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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

SUBDUING THE SENSES

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

May such zeal and yearning never leave you. Everybody should yearn for progress and for attainment of love of God and the goal of human life by leading a pure life. I am much delighted to learn that you have such sincere yearning. My humble prayer to the Lord is that He may give you strength. It is extremely difficult to subdue the senses; but there is no other way. You have asked which sense should be subdued first, but the Lord has said that all the senses have to be brought under control. Having restrained all of them,' etc. Manu says that if only one of the senses remain uncontrolled, it steals away all judgement, even as all water oozes out unnoticed from an unbaked clay pitcher.

If only one among the senses leaks, all judgement is drained away by it like water from an unbaked earthen pitcher (Manu, II. 99).

So all the senses have to be subdued. And though all of them are strong, there is no doubt that palate and sex are the chief among them. It is said

in the *Bhāgavata*, too, that one cannot be termed a victor of the senses, though he has conquered all, but not the palate.

A man is not a victor of the senses until he has conquered the palate, though he might have conquered all the rest. When the palate is subdued, everything is conquered. (*Bhāgavata*, XI. viii. 21).

So the palate has to be subdued first. But the Lord has also expressed differently in the following way:

Objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing behind. But his longing ceases, who sees the Supreme. (*Gita*, II. 59).

If one devotes oneself to spiritual practices by fasting etc., the objects may fall away, but not the longing for them. The attachment goes only when God is realized. As our Master used to say, 'A man who has tasted candy syrup loses all taste for treacle.' That is to say, if one can love God, human love loses all appeal. One should love Him. Then sense-objects will not have any more appeal and will appear as trash. 'The more one advances to the

east, the more is the west left behind.' Similarly the more you will advance towards God, the more the sense-objects will fall behind of themselves without any attempt at renouncing them. This is the secret. The essential thing is to call on God. No attempt at subduing desires or the senses will be needed, they will be conquered automatically.

Devotion to God means surrendering life and mind and everything to Him. He should be the darling of the heart. The heart should yearn for Him cent per cent. One has to weep for not realizing Him, for not being able to love Him. In that case alone He will draw you unto Him. His mercy is necessary, nothing will be attained without His mercy. But as the Master used to say, 'He advances a hundred steps nearer if one takes a step towards Him.' He has infinite mercy. This is

the only hope. Try to love Him by surrendering your heart and soul and all to Him. You will discover how merciful He is. Dress and food do not matter much. There is no harm in satisfying petty desires, but there should be discrimination. You should see that no particular attachment develops for anything but God. Holy company, books which deal with divine subjects, keeping away from evil company—these are necessary for the growth of devotion. Try to progress towards the Lord in this way and you will have no cause for fear. Taking refuge in Him, one is delivered from all anxiety and trouble. The Lord's words are:

Take refuge in Him with all thy heart,
O Bhârata ; by His grace shalt thou attain
supreme peace (and) the eternal abode.
(Gita, XVIII, 62).

What more? Take refuge in Him
and you will be ever blissful.

HINDUISM ABROAD (I)

BY THE EDITOR

I

The introduction of Hindu thoughts, especially Hindu religious thoughts, outside India, and their subsequent progress and vicissitudes, transformation and decline, triumph and defeat are an interesting study, which brings to light the inherent strength and weakness of Hinduism. In strange lands Hinduism often stands aloof for a time as a model for an alternative course of life appealing increasingly to the higher minds, and then its best features are brought into bold relief; or from the very beginning it percolates gradually into the foreign society by a process of give and take, and then is demonstrated its power of adaptability; or it may be in open conflict with unknown modes of thought, and then is tested its strength to withstand onslaughts.

From such a comparative examina-

tion of Hinduism we become aware of the circumstances that are favourable to its growth, of the ways and means which promoted its cause in the past, and of the fortuitous pitfalls and natural drawbacks that ultimately spelt disaster, till Hinduism withdrew itself progressively from foreign lands to take up an untenable defensive position in its homeland. Research in the field is still in its infancy. But the materials already available are so varied and extensive that it is impossible to do full justice to the subject in one or two articles. But the subject is arresting, for who is not inspired by the achievements of his forbears? Besides, no quest can be wholly useless, particularly if it can arouse interest for further investigation. We, therefore, propose here to make a hurried survey of Hinduism in various countries from the historical point of view. And in a subsequent

article we shall try to ascertain why Hinduism failed to retain the position won by it through long centuries. We begin with South-east Asia. For here the triumphal march of Hinduism was most striking, and available data throw a flood of light on its different phases.

Kambuja, Champa, Siam, Sumatra, Java, Bali, Burma, and the Malay Peninsula were not culturally far advanced when they came into contact with Indian thought. Hinduism came to Funan or old Cambodia probably by way of Java. The legendary Hindu contact dates back to not later than the first century A.D., when Kaundinya (Houen-t'ien of the Chinese), an Indian Brahmin, obtained the sovereignty of Funan through his marriage with Somâ, a *Nâgi* princess of the land. An old Khmer legend speaks of Java Brahmins (*Cheva-pre'ahm*) coming to Kambuja to found a kingdom. They had long hair and a dark complexion and claimed to be Brahmins from Vârânasi (Parea-nosey). A second Kaundinya, coming also from India was 'chosen king' by the people of Funan in about the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth century A.D. 'He changed all the rules according to the methods of India.' His dynasty added the title Varman to their names.

Kambuja (Chenla of the Chinese) soon threw off the yoke of Funan under Kambu who married the *Apsarâ* Merâ. Thenceforward Kambuja had a most glorious career. The State religion was most often Shaivism, though Vaishnavism and Mahayana Buddhism had their due share of importance. The two great architectural achievements of Kambuja, which still strike wonder, are the Bayon tower in Angkor Thom (Nagara Dhâma) or the great city founded by Yashovarman who ascended the throne in 889 A.D., and Angkor Vat built probably during the reign of Suryavarman II (1112-1152), the architect of the latter being Divâkara, the spiritual teacher of three successive kings. The former enshrined Shiva and the latter Vishnu, though images of other Hindu

and Buddhist deities were also in evidence. There were other Shiva and Vishnu temples in the land, and Buddhist shrines were by no means rare. In religion the Khmer people arrived at a syncretism in which Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism played equally important parts, though Shaivism had always the place of honour. Sanskrit was greatly in use, though Khmer literature flourished side by side. The *Dharmashâstra* of Manu formed, and still forms, the basis of Cambodian law, although the Brahminic code has been considerably modified by Buddhist influence and local customs. Khmer art and architecture were influenced by those of the India of the Guptas, the Pallavas, and the early Chalukyas. How thoroughly Kambuja was saturated with Hinduism can be gathered from the following account:

The kings, nobles, and priests had Sanskrit names. The Pandits of the royal court wrote the inscriptions . . . in elegant Sanskrit. Princes were educated by their Gurus in the Siddhântas (mathematics and astronomy), the Sanskrit grammar (especially the works of Panini and Patanjali), the *Dharma-shâstras*, the different systems of philosophy, etc. . . . Vedic sacrifices like the *Mahâ-homa*, *Laksha-homa*, *Koti-homa*, etc., were performed by the monarchs. The Vedas (especially the *Atharvaveda*) and the *Vedângas* were carefully studied. The invocations to Shiva in the earliest inscriptions show knowledge of the Vedanta. Daily recitations, without interruption, of the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata*, and the *Purânas* are referred to in a sixth century inscription. (*Indian Influence in Cambodia* by Bijanraj Chatterji, p. 237).

By the end of the fifteenth century, the Cambodian kingdom disintegrated as a result of continuous thrust from Siam, which had thenceforward a triumphal march; and with this, Hinayanism came to the forefront and Hinduism and Buddhism speedily declined.

The history of Champa (Annam) is very similar to that of Cambodia. We are told that a mythical Bhrigu came down from heaven at Shiva's behest to consecrate the Linga of Shambhubhadreshvara, which was later on taken care of by Uroja who also came down at Shiva's command to found a king-

dom. The later kings trace their descent from Uroja. Champa seems to have come under Hindu influence in the first century A.D. Thenceforward Hinduization progressed rapidly. The kings were Hindus. Each one of the fifty kings of Champa who ruled from the seventh to the thirteenth century A.D., bore names ending in Varman. Sanskrit was greatly in use. The art and architecture, although not directly derivable from Indian sources, were greatly influenced by the latter. Shaivism was the ruling creed, though other faiths, as in Kambuja, had honoured places. The Hindu kings tried to advance the cause of Hinduism and maintain contact with India. Thus Bhadravarman built the temple of Bhadreshvara at Mi-son; and his son and successor Gangaraja abdicated in order to spend his last days on the banks of the Ganges.

Siamese tradition has it that two Brahmins, after having peopled two villages with their offspring, selected a king, Pathanaraja, and then retired from the world for *tapasyâ*. Finds of Brahminical deities in Siam testify to the fact that there was considerable Hindu influence in the early days and that there was a large Hindu population. Siam acknowledged for a time the suzerainty of Kambuja. The first Siamese royal dynasty was established at Sukhadaya in 1218 A.D., the first historical king being Indrâditya. An inscription of Râmarâja, the third king, which is dated 1293 A.D., mentions temples with Buddha's images, monasteries with Buddhist monks, and a *Mahâtherâ* versed in the Tripitaka. Siam of those days had religious affiliation with Ceylon, from which country she invited missionaries, and it was Siamese Hinayanism, as noted above, which spread over Kambuja during the latter's decline. Vestiges of Indian culture still linger in Siam in art, architecture, names of offices, loan words, etc.

Hinduism entered into Arakan from Eastern India, and there is strong evi-

dence to show that Hinduized Mahayanism infiltrated into Pagan from the same region. Brahminical gods and goddesses like Shiva, Vishnu, Durga, Ganesha, etc., were well known as is evidenced, among others, by the Nat Hlaung Kyaung of Pagan which enshrined Vishnu, and which is the only Hindu temple that has withstood the ravages of time. Prome (Pisanu Myo = city of Vishnu) was an important centre of Hindu culture. Brahminism seems to have made its mark in lower Burma at least as early as the sixth century A.D. and continued to exert its influence up till the fourteenth century, though it does not seem to have caught the imagination of the masses who were mostly Buddhists. Lower Burma was under the sway of a Hinduized dynasty, known as the Vikrama dynasty, during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries of the Vikrama era. In Thaton, the land of the Talaings (Trikalunga), the people must have immigrated from Andhra-Kalinga, Tamralipta having played an important part as a port of exit. Legend associated two *Râjarshis* with the founding of the kingdom of Thaton. But Thaton acknowledged Hinayanism during the palmy days of Pagan. And when Anawrahta (Aniruddha of Pagan), who came to the throne in 1044 A.D., conquered Thaton in 1057 A.D., Thaton took its cultural vengeance on the conquering country by elbowing out both Hinduism and Mahayanism.

II

We have followed the fate of Hinduism in the Mon-Khmer countries. We now turn to the Malay Peninsula and the Malay Archipelago. The Malay civilization which was rudimentary in character, was greatly enriched by the Hindu civilization, though research has not been able to unearth all the connecting links of this transformation. From a Chinese account it can be gathered that Hinduism and with it Sanskrit reached the Peninsula by the

second century A.D. The Chinese records also refer to Hindu kingdoms (fifth century A.D.) in places which can now be identified with Keddah, Pahang, etc. The kings of Pahang added Varman to their names. We hear also of a king named Shri Varanarendra who sent an embassy to the Chinese Emperor Hia-Wu (454-465 A.D.). In addition to these evidences, actual remains of a Hindu temple (c. fourth century A.D.) have been discovered at the foot of the Keddah Peak, from which it is inferred that the people professed the Shaiva faith, for the images of Durgâ (?), Ganesha, and Nandi, as well as Yoni have been recovered from the temple, which has also yielded a Sanskrit inscription. At Perak, again, a seal with the name of a Hindu prince Shri Vishnuvarman has been discovered. At Phra No hill has been found a fine Vishnu image (c. sixth century A.D.). An old brick sanctuary at Caiya or Jaya is believed to have enshrined Shiva or Vishnu, though Buddha was introduced there as a secondary god.

There are also a few Brahminical temples in Nakhon Shri Thammarat where 'Hindu ceremonial was performed until about thirty years ago, and which are still in the care of a small colony of Brahmanas of Indian descent'. (R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarnadvipa*, Part II, p. 149).

One of these temples contains bronze images of Hindu gods such as Ganesha and Natarâja. In Malacca there is an image of Makara, perhaps the sole remnant of a Hindu temple.

Sumatra received her Hindu civilization very early; it may have begun two centuries before Christ. Sumatra is probably no other than the Suvarnadvipa of the Hindus. Sumatra attained her international fame under her Shailendra kings, whose domains often included the Malay Peninsula and almost all the Indonesian islands. They waged war against Ceylon and South India, though the Cholas had often the better of them. Java, too, in later days extended her supremacy in

Sumatra. The Shailendra kings of Shri-vijaya were Buddhists leaning to Tantrayana. But Hinayanism prevailed in the island along with Hinduism till Muhammedanism made short work of both. The highlands of Padang and Tapanuli contain the ruins of many Hindu temples, from which have been recovered Hindu images in stone. Such remains, though rare, are found in other places as well.

The remains of Hindu culture discovered in Borneo carry us back to the early centuries of the Christian era. At Muara Kaman, three day's journey above Pelarang along the Mahakam river, has been found a golden image of Vishnu besides inscriptions (c. 400 A.D.) which mention Hindu kings like Mulavarman, Kundunga (Kaundinya?), Ashvavarman. Mulavarman performed a sacrifice called Vahu-suvarnakam, and made a gift of 20,000 cows. The Kameng cave in East Borneo has yielded some Hindu images (c. fourth century A.D.) which were secreted there, presumably as a protection against vandals. These include images of Shiva, Ganesha, Brahmâ, Skanda, Nandi, Agastya, and Mahâkalâ. There was indeed a flourishing period of Hinduization in Borneo. But later history could not fulfil the earlier promise, and Borneo lapsed back to savagery.

In Java, too, Hinduism had a chequered career, but it was fortunate enough to leave on the Javanese culture a more indelible mark. Before the advent of Hinduism Java was animistic, and animism still forms the basis of popular beliefs. The first beginnings of Hindu culture in Western Java can be traced back to the early days of the Christian era, though it did not persist later than the sixth century when it vanished leaving few traces. In middle Java, however, the influence of Indian culture became very pronounced by the seventh century. Shaivism predominated in the Javanese court. Early Javanese history knows little of Bud-

dhism and much less of its Hinayanic manifestations. Hiuen-tsang noted in the fifth century A.D., that the country was predominantly Hindu. Mahayanism of the *tāntrika* school came later and became fused with Hinduism. Thus Kertangara, one of the kings, received the posthumous title of Shiva-Buddha. Buddhism seems to have flourished under the Sumatran rule, but when the country asserted her independence under the eastern Javanese kings in 860 A.D., Shaivism came into prominence, though it was very tolerant of Buddhism. One of the earliest law books of the Javanese is *Shiva-shâsana* (991 A.D.). Another law book entitled *Kutâra-mânava* is largely based on the *Manu-samhitâ*. Indonesia had her own version of the *Mahâbhârata* as well, and both the great epics of India supplied the *motifs* for Javanese art and architecture and themes for dramas.

Java has left many traces of her architectural greatness. Borobudur, the Buddhist temple, is really a wonderful achievement. But there are other equally noteworthy Hindu temples. Indian inspiration was in evidence in other fields of creative art as well. But Javanese creativity seems to have suddenly stopped with the advent of the Muhammedans, though the latter may not have directly interfered with the Javanese cultural life. Indonesian writers had a love and veneration for Sanskrit and they interspersed their vernacular compositions with Sanskrit verses even in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Of the Indonesian islands Bali has preserved her Hindu culture the best, though it would be more correct to say that this culture is really a mixture of Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism playing the higher part. The Balinese *Brahmândapurâna* (belonging to the fifth or the sixth century A.D.) links up a Kshatriya dynasty with an Indian sage Pulaha. This book must have been influenced by the *Vishnu-purâna*.

III

Nearer home, Vijayasena of Bengal is said to have landed in Ceylon long before the Christian era and secured the throne through marriage with the local princess Kuveni. But Ceylon came to be dominated by Hinayana Buddhism after Ashoka's missionary activity, though the Tamil Hindus of South India were always on its trail, and even today play a dominating part in northern Ceylon.

It is extremely doubtful if Tibet was ever directly influenced by Hinduism to any considerable extent, though the *tāntrika* Mahayanism in which Tibet shared after Shântarakshita's preaching, could not altogether ignore its Hindu affiliations. And even today there are Buddhist monasteries in the land in which Hindu deities receive worship under unfamiliar names.

The Khotanese trace their descent from Kuvera. Khotan is said to have been peopled by those who blinded Ashoka's son Kunal and had to leave India. Being on the overland trade route between China and South-western Asia as well as India, Khotan played an important part in the dissemination of Hindu culture. The excavations of Sir Aurel Stein unearthed traces of Hindu settlements under the sands of Gobi. Documents about 2,000 years old, written in Indian language and Indian characters are there side by side with frescoes of Buddha. Indian sculpture and architecture discovered there cannot be mistaken even in that remote period.

Indian influences or, to be more precise, Mahayana Buddhism entered China through three routes—through Burma and Yunnan, by the sea route via Sumatra and Java, and along the silk-trade route in Central Asia, passing through Khotan. The first historic missionary to China seems to have been Kashyapa Matanga who went there in 67 A.D. furnished with Buddhist images and scriptures. As acquaintance developed, many Chinese scholars came to

India to study Buddhist scriptures at first hand. In 413 A.D. Fa Hien was fellow passenger with 200 Hindus bound for Canton. Hiuen-tsang, who came to India in 629 A.D. and returned in 645 A.D., and Itsing, who followed soon after, were two other noted travellers. On the other hand many Indian monks went to China to preach Buddhism. Besides, during Harshavardhana's reign there were at Loyang 3,000 Indian monks and 10,000 Indian families. Through such channels Buddhism and with it Hinduism did not certainly fail to inspire Chinese creativity. But unlike Indonesia or Cambodia, China had reached a high state of civilization before she came into contact with India, so that she was never completely Indianized, though she had to recognize the supremacy of Indian religious thought and the modes of expression of the Indian ideas. Thus Hindu Yoga brought into existence *Zen* or the Chinese *Dhyāna* School. It was probably through Indian contact that the Chinese ideograph came to possess phonetic values, which in turn created the Japanese alphabet in the eighth century A.D. Chinese theatres, too, may have been influenced by Indian pantomimic performances. And traces of Indian deities are not rare in China, while writings in Indian characters have been discovered in more than one place.

Indian culture reached Japan from China by way of Korea. Japanese culture and unity were achieved during the seventh century through the Chinese influence, previous to which there was no considerable civilization. With Chinese Buddhism Hinduism, too, had an indirect entry into Japan. It is, perhaps, too much to assume that the Japanese had any direct inspiration from India apart from what trickled down through Khotan. But as A. Coomaraswami remarks:

It seems as though the Japanese must have depended in some degree directly upon Indian sources; it would be impossible otherwise to explain such iconographic parallels as that of the Jikoku Yen (=Dhritarâshtra) of the

Kondo, standing on a couching demon with the Kuvera Yaksha of Bharhut; and difficult to account for the great admixture of Brahminical, especially many-armed, forms that is characteristic of the mixed Shinto-Buddhist pantheon. The Japanese *torii* may be related to the Indian *torana*. (*History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 154).

As a matter of fact, there arose in the Japan of the ninth century a sect which proclaimed the familiar Hindu doctrine of the unity of life in the Absolute, believed in Buddha as a particular manifestation of Divinity, and gathered round the image of Buddha a host of gods and goddesses straight out of Hinduism—the elephant-god Ganesha (god Shoden) who gets the earliest worship at dawn, Shiva with his characteristic trappings of skulls, snakes, and tiger skin, etc., Kâli, Sarasvati with her *veenâ*, and Lakshmi. It is thought that *veenâ* has left its trace even in the present-day *biwa*, the favourite musical instrument of Japan.

There are strong evidences to show that Hinduism travelled from India and Indonesia to the Polynesian islands and from thence to central America where it gave rise to the Maya civilization. It may have also reached America through the Aleutian islands. The oldest loan words in the Malay-Polynesian world are words for religious, moral, and intellectual ideas coming from India. Dr. Kruijt notices that

In Siam, the highest God is called *Duata*, which is also found among the Macassars and Buginese as *Dewata*, among the Dayaks of Borneo as *Javata*, *Jata*, among the people of the Philippine islands as *Divata*, *Devata*, *Diwata*.

Amahai in Seram has yielded a golden image of Shiva, while Tato in the Timor islands has given us stone images of Trimurti and Kâla. Traces of Shiva worship have been discovered in South Celebes. Its language and alphabet also betray an Indian impression. The Samba islanders worship their stone Devas. New Guinea has also yielded traces of Shaivism to critical scholars. In the Philippines have been discovered

a copper *Linga* and a golden image of a female deity sitting cross-legged.

About the Indian origin of the Maya civilization, Prof. Raman Menon, Curator of the National Museum, Mexico, writes:

The Maya human types are like those of India. The irreproachable technique of their reliefs, the sumptuous head-dress, and ostentatious buildings on high, the system of construction, all speak of India and the Orient.

Another writer adds:

Whence came the highly cultured aliens whose civilization is represented by Quetzalcoatl? They were evidently sea-farers who settled on the coast lands and introduced the dragon beliefs so like those found in India, China, and Japan; they introduced various arts and crafts and well-defined laws, and their Quetzalcoatl priests were penitents given to self-mortifications like the Indian Brahmins; they hated war and violence, and instead of sacrificing animals, made offerings of flowers, jewels, etc., to their deities. That they came under Hindu or Buddhist influence, as did sections of the Chinese people, is a view which cannot be lightly dismissed except by those who cling to the belief in spontaneous generation in different parts of the world of the same groups of highly complex belief and practices. (Mackenzie).

IV

One of the eight dialects in which the Boghaz-koi inscriptions (1400 B.C.) of Mesopotamia are written, is said to be Indian. And in this occur the names of such Aryan gods as Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and the twin Nâsatyas. In the letters from Tel-el-Amarna, which belong to the same period, there are references to Aryan names like Ârtatama, Tusratta (Dasharatha), and Suttarna. In Palestine there were such names as Biridashya (Brihadashva), Yasdata (Yashodatta), and Shuwardata (Suryadatta). In Babylonia, too, the Kassite princes and deities had such appellations as Maruttas, Shimalia (cf. Himalaya), Daksh (Daksha), etc. In the Boghaz-koi inscriptions are also found words for Hindu numerals like *aika*, *teras*, *panza*, *satta*, and *nav*.

Hindu influence in South-west Asia persisted long after the early Aryan period through Indian traders and trad-

ing colonies. And through Persia, Asia Minor, and Arabia Hindu thoughts and modes of expression infiltrated into Egypt and the Mediterranean regions including Greece and Italy. Seals and coins of the Mohen-jo Daro types have been discovered in Babylonia; and if the Sumerians were an immigrant people, as they are supposed to be by some scholars, then the claim of Mohen-jo Daro to be recognized as the cradle of civilization cannot be easily set aside. And Mohen-jo Daro, it must be remembered, represents an autochthonous Hindu civilization—call it Aryan, Dravidian, or Aryo-Dravidian, whatever you like.

It has been held that commerce by sea between India and Babylonia dates back to as early a period as 3,000 B.C. This is proved by the presence of Indian teak in the ruins of Ur. Besides, the word for muslin in the Babylonian list of cloths is Sindhu. Others doubt the existence of such a pre-historic maritime connection, though evidences in favour of this are quite numerous after the seventh century B.C. Indian ideas and words passed into Greece through the Indian trade. Besides trade relations Europe and India came to know each other through other channels. A large contingent of Xerxes's army came from India. In the empire of Darius was included the north-western portions of India. And Ashoka's empire extended far beyond Punjab and Kashmir. Ashoka's missionary activity brought him into close contact with the Mediterranean countries. The Buddhists had their shrines and monasteries in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Asia Minor, long after Ashoka. As days rolled on, Indian Buddhism became increasingly suffused with Hindu ideas, so that the triumph of Buddhism meant in part the ascendancy of Hinduism as well. Furthermore, South India, which was predominantly Hindu, had direct trade relations with Egypt and Rome, and could not fail to leave a Hindu impress on the manners and customs and modes of thought in those countries.

Stray facts gathered from the pages of history lend ample support to the supposition that the Hindus and Hinduism of old had a brilliant career in the West. Hiuen-tsang noticed that in the chief towns of Persia Hindus were settled enjoying rights to practise their own religion. According to him very many people professed Shaivism as far west as Baluchistan. Alexander is said to have taken some Hindus with him from India. From a Syrian legend we learn that Krishna worship prevailed in Armenia as early as the second century B.C. There were in the second century B.C. temples erected to Hindu Gods like Krishna on the upper banks of the Euphrates. Under the dynasty of Arsacidas, the god Mithra (Mitra) extended His empire to the borders of the Aegean sea and became well known in Greece. The mysteries of Mithra found their way into the Roman empire. Julian the Apostate, who occupied the throne of the Caesars, was a worshipper of Mithra. Modelled heads of Indians of about the fifth century B.C. have been found in Memphis. Lucian (second century A.D.) makes Demetrius the Greek philosopher to give up property

and proceed to India to learn under the Brahmins. Clement of Alexandria (died c. 220 A.D.) knew the difference between Hinduism and Buddhism. In the reign of Constantine, Metrodorus is said to have journeyed to India to study the science and philosophy of the Hindus. Damascius mentions that certain Brahmins visited Alexandria (500 A.D.). Hippolytus, Bishop of Ostia, gives an account of Hindu thought including renunciation and asceticism. Plotinus attempted to visit India to learn Indian philosophy. Alberuni (977-1048 A.D.) translated many Sanskrit works which passed to Europe through the Moslem world.

Thus through various channels Hindu ideas percolated into the Christian and Muhammedan worlds bringing into existence new beliefs and giving new turns to existing ones. Renunciation, Yoga, absoluteness of the Ultimate Reality, unity of life, mind, and spirit, indestructibility of the soul, rebirth, all-pervasiveness of spirit, and such other typically Hindu doctrines are thus to be met with everywhere. In fact, it was Hinduism that ruled the ancient world of thought, culture, and religion.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA

BY P. NAGARAJA RAO, M.A.

The doctrine of *mâyâ* (the theory of super-imposition), sometimes inaccurately described as the theory of illusion, is the most distinct and celebrated doctrine associated with the name of the great idealist philosopher Shri Shankara. It is the pivotal point of Advaita on its theoretical as well as on its practical side. With characteristic humility Shankara holds the view that he derived the doctrine from the triple texts (*Prasthâna-traya*). A clear and a critical understanding of the implications of the doctrine is most necessary for a sound study of Advaita. The metaphysical

soundness of the doctrine depends on its intelligibility in terms of logic and experience.

It has its dim origins and outlines in pre-Shankara thought of Bâdarâyana, Bhartrihari and Gaudapâda. It has received a clear and lucid expression at the hands of Shankara. The chief pre-occupation of post-Shankara thinkers Chitsukha, Shri Harsha, Madhusudana, Vidyananya, and Appayya Dikshita has been to clarify and consolidate the several implications of the doctrine. The exposition is mostly dialectic and the form is syllogistic. They refute the

criticisms directed against the doctrine by the rival systems. Most of the post-Shankara thinkers are logicians *par excellence*.

The doctrine has been cried up and cried down. Contemporary criticism of the doctrine has ranged from unmeasured praise to bitter ridicule. The theistic schools of Vedanta have all directed their attack against this doctrine.

The doctrine is set forth by Shankara in his introduction to the commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*. Shankara's monism admits the ultimate reality of one category, namely, Brahman. The other religio-philosophical categories—God, souls, and the world—are derived from Brahman, the ultimate. The principle that accounts for the diversification and appearance of these entities is called *māyā*. The jurisdiction of *māyā* is all that falls outside Brahman. *Māyā* is a principle which is positive, and beginningless. It accounts for diversity in the world. The one Brahman is suppressed, and in its place the world of plurality is seen. The act of suppression and that of the showing up of the many in place of the one, are the twofold activities of *māyā* (*āvarana* and *vikshepa*). If it is not positive it cannot produce the many. It is the material cause of the world of plurality (*upādāna kāraṇa*). Waiving aside for a moment the different theories about the locus of *māyā*, let us admit that the individual soul is its locus. *Māyā*, being of the nature of ignorance, is a quality and it can pertain only to a conscious being. It is a *chetana-dharma*. It must have a content also (*viśaya*). Brahman is the content of *māyā*. Here it may be objected to by the logician that, before the operation of the principle of *māyā*, there cannot be individual souls in the plural. *Māyā* is unintelligible without the positing of the several loci. To avoid the defect of reciprocal dependence, it is assumed that it is *anādi*-beginningless. It is beginningless but not eternal. It can be put an end to by knowledge, and only by knowledge.

Its status in the Advaita metaphysics

is unique. It is not real and ultimate as Brahman. The real is that which is not sublated in all three times. It never ceases to be. The non-sublation of Brahman is due to Its self-luminosity. All sublations in the world are possible because of the dependence involved in knowing a thing. To know the rope aright, and not delusively cognize it as snake, depends on light and the proper sense organs. That is not the case with regard to Brahman.

The world of plurality is not real in the sense Brahman is. Nor is the world unreal in the sense of absolute non-existence (*atyantāsat*). Absolute negation, as for instance the barren woman's son or the sky lotus, has no existence except as words. *Māyā* has a status in between the real and the unreal. It cannot be both at the same time, because such a position goes against the fundamental law of thought, viz, the law of contradiction. So it is described as *anirvachaniyā*, indeterminate. The indeterminacy is of a restricted type. It is indeterminate in terms of the real or the unreal. It has the characteristics of both the categories. 'The entire world of social intercourse, the apparatus of human knowledge, and Vedic statements pre-suppose the doctrine,' Shankara argues, 'that they are unintelligible without this pre-supposition.' The *pramāṇa* for the doctrine of *māyā* is human experience itself. The fact remains with us. The persistent confusion of the inert with the *Ātman*, and *Ātman* with the inert is seen in life. When the body is ill or well one says, I am well or ill, when the body lacks a sense of sight or hearing, one says, I am blind or deaf. We, too, well know that the senses belong to the category of the not-self as any piece of external matter. In spite of the diametrically opposing characteristics of the self and the not-self, we still identify the one with the other. Thus there is the experienced confusion of identity between the self and the not-self, and a consequent confusion of their characters. Swami Vivekananda has put the

issue in foolproof language. 'Mâyâ is a simple statement of facts; it is what we are and what is around us.'

Shankara argues with great persuasive skill and cogency that unless there is super-imposition, i.e., the identification of the *Âtman* with the *anâtman*, it is not possible to have knowledge or *vyavahâra* in general. Unless one identifies oneself with the sense organs one cannot become the knowing subject. The subject-object relation, pre-supposed in knowledge, implies the need of *mâyâ*. For this and other efforts, reciprocal super-imposition is necessary and imperative.

If the world of souls and matter is the product of nescience, i.e., *mâyâ*, what exactly is the relation between the world and Brahman? Is the relation that of cause and effect, or one of manifestation of the potential into the actual, or the relation of ground and consequent? Theistic schools of Vedanta represent the Lord as creating the world of names and forms with the help of matter. God is hailed as the *nimitta kârana* of the world. Such an hypothesis is not free from defects. Some of the notable defects are: the Lord, on such an account, is no better than the average mechanic limited by the material at His disposal. He is no longer free from the responsibility of the existence of evil, and thus He forfeits His title to impartiality and justice. Creation implies a motive. To attribute motive to God is to imply that He has ends to attain. Such an assumption goes against His perfection. To deny motive and describe creation as the very nature of God is to reduce Him to a tendency. So the Advaitin does not assert that the world and Brahman are two entities. The position that God transforms Himself into the world is not free from defects. If God becomes the world, He gets tainted by its defects. For what purpose does He do so? To have purposes is to be incomplete. It cannot be held that God changes in one part only. This position disintegrates the very nature of God.

Shankara, being fully alive to the defects of *parinâma-vâda* and creationist doctrines, resorts to a third and unique way of stating it. It goes by the name of *vivartavâda*. Cause and effect, on Advaita analysis, are not two different things. The cause-effect relation involves a contradiction at its heart. It does serve some purpose, but in the last resort it is indefensible. The contradictory nature of this category, as that of several others, rests on the self-discrepant nature of relation. All predication in the world involves relation. Relation is either a quality or a thing. If it is a quality, it needs others to connect it with things, which in their turn require some others. Thus we land in infinite regress. If it is a thing, we have no connection but things. Such in brief is the dialectic of relation.

According to the author of the *Vedânta-sûtras*, the world has no reality apart from Brahman. It is non-different from Brahman. But this does not mean that it is identical. The world is the consequent, Brahman is the ground. Non-difference is interpreted by Vachaspati to mean not identity, but denial of difference. The world, as effect, shares with the cause the negation of unreality, and it differs from the cause in falling short of reality. Brahman is the sole independent Reality that is eternal. The world is an effect, hence it is not eternal. It needs explanation unlike Brahman which is self-explanatory. The world is not unreal (*asat*). If it were so, it would have nothing in common with Brahman and could not be Its product. Brahman is not dependent on the world, but the world is dependent on Brahman. The effect has no existence apart from the cause. The cause is in no way affected by Brahman. The little order that we find in the world, and the workings of Nature, are possible because of Brahman. The causal rigidity in the world is possible because of Brahman. The reality of the world is Brahman. Everything in this world is Brahman.

Traditional students of Advaita do not see the positive significance attached to the world. They stress a great deal the negative element. They define and describe Brahman by negating the world. The infinite nature of Brahman is derived by negating the finite. They erect an antithesis between existence and reality. Brahman, they say, is the annulment of the world. The trend of their argument is as follows: If this was not so Shankara would not have started his commentary with a dissertation on super-imposition. It is argued that in the stress on the negative method lies the significance of the *adhyāsa bhāṣya*.

The theory that on the acceptance of Advaita, the world of plurality commits suicide, is not intelligible. Even for being negated it must be some thing. To the upholders of philosophic unity the traditional position does admit of an improved interpretation. If the world is regarded as illusory, it ceases to have any significance. The world is a section and a semblance of reality. In the section there cannot *ex hypothesis* be presented a synoptic view of Reality, but the whole cannot but be in the part too, sustaining and informing it.

The appearance is neither entirely an appearance, nor has it a distinct reality in a fantastic realm of its own. It is real, but it derives its reality from, and is reducible to, the Absolute.¹

In the words of Sir S. Radhakrishnan :

The world is not so much negated as re-interpreted. It is transfigured in the intuition of Brahman. Unreal the world is, but illusory it is not.²

If the world is illusory, our very laudable attempt to realize 'our selves' through methods like intuition, contemplation, etc., would be of no value. They must be well-settled causes to help us to realize our selves. If it were not so, love, heroism, and asceticism could not prepare us for that life. All ethical endeavour would lose its signi-

ficance. It is because of the Reality in appearances that there is law and order in the workings of Nature. Brahman is not the negation of the world.

Reality and existence are not to be set against each other as metaphysical contraries. Nothing on earth is utterly perfect or utterly without perfection. Those who have the vision of perfection strive continually to increase the perfection and diminish imperfection.³

If the world is illusory Brahman will be a negative infinite and a pure nothing. Everything here is Brahman, say the scriptures. The Absolute includes the finite.

It is the self-determining principle which manifests itself in all determinations of the finite without losing the unity with itself. The Absolute involves the diversified universe as the universal involves the particular.⁴

It is a hasty logic that holds the One as real and the many as an illusion. The correct step will be to hold that the One reveals Itself in the many.⁵ Shankara observes that the entire world of names and forms, in so far as it has Brahman as its essence, is true; if regarded as self-dependent, it is untrue⁶. 'It is real not in being ultimate but in being a form, an expression of the ultimate.'

The one main argument that is directed against the doctrine of *mâyā*, is the fault of the excluded middle. The realist holds that there is no middle ground between Reality and unreality. The answer of the resourceful Advaitin is, however, experience. Human experience is itself evidence for it. Another point that is urged against the doctrine, is that it does not positively put forth any view and is bankrupt of any explanation. To describe a thing as *anirvachaniya* is no answer to the problem. The Advaitin points out that reflection and logical cogitation reveal how in the last resort there is at the

¹ S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 31.

² S. Radhakrishnan, *The Vedānta Philosophy and the Doctrine of Mâyā*, *International Journal of Ethics*, July 1914.

³ S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 110.

⁴ Shankara's com. on *Chhândogya*, VI. iii. 2, 'sarvam cha nâmarupâdivikârajâtam sadâtmanâ eva satyam, svatastu anritam.'

¹ S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, *An Advaitin's Plea for Continuity* in the journal of the Madras University, Vol. X, no. I.

² S. Radhakrishnan, *The Vedānta*, p. 149.

root of finite cognition a certain core of irreducible unintelligibility. In the words of A. N. Whitehead, 'For all its effort human thought only dimly discerns, it misdescribes, and it wrongly associates.' The Advaitin is alive to this defect. He does not dogmatically assert any point of view as final. He never recklessly repudiates any defect which is incidental to philosophic theo-

⁷ Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 203.

ries. He is scientific in his view. He criticizes the different views and shows up the falsity in their argument. The methodology of Advaita is critical. It passes in review the different conceptions of the universe and criticizes them in turn, one after another. In this criticism it never fails to note their varying fulness and worth. The lower category is criticized in the light of the higher in which it finds its fulfilment. It is a progressive discovery of truth.

VIKRAMADITYA

BY SWAMI DHYANATMANANDA

Vikramaditya Sakari, is one of the most notable figures in ancient Indian history. He seems to enjoy a greater amount of popularity even today than many of his successors or predecessors.

As to his identity, students of history, after strenuous labour, have succeeded in establishing it. 'He,' (Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta dynasty) observes Dr. Smith, 'has a better claim than any other sovereign to be regarded as the original of the mythical king of that name who figures so largely in Indian legends.' It would not be out of place, therefore, to examine the arguments that are put forth in support of his identity.

A critical study of Indian literature will go a great way to substantiate our theory. Kalidasa, the celebrated court poet of Vikramaditya, speaks of the King of Magadha as:

असौ शरण्यः शरण्योन्मुखाना-

मगाधसत्त्वो मगाधप्रतिष्ठः ।

राजा प्रजारंजनलब्धवर्णः

परन्तपो नाम यथार्थनामा ॥

कामं नृपाः सन्तु सहस्रशोऽन्ये

राजन्वतोमादुरनेन मृमिं ।

नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलाऽपि

ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः ॥

This Emperor of Magadha is thus described in the *Svayamvara* ceremony of Indumati (*Raghu.*, Canto VI). Although the Magadhian monarch, in spite of his many virtues, was rejected by the bride, we have reasons to believe that the person referred to is certainly one of the greatest ancient Indian princes. But that he was not Samudra Gupta will be clear from another reference in the *Purvamegha* where the poet says, दिङ्नागानां पथिपरिहरणस्थूलहस्तावलेपान् ।

This Dingnaga, according to Mallinatha, is a celebrated Buddhist logician and a disciple of Vasubandhu, a contemporary and a friend of Samudra Gupta. Further, no evidence has as yet been discovered that can lead us to think that Samudra Gupta did ever assume the title of Vikramaditya. On the contrary, Samudra Gupta has been singled out as Parâkramânka—an epithet found on his coins. He is further known as Sarvarâjochhettâ. The title Sakari—destroyer of the Sakas—is very closely associated with Vikramaditya. That Chandra Gupta II was the celebrated victor of the Saka Satraps of Saurashtra or Kathiawar, is proved by the celebrated Banabhatta, who speaks of this incident as—अरिपुरे च परकलत्र-कामुकम् कामिनीवेशगुप्तश्च चन्द्रगुप्तः शकपतिम् अशातयदिति ।

Moreover, the titles Shri Vikrama, Simha Vikrama, Ajita Vikrama, Vikramanka, and Vikramaditya actually occur on Chandra Gupta's coins. From this numismatic evidence, Sir R. G. Bhandarkar has identified Chandra Gupta with the traditional Vikramaditya Sakari, the Sun-valour, the destroyer of the Sakas. Certain chiefs of the Canarese districts, who claimed descent from Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya referred to their great ancestor as उज्जयिनीपुरवराधीश्वर, the lord of Ujjaini, the best of cities, as well as पाटलिपुरवराधीश्वर, lord of Patali, the best of cities. The author of *Kathâsaritsâgara* represents Vikramaditya as ruling at Pataliputra:

विक्रमादित्य इत्यासीत् राजा पाटलीपुत्रके ।

These evidences have almost conclusively proved that the celebrated Vikramaditya Sakari is no other than Chandra Gupta II of the imperial Gupta dynasty. Tradition associates his name with the capital at Ujjaini. We have reasons to believe that besides Pataliputra he had other capitals as well. Paramartha, the biographer of Vasubandhu, refers to Ayodhya as the capital of Vikramaditya, while Hiuen-tsang represents Sravasti as the seat of the famous king. Ujjaini seems to have become the second capital of the empire after the extinction of the Saka Satraps and annexation of their province to the Gupta dominions. It is quite likely that big empires should have more than one capital. Rome and Constantinople formed the two most important cities of the ancient Roman Empire.

As to his reign we possess a number of dated inscriptions so that its limits may be defined with more accuracy than those of his predecessors. His accession should be placed before 381 A.D. and his death in or about 413 or 414 A.D. Much light is thrown on the character of Chandra Gupta's administration by the narrative of Fa Hien and the inscriptions that have hitherto been discovered. 'The in-

habitanes,' observes the Chinese pilgrim, 'are rich and prosperous, and vie with one another in practice of benevolence and righteousness. The people are numerous and happy; they have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules; only those who cultivate the royal lands have to pay a portion of the gain from it. The king governs without decapitation or other corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances of each case. Throughout the whole country the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink any intoxicating liquor.' Gold and silver as well as copper were in currency; besides, cowries were used. Cowries and copper coins were used in smaller and gold and silver coins in larger transactions.

The great king himself was a devout Vaishnava (Parama-bhâgavata). Yet so magnanimous was his outlook that he felt no scruple in appointing men of other sects to high offices. His general Amrakardava, 'the hero of a hundred fights,' appears to have been a Buddhist, while his minister of peace and war, Saba-Virasena, and, perhaps, his *Mantrin* or High Counsellor, Sikharasvamin, were Shaivas. This clearly indicates his wonderful toleration—an ideal ever unrealised in the Western countries.

Regarding the machinery of Government we have no detailed information. But the inscriptions help us in this work considerably. The head of the State was the king. He was looked upon as 'Paramadaivata,' the supreme divinity, 'Lokadhâmadeva,' a god dwelling on earth. Thus the gradual progress towards the growth of an absolute monarchy was almost complete by this time. The Maurya Emperor was styled as Devanampiya Piyadashi, the Kushana Emperor as Devaputra Shai Shahanushai, and the Gupta Emperor as 'Paramadaivata' and 'Lokadhâmadeva'.

Be that as it may, the reign of Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya is un-

doubtedly one of the most brilliant periods of ancient Indian history. This has been clearly proved by numismatic, epigraphic, and literary evidences—both internal and external. Just as great literary geniuses produced the Elizabethan and Victorian schools of letters, so also did this great reign witness a marvellous revival of Sanskrit learning. Sanskrit once more began to gain grounds from the days of the great Kushana Emperor Kanishka. The celebrated author of *Buddha-charita* (Ashvaghosha) as well as the distinguished writers of *Charaka* and *Sushruta*, treatises on Hindu medicine, and many other great writers in Sanskrit belonged to the Kushana period. But, perhaps, the highest pinnacle of glory in Sanskrit literature was achieved during this period. Kalidasa, the greatest of the ancient Indian poets, 'lived and wrote in the fifth century. His literary activity extended over a long period, probably not less than thirty years'. It is most likely that he began to write either late in the reign of Chandra Gupta II or early in the reign of Kumara Gupta I. His writings alone are sufficient to immortalize this great reign. Yet there were other writers who occupy almost equally eminent position in the history of Sanskrit literature. Mention may be made in this connection of the dramas entitled

Little Clay Cart (*Mrichchhakatikâ*), *Mudrârâkshasa*, etc. Prof. Hillebrandt assigns the composition of the latter to the reign of Chandra Gupta II. The late Sir R. G. Bhandarkar observes that the period was distinguished by 'a general literary impulse,' the effects of which were visible in poetry as well as in law books and many other forms of literature. Mr. Kaye holds that 'the period when mathematics flourished in India commenced about 400 A.D'.

As to architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, we have the clearest evidences to speak with authority that in these branches of human creativity as well, this great reign achieved a marvellous success. Some of the most successful paintings of the Ajanta caves may be ascribed to this period. That the country enjoyed peace and prosperity is clearly brought out when the great poet Kalidasa exclaims :

न किलानुययुस्तस्य राजानो रक्षितुयंशः ।

व्यावृत्ता यत्परस्वेभ्यः श्रुतौ तत्करता स्थिता ॥

(*Raghuvamsha*, I. 27).

This marvellous brilliance is seldom witnessed in any other reign than that of this conqueror of the Western Satraps. This also is the reason why 'more living men cherish his memory today than have ever heard the names of' any of his predecessors or successors.

THE PROBLEM OF SOIL EROSION

BY PROF. A. K. DUTT, M.Sc.

Civilization is the product of man's struggle with Nature, and, as such, the progress of this civilization depends upon his continuous supremacy over Nature while respecting her usual course of behaviour. Any slight discord as a result of man's negligence and shortcoming makes Nature rebel and break through human efforts to control her, with disastrous effects. Soil erosion,

resulting from man's endeavour to curb Nature against her ways, has been responsible for the destruction of many bygone civilizations and empires now buried under barren wastes.

The untiring zeal of man to probe into the mysteries of the universe has brought home the truth that the earth was in a molten condition ere it came to its present state. Before plant and animal

life dawned upon its surface, the hard rock was acted upon and transformed into pulverized soil by various physical, chemical, and biological agencies, such as alternate freezing and thawing, wind and water, and animal and vegetation, etc. Of all the agencies concerned in soil formation, water has played the most important role in effecting the chemical decomposition of rocks by carbon dioxide and organic acids dissolved in it. It is upon the fine soil, not upon the hard rock, that plants thrive and multiply. This dynamic phenomenon, which acting through thousands of years has made the earth suitable for colonization by plants, is known as geological erosion or denudation. Nature looks to the protection of the soil which has sucked the blood out of her incessantly for years, and she does this through plants which, by the luxuriant growth of their leaves and roots, and by the power of adaptability they develop in response to any change in the environment, appear to check further onset of geological erosion. And yet some amount of geological erosion is always occurring, which plays a beneficial role by removing the surface layer of plant-covered soil as it becomes exhausted and is no longer required by plants, and replacing this old worn-out skin with a corresponding fraction of new soil formed by slow weathering of the underlying rock. In this way a virgin soil maintains an equilibrium between denudation and soil formation under the environmental conditions prevailing where it is, so that, unless this equilibrium is put to perilous stress from without, it preserves more or less constant depth and character indefinitely. But the attempt of man to live by eliminating the plants, easily disturbs this equilibrium and accelerates soil-loss at a much faster rate than soil can be formed from the lifeless parent material lying beneath. This man-accelerated erosion is known as 'soil erosion'.

Soil erosion is not an inherent property of any mature and fertile soil; it is a property induced most commonly by the

activities of man. Were it not true, virgin soil covered with rich grass or forest, which exhibits no appreciable erosion until the interference of man, would have disappeared long ago. So long as man lived wild with the wild-life resources of Nature, soil erosion was altogether out of the question. But when he began to think himself as a distinct element of this universe, the idea of living by struggle came into his head as the first lesson from Nature—resulting in the clearing of forests to obtain timber for shelter that marked out the boundary of his existence, and for fuel that warmed his body and kept out the wild animals. This clearing of forest lands was at first carried out on a small scale until man was familiar with the plants that could be grown for food and raiment, and with the harmless animals that could be tamed for his benefit. With the beginning of cultivation, more forests were cut down to provide lands for this purpose, while rich grass lands were opened up as grazing grounds for their cattle. Man learnt from plants the ways of obtaining the necessities of life from the soil; but, unlike plants, he neglected his sacred task of paying back to the soil the interest in terms of fertility that would maintain a stable soil for his exploitation. In the early days of his struggle with the soil, man lived in a gypsy community, moving from place to place with his cattle as the pastures were over-grazed and the fertility of the cultivated lands fell below a certain level and crops became too scanty. He then abandoned the plots to increasing deterioration through the hill graziers and also through rain and wind. This, however, had often a good result. For this primitive system, which kept small forest patches under cultivation for a few years and then left them to be reclothed by the regeneration of natural vegetation, often proved successful in usefully restoring the fertility of the soil. But in arid and semi-arid regions, re-growth of the natural flora, once des-

troyed, proved too difficult under the low rainfall occurring there.

The relation between vegetation and soil is more natural and helpful to evolution than that between man and soil. Plants protect the soil from rain and wind, and enrich its fertility on decay ; soil, on the other hand, serves as a foothold for plant roots and a storehouse of 'reserve' food. Rain-drops falling on grass or forest are held up by the leaves, which mitigates the beating action of the rain-water and guides it gently into the soil floor to replenish the underground water supply, which later appears as springs to replenish the rivers during the dry season. The small quantities of water running off from such areas are largely free from silt and do not constitute any appreciable menace to the population living in the plains. But when man thrusts his presence upon the soil and destroys the natural vegetation, he easily facilitates the action of the rain-water to remove the most fertile and most absorptive surface soil on which rests the foundation of many future generations, and sheet erosion begins. The shower of next year falls upon the fresh layer of soil which was exposed on the surface by the previous shower and which is less absorbent than the eroded layer ; the run-off water increases in volume and eroding capacity, giving rise, with time, to innumerable rills, which join together to form rivulets, and rivulets become gullies which coalesce to become chasms that tear away the unprotected soil in torrents and penetrate deep into the barren sub-soil, leaving ugly scars on the landscape that strike the tourist with the depth of devastation wrought by the virulent forces of Nature.

Sheet erosion is the precursor of gully erosion, without which the inevitable, harmful consequences of the former escape the notice of man. The enormous quantity of rainfall run-off and soil-loss which might remain *in situ* in the absence of maladjustment between human society and its environment, is discharged into the natural drainage

channels feeding the rivers and streams, which commence to flow menacingly as their beds rise and continue to rise with each year's deposition of suspended material eroded from the hills.

Shifting cultivation, as practised by the primitive people, was unable to meet all the requirements of increasing settlements destined to attain greater cultural heights and was consequently replaced by the art of continuous cultivation which enabled organized communities to develop in India, China, Iran, Egypt, Italy, Greece, and other regions. These communities quickly studied Nature and contrived new and newer devices to ease their struggle for existence—cultivating the soil by irrigation wherever there was shortage of water supply, and establishing schools and hamlets, towns and beautiful mansions. But the ancient people could not attune their art with Nature's ways, and the interest which was returned to the soil by careful cultivation and manuring fell too short to appease the revolting Nature disposed to punish man for his wilful acts. These civilizations, which were based upon continuous cultivation, rapidly exhausted the soil and carried out more promiscuous deforestation to secure new land for the rapidly growing population, without thinking for a moment how the source of their strength and prosperity was being precipitated towards decline. Soil erosion was given a free hand to play its relentless game with the greatest achievements of the ancient, sweeping out of existence one civilization after another that contributed nothing substantial to the advancement of mankind except a tale of their painful suffering and extinction. The deserts of North China, Iran, Mesopotamia, and North Africa, the fall of the Roman Empire, and the ruins of bygone civilizations now unearthed in Central America, Columbia, Ceylon, and other tropical regions have all resulted from the destructive effects of soil erosion.

Soil erosion soon set to work at other parts of the world as the light of civili-

zation of the advanced nations reached the shores of countries where man was still wandering as an unimportant servant of Nature. More rapid exhaustion of the soil began in those newly enlightened regions to satisfy the demands of the liberator and the liberated, and the pressure on the land became gradually intensified as commerce was set up between one country and another.

Towards the closing of the fifteenth century the people of Europe sailed their ships over vast seas and oceans and discovered new lands where Nature still reigned supreme. The inexhaustible resources of those virgin lands allured them to settle down in large numbers. They quickly upset the balance that Nature had so long maintained between soil formation and soil erosion, creating a situation quite alarming. In the north-eastern parts of the United States thousands of acres of forest land were cleared for timber, much of which was burnt for the early potash industry that fetched fat profits from Europe for the settlers. Further west, north-west, and south much havoc was done over large tracts of forest lands for cultivation, lumbering, and 'boxing' for turpentine. Indiscriminate deforestation for agricultural lands and pastures, over-grazing by animals, and the practice of a type of agriculture that was found suitable to conserve the soil only in Europe are all common contributing factors to soil erosion in the colonies. As a matter of fact, uncontrolled clearing of the natural flora has been partly responsible for the disappearance of diverse wild life from many parts of the world. The pioneers lived in a time of plenty when immediate use, rather than conservation of resources, was the predominant idea in their minds. Man longed to enjoy more and more the riches and luxuries of life, and the Industrial Revolution opened up new possibilities of exploitation to the people of Europe, who, strengthened by the discoveries and inventions of science, established their supremacy over the weaker nations of

their times. Money poured into the colonies and dominions, urging the local inhabitants to produce more and more agricultural and forest products without regard to encouraging appropriate reclamation measures to control erosion. Artificial fertilizers were indeed put at the disposal of the agriculturists to double and triple their yields, but very little was then realized of the insidious and mischievous process of soil erosion running over every country with accelerated momentum. Fertilizers may temporarily augment soil productivity, but they cannot replace the soil washed away bodily into the rivers and seas.

Water erosion is very active in the tropics and sub-tropics. The consequence of unchecked water-erosion is an accelerated run-off and soil-wash, which latter silts stream channels, reservoirs, dams, and ditches, gradually damaging their utility for navigation, irrigation, hydro-electric power, and town-water supply, etc. The fertile soil material washed down from the degraded hills, donates its life-supporting capacity to the lower slopes or alluvions over which it is deposited; but, unfortunately, the productive capacity of such rich bottom lands suffers outright ruin by overwash of gravel or sand as soon as the poor sub-soil comes into being by the vicious process of soil erosion. The streams flowing from run-down catchments silt over spawning beds and expose the fish to the hot rays of the sun, ultimately resulting in severe and increasing floods which cause suffering, and disease and death to the people as well as dislocation to the country's most vital links of communication. Moreover, droughts become more frequent and the underground water level goes down.

Wind erosion, taking the world over, has been less extensive, but not less catastrophic, than water erosion. Wherever, in the arid and semi-arid regions, man denudes the land of its protective cover, the soil loses its absorbing capacity and pulverizes under low moisture content. Wind whips up the dry soil bodily from the surface, darkening the

atmosphere with sand and dust which suffocate men and animals and do great damage to the neighbouring standing crops. The soil particles drift with the wind and at last settle down on fertile lands forming 'dunes.' The middle west of the United States, Canada, Russia, Australia, South Africa, and certain drier parts of India, namely the Punjab and Rajputana, all know its terrors.

Man has converted this world into a play-ground of soil erosion, which is taking place today in almost every country in varying proportions. Even Western Europe, which was till recently supposed to be immune from slow disintegration by this force, has been shown to be undergoing severe sheet and gully erosion, particularly in Germany and Czechoslovakia. Continuous, rather than intensive, utilization has greatly ruined the lands of India. Recent exploitation, due to the increasing population under British rule, has caused some of the worst erosions over wide tracts of our country. Sheet erosion has been going on for centuries and some of the spectacular erosions by gullies may be seen in various parts skirting the foothills of the Himalayas, for example, in the Punjab Siwaliks and Jalpaiguri Dooars. In India floods are nowadays more common and catastrophic than a few decades before, intensifying the periods of drought causing crop failures. At the present moment India, like other countries, is passing through a food crisis unprecedented in her history; and the nation, aching with the necessity of feeding its seething population, will be compelled to cultivate intensively every inch of available ground that was formerly considered inadvisable to be put under the plough. Such practice will so seriously accentuate erosion that the soil which may normally be washed away in a century will disappear within a couple of years, leading to flood like the Damodar disaster of 1913 or even still worse calamities. It is disappointing to note that despite the best aids of science to enhance crop yields, the

average output per acre, the world over, is falling; and in the opinion of the Allied Food Conference held at Hot Springs, U. S. A., on May 18th, 1943—

Soil erosion, unless checked, constitutes the greatest physical danger to the world's food production. India is drying up and may become a second Sahara unless the problem of erosion is efficiently dealt with.

After the last Great War, people shuddered at the pitiable condition of their superfluous prosperity standing on the frame-work of an unstable soil which erosion was reducing to the original barren rock quite unfit to be used for animal or plant habitat. In the United States the soil erosion problem has been given great publicity to make the nation conscious of the gravity of the situation threatening the entire country. A nation-wide programme of soil conservation has been inaugurated by the Department of Agriculture and other Federal and State organizations. The United States Soil Conservation Service conducts research to determine the soil and water losses which take place under different land-use and farming practices under the different climatic conditions in the continent. Flood control, prevention of silting up of reservoirs, rivers and harbours, and the construction of highways in relation to soil conservation are also other aspects of the problem. Although the rest of the world is still lacking in the accumulation of scientific data, certain practical measures have been adopted to temporarily check the progressive extension of erosion. Successful reclamation work is being carried out in different parts of Africa affected by soil erosion. Canada has slowed up the onward march of erosion by proper erosion-control measures initiated and encouraged by the Government. The people of Australia are also fighting this erosion menace as a national problem, and the donation of £25,000 to the University of Adelaide by the family of the late Mr. Frederick-Ramson served as an impulse to their campaign. In Japan the Government has stirred up the nation to apply anti-erosion projects in

the eroding regions to control floods and to ensure essential food production in the valley. Our neighbour China, being now deprived of the fertile soil in the north-west region through faulty land-utilization practice by her ancient people, has taken into consideration the urgency of employing erosion-control measures for feeding her teeming millions.

In India very little work has been done in this direction. Dr. Gorrie was the first to initiate soil-erosion measurement in the Punjab; and this was later followed in Sholapur (Bombay) and Bengal. The present writer determined both in the field and laboratory the soil and water losses in the bare condition for some of the erosion-affected regions of Bengal. In this connection the writer acknowledges his gratitude to his teacher Dr. A. T. Sen, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Lond.), Agricultural Research Chemist, Dacca University, who encouraged him to take up this subject for special study. It may not be out of place to mention here that Dr. Sen carried out erosion measurement on three types of soils commonly found in the Myngian district of Burma during his deputation as Agricultural Chemist to the Government of Burma during the period 1937-40, and his observation furnished the basis for further investigation by the present writer on Bengal soils. All the soils examined in the field by the writer are found to be fairly erosive. As much as 21 to 75% of the annual precipitation may escape as run-off; and as much as 20-171 tons of soil may be eroded annually, carrying with it 102-3221 lbs. of nitrogen and 2.3-17.2 lbs. of P₂O₅ approximately. In the laboratory, gullies are found to form in some soils from 10% slope and in other soils from 15% slope onwards. Forest soils can absorb much more rain water

than those under cultivation. Some interesting observations have also been made, e.g., the application of organic matter very greatly reduces the soil-loss and run-off, especially at low slopes, of the type of soils examined; while lime, contrary to the popular belief, accelerates both. The areas so far reclaimed in India pale into insignificance in comparison with the immense devastations caused in the country.

History is the best guide of man; and it is always open to him for seeking wisdom from the past. Soil erosion is like a contagious disease spreading destruction far and wide to countries of other nationalities, affecting the interests of different communities or industries in such an adverse way that the whole social structure at last threatens to collapse. The world is still rich in her soil resources to feed this and many other generations to follow if only man can adjust himself to living together with plants and animals and insects, rather than attempting the abortive task of moulding the environment to suit his immediate requirements. The prospect of the Industrial Era depends not only upon the development of agriculture but also on the conservation and preservation of the soil. Soil erosion is a century-old problem, the solution of which becomes harder with the lengthening of the period of destructiveness. The Allied Powers have promised durable peace with the cessation of the present world war; but that peace would not be worth enjoying unless erosion is checked and the cultural structure, now tottering on an unstable soil, is placed on a more secure footing. Much, as yet, remains to be seen as to how the post-war agricultural scheme is planned, especially in India which is one of the worst sufferers from erosion.

GIRISH CHANDRA GHOSE—POET AND DRAMATIST

BY KUMUD BANDHU SEN

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

About the middle of the nineteenth century there arose a galaxy of stars in the firmament of Bengal shining over every field of human activities diffusing around them a new light on the different aspects of life—in religion, politics, and literature. In the midst of this new era of transition and adjustment with foreign thoughts, Girish Chandra was born in February 1844 at Baghbazar in the northern quarters of the metropolis of India. He came of a respectable middle class *Kâyastha* family and was the eighth child of his parents. The house now numbered as 13 Bosepara Lane, is only a few minutes' walk from the bank of the Ganges—the most sacred and holy river for the Hindus. People of all ages and denominations throng there in all hours of the day to take their bath singing hymns and uttering sacred divine names. The family had an ancestral deity named *Shridhara* in the house, before whom all festivals were observed with due ceremony. The atmosphere in which Girish grew up, was full of *Paurânic* ideas made instinct with life by the staunch belief with which men clung to them. In his boyhood, every evening, he used to listen to his old widowed grand-aunt pouring out stories from the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Purânas*. One evening when he was listening to her stories of Shri Krishna (*Akrur-samvâd*), with wrapt attention, ending in tragic descriptions of Vrindavan, owing to the departure of Shri Krishna for Mathura, the boy with tears in his eyes asked her, 'Did Shri Krishna return from Mathura?' The old lady replied, 'No, he never came back to Vrindavan.' Girish at once left the place weeping bitterly and did not go to the old lady

for stories for the next three days. It made such a deep impression on him that even in his old age he could not be induced to hear *Mâthura*—those *Vaishnava padas* which describe the condition of Râdhikâ after Krishna had gone to Mathura. Girish thus imbibed from his surrounding a sense of *rasa* and fed on it in listening to *kathakatâ*, *half âkrai*, *kavi*, *pâñchâli* and witnessing *jâtrâ* performances. They deeply impressed him in his early days and their influence may be traced in his writings and songs as well as in his general outlook on life.

Girish lost his mother when he was very young and his father Nilkamal used to take special care of him.

One day Girish, in his boyhood, went to a neighbour's house where *half âkrai* songs were going to be sung. The place was fully crowded. Girish observed that suddenly there was an uproar, and he soon perceived that there was a great reception on foot for a bright-looking and smiling gentleman, then just entering the house. On inquiry, Girish came to learn that he was the poet of the age—Iswar Gupta. The boy then and there resolved to be a famous poet like him. With this aim in life, he read Bengali literature and got by heart the works of Kashiram Das, Krittibash, Bharat Chandra, and other great poets. It made him indifferent to his class lessons, though he was bright and intelligent as stated by one of his class-mates—the late Sir Gurudas Banerji in the Town Hall meeting, held to pay tribute to the loving memory of Girish Chandra after his demise. He failed to pass the Entrance Examination ; and the portals of the university were closed to him. He never tried it again and led a Bohemian life. He was married and his

father-in-law, looking at his wild habits, induced him to accept a job in Messrs. Atkinson Tilton & Co. in 1866; but he left it soon, taking an appointment in the firm of Messrs. Argenti Schilizzi & Co., where he served only for a year. In 1866 his eldest son Surendranath Ghose (the famous actor, popularly known as Dani Babu) was born while he was serving with Messrs. Atkinson & Co.

Though Girish, owing to his indifference, was not successful in his academic studies, yet his thirst for knowledge was strong enough. He had such a passion for books that nothing escaped him—science, philosophy, history, poetry, and other branches of knowledge—he devoured all that came in his way; and this passion stuck to the very end. He thus acquired a sound knowledge in all these subjects, but, at the same time, his old religious belief was shaken, and he became a sceptic. It will not be out of place to mention here that his knowledge of science and his keen interest in scientific experiments induced him later to attend the Science Association, where deep intimacy and mutual regard soon grew up between him and Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar.

FOUNDATION OF BENGALI STAGE AND GIRISH CHANDRA AS AN ACTOR

During spare time Girish used to go to a neighbouring club where an amateur *jâtrâ* party was formed. *Sharmishthâ* was to be staged, and he helped it in rehearsals, and composed songs for the occasion. In leisure hours, Girish used to compose songs and translate English verses into Bengali poems.

During this time, the new kind of dramatic activity was growing popular. The Belgachia Theatre, under the patronage of Paikpara Raj and the directions of Keshab Chandra Ganguly, Ramnarain, and Michael Madhusudan, attracted the attention of educated youths and scions of aristocratic families. In the heart of this metro-

polis there were four theatrical stages—one private theatrical society patronized by the Kumars of Sovabazar Rajbati; second, the Pathuriaghata Banga Nâtyâlâya under the guidance of Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore; third, the Jorasanko Theatre under the direction of Jyotirindra Nath Tagore and his brothers; and fourth, the Bowbazar Banga Nâtyâlâya under the guidance of Manmohan Bose and Chuni Lal Bose. The success as an actor of Keshab Ganguly who was an inhabitant of Baghbazar and who was praised by Sir Frederic Haliday for his skill in the histrionic art and whom Madhusudan used to call the Garrick of Bengal, might have inspired Girish Chandra with lofty ideals of dramatic art. Girish Chandra had by this time become friendly with Kaliprasanna Sinha, the immortal translator of the *Mahâ-bhârata*, equally an enthusiast for the development of the stage. The cumulative effect of the above influence and agitation led Girish Chandra to induce the *jâtrâ* party to convert itself into the Baghbazar Amateur Theatre.

In 1869, he first appeared as Nimchand in the play *Sadhabâr Ekâdashi* written by the dramatist Dinabandhu Mitra. He showed his inimitable histrionic genius in that role. In the *Bangadarshana*, which was then edited by Rabindranath, Sarada Charan Mitra who was one of the puisne judges of the Calcutta High Court and one of the presidents of the Bangiya Sâhitya Parishad, described it and paid high tribute to the wonderful histrionic skill of Girish as Nimchand. His recitations from Shakespeare and British poets were wonderful. Rasaraj Amritlal Bose wrote in his reminiscences with reference to this recitation, 'You have not heard his grand voice'.

His recitation of Bengali verses was equally wonderful. In the *Lilâvati*, Girish took the part of Lalit, and the author Dinabandhu addressed him thus: 'I could never imagine that my verses could be read so beautifully.' He further stated, 'There cannot be

any comparison between you and the Chinsura party. I will write to Bankim ; he has had the worse of it.' The Chinsura Theatre party was then staging *Lilâvati*, led by two literary magnates—one Bankim Chandra and the other Akshaya Chandra Sarkar.

Encouraged by popular applause and the praise of the educated and enlightened men of Calcutta, the Bagh-bazar Amateur Theatre party intended to start a public stage under the name of the National Theatre. Girish opposed the proposal. His reverence for the art was too deep. Foreigners, specially Europeans, generally have an inferior estimation of Indian art and culture. It would be ridiculous to call an institution 'National', when a few young men of Calcutta, without the backing of the rich and cultured society and having no funds at their disposal, ventured to call an institution 'national'—the very idea appeared to him to be morally dishonest. Moreover, Girish thought that the cultured people would not be present, as they would be reluctant to purchase tickets and sit down with the masses to witness the performances on the public stage, which were sure to suffer in comparison with the English stages of Calcutta in respect of sceneries, dresses, and other paraphernalia. But his party paid no heed to his advice. Girish who was then directing the rehearsal of *Niladarpana*, left the group. But this severance was only for two months. The first opening night was 7th December 1872, and the play was *Niladarpana*. Dinabandhu keenly felt the absence of Girish and noted it. The party then selected *Krishna-kumâri*, but none ventured to take the part of Bhim Sinha. At last they approached Girish Chandra who agreed on condition that his name would be mentioned as an amateur. Girish appeared on 22nd February 1873 on public stage in the role of Bhim Sinha. Michael Madhusudan was present to witness the performance of *Krishna-kumâri* at the National Theatre. He highly appre-

ciated and admired the histrionic skill and talent of Girish Chandra. It was Madhusudan who, while writing the *Krishna-kumâri* drama encouraged Keshab Ganguly to start a National Theatre at Calcutta. He was so much enthusiastic over it that he wrote to Mr. Ganguly : 'If this tragedy be a success, it must ever remain as the foundation stone of our National Theatre.' He further added : 'It strikes me that if the drama is to be acted, you had better at once organize your company and begin operations with two acts already printed. Go on rehearsing at Jatindra's, and then we can settle whether we are to do in the Town Theatre or blaze out at old Belgachia.' Unfortunately after the play of the *Krishna-kumâri* the National Theatre was closed owing to internal dissension and mismanagement, in spite of the best efforts of Sisir Kumar and Girish Chandra to save it from that miserable situation. It was Madhusudan who, after the close of the National Theatre, induced young Sarat Chandra, a grandson of Satu Babu, one of the richest men of Calcutta, to start a public stage under the directions and guidance of a committee consisting of representatives of leading citizens and intelligentsia of Calcutta. Accordingly a committee was formed consisting of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pandit Samasrami, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Umesh Chandra Dutt of Ram-bagan, and others. The name of the stage was the Bengal Theatre. It was again Madhusudan who proposed in that committee that the female parts should be played by actresses. Vidyasagar vehemently protested and opposed the idea, but Madhusudan carried the proposal by a majority of votes. Pandit Vidyasagar resigned his membership and severed all connection with the above committee.

Girish Chandra suffered a series of bereavements during this time, and lost his wife in 1874. He could not stand the shock and was attacked with monomania. He lost his job as the firm of

John Atkinson & Co. was closed. For about more than a year he often sat alone brooding over the past and his cold treatment to his beloved wife. His natural gifts and feelings were then expressed in verses, and his best poems *Shaishaba Bândhaba*, *Âji*, *Atit*—represent his mental agony, sorrow, and worry through which he was then passing. In 1876 he was employed by Messrs. Frayberger & Anderson to purchase their goods in Bhagalpur and adjoining districts. During this time he composed poems on *Giri*, *Bânshari*, and *Nirjharini* amidst the hilly scenery and solitary place at Kahalgaon. Girish came back to Calcutta in 1877 when he was requested by Sisir Kumar to take up an appointment as Head Clerk and Cashier in the India League. He then married a second time at the age of thirty-three years. In 1879 he was engaged as a book-keeper on a higher pay in the firm of Messrs. A. T. Parker & Co.

DRAMATIZATION OF WORKS OF MADHUSUDAN, BANKIM, AND NABIN CHANDRA

In 1877, when Girish came back to Calcutta, he found great changes in the stage world. Bhuvan Mohan Neogy had founded the Great National Theatre on the ruins of the National Theatre. Women were introduced as actresses in imitation of the Bengal Theatre. Bhuvan Mohan, being unable to meet the heavy establishment charges from the income, was running to debt. To save it from utter ruin Girish took the lease of the stage and renamed it as National Theatre. He first of all dramatized Madhusudan's immortal epic *Meghanâdavadha*, and he himself appeared in the roles of Râma and Meghanâda. His recitation of Madhusudan's blank verse was charming and inimitable, and his wonderful histrionic skill sent a thrill through the heart of the audience who remained spellbound. Akshay Chandra Sarkar, the eminent writer and critic of Bengal, then wrote in his paper that he could not imagine greater skill in histrionic art than what was displayed by

Girish Chandra who, he opined, would not suffer in comparison with Garrick whose performances were, however, never witnessed by him. It will be no exaggeration to say that Madhusudan's name became a household word in Bengal through the dramatization of *Meghanâdavadha* and the histrionic skill of Girish Chandra.

After dramatizing Nabin Chandra's *Palâsir Yuddha*, Girish took up Bankim Chandra's immortal novels. It made a stir among the educated section of the people. Even Bankim Chandra was charmed with Girish Chandra's skill. He regularly went to the theatre to witness with sincere admiration and praise, the performances of his books as dramatized by Girish Chandra. He permitted, requested, and even encouraged Girish Chandra to dramatize his novels. One such letter of Bankim appeared in *Nababibhâkar* and *Sâdhârani* on 15th Kârtic 1294 B. S., then edited by Akshay Kumar. Bankim wrote to Girish as follows—'You are a good writer and endowed with the best intellect. I have great hopes that my plays under your direction will be an unprecedented success.' It was indeed unique in the field of dramatic literature that the great novelist and the great dramatist as well as the great master of histrionic art of the age, joined hands for the development of the stage. Bengal was fortunate in this respect as two master artists co-operated in their lifetime—Bankim and Girish. Bankim Chandra, on the one hand, would have never allowed anybody to spoil his story by its representation on the public stage; Girish, on the other hand, was the last person to take up the dramatization of any book through flattery or for the sake of financial gain. It was a unique co-operation in the world's history.

The National Theatre building was sold in auction owing to heavy debts of Bhuvan Mohan Neogy; and it was purchased by one Pratapchand, a business man and jeweller who wanted to run the theatre on sound business lines. Girish Chandra was eager to have this

dramatic institution on a permanent basis. With this aim in view Girish resigned his job in the mercantile firm and gladly accepted the managership on less pay under the new proprietor. Henceforth he devoted most of his time to the making and educating of a band of actors and actresses on modern lines so that people might look upon acting as an honourable profession. His younger brother Atulkrishna tried his utmost to dissuade him; and on his insistent request Girish promised that he would never be the proprietor of a theatre. He solemnly kept this promise till death. However, in his life time, he was instrumental in establishing three public stages, which were successively managed by him for some years. He was thus called the father of the modern stage.

GIRISH CHANDRA'S ORIGINAL DRAMAS

From 1881 to 1912 Girish Chandra wrote seventy-six dramas out of which four were unfinished, three novels including one incomplete, eighteen short stories, forty-four essays, and two poetical works. In addition to these he composed quite a number of songs.

He began to write dramas after having dramatized some of the novels of Bankim Chandra, and Nabin Chandra's famous *Palâsir Yuddha*. Even then it was first advertised in newspapers inviting literary men for a drama suitable for the stage. When none was available, then was Girish Chandra compelled to write dramas.

Bernard Shaw, the greatest dramatist of the modern age, wrote in the *New York Times* of 2nd June 1912 about drama. The following are a few extracts from that article:

I am not governed by principles; I am inspired, how or why I cannot explain, because I do not know—but inspiration it must be, for it comes to me without any reference to my own ends or interest.

This not being guided by principle, it is hallucination, is what we call play or drama. I do not select my methods, they are imposed upon me by a hundred considerations—by the physical consideration of theatrical representation, by the law devised by the municipality to guard against fires

and accidents to which theatres are liable, by the economics of theatrical commerce, by the nature and limits of the art of acting, by the capacity of the spectator for understanding what they see and hear, and by the accidental circumstances of the particular production in hand.

It is these factors that dictate the playwright's methods leaving him so little room for selection that there is not a penny worth of difference between the methods of Sophocles or Shakespeare and those of the maker of the most ephemeral farce.

In going through the above, the people may well understand what tremendous responsibility is shouldered by a dramatist. Such was the case with Girish Chandra, too, who wrote dramas and at the same time managed the stage in a country where the thing was quite a foreign and strange innovation.

Girish Chandra had to adopt the Western techniques to Indian poetics, dramatic actions based on *rasa* and beauty. Girish had to evolve his own techniques and language. He was thoroughly original in these respects. Girish had a wonderful creative genius. The heroes and heroines of his mythological dramas are neither foreign under Hindu cloak nor modernized to suit the taste of the people who are saturated with Western ideas and thoughts. Girish did neither create those characters from his own imagination nor disfigure them by remoulding, creating situation and action which would be false to the *Paurânic* ideas. There is not the striking foreign colour, mannerism, and manipulation in his writings. Girish looked upon the *Purânas* as the mainspring of our nationalism, national inspiration, and life. He made the different phases of mind and passion into living characters showing clearly the hidden workings of human beings for their rise and fall in changing situations and environments in relation to their inner natures and instincts. He did not observe any so-called artificial convention through measured dialogues or social puritanism to show the real character as a whole. He painted the characters as they were with their peculiarities and ways of expression according to their respective stations in

life. By *Paurânic* dramas and by dramatic representations of Buddha, Shankara, Chaitanya, Rupa-Sanatana, and other saints and sages of India he touched the soft chord of the nation; and in an inimitable way he played on them with wonderful skill and sweetness. He inspired men with lofty ideals and sublime thoughts, elevated the people to the height of beauty and joy, and taught them the service and worship of humanity through love and divine outlook. For this his close association with Shri Ramakrishna was not a little responsible. His religious scepticism vanished when he came in contact with Shri Ramakrishna as a result of which he was totally transformed in his ideas and thoughts, in his deeds and habits, and his outlook on man and Nature. He wanted to renounce the world, but the Master commanded him to continue the work for the good of the people. Girish obeyed it till his death. His sense of duty was so great that he would not miss going to the stage even in inclement weather. This strain, however, made him bed-ridden. He died on 8th February 1912 at the age of sixty-eight years.

His domestic, social, romantic, and other dramas—both comedies and tragedies—are still unrivalled. His *Prafulla* and *Hârânidhi*, *Balidân* and *Shâsti-ki-shânti*, *Bishâd* and *Kâlâ-pâhâr*, *Mâyâbasan* and *Bhrânti*, *Serajud-daula* and *Mirkassim*, *Shivaji* and *Satnâm*, and all other dramas are like bright gems.

His Bilvamangal is a wonderful drama which speaks of his high artistic genius

and creative mind. It is an admitted fact that an essential basis of carefully conceived situations designed to arouse, stimulate, and startle by their strangeness, their peculiarity or unconventionality is the true requirement for a drama. Dramatic situations are quite different from those necessary for narrative fiction. All his characters are full of innumerable sweet, sublime, and characteristic diversity of their own.

His delineation of characters, both men and women, in the change of this world, his dialogues which are a special creation in modern dramatic literature of Bengal, and his dramatic arrangements on the stage and the composition of innumerable sweet, sublime, and thought-provoking songs, are charming and beautiful. In *Paurânic* dramas he excels so much that he will stand ever on a high pedestal of glory and immortality.

It will not be an exaggeration to state here that it is impossible to give within a short essay even a brief outline of his monumental works and dramatic career. The more we study his dramas, the more shall we appreciate his extraordinary creative genius as a great poet and dramatist.

He dedicated his life to the establishment of our national stage, creating a band of histrionic artists, and contributing some of the best dramas to Bengali literature with a message of India's eternal truth, spirituality, and love of humanity. This is his gift to the nation and the country for leading it to the path of future glory and immortality.

Have that all-effacing devotion to God which the moth has to the flame. In a single moment it burns itself to death, and shrinks not its body while burning.

Be as careful in constantly fixing thy devotion on God as the poor man is careful in preserving his guinea of which he is never unmindful and sees every moment that it is not lost.—*Saint Kabir*.

THE INDUS CIVILIZATION

BY PROF. SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKERJI, M.A.

Mohen-jo Daro and Harappa! How much they mean to the Indologist! Not very long ago the age of the *Rigveda* (c. 2500 B.C.) was supposed to be the starting point of Indian culture and civilization. Historical researches have, however, proved that they had a pre-Aryan beginning. The Dravidians, who had settled in India earlier than the Aryans, had a civilization more developed than the Aryan in more respects than one. The discovery of Mohen-jo Daro by the late lamented R. D. Banerji in 1922 revealed the existence of a flourishing civilization in the Indus valley in the chalcolithic era of human history. The chalcolithic civilizations all sprang in river valleys and Mohen-jo Daro was no exception. It stood on the Indus.

Mohen-jo Daro (lit. 'The Mound of the Dead') is in Larkana in Sind. What its name actually was will never be known. What its civic life was like will ever remain a sealed book. One thing, at any rate, is certain. It was highly civilized. The civic and social life of its inhabitants seem to have been fairly developed. The great people who built this civilization before the dawn of history in India, might take legitimate pride in their architecture, sculpture, and sanitary system which far excelled those of the contemporary Aryans.

Sir John Marshall's theory was that the Indus civilization was contemporaneous with those the remains of which are scattered all over the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates valleys and that all belonged to the same group. This opinion has since been discarded. From the antiquities unearthed at Mohen-jo Daro, Chanher Daro, Amri, and other places in Sind and at Harappa in the Punjab, it has been established that at the time of the Aryan incursion into India there existed in the Indus valley a highly

developed and far-extending civilization superior to the contemporary Indo-Aryan as well as the Elamite, the Mesopotamian, the Babylonian, and the Egyptian civilizations.

Some of the *Rigvedic suktas* refer to an uncivilized *dāsa* people the Aryans met on their arrival in India. The antiquities unearthed at Mohen-jo Daro and other Indus centres, however, give the lie direct to this boastful assertion. Not to speak of the Vedic civilization, the pre-Aryan Indus civilization was in a higher stage of development than those of the Nile and Euphrates valleys.

The archaeologist's spade has brought to light many valuable and interesting antiquities buried underground. The Stone Age was not yet over. Man had just begun to use copper; and the weapons discovered at Mohen-jo Daro and other Indus centres were made of stone as well as copper. Of the weapons discovered, mention may be made of axe, spear, scimitar, arrow, bow, and sling. Arrow-heads were made of copper or bronze. Agriculture was highly developed. Mohen-jo Daro had a brisk export and import trade. Voyages or land-journeys to and from Babylon for purposes of trade seem to have been frequent. A large number of Mohen-jo Daro seals have been found in the ruins of the ancient Babylonian cities.

The potter's wheel had been invented. A piece of cotton cloth found at Mohen-jo Daro shows that weaving was not unknown. Cotton in ancient Greek and Babylonian is called 'Sindu' and 'Sindom', respectively. Would it be far from the truth to assume that the Indus (Sans. Sindhu) valley is the birth-place of cotton industry? Men and women were all very fond of ornaments, a large variety of which—necklace, bangle, armlet, anklet, ring, ear-ring—

has been found in the ruins of Mohen-jo Daro. The rich folk had their ornaments made of gold, silver, ivory, and other costly materials while the poor had to rest content with those of bone, stone, and copper. Of metals gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, and bronze were used. Iron was unknown. Articles of everyday use, such as, plate, water pot, cup, and tumbler, grinding stone and hand-mill were mostly made of earth or stone. Saw, razor, scythe, and hook were made of copper and needles and combs of bronze or ivory. Toys were of countless varieties and designs. More than 500 seals—some round and others quadrangular—have been found on the site and almost everyone of them has some figure engraved on it. There are, for example, figures of tigers, elephants, and oxen. The horse is conspicuous by its absence. The Aryans were the first to domesticate the horse in Central Asia about 2000 years before Christ. Of the domestic beasts and birds of the Mohen-jo Daro people mention may be made of the humped bull, the cow, the buffalo, the sheep, the camel, the bear, the goat, and the fowl. The script on the seals has baffled scholars up till now. When deciphered, it is sure to throw much new light on the contemporary civilization.

It may be inferred from the materials at our disposal that this Indus valley people worshipped the Mother Goddess as well as Shiva. One of the seals discovered here has on it a three-faced figure absorbed in meditation and surrounded by tiger, elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, and deer. Besides, some other statues absorbed in meditation have also been discovered. The discovery of a large number of phallus and ring-like objects made of stone and earth points to the prevalence of phallus worship side by side with that of the female organ. Many are inclined to believe that snakes (i.e., *Nāgas*), beasts, such as bulls, crocodiles, tigers, etc., and trees also were worshipped. A Harappa seal represents a tree being born from the

womb of a female figure. The worship of the Earth Goddess may have been practised by the people. Dead bodies seem to have been disposed of by complete burial, fractional burial, and post-cremation burial. Sir John Marshall thinks that at first dead bodies would be disposed of by cremation and post-cremation burial, which gave place to complete and fractional burial later on. These latter may have been due to foreign influence from the West.

The houses, streets, and drains of Mohen-jo Daro prove conclusively that their builders were consummate architects and town-planners. The broadest street of Mohen-jo Daro was 33 ft. wide and 6 furlongs long. The city was divided into a number of quarters each separated from others by wide streets. The quarters had each a number of buildings. Lanes running by the buildings connected the wider roads. Rooms on the ground floor facing the wider streets were used as shops. Bricks used were both burnt and sun-dried and buildings were sometimes two or three stories high. Some were 80 ft. in width with their walls 4 or 5 ft. in thickness. Each such house had its well, drain, bath-room, and courtyard.

The wonder of wonders unearthed so far is a big bath. It is so big and well built that considering the age of the structure we cannot imagine anything better. Surrounded by a $7/8$ feet thick wall it is 180 ft. by 108 ft. In the centre is a courtyard wherein is to be found a $39' \times 23' \times 8'$ swimming pool. This bath had at least one upper story. On two sides of a lane a little to the north are two rows of baths meant probably for the priesthood.

Mohen-jo Daro had an excellent drainage system. Long drains were brick-built while the perpendicular ones for the outlet of used and dirty water from upper stories were of burnt earth. Latrines were brick-built and had arrangements for the removal of the night-soil.

The ruins at Chanher Daro, Amri, and Harappa have yielded antiquities—

much less though—similar to those of Mohen-jo Daro, and it is apparent that they all had a common culture. It is indeed very difficult to believe that so advanced a civilization as that of Mohen-jo Daro was confined within the narrow limits of a single city. Chanher Daro, it may be noted, was poorer than Mohen-jo Daro, and this has led some to think that it was an artisans' town. Metals were more in use here than stone.

How old is the Indus civilization? The excavation of the ruins at Mohen-jo Daro has revealed seven strata, one upon another. These have been assigned to three different periods—the late, the intermediate, and the early. According to Dr. Mackey the three uppermost strata belong to the late period, the next three to the intermediate period, and the lowest to the early period. He is of opinion that there are still earlier strata. Five seals similar to those of Mohen-jo Daro have been found in different places of Elam and Mesopotamia. At least two of these are anterior in time to King Sargon of Mesopotamia (c. twenty-eighth century B.C.). So they belong to the twenty-ninth or thirtieth century B.C., if not to a still earlier period. Two seals found at Ur and Kish, too, support the view that the Indus civilization belongs to the third millennium B.C. Sir John Marshall, who thinks that five centuries must have intervened between the founding of Mohen-jo Daro and its final destruction by the floods of the Indus, places the Indus civilization between c. 3250 and c. 2750 B.C.

Who built this civilization? The question is yet to be answered. Several theories have been advanced. It was once believed that the Indus civilization was but a phase of the Sumerian and was given the name of Indo-Sumerian civilization. Some again are of opinion that the Indus valley people were of Dravidian origin. There are some who think that the Dravidians and the Sumerians belong to the same racial

stock and lived originally somewhere to the East of Mesopotamia or in the Indus valley. There are some again who identify the Indus valley people with the Vedic Aryan group. It may be of some interest to note the principal points of similarity and dissimilarity between the Vedic Aryan and Mohen-jo Daro civilizations. The Vedic Aryan was an agriculturist living in the village. He seems to have dwelt in huts made of bamboo and cane. The builders of Mohen-jo Daro, on the other hand, lived in buildings made of burnt brick. A study of the finds *in situ* reveals that wells were dug at short intervals for the supply of water to citizens, drains were built to let out impurities and impure water, and wide roads were constructed for pedestrian and vehicular traffic. But the Vedas give no such proof of a developed civic life. So far as the use of metals is concerned, there is much similarity between the two. Thus both used gold, silver, copper, and bronze, but neither knew the use of iron. The weapons of offence and defence of both were similar with this difference that the people of Mohen-jo Daro used stone and metal clubs which the Vedic Aryans do not seem to have used. The latter used helmets and armours none of which has been discovered at Mohen-jo Daro. The *Rigvedic* Aryans were meat-eaters. Whether they were fish-eaters as well is not definitely known. Fish, however, seems to have been one of the principal items of the daily food at Mohen-jo Daro. A large number of hooks found at Mohen-jo Daro lends strength to this view. In the Vedic age the horse was a familiar animal, the cow was assigned a place of honour, image worship seems to have been unknown, female deities were held to be inferior to male deities, the Mother Goddess and Shiva were not worshipped, offerings were made to the Fire-God, and phallus worship was held in contempt. At Mohen-jo Daro, on the other hand, the bull was more popular than the cow. The large number of images discovered at Mohen-jo Daro

indicate the prevalence of image worship. Shiva as well as the Mother Goddess were worshipped, but not, perhaps, the Fire-God.

Of the two civilizations, the Vedic is not only later but of an entirely different origin as well. Some scholars point out that there were two waves of Aryan migration into India—the Vedic Aryan and the Alpine Aryan. The latter, according to this view, came earlier, occupied the Indus valley, and built the Indus civilization. It is just possible that this civilization was not

the creation of any one people, but of several.

Whoever may be the builders of this great civilization, India owes a deep debt of gratitude to them. Norman Brown truly says,

Although we are ignorant of many phases of civilization, we recognize numerous cultural items which still persist in India, such as the 'Svastika' or the veneration of the 'pipal' tree, and we plausibly interpret other remains as indicating that some of the major phases of the Indus intellectual life were already in existence, such as of the use of 'Yoga' methods in religious meditation.

THE SPIRIT OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(Concluded)

THE TESTS OF PATRIOTISM

They talk of patriotism. I believe in patriotism; and I also have my ideal of patriotism. Three things are necessary for great achievements. First, feel from the heart. What is in the intellect or reason? It goes a few steps and there it stops. But through the heart comes the inspiration. Love opens the most impossible gates; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heart-beats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you

forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step. . . .

You may feel, then; but instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you, sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right? If your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your own goal? As the great king Bhartrihari says, 'Let the sages blame or let them praise; let the Goddess of Fortune come or let Her go wherever She likes; he indeed is the steady man who does not move one inch from the way of truth.' Have you

got that steadfastness? If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles. You need not write in the newspapers, you need not go about lecturing, your very face will shine. (C. W., III. 225-226).

FUNDAMENTAL EVIL

First of all, is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause at least of one-third of our miseries. We are lazy; we cannot work; we cannot combine; we do not love each other; we are intensely selfish; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are—hopelessly disorganized mobs, immensely selfish, fighting each other for centuries as to whether a certain mark is to be put on our forehead this way or that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such momentous questions as to whether the look of a man spoils my food or not! This we have been doing for the last few centuries. We cannot expect anything high from a race whose whole brain energy has been occupied in such wonderfully beautiful problems and researches! And are we not ashamed of ourselves? Aye, sometimes we are, but though we think these things frivolous, we cannot give them up. We think many things and never do them; parrot-like thinking has become a habit with us, and never doing. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do anything; we must strengthen it. First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words, but I have to say them, for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna

better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the *Âtman*, when your body stands upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men. Thus we have to apply these to our needs. (C. W., III. 241).

Centuries and centuries, a thousand years, of crushing tyranny of castes, and kings, and foreigners, and your own people, have taken out all your strength, my brethren! Your backbone is broken, you are like down-trodden worms! Who will give you strength? Let me tell you, strength, strength, is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads, and believe—‘I am the Soul.’ ‘Me the sword cannot cut; no weapons pierce; me the fire cannot burn; me the air cannot dry; I am the omnipotent, I am the omniscient.’ So repeat these blessed saving words. Do not say we are weak; we can do anything and everything. What can we not do? Everything can be done by us; we all have the same glorious soul, let us believe in it. Have faith, as Nachiketâ. At the time of his father’s sacrifice, faith came unto Nachiketâ; aye, I wish that faith would come to each of you; and everyone of you would stand up a giant, a world-mover, with a gigantic intellect, an infinite God in every respect; that is what I want you to become. This is the strength that you get from the Upanishads, this is the faith that you get from there. (C.W., III. 244).

We want that energy, that love of independence, that spirit of self-reliance, that immovable fortitude, that dexterity in action, that bond of unity of purpose, that thirst for improvement. Checking a little the constant looking back to the past, we want that expansive vision infinitely projected forward; and we want—that intense spirit of activity (*rajas*) which will flow through our every vein, from head to foot.

* * *

Do you not see, taking up this plea of *sattva*, the country has been slowly and slowly drowned in the ocean of

tamas, or dark ignorance? Where the most dull want to hide their stupidity by covering it with a false desire for the Highest Knowledge, which is beyond all activities, either physical or mental; where one, born and bred in lifelong laziness, wants to throw the veil of renunciation over his own unfitness for work; where the most diabolical try to make their cruelty appear under the cloak of austerity, as a part of religion; where no one has an eye upon his own incapacity, but everyone is ready to lay the whole blame on others; where knowledge consists only in getting some books by heart, genius consists in chewing the cud of others' thoughts, and the highest glory consists in taking the name of ancestors; do we require any other proof to show that that country is being day by day drowned in utter *tamas*?

Therefore, *sattva*, or absolute purity, is now far away from us. Those amongst us who are not yet fit, but who hope to be fit, to reach to that absolutely pure *Paramahansa* state—for them, the acquirement of *rajas*, or intense activity, is what is most beneficial now. Unless a man passes through *rajas*, can he ever attain to that perfect *sāttvika* state? (C.W., IV. 337).

WANTED WORKERS

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality. (C.W., V. 12).

I heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with the heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll. O you of great fortune! I too believe that India will awaken again if any one could love with the whole heart the people of the country—bereft of the

grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome, and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance. I have experienced even in my insignificant life, that good motives, sincerity, and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of millions of hypocrites and brutes. (C.W., V. 96).

INDIA IS AWAKENING

The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awakening, and a voice is coming to us—away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were, from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, and of love, and of work. India, this motherland of ours—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold, the sleeper is awakening! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet. (C. W., III. 146).

Once more the wheel is turning up, once more vibrations have been set in motion from India, which are destined at no distant day to reach the farthest limits of the earth. One voice has

spoken, whose echoes are rolling on and gathering strength every day, a voice even mightier than those which have preceded it; for it is the summation of them all. Once more the voice that spoke to the sages on the banks of the Sarasvati, the voice whose echoes reverberated from peak to peak of the

'Father of Mountains,' and descended upon the plains through Krishna, Buddha, and Chaitanya, in all carrying floods, has spoken. Once more the doors have opened. Enter ye into the realms of light, the gates have been opened wide once more. (C. W., IV. 275).

SAMAVEDA—A QUERY

BY BIMALACHARAN DEV

At two places in the *Mahâbhârata*, the *Sâmaveda* is highly extolled. One is at *Bhishma Parvan* (ch. 34, Shl. 22 = *Shrimadbhagavadgita*, X. 22), where we have Shri Krishna saying, वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि. The other is at *Anushasana Parvan* (ch. 14, Shl. 323), where we have Upamanyu praising Mahâdeva, सामवेदश्च वेदानाम्. At both the places the purport is to indicate the very best of a class.

In so far as the enumeration of the Vedas goes, we have it usually in the following order: *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sâmaveda*, *Atharvaveda*. The first question which naturally occurs to one is, How is it that the third in enumeration is the most excellent of the three? There is, no doubt, a rule that, what comes later in the order of enumeration is better than that which precedes it. But we are not aware of any such rule in connection with the Vedas.

Then the next question is, Why is it excellent? What is the reason why it is deemed superior to the other two Vedas?

I have been able to look into nine commentaries on the *Shrimadbhagavadgita*, which are collected in Damodar Mukherji's edition. Of the nine, six (including Shankaracharya) are silent on the point; only three, viz, Baladeva, Madhusudana, and Nilakantha say something (to be precise, the same thing) about it. Baladeva say, गीतमाधुर्येणोत्कर्षात् सामवेदोऽहम्. Madhusudan says, गानमाधुर्ये-

णातिरमणीयः सामवेदोऽहमस्मि. Nilakantha says, सामवेदगानेन रमणीयत्वात्. They all say practically the same thing, *Sâmaveda* is most excellent because it is very sweet to the ear.

Is this really convincing? Does this 'explanation' really satisfy? One somehow feels that the real reason for this excellence must be something other and higher than mere sweetness.

Then we come upon a startler. We are told that the sound of this most excellent *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि. We have in the *Mârkandeya Purâna* (102. 119):

विषुष्टौ ऋद्धमयो ब्रह्मा स्थितौ विष्णुर्जुर्मयः ।

रुद्रः साममयोऽस्ते च तस्मात् तस्याऽशुचिर्ध्वनिः ॥

At creation of the Universe, the presiding deity, Brahmâ, is *Rigveda*; at preservation of the Universe, the presiding deity, Vishnu, is *Yajurveda*; and at the final destruction of the Universe, the presiding deity, Rudra, is *Sâmaveda*. That is why *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि.

Then we have in the *Manusamhitâ* (IV. 124):

ऋग्वेदो देवदैवत्यः यजुर्वेदस्तु मानुषः ।

सामवेदः स्मृतः पितृयस्तस्मात् तस्याऽशुचिर्ध्वनिः ॥

The *Rigveda* is sacred to the gods, the *Yajurveda* is sacred to men, and the *Sâmaveda* is sacred to the *Pitris* (manes). That is why it (*Sâmaveda*) is अशुचि.

The immediately preceding *Shloka* gives the effect of this on the other two Vedas, saying, सामध्वनावृणुषी नाऽधीयीत कदाचन.

Smritichandrikâ (Ed. Gharpure), *Âhnika Prakarana* (p. 59, 1.27), says, सामशब्दे ऋग्यजुषोरनध्यायः । नाऽन्यस्य तदाह मनुः, and refers to Manu IV. 123.

So we have the intriguing position—*Sâmaveda*, which is more excellent than the other two Vedas, is also अशुचि, so much so that the other two Vedas cannot be studied, if the sound of the *Sâmaveda* is heard. It is indeed startling to be told that a Veda can be अशुचि, even to a limited extent, in comparison with any of the other Vedas. So far as the *Mârkandeya Purâna* is concerned, we do not find there any limited 'bar' (as in Manu, IP. 123) regarding any of the other Vedas.

One thing is noticeable that while both the *Mârkandeya Purâna* and *Manusamhitâ* agree in saying that the *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि, the reasons assigned by them are different. One naturally feels impelled to ask, Which of the 'reasons'

is the real reason? Or is neither the real reason? Can it be that the real reason having been lost in course of time (the practice having survived), what we find in recensions of the *Mârkandeya Purâna* and the *Manusamhitâ* now available, represent merely attempts to explain the practice of not reading the *Rigveda* and the *Yajurveda*, if the sound of the *Sâmaveda* is heard? We do not know what the older recensions of these books contained. It is fairly well known how 'recensions' have played havoc with the texts of our sacred books.

It would be interesting to know :

(1) What is the real reason of the *Sâmaveda* being the most excellent of the Vedas? (2) Is the *Sâmaveda* really unclean, even to a limited extent or should we understand the word अशुचि in any other sense? (3) Why this bar to reading the other two Vedas on the sound of *Sâmaveda* being heard?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The April issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata* brings into focus some glorious periods of Indian history. Mohen-jo Daro, Ujjain, and Suvarnadvipa, though temporally and spatially separated, belong really to the same spiritual domain; and Vikramaditya's towering personality just tops the crest of a Himalayan wave that rose gradually from the Indian cultural ocean to subside again through centuries to unperturbable stolidity. Mr. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji's *The Indus Civilization* gives a glimpse of the early beginnings of Hindu culture Swami Dhyanatmananda's *Vikramaditya* has topical interest in view of the two thousandth anniversary of the Vikrama Era which the country celebrated last month. . . . The Editorial gives a graphic account of Greater India in her palmy days. . . . To Mr. Kumud Bandhu Sen, who is well known as the

Bengalee biographer of Girish Chandra Ghose, the great poet and dramatist of Bengal and a disciple of Shri Ramakrishna, we are indebted for his timely article which is of topical interest inasmuch as Bengal celebrated the poet's first birth-day centenary last month. . . . But lest the readers should complain that the *Prabuddha Bharata* is too engrossed with the past Prof. A. K. Dutt of the Dacca University makes, for our realists, a very timely and illuminating contribution on *Soil Erosion*. . . . And for modern idealists there is a fresh presentation of the *Implications of the Doctrine of Mâyâ* by Mr. P. Nagaraja Rao of the Hindu University. . . . Lastly Mr. Bimalacharan Dev presents us with a riddle about the *Sâmaveda*. We wish very much that he had given the solution as well. But he wants others to throw more light on the problem and help him in straightening it out.

CIVILIZATION AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Do civilization and human progress go hand in hand? The life of the modern man who is proud of his culture and refinement, centres round selfish interests. Accumulation of wealth and enjoyment of sense pleasures seem to be the signs of civilization, and the very object for which it is worth while acquiring these is neglected.

Judged from that standpoint, does it appear that human culture, by which is generally meant today the ways of living and thinking in Europe and America, is advancing?

Thus asks Mr. J. M. Ganguli, writing in the *Aryan Path* of February, 1944. He maintains that prior to the advent of modern Western culture 'there was more sense of the dissatisfying incompleteness of life than there seems to be in the men of education and culture today.'

Civilization is a word for which there is no definite connotation. In its modern sense, it is popularly associated with the possession of an individualistic outlook on life, characterized by a bold and reckless pursuit of material prosperity, and the maintaining of a cynical attitude towards the fundamental values of the life of spirit. The civilized peoples of the West wage the most ruthless wars for the sake of material and physical possessions. It is these that are of absorbing interest to the moderner, while religion and spirituality are anathema to him.

His mind distracted by the surrounding environment and his thoughts preoccupied with the interests of his fleshly self, he dismisses spiritual curiosity, if it ever awakens, by calling that idle thinking and an unprofitable pursuit, or even by denying the possibility of the existence of anything spiritual or immaterial.

True civilization, as Mr. H. H. Fyfe points out in the *Hibbert Journal*, is 'being civil—friendly, helpful, tolerant, doing to others as we would they should do to us.' Progress of civilization lies in the subordination of the selfish to the unselfish, of the material to the spiritual. Religion and spirituality are

essential to the growth of the high moral ideal which true culture is intended to foster. Culture is the harmonious development of the subtler faculties of the mind, and the regulation of the processes of human thought. To cling tenaciously to one's own and to hate passionately another's does not signify advancement of culture. As the writer rightly says

how miserably is found to fail the modern Western culture which is spreading over other parts of the world, displacing many better native ideals and institutions.

This failure is undoubtedly due to dearth of men endowed with renunciation and non-attachment. Present-day civilization has led humanity out of peace and contentment into competition, greed, and war. While undue emphasis is laid on the mere instrumental value of life, the more important experiences of intrinsic value are ignored as superstitious. But superstitions are not confined to the realm of religion alone, and scientific and political superstitions of today are proving no less impediments to human progress. The civilization of India has been able to stand the test of time through the ages, in spite of repeated onslaughts of alien influences, as it is based on a sound spiritual foundation. The neglect of the spiritual values of life is the cause of unrighteousness among 'civilized peoples,' and, as the writer truly concludes, this is 'more an indication of intellectual dullness and cultural retrogression than of progress.'

SCHEDULED CASTES

Addressing the All-India Scheduled Castes Conference, the Hon. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar blamed Hinduism for the disabilities from which the scheduled castes were suffering, and as a remedy advised the members of his community to discard their religion. We take the following as it appeared in the *Hindu* of Madras:

Dr. Ambedkar asked the people to ponder over the causes of their sufferings extending over a long period of two thousand years. The Hindu Dharma, he asserted, was the

main cause. Of all religions in the world, it was Hinduism that recognized caste distinctions and untouchability. This was the cover, the cloak, for all the injustices perpetrated on the scheduled castes by caste Hindus He, therefore, reiterated his conviction that they must discard Hinduism, and refuse to submit to indignities any longer

The learned Doctor did not tell his followers what new religious faith they have to embrace after abjuring the religion of their ancestors. From the trend of the resolutions passed at the Conference, it is clear that the issues involved are not social or economic, but political. Scheduled castes, as distinguished from Hindus or Muhammedans, were unheard of a couple of centuries ago in India, and yet we are told that they suffered indignities at the hands of the 'Hindus' for the last two thousand years. That change of religion does not guarantee social or economic betterment is evident from the deplorable condition of members of the scheduled castes, especially in the South, large sections of whom have embraced Christianity. Even if certain individuals or groups unjustly oppressed their poorer brethren in the name of religion, it is unwise to level ignorant criticism against Hinduism.

There is nothing so wicked about the caste system as some persons seem to think, though caste distinctions have, in certain cases, given rise to caste prejudices leading to social injustice. For the matter of that, no system or organization of a social, economic, or political nature has been able to eliminate completely the exploitation of one class by another in some form or other. Hinduism never justifies untouchability which has certainly to go; and caste, mainly a socio-economic institution, was but a process by which Hinduism civilized

and assimilated the different racial groups that were taken in.

Of all religions Hinduism has truly upheld the dignity of the individual by asserting the divinity of man, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour. But social disabilities do exist, and, in recent years, resurgent Hindu thought has roused large sections of the community to actively take up the cause of the lower castes in all earnestness. Though some leaders of minority communities, anxious to maintain their political hold on the masses, create unreal differences and repudiate the religion and culture of their forefathers, it is encouraging to find that the rank and file are not inclined to be misled. The Conference itself passed no resolution discarding or intending to discard Hinduism. And elsewhere, the Working Committee of the All-India Depressed Classes League met and passed a resolution viewing with grave concern the growing activities of non-Hindu missionaries among the people of the Depressed Classes in various provinces, and expressing their apprehension that this would lead to the conversion of the people of those areas to Christianity. Where mutual distrust and antagonism have already been created by sedulous hands, the way to redress grievances does not lie in taking hasty and rash action which may 'kill the man along with the mosquito'. Dr. Ambedkar has very rightly advised his followers to 'shake off their inferiority complex,' 'rely on their own strength,' and 'refuse to submit to indignities'. But is it necessary to 'discard Hinduism' in order to be able to do these?

Never quarrel about religion. All quarrels and disputations concerning religion simply show that spirituality is not present. Religious quarrels are always over the husks. When purity, when spirituality goes leaving the soul dry, quarrels begin, and not before.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE SOUL OF INDIA. BY MOTI LAL DAS. Published by Mrs. Prabhavati Das, Shiva Sahitya Kutir, Jalpaiguri, Bengal. Pp. 167. Price Rs. 2.

Mr. Das is a prolific writer in Bengali and has already about a dozen volumes in that language to his credit. The book under review, which is his maiden work in English, is a collection of twelve articles on the rich legacy of India as also a short poem entitled *Mother India*. Five of the articles were read at culture centres in London, Berlin, Paris, Belfast, and Hamburg, and three of them appeared in two high-brow monthlies in India. The essays are of general interest and were mainly written for the foreign reader. The articles on Kalidasa, Rabindranath, Chaitanya, Chandidasa, and Buddha are fairly interesting.

In the first article, after which the book is named, the author points out quite poetically the salient traits of the Indian nation and traces the fundamental continuity and unity of Indian culture through the ages. He rightly observes that the steadfast faith in the transcendental source of life and humanity has saved India from utter extinction. 'The civilization of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon are gone;' he continues, 'dead is Greece and dead are her gods. The power of Rome is a chapter of History. Egypt lives in her mummies and pyramids. Assyria and Babylon are forgotten. But India still lives' It is the ancient faith in the Spirit that has made India survive through centuries and overcome death. The author is right in cherishing the great hope that though to-day India is shorn of her past glory and 'her lamp of life burns dim in her lone cottage', yet if she sticks to her ancient faith, she shall rise up in near future and win her rightful place in the federation of nations. The author remarks that Indian civilization, which is 'grand in its outlines, unique in its perfections of details, and immortal in its virility,' is destined to bring deliverance to the weary world, and India's gospel of spirituality of life will heal modern life of its intense intellectualism in which it is badly steeped.

The paper on Chaitanya's magnetic personality and God-intoxication will be extremely entertaining to the readers who are devotional-minded. The personality of Chaitanya was so attractive that none could turn his eyes away from his divine beauty, and his

presence was so elevating and purifying that all around him used to be inspired with thoughts of God. The last article dealing with Rabindranath clearly brings out the excellences of his poetry and the universality of his message.

BENGALI

BENOY SARKARER VAITHAKE. BY SHRI HARIDAS MUKHERJEE. Published by Chakravartty, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., 15, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 453. Price Rs. 3.

Mr. Mukherjee used to frequent Sarkar's parlour for a period in 1942. He had interesting conversations there. The topics, starting with Swami Abhedananda ended with Shyamaprasad. Prof. Sarkar is an encyclopaedia of knowledge. When he speaks, the listeners are overwhelmed with a plethora of information—too much to be remembered. He starts from home, inspiration takes him abroad, and after a long peregrination through America, London, Germany, France, and Japan he again comes back to his subject and concludes by giving out his own way of looking at things. A detailed review of these talks is hardly necessary; for the matters are not very new and have been already applauded or criticized. It is, however, always true that a man is best known from his informal talks, and this Vaithaka is no exception in revealing Sarkarism unreservedly. Mr. Mukherjee took notes of these conversations for himself. But at the instance of some of his friends, who accidentally read some of these notes and thought that a publication will help the young students in their pursuit of knowledge, he has published this big volume for a wider public.

BHABISHYATER BÂNGÂLI. BY S. WAZED ALI, B.A. (CANTAB), BAR-AT-LAW. Published by Prabartak Publishing House, 61, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 112. Price 1-8.

We read the whole book in one breath and found it immensely interesting from page to page. This is a book of the hour; its title literally means 'Bengalee of the future'. The small volume is divided into seven chapters, some of which are 'Bengalee of the future', 'The nature of the future', 'Religion of love', and 'National awakening'.

Some serious problems that confront Bengal and, in fact, the whole of Hindustan, are thoughtfully discussed in these chapters by an enlightened Bengali Muslim, though it should better have been written in English for the sake of the non-Bengalees as well.

The first chapter concerns the Bengalees, both Hindus and Muslims. The first thought in it, that strikes the reader at the very outset, is that, on account of the naturally existing defensible frontiers, India is geographically one indivisible country where only one nation is destined to grow. This itself is a home-thrust to those who indulge in the absurd day-dreams of Balkanizing India. The author rightly favours the view of dividing the land into several linguistic provinces as suggested by the Congress, converting each such province into an almost independent State and then forming finally a Federation of all the States. Each province, having its distinct language, literature, history, and culture, is, according to the author, quite capable of being turned into a State that should have the Dominion status for internal affairs only. A central Government over the union of States will look after the defence and foreign relations of the whole country. Bengal, the author believes, has almost all the materials for growing into such a State, and the Bengal of the future will develop into an ideal State and show the way to other Indian provinces.

The second chapter first gives a history of the nation idea. In ancient times there was clanship by which the empires of Cyrus and Chengis Khan were formed. Clanship then grew into city State, and on that model the empires of Rome, Athens, and Carthage were built, and then the city State made way, in the medieval age, for religious States, as made by emperor Charlemagne and Khalif Harun-al Rashid, and lastly the religious State turned into the modern nation, as prevalent in the whole world of today. The author, after detailing nine distinguishing features of the nation idea, observes that India can stand united only on the nation idea, setting aside all religious and other differences. As, the author says, nations in other lands have been built on this idea, India cannot do otherwise.

The fourth chapter analyses the root causes of Hindu-Moslem disunity in Bengal, and suggests proper and practicable solutions for the establishment of unity between these two sister communities. Undesirable influences of the religious leaders with communalistic bent of mind, popularity of communalistic literature, want of institutions for closer union of the two communities, the

false hope of some people to get back the communal State of the middle age, and the potent influence of non-Bengalis on the present-day life of Bengal, are some of the main causes that have created a yawning gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims. The first and foremost thing that can lay the foundation of this unity, the author rightly says, is that Hindus and Muslims should realize in their heart of hearts the supreme fact that they will have to live together for ever, and that they are Bengalees first, and then Hindus or Muslims. Truly did the members of the Turkish goodwill mission declare, while in India, that they are Turks first and Muslims or Christians afterwards. Chiang Kai-Shek, though by religion a Methodist Christian, is the national leader of China. Nazif Azidi and Beterus Bostani—both Christians, are the founders of Arab nationalism. The bright sincerity of the author prompts him to declare that those who fan the flames of communalism should be prosecuted in the court, and a country-wide agitation should be launched to stop communalistic propaganda of all kind.

The next chapter traces in a short compass the development of English literature and then that of Bengali literature. He humbly begs the literary men of today to create such a literature as may enrich the minds of both Hindus and Muslims, send the past differences into oblivion, and hold constantly before the public a glorious future of the country, absolutely free from present unpleasantness. As H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, and Aldous Huxley are dreaming of a better future for mankind, so our writers should do in right earnest. Collective dreams will in the fulness of time materialize into tangible realities.

The last but one chapter is very interesting and instructive. It contains a brief outline of Sufism—the religion of love—with apt quotations from the Persian Sufi poets Jalaluddin, Jami, Saadi, Omer Khayyam, Hafiz, etc. Sufism, the fairest flower of Islam, eloquently speaks of the glories of universal love and does not distinguish a Muslim from a non-Muslim. The Sufi poet Hafiz says, 'O Hafiz, if you desire union with Truth, then love one and all irrespective of creed. Say Allah, Allah, with a Muslim and Râm, Râm, with a Hindu.' The author relates the personal experience of meeting such a Sufi in a mosque in the village of Pandu, in the district of Hoogly, in Bengal. He reached there in the evening and alighted from his motor car. Simultaneously the call of Azan as well as the sound of conches and bells were heard in the mosque. This surprised the author who

was told by the old Khadem of the mosque that He who is the Khuda of the Muslims is the Bhagavân of the Hindus. May this spirit overwhelm the Hindus and Muslims alike!

In the concluding chapter, the author suggests that as we live in the modern age, we should dismiss our medieval ideas and ideals as dead and gone, think of living thoughts, and cultivate a new outlook. This is no doubt the need of our age. Moreover,

the present-day awakening, the author opines, should be consolidated on nationalism and not on religion. The author then feelingly unhosoms his eager expectation of a superman, the man of destiny, like Ashoka, Akbar, George Washington, or Kamal who will make his epochal appearance in India when circumstances will be propitious, and he will crown India with independence. The chapter is finished with a description of such a superman.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DISTRESS RELIEF WORK IN BENGAL

Report from June, 1943

The Ramakrishna Mission began the Distress Relief work in Bengal last June, and gradually extending its area covered, through its 75 relief centres, a maximum of 1,169 villages, spread over 19 districts, in December. Reports of this work have been published from time to time in this journal. We are now presenting a consolidated report up to January last, when the first phase of our work ended.

Till the end of January we distributed 37,002 mds. of rice, 2,955 mds. of other food-grains, 28,964 cloths, saris and chaddars, 8,169 blankets and 4,371 banians. The number of recipients reached its peak in December, when it came up to 1,28,972, the figures for September, October, and November being 5,201, 27,227 and 51,113 respectively. In January the number came down to 93,430. Besides free doles, Rs. 35,645-6-0 was distributed as pecuniary help. Relief in the form of supplying rice and other food-grains at concession rates was given to 4,172 persons on an average per month, the total amount of rice thus sold being 2,752 mds. and other food-grains 634 mds.

Milk canteens were run in 13 centres, from where a maximum of 3,070 children and invalids were daily served with milk and diet. Seven free kitchens were also organized by the Mission, which daily fed a maximum of 8,240 persons.

Along with this, medical aid was given through most of our centres. Homoeopathic medicines were given free to general patients and quinine to the malaria patients. We also got considerable help from our permanent dispensaries at about twenty places.

The total receipts up to the 15th March were Rs. 8,75,451-2-11 and the total expenditure Rs. 7,01,132-7-4. Besides we received in kind about 40,000 mds. of rice and other food-

grains and 54 bales of cloth and blankets during the period.

From February the second and restricted phase of our relief work has begun. Owing to various reasons, of which lack of funds is the principal one, we have had to curtail our activities to a great extent. At present the work is being conducted only through 50 centres. We are now concentrating mainly on medical relief and test relief, and giving free doles on a restricted scale only to the absolutely needy or the disabled. The total quantity of quinine distributed in the two months of January and February was about 15 lbs. 5 ozs.

But we feel that in a short time the Distress Relief work will again have to be expanded. It is only through the concerted efforts of us all that a recurrence of the last year's tragedy can be averted. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public to help us in every possible way and thus save our countrymen from destitution, misery and death.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Swami Madhavananda,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.
20-3-44.

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT AT THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTRE OF NEW YORK

Just fifty years ago Swami Vivekananda, an unknown monk from India, electrified the great audience of the opening session of the Parliament of Religions, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, with his message of universal brotherhood. It was as a direct result of his appearance at the Parliament, where he delivered a number of addresses on Hindu philosophy and religion, that the Vedanta movement was started in America. In celebration of the event, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New

York held two special services on Sunday, 14 November, 1943.

At the Sunday morning service in the chapel, Swami Nikhilananda gave a sermon on *Fifty Years of Vedanta in America* before an audience that filled the auditorium. The chapel was tastefully decorated with beautiful flowers, which added to the festive atmosphere.

In the evening an even larger gathering had the privilege of hearing several brilliant speakers and, in addition, a fine programme of music by Bach, César Franck, and Handel. Two outstanding artists, Mrs. Helen Teschner Tas, violinist, and Dr. Paul Berl, pianist, contributed largely to the success of the celebration by their sensitive rendering of the works of great masters of Western music.

Mr. Joseph Cambell, President of the Centre, gave the opening address and introduced the speakers. In the course of his remarks he stressed the importance of the coming together of the Occident and the Orient. To the message of the culture bearers of the West, he declared, the Orient has only begun to reply. Westerners have hardly begun to realize the majesty, the serene sublimity, of the Asiatic soul.

The President then called on Swami Yatiswarananda, the first guest speaker of the evening. The Swami had come all the way from his new centre in Philadelphia especially for the occasion. In a moving discourse he told of his first contact with the message of Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda shortly after the latter's death. He also explained why the people of America are so receptive to the ideas of Vedanta, pointing out the similarity of its teachings to some of the fundamental ideas of the American Declaration of Independence. Swami Vivekananda, he said, put before us the great ideal which we may call the Declaration of Man's Spiritual Freedom. He appealed to the Americans because he was a man who not only spoke of unity, but felt unity and knew how to express it through loving service.

The second guest speaker of the evening was Dr. Irwin Edman, the well-known professor of philosophy in Columbia University. There are two reasons, he said, for Westerners to be grateful that the Vedanta movement has taken root in America. First, this movement has been significant in furthering that exchange of culture and imaginative understanding between India and the Western world which is helping to make the world one. And second, in this practical and at the moment distraught country, full of necessary hurried urgencies

in temporal aims, here is a movement that quietly and pertinaciously says that the ills of time will never be cured unless time itself is seen in the perspective of eternity. The Vedanta movement, he continued, is a noble instance of a religious tradition that can appeal to people without technical training and experience because of the sense of common fellowship in the divine quality it teaches, and at the same time can appeal, and perhaps even more strongly, to philosophers.

After another musical selection by Mrs. Tas and Dr. Berl, the Vice-president of the Centre, Mr. Denver Lindley, was called on. The Columbian Exposition of 1893, he declared, was actually an occasion for celebrating the material progress of America. At the Parliament of Religions, as in a museum, various religions were exhibited some even under glass. Then, startlingly, into this museum came something that did not belong to a museum at all. It was Swami Vivekananda. The reason for the tremendous effect of this captivating and volcanic person was that to him religion was a passion; it was completely necessary to the life of man. The West's great need has been for men who have verified in their own persons the meaning of existence. That is the service that Swami Vivekananda and those who have followed after him have rendered to us.

In conclusion, Swami Nikhilananda spoke on *Swami Vivekananda: the Spirit of India*, presenting in detail some of the important aspects of the great Swami's message.

After the closing selection of music, Indian rice-pudding was served to the entire congregation. Those who were fortunate enough to be present felt that this was one of the most noteworthy celebrations in the history of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, thoroughly befitting the Golden Jubilee of the inauguration of the Vedanta movement in America.

REPORTS PRINTED

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

Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama,	
Kankhal	1942
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya,	
Coimbatore District	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Students'	
Home and Shivananda Vidyalaya,	
Batticaloa, Ceylon	1942-43
Shri Ramakrishna Ashrama,	
Mymensing	1937-43
Ramakrishna Mission Students'	
Home, Madras	1943