds, 'Salutation to the modern knowers of Brahma (i.e., the Brahmos)!'. It is quite well known now that it was Keshub, the renowned leader of the Brahmo Samaj and a great devotee who first made Shri Ramakrishna known to the public, and it is freely admitted that some of the monastic disciples of Shri Ramakrishna, among whom Swami Vivekananda was the most prominent, were ever indebted to the Brahmo Samaj.

which no one can recount.' 'To explain what God's assumption of form is, it is like the relation between water and ice. Ice is nothing but frozen water, it is nothing but water through and through—it is floating in water and it is water. But, mind you, water has no form, while ice has it. Similarly, as a result of contact with the chill of devotion the ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss freezes and takes on various shapes.' Innumerable indeed are the devotees who, through that illustration of the Master, have attained peace of mind being convinced of the possibility of harmony of these two opposing views of the forms and formlessness of God.

We cannot resist the temptation of relating another incident in this connection. Among those followers of the Master who stuck to the ordinary view of formlessness, Swami Vivekananda was the most prominent, though it must be admitted that he was in the forefront not merely of this group, but he was assigned the first place among all kinds and classes of followers by the Master. Due to his Western education and Brahmo leanings he often made unwitting flings at those who believed in an anthropomorphic God. This was mostly noticeable during discussions. As for the Master, he often out of fun enticed Vivekananda into a heated debate with some one on this very point. Few could successfully face the Swamiji on such occasions; to their chagrin they were nonplussed by his clever arguments. The Master, too, would joyfully relate that to others: 'What a sharp intellect Narendra has! He minced the arguments of so-and-so with perfect ease!' But even the Swamiji was silenced one day in his debate with Girishchandra who believed in God with form. We felt that day as though the Master took Girish's side with a view to strengthening and heightening the latter's belief. However that might have been, one day during a talk with the Master on belief in God, Swamiji decried as blind the faith of those who

stood by a God with form. In reply the Master said, 'Well, can you explain to me what you mean by a blind faith? Faith is all bind, how can it have an eye? Either speak of faith or of knowledge. But strangely enough you endow some faiths with sight while others you make blind—what a mess it is all!' Swami Vivekananda later said, 'Truth to say, I was in a quandary that day in explaining the meaning of blind faith. I could not find any sense in that phrase. Realizing that the Master was right I gave up repeating that phrase from that day.'

The Master looked on the ordinary believers in formlessness with the same commiseration as he did on those who believed in forms. To them also he pointed out modes of meditation that would be helpful to progress. He said, 'Well, in those days I thought of God as occupying all space like sea water, and of myself as a fish diving, floating, and swimming in that sea of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. Again, I thought of myself as a pitcher immersed in that water, and Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss permeating me through and through.' Again he said, 'Before you sit for meditation, think of this one (pointing to himself) for a time. I say so because of your faith in this one. A thought on this will link you up to That (God). To illustrate, as soon as you see a herd of cows you think of the cow-herd—the sight of the son reminds one of the father—the sight of an advocate reminds one of the court. It is just like that. Have you got that? The mind is scattered all around. As soon as you think of this one it will become focused on a point. If you think of God with such a mind, the meditation will be truly deep. This is why I advise you so.' At times he said, 'Take firm hold of someone or something that you love most and in the way you cherish most, and then only can there be fixity of purpose. "He is an object of love, how can indifference get hold of Him?" Love is

necessary. He should be called on with some fixed attitude. "Fruition follows on the footsteps of attitudes—conviction is the basic factor. Meditation leads to the ripening of attitudes." Love is wanted, faith is wanted, fixity of purpose is wanted—and then only can come success. What is an attitude? It is the establishment of some relationship with Him (God). The ego that is ever alive to such a relationship—is conscious of it while eating, sleeping, or sitting—one that thinks, for instance, that it is His servant, His son, or His part—is the pure ego, the illumined ego. But the ego which thinks of itself as a Brahmin or a Kâyastha, the son of somebody or the father of someone, is the impure ego. These identifications have to be given up—these only lead to bondage through hardening of egotism and heightening of pride. There should be constant thought and meditation on God, a portion of the mind should for ever be turned towards Him—then only can success follow. One must hold steadfastly to one of the attitudes through which God must be made one's very own, and then only can one insist on one's wishes being fulfilled by Him. To wit, on first acquaintance people use such words as "sir", etc.; as intimacy develops they have recourse to "you", and such words as "sir" are out of place; with the fullest intimacy they turn to "thou", and "you", too, never makes its appearance! He should be made one's very own, yea, more intimate than one's own ego—then only can come success. Take for instance a girl who has just fallen in love with a man. At that time there is a great effort at hiding, an overwhelming trepidation, and insuperable shyness; but as love deepens there is nothing of all that—she takes hold of his hand and publicly leaves home with him. If the man is then indifferent to her comfort and wants to desert her, she holds him fast by his neck and says, "For your sake I left home;

tell me now if you will make adequate arrangement for my maintenance!" Similarly one who has renounced everything for God, and has made Him one's own, can be very hard with Him and say, "I have given up everything for Thy sake; say now if Thou wilt vouchsafe me Thy presence!"

If he noticed any ebb in anyone's love for God he would say, 'How lacking in faith it is to say, "If I do not get Him in this life I shall get Him in the next." One should not have such a timorous love. One should have the strength of faith and firmness of conviction that one will get Him through His grace even in this life; how else can it succeed? In that countryside (meaning the area round his native village) the peasants who want to buy bulls, first touch their tails. There are some bulls that do not make any spirited response to such a touch, but relax their limbs and fall down flat on the ground; so the peasants conclude that these are worthless. But those that being touched on their tails respond by frisks and fidgets are considered to be very useful; so they choose from these latter ones. Effeminacy is no good. Muster strength and say, "I must realize Him, aye, even forthwith." Then only will success come.' Again he added, 'Eliminate gradually these earthly desires, and then you will succeed. But instead of giving them up you go on multiplying them all the more—how can, then, fruition follow?'

If any one, be he a believer in forms or formlessness, felt dejected when he did not find any Divine response to his orison or meditation, the Master said, 'In angling one has first to set a bait. It may so happen that after setting up a bait, one is sitting for long with the rod in hand, while there is no sign of any fish, and one is led to thinking that there is no fish in the pond. Then some day a big fish makes a stir, which makes one conclude that the pond abounds with fish. Then on another day the float moves, and one

thinks that there is a fish near about. Then on a subsequent day the float sinks, and one draws up the hook to find that the fish has gulped the bait and left. One fixes a new bait on the hook, throws it in, and sits with all attention. Then on a subsequent day as soon as a fish gulps the bait, one lands it on the bank with a mighty pull.' To some he said, 'God is very quick of hearing; He hears everything. He has heard all your calls, and will certainly vouchsafe His vision some day or other, at least He will do so at the time of death.' To some he said, 'If you cannot fix on either form or formlessness, then pray thus: "Lord, I cannot understand whether You are with or without form. Howsoever You may be, kindly reveal Yourself to me." ' To rouse others he said, 'Believe me, my child, I say it on my honour that one can really have God-vision. He can be seen and talked to just as intimately as we two are now gossiping together.'

There is a further point to note. Generally speaking, any continuance at the threshold of the super-conscious for all the twenty-four hours of the day means a deepening of contemplativeness which is adverse to the performance of ordinary duties of life and which is uncongenial to the remembrance of petty affairs of this world. Instances of this abound galore not only in the religious world, they are also met with in the lives of geniuses in the scientific, political, and other fields. It is noticed, for instance, that they are quite inept in taking care of their own persons, arranging things in their proper places, and such other petty details. It was no small wonder, however, that in the Master's life, we noticed that in spite of such deep meditateness he was fully conscious of these details; when he was not, as in *samadhi*, he had neither the consciousness of his own body or any thing or person of this world; but when he was, he was conscious of everything. We shall cite here only a few illustrations of this.

One morning the Master was going to Balaram's house from Dakshineswar with his nephew Ramlal and Swami Yogananda. When all were in the carriage and it had proceeded up to the gate of the garden, the Master asked Swami Yogananda, 'Have you brought my cloth and towel for bathing?'

Yogananda: 'No, sir, I have brought the towel only, but forgotten the cloth. But what of that; the people there will find out some unused cloth for you.'

Master: 'How unthinkingly you talk! They will think, "How boorish he is!" They will be worried and put to difficulties. Stop the carriage and fetch the cloth.' So Swami Yogananda had to act accordingly.

The Master would say, 'When a cultured and lucky man comes to a house, everything works in order, nobody feels troubled. But should a boorish wretch come, everything is at sixes and sevens. It so happens that he comes on the very day when the house has run short of everything and the master of the house is likely to be put to difficulties on his account.'

During the Master's time, a gentleman named Pratap Hazra led for long a religious life at Dakshineswar. We used to call him Hazra Mahâshaya, and he often accompanied the Master when the latter visited his disciples in Calcutta. Once, when returning from such a visit, Hazra left his towel in Calcutta by mistake. When, on his return to Dakshineswar, the Master heard of this, he told him, 'Enraptured as I am by God's name I can hardly take care of my loin-cloth, yet I never leave behind my towel or wallet in Calcutta through mistake, whereas you have become so forgetful as a result of repeating God's name a little!'

The Master instructed the Holy Mother (Shri Sâradâmani Devi) thus: 'When travelling by train or boat, board it first; but when getting down, be the last to leave it after being sure that nothing is left behind through mistake.' So mindful was he of petty things!

Thus, though constantly staying at the threshold of the super-conscious, the Master took full care of all the necessary things : everything was kept in its own place, he took personal care of the daily necessities like his own clothes, wallet, etc. When going elsewhere he inquired whether all those necessities were taken with him, and as he made a detailed inquiry into the mental states of his disciples so also did he take constant note of the ordinary affairs of their lives with a view to guiding these to their best advantage for their spiritual progress.

A study of the Master's life leaves the impression that he was the living image of all kinds of spiritual states. The world had not seen before such a prince of the ecstatic world. Himself the embodiment of ecstasies, the Master, staying at the threshold of the super-

conscious and manifesting in himself all the spiritual states from non-dualism to dualism, was the beacon to all kinds of aspirants guiding them to their goals in the dark nights of their souls; he revived hope in the midst of despair; and in the midst of life's anguish he brought the peace of heaven. It is impossible to describe in words how great a source of inspiration the Master was. It is impossible to recount the great influence that we noticed him exerting on the mental plane. Swami Vivekananda would say, 'It is not a very difficult task to work miracles by mastering somehow the material forces of the world. But I have not seen any greater miracle than the one performed by this mad Brahmin who handled peoples' minds like lumps of earth—breaking, hammering, reshaping them at will, and at a single touch remoulding them and refilling them with a new afflatus !'

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The *Prabuddha Bharata* appears in its reduced size in accordance with the 'paper control order' of the Central Government, of which our readers must be already aware. . . . In this number we have inserted some unpublished letters of Swami Vivekananda and hope to publish some more next month. . . . *Common Sense about Jnana-Yoga* is another chapter from Swami Pavitrananda's forthcoming book. . . . Mr. P. S. Naidu, who is himself a psychologist, can certainly write with some authority on Malebranche. . . . *Why Do We Pray?* from Mr. Chunilal Mitra's pen is short but thoughtful.

RELIGION AND COMMUNALISM

Addressing the Fine Arts Club at Simla, the Hon'ble Dr. N. B. Khare is reported to have observed:

So long as the rights of citizenship are based on religion there will be communal bitterness in this country. Unless this

mentality disappears from the minds of the people, all efforts to bring about a communal harmony will fail.

Communal bickerings have come to stay in India, and are a constant source of disharmony in the national life of the country. In spite of the best efforts of leaders of the communities to establish communal harmony, results have not been achieved to the desired extent. If Hindus and Muslims quarrel with each other, it does not necessarily follow that either Hinduism or Islam is at fault. Very often people professing the same religious faith are seen to wage the most ruthless wars. Religion is not to blame if certain unthinking persons make religious sanctions an easy excuse to give vent to their lower passions and adopt deprecatory ways to secure temporal advantage over their neighbours. Swami Vivekananda was emphatic in his condemnation of fanaticism, dissension, and privilege being upheld in the name of religion, and said:

Religion is not at fault. On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it was the want of practical application, the want of sympathy—the want of heart.

Communal differences are more social and political than religious. None would wish to see communal wrangles flourish, but the remedy does not lie in giving up religion. Indian unity can and will be achieved notwithstanding the different religions and communities existing side by side with mutual toleration and appreciation. It was so in the past. Due to various causes communal differences have apparently become strained at present. But circumstances becoming favourable again communal harmony will be re-established. True religion, shorn of all non-essential rituals and external formalities, will ever remain the *leit-motif* of Indian national life. What is needed is the maintenance of the right kind of religious outlook and the reiteration of the points of essential unity of all religions.

NOT WITHOUT RELIGION

Of those who want to build a better and more prosperous world, there are many who think that more political and social changes are enough to cure the world of its evils. But man's failure to do this so far, and the fact that no amount of political or social manipulation of human conditions can permanently cure the evils of life, have not changed the attitude of some of these stubborn optimists. Writing in the *Unity* for February 1944, under the above title, Mr. A. Powell Davies pleads for 'a new moral force, new vision, new spiritual impulse' in working for a better world order and an enduring and just peace. He asks,

Can we hope to succeed in the task now before us if we are spiritually uninspired? Where shall we find the moral energies, the patient courage, the triumphant faith, if our hearts are unmoved, our belief uncertain, our souls unstirred? Can we do the things we need to do—and go on doing them until the task is finished—without religion?

No amount of external force, governmental or legislative, will effect a change of heart, a betterment of human nature. It is the change of the mind itself for the better that will cure the evils that flesh is heir to.

To change the world, you have to change the people in it—the people who will undertake the work. . . . Men are transformed not by the challenge they face but by what enters into them when they meet that challenge. And what enters into the minds and hearts of men with power enough to change them is religion.

Religion is undoubtedly the most potent force that has worked and is still working to mould the destiny of man. It is often the case that the bonds of religion have proved stronger and more uniting than the bonds of race or nationality. The writer feels that behind the great movements for freedom in the lives of nations lies religious faith which is the mainspring of the strength of a race. The trouble with many people is that they put too traditional and sectarian a definition on religion, and argue that great changes have been made without religion. He makes no secret of what he thinks about organized religion.

Many churchmen have very little understanding of religion. They are too busy protecting a dwindling institutional significance in a world that is crumbling away. . . . Institutions that not only have no power to mould the better world we want, but which deliberately obstruct it. . . . Meanwhile, none of the traditional Churches, whether Catholic or Protestant, can bring the inspiration of a true and live religion to the modern world.

On the other hand he believes that only a religion which proclaims the brotherhood of man without distinction of nation, race, or creed can bring the needed inspiration.

In this connection we remember what we read in a daily paper some months ago:

LONDON, MAY 31.—Religious history was made in Britain to-day when the Council of Christians and Jews addressed a message to the 130 Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish signatories of the recent American Three-faith declaration on world peace. The message, the first of its kind to be published in Britain with the approval of the heads of the Protestant, Roman Catholic and

Jewish communities, welcomed the American statement and declared that there can be no permanent peace without religious foundation.

Christians and Jews will share the responsibility of putting the plans and actions of statesmen to the tests of religion, the Council declared.—*Reuter*.

That was very heartening indeed. The organized religions of Europe seem to be taking a firmer stand on spiritual unity, though the actual declaration is very vague. Compared with this the article in the *Unity* is more illuminating because it deals with more concrete materials. Before real peace can come, organized religion must recognize that though spirituality works for peace communalism pulls its weight the other way.

MISSIONARY METHODS AMONG ABORIGINALS

The missionaries have an efficient technique for getting the simple and gullible aboriginals into their power. They swear that they have no intention of making converts. Yet in a few months they have the villages saying 'Jai Jesu' instead of 'Jai Ram' and they refuse to speak to anyone who does not repeat this password. They are now employing many Hindu teachers. These are called for their pay on a Saturday so that they will be able to attend Church the following day; one of them has described to me how when he—a Hindu—arrived at the mission station to draw his pay, he was compelled to fall on his knees, cross himself, and exclaim 'Jai Jesu'. The missionaries take thumb impressions from the people, and then threaten to prosecute them if they withdraw their support from the Church. . . . A missionary propagandist even threatened one of my workers that the Father would bring his gun and shoot him if he dared to oppose the Christians. The Fathers, finally, have an extensive money-lending business, and this is one of their most effective means of bringing their aboriginals under their control and forcing them into the Church.

Thus writes Verrier Elwin in the *Indian Social Reformer*. Varied are the methods employed by Christian missionaries in our country to obtain converts in large numbers. The above observations from a well-known worker among aboriginals, who himself was a missionary formerly and later renounced, are significant.

In Father Elwin's opinion the policy

of the Government has indirectly helped the missionaries in their proselytizing activity:

The establishment of the Partially Excluded Areas by the Government of India Act, a measure that deeply offended every shade of Indian sentiment, aimed at giving some kind of protection to the religion and culture of the aboriginals. All that in practice it appears to have achieved has been to give encouragement to proselytizing missions that have not hesitated to exploit to the full the opportunity of occupying areas so remote from the scrutiny of public opinion. In the Santal Parganas, for example, thousands of Santals have been converted to Christianity and quite recently, since the passing of the Act (*Hindustan Times*, 15 June 1944).

Proselytizing has thus been helped by politics, though politicians are loud in their protestation of religious neutrality. The Indian spiritual atmosphere cannot be cleansed unless politics is freed from communalism.

EAST AND WEST

The last Great War, and more so the present War, have revealed the hollowness of Western civilization. But Westerners are proud of their 'progressive civilization', and look upon Eastern culture as visionary, unrealistic, and other-worldly. The West has advanced a long way in scientific adventure and commercial prosperity, while the East is content to live undisturbed in comparative security and piety. But where do real happiness and progress lie? Pearl Buck, addressing the students at Antioch College, said,

Only the people of the East can frame a real and durable organisation for world peace, because only they really comprehend the laws of human nature.

She asserted that when the West is able to receive the wisdom of the East, then it will result in the 'greatest renaissance the world has ever seen'.

European civilization, according to some of its accredited exponents, aims at exterminating non-Europeans with the sword in order to gain 'living space' for Europeans. Scientific advancement utilized to achieve might over right and

victory over the weaker nations does not conduce to human progress as a whole. The Easterners discovered long

ago that the cultivation of spirituality alone brings true enjoyment here and hereafter.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CONGRESS CASE. BY JAG PARVESH CHANDER. *Published by Free India Publications, the Mall, Lahore. Pp. 121. Price Rs. 3.*

The author writes in the Introduction: 'As a student of Indian politics I have taken upon myself to present "The Congress Case". Officially I hold no brief for the great patriotic organization. Hence the book is an unprejudiced account of the last four critical years in Indian national life. It is unaffected by party politics, and every aspect of the situation is weighed in the historian's balance and adjudged from the view-point which every freedom-loving individual has.' Indian nationalism has had a chequered career in the last half a century. With the onset of the present war India has had to share a great portion of the responsibility for war effort in several directions. The country is passing through a period of great travail, ravaged by famine and pestilence on an unprecedented scale. Everybody is anxious to do something to save the country from a worse catastrophe which may befall her if the present state of things is allowed to continue. Even before taking up plans for post-war reconstruction, the Government and the leaders of the people have to come together and chalk out a bold and cautious procedure by which the resources of the country can be conserved and millions can be saved from destitution. But some of the leaders are in prison, and a general feeling of frustration and helplessness is in evidence everywhere.

In the book under review, the author makes a close study of the political events in India since the outbreak of the war with special reference to the Indian National Congress. He presents the view that the Congress leaders are one with the United Nations in their opposition to aggression and enslavement of one nation by another in any form whatsoever. He argues that the Congress was never in sympathy with undemocratic forces, but that the leaders have been misunderstood and misrepresented in many quarters. Relevant passages from speeches of Congress leaders and Government spokesmen, and important extracts from the resolutions of the Congress are incorporated to support the writer's arguments. It is a timely publication distinguished by sound reasoning and clarity of expression. Mr. K. M. Munshi has

written an appreciative foreword to the book.

ARCHÆOLOGY AND ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY. BY JNANARATNA DR. HIRANANDA SHASTRI, M.A., M.O.L., D.LIT. *Published by the Gujarata Vernacular Society, Ahmedabad. Pp. 107+24. Price Rs. 3.*

This book consists of four lectures delivered before the Gujarata Vernacular Society by the eminent scholar who has served in the Archæological Department of the Government of India and has lately been Director of Archæology, Baroda State. In the first lecture an attempt is made to show by suitable examples how Archæology is helping to reconstruct the ancient history of India and thus raising the Indian people in the estimation of the world. It is regrettable that this valuable service of Archæology is not adequately recognized by the Central, Provincial, and State Governments. The second lecture deals with the monuments of Gujarata and Kathiawad. The third deals with Nalanda, and the fourth recounts the main sources of the cultural history of Gujarata and Kathiawad.

The lectures are free from technicalities and are meant for the lay public. A number of plates added at the end have heightened the value of the book. There is also an exhaustive index. Readers who cannot go in for bigger volumes will do well to turn to this handy book, though its price is rather high.

KASTURBAI GANDHI. BY MISS DHAN WANTI CHANDRA. *Published by the Free India Publications, The Mall, Lahore. Pp. 44. Price 12 As.*

We congratulate Miss Dhanwanti Chandra, the young apprentice in the profession of journalism, on her writing this little brochure on the life of Kasturbai Gandhi who lived for a high ideal and who gave her life for the cause of India within the prison walls. We wish Miss Chandra all success in her endeavour to adopt journalism as a career.

BEGGAR MY NEIGHBOUR. (THE CASE FOR INDIA). BY LIONEL FIELDEN. *Published by International Book House Ltd., Bombay. Pp. 99. Price Rs. 3.*

As the sub-title shows, it is a case for

India. It is, in fact, the strongest case any Englishman has recently presented.

The author was for some time Director of Broadcasting to the Government of India. In that capacity, and later as a private individual, he has studied the Indian question as closely as possible. Also, he has tried to understand the official as well as the non-official view-point. He is convinced England has no excuse for delaying India's freedom. All talk of responsibilities to the minorities and such other things equivalent to the 'white man's burden' he dismisses as nonsense. At the same time, he proves hollow the bogey that Congress is pro-Japanese. He argues it is in England's interest that India should have freedom at once. And, he warns, if, on the contrary, freedom is denied to her now on one or other pretext, the consequences will be fatal to the future relations between England and India.

He suggests a new approach to the Indian question—an approach in terms of feelings and emotions. He believes too much reliance on factual evidence is a mistake. Account must be taken of human feelings and emotions too. At least in deciding the question of a country's freedom they must have priority to bare cold facts.

Then, the author says, India is not a concern of England only. She is a concern of the other members of the United Nations too. The first step towards the establishment of a lasting peace in the world is India's freedom. In this other members of the United Nations have a duty as well as a responsibility.

In presenting India's case the author makes the strongest indictment of the civilization of the West. Himself a product of it, he thinks it is an utter failure. He is no believer in industrialism. He believes the insane craze for more and more of

everything has been the undoing of the West. For this has led to imperialism, and imperialism has led to war. It is almost a vicious circle, and in it the West is struggling.

He pleads for a new spirit, a new outlook. He is impressed by Gandhiji's philosophy of life. He believes there is much in it that the West will do well to accept. He is convinced, unless the West adopts a new scale of values, unless it revises the whole basis of its life, it is doomed.

The author gives a true and clear picture of India. His analysis is objective and well-reasoned. Throughout, he shows great sympathy, great understanding. And happily, there is none of that patronizing air about him which, in the case of most foreigners, vitiates what is otherwise well-meaning and sympathetic.

We consider it a remarkable book. We commend it to all those who care for a free India and a happier world.

SANSKRIT--ENGLISH

PRASTHANIK-TRAYI OF THE THREE-FOLD VEDANTA. BY R. C. VIDYARTHI. *Gita Bhawan, Agra. Price not mentioned.*

This is apparently the first volume of the intended series of works on Vedanta. It contains the twelve principal Upanishads with texts, English translation, and occasional notes, besides an introduction and an appendix.

In the introduction the main themes of Vedanta have been stated very briefly. The English translation mainly follows the verbal interpretation of the texts and as such it cannot be expected always to convey the right sense; the volume will, however, be appreciated as a handy book of Upanishadic reference. The appendix contains extracts from the *Râmâyana*, the *Yoga-vâshishtha*, Tulsidas, etc., and should have formed a separate volume.

ISANCHANDRA RAY

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORTS PUBLISHED

The following branches of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have published their reports for the periods noted against each: The Twelfth General Report of the

Ramakrishna Mission	...	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta	...	1943
Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School and Home, Belur	...	1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur	...	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar	...	1943
Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch), Port Louis	...	1943

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION NEW BOYS' HOME

With the donation of the proprietors of the 'Basumati, who have placed at the disposal of the Ramakrishna Mission about Rupees three lakhs and a half together with landed properties including buildings near Khardah 12 miles from Calcutta, in accordance with the will of the late Babu Satish Chandra Mukherjee, the Mission is going to start a decent orphanage for boys. This noble act of charity is sure to inspire others.