

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX

FEBRUARY, 1944

No. 2



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य धराग्निबोधत।”

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

HINTS ON SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Birth in a Brahmin family is all right if one is devoted to the knowledge of Brahman; otherwise a Brahmin is worse than a pariah without love of God. ‘Even women and Vaishyas and the Shudras too reach the Supreme Goal,’ if they have faith in God. This agrees with the Shâstras, and we have learnt this attitude also from the Master through precept and example. I am not prepared to agree that because you have not been born a Brahmin, Brahman is a sealed book to you. Rather I think that those who affirm that non-Brahmins cannot realize God are themselves ignorant of the import of the Shastras. I am exceedingly glad to learn that you enjoy nothing except holy company. It is good even if it is a matter of pride, for it has been declared to be the ‘boat for crossing the ocean of birth’. I have read in the Shastras that the fruit of holy company outweighs all kinds of austerities.

Why should the power of the brain for receiving other things diminish? Rather

the power of discrimination between the good and the bad has increased, so that you do not any more feel prompted to accept what is bad. Your modesty no doubt merits praise, but I do not think you are right when you say that you are the same as you were twenty years ago. But if you meant the Self, you were right, for the Self is the same. It does not look nice in a monk to enjoy the things of the world even though the things—divine and worldly—be fit objects for his enjoyment. The Sâttvika attitude fits the monk well. That impatience of yours will not endure for ever. It will go when you will turn a little more inward. It is good to be slow and gradual with spiritual practice. It will be the same with you. The Master used to say, ‘Calling on God while in the world is like fighting from a fort. It has many advantages. Others fight in the open field, which is not for all.’ The thing is that the mind has to be fixed on God, whatever be the means. If that comes about, life will be a

success and will not be in vain. The demands of the body are there and will last till death. But Ramprasad sings : 'When you eat think that you are sacrificing to Mother Shyâmâ.' This counsel has to be followed. You will then easily have devotion to the Lord. The song is as follows :

Listen, O my mind, worship Kâli in whatever way it pleases you and with whatever rites by repeating day and night the great Mantra given by the Guru.

When you lie down think you are prostrating yourself, meditate on Mother in sleep. When you take food think that you are sacrificing to Mother Shyama.

Whatever your ear catches are verily the sacred words of Mother.

Kali is the fifty letters of the alphabet, and she dwells in every letter. Ramprasad proclaims in joy that Mother dwells everywhere. When you go about a town think that you are moving round Mother Kâli.

What greater knowledge of Brahman can there be than this? This is seeing Brahman everywhere, in all action, in

every being, and in every situation. You will find the same words not only in Yâjñavalkya's code, but also in many other religious codes—Yoga scriptures, Puranas, and Tantras. The *Mahâ-nirvâna Tantra*, on the basis of which Raja Ram Mohun Roy created the original Brahma Samaj, is the authoritative work meant for the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman by the householder. God also is the Guru : He points out the necessary paths. Confess your feelings to Him : He will do whatever is necessary.

You have rightly remarked that nobody can ever achieve anything without practice. But if one performs spiritual practices sincerely, His mercy shows itself. God alone is the Guru. He is the Inner Ruler, if one prays to Him sincerely He fulfils all the desires in time. The more the yearning the nearer will be His mercy. May you have great yearning, is my sincere prayer to Him !

STOP CONVERSION

BY THE EDITOR

I

The present global conflagration has at bottom an unholy thirst for winning the world over to one's own point of view. 'Fascism is good for me and my country, *ergo* the world must accept it', says the Fascist. So also runs the Nazi argument. Communism, socialism, and all such isms in their international manifestation, have nothing but this argument to support their world recognition. Imperialism, too, is only one particular expression of this craving for world domination. Nobody cares for the intrinsic worth of the opposite view, the real welfare, the personal dignity, and integrity of those against whom such organized propaganda is aimed. Everyone is bent on proving the rightness of his particular standpoint by a

mere force of number—by enlisting more adherents to the particular ism. This is as much true of individuals, as of nations. This ideological imperialism is the bane of modern international politics. There is an absolute lack of *noblesse oblige*, of helping weaker people to grow in their own way. Love of neighbours and brotherly feeling are mere empty catch-words for hoodwinking the unwary. It is the self-conceit of the more powerful minds that rules the world under the name of leadership, and it is rank imperialism that masquerades under such high-sounding words and phrases as trusteeship, mandate, development of backward areas, etc.

This is in the political and economic fields. In the social field we have the

aristocrats, the privileged few, the brahmins, who, in the name of higher values, trample upon the poor, the demos, the pariahs, who, according to the former, cannot aspire to the fine things of life until and unless they raise themselves to the cultural level of the highly placed ones or, in other words, until they ape the snobbery of the former. The *modus operandi* here, as in politics, is conversion; and here again is that same care taken for covering social imperialism under such respectable terms as culture, refinement, civilization, etc.

It will be seen thus that, though conversion is considered to be primarily a religious phenomenon, it has its tentacles spread over the whole range of human activity. In fact, it seems to be co-extensive with human nature itself so far as the latter has evolved up till now. The next step forward lies in curing men of this fatal tendency to domineer over others. World regeneration and world peace cannot be achieved until this fact is recognized and conversion as a method of procedure, in whatever field it may be, is ruled out of court.

We are not, however, concerned here with conversion in all its diverse manifestation. We shall confine our remarks primarily to the religious field. For truly do men believe that human nature can best be improved through religion, which touches the innermost core of one's being. Spiritual growth comes from within and does not follow the dictates of others.

II

To us Hindus, conversion is a new phenomenon which arrested our attention with the advent of the Muhammedans in India. It is so very foreign to the Hindu nature that even in spite of the grievous harm done to the Hindu society during the past centuries, the Hindus have not been able either to accept it as a part of their religion or counteract it effectively by some suitable device.

The Muhammedans cut off great slices from the Hindu society. And before the Hindus had time to recover from that stunning blow they were again subjected to Christian inroads. Circumstanced as the Hindus are there are two alternatives before them to save themselves and the values they stand for. They may either persuade the other communities to desist from their present activities in the name of brotherly understanding and higher spiritual values, or they may themselves take to proselytizing in an aggressive way just as the other communities are doing. From the point of view of practicability the second alternative will appeal the most; for under present conditions it would seem absurd that either Christianity or Muhammedanism can be persuaded to give up conversion, which, according to some of their followers, is a part and parcel of their religion, and which has a record of unimpeded success so far. Besides, if the Hindus take to conversion there is a chance that the other communities may become more accommodating. If the other communities feel that the Hindu proselytizers hold out a real threat which no amount of abuse, seduction, and breaking of heads can undermine, they may come to terms. Moreover, if the Hindu community can develop a fighting spirit, the weaklings in the Hindu fold may feel reassured and may not easily fall into the snares of others. There is also a possibility of winning back those from the other communities who might have gone to them not out of conviction but by force of circumstances and now feel a kind of nostalgia for the former faith.

Superficially considered, the Hindus stand to gain *almost* in every way by taking to conversion. But we use the word *almost* advisedly. For though they may gain substantially, in one respect they may be losers—and that one is by no means a negligible thing; nay, if that one goes, religion itself may be liquidated—we mean the unsullied spirituality of the Hindus. If the

Hindus have so far lost much ground—socially and politically speaking—by refraining from conversion, inasmuch as that has depleted their number and prevented them from being an aggressive community, they have at least kept their spiritual values pure. We agree, of course, that according to Hindu sociology, the higher spiritual values cannot be long kept intact unless society maintains a vigorous and progressive outlook on all worldly affairs. A moribund society cannot continue producing spiritual giants for long. With the disintegration of society spirituality is bound to suffer. Here, then, conversion advances its claim to be recognized as a saviour of Hinduism from its present impasse. In society number does count. Why not then have more? Yes, why not? We do not propose to argue against such a position, for it will lead us nowhere. Let those who want, fight it out amongst themselves. As for ourselves we should like to put the controversy on a higher plane, and look at it not only from the point of view of the Hindus but of others as well. We propose to take our stand on spirituality, the inner and common core of all religions, and not on any particular creed or ism. And we hope, we shall be able to show that by this new orientation all creeds stand to gain.

Before proceeding to our main task, however, let us linger yet a while on Hinduism; for it is here that toleration has taken the best practical shape so far. And Shri Ramakrishna, its latest and best exponent, has shown by his life how all religions can be reconciled and how even without conversion each man can imbibe the best in other creeds. His words still ring as fresh as ever: 'As many creeds, so many paths.' What a world of meaning and what a plethora of possibilities are hidden in those pregnant words! What a wide range of application they admit of! Far from converting others, he shuddered even at the thought of being called a Guru, a teacher! A Hindu

spiritual giant is a model of modesty. Hinduism is the last bastion of practical toleration. In spite of the abuses of sister communities the Hindus have continued to love Christ, and Muhammed, and Christian and Muhammedan saints. For they do not believe in organized religion and can distinguish between spirituality and religiosity. The reason is not far to seek. As pointed out by Lord Lytton in a recent B. B. C. debate (29 November, 1943) on Hindu-Muslim relations:

From my experience I would say the Hindu community is a very tolerant community in matters of religion, largely, I think, owing to the fact that the Hindus' attitude towards religion is intensely individualistic.

When personal perfection is kept in view and introspection guides every step, how can a man be intolerant of others struggling in their own way, and how can he be so supercilious as to try to save others without himself being perfect first?

This tolerance is at once the strength and weakness of Hinduism—the strength of Hinduism in matters spiritual and the weakness of Hinduism in matters social. Other religions, which are more careful about organizational perfection cannot tolerate individualism even in spiritual affairs to the same extent as the Hindus do. They are accordingly stronger in the social field. But spirituality is the forte of Hinduism. Nevertheless, there is no reason why Hinduism should grow in spirituality alone and not in social strength. For, as we have already noted, social weakness may ultimately undermine spirituality itself, as even at present it is doing so.

This line of argument is so convincing to some sections of the Hindu society that they have already adopted conversion as one of their tenets. The Arya Samaj of Punjab and the Hindu Mission of Bengal deserve special mention in this connection. We do not for a moment doubt the sincerity of their purpose. And many Hindus are con-

vinced that these organizations are doing yeomen's service to the Hindu society. The logic of circumstances would seem to lead to no other natural development. Yet the question of questions is, Is that the only alternative left to us? Would there be any necessity for the Hindus to undertake conversion if the other communities abstained from it? We realize that it is a big if on which we want to build our hope. We are not convinced that the other communities will easily give up organized conversion since it is socially advantageous to them. And to the extent that they are chary of giving up this pet game, the Hindus may be justified in taking counter measures in self-defence. If, therefore, we chose in this article to impugn conversion, we do so from a higher consideration than mere communal gain or loss. We are not concerned here so much with practical politics or sociology as with spiritual idealism. Some will say, 'Impossible day-dream!' But idealism always appears so to the unthinking multitude. We are not, however, so hopeless idealists as to ask any community to make an one-sided disavowal of conversion; for that may be suicidal from the communal point of view. Our arguments in fact are not addressed to communities, but to the spiritual sense in men which cuts across all communal limitations. We want the new orientation to take place in the higher levels of our being. And when that is done the foundation for better communal understanding will be more securely laid. We do not believe in mere political make-shifts, or social truce. We believe, in the language of Swami Vivekananda, in 'root-and-branch reform'. The remedy for communal wrangles lies in a change of heart, in a breadth of spiritual outlook.

III

It makes a world of difference whether we look at spirituality from the individual or institutional point of

view. Spiritual giants all over the world have demonstrated that individual perfection can be carried to its greatest height irrespective of outer circumstances. Christ was crucified, but his faith remained unmoved. Muhammed was harassed off and on, but Islam remained untarnished. In the fight between social conformity and individual perfection, it is the latter that triumphed; society had ultimately to follow the new paths and not the indomitable spiritual giants the dictates of society. Society appears very often as a stolid mass which grows by shaping the individuals according to set patterns. And conversion, which is most often a social affair, results in the regimentation of the converted. By accepting a new faith, a man does not necessarily gain a fresh supply of spirituality. He simply undermines his social integrity. He has to ape the ways of others. Furthermore, he has to demonstrate by a show of orthodoxy that he has really uprooted the old belief from his heart. It is thus that converts are very often the worst persecutors of their erstwhile co-religionists.

We repeat, conversion is mostly a social phenomenon; and being a social phenomenon concerned with the masses, it cannot pitch its spiritual key too high. The highest truths are not for mass consumption. And when these have to be subjected to methods of large-scale production and distribution, they lose much of their intrinsic worth. As G. B. Shaw points out:

The great danger of conversion in all ages has been that when the religion of the high mind has been offered to the lower mind, the lower mind, feeling its fascination without understanding it, and being incapable of rising to it, drags it down to its level by degrading it. Years ago I said that the conversion of a savage to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery.

Shaw need not have taken such extreme cases to illustrate his point. Such things are happening before our very eyes. We see that the appeal first begins in the name of spiritual

values. Then it is made in the names of religious founders: values give place to personalities. In the third stage the appeal comes in the name of Churches: personality is replaced by organization. And lastly the Satan in man is stirred in the name of material advantages and vested interests: organization is degraded into a fighting machine. This is what conversion leads religion to! The religious mind in this perverted condition is painted thus by René Guénon:

The real motive is not the wish to attain to knowledge of the truth, but to prove oneself right in spite of opposition, or at least if one cannot convince others, to convince oneself of one's own rightness; though failure to convince others invariably occasions regret in consequence of the craving for 'proselytism'

'Everyone wants to become a spiritual leader and none a disciple', as Shri Ramakrishna remarked! In short, proselytism leads to fight and frustration and not spiritual advancement and fulfilment. Spirituality, which is calculated to establish the kingdom of God on earth, cannot certainly come through recrimination for the simple reason that bad means cannot lead to good ends. In the perfection of the bad means all the spiritual values get dissipated. In fact the best means of torpedoing all spiritual values is to launch a war of religions. It is one of the strongest temptations in Satan's armoury to dangle before men a heinous means for a commendable end and let the seduced people slide down step by step, imperceptibly and irretrievably.

Europe could not achieve religious harmony through fight; and peace came only when the Europeans got too tired of religion and turned their attention to earthly things. The crusades and the inquisitions, instead of uplifting human nature, only left rancour behind. The Semitic world established peace only by a clean sweep of the old-world beliefs. And yet no historian can assert that present-day Muhammedanism is better than what it was in the

days of its founder. Nor have there been as good a number of saints and mystics in recent years in the Christian and Islamic world as in the middle ages. The followers have grown in number, but men of realization have not increased proportionately; and there is every doubt if the intensity of belief that characterized the religious people of old, is still in evidence.

IV

When religious communities take to power politics, and number comes to attain an intrinsic value, people stoop to all detestable contrivances for getting recruits. During the recent Indian famine, it was reported in the newspapers that some Muhammedan philanthropists refused to give food to Hindu destitutes from the free kitchens run by them unless the Hindus abjured their faith. Others alleged that children were being bought and converted to Islam. We quote the following from Veer Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha:

The Moslem proselytizers would not give a morsel of food to the dying Hindu mothers or their children, . . . and would save them from that dire agony only if these unfortunate Hindu women and children renounced their cherished Hindu faith and accepted the Muslim religion. . . . Hundreds of famished Hindu children are bought . . . and sent to conversion centres by those proselytizing Moslem agencies. (*The Mahratta*, 26 November, 1943).

After pointing out that the Muhammedan destitutes were being saved by Hindu organizations with money contributed by Hindus, Veer Savarkar concludes that this help rendered to Muhammedans was leaving the proselytizers free to divert the money at their disposal to furthering their own end. He then suggests a remedy for saving the Hindus from this suicidal policy:

Under the circumstances, Hindus, if there be any instinct of self-preservation left in them, should immediately resort to the only efficacious remedy to fight out this menace as best as they can. They should determine to send whatever money, foodstuffs, clothes they want to forward to Bengal and other starving parts for relief, by earmarking as

exclusively to be used for the rescue of Hindu sufferers. (*Ibid*).

The remedy is at least as drastic as the disease! It is not germane to our present discussion as to how far the newspaper reports are correct, and how widespread these nefarious activities are. Suffice it to note that actual conversion or a mere threat or suspicion of it is enough to make any self-conscious and self-respecting people wary. The consequences are communal bickerings and moral degradation. Nor does the converter gain spiritually. For can God be pleased when His children are allowed to die rather than lead an unregenerate life under the plea that men understand God's mind better than God Himself? The fact is, when such abominable conduct is tolerated by any community or silently passed over by it, the riff-raffs prosper materially under the guise of religion, but the community receives its death-blow.

In addition to such occasional outbursts of misdirected proselytizing zeal, the daily papers are full of reports of conversion through sophistry, enticement, abduction, mass violence, etc. Sophistry takes various forms; and it uses all the techniques of political propaganda—*suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*, declamation, abuse, exaggeration, and all the weapons in the arsenal of a Machiavellian demagogue. People will be found denouncing Hinduism though they have not read a line of its scriptures. Stump orators will be found crying hell fire on the heads of the idolatrous Kafirs, though their talks smack of idolatrous belief at every turn. Proselytizers can never speak with open hearts and never see things with open eyes. Set speeches, second-hand information, diabolical means, and fanaticism are often their stock-in-trade.

Enticement can be of various kinds—economic betterment, social advancement, political gain, cultural uplift, etc. Christian and Muhammedan propagandists could hold out such hopes in abundance in their early contact

with the Hindus. But present conditions in India have much blunted the edge of these weapons. They are used none the less, and often with terrific results.

Conversion through abduction is not as rare as some people think. And even from the few cases reported in the papers it would appear that it is a great social menace, and ought to be put down by the combined effort of all the communities. But the pity of it is that even respectable people connive at such conversions, and it is not rare to find an abducted woman being smuggled from place to place and district to district with the help and knowledge of people considered honest in every other walk of life.

Mass conversion through violence takes place during communal riots. The Mopla riot of Malabar is an instance in point. There have also been such conversions in Bengal during the present decade. We fear that the other provinces, too, suffer occasionally in this way.

We need not linger on these despicable forms of conversion. Nor need we dilate on the various other forms that proselytization may take. We leave such proselytizers with the questions, Can a community prosper spiritually when a substantial portion of its energy is thus misdirected, and can spirituality be advanced through such nefarious means? We are sure, every community will condemn such palpable prostitution of religion, though we are not sure if they will take any active step for stopping it—herd instinct is so blind and blunt indeed!

V

But there is a second class of proselytizers, honest people in every way, believing in their divine mission to save others and employing honest means, who are not only respected and helped by their respective communities, but are set up as their leaders. Against them it is very difficult to speak; for they are protected by the sentiments of

their own communities and their own convictions, and the evil effects of their activities are less tangible, or often imperceptible to the ordinary eyes. Nevertheless, we propose to consider their case briefly.

Who are these saviours? Are they mere intellectual propagandists or men of realization? The men of realization, history tells us, do not care for conversion, they care only for communicating spiritual truths and leave matters there. Neither Christ nor Muhammed nor, for the matter of that, any great prophet condemned other spiritual paths as wholly devilish and misleading. It is only the small fry who introduce arbitrary scales of judgement through love of organizational triumph. As Shri Ramakrishna used to say in his homely way, 'Moss gathers only in the smaller stagnant pools.'

As for intellect, it is not the best means for spiritual communication. Spirit alone can speak to spirit; realization alone can awaken hankering in others. Mere intellect, without faith, character, non-attachment, and realization, can hardly lead others—the possibility is that it will mislead them and degrade the leader into an empty talker.

And of what worth is this solicitousness for saving others? Psychologically it is on a par with forcible conversion. As pointed out by Prof. Hauer:

Christianity claims to possess the absolute truth, and with this claim is bound up the idea that men can only achieve salvation in one way, through Christ, and that it must send to the stake those whose faith and life do not conform, or pray for them till they quit the error of their ways for the kingdom of God. Of course there is a difference between sending men to the stake and praying for them. But the attitude which lies behind both is much the same at bottom. In both cases the whole stress is laid in forcibly rescuing men of another faith from the peril of hell fire into which the pursuits of his own path would inevitably plunge him. (Quoted in *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*).

A plausible argument in favour of conversion is the cultural one. Proselytizing missions claim to advance the

culture of the backward peoples and particularly the aborigines. The hollowness of such claims has been exposed by Pearl Buck who was herself a missionary in China for many years; and Lowell, the American poet said that the Churches have killed Christ. But apart from what individuals may say, facts do not support any such extraordinary claim. The failure of organized Christianity to check the recrudescence of wars of attrition is too patent to students of history to require any special pleading. Nay, Christianity itself often promoted war in the past. Culture does not mean a mere change of social habits and widening of the intellect. It includes also the depth of morality. And this is exactly where Christianity cannot claim any special success over other religions. Besides, it has not been proved that the Eastern culture is worse than the Western, nor has it been shown that the so-called civilization is diametrically opposed to the so-called barbarism. When passion is aroused the civilized people are often worse than barbarians. Things being as they are the proselytizers often have to content themselves with thrusting Western material civilization on the Asiatics. They help in denationalizing the Eastern peoples, though the social customs substituted by them are often ruinous and diametrically opposed to Eastern customs and beliefs. In the words of *The Indian Social Reformer* (27 November, 1943):

The main work of the Missions nowadays seems chiefly to make the Asiatic accept the domination of the White man as ordained by God. . . . The Catholics, and for that matter Christians generally until a few years ago, were unconsciously functioning as protagonists for drink. . . . The association of Christianity with drink has been a serious handicap to the reformer in India.

In our study so far, we have seen that conversion, as it is generally understood, touches only the superficial sides of man, his morality and spirituality being often left untouched. Not only this, there may often be a set-back to the inner side of man due to a forcible

change of the environment. From indifferent moralists or religious men, the converted may turn into parrot-like imbibers of foreign beliefs and customs and reckless decriers of national precepts and injunctions. This happened in the early days of contact with the West, when young Bengal believed that civilization consisted in eating beef and drinking wine. Even later, the converted could find nothing good in the civilization of India and they condemned the Indian philosophies as superstitions.

VI

A cogent argument in favour of conversion is that though there may be perversion here and there, there are some genuine souls who change faiths out of conviction and an inner hankering. To this we answer that inner hankering can very well be satisfied without flaunting and *fanfaronade*. As an illustration of what we mean, we draw the readers' attention to Shri Ramakrishna, who, though a Hindu, found no difficulty in practising Christianity and Muhammedanism and attaining realization through them. His example teaches us that the best in each religion can very well be imbibed and utilized without changing faith.

This last fact carries us to another consideration. Conversion, though successful at times, hardens the hearts of other communities against the aggressive religion and thus blocks the way for real understanding and mutual help. The increase in number is achieved at the cost of narrowing down the sphere of influence. We are firmly convinced that if Christianity and Muhammedanism had but refrained from conversion, all India would now acclaim Christ and Muhammed as the saviours of the world. Things being as they are, the

real teaching of the prophets are drowned by the loud clamour of their misguided followers.

The result of any militant or for that matter of any well organized and wide-spread movement for converting anyone and everyone has, as we have already shown, its deleterious effect on the converting religion itself. It also results in diverting attention from true spirituality and riveting it on the outer paraphernalia. It is social conformity that takes the place of spiritual insight. The more the different religions come into clash the more do they become stereotyped and move further away from the original message; for in trying to show each one's superiority each religion succeeds only in heightening its angularity.

Thus considered from every point of view, conversion, in the accepted sense of the term, is a positive nuisance. With its departure will come peace and understanding and the fulfilment of the true ends of religion. Resurgent Hinduism is at the parting of ways. Its better sense advises it to avoid this promising but deadly snare of conversion. But fear of other communities, hope of immediate success, and the instinct of self-preservation goad it on to pay back others in their own coins. The future depends largely on the attitude of the sister communities and the high idealism of the Hindus. The triumph of the proselytizers will bring misery, fight, and degradation of true spiritual values, while the success of all-round tolerance will mean harmony and spiritual progress. The star of the former seems so far in the ascendant. We wait with trepidation for what the future has in store for India and the world, and in the meantime our heart prays that good sense may prevail in all sections of society.

THE NEED OF THE AGE

BY SWAMI SARADANANDA

Even a superficial observer can easily discern how far, in every part of this earth, human life is extending its influence through education, wealth, and a spirit of adventure. It seems as though man now refuses to be confined within any limit in any field whatsoever. Not content with moving at will on land and water, he has now invented a new machine and is flying in the sky; he is satisfying his curiosity by exploring the dark bottom of the sea and descending into the craters of fiery volcanoes; he has been able to reach mountains and seashores perpetually under snow and laid bare their mystery; he has discovered that, just as in himself, life throbs in creepers, shrubs, and trees; and bringing all kinds of living things under his direct observation and analysis, he is fulfilling his goal of achieving complete knowledge. Thus by extending his influence on the five elements, viz, earth, water, fire, etc., he has discovered almost everything regarding this material earth; but not content with this, he has become inquisitive of the secrets of the distant stars and planets, and has succeeded in this as well. Nor is he wanting in effort for the exploration of the mental world. Even there, man is daily discovering new truths through sustained observation and research. In his study of the mysteries of life, he has come to know of the transformation or evolution of one species into another; in his analysis of the nature of body and mind he has been able to establish the truth that mind is a derivative of subtle and temporally limited matter; he has learnt that just like the events in the physical world, mental phenomena, too, are related by inevitable causal laws; and he has been able to find out subtle causal connections among apparently

unrelated psychic events like suicide. Moreover, even though he has not been successful in discovering any conclusive proof for continuation of personality after death, he has been able through a study of history to believe in the evolution of the human race. Realizing thus that the fulfilment of individuality lies in the advancement of the race, he is now, with the help of science and organizing power, waging a relentless war against ignorance with an eye to the perfection of the racial life; and basing his hope on an infinite progress, realizable through a perpetual struggle, he is allowing his life to be drifted down the unending current of want with a view to reaching undreamt of regions in the physical and mental worlds.

Though this expansion of life has specially centred round the Western man, its repercussion on the Eastern countries is no less pronounced. The more the East and the West are coming closer together through the unavoidable influence of science, the more are the oriental habits of life being remoulded according to those of the West. This becomes clear on a consideration of the present conditions in countries like Iran, China, Japan, and India. Whatever else the future may have in store, there can be little doubt as to the future influence of the West on the East; and it seems inevitable that, in the years to come, there will be an ascendancy of Western ideas throughout the world.

If we want to ascertain the results of the expansion of life, noted above, we shall have to turn mainly to the West. Through a thoughtful scrutiny of the Western life we shall have to find out the roots and nature of that development, the growth or decay which the old-world Western values have under-

gone under their influence, and the increase or decrease in Western happiness and misery that have followed in their wake. If we can thus once determine their consequences on Western life—individual and collective—it will not be difficult to ascertain them on other times and places.

History points out unmistakably that from time of yore the severity of cold has not only been strengthening the body-consciousness in the Western mind, it has also been easily impressing on it the lesson that self-interest can best be realized through organized effort; and this has given rise to nationalism. This self-interest and this nationalism impelled Westerner to defeat other races with indomitable energy and enrich his life through spoliation. When, as a result of this, he was able to solve to some extent the problem of his material wants, his mind gradually turned inward and induced him to acquire knowledge and other fine embellishments. No sooner was his attention thus attracted to things higher than the mere struggle for existence, than he realized that his religious beliefs and the predominance of the priesthood barred his way to such a goal. He realized that the priests were not content merely with declaring that the acquisition of knowledge would lead to hell by inciting God's wrath; they were also determined to hinder him by fair means or foul from following that path. The Western man, bent on fulfilling his cherished ends, was not slow to chalk out his programme. With firm hands he cast the priests aside and followed his goal. Thus by discarding the scriptures and the creeds as well as the priests, the West guided its course along a new path, and it became its watchword never to believe or accept anything which did not admit of the irrefutable proof of direct perception by the five senses.

The West with its conviction that the validity or invalidity of things must be ascertained through reasoning and inference, etc., based on sense percep-

tion, became henceforth concerned only with verities that admit of subject-object relations; and considering the subject, the cognizer of objects, as one among the materials themselves, the West attempted to know its nature, etc., as well through an application of the means of proof already referred to. For the last four centuries the West has thus been accepting every object or every person of this world after testing him through the five senses. And it was during this period that material science overgrew the limitations and helplessness of its infancy and reached its youthful energy, hope, pleasure, and intoxicating strength.

But though this procedure resulted in an unprecedented advance in material knowledge, it could not show the West the path to spiritual knowledge. For self-control, selflessness, and introspection are the only means for the achievement of that knowledge; and a poised mind is the only instrument for self-realization. It is nothing strange, therefore, that the worldly-minded West should miss this path and should gradually become materialistic believing the body to be the Self. It is, therefore, that worldly pleasure has become the be-all and end-all of life in the West; and it is with this that the West is specially occupied. And the knowledge of Nature derived from science, being primarily employed to this end, has made the West progressively arrogant and selfish. It is because of this that one finds in the West conquest of foreign lands, oppression of foreign peoples, deep discontent, and thirst for wealth due to poverty, side by side with guns dealing death, cannon thundering like doom's day, social stratification based on wealth, and opulence unparalleled anywhere. It is because of this, again, that we can see how even after reaching the height of enjoyment, the poverty of soul of the West is not removed; and a mere belief in the perpetuation of the race even after the individual's death, cannot give it any solace. After a strenuous search, the

West has now realized that sense knowledge can never enable it to discover the nature of that entity which is beyond time and space. Science gives indication of that and then recoils, since that is totally beyond its reach and comprehension. Consequently, the defeat of that deity which was the source of its strength and which bestowed on it all pleasure and plenty, has increased the agony of the Western mind and left it totally helpless.

From this study of the history of the Western life we find that at the root of its predominance lie materialism, selfishness, and lack of spiritual faith. Therefore, if one aspires to similar achievements either in social or individual life, one will have to build one's life on that same foundation. As a proof of this we find that in Japan and other Eastern countries, which have resolved to reconstruct their national lives on the Western model, there have appeared all the vices of the West along with patriotism and nationalism. This is the inevitable result of coming under Western influence. This becomes clearer to us on a consideration of the change that has come over the national life of India as a consequence of Western contact.

The question arises here, Was there any such expression as Indian national life before India came into touch with the West? In answer we may say that though the expression as such might not have existed, there can be little doubt as to the currency of the idea connoted by it; for even then India as a whole adored the Gurus, the Ganges, the Gâyatri, and the Gita even then a respect for cows was in evidence everywhere—even then every Indian, irrespective of age and sex, was inspired by, and modelled his life on, the same ideology derived from such scriptures as the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata*, etc.; and the intelligentsia of the different localities expressed their ideas among themselves in Sanskrit. Many other unifying links like these may be cited; and it can be easily realized that reli-

gion and religious practices were the main factors in forging these links.

Founded as the Indian national life was on religion, its civilization was derived from a unique and distinct material. In short, self-control was the life-inspiration of this civilization. India taught her citizens as well as the nation to accept self-control as the pivotal point in their lives. She put everyone constantly in mind of the fact that enjoyment has its *raison d'être* merely as a spring-board for renunciation, and this life as a preparation for the next; and thus she guided the individual and national lives to the highest goal. It is because of this that her castes have not so far given rise to class-struggle which ensues from a clash of interests. For what cause for discontent can a man have when he can achieve the greatest end of life, viz, spiritual realization and salvation, by performing in a non-attached way the duties of the class or caste in which birth has placed him? That in ancient India, unlike in the West, there was no class-struggle centring round the differences in pleasures and privileges among the classes, is due to the fact that every social unit had an equal right to the highest goal of life. Bearing these facts about ancient India in mind, we should notice the changes that have come over her after she came into contact with the West.

It was but natural and inevitable that from the date of the conquest of India by the West there should come a striking change in her system of distribution of the national wealth. But the Western influence did not stop with disturbing this particular aspect of the national life; it also brought about a new transformation in those basic principles with which the Indian genius ordered the individual and national lives. That enjoyment should end in renunciation, was condemned by the West as a mere self-interested propaganda by the priesthood; belief in an after-life and the soul was considered as a mere poetic fancy; and what rule could be

more inequitable than that which asked a man to confine himself till death to the position in life which birth had given him? India, too, took this lesson gradually to heart: and discarding her ancient ideal, in which renunciation and self-denial predominated, she hankered after more enjoyment. Thus came about a break with her former tradition and belief; and with the progress of atheism, love of imitation, and want of self-confidence, she became absolutely supine like some spineless creatures. India now came to believe that all she had so far hugged to her bosom and observed meticulously, were quite superstitious: after all, the West with its scientific knowledge, might be right when it decried the Indian traditions as unpolished and half-barbarous. Carried away by a lust for enjoyment, India forgot her past history and her ancient glory. This self-forgetfulness led to intellectual deterioration, which in its turn threatened to destroy her national life. But earthly enjoyment, too, escaped her grasp, as she had to depend on others for its fulfilment. Thus, being decoyed from both pleasure and perfection, she only aped others; and with her sail swelling with the wind of desire, she drifted aimlessly like a ship without a helmsman.

The air then became thick with the cry that India never had a national life. It was through the kindness of the West that she was just getting an inkling of that life; but there were innumerable impediments against its full realization. That irremediable religiousness of hers, had been her undoing. That idolatry, consisting in the worship of numberless gods and goddesses, had checked her progress. Destroy it, uproot it, and then only will the Indian genius breathe freely! Christianity and a form of monotheism based on it began to be preached. In imitation of the West senile India began to be taught from pulpits and platforms the advantages of such things as politics, sociology, widow-remarriage, and feminism; but instead of bringing relief, this only

resulted in multiplying her want and heightening agony evermore. Railways, telegraphs, and all the other paraphernalia of Western civilization came one by one to India; but all in vain. All these attempts fell absolutely short of finding out and bringing back, once more, into play that inspiration which kept India alive. Medicines were not applied to the limb actually ailing; and so how could the ailment subside? How could India be re-invigorated without a resuscitation of India's spirituality? How could the materialistic West remove that spiritual poverty which her own ideologies had brought about? Being itself unsuccessful how could the West make others succeed?

It cannot, of course, be asserted that before the Western conquest, Indian national life was free from all blemishes. But the national corpus being alive, there was noticeable in it a sustained and spontaneous effort to eliminate such drawbacks. The absence of such effort in the nation and society at present would go to prove that the administration of doses in the form of Western influence is not only curing the patient but killing her also.

It is evident, therefore, that the decline of religion in the West is extending its domain in India as well. In fact, one is awe-struck to consider how low a mark this decline has reached everywhere in the present-day world. If there is any such thing as religion, and if that is achievable by man through God's grace, then it is undoubtedly a fact that the pleasure-driven human life of the present age has far receded from that ideal. It is because of this that, though the expansion of life through science has put man in possession of pleasures, it has not been able to bring him peace. Who can remedy this? Who can it be whose heart will catch the ever-resounding cry of agony and lamentation, impelling him thus to turn his back to all means of pleasure and direct all his energies to finding a new spiritual

path suitable for the age? Who will again remove the irreligiousness of the East and the West and teach humanity to direct its life along a new peaceful path?

Through the Gita the Lord has promised that whenever there will set in a decline in the world's spirituality, He will descend as an embodied being with the help of His power of Mâyâ, and He will again vouchsafe peace to humanity by stemming the tide. Will not the present-day feeling of want and discontent induce Him to incarnate?

Dear reader, the need of the age has really accomplished this—God has really incarnated again as a world teacher! Be comforted by hearing his holy words of blessing: 'As many beliefs, so many paths,' 'Whatever you do with the fullest sincerity, will indeed lead you to God.' With a mind fully poised, meditate on his supernatural renunciation and self-mortification for bringing back super-sensuous knowledge; and let us both be purified by a study of his holy and passion-free life according to the best of our ability.

ICY HOME OF THE GANGES

BY SWAMI APURVANANDA

(Continued)

GANGOTRI

It was a lovely morning and the bright rays of the sun occasionally fell on us through the thick branches of the deodars. There was almost a spiritual quality about the atmosphere around us and one somehow felt that sacred Gangotri was not far off. The silence was so deep that even the sound of heart-beats seemed disturbing. As we advanced quickly through the dense forest, full of excitement to reach Gangotri as soon as possible, we heard a booming sound and soon discovered that it came from a gorgeous waterfall made by the Ganges in this part of its course. The waters of the holy river here fell from a height of about fifty feet into a huge natural basin of stone. They fell with such force that the resulting spray spread over a large area. This place is known as Gauri Kund. The rays of the sun falling on the foaming water in the basin, produced all the seven colours of the rainbow; while the fall of the water from the great height above sounded like the symbolic 'Om'. A few Sâdhus were sitting near by under

the deodars in deep meditation. The whole scene was so beautiful and awe-inspiring that we found it difficult to tear ourselves away.

We had proceeded not more than a furlong after leaving Gauri Kund, when we saw in the distance the gleaming towers of the temple of Gangotri. The sight of this temple thrilled me with sudden joy and I ran towards it in a fit of excitement. On reaching the holy precincts, I fell on my knees before the image of the river goddess, overcome by emotion. I remained in this position oblivious of my surroundings, and felt for a moment as if all my desires had been fulfilled. At last, my companions called me away and we did the customary round of the temple three times, notwithstanding the rush of pilgrims. Special worship was going on inside the temple, while a large number of pilgrims were performing various other ceremonies all around it right up to the bank of the Ganges. The whole scene was one of religious festival, and the air rang with the constant sound of 'Jai!' in honour of Mother Ganges.

With hearts full of joy we left the temple and went in search of some place where we could leave our belongings before going for the customary bath in the holy river. All the three good Dharmashâlâs were already packed to capacity with pilgrims, and after much persuasion I prevailed upon the man in charge of Kambli Baba's Dharmashâlâ to open for us an isolated room on the ground floor of an unused Dharmashâlâ which had been badly damaged the previous year by the falling of a huge boulder. This boulder had also smashed to pieces one of the towers of the temple of Gangotri which had been rebuilt some years ago by a Maharaja at a huge cost. We were told that in July of the previous year after there had been continuous heavy rain for two days, the sky had cleared up and there was calm everywhere. But at about 2 p.m.—when the door of the temple was closed after the noon service and the priests and pilgrims were taking rest—a huge boulder weighing more than a thousand maunds suddenly got dislodged from the adjacent mountain, and rolling down with a terrific force and velocity, first smashed to bits more than half of a Dharmashâlâ and then fell on one of the towers of the temple. The strangest feature of this sudden catastrophe was that not a single life was lost although there were more than a thousand people at Gangotri at the time!

Luckily there had been no one in the ill-fated Dharmashâlâ when the boulder fell, but the damaged portion remained to be repaired and no pilgrim had dared to occupy even the undamaged portion since the day of the accident. As we had, however, no other place to stay in, we were compelled to occupy a room in this undamaged portion. Leaving our things there, we went for a plunge into the Ganges. It was nearly ten o'clock then and the sun, which was already up in a clear, blue sky, shone brightly on the chain of high mountains which surrounded Gangotri. The heat of the sun

made even the strong, icy wind blowing from the Ganges quite pleasant. The river bank which is not more than a hundred yards from the temple was already full of pilgrims: some bathing, some performing ceremonial rites, some chanting and singing. It was by no means easy to take a plunge in the swiftly-flowing, icy water of the Ganges in this place, especially as the river bed is strewn here with boulders of various sizes. Nevertheless, I took the risk of entering the water and caught hold of a boulder to prevent being carried away by the swift current. I was richly compensated for my daring, because when I came out of the water I felt as if my body and mind had been transformed, and a sense of unspeakable joy pervaded my whole being.

When the rush of pilgrims to the temple had abated a little, we were taken in by a priest for the ceremonial worship of the deities. In the centre of the altar was a beautiful image of the Ganges goddess while on either side were the images of the goddesses Jamunâ and Sarasvati—all standing. On a lower pedestal, among other gods and goddesses, were the images of Lord Shiva and saints like Shankara. While worshipping these images, we could feel the intense spiritual atmosphere created by the earnest prayers and chanting of many devout pilgrims who had come there from all parts of India. We left the temple with hearts full of joy; and wanting to be alone, I went and sat on a big boulder by the side of the Ganges. I remained sitting there, lost in thought, till one of my companions came to call me for meals.

Though I have visited almost all the important places of pilgrimage in the Himalayas, I found none of them possessing such an all-round beauty—appealing to almost every type of person and imagination—as Gangotri. Situated at an altitude of about eleven thousand feet at the foot of a beautiful mountain, with the majestic Ganges

flowing by, it is protected on all sides by lofty, snow-capped mountain ranges covered on the lower slopes with luxuriant forests of deodar. It is a truly worthy monument to the great Advaitist Shankara, who first established it as a place of pilgrimage. It is said that when Shankara was wandering as a pilgrim in the Himalayas with some of his disciples, he suddenly made up his mind to visit the real source of the Ganges—Gomukhi. When, in spite of the total absence of any track, they at last reached the sacred spot, Shankara is said to have seen a vision of the holy Ganges coming down to the earth from heaven! After performing all the rites sacred to the goddess, Shankara turned back with his disciples, but on the way while going up and coming down, they suffered terrible hardships on account of frequent snow-storms and other difficulties. Their lives were at stake on several occasions. When at last they reached the spot which is now called Gangotri, Shankara was in an ecstatic mood and is said to have heard a divine voice asking him to install the images of Lord Shiva and Mother Ganges there in a temple, for the worship of future pilgrims. When the saint communicated this message to his disciples, one of them, who was a Raja, immediately ordered the building of the temple.

Shankara is said to have lived happily for a few days at Gangotri before he finally left with his disciples. The priests of Gangotri have no doubt that the images of the Ganges goddess and of Lord Shiva, now in the temple, were originally installed by Shankara whose image is also worshipped in the temple.

The origin of the river which flows by Gangotri, is beautifully described in *Kedâra Khanda*, one of the chapters of the *Skanda Purâna*. It is there said that Lord Shiva was mightily pleased with the hard austerities of King Bhagiratha, who had performed severe Tapasyâ for a thousand years for the salvation of the souls of his ancestors who had all been burnt to ashes by

the anger of a Rishi. Shiva, thereupon, allowed the holy Ganges, which had always remained concealed in the matted locks of his hair, to come down on earth to purify the sins of the King's ancestors. As soon as the great river was let loose, she began to pour down in strong currents of transparent water on to a mountain top. Unable to withstand the tremendous pressure, the mountain collapsed, and the river fell on the earth in three swift currents. One of them, coming down from Gomukhi and flowing past Gangotri, gave salvation to King Bhagiratha's ancestors and was, therefore, known as the Bhâgirathi Gangâ. The second current which flowed through Badrinarayan was known as Alakânandâ Gangâ; and the third one which flowed through Kedarnath was known as Mandâkini or Kumudvati Gangâ.

TOWARDS GOMUKHI

After a hurried meal we got ready for our difficult trek to Gomukhi which required provisions that would last for at least a week. It was nearly 2 p.m. when our party of seven, including the guide and coolies, left the Dharma-shâlâ. Some of the pilgrims who had come with us as far as Gangotri and whom we had come to know, now came as far as the river bank to see us off. An old Nepalese lady among them began to weep at the thought of the dangers of our journey. Before crossing the tottering wooden bridge on the Ganges we bowed down to the temple and sent a silent prayer to the goddess for her protection. The nervousness shown by our pilgrim friends for our safety made us also feel nervous in turn, and for a moment the thought entered my mind that, perhaps, we might never return from this dangerous trek. The only thing to do was to pray to the all-merciful Lord for our safety and this prayer soon drove away the fear.

Our way now lay through the trackless bed of the Ganges which consisted of boulders of various sizes. Some of these boulders were very difficult to

negotiate and we had often to crawl on all fours before we could advance. It was then that we really appreciated our guide's wisdom in asking us to leave our hill-sticks behind at Gangotri. Before taking a turn to the left we took a last look at the temple of Gangotri. We had not, however, proceeded far when our attention was suddenly drawn by the sound of someone calling and whistling to us from behind. Looking back we found that a man was running towards us and was calling to us to stop. We waited, and as soon as the man came near, we recognized Tekram, one of the Nepalese pilgrims who had accompanied us with his party all the way from Jumnotri to Gangotri.

On approaching us, Tekram fell on his knees and begged me to allow him to accompany us to Gomukhi. He explained that he had intended from the beginning to go along with us but that his companions began to weep at the idea and prevented him from going. When, however, he saw us finally depart, his inner urge to join our expedition became irresistible and he slipped away without the knowledge of any of his companions, taking with him only one blanket and a little quantity of rice and wheat flour. Tekram's earnest pleading, with almost tears in his eyes, to be allowed to go with us was so touching that we had not the heart to turn him away. In spite of my reminding him of the great perils of this journey and of his family responsibilities in contrast to the freedom of Sannyâsins like me and my companion, he remained adamant and I had at last to yield to his entreaties. Tekram's joy at his success knew no bounds and he began to shout, 'Jai! Gangâ Mâi Ki Jai!' at the top of his voice until the whole place reverberated with this triumphant cry.

Although it was quite clear and the sun was shining brightly when we left Gangotri about an hour and a half back, thick clouds now began to gather, and there were all indications of impending rainfall. Our guide became very con-

cerned at this, saying that, if it rained, no further advance would be possible, because landslides would follow the rainfall and no one knew from which side the boulders would roll down. While we were thinking of what best to do in the circumstances, rain began to fall in torrents, and as there was no place of shelter we had to stand by the side of some large boulders for protection. Proceeding even a single step was impossible, and soon the clouds became so thick and dark that nothing was visible within a distance of twenty yards. There was, besides, a piercing, icy wind which went through our bones and made us tremble with the cold. As we were almost on the point of despair at our helpless condition, the clouds suddenly began to disperse under the influence of a strong wind which luckily rose from the proper direction, and the sun came out again in all his glory. Although our guide was against further progress owing to the danger of landslides, we finally decided to take the risk in order to avoid the greater risk of being without any shelter for the night in that wind-swept river bed.

A REAL TEST

When we had walked a little further among the boulders, we were suddenly confronted by a steep mountain barrier which had to be crossed before we could proceed any further. This mountain was covered with a thick forest, but there was no track through it and the Ganges was flowing at its foot in a furious torrent. The guide led the way and Tekram used his sharp Bhujâli (long Nepalese knife) to cut a way for us through the forest. The climb was very steep and slippery and we had to catch hold of grass and small plants to keep our foothold. In this way it took us nearly an hour to cross the barrier and we finally came upon a snow-field stretching more than half a mile. The hard snow had become so cold and slippery that it was painful to walk over it in our canvas shoes, which made the feet completely numb.

We at last came to an ice-bridge across the Ganges and wanted to cross it, but were prevented by the guide on the ground that this same sort of bridge might not be available for re-crossing the furious river at a suitable place. We, therefore, decided to proceed by the side of the river as far as possible. The difficulty was that we were going to Gomukhi at a time of the year when the ice was melting and consequently the snow-bed of the Ganges which is the usual means of communication between Gangotri and Gomukhi had melted down.

After leaving Gangotri, we did not find any habitation whatsoever and consequently no sign of a track anywhere. During the pilgrimage season only a few ascetics generally visit Gomukhi, and neither they, nor the Bhutias who sometimes bring their sheep and goats to these parts for grazing, require any beaten track. The swift-flowing current of the Ganges was, therefore, the only sure indicator of the direction to its primal source, Gomukhi. Because of the difficulty of our boulder-strewn path we had to move very cautiously, and our speed in many places was hardly a mile per hour. As we were advancing slowly in this manner, we saw in the distance a barren hill rising from the bed of the Ganges. The guide said that our reaching Gomukhi depended upon our ability to cross a portion of this hill. When we came near we found that the hill which rose more than five hundred feet was composed mostly of sand, gravel, and small boulders, and our hopes of crossing it almost vanished. The Ganges rushed along with tremendous force about two hundred feet below the place where we were standing, and its roaring noise suppressed all other sounds. Our guide decided to investigate the possibility of crossing the hill from another side, and asking us to wait disappeared. We awaited his return in awful suspense, and although the scene around, lighted by the rays of the setting sun, was very beautiful, it failed to inspire us in our

dejected mood. As the sun was gradually setting, we were faced with the prospect of spending the night in that shelterless place, with the danger of loose boulders rolling down on us from that ugly hill. We at last saw the guide slowly coming down from the hill, but in another direction. After hearing what he had to say, we made up our minds in spite of obvious dangers to cross somehow that portion of the hill, near its foot, which would bring us to a place of comparative safety before nightfall. Tekram volunteered to lead the party and we all took off our shoes to lessen the chances of slipping on the loose gravel. As we advanced cautiously, Tekram cleverly made rough steps for us by digging in his toes into the sand and gravel, while he clung fast to the hill with both his arms. Immediately behind Tekram was one of our Pâhâri companions and the rest of us followed close behind. We had crossed in that way almost half of the most perilous portion of that treacherous hill, when a huge boulder rolled down in great force between Tekram and the Pâhâri behind him. The roar of the Ganges below us was so loud that we only realized what had happened when we actually heard the still louder thud of the boulder as it struck the ground. The dislodging of this boulder brought in its train a lot of loose sand and gravel which now began to fall on us. It was a moment of great suspense and we knew that a single false step might hurl most of us down two-hundred feet into the stony bed of the angry river. I asked my companions to keep calm, with faith in the mercy of God, and to move forward courageously, keeping their eyes always in front of them. When we at last reached a place of safety, we sat down for a little rest with our hearts full of gratitude to the Lord for saving our lives.

CHIRBASA

That hair-breadth escape from death gave us courage and confidence for the

remaining stages of our perilous journey because it made us feel that the All-merciful Lord would protect us till the very end. We now slowly made our way, in turn, through thick forests, ravines, and boulder-strewn areas, keeping most of the way by the side of the Ganges. Although the day's happenings and exertion had brought on a feeling of extreme fatigue, we pushed on as fast as we could in order to reach a safe place of encampment before nightfall. Before leaving Gangotri it was decided that we should stop for the night at a place called Chirbasa, only eight miles away from our starting point. As the guide now said that we were nearing Chirbasa, I began to be on the lookout for a suitable place to pass the night in. Just before it became dark we reached a place in the jungle which we selected as our camping ground. Though the Ganges was flowing down below, there was a spring of clear water near by, and the place was covered with a thick jungle of Bhurja¹ trees. We soon began to erect a temporary shelter for the night with branches of trees, and for this purpose we used the axes and hatchets which we had brought from Dharali, while Tekram had his sharp Nepali knife always ready for use. In the meantime, our guide and the Bhutia cooly went in search of fuel to make a fire. Before it became dark we had completed the erection of the shelter, and all of us sat round the big fire which had by then been lighted.

Just as the fire lighted up our faces, the last rays of the setting sun were lighting up the top of the mountain opposite. As the stars came out slowly, I felt like being alone, and leaving my companions, went and sat by the side

of the Ganges. The only sound which made music with the voice of the all-pervading silence was that which came from the river flowing down below. I sat there long, listening to that strange melody, and when I returned to our shelter the moon was peeping through the thick branches and foliage of the Bhurja trees. Seated comfortably round the roaring fire, Tekram was chanting from the *Râmâyana*, while one of the Sannyâsins was singing: 'Why in this world any longer, O my Mind? Let us go to that region where, day and night, the full moon resides, in bliss,' etc. After partaking of our simple fare we got ready for our well-earned rest for the night. As the altitude of our camp was about 13,000 feet the cold outside was intense and sleep would have been impossible but for that fire which we kept blazing all the time. One of us had to keep vigil, by turn, to keep the fire burning all the night while the others slept. Our guide, seeing a patch of thick cloud in the sky, said there might be rain later on in the night; but none of us liked to believe this unpleasant possibility, and all except the fire-watcher went to sleep, lulled by the musical roar of the Ganges. It was nearly three o'clock when, as predicted by the guide, rain actually began to fall. At first we ignored it, but soon sleep became impossible as the water leaked through our shelter and made our beds wet. There was no other help but to roll up our beds and sit round the fire once more, this time with our umbrellas open. We tried to keep up our spirits by chanting the name of the Lord in chorus; but as the continuing downpour began to extinguish the fire, we shivered with cold and waited impatiently for the dawn.

(To be concluded)

¹ A variety of the birch tree (*Betula Bhurja*), the bark of which is used for writing.

SCULPTURE REPRESENTING 'MOTHER AND CHILD'

BY U. C. BHATTACHARYA, M.A.

The Rajputana Museum at Ajmer possesses a noteworthy sculpture representing a 'Mother and Child' finely carved on a black stone slab measuring 2'6" x 1'1" x 8".¹ In this alto-relief we find a sleeping female reclining on her left side upon a four-poster bedstead. She supports her head on her left palm. A child lies sprawling on a cushion beside the mother, touching her left breast with one of its hands, and seems to be looking at her face joyfully. There is a seated female attendant who (as we know from other complete specimens²) is shampooing her left foot, which is broken in the present sculpture. A row of ten standing figures as described below is sculptured behind the sleeping lady :

From right :—(1) Female figure
(2) Male figure
(3) Male figure
(4) Female figure holding a fan
(5) Male figure with a child held in both hands
(6) Female figure with outstretched hands (? Devaki) eager to receive the child from the hands of No. 5.

¹ This exhibit (Museum No. 448) was acquired from a place called Arthunâ, in the Banswara State of Rajputana, situated about 24 miles west of Banswara town. In inscriptions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. we find 'Ârattunaka' and 'Uttunaka' which are no doubt the old names of Arthunâ.

² Cf. Indian Museum No. Gr. 1 and Rajshahi Museum No. H (d) 1. These two

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interesting sculptures have been reproduced in R. D. Banerjee's *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture*—vide plates XLIX and L.

(7) Male figure holding a club

(8) Male figure with mace

(9) Female attendant holding a fly-whisk

(10) Female attendant holding a fly-whisk.

The story referred to in similar sculptures representing a sleeping mother with her child has been differently explained by different scholars. Some writers hold that such charming composition relates to the birth of Mahavira or Siddhartha.³ One scholar even finds in it an attempt to represent Sadyojâta-Maheshvara.⁴ But the majority of them favours the view that such sculptures really represent infant Krishna nursed by his mother Devaki. I shall try to prove in this note that the Rajputana Museum relief and other exactly similar pieces do not represent Devaki in the prison-house of Kamsa, but really represent Yashodâ (the wife of Nanda of Gokula) reposing with infant Krishna conveyed to her couch by Vasudeva⁵ while she was asleep after delivery.

On a careful examination of the ten standing figures mentioned above our particular attention is drawn to the male and female figures numbered 5 and 6. I identify them as Vasudeva holding in his two hands the newly born daughter of Nanda's wife Yashodâ, and Devaki (Vasudeva's wife) eager to have that child. Figures 7 and 8 very probably show Kamsa's guards who have hastened to the spot hearing the cries of the infant. Of the other standing figures,

³ Anderson's *Catalogue and Hand-book of Archaeological Collection in the Indian Museum*, page 259.

⁴ Bhattasali's *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, page 134 ff.

⁵ *Hindu Mythology* by Wilkins, page 202.

Nos. 4, 9, and 10 may be taken as three female attendants with fan and fly-whisks (Châmara). Thus we see that in the Rajputana Museum relief the sculptor aimed at showing what happened both at Gokula and Mathura just after Krishna's birth. From the Purânas we know that while Krishna was lying safe on a couch at Yashodâ's side at Gokula and joyfully sucking milk from her breast, in the prison-house of Kamsa at Mathura poor Vasudeva was handing over Yashodâ's daughter to Devaki and immediately after Kamsa's guards Nos. 7 and 8 were awakened and brought to the scene by the cries of this infant. The following passages from the *Vishnu Purâna* may be given here⁶—

At that time Yashodâ was also influenced by Yoganidrâ⁷ whom she had given birth as her daughter and whom the wise Vasudeva took up placing his own son in her place by the side of the mother (i.e., Yashodâ). He then came back home. When Yashodâ awoke, she found that she had been delivered of a boy as black as the dark lotus-leaves and she was greatly delighted.

Vasudeva taking the female child of Yashodâ reached his house (i.e., prison-house where Kamsa detained Vasudeva and his wife Devaki⁸) unperceived. . . . The guards were awakened by the cry of the new-born babe, and starting up they informed Kamsa that Devaki had given birth to a child. Kamsa immediately went to the house of Vasudeva where he got hold of the infant.

There is a similar passage in the *Agni Purâna*⁹ which is also worth quoting here—

Krishna was the issue of the eighth conception. . . . Hymned by Vasudeva and Devaki he was born as a boy with two arms. From fear of Kamsa Vasudeva placed him on Yashodâ's bed and taking her girl placed her on Devaki's bed. Hearing the cries of the baby, Kamsa threw her on a rock saying, 'The child of thy eighth conception is my death', although he was prevented by Devaki.

From the Paurânic passages cited above it is quite clear that as soon as Devaki gave birth to her eighth

son Krishna, Vasudeva (husband of Devaki) conveyed the child to the couch of Yashodâ with a view to saving Krishna from being killed by Kamsa. As Devaki herself knew that her son's life was at stake, it was quite unthinkable that she would be reposing so peacefully as we find it represented in the sculpture in question. I have already suggested that Vasudeva and Devaki are there among the standing figures (Nos. 5 and 6) sculptured behind the mother. There Vasudeva is shown as holding a child in his two hands, and Devaki, who stands near beside her husband, as extending her hands to have the same child. This is quite in keeping with the extreme anxiety of a mother who had to hand over her child to Vasudeva soon after delivery. The representation of Devaki in this attitude and her fear of Kamsa, preclude the possibility of her sleeping peacefully and at the same time being looked after so very carefully by a number of female attendants either shampooing her feet or fanning her. These comforts for Devaki are surely unthinkable in the prison-house of Kamsa. As we know it from the Purânas, at Krishna's birth there was danger in delay. Vasudeva had to carry the newly born child immediately away to save it from being killed by Kamsa.¹⁰ In these circumstances we should not identify the mother, represented as slumbering so peacefully, with Devaki. The sculpture under consideration suggests a state of undisturbed repose; and if the mother be taken as Devaki, it stands in direct contrast to the Paurânic legends relating to the birth of Krishna in the prison-house of Kamsa. On the other hand if the sleeping mother be taken as Krishna's foster-mother Yashodâ—the wife of Nanda-Gopa of Gokula we find that the identification fits in with the story narrated in different Purânas. Yashodâ was influenced by 'Yoganidrâ' soon after delivery, as we know it from the *Vishnu*

⁶ *Vishnu Purâna*—(Edited by M. N. Dutt-Shastri), Part V, Section III.

⁷ Yoganidra is 'a state of half meditation half sleep'. It also means 'Vishnu's sleep personified as a goddess and said to be a form of Durgâ'—Monier Williams.

⁸ Words in italic are mine.

⁹ *Agni Purâna*—Chapter XII (Edited by M. N. Dutt-Shastri).

¹⁰ *Epics, Myths and Legends of India* by P. Thomas—page 18.

Purâna passage quoted above. So there is nothing wrong in sculpturing her in a state of undisturbed repose with infant Krishna placed beside her by Vasudeva, 'while she was asleep after child-birth'. The representation of Yashodâ with infant Krishna sucking milk from her breast is also supported by the following passage of the *Shritatvanidhi* :

पिबन्तं च स्तनं मातुर्मुखं संवीक्ष्य सुस्मितम् ।

अङ्गुल्यग्रं स्तनं चान्यं स्पृशन्तं च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

यद्योदाङ्गस्थितं गोपं ध्यायेत्पुत्रप्रदं सदा ।

Stylistically this and other images obtained from the ruins of old temples at Arthunâ¹¹ may be assigned to the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. Such a date is further supported by the

¹¹ There are about half a dozen Medieval images from Arthunâ exhibited in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.

fact that two Sarasvati images from Arthunâ which are exhibited in the Rajputana Museum at Ajmer bear on their pedestals inscriptions dated Samvat 1254¹² (=1197 A.D.) and 1256¹³ (=1199 A.D.). We have epigraphic evidences of the building of a number of temples at Arthunâ by the Paramâra Princes Châmundarâja¹⁴ and Vijayarâja¹⁵ during the period between 1080 A.D. and 1109 A.D. On all these grounds I am in favour of assigning the sculpture dealt with in the present note to about early twelfth century A.D.

¹² Jain Sarasvati (Rajputana Museum exhibit No. 58).

¹³ Jain Sarasvati (Rajputana Museum exhibit No. 57).

¹⁴ Stone inscription of the time of Châmundarâja dated Samvat 1137 (vide *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XIX, p. 24, No. 148).

¹⁵ Stone inscription of the time of Vijayarâja dated Samvat 1166 (vide *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XIX, page 29, No. 179).

THE GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS OF BUDDHISM

BY BHIKSHU BRAHMABODHI

(Concluded)

The Gilgit Mss. are a revelation to the Buddhist world as they have brought out the hitherto missing Sanskrit scriptures of Buddhism which were existing only in Chinese or Tibetan translation. When these Mss. were copied the later Sahis were ruling over the region round about Udbhandpur up to Gilgit. The Mss. copied for Yuang Chwang were also of this same time as the Gilgit Mss. and it is interesting to note that the Gupta characters preserved by the Chinese for transcribing the Sanskrit Mantras in their Chinese translations are similar to those found in the Gilgit Mss. The language of the Mss. is usually Buddhist Sanskrit which does not follow the canons of Panini. Dr. Nalinaksha Dutta thinks that the compiler worked on a Prakrit original and found difficulty in Sanskritizing the Prakrit words. The Sanskritization and Pali-ization of words have been noticed in a verse by this

esteemed scholar. Buddhist scholars are of opinion that though the Sutra and Vinaya Pitakas originated in Magadha, the Abhidharma must have emerged in Kashmir. The Kashmirian Buddhists were, therefore, frequently referred to as Abhidharmikas. Moreover, the *Vibhâsa-shâstras*, which are the creations of Kashmir, dealt more with Abhidharma. A Kashmirian, Prince Yashomitra, wrote a *Tikâ* on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma Kosha* and *Bhâsya*. Now the *Vibhâsa-shâstra* is lost in Sanskrit and is preserved only in its Chinese translation, which has not yet been adequately studied. A Hinayana sect of Buddhism prevailed in Northern India and Kashmir in the post-Ashokan and particularly in the Kushan period. This sect developed Sanskrit Pitakas parallel to Pali Pitakas. Since the discoveries of the fragments of Sanskrit Sutras and Vinaya texts in Eastern Turkistan and

neighbouring places, Buddhist scholars were hoping to get more of them somewhere, and Gilgit has yielded a lot of them. The Gilgit Mss. are similar to the Bower Mss. and to those found in Central Asia and Eastern Turkistan. Most of these valuable Mss. were known to the scholars only through their Chinese and Tibetan translations, and none dreamt of finding their Sanskrit originals. It is surprising that not a single Sanskrit original of Buddhist works was so far found in India with the rare exception of *Manjushrimulakalpa*, which has since been published in the Trivandrum Sanskrit series. All the originals have come from Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Nepal, etc. The Gilgit Mss. are the only ones discovered in India.

The first volume of the Gilgit Mss. published by the Research Department of the Kashmir Government, contains about 250 pages of which 150 pages publish Texts and the rest contains introductions to the texts and a summary of Kashmir Buddhism by Dr. N. Dutta, the learned editor of the texts. The six books that are published in this volume are (1) *Bhaishajya-guru-sutram*, (2) *Ekâdashamukham*, (3) *Hayagrivavidyâ*, (4) *Sarva-Tathâgata-adhîsthâna*, (5) *Shrîmahâdevî-vyâkaranam*, and (6) *Ajitasena-vyâkaranam*. The published volume II of the Gilgit Mss. contains *Samâdhi-râja-sutram*, which is a considerably big text covering about 215 pages in print divided into 16 chapters. The third volume (part II) contains *Vinaya Vastu* of Mulasarvâstivâda. It is also a big text covering more than 200 pages. This text is divided into four books—*Chivara-vastu*, *Kathina-vastu*, *Kosambaka-vastu*, and *Karma-vastu*. The Sanskrit Vinaya is divided into four books entitled (1) *Vinaya-vastu*, (2) *Pratimoksha Sutra* and *Vinaya-vibhanga*, (3) *Vinaya-khsudraka-vastu*, and (4) *Vinayottara-grantha* corresponding to the four divisions of the Pali Vinaya text, viz, (1) *Mahāvagga*, (2) *Sutta-vibhanga*, (3) *Chulla-vagga*, and (4) *Paribara-patha*.

Dr. N. Dutta says that there are many agreements, sometimes verbatim, between the Sanskrit and Pali versions of the Vinaya; but there is a wide divergence in the contents. *Pravrajyâ-vastu*, *Posada-vastu*, *Pravarana-vastu*, *Charmavastu*, *Varsha-vastu*, and *Vaishajya-vastu* are being edited by Dr. P. C. Bagchi of Calcutta and will be included in the forthcoming volume, i.e., third volume, part I. Mss. of *Pândulohitaka-vastu*, *Pudgala-vastu*, *Pâribhâshika-vastu*, *Posadhasthahana-vastu*, and *Sanghabhedaka-vastu* have also been found and will be edited and published later. In the *Mahavyutpâda* (276) appear names of seventeen Vastus of which seven or eight have got different names. All the three volumes published are nicely got up and printed in good paper and will adorn the library in which they will be placed. The extraordinary care, skill, and scholarship of Dr. Dutta, the esteemed editor, leave nothing to be desired about the volumes which have been printed under his personal care at Calcutta.

Something about the texts published, and we will conclude this long dissertation on the Gilgit Mss. *Bhaishajya-guru-sutra* of the first volume is a Mahayana Sutra and is quoted copiously in the *Shikshâ-samuchchaya* of Shantideva. The work deals with the resolutions (Mahâpranidhânas) of one of the seven Buddhas called Bhaishajya-guru who, according to Prof. Paul Pelliot, is one of the most popular Buddhas in China, Japan, and Tibet. His name in Chinese is Bhashajya-guru Vaidurya-prabha. From its Chinese and Tibetan translations it is learnt that the present work is the last chapter of the book dealing with the great vows of the seven past Buddhas and attained great popularity. It must have been composed earlier than the first century A.D. It was translated by Shrimitra, Dharmagupta, Itsing, and Hiwentsang into Chinese in different times. In Tibetan, there is also more than one rendering of this text. From China, this Sutra travelled to Japan, where in the year

681 on the occasion of the illness of the queen, Emperor Temmai founded the great temple of Bhaishajya-guru, which preserves even now the wonders of the ancient Chinese art. *Ekâdashamukham* is a treatise which contains two Dhâranis. Dhârani means a Riddhimantra, a magical charm to be written on birch bark or palm leaf and put within an amulet and worn on a part of the body to avert evils. There are Mantras also in this text for offering Homa, Bali, Pushpa, Dhupa, Gandha, Deepa, etc. If one repeats the Mantra, the text declares, one can attain a number of merits and get rid of all evils. People can attain Sambodhi by repeating it. This text was translated into Tibetan and Chinese by Yashogupta and Hiuent-sang. *Hayagriva-vidyâ* is a Dhârani. The deity invoked is horse-faced. The fourth book of the first volume is called *Sarvatathâgatâdhisthâna-sattâ-valokana-Buddha-kshetra-sandarshana-vyuham*. Csoma Korosi translates the title of this book in *Asiatic Researches* (vol. xx, p. 425) thus : 'Description of the province of Buddha on which, for the sake of all beings, all Tathâgatas have bestowed their benedictions.' Its Tibetan rendering was made by Surendrabodhi, Shailendrabodhi, and Jinamitra in the ninth century A.D. with the help of the Tibetan monk Ye-shes-de. Its Chinese translation was done by Itsing in the seventh century. The date of its composition may be placed in the fifth or sixth century A.D. It contains a principal Dhârani, some supplementary Dhâranis, and the account of their efficacy. By reading, writing, or propagating this Dhârani, beings of the present and future will acquire all merits. The name of the donor of the Ms. is given. The donor is Shulivajra, a Dard, at whose instance the Ms. was copied. There is a vast literature of the *Vyâkarana* class in the later Tripitakas, but not in Pali. *Shri-Mahâdevi-vyâkaranam* is a Sutra of that class. The Sutra describes the scene of Sukhâvati where Bhagavân Buddha is seated with the Bodhisattvas only. Then

Shri Mahâdevi approaches and pays obeisance. Bhagavân on seeing her refers to her past merits and tells the Bodhisattvas that any one who will utter the *Ashtottarashata-vimalapra-khya-stotram* addressed to Shri Mahâdevi (given in this Sutra) will have only prosperity and no loss, and the goddess will dwell in his house. The Tibetan version of the Sutra gives the name *Sarasvati Shridevi*. *Ajitasena-vyâkaranam* is a Mahayana Sutra, and from the Ms. it appears that it was written by one Arya Sthirabuddhi with the help of Dharmabhanaka Narendra Dutta. The language and style of this Sutra resembles those of *Lalitavistara* of Ashvagosha. It relates an incident or gives a prayer first in easy and correct Sanskrit and then repeats it in broken Sanskrit called Gâthâ dialect by the late savant R. L. Mitra. The Sutra contains an edifying story admonishing people to give alms to the Buddhist monks, develop faith in Buddha as the saviour of mankind and thereby attain Buddhahood in all its glory.

Samâdhirâja-sutra published in the second volume is an important work on Mahayana. It is otherwise known as *Chandra-pradipa-sutra*. The Buddhist Society of Calcutta published as early as 1897 a portion of this text. It was based on a Ms. collected by Hodgson from Nepal. The late Mm. H. P. Shastri also collected a Ms. of this Sutra from Nepal. The Tibetan translation of this Sutra was made by Dharmata-shila and Shailendrabodhi who lived in the ninth century A.D. In Chinese there are three translations of this text made by Narendrayasa of the Northern Tshi dynasty in 557 A.D., by Shih-sien-kun of the earlier Sun dynasty in 420-479 A.D., and by Ngan-she-kao of the later Han dynasty in 148 A.D. On scanning the colophon Dr. P. C. Bagchi points out that there was an earlier translation of the text by Ngan-she-kao, which is now lost. The original Sutra was probably written in the first century A.D. Chandra Kirti, the author of *Mâdhya-mika-vritti* and Shantideva, author of

Shikshâ-samuchchaya have quoted several extracts from this Sutra in which there is also reference to the three Buddhist synods. *Samâdhirâja* means that state of mind in which Buddhas and Bodhisattvas realize that all worldly objects, thoughts, or deeds, good or bad, are mere illusion and that the highest truth does not admit of any description, differentiation, or denial. The book harps on the theme that there is no individual (Nara, Pudgala, Jiva, or Sattva), Skandhas are non-existent, all are mere usage, names do not come and go. Almost in every page this idea is expressed, but in such a poetical language that one forgets the monotony of the topic. In the first chapter the Buddha in answer to a question observes that one can perfect himself in *Prajnâ* by developing even-mindedness alone which means a state of mind that remains unaffected by attachment or hatred. The second chapter is concluded by saying that one who realizes this *Samâdhi*, which is the highest state of mental condition, becomes a Buddha. We see from this book that Patanjali's conception of *Samâdhi* is identical with the Mahayanist conception and that Mahayana is a parallel development of Vedanta. The fourth chapter describes a number of preparatory exercises for the attainment of *Samâdhi*. The three essential exercises are (1) development of a compassionate mind, (2) acquisition of merits, and (3) worship of the *Dharmakâya* of the Buddha and not the *Rupakâya*. At the end of the chapter are given some supplementary preparations for *Samâdhi* such as worship of Buddha with incense, practice of *Kshânti* (forbearance), acquisition of firm faith in Buddha. The seventh chapter describes the three kinds of *Kshânti* which are indispensable for perfection in *Samâdhi*. By the first *Kshânti* a person avoids quarrels, realizes the illusory nature of things, acquires knowledge of the scriptures comprehending their esoteric and exoteric meanings, and takes the vow to attain the highest knowledge. By the

second *Kshânti* a person becomes steadfast like the mountain, develops concentration of thoughts, and ultimately extends his thoughts beyond all limitations. By the third *Kshânti*, a person visualizes the Buddhas preaching to beings, comprehends the ways and manners of the Buddhas, and remains unmoved by worldly gain or fame. By the attainment of threefold *Kshântis* he becomes a Buddha. Buddhahood is here equated with *Samâdhi*. May we hazard a remark that the Mahayanist conception of Buddhahood is almost the same as the Vedantic conception of Brahmanhood? The ninth chapter called *Gambhira-dharma-kshânti* shows in charming similes that as the phenomenal world has no more existence than mirage, one does not find anything which can be the cause of *Râga*, *Dvesha*, or *Moha*. *Chandrakirti* has utilized this passage to explain Nagarjuna's *Mâdhya-mika Kârikâ* 8 (cf. Chap. V). The verse compares the things of the world to sky, fleeting clouds, sea-foam, bubbles, reflection on a mirror or water, echo, or objects seen in a dream. In the last chapter the Buddha recounts the experiences of one of his previous incarnations when he was born a prince. The prince fell seriously ill and over five hundred physicians could not cure him of his illness. A *Bhikshu*, who was a reciter of the Dharma, approached him and spoke to him about this *Samâdhi*. On hearing the talk, the nature of Dharma became clear to him, and the disease at once left him.

The four 'Vastus' published in the third volume have all their Tibetan and Chinese versions. The Tibetan translation was made by Sarvajnadeva and Dharmakara of Kashmir with the assistance of Vidyakaraprabha of Central India and a Tibetan named Lotsava in the ninth century A.D. There are several translations of this Vinaya text in Chinese. Of the eighteen schools of Buddhism that appeared in the pre-Ashokan period five at least had their own Vinaya texts, all of which were translated into Chinese. The Chinese,

unlike the Tibetans, took keen interest in the Vinaya. Both the Chinese travellers Fa-hien and Itsing came to India with the sole purpose of getting correct Vinaya texts and carrying them to their country. Fa-hien, who came to India in the first decade of the fifth century A.D., copied a complete text of *Mahâsanghika Vinaya*, which he found in a Mahayana monastery at Pataliputra. Itsing, who visited India three centuries later, got interested in the *Mulasarvâstivâda Vinaya*. Both were mainly responsible for introducing *Mahâsanghika Vinaya* and *Mulasarvâstivâda Vinaya* into China. The *Dashâdhyâya* of the *Sarvâstivâda Vinaya* was translated in 404 A.D. into Chinese by Punyatara and Kumarajiva. Other principal Vinaya texts existing in Chinese translations are (1) *Sarvâstivâda-vinaya-mâtrikâ* translated by Sanghavarman in 445 A.D., (2) *Sarvâstivâda-vinaya-vibhâsa* translated in 431 A.D., (3) *Dashâdhyâya-vinaya-nidâna* translated by Vimalaksha in 405-418 A.D., (4) *Mahâsanghika-vinaya* translated by Buddhahadra and Fa-hien in 400-413 A.D., (5) *Dharma-gupta-vinaya* translated by Buddhaya-shas and Chunfonien in 365 A.D., and (6) *Mahishâsaka-vinaya* translated by Buddhajiva and Chutaoshan in 391-401 A.D.

The *Chivara-vastu*, which is the section of Vinaya on the robes of the monks, consists mainly of stories of Bimbisara, Jivaka, Visakha, and Upananda who brought about the framing of certain rules concerning the dress of monks and nuns. Towards the end of this book certain rules are given regarding the distribution of robes.

From the stories of this book it is evident that medical science as well as surgery was fairly well developed in ancient India. In extreme rains and heat, when monks were in trouble due to shortage of cloth, *Kathina-vastu* describes how Buddha allowed the monks to accept cloths *en masse* for members of the Sangha. He prohibits monks from trimming hair, and using bark, deerskin, camel hair, etc. The *Kosâmbârka-vastu* describes some incidents that happened when the Buddha was dwelling in Kosambi as well as the occasion which led to the formation of the ecclesiastical act of suspension or expulsion (*Utkshepana*) of a defaulting monk. The *Karma-vastu* first enumerates four codes of the Sangha as follows: (1) four monks can form a chapter to perform all ecclesiastical acts except *Pravarana*, *Upasampada*, and *Avarhana*, (2) five monks can form a chapter to perform all acts except *Upasampada* and *Avarhana*, (3) ten monks can perform all acts except *Avarhana*, (4) twenty or more monks can perform all acts. This is followed by a list of disciplinary actions to be taken against an offending monk. Buddha lays down the general principle that a particular offence must be met by the particular disciplinary measure prescribed in the code, and any deviation would make the chapter of monks guilty of an offence. The book is concluded with an exposition of an ecclesiastical act performed in concord and in discord. As the texts only are published and not their translations, the above *résumé* of their contents will be interesting and useful to the readers.

NIMBARKACHARYA'S INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDANTA-SUTRAS

BY DEWAN BAHADUR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

It must not be supposed that such a theistic system as that of Nimbarkacharya was new and without its own line of ancestry in Indian philosophical thought. In the Upanishads themselves we have the seeds of all the later schools and sects and systems of Indian thought. The later world-views and the later ideologies in regard to the nature of the soul, the later visualizations of the nature of Godhead, and the later concepts of salvation and liberation were all there in the germ. The names of the universal God as Vishnu or Shiva or Devi had already come to prominence along with the concept of Brahman, as supplementary to it and as an amplification of it. Though the earliest Upanishads work out the concepts of Akshara, Ânanda, Isha, Antaryâmi, etc., yet in the *Kenopanishad* we come across the concept of Umâ as the revealer of Brahman who appeared in his form as Yaksha before the assembled gods.

Further, the later thinkers who preceded the Sutrakâras and Bhâshyakâras, held diverse views. In the *Vedanta-sutras* themselves there are indications of such pre-existence of monism and qualified monism of various types and dualism of diverse types. Such thinkers as Jaimini, Audulomi, Kâshakritsna, and others pondered deeply over the fundamental problems of life. While Bâdari and Kâshakritsna were distinctly Advaitins, Audulomi and Âsmarathya clung to diverse types of qualified monism and dualism.

It may be that Shri Shankara emphasized the transcendental aspect of reality too much and that this attitude coloured his world-view. Similarly Shri Ramanuja emphasized the immanent aspect overmuch while Shri Madhva emphasized the aspect of God as the

Lord of the universe. The *Bhâgavata* gives us a glimpse of this threefold attitude when it says:

‘ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दयते ।’

But all the three Âcharyas agree in saying that Brahman is the substratum of everything and that the world has only a derivative reality and is really non-independent from Him and that Brahman is immanent and transcendent and is the Infinite Eternal Absolute Bliss. I do not mean to say that there are not basic cleavages and divergences of doctrine amongst them. But the similarities and even identities of doctrine amongst them have not been sufficiently stressed. I have sought elsewhere to indicate in what direction the future, dynamic, synthesized Hinduism will flow. The Gita gives us a clear indication of such a direction.

Nimbarkacharya is one of the outstanding Bhâshyakâras on the *Brahma-sutras* of Vyasa. His Bhâshya is called *Vedânta-pârijâta-saurabha*, i.e., the perfume of the Pârijâta flower of Vedanta. His school of thought is called the Bhedâbheda or Dvaitâdvaita school. Bhaskara, who belonged to the ninth century A.D., and Yadava Prakasha who was the Guru of Shri Ramanuja, also were of the same school. The analogy of the ocean and the wave is pressed into service by the school to express the inter-relations of Jiva (the individual soul) and Brahman (the universal soul). This idea is expressed by Shri Shankara also in his *Shatpadi* poem thus :

सत्यपि भेदापगमे नाथ तवाहं न मामकीनस्त्वं ।

सामुद्रो हि तरंगः क्वचन समुद्रो न तारंगः ॥

But he holds that such a difference is not basic and absolute but only

relative. But Nimbarka thinks that both the aspects, viz, being part of the Universal Soul and being essentially one with It, could be simultaneously predicated about the Jiva. The mind under the stress of desire objectifies itself and becomes the focus of egoistic individual consciousness. But when it is calm and tranquil it realizes the Infinite; and then the egoistic individual consciousness is merged in the Infinite Universal Consciousness. Thus Jiva and Brahman are one in kind but different in degree. The Jiva is atomic (Anu) in its nature and is not all-pervasive (Vibhu). It is eternal and is consciousness in its nature. It is separate from Brahman in its phenomenal aspect and one with Brahman in its noumenal aspect without losing its separateness. In the same way Nimbarka holds that the universe is an aspect or effect (Parinâma) of Brahman, as the effect is always only in the cause in another form. The Absolute is God in relation to the Jiva and the universe; these being but aspects of Shakti. The universe is but a finitization and limitation of the Infinite. It is non-separate (Ananya) from Brahman. Brahman is its material cause (Upâdânakârana) as well as its efficient cause (Nimittakârana). But Brahman is not exhausted by the universe and He transcends the universe besides pervading it. Just as a spider spins its cobweb out of itself but is itself all the time, even so does the universe emanate from God.

The Jiva realizes its essential nature and attains emancipation by Jnâna and Bhakti. In Mukti or liberation, the soul is separate from Brahman, but yet it feels itself to be one with Brahman. It is the Lord's servant (Dâsa); but it has the same bliss as the Lord. The soul ceases to regard itself as being apart from Brahman and realizes itself as being a part of Brahman. It is eternal and free from the round of births and deaths (Samsâra) but has no part in the creation, preservation, and destruction of the world.

Thus Jagat is perceived by the desireful mind as being separate from God. The desireless mind will regard itself as a part of God and realize the world as non-separate from God. This will happen only in the Turiya (fourth) state of Samâdhi, which is above and beyond the ordinary three states, viz, Jâgrat (the waking), Svapna (the state of dream), and Sushupti (the state of dreamless sleep). The multiplicity of the things of the phenomenal universe is resolved into the unity of the noumenon in the state of liberation (Mukti). In Mukti the soul becomes omniscient and has infinite bliss, but realizes itself only as a part of Brahman. Thus in liberation there is no extinction of individuality but only its infinitization.

Brahman is both Saguna (with attributes) and Nirguna (without attributes). It is beyond speech and thought and can be apprehended, but cannot be comprehended, by our mind (Achintya). Brahman viewed in relation to the world is Ishvara. The Absolute of philosophy is in no wise separate or different from the God of religion.

The first Adhyâya of the *Brahma-sutras* is known as the Adhyâya of Samanvaya (synthesis). It shows how the different words used in the Shruti refer to Brahman. Pâda I of Adhyâya I discusses the nature of Brahman. Brahman is the cause of the universe and is known only through Shâstra (scripture). The universe is created by God's will (Sankalpa) and not only by the inert blind force of Prakriti. Brahman is bliss and is the innermost soul of all. The Shruti describes Brahman by such terms as Âkâsha, Prâna, Jyotih, etc. Thus the first Pâda is the seed of the tree of Brahnavidyâ. It deals briefly with God and soul and world and their inter-relations.

Pâda II of Adhyâya I pursues the task of Pâda I. It takes up various terms used in the Shruti and shows that they refer to Brahman. Brahman is perfection, light, life, all-devourer, the indwelling spirit in the eye, the

immanent power (Antaryâmi), the invisible, the omnipresent, the subtle, the formless, the Vaishvânara, etc.

Pâda III of Adhyâya I pursues the same discussion further. Brahman is the abode of all, the infinite (Bhoomâ), the indweller, the dweller in the heart, the spirit of the size of the thumb (Angushthamâtra Purusha).

Pâda IV of Adhyâya I examines other Shruti texts and shows that the inanimate Pradhâna cannot be the cause of the universe. The Shakti of God is a mode of God and is not inanimate and independent like the Pradhâna or Prakriti or Avyakta of the Samkhya system. Mahat in the Vedanta is the Universal Ego or Hiranyagarbha and not the Samkhya category of Mahat which is inanimate. The words Asat, Kartâ, Âtmâ, etc., as used in the Shruti texts refer to Brahman. Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. 'सदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत' (Taittiriya Upanishad, II. 7. 1): the world has no separate existence apart from Brahman. It is its apparent separate existence that is an illusion; but it is not an illusion itself as it is only a mode of Brahman.

After thus establishing that the inanimate independent Prakriti of the Samkhya system is not the cause of the universe and that Brahman is the cause of the universe, Adhyâya II refutes the theories of the schools of thought other than the Vedanta system. It is called the Avirodha Adhyâya. Pâda I of Adhyâya II discusses and refutes the Yoga system, etc. Brahman and Jiva are like the ocean and the waves or the sun and its rays. Brahman includes and transcends soul and universe. Brahman creates the universe as the spider weaves its web out of itself and is yet in and beyond the web. Brahman does not need any organs or instruments for creating the universe. Brahman creates the world as a Leelâ or sport and not out of any motive or purpose. Diversity of enjoy-

ment is due to Karma and there is no partiality or cruelty in God.

Pâda II of Adhyâya II refutes the Samkhya and Vaisheshika systems, the various schools of Buddhism, the Jaina schools, the Pâshupata school, etc.

Pâda III of Adhyâya II deals with the order of evolution and involution and the characteristics of the individual soul. The soul is atomic (Anu) and not infinite and all-pervading (Vibhu). If it is Vibhu, it cannot enter or leave bodies. Further, if the souls are infinite there will be intermixture of their Karma and hence confusion in the rewards of Karma. Though it is Anu, its power of sensation relates to the entire body, just as the perfume of a flower or the light of a lamp spreads beyond its locus. The soul and Buddhi are the agent in Karma; but they are governed by the universal soul. The universal soul is in no way affected by the joys and griefs of the individual souls, just as the sun is not affected by its rays falling on the impurities of the earth.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya II discusses the evolution of the senses, the Prâna, etc., from Brahman. They have their presiding deities who are subordinate to God. All material bodies are the result of the commingling of the five elements.

Adhyâya III is called the Sâdhanâ Adhyâya and deals with Sâdhanâs (means of liberation). Pâda I of Adhyâya III refers to the transmigration of the soul. The soul along with the subtle essences of the elements, the senses, the Prânas, the mind, and the Buddhi (forming the Lingasharira) leaves the body. Evil-doers go to hell or take birth in the earth. Sacrifices etc., lead by the Pitriyâna to the Pitri-loka. Devotion leads by the Devayâna to the Brahmaloika. The return journey from the Pitri-loka is described, but there is no return from the Brahmaloika.

Pâda II of Adhyâya III discusses the states of dream and sleep and swoon, the immanent and transcendent aspects of Brahman, and the relation

of Brahman to the individual souls and the universe. Brahman is one with the universe and yet separate from it. He is in the universe and the universe is from Him, and yet He is beyond it.

Pâda III of Adhyâya III describes the various Vidyâs (meditations) prescribed in the Shruti. These differ in form but all of them lead to beatitude. We can meditate on Brahman directly or through some symbol (Pratika) such as the sun, Âkâsha, mind, Prâna, Pranava, the space in the heart, the spirit in the eye, etc. We must meditate on His infinite auspicious attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinite bliss, etc.). The worshipper should concentrate on His oneness with Brahman.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya III teaches that Brahman leads to Mukti and that works are of value as cleansing the mind; they do not directly lead to salvation. The seekers of salvation may

go by the Jnânâ-mârga but should not give up the obligatory duties (Nitya-karma).

The fourth Adhyâya deals with Phala or fruit, i.e., liberation. Pâda I treats of incessant meditation, the conception of Brahman as the self of the meditator, the value of Pratikas (symbols), and the traits of the man of realization.

Pâda II of Adhyâya IV describes the mode of departure of the soul from the body.

Pâda III of Adhyâya IV describes the journey of the liberated soul towards Brahman by the Devayâna (Archirâdimârga). It describes Kramamukti, Jivanmukti, and Videhamukti.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya IV describes the experience of Mukti. The liberated soul may function in a body or, may be, bodies. It has all the powers of Brahman except Jagadvyâpârâtâ, the creation and preservation and dissolution of the universe.

MY EVENINGS WITH THE SWAMI

Dear Miss M.,

CALCUTTA,
5 January 1899.

Swami is looking splendid but is not strong enough yet to come and see me.

The Albert Hall is taken for me for Saturday Feb. 4th. Subject 'Kâli and the Kali worship'. I am going to write out what I have to say and take it to Swami, who will then help me with the solid parts. All I dare pray is that I shall not fail completely to put Kali worship sympathetically before educated Calcutta.

Swami is always asking when we are to have the tea-party which I promised, and which I hope will happen next Monday. He is to stay in Calcutta till April, the doctors say, and then go to Europe. But what an atmosphere of work and energy he has brought with him.

If I had more time, I should want to tell you about my expeditions to the Math and the dear little tea-table in Swami's room, at which I drink tea after my lessons. My lessons are: Wednesday, Botany and Drawing; Friday, Physiology and Sewing.

To-day a new Brahmacharin applied for admission to the Order and was sent on to Belur with a warning about severe discipline.

Did I tell you that I have a class of Christian missionaries? There is a Christian mission (American) school under a lady, on whom I was asked to call. I loved her because she has that lovely American something about her, and she asked me to help them a little in history teaching, on Thursday evenings. So I went last night, and talked for an hour instead of half-an-hour, and she said it was not at all too long.

For Monday's tea-party I must have the tea-set transferred here, and we shall have tea outside in the yard, or, if the pigeons would keep away, on the school verandah, so I shall hurry and get the cushions made.

Yours,

—M. (SISTER NIVEDITA)

THE AGAMASHASTRA OF GAUDAPADA*

BY JATINDRA NATH BANERJEE, M.A.

The author has dedicated the book to 'Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore,' the immortal poet of Bengal, with a Sanskrit Shloka transliterated in English characters. Then come the preface (19 pages), introduction (108 pages), the text of the *Āgamashāstra* (219 pages), appendices (70 pages), and addenda-et-corrigenda (180 pages). There is unmistakable evidence in the book to show that it is the outcome of long and laborious research into the domain of existing literature on the important subject with which it deals, namely, the Advaita Vedānta philosophy. We have, therefore, gone through the book with the care and attention it demands, and we wish we could congratulate the learned author on his bringing out this book, giving his own interpretation of the text of the *Āgamashāstra*, perhaps with the object of adding to the stock of knowledge on the subject and removing all misapprehension. But the principal difficulty in our way is that the book has been written in English and even the Sanskrit Shlokas have been printed in Roman characters; this, we are afraid, will make it extremely difficult, if not wholly impossible, for many of our countrymen, however well versed they may be in Sanskrit lore, to read the Shlokas correctly, as the Roman characters are wholly unsuitable for writing the Sanskrit language in. The English language, we fear, will detract greatly from the value of the book and will make it useless to by far the largest majority of Sanskrit scholars of the country who constitute the repository of

all knowledge of the scriptures but to whom English is an unknown language. Is it then only for the enlightenment of the few English-knowing Sanskrit scholars, who form but a small minority of our Sanskrit scholars, and of the young students of the university, who are being trained up on modern lines, that the author has written this book?

Before dealing further with the book, we think, it is necessary to say a few words about the *Āgamashāstra* of Gaudapada. As is well known, the *Āgamashāstra* of Gaudapada belongs to the Vedānta school of philosophy and, according to that school, its place is only next to that of the Upanishads. Indeed it is regarded as the highest authority next to the Upanishads and as one of the four corner-stones of the ground edifice of Advaita Vedānta, namely, (1) the Upanishads, (2) the works of Brahmarshi Vāśiṣṭha, (3) the works of Vedavyāsa and (4) the works of Gaudapada. It is superfluous to say that the latter three are completely in accordance with the first—the Upanishads. Gaudapada is esteemed by Shankaracharya as 'Puṣyābhīpujya Paramaguru, that is, as the preceptor of preceptors, the most venerable of the venerable preceptors'. For support of his views on very intricate points Shankaracharya in his *Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya* has quoted more than once from Gaudapada as 'a Sampradāyavidhānāchārya, that is, as a professor conversant with the teachings of this particular Advaita school,' as he was the direct disciple of Shukadeva, the son of Vedavyāsa. The greatest work of Gaudapada is the *Māndūkya-upanishad-kārikā*, popularly known as the *Āgamashāstra* of Gaudapada. In order to establish that the Advaita Vedānta is based on a substratum of truth which is unassailable,

* *The Āgamashāstra of Gaudapada*, edited, translated, and annotated by M. M. Vidhushekhara Shastri, Ashutosh Professor of Sanskrit, University of Calcutta. Published by the University of Calcutta. Pp. 435. Price not mentioned.

and to promulgate that truth, Shankaracharya has written commentaries on the three sections of the Vedanta known as the Prasthânatraya, that is, twelve Upanishads, some works of Vedavyasa, such as the *Brahmasutras*, the *Bhagavadgitâ*, *Sanatsujâtiya*, *Vishnu Sahasranâma*, and the *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada. In his other invaluable works also, such as the exposition of the *Nrisimha Uttarâtâpaniya Upanishad*, *Uttaragitâ*, etc., Gaudapada has based his conclusions solely on the Upanishads. Thus Gaudapada was a Vedantist to the core of his heart and his *Âgamashâstra* is unquestionably an authoritative work on the Advaita Vedanta philosophy, and it is a grievous mistake to say, as our learned author does, that it is based merely on traditional doctrines. Not only this, but the learned author also attempts to prove in his own skilful way that this *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada is mostly borrowed from and influenced by the Buddhist philosophy. To arrive at this conclusion, he attempts to show that he has considered the question of indebtedness of the one to the other from the standpoints of both the orthodox and heterodox schools—from the angles of vision of both the Westernized and ancient oriental scholars with an unprejudiced mind. Indeed he has reassessed the whole of the literature which has a bearing on the question, and his collection of information is exhaustive and highly commendable. Through his ardent labour we come to know many things relating to Buddhism and its literature which were hitherto unknown to many like us. But still we are not convinced that the conclusion he has arrived at will be found acceptable by all. We are afraid it will only create controversy when there was none. In our humble opinion, the learned author would have done a great good service to the country if he had directed his undoubted talent and ability to finding out how much the Buddhist philosophy is indebted to the more ancient Hindu philosophy,

how much the savants of the Buddhist school owe their inspiration to the ancient Hindu sages and saints. In compiling and editing the book, the author seems to have not only followed in the footsteps of the Western savants of archæology and antiquity but has surpassed them on many points. Had Macaulay now been in the land of the living, he would certainly have been delighted to see in this book that the fruit which his educational scheme for this country has borne, is far in excess of his own expectation; for in the words of the late Mr. Justice Woodroffe of the Calcutta High Court, only our physique is Indian but the brain is European. The enterprise of our learned author furnishes an incontrovertible evidence of the truth of the great judge's remark.

One cannot but admire the spirit of self-abnegation and humility which the learned author displays in the preface of the book by saying, 'it would be sheer foolishness on my part, I am perfectly conscious, if I pretend to claim by writing the following pages any superiority to the commentator' (Shankaracharya). But it is passing strange that in the same breath he accuses Shankaracharya of having twisted the text of the *Âgamashâstra* to suit his own explanation and rejects the text accepted and explained by that great sage, though it has successfully stood the test of scrutiny for more than a thousand years. Shankaracharya was a man of superhuman intellectual powers. He is said to have finished writing his commentaries when still a young man. It was he who saved the eternal Vedic religion from the onslaughts of Buddhism. To accuse him of having twisted the text of any work to suit his own explanation can only be characterized as a bold assertion. If this is not claiming superiority to Shankaracharya, we have yet to learn what it is. But we forget. In giving his own interpretation to the text of an ancient work, it is certainly necessary for the present author to do the needful to

support that interpretation; and it is evidently for this purpose that our author has thought fit to find fault with the work of Shankaracharya.

We again admire the humility which the author displays by leaving it to his readers to form their own judgement as to how much Gaudapada is influenced by Buddhist thoughts and how much of them he has adopted in his own system of Vedanta, although he is himself absolutely free from all doubts on that point. But let us see the logic he relies upon. His logic is that the similarity of thoughts, expressions, and sometimes even of the language with those of the Buddhists, suggests that Gaudapada is later than many Buddhist writers of the third or the fourth century A.D. and so Gaudapada's indebtedness to the Buddhists is a fact which none can deny. But if similarity of thought can prove the indebtedness of the one to the other, what is there to prevent one from thinking and saying that the Buddhist philosophy is later than Vedanta, is borrowed largely from Vedanta, and is indebted to Vedanta? To prevent the possibility of any such argument being put forward, our learned author proceeds to determine the date of Gaudapada and says that as Gaudapada is not mentioned by any Buddhist writer of an earlier age, he must be assumed to have flourished after them in the fifth century A.D. But can any negative prove the positive which is not diametrically opposite to it? Can the non-mention of Gaudapada in any earlier work prove his posteriority? Indeed such a theory cannot but be dismissed as absurd. Is there any scholar who can assert that he has seen all the literatures of the past? Are these all extant and available? Clearly, therefore, non-mention cannot prove anything with certainty. On the other hand, the Vedic literatures declare in the clearest possible language that Gaudapada was the disciple of Shukadeva, son of Vedavyasa who flourished at the end of the Dwâpara and at the beginning of the Kaliyuga which

is generally believed by Hindu Pandits to be now more than five thousand years old. The author need not rely upon what he calls mere legendary tradition, but regarding the time of Gaudapada, reference may be made to about a dozen of the Purânas in which it is said that Shukadeva had a son named Gaura who is called Gaudapada according to the tradition prevalent among the Advaita Vedanta Sannyâsins. Besides, the *Prakritârthatikâ* on the Shankarabhâshya of *Brahmasutra*, which was written about a thousand years ago, also proclaims Gaudapada as the disciple of Shukadeva and the Bhâshya on *Shvetâshvatarâ Upanishad* also says the same thing. Lastly, we may mention the name of Balakrishna Sarasvati of the seventeenth century who distinctly asserts that Gaudapada existed in the beginning of the Kaliyuga and was the disciple of Shukadeva—a fact which is generally forgotten by men for its antiquity. It is difficult to imagine that these facts are unknown to our learned author who has taken great pains to ascertain the time of Gaudapada, but what has led him to consider these as unbelievable and unworthy of consideration passes our comprehension.

The mention of the word 'Buddha' (*G. Agama.*, 4. 99 Shloka) and such other things does not conclusively prove the posteriority of Gaudapada to Gautama Buddha. According to the Buddhists as well as the Vaidikas many Buddhas came and passed into Nirvana since the first emergence of Buddhism. There was a Buddha in the time of Vedavyasa who has been probably referred to in the *Kârikâ* mentioned above. Hence to conclude that Gaudapada was posterior to Gautama Buddha is nothing but a speculation without any foundation. Thus the conclusion is irresistible that the logic of our learned author is neither sound nor convincing and, perhaps, it will not be far wrong to characterize it as mere sophistry.

Let us now consider if the charge of having borrowed thoughts and ideas

from the Buddhist writers and having been influenced by their writings can at all be correctly laid at the door of any author of any treatise on Vedanta. As every reader of history knows, the Buddhists were looked down upon by the Brahmins and the writings of Udayanacharya, perhaps the greatest Naiyayika ever produced by India, leave no room for doubt on this point. Dharma Kirti, one of the greatest Buddhist logicians of unique merit, was deprecated by Udayana in a very defamatory language. It is the Brahmins, and perhaps the Brahmins only, who greatly enriched it and propagated Buddhist thoughts after embracing Buddhism, but no Buddhist ever served the Brahminic religion in that way. So it is more than evident that the Buddhists borrowed from the Brahminic religion; but the followers of the Brahminic religion neither borrowed from nor were influenced by the Buddhist religion. If we analyse Buddhist philosophy, we find that it is nothing more than an admixture of the Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta which were already existing. As is well known, Gautama Buddha was born in a Kshatriya family and was trained in Vedic thoughts. While practising the art of Yoga under the instructions of Vedic Âchâryas like Arar Kalam, Gautama revolted against his Gurus and, assuming the name of Buddha and Bhagavân which is synonymous with Brahman

of the Upanishads, started the Buddhist religion—and yet it is regarded as an original religion. Gautama Buddha himself was not very antagonistic to the Vedic religion but the converts to his religion and their followers and disciples began to throw mud at the religion of their forefathers for reasons known to themselves alone. That is the way with all who change the religion in which they were born as we see even in these days. It is only under the influence of the present careless system of education that we have learnt to admire the Buddhist religion which was driven out of India by our ancestors and to condemn our own religion as leading only to degeneration, in other words, to a state more than total destruction. It is, therefore, deeply to be regretted that a Brahmin who is reputed to be a Pandit engaged in the sacred work of imparting education to young men in whom all the future hope of the Hindu race lies, has come forward to say that the Vedanta philosophy is a thing borrowed from the Buddhists in total disregard of all evidence to the contrary. Consideration of space forbids our dealing further with the book, and we must, therefore, conclude here; but before doing so we must congratulate the author for placing before the public all that can be said as to the indebtedness of the Vedanta philosophy to the Buddhist philosophy which requires refutation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The Editor makes bold to differ from the accepted theory that the progress of religion lies in conversion, and asserts that the best way of ensuring spiritual advancement is to *Stop Conversion* . . . Swami Saradanandaji's scientific study of Shri Ramakrishna's life reveals the fact that it fulfils *The Need of the Age*. . . Mr. U. C. Bhattacharya, Curator

of the Rajputana Museum, makes an original contribution to the interpretation of the *Sculpture Representing 'Mother and Child'*. . . Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri makes a brief, comparative study of Nimbarkacharya's philosophy. . . Was Gaudapada indebted to Nagarjuna? is a complicated question. Mr. J. N. Banerjee throws much light on it.

UNTOUCHABILITY

In a short but enlightening article in the last number of *The Hindusthan Review* on 'Nambudiris', a community of orthodox brahmins belonging to Malabar, Mr. T. S. Paducone observes:

These people are strict vegetarians and they are well known for their orthodox views of religion. They consider themselves polluted by the touch of all castes below them and by the approach of all lower than the Nayars. A member of the depressed classes uncovers himself to the waist at the sight of a Nambudiri, and shouts out in warning that he is an untouchable. The brahmin likewise exclaims 'Ho'. An untouchable is expected to move to a safe distance and let the Nambudiri pass.

The curse of untouchability which is prevalent in a virulent form even to-day in some sections of Hindu society, as is evident from the above, is undoubtedly one of the main obstacles that stand in the way of our national regeneration. Hinduism never identified spirituality with caste which is purely a social institution and which has its own purpose to serve. To class a large section of our fellow men belonging to the lower castes as 'untouchables' on the ground that they are culturally far below the higher castes, and to treat them as worse than animals is nothing short of gross injustice and oppressive tyranny. It is all the more deplorable that such an iniquitous custom should be prevailing among the learned and cultured sections of the higher castes who are usually the custodians of wealth and power. Swami Vivekananda expressed himself vehemently against untouchability and repeatedly called upon the higher castes to be more sympathetic and tolerant towards their poor and less fortunate countrymen. The Swami, in one of his lectures at Madras, said:

Was there ever a sillier thing before in the world than what I saw in Malabar country? The poor pariah is not allowed to pass through the same street as the high-caste man, but if he changes his name to a hodge-podge English name, it is all right; or to a Muhammedan name, it is all right. What inference would you draw except that these Malabaris are all lunatics, their homes so many lunatic asylums, and that they are

to be treated with derision by every race in India until they mend their manners and know better. Shame upon them that such wicked and diabolical customs are allowed.

'Untouchability' has no religious or scriptural sanction whatever, and can have no place in the resurgent Hindu society traditionally known for its ideals of love, toleration, and the divinity of man. To quote Swami Vivekananda again,

See that you do not lose your lives in this dire irreligion of 'Don't-touchism'. Must the teaching 'Looking upon all beings as your own self' be confined to books alone? How will they grant salvation who cannot feed a hungry mouth with a crumb of bread? How will those who become impure at the mere breath of others purify others?

The sad spectacle that we see even to-day of large numbers of the lower caste people leaving the Hindu fold to join the ranks of the Christian and Muhammedan communities is a direct result of this social repression. Untouchability is gradually disappearing from its very haunts. In Travancore State temples were thrown open to all sections of Hindus, though the vested interests were much perturbed over it. But it is a pity, as the writer observes in conclusion, that untouchability, in a crude form, should still persist among the Nambudiri brahmins who are renowned for their Sanskrit learning and whose community produced the great Shankaracharya.

HINDUISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

In his Convocation Address to the Annamalai University, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetti made some observations regarding the necessity for voluntary social service in the reconstruction of our society on a sound basis. We take the relevant portion as it has appeared in *The Hindu*:

The speaker pointed out how voluntary social service by individuals can supplement and facilitate in their own way, the larger schemes for social security and human happiness now on the anvil. In his own experience he had come across the silent and unostentatious work done by Christian missionaries and nuns in remote and unheard of villages and hamlets; and he had

often asked himself the question 'Why is it that in spite of all its great philosophy the Hindu religion has not kindled this spirit in the hearts of its votaries?' The missionary spirit of social service seemed to be alien to their temperament and upbringing. Was it because Hinduism was not a proselytizing religion and they needed the zeal of the preacher to feel the call for service? Somehow this explanation did not satisfy him.

A tree is known by its fruit. If Hindus are not imbued with the missionary spirit of social service then Hindu religion is to blame for not having kindled this spirit. So also if Christian nations have been fighting one another for pelf and power, and oppressing weaker nations in violation of the principles of truth, love, and charity, their religion is responsible. But the failure of the Hindu to live up to the ideals of his religion can no more be attributed to Hinduism than the failure of the Christian to walk in the path of God be attributed to Christianity. To the Hindu, religion is realization of Truth, and social service is but the means to reach the ideal. In Hinduism service rendered towards the removal of physical wants or fetching of material comforts is not looked upon as the highest type of service to man. Hindu philosophy has placed before man the highest ideal of service, cover-

ing all mankind, irrespective of race, colour, or creed. The path of Karma Yoga as taught in the Bhagavadgita enables us to work for the good of society as well as self-purification through non-attachment and self-abnegation. Moreover, the rational basis of all ethics is founded on the Vedanta philosophy. 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' is not simply a moral code. Hindu philosophers tell us that the same divinity pervades all beings and that by loving or hating another we love or hate ourselves. Christian missions have been doing good work in India. But they are not unoften inspired by motives other than purely humanitarian. It is said that religion makes men indifferent to the sufferings of humanity. But the urge to unselfish service comes only when the true religious spirit dawns in the life of a man. In ancient India religious life aimed at preparing every individual for negation of his little self in the interests of the family, the community, and the country. If Hindus practise, in the right spirit, what their religion teaches, our society need have no dearth of sincere workers possessing the proper attitude to service.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE JOURNAL OF THE GANGANATH JHA RESEARCH INSTITUTE. BOARD OF EDITORS—PROF. R. D. RANADE, DR. A. SIDDIQU, MM. DR. UMESH MISHRA. *Allahabad. Pp. 143.*

THE BHARATI. EDITORS—BALASHASTRI HARDAS, PROF. D. K. GARDE. *Published by Bharatiya Sanskriti Vidyapeetha, Nagpur. Pp. 44. Annual subscription Rs. 4.*

U. S. A. *Published by the Government of the United States of America. Pp. 64. Price 3 annas per copy.*

We heartily welcome all these three magazines and wish them every success.

The Journal of the G.J.R.I. is devoted mainly to research in Sanskrit and Persian. We have every hope that this quarterly

journal will keep bright the tradition created by the illustrious scholar whose memory it perpetuates. The first issue amply justifies our expectation. The first article *Kalpa or the World-cycle* by Dr. R. Shama Sastry arrives at the conclusion that 'a Kalpa in its origin meant an eclipse-cycle of nearly 19 years and not a period of 1,000 divine Yugas of 4,32,000 years'. Dr. S. K. Belvalkar in his article *A Fake (?) Bhagavadgita Ms.*, examines the claim of the newly discovered Gitas with 745 stanzas to be recognized as more genuine than the one with 700 stanzas commented on by Shankara and others. The eminent scholar finds no substantial reason for not condemning the former as spurious. There are also other scholarly articles by Dr. S. N. Sen, Prof. M. Hiriyanna, Dr. S. K. De, Dr. B.

Bhattacharyya, Captain S. M. Zamin Ali, Dr. S. M. Katre, and others.

The Bharati is also devoted mainly to research and interpretation of the ancient culture from the Hindu point of view. When Western scholarship tries to ride roughshod over the traditions and beliefs of the Hindus and wants to reconstruct Indian history in its own way, a journal of the type of *The Bharati* is by no means superfluous.

The *U. S. A.* condenses articles on various subjects from the magazines of the United States of America, and aims at giving a true picture of that country's war efforts. The magazine is profusely illustrated. It is calculated to promote good understanding between India and America. We wish, however, that it included some articles on cultural subjects, so that India could understand the inner life of America as well.

CRISIS OF THE MODERN WORLD.

BY RENE GUENON. *Published by Luzac & Co., 46. Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1. Pp. 170. Price: paper Rs. 3-8; cloth Rs. 6.*

René Guénon is a *liaison* officer between the East and the West, between the traditional culture of the hoary past and the modern civilization, between the universal metaphysics and materialism that has *de facto* overthrown intellectuality and banished spirituality. This *liaison* officer may very reasonably be counted as one of the few who, in his own language, are a 'prolongation of the Eastern elects'. His recent book *The Crisis of the Modern World* presents a very thought-provoking and serious review of the modern crisis. This splendid diagnosis of the modern chaos by this philosophical bi-linguist, equally versed in Eastern lore and Western philosophy, naturally commands a serious and thorough study by all who are in the least interested in the welfare of the worried world.

The modern world is in the throes of a crisis, and even some go so far as to be haunted by the idea of the 'end of the world'. Such reflections and anticipations are not too surprising if attention is riveted keenly on the real nature of the present world. It is the 'Dark Age'—Kaliyuga—in which we are living. The disequilibrium is too 'profane' to be overlooked. Europe, according to Guénon, has diverged from its traditional path since the thirteenth century, which marks the beginning of the 'disruption of Christendom', of the decadence of the modern civilization. And the 'Renaissance' *ipso facto* was 'not a rebirth but the death of many things'.

Thereafter there is only 'profane' philosophy and 'profane' science; religion has

disintegrated into verbal moralism—'modern man, instead of attempting to raise himself to truth, claims to drag truth down to his own level'; philosophy is building its edifice on quibbles and ill-framed propositions; reality is identified with nothing but sensible things; science is limited to things that can be measured, counted, and weighed; scientific research has lost its purity—disinterestedness; intellectual ambition has been limited to inventing and constructing machines; industry has become the justification of science! Man has become 'a tool for making tools'; utilitarianism has become the main motive power or the only spring of action; history has become superfluous; instead of the feudal system, democracy is introduced, which prefers quantity to quality, the masses to the elect; commercial relations far from drawing peoples closer together and bringing about an understanding have become the source of struggles and conflicts; the economic field is that of rival interests. Materialistic outlook on life, observes the writer, has thus exteriorized itself in every field of our action, calling it 'progress—deformed to the point of caricature'! These are, surely, descriptions of an utter confusion and crisis; and as a result of these the whole of the human world is embroiled in a war, the inhumanity of which is unknown to human history.

It is a hopeful sign, as noticed by the author, that some of us who are inclined to contemplation are fed up with this sort of things and are sure that these evils are but the repercussions of our own materialistic civilization, our disregard for tradition, and last but not the least our lack of principle—a higher principle which should always guide our actions. The author assures that it is not too late even now to go back to tradition whereby the Western civilization could be saved from complete dissolution. It is essential here to remark that by modern civilization he means that sort of civilization which is advocated in the West in our time and which is also followed by those of the East who are influenced by the ideas that are Western, and by dissolution he means the complete end of this civilization either accidentally or in a cataclysm. He invites an 'attempt to restore something comparable to what existed in the Middle Ages, with the differences demanded by modifications in the circumstances'. Secondly, he calls for a 'Defence of West' against *itself* and *its own* perversities, tendencies and confused activities, that will lead inevitably to ruin and destruction. It is highly satisfying to note that the author has just understood the Indian standpoint which impels him to write: '. . . East (India specially)

has no thought of attacking or dominating anybody and asks no more than to be left in independence and tranquillity—a not unreasonable demand, one must admit.' The author looks forward to the East as the repository of all the good and noble of the past. He believes that the traditional civilization still exists in the East, and the East can by virtue of its noble features alleviate the Western malady. Thirdly, he warns us against feverish commotion and craving for speed in which we are living. He appeals for a more contemplative life without which everything will turn monstrous as it is to-day. Fourthly, science should be disinterested. It should not be a mere means to the satisfaction of the ends acclaimed by pragmatism. Fifthly, 'individualism, inasmuch as it implies the negation of intellectual intuition which is essentially a super-individual faculty,' should be discarded. Sixthly, philosophy should not be identified with rationalism and religion must be strictly differentiated from verbal moralism. Religion should cease to be a theory and should be treated as a practical science. Finally, in the social order he pleads for the 'really intellectual elects' instead of democracy, and restoration of intellectuality instead of narrow utilitarianism. And above all, our whole outlook on life should be changed. Materialism should be thrown off. Spirituality needs a focus. Spirituality and intellectuality are the very watchwords of Guénon's philosophy.

Materialism cannot restore peace and happiness—it can cause struggle and conflict only. He is a believer in hope, love, and charity—an advocate of truth, God, and spirituality and the higher values of life. The Western civilization can escape from the fast approaching collapse only by 'realizing Catholicism in the true sense of the word.' He affirms that the West can only achieve these remedies if it knocks at the door of the East whence will come the flood of light that will dispel the present gloom of the West. 'The Orientals,' he says, 'are not a menace to the West in any way whatsoever,' contrarily, they are the savants, of humanity, civilization and culture. Their adherence to intellectuality, devotion to Truth and affinity with tradition bespeak their brightest features that should guide the West at this hour of crisis.

SANSKRIT—ENGLISH

NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS. BY SWAMI TYAGISHANANDA. *Published by Shri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 251. Price Rs. 2-8.*

The aphorisms of Narada on the philosophy of Bhakti are too well known to need any introduction. Here is an excellent

translation into English of these Sutras, with word-for-word meaning, and elaborate notes. The text is given in the original, divided into five sections under different headings. The word-for-word meaning and English rendering follow the text in each section. Copious notes, covering over two hundred pages of the book, prefaced by a lucid introduction, form the special feature of this work. It is not all uncritical appreciation and elucidation of the textual standpoint, but a thorough and thoughtful study of the sublime path of divine love. The much misunderstood relation between Shri Krishna and the Gopies has been helpfully discussed and explained in its true light. Suitable quotations from a large number of original works on Bhakti and kindred works of other religions are inserted wherever necessary. We gladly welcome this practical contribution to Bhakti literature and commend it to all those devoted to the spiritual life.

THE BHAGAVADGITA. *Published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 370. Price 4 As. (Board 6 As.).*

We welcome this pocket edition of the Bhagavadgita with Sanskrit text and English rendering in popular style. It also contains an introduction and textual synopsis as also an article bearing on the subject matter, all by Jayadayal Goyandka.

HINDI

GITA PRABANDH (ESSAYS ON THE GITA). PART I. BY SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Grantha Mala, 16, Rue Debassin De Richement, Pondicherry. Pp. 402. Price Rs. 4.*

There is in philosophy no more neat and superb exposition of human life than the Gita. It is a clarion call to the suffering humanity for action in the midst of worldly confusion. Lord Shri Krishna's message to Arjuna is a multitude of celestial flames that never go out. They shed an eternal light of wisdom and hold out a fervent hope to the world which has lost its track in the labyrinths of sectarianism.

The Gita has been a favourite theme for the thinkers of the East and the West. Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Gita is more rational than those of most of the other modern thinkers, for he has analysed the Gita most psychologically from the view-point of its practicability to the drama of human life.

The present volume is a Hindi translation of the first part of Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita* first written in the *Arya* and subsequently brought forth in the form of a book. It is divided into twenty-four

chapters dealing with every important aspect of the Gita and presents a most practical solution to the problems of human life. The best part of the book lies in its direct approach to Truth by means of illustrations culled from the Gita itself. It is thus an intensive study of life, which throws open the door of happiness through action.

I am confident, every student of the Gita will find the exposition of Sri Aurobindo most intelligent and practical to his life and circumstances. The Hindi translation has kept up the dignity of the original writing, and it is a volume welcome to the readers of our mother tongue.

R. K. VARMA

NEWS AND REPORTS

SOME NEW ACTIVITIES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

In spite of great hardship and struggle through which the Mission is passing during this war it has on its record the addition of some important branches of its activities besides expansion of the existing ones in various directions. Below is given a brief account of its newly started works during the last few years.

The Ramakrishna Mission Shri Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras

The Ramakrishna Mission Shri Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras, was started in 1939 with the following objects:

1. To provide the nucleus for a Hindu convent under the Ramakrishna Mission.
2. To provide a Home for poor and destitute widows, and to give them such education and training as will qualify them to earn an independent living and live a life of dedicated service.
3. To provide all facilities for the education of girls through schools and hostels conducted on sound traditions of character training and moral and religious instruction co-ordinated with intellectual and physical culture.

The institution has for the present three sections, the High School, the Training School, and the Elementary School.

The strength of the High School, the Training School, and the Elementary School in December, 1942 were 597, 207, and 198 respectively.

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras

A Technical section for the training of electricians, fitters, and carpenters was run by the Madras Students' Home at its newly constructed Workshop at Tyagarayanagar and the Home Workshop at Mylapore, the number of its students being 346 (fitters 275, electricians 17, machinists 36, and turners 18).

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaikenpalayam (Dt. Coimbatore)

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaikenpalayam, Dt. Coimbatore opened a Teachers' Training School in a newly constructed building on 17 August, 1942.

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar (Behar)

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Behar, revived its Vocational Section (Tailoring, Typewriting, Fine Arts) since July, 1943.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Pitha, Belur Math

Swami Vivekananda wanted to build up at the Mission Headquarters at Belur a centre of learning, the principal objects of which would be to impart, after the model of the ancient Gurukula system, that type of education to our youngmen by which their character would be formed and they would be able to stand on their own feet in the struggle of life. Following in the footsteps of the Swami the Ramakrishna Mission made an humble beginning in that direction in the early part of 1941 and started the Sarada Pitha as one of its branch centres on an extensive plot of land adjacent to the Belur Math premises.

The Sarada Pitha includes in its comprehensive scheme two main sections—general and technical. In the general section, in addition to all the advantages of modern university education, the boys will get ample opportunity of imbibing our ancient culture in its depth and fulness, and in its technical section it will train up boys in various productive industries and impart commercial and technical education to them so as to equip them for an independent career in trades, manufactures, and such other pursuits. It is hoped that in the fulness of time it will accommodate various other branches of oriental and occidental learning as well.

As a first step towards the materialization of this broad scheme, the Sarada Pitha started in its general section an Inter-

mediate Arts College of a residential character, in July 1941, under the designation of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira.

Advantage was also taken of the Government's scheme to train up various kinds of technicians, and early in 1942 the technical section of the Sarada Pitha came into existence. This department which is now training nearly 250 boys in different trades, if adequately financed, is sure to make good progress in the future. A comprehensive syllabus of selected trades suitable to the needs of the country will soon be drawn up. The construction of a large workshop, an administrative block, and two hostel blocks for the technicians are nearing completion.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,
18, Jadoo Lal Mullick Road, Calcutta*

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at 18, Jadoo Lal Mullick Road, Calcutta was started this year as a hostel for college students.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home,
Bankura, Bengal*

The building for the Saradananda Students' Home has been completed.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis
Clinic, New Delhi*

The Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, acquired in 1941 some plots of land from the Delhi Improvement Trust in order to have a permanent home for the Clinic and its residential staff. The foundation stone of the Clinic was laid in November, 1941; but the construction of the building has been held up for emergency reasons due to the war.

A new scheme known as the 'Home Treatment Scheme' was started in August, 1942

and continued till the end of the year. This scheme is now going to be a part of the regular work of the Clinic as the Government has sanctioned an additional grant for the work.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Maternity Clinic,
Jalpaiguri, Bengal*

A separate building for the Maternity Clinic was constructed in 1942 in co-operation with the Government of Bengal and the work was shifted to the new premises in the beginning of the present year.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Indoor Hospital,
Taki, 24-Parganas, Bengal*

An indoor hospital known as the Swami Shivananda Sevashrama, founded in 1937 by Dr. Ajit Nath Roy Choudhury, a very well-known and sacrificing Zemindar of Taki, came under the management of the Mission in 1940. A maternity ward has also been added to it in 1942 under the name of the 'Kamini Mohan Memorial Maternity Ward'.

*The Kankurgachhi Yogodyana (near
Calcutta)*

The Kankurgachhi Yogodyana, where also the relics of Shri Ramakrishna Deva are preserved and worshipped, was transferred to the Trustees of the Belur Math on Monday, the 12th April, 1943. Regular Pujâ, religious discourses, publication of the books of Dr. Ram Ch. Dutta on the life and teachings of Shri Ramakrishna form its special features.

Foreign Work

A temporary Vedanta Society under the leadership of Swami Yatiswarananda was started at Philadelphia (U.S.A.) during the latter period of the year 1942.

BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna falls on February 25, 1944.