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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

THE PATH OF SELF-SURRENDER

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Faith in God is the real thing. I am glad to know that you liked what I wrote about the essence of the teachings of the Gita. The sense of the verse : ‘Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, . . .’ etc., is exactly as you have written. To look upon oneself as the machine and Him as the mechanic, is one attitude. There are other attitudes too. For example, He has become everything, and dwelling within all He Himself is playing all these games—this is another. Similarly there are many other attitudes. But the absence of this petty egoistic feeling is necessary in all the attitudes. Know this petty ego to be the root of all evil and delusion.

Taking refuge in Him means just this : to try to be content, however He may place you, viewing it as good, to merge one’s will in the will of God, and to practise equanimity in happiness and misery, gain and loss, etc. That is to say, one can rightly take refuge in Him

only when one becomes free. Before that it is the Yoga of practice. Perfect resignation of self to God is liberation. If one is honest in the practise of this attitude, it is sure to come some day through His grace. About renunciation, of which you have written, the Master used to say, ‘At first the daughter-in-law has to do a lot of tiresome work in the house; but when she is with child, the mother-in-law gradually cuts down her work and does not allow her to toil so much. Afterwards when she gives birth to the child, there is no more work for her at all. Her sole work consists of being occupied with the baby, looking after it and finding joy in its delight.’

To wait in patience for His mercy as a beggar waits for alms, is also another attitude; if it is sincere, His mercy is sure to descend. The Master used to call it the attitude of the kitten which stays wherever and however the mother chooses to place it; it has no desire, no

effort of its own. In short, success is sure if any attitude whatever is sincerely followed. He is the inner ruler—He

knows everything; our attainments are bound to be in accordance with our cravings.

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

BY THE EDITOR

I

We glibly talk of racial perfections and shortcomings, and eulogize or malign the different races on the face of the earth according to the varying moods we are in, little thinking that our premises may be fundamentally wrong. The harm done by such biassed or prejudiced propaganda is assuming greater and still greater proportion, till thinking people despair of the harmonious development of the human family.

The present war, like all wars of old, has roused emotion to the highest pitch and encircled this sentimental bias with a strange halo of verisimilitude. The mass mind has been worked to white heat, so that the least opposition runs the risk of being speedily scorched and blasted. National Governments, too, have added not a little to this strange attitude through their propaganda machines. Thus we are asked to believe that certain races are inherently cruel and barbarous and wreckers of cultural values like bulls in china shops; certain others are impermeable to democratic ways of thinking and incapable of administrative efficiency like babies and disorganized mobs; while still others are so far below the standard of civilization that they should better be classed with subhuman species of animals. The simple fact that most of these races have, one time or other, given birth to great souls who have helped humanity on the path of perfection, is totally forgotten. They swear by the theory of evolution, and yet they hardly recognize that the so-called backward races have an infinite future before them replete with inexhaustible possibilities

of progress. They refuse to see that the present scales of values are highly artificial, and the present scheme of opportunities and inducements for progress are jealously guarded and devilishly monopolized. In fact, the present civilization does not look at man from the point of view of his intrinsic worth, but thinks of him *en masse* as one of a strange conglomeration of dream-world phantasies. And the background of this fantastic picture is supplied by organized selfishness, short-sightedness, and prejudice which go by the name of nationalism.

Of these whimsical segmentations of the human society we have two very broad and well-known divisions—the East and the West. And Kipling's dictum that the East is East and the West is West and the two shall never meet, though it has become trite, still boldly underlines a real state of human mind. Many Westerners keep that idea hidden in their subconscious mind, and many Easterners betray it in their conscious moods and attitudes. There is a third division, that of the Niggers and the aborigines who are subhuman for all intents and purposes both to the Eastern and the Western minds. There are other racial groups which have gathered round them intense sentimental reactions. The Huns are undoubtedly barbarous and subverters of culture; and the Japs are intruders in the civilized world, their thin integument of culture hardly covers their rough and brutish minds. Such are some of the working generalizations that most people keep in their pockets for ready application.

It will be silly and useless to blame any one nation for this slur on humanity. We have one and all contributed to this strange phenomenon. For oppression continues only so long as there are submissive human beings, and so long as these latter are not brought to bay. Such being the laws of social actions and reactions, there would have been no supercilious ruling race if there were not groups of supine human beings: there would have been no racial snobbery if there was no culture-lag anywhere; there would have been no inter-racial black-mailing if there was no racial monopoly of the world's wealth: and there would have been no cruel retaliation if there was no carefully hatched racial hatred. But unwittingly we have entered the domain of hasty generalization that we set out to condemn! Let us now turn to some concrete illustrations of racial prejudice.

Kipling's mistake lay in accepting a temporary phenomenon as a permanent feature of human relationship. But Maeterlinck raised this to the psychological plane when he asserted 'that the East and the West are altogether impermeable to each other, or that there exist in the human brain an Oriental and an Occidental division which mutually paralyse their efforts'. The question of *rapprochement* was, therefore, ruled out of court. But when Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and others were highly eulogized by their Western admirers like Romain Rolland who maintained that the Orient had a message of its own which the West would profit by taking timely note of, some Western thinkers scented a danger of Eastern contamination. Henri Massis gave utterance to this in the most emphatic way:

It is in the West that one must first look for and denounce the ideologists who—while pretending to open our eyes to Oriental ideas—betray Occidental civilization and their own proper vocation. On the other hand, when we consider who are their allies in Asia, among the Orientals themselves, we observe that they all have been formed by Western culture. Tagore, Okakura, Coomaraswamy, even Gandhi himself, all of

them have been educated in European universities; they quote unceasingly our poets, our philosophers, and it is our own ideas—meaning thereby our own follies—which they give back to us. How does it happen that under the pretext of coming to an understanding, a union between the East and the West, their thought by a kind of pre-established harmony, is in agreement with what is most destructive in European ideology? It is obvious that they utilize the breaches and search for the line of least resistance in order to penetrate into the body of the disintegrating West?

But Romain Rolland could present not only Tagore and Gandhi but also Shri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who were not the products of Western culture, who did not quote Western poets and savants, and who could not be accused of entering the Western world through the backdoor. Their's was a message universal, coeval with humanity, nay, Divinity, unlimited by climatic limitations and racial prejudices, and yet derived from the hoary past of the Orient. The West could not but take note of this and ask in its confusion, Is the East so really strange as our thinkers would have us believe? Are its values so far low in the scale of human estimation as not to merit any consideration? Shri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are a challenge to the modern, superficial intellect and still more vapoury spiritual consciousness, for they represent the Vedantic ideal of the potential equality and Divinity of all races and individuals.

II

Prejudice, however, dies hard. Reason and facts pale into insignificance in the face of self-interested drives. Besides, the West has the whip-hand and can easily ignore the cry of the so-called backward races for fairer treatment. The Whites can requisition at will history, science, sociology, and metaphysics (which are their own creations) to justify the present state of things. As Stoddard writes:

Out of the prehistoric shadows the white races pressed to the front and proved in a myriad ways their fitness for the hegemony of mankind. Gradually they forged a com-

mon civilization; then, when vouchsafed their unique opportunity of oceanic mastery four centuries ago, they spread over the earth filling its empty spaces with their superior breeds and assuring to themselves an unparalleled paramountcy of number and dominion.

It may, therefore, be taken for granted for the time-being that evolution has decided in favour of the Whites. The coloured people have to bide their time till the evolutionary circle takes another turn, if it does at all, in the distant future. But things assume an ugly appearance when white races try to make a distinction among themselves and the solution is sought to be made at the point of the bayonet. During the last World War, Germany claimed certain superiority on account of her Kultur, though she had to eat the humble pie. None the less, Hitler's Germany has again raised the false cry of racial purity and a *lebensraum* for the Germanic people, which must be attained even at the cost of others. According to German ideologists, Jews must be extradited or extirpated by thousands. Poles, with their inferior Kultur, can advance no counter-claim to equality of treatment. The French and the English must equally yield precedence to the Germanic race. The modern international struggle is interpreted in terms of money or power by superficial thinkers only. As Dr. Rosenberg puts it,

The real fight today is not so much for the shifting of power in the outer world, but rather to rebuild the soul-structure of the Nordic nations, and to preserve the very substance of the race. The position of political power may for a long time continue to become even more unfavourable for us. If, however, a new and yet ancient Germanic type has been realized and created, it will become the focal point round which everything will gather which is still rooted in the old home-soil of Europe.

Hitler is equally emphatic on this race theory. His State is synonymous with the Nordic race, whatever that phrase may imply :

The State is only a means to an end. Its end and its purpose is to preserve and promote a community of human beings who are physically as well as spiritually kindred.

Above all, it must preserve the existence of the race, thereby providing the indispensable condition for the free development of all the forces dormant in this race. The State is only the vessel and the race is what it contains. The vessel can have a meaning only if it preserves and safeguards the contents. Otherwise it is worthless.

Not only this, the superiority of the Germanic race is a historic and natural fact :

It was the Aryan alone who founded a superior type of humanity; therefore he represents the archetype of what we understand by the term Man.

From this it is but one step more to conclude that Germany must rule the world :

Anyone who sincerely wishes that the pacifist idea should prevail in this world, ought to do all he is capable of doing to help the Germans conquer the world....

It will be far from the truth to maintain from such quotations that all the Germans are imbued with the idea that they are the chosen people of God. There must be honest people who doubt or even deny such a flagrantly false theory, although their voice is ineffective at present and they are led along like dumb-driven cattle by their power-intoxicated and prejudice-ridden leaders. It will be equally wrong also to hold that though the Germans have stated this theory most blatantly and are working it out most tenaciously, there are not others among the European nations who publicly swear by this and privately work for it. We should not be understood here also as condemning whole groups. But we have to take note of the fact that there were and still are leaders of thought in other countries who believe in this theory of racial superiority and all that it implies. Bryce, for instance, wrote:

What we must desire in the interests of mankind at large is that the most highly civilized races should increase faster than the more backward, so as to enable the former to prevail not merely by force, but by numbers and amicable influence.

In a debate in the South African Assembly on 11 April 1944 Mr. Abrahamson said 'that the position was im-

possible. They were seriously considering asking Government to segregate Europeans in their areas and to leave certain areas for Indians only. If only that was done, perhaps, white civilization in Natal could be saved.' (*Hindustan Standard*, 13 April 1944).

And we hear responsible statesmen making appeals in the name of Anglo-Saxon solidarity, and adjuration for the putting down of Japanese brutality and Germanic cruelty. We hear that the Anglo-Saxon races will have to take upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining world peace, that the German Huns and Japanese barbarians will have to be unarmed, that the Slavonic people will have to be dealt with more carefully, that the Arabic people will have to be given more political power, and so on and so forth. People often speak of the present struggle as an ideological war. Be that as it may, the fact cannot be denied that it is a racial war as well. The only difference between the two opposing camps is as regards method—the one believes in an appeal to arms and mass massacre while the other stands for peaceful penetration and reduction of opposing races to imbecility.

III

The theory of intrinsic racial differences, though apparently based on so-called scientific data, is at bottom an attempt at justifying the rule of some races over others. It is advanced as a socio-philosophical background for the pretension of some groups to be recognized as natural world leaders. First comes distinction and then supremacy. The Germans are Aryans, *ergo*, the non-Aryans must be their under dogs. The Whites are distinct from the coloured peoples, therefore, the latter cannot claim equality with the former. The axiom underlying all such discussion is that there must be some one human group which is Divinely ordained to assume world leadership. Or in other words, the attempt at grading the different races resolves itself into a

simple search for the chosen people, although no racial group has so far been able to advance that pretentious claim and successfully withstand the consequences. The Jews once claimed the distinction, but they are now scattered all over the world. The Chinese did it under their imperial dynasties, but they are now fighting for their national existence. The Greeks and the Romans did it in their palmy days, but they are now out of the running. The Whites claim it now for themselves, although Port Arthur was at once a shock and an eye-opener. But the last incident failed to materially alter the theory of White supremacy, though it ushered a new contestant in the arena. When the modern pupil of the West, we mean Japan, outbid Russia in her own game, she adopted the technique of propaganda of her masters and claimed racial superiority over others.

It was easy, however, to dismiss the pretensions of such an 'infant terrible,' and explain away the temporary success on various plausible grounds. It was easy to assert that the Japanese people did not triumph over any European Power as such, but only against Czarist Russia, which had a rotten administration and was virtually an Asiatic country. And during the present war, it is openly declared that Japan's claim is absolutely spurious, she being a freak of Nature and a sort of skeleton in the cupboard.

This easy-going self-complacence might go unchallenged but for two significant incidents during the last World War. Japan's success notwithstanding, the Whites might still guard their privileged position against the coloured races. But when Germany made a bid for world hegemony on the basis of cultural and racial supremacy, the race theory itself had to be stated afresh. Mere material power and possession could no longer be a sure criterion of superiority. Besides, Aryanism, which had so far held the field as the hall-mark of higher culture and mental calibre, had to be decried as a study-room invention. Thus H. B.

Hannah writes in his *Culture and Kultur Race-origins* :

It is now generally agreed that there never was any Aryan Race, the common progenitor of all the subsequent races who spoke and speak the Indo-Aryan and Indo-European languages (p. 10). Prusso-Germans as an ethnos, and even so far as the recent indications show, individually, are possessed of no Character, no Spirituality, whatever. Intellect, of a sort, they undoubtedly have. . . . Nevertheless, they are utter barbarians. . . . Closely connected with this subject are the far-reaching and deep-laid plots on the part of 'Scientific' Teutonia to obtain a general acknowledgement that as individuals—physically, mentally, and even, ye gods! spiritually—the Prusso-Germans are the supermen of the Earth, and as a nation, are destined to universal hegemony and overlordship. Knowing full well that these first-mentioned honours already belong, as of right, to the Englishman (using that term in its widest sense), . . . (pp. 145-146).

According to the same author civilization, or rather the spiritual portion of it, travelled from the West to the East and not *vice versa* (p. 150). Thus Hannah, at one stroke, establishes not only the racial inferiority of the Easterners, but he also advances the claim of his Englishman to be recognized as the superman!

Secondly, if the last World War ended in an unaided victory for England, the victory would certainly have been requisitioned for supporting the old race theory, for was not superiority proved there demonstrably by force of arms? But a distracting factor was the participation of America whose men, money, and ammunition played a decisive part. We hear nowadays of the United States of America as an Anglo-Saxon country, though there is hardly any pure race on the earth now. In fact, there has been such a fusion of blood there, that the race theory in its old sense is hardly applicable. The English, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Slavs, the Spaniards, the Negroes, and many other races have contributed their blood in the building up of the American nation. When, therefore, American superiority became apparent after the last War, a fresh explanation was called for. So H. W. Van Loon came with a more

realistic outlook in his *The Story of Mankind* :

I do not for a moment claim that, man for man and woman for woman, the Americans as a nation are superior to any of their cousins of the old world. But fortunately they have little consciousness of the past, and, therefore, they are more able to approach the problems of the present with an open eye towards the future than the members of almost any other race. As a result they have accepted the modern world without any reservations and having accepted it with all its good and all its evil, they are rapidly reaching a *modus vivendi* whereby animate man and his inanimate servant shall be able to exist on terms of peace and mutual respect. . . . In order to do this the American people have been forced to throw overboard a great deal of ancestral ballast. (p. 407).

The difficulties experienced so far with the race theory have been augmented by the present nameless, formless, and aimless armageddon which cuts across all racial and geographical frontiers. The Japanese are shaking hands with the Germans, and the Chinese, Russians, Indians, and Negroes have joined hands with the English and the Americans. When victory comes, the historian will hesitate to ascribe it to the racial worth of any particular group, though claimants for the honour there certainly will be.

IV

Such are some of the aspects of the race theory which have developed so far in the West. These have their counterparts in India as well. Caste is held by some to be a natural consequence of racial superiority and eagerness for maintaining racial purity. We have to say frankly, however, that whatever the early beginnings might have been, the plain fact is that there is little of pure blood in India at present. Races have intermarried and intermixed for centuries, so that it is almost silly now to talk of Aryans and Dravidians, whites and reds, blacks and browns, etc. In features and colours the people of one region differ so little from those of another, that when dressed alike, the foreigners can hardly distinguish among them. It is high

time, therefore, that we recognize facts and stop talking irresponsibly about these study-room races, thereby making confusion worse confounded. There is but one Indian nation. Local pride and interested propaganda, however, cannot take kindly to such a patent fact. As a consequence, others take advantage of this divergence to our utter chagrin. We fight for mythical names and imaginary fames ignoring the broad facts of history and everyday life while things more substantial slip through our fingers. For where are the Aryans and Dravidians of the scientific anthropologists, and where are the castes of the orthodox sociologists? As Swami Vivekananda pointed out :

In India, more than anywhere, such words as Aryans and Dravidians, are only of philological import, the so-called craniological differentiation finding no solid ground to work upon.... Not one of the epithets expressive of contempt for the ugly physical features of the Dasyus of the Vedas would apply to the great Tamilian race; in fact if there be a toss for good looks between the Aryans and TAMILIANS, no sensible man would dare prognosticate the result. The sur-arrogated excellence of birth of any caste in India is only pure myth.... an ocean of humanity, composed of these race-waves seething, boiling, struggling, constantly changing form, rising to the surface, and spreading and swallowing little ones; again subsiding—this is the history of India.

Such being the case, the Swamiji entreated us to think of the Indian nation as a whole and be proud of our Tamilian, Kolarian, Hun, Scythian, Persian, Mongol, Tartar, and all other ancestors, who made India what it is, and whom he included under the single generic name, the 'Aryans', the people of India. In the Swamiji's view, therefore, the race theories had no practical significance, and in the fight for precedence and privilege he found the seed of disruption. This in India. In the world, too, as we have seen, race supremacy is at the root of most of the trouble. But we are not in this article primarily concerned with the West for the very cogent reason that the West can take care of itself. The race theory in the contemporary world works

most disastrously against the East inasmuch as it not only justifies and perpetuates present inequities, it has also made inroads into the mental and spiritual life of the East, engendering a degrading belief in racial inferiority. To check further progress of this soul-killing ideology, we must effectively despoil our minds of some of the theories propounded by race propagandists. Let us take brief note of some of these.

V

What does the Oriental mentality, according to the Occident, actually consist in? The Orientals are unscientific, other-worldly, pessimistic, unprogressive, undemocratic, and culturally backward.

To at least one of the assumptions underlying all these charges, we plead guilty. The East does want to build its society on spirituality rather than on materialism. It is beyond the scope of this article to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the opposing points of view. But we do believe, from the bottom of our heart, that the spiritual standpoint does represent a higher outlook on life, and it is replete with more possibilities of progress than the rival one.

As for the other charges, we can only consider some of their worst implications. The race theories are nothing but wide generalizations based on insufficient data. For one thing, we must remember that it is extremely silly to condemn a whole race or a nation on the evidence of meagre literary, historical, or other evidences, for the simple reason that inductive logic demands a more thorough sifting of facts and testing of hypotheses. Be that as it may, if we follow the method of our calumniators, we may easily show that they themselves stand on no better ground.

The backwardness of Europe was too palpable a few centuries ago to require any special exposure. In Europe barbers were surgeons even in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the magic touch of the king

was believed to have curative power. In England, so late as 1843, 32 p.c. of men and 49 p.c. of women were illiterate and had to sign their names on the marriage register with a cross. Alchemy had many votaries and the search for the philosopher's stone ceased only a few generations ago. Hospitals were unknown in Europe before the time of Emperor Constantine, though Ashoka founded them five hundred years earlier. Indian ships excelled those of Europe even in the fifteenth century. India is the original home of cotton. Indian art and architecture attained great perfection when it was little known in England, France, Germany, and other countries. In physical, chemical, mathematical, astronomical, and metallurgical sciences India attained a height which was beyond the conception of the contemporary West. In medicine and surgery India easily surpassed others. In warfare India was hardly behind other nations, and often led them. In colonization she was unrivalled in the East. In literature her achievement is still the wonder of the world. And in speculative thought she is still unsurpassed. In fact, India of old, was neither unusually unprogressive nor very unscientific. The same can be said of China as well. She, too, was in the vanguard of civilization, and modern nations owe much more to China than she does to them.

The East, again, was not more pessimistic and other-worldly than Europe. Calvin, for instance, wrote :

If heaven is our country, what is earth but our place of exile? If to depart out of the world is to enter into life, what is the earth but a sepulchre? What is a continuance in it but absorption in death? We must learn to hate this terrestrial life, that it make us no prisoners to sin.

Schopenhauer's conception of the world as an evil thing is too well known to call for any special reference. He did not believe in progress, for he wrote :

In general, the wise in all ages have always said the same things, and the fools, who at all times form the immense majority,

have in their way too acted alike, and gone the opposite; and so it will continue. For as Voltaire says, we shall leave the world as foolish and wicked as we found it.

And look at this Byronic despair :

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis better something not to be.

Are the Indians undemocratic? Look at the republics India reared in the past. And even in later history the intelligentsia had a determining voice in the affairs of State and often, too, the masses revolted and made and unmade things. Besides, there were guilds and *panchâyats* for carrying on local affairs. In this connection we must remember that in the West democracy is still an ideal to be achieved, while there are many in every nation who openly decry it. Truth to say, modern European societies are mostly plutocracies and aristocracies. Besides, for administrative efficiency Europe of old had nothing comparable to the India of Ashoka, Harshavardhana, or Akbar.

Such are some of the charges and counter-charges. But the modern Westerner, while admitting all this, will argue that though the East was in an advantageous position in the past, the forces of evolution have now placed the best race on the top. The East has been left in the lurch by the natural forces of evolution, and it is no use now blaming the West. A greater prostitution of a biological theory is unimaginable! If the coloured races were really so deficient in brain, will, and physical strength, how can the Negroes make their intellectual weight felt in the U.S.A.? How can Indian scientists, writers, artists, and statesmen outbid the Whites? How can Japan imbibe all the Western culture in such a comparatively short period? How can Asiatic Russia be so speedily revolutionized? And how can China display such physical and moral stamina even in the face of Japanese onslaught?

Truth to say, the present war has stripped the race theory utterly naked

and exposed the worthlessness of the material with which is stuffed this colossal image to which all modern nations pay homage. A Moses was necessary to wean back the Jews from their idolatry. A prophet may not arise in these God-forsaken days to cure humanity of its idolatry of race superiority. But will not the sufferings of the War compel us to mend our ways? Religious men of old searched for the best religion, and the Parliament of Religions at Chicago put an end to that

quest by showing that all religions are true. Modern politicians are clamouring for the chosen people. Will the future peace table give the quietus to this by demonstrating the need and worth of each and every nation for the progress of humanity? Vedanta believes in the Divinity of man. All can reach perfection provided there is adequate opportunity and self-exertion. Will future statecraft provide such opportunity and make the world richer, fairer, more worthy to live in?

DRAMA IN INDIA

BY PANDIT TARANATH

Culture is the goal and centre of life. It is the organization of the whole being which has to react to an ordered environment called the world. This culture is, therefore, the urge of life, being the inevitable response to a stimuli of ordered creation. Once this is realized, pleasure is transformed into bliss, the ephemeral reveals the eternal in it, and the human becomes Divine. With the highest attainment possible, and the highest bliss available, the very nature of pleasure-loving in the human creates another urge, that of broadcasting the same consciously or unconsciously. It is the existence of such self-realized propagandists that accounts for the evolution of the race. It is such that make for the dawn of progress, as the West would call it. Therefore we in India concluded long ago that civilization means the spontaneous spread of the process of self-realization. The underlying principles of it, that go to form the philosophy of the people, are the direct result of intuitive realization and intellectual conviction.

But philosophy to propagate, must pragmatize itself into pedagogy, and the rock-bottom of pedagogy is the psychology of the taught. It is a well-known fact that the unknown can be learnt

only with the aid of the known, or more technically speaking, that knowledge is the correlation of a novel objective to an existing cognate. That cognates are the impressions caused by the reaction of the inner being to the stimulus of the environment, is also admitted on all hands. These environments being different according to the very structure of the universe, different zones evoke different reactions, creating different impressions thereof. Though fundamentally human nature is the same in terms of pleasure and pain, the reactions to these differ in mode and expression. These vary with the several zones according to the geographical differences and their respective customs and conventions. The people of each zone, therefore, have their distinct characteristics which the Vedantins called *samashti* or 'group-consciousness'. No teaching can be perfectly assimilated unless it is in tune with this group-consciousness. And, besides, any teaching to fix itself must have a natural bearing on the *samskâras* (approximately, impressions) of the taught.

On an average, the feelings of pleasure and pain may be the same, if only the physical aspect is considered. But with man there is the mental aspect

too. And this mental response, or the way in which men are moved by circumstances, differs with *samashtis*. Superficially it may differ even with different individuals of the same *samashti* but not fundamentally so. Therefore if any teaching should be a success, it depends not only on the excellence of the lesson itself but also on the mind of the taught and the method of imparting too. But apart from these considerations, there is the important aspect of attraction. All beings are fond of pleasure and no system of education, therefore, that does not incorporate pleasantness with it, can spread well. *There can be no instruction without interest and attraction.*

The ancients never stopped with regarding culture as conviction. They defined that as 'a process of becoming' through the character of the individual and the custom of the people. To them it was never the pointed pinnacle of a stray temple but the broad base of society. Its place of discovery might be in solitude but its field of play was always society. The discoveries in the cave were to be the conduct of the community. The intellectual convictions of the few were to be the character of the many. Aspirations were meant only to make aspirants after Truth.

Mere drawing-room manners cannot be called culture. They are but acted poses of others' realizations and never the expressions of a knowing and feeling heart. And what use is ruminating others' cud or is it even possible? Culture to the ancients meant real conversion—the lower becoming the higher. It meant the great work of leading the beast and the bigot to a state of beatitude; and that was no easy task. But the Rishis were of no ordinary mettle to fight shy of it. With the eye fixed on eternity and the hand of blessing on humanity, they rose equal to the task of evolving the *vyashti* (individual), through *samashti* to *mukti* (beatitude). To this end the Vedas were written: the Upanishads, the Āranyakas, the

Dharma-sutras, and the Purānas, too, came into existence only that the Light of Eternity may shine in the ephemeral as well. They were the outcome of the experiences of ages and sages, who before the majesty of knowledge discovered the littleness of their own realizations; who humbly before the stupendousness of *jñāna* (knowledge), regarded even their vastness and sublimity of realization as but an impetus to further research. Metaphysics, philosophy, and psychology—and that mostly introspective—one and all methods of analysis, and Vedānta of synthesis were used for the purpose of broadcasting the fundamentals and the methods of realizing them. *And drama, too, was conceived as but a method of imparting knowledge to the people.* It was not meant to excite but to educate, not to entice but to elevate; in a word *drama was evolved to transmute man to God.*

To spread the culture of the race based on eternal verities in a manner interesting and elevating, needed the vision of the seers, the analysis of the philosophers, and the sweetness of the poets and artists. The Indian drama, characteristic of all these, is, therefore, rightly called *triveni sangama*—a confluence of the three rivers of vision, philosophy, and symbolic art. Drama as such is not meant to be merely amusing: it is that which uses amusement to reveal verities. It has neither the flippancy of an empty joke nor the seriousness of philosophy. If the verities of life can be so well embodied in words as to picture in the mind of the hearer the life of the world as it is and as it ought to be, there then is a feat of the artist. Such feats are not dreams of mere rhetoric, but were actually realized by seers like Vyasa and Valmiki. But when times changed it needed the introduction of what are called *drishya kāvya*, meaning 'visible poetry', i.e., drama.

What should be the fundamentals of this great art then? The answer is not far to seek, when the function of the

drama is to epitomize not only the world of actualities but also of the verities behind that govern them visibly or invisibly. According to Hindu philosophy, the whole of creation is a dual throng, *dvandva*. Pleasure and pain are not independent and isolate. They are but the obverse and the reverse of the Truth yet unrealized: and to see that Truth embosomed by these, which are but surface-waves of that same great ocean, is knowledge. To the Hindu, knowledge, therefore, is that which enables him to see the transient merge in the eternal by his transcendental vision. Herein is his bliss and the urge of life, the conclusion of all philosophy and religion too. To accomplish this is the function of great teachers and the *raison d'être* of drama.

Drama, therefore, cannot logically be only the depiction of life as it is seen and lived on the surface. The invisible other side as well, the undercurrent which life is oblivious of in pleasure and pain, should be suggested by it. Then only can drama expand vision. It can neither be picture-painting nor anything only didactic: the former has no lesson and the latter has no life. The one has nothing to teach and the other no appeal, having no touch with life. But drama worth the name should

reveal the seen and the unseen aspects of life, the conscious undertakings as well as the subconscious undercurrents. The dramatist must remember that dry ethical sermons alone cannot be appreciated and much less remembered. Abstract thoughts are not meant for the majority of mankind who can think only in forms. This aspect of psychology must be foremost in the mind of the dramatist.

Life being what it is—neither pleasure nor pain exclusively—drama, too, cannot be wholly a comedy or a tragedy. The purpose of it, therefore, should not be to represent life as optimistic or pessimistic but visionful if not transcendental. For instance, what use has the common world of a Buddha or a Christ if it cannot have a glimpse of the glory of their renunciation? It is that vision of the resurrection that makes the cross a bed of roses. And no drama can have a mission for the commonalty which has not that vision. It was well said, therefore, when a great seer remarked that the 'drama is the *pratinidhi* (representative) of all thinkers, the *nidhi* (depth) of *navarasas* (emotions) and the *sannidhi* (proximity) of God'. The purpose and fulfilment, too, of drama is, therefore, in its true vision of life.

TRANCE, SAMADHI, AND VISIONS

BY SWAMI SARADANANDA

II

The Master used to say that in his ascent to the state where the *nirvikalpa samâdhi* (transcendental absorption) of the Vedantic path can be achieved, he was obstructed neither by any object nor by any relationship. For had he not, even from the beginning, given up all hankering after enjoyment for the sake of having a glimpse of the lotus feet of the blessed Mother of the Universe? Being attracted by the Mother, he had

completely rooted out from his mind all kinds of desire and passion with this prayer: 'Mother, I offer Thee herewith Thy knowledge and Thy ignorance; I offer herewith Thy virtue and Thy vice; I offer herewith Thy good and Thy bad; I offer herewith Thy fame and Thy infamy; vouchsafe me only pure devotion to Thy blessed feet.' Alas, can we ever think of that one-pointed devotion, leave aside its realization? Even if our lips should say to God some time,

'Lord, I offer all that I have to Thee, we forget all about it the next moment and speak in terms of personal possession and weigh in the balance our gains and losses. At every turn we are conscious of public opinion and are ever busy and agitated. We are sometimes at sea at the thought of the future, while at other times we are swept along with delight; and we have laid the flattering unction to our souls that even though we should not be able to overhaul the world, we can make substantial changes here and there. The Master's mind did not play the swindler with him. As soon as he said, 'Mother, take here the things that Thou gave,' his mind ceased forthwith to look hankeringly at them. From that moment he ceased to have even such regrets as: 'Well, it cannot be helped now; I have already spoken the word. It would have been better if I had not done so.' It is because of this that, when once the Master had offered anything to the Mother, we never noticed him calling it his own again.

We want here to draw the reader's attention to another fact. Though the Master offered to the Mother virtue and vice, merit and demerit, good and bad, fame and infamy, and all such mental and physical appendages, he could never utter: 'Mother, I offer herewith Thy truth and Thy falsehood.' The Master himself once explained the reason to us. He said, 'If I offer truth in that way, how can I stick to the truth that I have offered everything to the Mother?' In fact, what a veracity we did observe in him even after his offer of everything! He kept his appointments scrupulously. If he promised to take a thing from some one, he could accept it from none else. From the day that he said, 'I shall not eat this thing any more,' or 'I shall never do such a thing again,' he could never eat or do it again. The Master used to say, 'One who sticks to truth, realizes the Lord of truth. The Mother never allows any utterance of a truthful man to be falsified.' As a

matter of fact, we have innumerable instances of this in the Master's life. It will not be out of keeping to place some of these before the readers.

It was once arranged that Gopal's Mother who was intensely devoted to the Master, would cook for him. Everything was ready; the Master sat for meal, when he found that the rice was not well boiled; it felt hard. He was annoyed and said, 'How can I eat this rice? I shall nevermore eat from her hands.' When these words dropped from the Master's lips, the people present thought that this threat was nothing more than a sort of admonition to Gopal's Mother to be more careful in future. For, otherwise, how could it be possible that he would nevermore eat from Gopal's Mother whom he loved so much? He would, therefore, excuse her after a short while and would forget all about that. But it turned out to be quite otherwise. For, a little later, the Master had an ailment in his throat, which increased gradually till he could no more eat rice, so that he had no occasion to take rice from Gopal's Mother again.

Once, while in trance at Dakshineswar, the Master said, 'In future I shall take nothing but porridge, only porridge.' The Holy Mother (i.e., Shri Ramakrishna's consort and first disciple) who was then carrying his food to him, and knew that whatever dropped from his holy lips was never in vain, became much concerned and said, 'I shall cook curry for you, which you will take. Why should it be porridge alone?' The Master, still in trance, said, 'No, porridge.' Shortly after, he had the throat disease which made it impossible for him to take any curry; he lived only on rice and milk, or barley and milk, etc.

Of his four 'suppliers of needs', the Master pointed out the late Shambhuchandra Mallik as the second. Contiguous to the Kâli temple of Rani Rasmani, he had a garden-house where he spent much time, in the Master's

company, engrossed in Divine talks. He had also a charitable dispensary in that garden. Shri Ramakrishna suffered frequently from stomach trouble. Shambhu Babu who came to know of this, once advised him to take opium, and requested him to get the drug from him before returning to Rasmani's Kâli temple. The Master agreed. But during the talk they both forgot all about it. Taking leave of Shambhu Babu, the Master came to the road, when he recollected the matter and turned back; but he found that Shambhu Babu had gone to the inner apartments. Without calling him back for that purpose, the Master obtained some opium from one of his clerks and proceeded towards Rasmani's garden. But no sooner was he on the road than he felt dazed, which obliterated the road. Something seemed to drag his feet to the drain by the road-side. The Master thought: 'What is this! This is not the road to be sure!' And yet he could not trace it. As a last resort he turned towards Shambhu Babu's garden, thinking that he had lost his way. The road that way was quite clear. After a little reflection he retraced his steps to the gate of Shambhu Babu's garden, from which he re-started cautiously towards Rasmani's garden, taking careful note of the alignment of the road. But hardly had he proceeded a step or two when the same thing occurred again—the road was no more visible. The feet felt pulled backwards. After this had happened several times, it flashed in his mind: 'Oh! Shambhu said, "Get the opium from me." Instead of doing that I have taken it from his clerk. That is why the Mother does not allow me to proceed. The clerk should not have given it without his master's order, and I, too, as directed, should have taken it from Shambhu. Otherwise, the way I am carrying the opium amounts both to falsehood and theft. That is why the Mother has thus made me bewildered, and is not allowing me to return.' With this thought he returned to Shambhu Babu's dispensary

to find that the clerk, too, had left the place—he, too, had gone elsewhere for his meal. So he threw the packet of opium into the room through a window and called out, 'Hullo! Here I leave back your opium.' There was no such daze this time on the return path, the road was quite clear, and he went easily. The Master used to say, 'It is because of my complete surrender to the Mother that She has taken hold of my hands and does not allow me to take a single false step.'

Innumerable are the instances of this sort that we heard of in the Master's life. What a wonder it was! Can we even conceive an iota of this truthfulness and this complete surrender? Is this the same surrender of which the Master told us again and again in a parable? 'In that part of the country (i.e., at Kamarpukur, the birthplace of the Master) there are raised foot-tracks across paddy fields, over which people walk from village to village. The track is narrow. The father, therefore, carries his little boy on his arms lest he should slip down, while the older boy, being cleverer, clasps the father's hand and walks along. As they proceed, the boys espy a kite or some such thing and delightfully clap their hands. The boy in the father's arms knows that the father has taken hold of him, and completely gives himself up to merriment. But the boy who has taken hold of the father's hand, forgets the risks of the track, and as soon as he leaves his grasp on his father's hand and claps hands, he topples down and cries. Similarly, one has no fear if one's hand is grasped by the Mother, while one who grasps the Mother's hand is in fear of falling down as soon as that grasp is loosened.'

Thus, no worldly passion or desire stood in the way of the Master's realization of *nirvikalpa samâdhi*, as due to his extreme love for God. Nothing and nobody of this world attracted or seduced him. There stood in his way only the 'beautiful, outstandingly elegant, and surpassingly exquisite' form of the Mother of the Universe whom the

Master had so far known as the essence of all essential things and the highest of all high things, and had accordingly rendered his loving worship. The Master said, 'No sooner had I collected my mind and concentrated it, than there stood before me the form of the Mother! Then it was impossible to leave Her and proceed further along the path. As often as I tried to empty my mind and reach equipoise, the same thing occurred. At last, after deep reflection, I gathered strength of mind, and imagining knowledge as a sword, I mentally cut that form into two with it. Then nothing was left in the mind. At a single bound it now reached the stage of transcendental absorption.'

To us such things are mere empty words. For we have never fully accepted any form or idea of the Mother of the Universe as our own. We have never learnt to love anyone with our whole being. We have that kind of love for our own body and mind, and this pervades our whole being through and through, yea, even to the very bottom of our minds. Hence we are afraid of death as well as a total transformation of the mind. The Master had no such handicap. He accepted the Mother's lotus feet with heart and soul as the be-all and end-all of life. He meditated on these feet and spent his life in rendering service to them. So when he once succeeded somehow in removing that form from his mind what else could bind down his mind to this world? It became completely cut off from objects and free from modifications, and could not stop short of the transcendental state. Reader, if you cannot comprehend that, try at least to imagine it. Then you will understand how intensely the Master had made the Mother his own—with what a full and undivided heart he had loved Her.

The Master stayed in this state of transcendental absorption continuously for a period of six months. He said, 'I stayed in that very state for six months, from where ordinary souls never return,

their bodies dropping down like dry leaves after twenty-one days only. I had no idea as to when day began or night ended. Flies entered into my nose and mouth as into those of a corpse, but there was no reaction. The hair became matted through collection of dust. Maybe, there were unconscious evacuations which had no effect on my mind. There was little chance of the body's outlasting this, it would have died then, had not a monk come at this time, who had in his hand a baton-like stick. He knew my real state at sight, and realized that through this body much work of the Mother yet remained to be performed; many people would be benefited if this could be preserved. So, at times of meal, he would fetch the food and try to bring back consciousness by beating me. Whenever there was a slight indication of it, he would force some food into the mouth. Thus some food reached the stomach now and then, though often enough it did not. Thus passed by six months! Then, after some time in this state, I heard the Mother's voice, "Do thou stay at the threshold of the super-conscious plane." Then I had a disease—blood-dysentery with intense griping pain in the stomach. After I had suffered from this disease for about six months, the mind descended gradually to the physical plane—and I regained consciousness like ordinary mortals. Otherwise the mind would at frequent intervals rush, of its own accord, to the state of transcendental absorption.'

In fact, we have heard from those who had the good fortune of meeting the Master at least ten or twelve years before his passing away, that even then they had seldom the opportunity of hearing him talk. For all the twenty-four hours he was in a state of trance, let alone talking to others! We have heard from Vishvanath Upadhyaya, who was an officer of the Nepal State and whom the Master addressed as Captain, that he had seen the Master continuously in the super-conscious state for three days together! He

further said that during such deep and prolonged trance, clarified butter, prepared from cow's milk, used to be rubbed now and then on his body from neck downwards to the lower end of the back-bone, and from the knees to the feet, and as a consequence the Master felt it easier to return from deep trances to the subject-object plane.

Often enough, the Master himself told us: 'This mind naturally leans upwards (i.e., towards transcendental absorption). And once in trance, it loathes to come down. I bring it down forcibly for your sake. Unless I pin it down to some desire of the lower plane, I cannot exert sufficient force. It is, therefore, that I say, "I shall smoke, I shall drink, I shall eat curry, I shall see so and so, I shall talk." Such petty desires are first raised in the mind and repeated continually till the mind comes down (to the body). It may again happen that while coming down it turns and hurries back that way (upwards). Then I have to cajole it back once more through such a desire.' What wonder! We sat dumbfounded at such revelations and thought: 'If the dictum, "Do whatever you like after taking firm hold of the non-dualistic realization," means this, then it will be a very easy matter indeed to achieve that in our lives! It seems that the only means, within our competence, is to surrender ourselves unreservedly.' But when we tried that, we found to our dismay that it was no easy matter. Even when treading that path, the evil mind spurts out now and then: 'Why should not the Master love me best of all? Why should he not love me as much as he loves Narendranath (i.e., Swami Vivekananda)? In what respect am I inferior to him?'—and so on and so forth! Let us now drop this topic and return to the matter under discussion.

We shall relate here something about attitudes and *samâdhi* of the highest order of which we have heard from the Master, and then we shall try our best to expatiate on what is meant by being

at 'the threshold of the super-conscious'. We have already stated that physical changes of some sort or other must accompany mental dispositions, however high or low the latter may be. This needs no particular pleading, for it is a matter of daily observation. We can easily understand this from a study of daily experiences: our bodies undergo one kind of transformation under anger, another kind under love. Again, if good or evil tendencies should predominate in any person, his body receives such a deep impression of these that people can easily infer his character from his physiognomy. Besides, our use of such sentences in common parlance as, 'This man looks irritable, lascivious, or saintly,' is proof positive of that. Moreover, it is within the personal experience of most of us as to how a devilish man of ugly demeanour and perverted nature gets soft and attractive features and noble bearing if he for some reason or other spends some six months continuously in good thoughts and deeds. Western physiologists say that all thoughts, of whatever kind they may be, leave some permanent impression on the brain. A man's goodness or badness depends on the sum total and relative preponderance of these good and bad impressions. The Eastern, and particularly the Indian, Yogis and Rishis declare that these thoughts do not end by leaving these impressions on the brain, they again induce one to undertake good and bad deeds in future; and being transformed into subtle impulses they live permanently at the lower end of the spinal column, in the region of what is called the *mulâdhâra*, that is to say, the store-house of impulses gathered through successive lives. These are called *samskâras* or *purvasamskâras* (instincts), which are destroyed only through a direct vision of God or on the attainment of *nirvikalpa samâdhi*. Otherwise the individual souls carry these bundles of instincts, even when proceeding from one body to another,

'like a puff of wind blowing away the aroma of perfumes'.

That kind of intimate connection between body and soul persists up till God-realization. If anything happens to the body, the mind reacts; and if anything happens to the mind, the body reacts. Like this close correspondence on the individual plane, here is a connection between the mind of the human race as a whole and the individual bodies composing that whole. The actions and reactions between your mind and body find their repercussions in those of others. Thus the outer and inner, the gross and subtle worlds are permanently linked together and act and react on each other. Thus you see that where there is a pall of sorrow all around, you too feel depressed, and where there is an atmosphere of devotion, you too spontaneously become a devotee. Similarly also in other spheres. It is due to this that mental dispositions or attitudes are as effectively contagious as bodily diseases or health. They, too, spread according to the predisposition of individuals. The scriptures accordingly eulogize so highly the efficacy of good company. The Master, therefore, told all newcomers, 'keep on visiting this place; it is necessary in the beginning to come here off and on.'

Just as with ordinary mental conditions, the changes that come over the

mind as a result of chaste, undivided, and intense love for God, cause strange physical transformations. For instance, when such a love dawns, the aspirant has less attraction for worldly objects than formerly, his food and sleep get reduced, he develops a taste for certain kinds of food and distaste for others, he feels an inclination to shun as poison the company of wife and children and such other people whose worldly relationship distracts him from God, he has a predominance of *vâyu* (the windy humour), and so on and so forth. The Master used to say, 'I could not bear the company of worldly people; I felt choked and dying when in the midst of my relatives.' And he added, 'Anyone who calls on God will have his *mahâvâyu* (vital energy) rushing up to his head.'

So we see that the mental moods or dispositions, consequent on love of God, have their physical correlates or reflections. From the point of view of the mind, the Vaishnava Tantras have divided these attitudes into five classes, viz, tranquility, servanthship, comradeship, parenthood, and consortship. And from the point of view of the physical transformations, the Yoga-shâstras have described the *Kundalini-shakti* (the coiled up energy) and the six *chakras* (plexuses) in the spinal column and the brain.

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

Take up the remembrance of God as the fish takes to water. Separate the fish from the water, and in a moment it dies; so much is its dependence on water!—SAINT KABIR.

'WOOD'S CHARTER' : ITS PART IN INDIAN EDUCATION (1854-82)

BY MRS. SWARNAPRABHA SEN

I

In 1854 came the famous Despatch of Sir Charles Wood (Viscount Halifax), then President of the Board of Control, marking an epoch in the history of education in India. Parliament had revised and renewed the Company's Charter in 1853, and education was one of the problems that were foremost in the minds of the Government. The material prosperity of the country during Lord Dalhousie's reign spoke of the comparative peace and progress of the time, and the Despatch of 1854 ushered in a new era in the history of education in an atmosphere of general advancement. It was a comprehensive and wide scheme that contained the germs of all later developments achieved up to the present day. This Despatch definitely declared the Government's policy towards the people, which included not only the material prosperity of the land but also the attainment of a high, all-round moral and educational standard. It was considered the duty of the Government to assist the education of the people by systematic guidance and pecuniary help. It was admitted to be a legitimate subject for the Government which required efficient officers to carry on the day-to-day administration.¹ The Despatch recognized the honour due to ancient traditions and institutions while it declared at the same time the intention of the Government to diffuse the improved arts, science, philosophy, and literature of Europe, in short, European knowledge, among the people of India.

¹ '... in India, where, the well-being of the people is so intimately connected with the truthfulness and ability of officers of every grade in all departments of the State,'—Paragraph 3 of the Despatch.

This was of course meant for the middle class people who had made a demand for it—for the mass the vernacular was always, even as early as that, thought the best and the only mode of approach.²

The teachers, however, had to be equipped with a decent knowledge of both the tongues. This bilingualism was enjoined upon the teacher and paragraph 14 of the Despatch ends: 'We look, therefore, to the English language and to the vernacular languages of India together, and it is our desire to see them cultivated together in all Schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a schoolmaster possessing the requisite qualifications.'

One of the remarkable features of the Despatch was the emphasis which, at that early stage in the history of modern education in Bengal, it laid upon elementary education and the position of the modern Indian languages. The Despatch refused to sanction any religious teaching, as 'directly opposed to the principle of religious neutrality to which they had always adhered'. Its scope, however, was not limited to the elementary and secondary schools and to their inspectorate to religious instruction or curricula—it created a separate department for education and decided, by way of providing suitable machinery,

² 'It is neither our aim nor desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country. We have always been most sensible of the importance of the use of the languages which alone are understood by the great mass of the population. These languages, and not English, have been put by us in the place of Persian in the administration of justice, and in the intercourse between the officers of government and the people. It is indispensable, therefore, that in any general system of education the study of them should be assiduously attended to.'—Paragraph 13, Wood's Despatch.

to found universities in India.³ It created the Education Departments with their proper paraphernalia. So long public funds were spent upon a few Government schools and colleges; but the departments of public instruction would produce spontaneously organized schools and stimulate local activity throughout the length and breadth of the country, so that a time might come when it would be unnecessary for the Government to maintain any schools of its own. Recommendation for the establishment of universities was one of the chief features of the Despatch which persuaded the Directors of the Company that already there existed a demand for a regular and liberal course of education. Entry to public service was already dependent upon examination results. The universities should be examining bodies for the time being and confer academical degrees on the students and thus enable them to enter the European republic of letters. The London University, recently established, was taken as the model for the Indian universities. Producing qualified teachers, paying special attention to women's education, encouragement of the translation of the European books into the vernaculars, etc., are other notable features. Some of these items could not be 'at once translated' into action, but they were not lost to view.

The Despatch, like all other schemes, has no doubt had its limitations; but the comprehensiveness of its scope and its effects on the social and moral life of India cannot be denied. Even today the system of education in India is based on foundations which got their brick and mortar from the Despatch of 1854, sometimes called the 'Intellectual Charter of India'. Principal James admirably sums up its importance in the following paragraph:

³ '... the time has now arrived for the establishment of the universities in India, which may encourage a regular and liberal course of education, by conferring academical degrees as evidences of attainment in the different branches of art and science, and

Unquestionably, the despatch of 1854 is a most memorable document. It rises to the height of its problem and comprehends its length and breadth. It outlines a complete and systematic organization of education in India from the university to the elementary school. In the fifty-six years that have passed since it was received, Government, the Education Departments, and private effort have toiled and panted at the tasks it set they are straining at them still, and adequate fulfilment is not even yet within view. For it is nothing short of a complete system of national education which it sketches. The Despatch of 1854 is thus the climax in the history of Indian education: what goes before leads up to it; what follows flows from it. It offers a convenient measure both of attainment and of failure of attainment. It will repay, therefore, the most careful study in relation to the problems of today.⁴

II

'Wood's charter,' this important document of one hundred paragraphs, was published at a moment when the very existence of British authority in India was seriously questioned by a rising of the Sepoys in the North. And though the disturbances were quelled, and the authority passed from the East India Company to the direct control of the sovereignty of England, the authorities minutely scrutinized the provision because they would give no more handle to the discontented elements in the people. However, the Legislature passed the necessary Act for the establishment of a university at Calcutta in 1857; the universities of Bombay and Madras followed in the same year. The universities became astonishingly popular, the number of examinees went up by leaps and bounds, and the eagerness displayed by the upper and middle classes throughout the length and breadth of the country for the distinction implied by a university degree was marvellous.

Bengal was the first province to undertake primary education; by 1881 about 836,000 children were being educated at an annual expense of five lakhs only. It was also the province

by adding marks of honour for those who may desire to compete for honorary distinction.'—Para. 24, *ibid*.

⁴ *Education and Statesmanship in India, 1797-1910*—H. R. James (1911). Pp. 37-38.

which had put forward the first definite proposal (which was no doubt turned down by the directorate of the East India Company) for a university (that was in 1845) and the number of colleges which sprung up in Bengal and the number of candidates they qualified for the university examinations fully justified its establishment. The University of Calcutta held its jurisdiction over eighteen colleges in Bengal, seven in North-Western Provinces, one in the Punjab, one in the Central Provinces, and two in Ceylon. It was the first university in India to hold a matriculation examination. More than a thousand students appeared for this examination as early as 1861. The university has provided a uniform test of the education received in the schools and colleges. It has Westernized the educated section of the children of the soil which has had the effects of the Western influence in so many spheres of life. The number or quantity may not be in all cases a proof of the intrinsic merit of a thing, but in the years immediately following, the examination results were watched with anxious care by the public. The first graduates had a prestige which in these days we cannot dream of.

In spite of the rapid expansion there were voices of discontent with the kind of education imparted through the universities. People doubted if the university could provide education in the true sense of the term. Whether the graduates of the university were really equipped with 'high ability and valuable attainment' or whether the standard of education in this university could command respect abroad—these were the questions that turned up, and they brought about the consequent reforms in university education. One thing is clear—the university education had succeeded in convincing the people of Bengal that university degrees were the only true test of a boy's merit, and Government service was the only goal of the first class boys, whereas business and industry were for the second and

third rate people. This has been imbibed so deeply that we are not yet out of the wood; and big businesses, which require independent thinking and alertness, awarded only a secondary place in the scheme of our standard of values, have been sadly neglected. Other provinces have scored over Bengal in this matter and we find today all the big concerns in Bengal in alien hands. The call of Sir P. C. Ray and a few others has been only a matter for the last two or three decades,⁵ and the response has been, all things considered, meagre.

III

The universities had been started; but they did not yield as rich a harvest as was expected. Constant vigilance was necessary, and public criticism was roused. Measures were called for, and, in this article, the first reform measure will be sketched.

This first step in the reforms relating to university education was taken in 1882. It was found during the decade preceding that the number of High Schools had risen to 209 against 47 in 1855, and High Schools were considered only as vehicles of transport to the university, the entrance to which was the sole ambition of the literary classes. The Government had diminished its expenditure on secondary education, which had become self-supporting through the increasing number of candidates for the Entrance Examination of the university. Thus the university and the secondary schools were influencing one another and the Department of Public Instruction was losing its control over the educational system.

The growth of private colleges, however, was not so remarkable. The St. Xavier's College (1860), founded by the

⁵ 'Paradoxical as it may seem the more a Bengali shows his aptitude for original work in art or sciences the more helpless and incapacitated he becomes for earning his livelihood. One fights shy of taking him even as an apprentice as he talks big and suffers from swelled head.'—*Life and Experiences of a Bengali Chemist*, p. 501.

Society of Jesus; the Metropolitan College, started in 1869 by Vidyasagar, the great leader of educational movement in Bengal; the City College, opened in 1881 by the Brahmo Education Society; were the institutions of the kind started during the period after 1854 and before 1882.

The universities did not seem to have improved the teaching in the colleges or offered opportunities to students; but they existed only as administrative bodies conducting examinations and making rules and regulations for the colleges that taught. The function of teaching in the colleges being thus subjected to restriction from outside while deprived of teaching help, they could not rise to the desired level. The Senate of the University of Calcutta was composed of leading public men, not of educationists, and its members seldom included men like Duff, who played an important part in defining the educational policy which should be followed.

A Commission was appointed as a result of public agitation to consider the extent to which the instructions of the Despatch had been carried out; to note their effect on the people; and also to suggest courses of further improvement. Sir William Hunter, member of the Viceroy's Council, presided—and members included Sir S. Ahmed, Babu Bhudev Mukherjee, Mr. A. M. Bose, and Maharaja Sir Jatindramohan Tagore. It had its sittings in Calcutta from December 1882 to March 1883.

The principal recommendation of the Commission was that the Government should devote special care and attention to the cause of elementary education, and the Department of Public Instruction should set apart local funds exclusively for the primary schools. The Government had direct responsibility for primary education. The secondary and college education should only be given when there was local demand for it and co-operation from the people. The management of the secondary schools and colleges should be gradually made over to local

people. The Government should confine its work, in the secondary field, to the distribution of grants-in-aid to schools, the grant being in no case more than half the total expenditure. Only first class colleges like the Presidency College were still maintained by the Government. Second grade colleges like those at Rajsahi and Krishnagar were transferred to local bodies. Colleges which could not get local bodies to maintain them according to the university standard would be abolished. That meant the gradual withdrawal of direct Government help and control from higher education except to maintain a few models. In order to encourage the growth of aided schools it was given out that they could charge a lower rate of fees—a recommendation which brought a long series of miseries in its train. When Government institutions with many sources of income other than the college and school fees had to charge a higher fee, it is not difficult to trace the evil effects of the lower scale of fees on the aided institutions. Teachers began to be paid miserably (in privately managed schools the rates varied from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 78/- per month) with the inevitable result that the standard of teaching became lowered, and the institutions suffered from a lack of efficiency. When, later on, the grants-in-aid were made subject to a higher scale in the fees charged and salaries paid to the teachers, many institutions ceased to avail of the Government grants and depended solely on the fees received, thus the numerical rolls became inflated and the standard of education lowered.

This recommendation of the Commission, therefore, has hampered rather than helped the growth and progress of higher education in Bengal.

Measures modelled on European practice may not have been the right ones for India where the relation between the State and the people does not furnish exactly a parallel.

Some of the other recommendations of the Commission deserve to be men-

tioned: attention was drawn to the moral side of education; the schools and colleges were required to maintain a high standard of discipline among the boys. Rules were made for transfer of boys from one institution to another. The university did its best by refusing to admit candidates from any unrecognized school. It was desired to prevent a change of service between inspecting officers and professors of colleges—to keep the tone of the teaching unruffled.

The Commission felt strongly the danger of a too literary course of studies, and urged the need for courses in industrial and commercial pursuits. It recommended two divisions in the upper classes—one going up for the Entrance Examination, the other for a more practical course. The Commission held that the First Arts standard represented the real line of division between university and school work, and that the second grade college ought to be regarded as the highest form of

the secondary course—in other words, collegiate instruction should begin at the third year class of present-day colleges.

The reforms of 1882 led to a vast expansion of schools and colleges throughout the country. In 1902, the total number of boys, studying in unaided colleges only, was no less than 4,540. These colleges, in Bengal only, numbered about 20. But the intrinsic worth of education had suffered from a sad neglect. The quantity and the quality were curiously apart from one another. People, however, were generally satisfied at the rapid increase of the number and seemed to be unconscious of the fall in the standard of teaching in the colleges, which depended solely on the low fees of students and necessarily provided inadequate equipment and second-rate teaching. Things could not be expected to be better under the circumstances, and even today we have not outlived such conditions.

THE MESSAGE OF DAKSHINESHWAR

BY PROF. SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKERJI

From time immemorial India has been the meeting place of divers cultures. Countless hordes in quest of plunder and conquest have poured into the fertile plains of India, chiefly through Afghanistan, appropriately called 'the corridor of the world'. Aryan genius possesses the remarkable virtue of absorption and assimilation. Consequently, assimilation and not annihilation has been the racial policy of Aryanized India and, to quote Dr. S. N. Sen, 'in this magic cauldron (India) have been thrown divers cults, languages, and civilizations to be brewed into a wonderful potion that still brings peace and solace to millions of human beings'. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century of the Christian era the nation had already been considerably devita-

lized as a result of long centuries of political bondage and fell an easy prey to the glammers of the Western civilization which had considerably risen above the Indian horizon.

This nineteenth century is at once one of the most shameful and most glorious epochs in the annals of India. For one thing, it was now that the accumulated effects of political serfdom began to be felt. An inferiority complex permeated the nation. Not a minor role was played by Christian missionaries and Christian professors in bringing about this state of affairs. It was dinned into our ears that everything Indian and Hindu was bad, that everything old must be discarded. Christian missionaries as educationists have carved out for themselves a niche

in the history of modern India. But they were narrow-minded and short-sighted as missionaries. To facilitate evangelization they opened a crusade of calumny against Hinduism. One woman missionary went so far as to say, 'Crystallized immorality and Hinduism are the same thing.' Young India believed *in toto* what was said and made serious efforts to be modernized overnight. The realization of Macaulay's dream of an anglicized India¹ was well within sight. It was a crisis of culture—the most serious that ever threatened the Aryan.

It was the same nineteenth century again which saw the beginning of the Indian renaissance. It may be most appropriately called the 'seed time of modern India'. It was the age which gave birth to spiritual giants like Dayananda, Rammohan, and Ramakrishna. We leave out of consideration the stalwarts in other walks of life—political, literary, and scientific.

India needed a saviour with Shankara's brain and Buddha's heart. The hour brought forth its man. The ageless soul of hoary India manifested itself on the bank of the holy Ganges. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born of poor Brahmin parents at Kamarpukur in Hoogly (Bengal) on 17 February 1836.

Without entering into a technical discussion as to the marks of an *avatāra* (incarnation) we might hazard the opinion that he is one through whom the Divine Will manifests and fulfils itself. Judged by this criterion, Ramakrishna Paramahansa is undoubtedly an *avatāra*.

From the dawn of his consciousness man has asked the questions: Is there a God? Can He be attained and if so, how? Religious systems are but different answers to these questions. Apparently divergent as they are,

a strong undercurrent of unity runs through them. This fundamental unity notwithstanding, these systems have waged countless battles against one another, and untold barbarities perpetrated in the name of religion are an indelible blot on man's history.

Román Rolland has very aptly compared the different religious sects to armies beleaguering the same fortress—God. The investing forces are, however, not in co-operation with one another, and consequently they cannot accept one another as allies. One aim permeates them all nevertheless.

Differing in externals, these systems are at one so far as the fundamentals are concerned. The fundamental unity screened behind apparent diversity stands revealed to the sincere seeker after truth. The day when this unity is realized by humanity at large many of the problems of modern life will be solved. Ramakrishna Paramahansa is one of the very few who had this realization. He has never uttered a single word in condemnation of any sect. This testimony from Swami Vivekananda, the 'patriot saint of modern India', can certainly be accepted unquestioningly. He realized that it is rituals that keep off man from man. The relation between a grain of rice and its husk is no more intimate than that between a religion and its externals. Ramakrishna was an embodiment of this great truth. He knew that of religious sects some emphasize *bhakti* (devotion), some *jñāna* (knowledge), some *yoga* (concentration), and some again *karma* (action). He gave a practical demonstration that all these four aspects can be developed by the same individual and firmly believed that in the age yet to be born man will be able to achieve this. He, it may be said without any fear of contradiction, is the boldest spiritual idealist the world has yet seen.

The Saint of Sevagram has thus summed up the greatness of the Messiah of Dakshineswar, 'The story

¹ Cf. 'We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect.'—Lord Macaulay.

of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. . . . His sayings are not those of a mere learned man, but they are pages from the Book of life.'

Ramakrishna sought and realized the Supreme Soul in its different aspects—*Shākta*, *Vaishnava*, *Tāntrika*, Vedantic, Christian, Muhammedan, and Sufi. All his doubts were now set at rest. He demonstrated the truth of the deathless saying of the Gita—the song celestial—that the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee in the form He is sought after. One day a man was disparaging other religious sects before him. The Master sharply retorted that though some get into the house through the main gate and some again through the backdoor, the destination is the same.

True religion is being and becoming and it is the endeavour of a devotee to make his life beautiful. Ramakrishna was eminently successful in this endeavour. His life blossomed out as a thousand-petalled lotus rearing its head up in the sky, or as a thousand-stringed musical instrument, each string reverberating with the rhythm of synthesis. His noblest contribution, surest of all, is the demonstration of the possibility of the realization of the ultimate Reality without

rejecting its manifestations, divers and varied as they are. A happy day it will be for humanity when this possibility becomes a reality in the life of man. A parliament of men and a federation of the world will then be possible. Class war and sectional interests will be memories of the past. Looked at from this angle of vision Ramakrishna is in the vanguard of India's struggle for the achievement of national unity and, what is more, of world peace.

He came 'to fulfil, not to destroy'. His message drew its inspiration from the Upanishads and he is the culmination incarnate of the spiritual quest of India. 2,500 years ago the spontaneous flow of love and fraternity that welled out of the heart of the all-re-nouncing Prince-Prophet of Kapilavastu gave a new direction to the thought-current of the nation. The message preached by the Messiah of Dakshineswar—re-vitalized the nation and injected a new life into its culture.

Let us be worthy of the noble heritage left for posterity by the man-God of Dakshineswar. Let a constant prayer well up from the innermost depths of our heart—

From untruth lead us to truth.
From darkness lead us to light.
From death lead us to immortality.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE MAN OF ALL TIMES

BY ARWIND U. VASAVADA, M.A.

Since the impact of the West due to British connection, India has been trying to preserve her right place in the cultural history of the world. The propaganda of the Christian missionaries and our ignorance and indifference towards our own culture led us to think then that there was nothing valuable in the Hindu culture. Hindu religion was idol worship, magic, and degenerate animism; Hindu philosophy pessimistic;

its social tradition decrepit; and the unscientific way of life obstructed the growth of individuals. It was to the credit of Shri Ramakrishna that he cleared the above misconception about Hinduism and drew it out of its narrow outlook and gave it a universal turn.

Great men of those days may be forgotten; but the dust of ages will not cover the name of Shri Ramakrishna. He is the Eternal Man who rises from

the horizon and disappears leaving his message for generations to acquire and assimilate. Born of a poor family, with little education as a boy he rose like a beneficent moon flooding the whole world with his generous love for all, and thrilling the whole universe by the outpourings of his intense love for God. His message was at home to all—learned and unlearned, poor and rich, men of all sects and creeds. He was as much the spirit of his age as that of all times. When India had become the battle-ground for different religions to proclaim their greatness by rival demonstrations and internal quarrels, his message came as the peace-giving influence to all. He announced gently but very forcefully to everyone the truth and greatness of all religions and showed, by his personal example, their capacity to lead man to the realization of God. He was the very spirit of toleration, which is the heart of Hinduism.

His life started with intense love for Mother Kâli. He renounced everything to please and realize Her. His love for God was so intense and exuberant that it could not be satisfied by this one approach to God. There were the *tântric* and the Advaitic ways and also those of the Christians and the Moslems. He sat at the feet of the great masters of these religions and realized Shiva, Shakti, and the God of the Christians and the Moslems. Could there be a better and clearer demonstration of the rightness and the greatness of all religions? And could this be better exemplified in one man's life? Ramakrishna was a great experimenter in the realm of religion. He was never wearied of repeating the message of unity of all religions and the cultivation of true worship. Dogmatism in religion, according to him, was the worst crime. He says, 'My religion is true whilst that of the others is false—this kind of belief is not right. It is not our business to correct them, our duty is in some way or other to realize Him.'¹ He could say

on the authority of his personal experience, 'I have seen all sects and all paths. I do not care for them any more. People belonging to these sects quarrel so much! After trying all religions, I have realized that God is the Whole and I am His part; that He is the Lord and I am His servant; again I realize, He is "I"; "I" am He.'² What is essential is one's intense and sincere love for God. 'When there is true devotion and love, one can reach God by any of the sectarian religions.'³

Ramakrishna was a realized soul—a God-man. There were no intellectual confusions, doubts, and vascillation in his mind. He was simple and humble, and his vision of truth straight and clear. He spoke of difficult problems of philosophy in a simple, lucid, and forceful manner. He often used parables which were easy to understand, and they went directly to the heart of the hearers. Speaking about differences in religions, he says, 'These distinctions exist because God has made different people understand Him in different ways. The difference lies in the nature of individuals. Knowing this you will mix with all as closely as possible and love them as dearly as you can.'⁴ Further, using an imagery, he explains, 'When cowherds drive the cattle to the pasture from different quarters, the cows form themselves into one herd as if of the same family, but when they return at night, they separate, each going to its home. So the *bhaktas* of different sects and creeds, when they meet, are like members of the same family, but when they are by themselves, they show their peculiar beliefs and different creeds.'⁵ This was the universal element in the teaching of Shri Ramakrishna.

Another important teaching of his is that God is both with and without form, personal and impersonal. There is no conflict between the path of devotion and that of wisdom. This and other

² *Ibid.*, p. 27.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 345-6.

¹ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (R. K. Vedanta Centre, N.Y.), p. 27.

teachings of Shri Ramakrishna have far-reaching importance at present. He believed that the path of devotion and that of wisdom both lead to the realization of God. But the former is suited particularly to the present age. God can be sought in numerous ways, and He joyfully responds to the call of His devotee, whichever way he may choose to follow; what is needed is the sincere love for Him. 'Who can say what other aspects He may have!'

The path of devotion is easier to follow. The sense of 'I', the greatest obstacle in God-realization, is very difficult to be completely overcome through the path of wisdom. He says, 'The path of wisdom is very difficult. It cannot be followed so long as the sense of "I" is connected with the body. In this age the consciousness of body and the sense of "I" cannot be overcome easily. But in the path of devotion, through prayer and repetition of His holy name with extreme longing, God can be reached without fail.'⁸ The path of devotion makes use of 'I' for its own purpose. It dedicates it to the service of God. Therefore, he says, 'The servant "I" or "I am the servant of God", "I am His devotee", this egoism is not bad, but on the contrary it helps to realize God.'

The path of devotion, which he enjoins, does not necessitate the renunciation of the world. God is to be realized while we live in this world. It is not necessary to go out into the wilderness to find Him. It is better and safer, he says, to fight from within one's own fort rather than from outside. All that is necessary for the devotee is to cultivate non-attachment towards this world. Having practised it through periodical solitude, one should create within oneself fervent longing for God. These means are sufficient to lead one to God-realization.

Shri Ramakrishna does not agree with the world-illusionism of some thinkers. For him, the self and God—all are real, being the manifestations of God. He puts

it, '... I accept all states as true,—the state of *samādhi*, which is the fourth state, and again the waking, dream, and dreamless sleeping states. I accept Brahman the Absolute and *mâyâ*, *jīva* (the individual soul), and the world. If I do not take all, a portion will be missing, and the weight will be less.'⁹ Making the statement clear by the example of a fruit, he says, 'I take both the Absolute reality and the phenomenal reality. I do not blow away the phenomenal world by calling it a dream, because then the weight will be less.'

In the final stage of God-realization, the individual is absorbed in God. 'The great souls who have realized the Absolute, have not come back, because after attaining the highest knowledge of Brahman, one absolutely loses the sense of "I". The mind ceases to be active, and all sense-consciousness vanishes. This state is called *Brahma-jñāna* or Divine Wisdom.'¹⁰

In his talk with Keshab Sen, we have valuable advice for all those who think of starting a new creed. He did not believe in public controversies or demonstrations for defending one's view of religion. In one discourse he tells the Brahmos, 'You are Brahmos, you believe that God is formless and you do not believe in God incarnate. Well, it matters not. You need not accept Râdhâ and Krishna as incarnations of the Supreme Being; but the intense love and yearning which the Gopis felt for Shri Krishna, is a thing which you may well make your own, for yearning is the next step to God-vision.'¹¹

He corrects the new religious enthusiasts who identify social work with religion. He asserts again and again, 'First cultivate devotion; all other things—schools, dispensaries, and charitable work shall, if you wish, be added unto you.' One should not lose sight of the goal—complete renunciation. Self-surrender to God is the essential

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

pre-requisite of God-vision. When Keshab Sen asks him as to how he can see God, Ramakrishna beautifully answers him, 'So long as the child is absorbed in playing with its dolls the mother does not come. But when the child throws away the dolls and cries for the mother, the mother cannot stay away.'¹²

The life and teaching of Shri Ramakrishna should be taken as our guide in adapting our culture to the impact of the West. The West has brought the teaching of Jesus and the emphasis on

this world. Shri Ramakrishna points out how this stands in relation to the Eastern ideal of renunciation. He asks us to live in the world and still be above it and warns us against entering into theological discussions about the merits and the demerits of other religions. His last word to all is, 'On whatever path you may travel, whether you have faith in God-incarnate—in human form or not—if you have intense and sincere longing for Him, you are sure to attain Him. He alone knows what He is like.'¹³

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

THE STUDY OF A SOUL IN CONFLICT

By P. J.

In London, fifteen years ago, Aldous Huxley was the idol of the young intellectuals—particularly those belonging to high-brow circles in Mayfair. Quoting Huxley was, in those days, almost as fashionable for a sophisticated young man or woman as discussing Freud and his complexes or Epstein and his models. This was but natural in the decade of bitter disillusionment and frustration which followed the tragicomedy enacted at Versailles by the victors of the First Great War. The rumble of the Second Great War which was to start in the next decade was already faintly audible; but slogans like 'democracy in danger' and 'fight against tyranny' had already lost their former appeal; and in Oxford, that 'home of lost causes', a band of undergraduates had the courage to pass a resolution that, if war came again, they would *not* fight 'for king and country'!

The books written by Huxley during that period of disillusionment—whether novels, short stories or essays—showed consummate artistry and brilliant wit; but an undercurrent of cynicism was also discernible in most of them toge-

ther with a recurring note of frustration. In the opinion of some, the Huxley of that period was

too intelligent and too sophisticated by upbringing and temperament to be genuinely absorbed by anything he undertook. As a writer, he knew a good deal about everything, from biology to music and from chemistry to mysticism; but was unable to integrate his knowledge. He was a split personality, the prototype of a modern Hamlet who could see beyond the surface of things and who realized the need for action, but was constantly afraid to do what alone he considered to be right.

Judged by two of Huxley's 'best sellers' published in the last years of that decade—*Jesting Pilate* (1927) and *Point Counterpoint* (1928)—this opinion of the critics appeared to be correct. *Jesting Pilate* was the result of the author's first contact with India and the Far East; and, as the title of the book implies, Huxley's attitude towards what he saw and heard was that of an unbeliever and a scoffer. Proud of his scientific training and his capacity for ridicule, he seemed to take a delight in attacking the cherished idols of India—whether it was the celebrated beauty of the Taj Mahal or the unrivalled power of Hindu mysti-

cism. A little self-analysis—(did the successful young author ever submit himself to that process in those days?)—would have shown Huxley that his reaction was simply that ‘of a highly sophisticated European taking up a defensive attitude towards all things Eastern: defensive, because the psychological mechanism of frustration always leads to a wholesale denial of spiritual or ethical values.’ The book abounds in clever paradoxes—a device often used by a writer ‘to hide his own lack of faith and convictions’. For instance:

And what meaning for us have those airy assertions about God? God, we psychologists know, is a sensation in the pit of the stomach, hypostasized: God, the personal God of Browning and the modern theologian, is the gratuitous intellectualist interpretation of immediate psycho-physiological experiences. . . .

One can almost hear, in the conceited assertion: ‘God, we psychologists know, etc.’, the familiar ring of the voice of the Freudian who naively believes his science of psycho-analysis to be so perfect as to be infallible, not only in the case of the sub-conscious, but even where *supra-conscious* experiences are concerned!

The critics who summed up Huxley as an apostle of the post-war decade of frustration, did not, however, know that this was but a passing phase in his evolution as a man and a writer. It took the proud scoffer ten long years to outgrow his feeling of frustration and the resulting cynicism. But when, at last, his first great book *Ends and Means* was published in 1937, his critics, as well as those who idolized him, gasped with wonder, because it revealed an entirely different Huxley whose existence no one had ever suspected. That book was the author’s first serious attempt at integrating an entirely new system of values. He was no longer a ‘jesting Pilate’ who would not wait for an answer to the question: What is Truth? He now actually showed himself to be an uncompromising moralist

for whom ‘good action’ would be possible only when ends and means had become identical. What, however, totally confounded the critics was their discovery that the former atheist had now actually become an exponent of the central truth of all mysticism—especially Hindu mysticism—that only selfless and non-attached action can make the way clear for attaining a knowledge of God or Reality!

Two years after the publication of *Ends and Means* came the present World War which Huxley had clearly foreseen. Sick of hearing once more the parrot-cries of the recruiting sergeant, like ‘The War to end War’, he went away to America—then neutral—rather than be a spectator of the war and its horrors in his own country. This conduct was obviously so unpatriotic, and therefore un-English, that several of the respectable London reviewers who still believed, like their ruling class, in the ‘old school tie’, were profoundly shocked; and they appear to have come to a tacit understanding that the renegade author’s forthcoming books should not be afforded the same generous space in their columns as his former publications. They evidently failed to reckon with the possibility of one of Huxley’s new books being so great that it would not stand in need of their support. This is exactly what happened in 1942, the third year of the War.

Huxley had made his temporary home in a quiet corner of Hollywood, not for film-making, but for applying his well-equipped and disciplined mind to a further study, both deep, and critical, of mysticism—Buddhist, Hindu, Chinese, Christian, and Sufi. He was still, like Jung, ‘the modern man in search of a soul’, but his quest appears to have gone further than that of the great psychologist. His attitude towards life was no longer, as in the past, that of an intellectual, proud of his scientific training and encyclopædic knowledge. He was now a humble seeker after truth, trying to emulate,

not 'the self-centred personal will' of the *Great Men* of history, but 'the will of the self-abnegated person (which) is relaxed and effortless, because it is not his own will, but a great river of force flowing through him from a sea of subliminal consciousness that lies open in its turn to the ocean of reality'.

As a result of this quest, Huxley wrote—what is perhaps his greatest book,* so far—the biography of Father Joseph of Paris, popularly known in seventeenth-century France of Louis XIII as *L' Eminence Grise* in contrast to *L' Eminence Rouge*, the nickname of his scarlet-robed collaborator, Cardinal Richelieu. Although this was the author's first attempt at a full-length historical portrait, the book is so remarkable as a work of art; as a scholarly and, at the same time, a tremendously vivid description of conditions in seventeenth-century Europe; and, finally, as a searching commentary on the deepest and most baffling problems of life, that any famous biographer might well envy Huxley's genius and capacity for throwing new light on past events. It is, without doubt, one of the greatest psychological biographies written by a Western writer during the last quarter of a century. If a comparison may be made, it seems that only about half a dozen other great biographies written in the West during that period can be put in the same class. Those which immediately come to mind are: Rachel Taylor's *Leonardo the Florentine*; Romain Rolland's *Life of Vivekananda*; J. W. Sullivan's *Beethoven*; Stefan Zweig's *Erasmus*; Emil Ludwig's *Goethe*; and Rene Füllop Miller's *Rasputin*. Each of these six great biographies is, like *Grey Eminence*, concerned with the pilgrimage on earth of a complex soul; but it is only in the case of the first three books, that the authors are, like Huxley, capable of

dealing adequately with the vital significance of the *spiritual* conflicts and development, or lapses, of their heroic subjects. So far as a deep understanding of mysticism is concerned, the only one of the six authors with whom Huxley may be properly compared is Romain Rolland.

If the question were asked: What is the very first reaction of a careful reader of *Grey Eminence* on finishing the book? The answer, in the majority of cases, would probably be that in this book Huxley has shown, in greater measure than in any of his previous works, his uniqueness among modern writers as a master of the art of *multum in parvo* ('much in little'). As historical biographies go, the size of *Grey Eminence* which consists of only 278 pages (including an appendix; three pages of translations from the French; and a comprehensive Index) is almost insignificant. But one cannot help the feeling, after a first reading, of having gone through a book of at least three times the size of this slender volume. The reason is that Huxley's flow of thought is so disciplined that he rarely uses a superfluous word. There are, no doubt, important digressions containing the author's comments on points arising from certain incidents in Father Joseph's life; but none of these digressions is ever irrelevant to the great issues involved. Though the reading of the book is a rich literary repast, its close-packed thought often makes exacting demands on one's mental capacity. By comparison, the reading of nearly a thousand pages of Ludwig's two-volume *Goethe* is far less taxing for the mind, although that biography is also great in its own way.

Another thing that at once strikes any one familiar with Huxley's development as a writer is that the author of *Grey Eminence* is no longer the brilliant stylist of the novels—for instance, of *Eyeless in Gaza* published in 1936. A discriminating reader of Huxley has suggested two alternative reasons—both

**Grey Eminence: A Study in Religion and Politics*: By Aldous Huxley. 1942: Chatto and Windus, London—15 Shillings net.

cogent—for this clearly perceptible change in the author's style:

Perhaps, only a mind which is constantly stimulated at a 'clever-intellectual' level can sparkle forth into literary brilliance; but the expressions of the mind which has plumbed a warmer depth are bound to be less spectacular. It is also possible that, with his new-found piety and determination to face Reality, Huxley is consciously clothing his style in sackcloth.

A hasty reader of this book was recently inclined to think that, on occasions, Huxley had succumbed to the temptation of over-dramatizing the character of Father Joseph. A more careful reading would have convinced him, however, that this was far from the truth. Even more than being a master of condensation, Huxley is, by training and temperament, a master of *under-statement*. Being a confirmed believer in the value of the scientific method, he is one of the most restrained of modern writers and would be the last person to indulge in over-statement or the use of superlatives. Actually, his fear of giving expression in writing even to a genuine emotion has been so great as to be almost morbid. Even in the finest passages of his book, he is temperamentally incapable of rising to really great emotional heights, like, for instance, Romain Rolland in his *Life of Vivekananda*. If then, there often appear to be 'high lights' in the delineation of Father Joseph's character, they are due to the complex and unique nature of that character itself. Among the memorable figures of history, here was one whose extraordinary life illustrates the homely adage that 'truth is oftentimes stranger than fiction'. Huxley himself recognizes this fact when he says:

Romance is always poorer and less strange than the facts it distorts and over-simplifies. This imaginary Father Joseph, who is the prototype of the ridiculously villainous figure bearing his name in Vigny's *Cinq Mars*, is just a bore, whereas the real Father Joseph moves through history as the most fascinating of enigmas.

This is not to say that the sensitive artist in Huxley is not fully alive to the sense of the powerful and compelling

drama inherent in the unfolding of the Capuchin's life. The very first chapter of the book, *On the Road to Rome*, is a masterpiece of the dramatic art, almost as great as a scene from Greek tragedy or from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Listen to this:

The image of Calvary rose up before the friar's mind—the image that had haunted him ever since, as a tiny child, he had first been told of what wicked men had done to Jesus. He held the picture in his imagination, and it was more real, more vivid than what he actually saw of the road at his feet. 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Pity and love and adoration suffused his whole being, as with a sensible warmth that was at the same time a kind of pain. Deliberately, he averted the eyes of his mind. The time had not yet come for such an act of affection and will. He had still to consider, discursively, the ends for which the Saviour had thus suffered. He thought of the world's sins, his own among them, and how he had helped to hew the cross and forge the nails, to plait the scourge and the crown of thorns, to whet the spear and dig the sepulchre. And yet, in spite of it, the Saviour loved him and, loving, had suffered, suffered, suffered. Had suffered that the price of Adam's sin might be paid. Had suffered that, through his example, Adam's children might learn how to conquer evil in themselves. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.' Loving, one was forgiven; forgiven, one became capable of forgiving; forgiving, one could open one's soul to God; opening one's soul to God, one could love yet more intensely; and so the soul could climb a little higher on the ascending spiral that led towards perfect union. *Ama, et fac quod vis.* ('Love, and do what thou wilt.') 'Let there be love,' he repeated, modulating his orison out of Meditation into Affection, transforming it from an act of the discursive intellect into an act of loving, self-renouncing will. 'Let there be love.' And taking his own lovelessness, taking the malignantly active nothing that was himself, he offered it up as a sacrifice, as a burnt offering to be consumed in the fire of God's love.

Another reader of the book—an enthusiastic Freudian—finds it difficult to believe that Father Joseph actually had any direct contact with the Absolute, because if he had, how could he ever be capable of conduct which resulted in the deliberate prolongation of the ruinous Thirty Years' War, with all its attendant horrors? As a loyal Freudian, this reader is also convinced that the friar's strange conduct can be

adequately explained only in the language of psycho-analysis.

His first conclusion that there cannot have been any real contact with the Absolute, if the person supposed to have experienced such contact afterwards indulges in manifestly wicked actions, appears to be due to a common misconception regarding the actual nature of contact with the Absolute, or God, or Reality. All the great mystics—Eastern and Western—have made it clear that such contact or union with Reality may become complete and continuous, as in the case of a Buddha, a Jesus, a Ramakrishna; or it may be only partial and fleeting, as in the case of Father Joseph. Spiritual history also records more than one case of subsequent moral collapse among those of the second class. Huxley clearly recognizes this distinction when he says about Father Joseph:

Well, he had been a beginner, hugging the shore of vocal prayer and discursive meditation; then, growing more proficient in pure contemplation, he had launched out further and further into the boundless sea of divine reality. And then Richelieu had appeared and it had seemed his duty to do the exterior will of God by serving that instrument of Providence called the French monarchy. At the beginning he had not doubted his capacity to do his political duties and still remain at sea, in the presence of God. But as time went on he had found himself forced back towards the coast, and his glimpses of that bright torch of the sovereign good became more and more infrequent. As a young man, he had described the experience of union with an eloquence whose passionate ardour seems to prove two things; first, that he had himself experienced union, and second, that *that experience of union was not of the highest order*; for mystical experiences of the highest order do not lend themselves to expression in terms of the violently emotional language employed by Father Joseph.

The Freudian reader's second conclusion that Father Joseph's indifference to the cruelty, torture, and bloodshed accompanying the war which he helped to prolong, must have been due to repressed masochistic and sadistic tendencies, appears to be based mainly on the *theory* of psycho-analysis that such tendencies are latent in most persons. It has no actual sup-

port in any of the incidents of the friar's comparatively happy childhood and youth; unless it be argued, in the approved Freudian style, that the child's abnormal grief on first hearing the story of Christ's Passion revealed a masochistic tendency. It may similarly be argued that the fact that Louis XIII, as a child, 'was birched every morning before breakfast' under the orders of his stupid mother, must necessarily have turned him into a sadist!

The same reader also suggests that a further reason for the friar's strange callousness to suffering might be found in an 'obsessional neurosis' caused by the 'frustration' of his first love-experience. But, surely, 'frustration' is not the correct word to use for the deliberate uprooting of the violent passion which the fourteen year old Baron de Maffliers had conceived for his girl friend. The girl never rejected his love. It was the boy himself who was troubled, from the first, with a sense of guilt:

Those Plutarchian heroes were there to remind him that love is the enemy of high ambition; those hermits proclaimed the vanity of human wishes; and when he prayed, the old facility of communication between his soul and its God and Saviour was lost.

It is also clear from the Baron's life in the years immediately following the uprooting of that 'uneasy passion,' that the boy's love for the girl became almost completely sublimated into the youth's love for Christ.

No, the danger of using, indiscriminately, the attractive formulae evolved by psycho-analysis to explain any strange character, is that such explanation has often the fatal tendency to over-simplify—a tendency which Huxley is never tired of deprecating. Father Joseph's character is undoubtedly

the strangest of psychological riddles—the riddle of a man passionately concerned to know God, acquainted with the highest forms of Christian gnosis, having experienced at least the preliminary states of mystical union; and, at the same time, involved in court intrigue and international diplomacy, busy with political propaganda, and committed whole-heartedly to a policy whose

immediate results in death, in misery, in moral degradation were plainly to be seen in every part of seventeenth-century Europe, and from whose remoter consequences the world is still suffering today.

Such a riddle cannot be solved by simply classifying its subject as a sadist or a masochist, or as a victim of an obsessional neurosis.

Although psycho-analysis, in the Freudian sense, was not known in seventeenth-century Europe, Cardinal Richelieu, a very shrewd judge of character, had two nicknames for his old friend and collaborator which were

admirably chosen to describe that curiously complex nature. *Ezechiely* was the enthusiast, the visionary, the Franciscan evangelist and mystic; *Tenebroso-Cavernoso*, the man who never gave himself away, the poker-faced diplomatist, the endlessly resourceful politician. These two strangely dissimilar personalities inhabited the same body, and their incongruous conjunction was an important element in the character of the man. . . .

In the years when he wrote *Jesting Pilate*, Huxley, the young cynic, was himself an enthusiastic Freudian. He still recognizes the immense value of the pioneer work done by the great Viennese doctor in the field of experimental psychology. But, after long years of trial and error, he now also realizes the limitations of the psycho-analytic method and can no longer concede the extravagant claims of some of its dogmatic votaries. He is himself a psychologist of the highest order; but his penetrating insight into the workings of the mind is also illumined by the intuition of a great artist as well as by a philosophic balance, and a discriminating sense of history—especially the history of mysticism from the earliest times in the East and in Europe. Is it any wonder that, with such equipment, Huxley's own explanation (which follows) of Father Joseph's gradual moral decline and strange inconsistency of character and actions is far more satisfying than the sweeping psycho-analytical explanation discussed in the preceding paragraphs?

Father Joseph was diverted from the road of mystical perfection by a set of closely

related temptations—the temptation to do what seemed to be his duty, to accomplish what was apparently the external will of God; the temptation to be mistaken about God's will and to choose a lower at the expense of a higher duty; and the temptation to believe that a disagreeable task must be good just because it was disagreeable. . . . Father Joseph . . . was intensely a patriot and a royalist. Born and brought up among the civil wars, he had conceived a veritable passion for national unity, for order and for what was then the sole guarantee of these two goods, the monarchy. This passion had been rationalized into a religious principle by means of the old crusading faith in the divine mission of France and the newly popularized doctrine of the divine right of kings. . . . Granted the validity of these doctrines, doctrines which he held with a burning intensity of conviction—it was obviously Father Joseph's duty to undertake political work for king and country, when called upon to do so. It was his duty because, *ex-hypothesi*, such political work was as truly the will of God as the work of preaching, teaching and contemplation.

We come now to the second temptation—the temptation to fall into error regarding God's will. . . . Father Joseph believed that the cause of God and the cause of France were inseparable. . . . There seem to be two reasons (for this belief). The first is that the circumstances of his upbringing had created habits of thought and feeling which, in spite of his long-drawn effort to kill out the old Adam in him, he had found it impossible to eliminate. To the second we are given a clue by a penetrating phrase of Victor Cousin's. In one of his studies of seventeenth-century manners, that philosopher-historian remarked of Father Joseph that 'he was a man without ambition for himself, but full of a boundless ambition for France, which he regarded as the great instrument of Providence.' In spite of his reading of the theocentric moralists, in spite of all the thought he had given to the right relationship between man and God, Father Joseph had failed to see that *vicarious ambition is as much of an obstacle to union as personal ambition*—that a craving for the glorification of France is merely Satan's 'manlier object' at one remove. And whereas personal ambition is regarded by all the moralists as undesirable, only the most advanced theocentrics have detected the perniciousness of vicarious ambition on behalf of a sect, nation or person. For the immense majority of mankind, such ambition appears to be entirely creditable. That is what makes it so peculiarly dangerous for men of good-will, even for aspirants to sanctity, such as our Capuchin. Father Joseph had freed himself from personal ambition; but as the devoted servant of a providential France and a divinely appointed Louis XIII, he was able to go on indulging the passions connected with ambition, and to go on indulging them, what was more, without any sense of guilt. To put it cynically, he could enjoy subconsciously

the pleasures of malice, domination and glory, while retaining the conviction that he was doing the will of God. . . .

What finally tempted Father Joseph to commit himself definitely to a political career was the fact that a political career was extremely arduous and, to a part at least of his nature, disagreeable. Tenebroso-Cavernoso might enjoy the scheming and the diplomacy, and Ezechiely might vicariously exult in his royal master's triumphs. But the centemplative who had spent so many hours of each day in communion with God could not but suffer from having henceforward to devote the greater number of those hours to affairs of State. That he should deal with such affairs was, however, his duty and the will of God, who evidently desired to try to the limit his powers of active annihilation. . . . As a child he had asked to be sent to school for fear his mother should turn him into a molly-coddle; and now, as a man, he thought it his duty to accept the burden of political responsibility. A part of him, it is true, rather enjoyed the burden, but there was another part that groaned under its weight. It was because of that groaning that he felt himself justified in enjoying, that he felt finally certain that in accepting Richelieu's invitation he was doing God's will. . . .

. . . in spite of his theoretical and experimental knowledge that good cannot be mass-produced in an unregenerate society, Father Joseph went into power politics, convinced not only that by so doing he was fulfilling the will of God, but also that great and lasting material and spiritual benefits would result from the war which he did his best to prolong and exacerbate. He knew that it was useless to try to compel the good ladies of Fontevault to be more virtuous and spiritual than they wanted to be; and yet he believed that active French intervention in the 'Thirty Years' War would result in 'a new golden age'. This strange inconsistency was, as we have often insisted, mainly a product of the will—that will which Father Joseph thought he had succeeded in subordinating to the will of God, but which remained, in certain important respects, unregenerately that of the natural man. In part, however, it was also due to intellectual causes, specifically to his acceptance of a certain theory of Providence, widely held in the Church and itself inconsistent with the theories of action and the good. . . . According to this theory, all history is providential and its interminable catalogue of crimes and insanities is an expression of the Divine will. As the most spectacular crimes and insanities of history are perpetrated at the orders of governments, it follows that these and the States they rule are also embodiments of God's will. Granted the truth of this providential theory of history and the State, Father Joseph was justified in believing that the 'Thirty Years' War was a good thing and that a policy which disseminated cannibalism, and universalized the practice of torture and murder, might be wholly accord-

ant with God's will, provided only that it was advantageous to France. . . .

If history is an expression of the divine will, it is mainly so in a negative sense. The crimes and insanities of large-scale human societies are related to God's will only in so far as they are acts of disobedience to that will; and it is only in this sense that they and the miseries resulting from them can properly be regarded as providential. Father Joseph justified the campaigns he planned by an appeal to the God of Battles. *But there is no God of Battles*; there is only an ultimate reality, expressing itself in a certain nature of things, whose harmony is violated by such events as battles, with consequences more or less disastrous for all directly or indirectly concerned in the violation.

There is no need of an apology for the length of the passages quoted above, because it is in them that Huxley has explained, with remarkable insight and clarity, the inner meaning of the tragic conflict which raged in Father Joseph's soul—a soul of fascinating interest, and in some respects, even lovable (in spite of its fall) in comparison with the odiously pompous, mammon-worshipping soul of Cardinal Richelieu.

When the news of the famous Cardinal's death was brought to Urban VIII, 'the old pope sat for a moment in pensive silence. "Well," he said at last, "if there is a God, Cardinal Richelieu will have much to answer for. If not, he has done very well." ' It is a pity that history does not tell us if this same old pope had anything to say on hearing of the earlier passing of Father Joseph; because the scurrilous couplet which some disgruntled hater of the friar chalked on the slab covering his grave, did scant justice to the finer side of the man. Referring to this anonymous distich, Huxley pertinently says at the end of the book: 'It is always easier to make an epigram about a man than to understand him.'

During the last period of his life Father Joseph himself realized, probably better than his worst enemy could have done, what had actually happened to him :

He had the dreadful certainty that God had moved away from him. It was a dark

night of the soul, . . . not the dark night of those who are undergoing the final and excruciating purgation from self-will; no, it was that much more terrible, because fruitless and degrading, dark night which is the experience of those who have seen God and then, by their own fault, lost him again.

The aging friar's knowledge of his true state is proved by the following passage quoted by Huxley from a letter written by him at this period to one of the Calvarian Abbesses:

I know by personal experience—I who, in punishment for my faults and having misused the time God gave me, have now so little leisure to think of my inward being and am for ever distracted by a host of different occupations—I know how bad it is not to be united to God, not to give one's soul into the possession of the spirit of Jesus, to be led according to his will; and I know too how necessary it is for this to keep good company, in which the faithful can help and strengthen one another. When I think thus and then look and see how I and the most part of creatures live our lives, I come to believe that this world is but a fable, and that we have all lost our senses—for I make no difference, except for a few externals, between ourselves, the pagans and the Turks.

Huxley's comment on these words of the friar's letter is expressed in one of the most moving passages of the book—a passage which shows his power of combining pathos with biting irony:

These are despairing words, words that make one wonder whether the unhappy man had come to doubt of his salvation. And having penned them, back he had to go to the hideous work to which his duty to the Bourbons had harnessed him, the work of spreading famine and cannibalism and unspeakable atrocities across the face of Europe. Back he had to go to the distracting cares which cut him off from the vision of reality; to the bad company of King and Cardinal, ambassadors and spies; back finally to all the criminal follies of high statesmanship; to the Satanic struggle for power in a world which he knew to be a fable, a mere nightmarish illusion; to the orgies of violence and cunning; to the dreary battles of force and fraud, waged by two parties of mad men between whom, as he had now come to perceive, there was nothing whatever to choose. And as a reward for turning his back upon God, they had promised to give him a red hat.

As already shown, this slender volume not only makes the dry bones of history and of characters like Father Joseph and Cardinal Richelieu vividly

alive, but it has also the unique merit of being packed with illuminating comments on problems of life and of the soul which are as important today as they were in seventeenth-century Europe. Some of these comments have already been reproduced, and there is a great temptation to quote many more but space forbids doing this except in the case of three which have an important bearing on present-day problems.

In analysing the anonymous little book called *The Cloud of Unknowing* which he calls 'one of the finest flowers of medieval mystical literature', Huxley throws a veritable search-light on the little understood subject of 'distractions':

. . . The passions and the discursive intellect are not the only components of the self; there is also a great psychological province to which the name most commonly given by mystical writers is 'distractions', a province little touched upon by ordinary moralists and, for that reason, worth describing in some detail. Contemplatives have compared distractions to dust, to swarms of flies, to the movements of a monkey stung by a scorpion. Always their metaphors call up the image of a purposeless agitation. And this, precisely, is the interesting and significant thing about distractions. The passions are essentially purposeful, and the thoughts, the emotions, the fantasies connected with the passions always have some reference to the real or imaginary ends proposed, or to the means whereby such ends may be achieved. With distractions the case is quite different. It is of their essence to be irrelevant and pointless. To find out just how pointless and irrelevant they can be, one has merely to sit down and try to recollect oneself. Preoccupations connected with the passions will most probably come to the surface of consciousness, but along with them will rise a bobbing scum of miscellaneous memories, notions and imaginings,—childhood recollections of one's grandmother's Skye terrier; the French name for Henbane; a white-knightish scheme for catching incendiary bombs in mid-air—in a word, every kind of nonsense and silliness. The psycho-analytical contention that all the divagations of the subconscious carry a deep passional significance, cannot be made to fit the facts. One has only to observe oneself and others to discover that we are no more exclusively the servants of our passions and our biological urges than we are exclusively rational; we are also creatures possessed of a very complicated psycho-physiological machine which grinds away incessantly and, in the course of its grinding, throws up into consciousness selections from that indefinite number of mental

permutations and combinations struck out in the course of its random functioning. These permutations and combinations of mental elements have nothing to do with our passions or our more rational mental processes; they are just imbecilities—mere waste products of psycho-physiological activity. True, such imbecilities may be made use of by the passions for their own ends, as when the Old Adam in us throws up a barrage of intrinsically pointless distractions in an attempt to nullify the creative efforts of the higher will. But even when not so used by the passions, even in themselves, distractions constitute a formidable obstacle to any kind of spiritual advance. The imbecile in us is as radically God's enemy as the passionate and purposeful maniac, with his insane cravings and aversions. Moreover, the imbecile remains at large and busy, when the lunatic has been tamed or actually destroyed. In other words, a man may have succeeded in overcoming his passions, in replacing them by a fixed one-pointed desire for enlightenment, and yet still be hindered in his advance by the uprush into consciousness of pointless distractions. This is the reason why all advanced spirituals have attached so much importance to these imbecilities and have ranked them as grave imperfections, even as sins. . . .

To distractions within correspond the external distractions of civilized life—news, gossip, various kinds of sensuous, emotional, and intellectual amusements, novelties and gadgets of every sort, casual social contacts, unnecessary business, all the diversified irrelevances whose pointless succession constitutes the vast majority of human lives. Because a large part of our personality is naturally imbecile, because we like this imbecility and have made a habit of it, we have built ourselves a largely imbecile world to live in. Deep calls to deep; inner distractions evoke outer distractions, and in their turn the outer evoke the inner. Between congenitally distracted individuals and their distracting, imbecile environment there is set up a kind of self-perpetuating resonance. . . . Every sensitive human being has at one time or another realized the pointlessness and squalor of the common life of incessant and reiterated distractions, has longed for one-pointedness of being and purity of heart. But how pitifully few have ever chosen to act upon this realization, have tried to satisfy their longing! None has written more eloquently of the misery of the distracted life than Matthew Arnold. And yet, though he was fairly well versed in Christian literature, though, as a young man, he had been profoundly impressed by an early translation of the Bhagavad Gita, he sought no practical remedy to that misery, and denied, even as a matter of theory, the very possibility of such a remedy existing. . . . Like so many poets and moralists before him, Arnold had stated a problem to which there is no practical solution, except through some system of spiritual exercises. In the overwhelming majority of individuals, distraction is the natural

condition; one-pointedness must be acquired. One-pointedness can, of course, be turned to evil purposes no less than good. But the risk of actualizing a potential evil must always be run by those who seek the good. In this case, the good cannot be achieved without one-pointedness. That Arnold should have failed to draw the unavoidable conclusion from the premises of his own thoughts and feelings seems puzzling only when we consider him apart from his environment. The mental climate in which he lived was utterly unpropitious to the flowering of genuine mysticism. The nineteenth century could tolerate only false, ersatz mysticism—the nature-mysticism of Wordsworth; the sublimated sexual mysticism of Whitman; the nationality-mysticisms of all the patriotic poets and philosophers of every race and culture, from Fichte at the beginning of the period to Kipling and Barres at the end. Once more, Arnold's 'sad lucidity' did not permit him to embrace any of these manifestly unsatisfactory substitutes for the genuine article. He chose instead the mild and respectable road of literary modernism. It was a blind alley, of course; but better a blind alley than the headlong descent, by way of the mysticisms of nationality and humanity, to war, revolution and universal tyranny.

How true and vitally important these thoughts are for our own days of war and famine! Huxley is, perhaps, not quite fair to Wordsworth and Whitman; but is there any doubt whatsoever that Kipling's 'mysticism of nationality and humanity' was 'false (and) ersatz'? It is a great tragedy that the old Conservatives who today actually rule Britain and its far-flung Empire, were brought up, even from their cradles, to believe, almost fanatically, in that 'ersatz nationality mysticism' preached by Kipling along with his sanctimonious doctrine of the 'White man's burden'. Is it any wonder that a realist like Huxley could not tolerate the unreal atmosphere of his home-country under such a regime?

In discussing the idea of vicarious suffering which is associated with the story of Christ's Passion, Huxley quotes the following extraordinary passage 'from a letter addressed to a west-country newspaper by a clergyman of the Church of England and published in the spring of 1936':

The principle of vicarious suffering pervades history, some suffering and dying for the sake of others. The mother for her sick

child, the doctor in his laboratory, the missionary among the heathens, the soldier on the battle-field—these suffer and sometimes die, that others may live and be happy and well. Is it not in accordance with this great principle that animals should play their part by sometimes suffering and dying to help in keeping Britons hardy, healthy and brave?

Huxley then makes the following caustic comment on this part of the clergyman's letter :

That such lines could have been penned in all seriousness by a minister of religion may seem to many almost unbelievable. But the fact that they actually were penned is of the deepest significance; for it shows how dangerous the idea of vicarious suffering can become, what iniquities it can be made, in all good faith, to justify. God took upon himself the sins of humanity and died that men might be saved. Therefore (so runs the implied argument) we can make war, exploit the poor, and enslave the coloured races; and all without the slightest qualm of conscience; for our victims are illustrating the great principle of vicarious suffering and, so far from wronging them, we are actually doing them a service by making it possible for them 'to suffer and die that others (by a happy coincidence ourselves) may live and be happy and well.'

One wonders if the strange complacency shown, at first, in Whitehall towards the question of deaths from starvation in Bengal last year was, to some extent, the result of the influence—subconscious of course—of this idea of vicarious suffering on the minds of those in authority!

In speaking of Action *ve.* Contemplation Huxley makes the following interesting comment on the nature of good action :

To us, 'life of action' means the sort of life led by movie heroes, business executives, war correspondents, cabinet ministers and the like. To theologians, all these are merely worldly lives lived more or less unregenerately by people who have done little or nothing to get rid of their Old Adams. What *they* call active life is the life of good works. To be active is to follow the way of Martha who spent her time ministering to the material needs of the master, while Mary (who in all mystical literature stands for the contemplative) sat and listened to his words. When Father Joseph chose the life of politics, he knew very well that it was not the life of action in the theological sense, that the way of Richelieu was not identical with the way of Martha. . . .

Some reader of this article who has not had the good fortune of having al-

ready read the great book it describes, might be apt to think that Huxley is so serious a writer that he has no time to laugh at the jokes—sometimes cruel—which destiny often delights to play even with the most famous of her children. This is far from the truth. Huxley has, in addition to his other great qualities, a keen sense of humour. No doubt, it is not the kind of humour that would be appreciated by the respectable and 'correct' old 'ladies' of Kensington, because it is of the Falstaffian variety. But any intelligent reader of the book who is not too easily shocked, is bound to enjoy it. One of the typical instances in this book of Huxley's sardonic humour is his entertaining description of Cardinal Richelieu's painful complaint of piles:

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries no event in the life of an eminent personage was entirely private. Even the act of excretion was often performed in public, and for those whose rank entitled them to this privilege, Kings and Princesses were at home and made conversation while seated on the *Chaise percee*. Diseases and the most intimate forms of medical treatment were no less public. Louis XIV's enemas were discussed by the whole court, and his fistula, or fissure of the fundament, was a matter of national concern. A generation earlier, it had been the same with the Cardinal's piles. There was not a corner of the kingdom to which the news of them had not penetrated. Sympathizers expressed their condolences and many reputedly infallible remedies were sent in—among others a powder invented by a Capuchin monk and guaranteed to cure, not only the Cardinal's haemorrhoids, but also the King's childlessness. When all these had failed, a deputation of clergy proceeded to the Cathedral of Meaux and returned with the relics of that seventh-century Irish hermit, who is the patron saint of Brie and has left his name to the hackney cab, St. Fiacre. The relics were applied; but, in spite of his high reputation as a healer, St. Fiacre was no more successful than any one else. One regrets the fact, not only for the sake of poor Richelieu, but also because St. Fiacre's failure has lost us some curious literature and perhaps some splendid works of art. One can imagine, if the miracle had occurred, the volume of odes, by several hands, in honour of the event. These would have been more odd than good. Not so the enormous composition by Rubens, *that* would have been a thing of unqualified beauty and magnificence. Robed in great cataracts of red silk, Richelieu kneels in the right foreground and rolls up his dark impassive eyes towards a heaven in which, in the top

lefthand corner, and at an altitude of about two hundred and fifty feet, the Holy Trinity and the Virgin look down from their soft cloud, considerably fore-shortened, but with an expression of the liveliest benevolence. Poised only a foot or two above the Cardinal's head, St. Fiacre descends, much bearded and in the ragged homespun appropriate to anchorites. One hand is raised in benediction, and in the crook of his other arm he carries his emblems—a slice of Brie-cheese, a shillelagh and a miniature four-wheeler. From aloft, he is followed by a squadron of cherubs, nose-diving and banking above a delightful landscape where, in the distance, the siege of La Rochelle is in full swing. Immediately above and behind the Cardinal, Louis XIII stands at the head of a flight of steps, his left hand on his hip, his right supported by a long malacca cane. Trailing pink draperies, Victory hovers over him, while the livid form of Heresy grovels in the middle distance. At the bottom of the canvas, immediately below the Trinity and a plane or two behind the nearest foreground, we see a group consisting of Father Joseph at prayer, Sacred Theology in blue and white satin and, representing Literae Humaniores, a young woman from Antwerp, with no clothes on, pointing at a marble slab, upon which we read a Latin inscription alluding to the foundation of the académie Française. . . . But, alas, this splendid work was never painted; the bones of St. Fiacre were taken back to Meaux and the unhappy Cardinal continued to suffer the tortures of the damned.

Soon after the publication of *Grey Eminence*, there took place one of those fatuous India Debates in the House of Commons. While speaking, as usual, to an almost empty House, the Secretary of State for India tried, on this occasion, to enliven the proceedings by referring to Huxley's latest book. His purpose in doing so was to draw a comparison between Father Joseph and Mr. Gandhi. For him, Gandhi was, like Father Joseph, a double-souled personality—half-saint and half-politician, with the latter frequently gaining the upper hand. We do not know if the Secretary of State himself actually believed in the validity of this comparison, or if

he was using it merely as a 'debating point': because any one who has even a cursory knowledge of Gandhiji's life, knows that there is no real similarity between the two men. For Father Joseph, the greater glory of France was identical with the glory of God, and there were no means, however ignoble, which he would have hesitated to employ to achieve that glory. For Gandhiji, on the other hand, the end, however great or noble, can never justify a bad means. He has often said that Swaraj for India would 'stink in his nostrils', if it were to be gained by means of bloodshed, or even at the cost of his cherished ideals, like the removal of untouchability, or the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity. Father Joseph's acceptance of the 'providential theory of history' made him believe that even the Thirty Years' War, with all its horrors, was a good thing so long as it was advantageous to France. Gandhiji, if he had wanted, might have immersed the whole of India in a terrible blood-bath during one or other of the stages in the long struggle for independence. But his creed of non-violence is so uncompromising that it has led him, on more than one occasion, to call off the struggle even at propitious moments which would have been eagerly seized by any shrewd politician. Perhaps no Western writer of eminence has so far attempted to understand 'the mighty and pathetic struggling towards harmony' of Gandhiji's soul with such an open mind as Romain Rolland. Let us hope that Aldous Huxley who has shown in his *Grey Eminence* the capacity for such an understanding will some day write a critical Life of Gandhiji which will adequately explain that struggle.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The late Pandit Taranath was well known in South India for his thorough mastery of the ancient culture, though his scholarship was not so well known in the North. His *Drama in India* reveals a truly Indian mind, deep in meditation in discovering the spirit of Indian culture. . . . From the historical point of view, Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji shows the significance of *The Message of Dakshinেশ্বর*. . . . Mr. Arvind U. Vasavada draws pointed attention to one important aspect of that message, viz, its universality. . . . To P. J., who prefers to remain incognito, we are indebted for a critical and elaborate presentation of Aldous Huxley's latest work *Grey Eminence* which according to the present writer, is Huxley's *magnum opus*.

PLAN OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIA

India is beset with many problems today, and different persons are trying to evolve different solutions to them. Economics and politics are the two factors that predominate our national life at the present day. It has been recognized by most people that political freedom by itself will not bring us all that we want unless it is accompanied or preceded by economic stability. A fifteen-year scheme for the post-war economic development of India, to be given effect to in successive five-year plans, has been drawn up by some leading industrialists and economists. It has received wide publicity, and met with general approval as well as with helpful criticism from various quarters. Mr. Manu Subedar, M.L.A., has made a critical study of the memorandum and offered his valuable suggestions in his well-written introduction to a brochure on the subject, extracts from

which have been published in the *Bombay Chronicle* (weekly). He welcomes the scheme in so far as it aims at the physical, economic, and moral amelioration of the poor population of India. But he has his differences with the authors of the scheme on certain points. He holds that emphasis should be laid on village industries. He says,

In any plan of economic expansion in India, the first and the biggest benefit must reach those whose economic resources are the lowest. It is for this reason that I urge in any plan the front place for village industries.

Some of our national leaders are opposed to an economic system in which large-scale industries are carried on by capitalists for profit by exploitation of the masses. As a proof against such inequity, he wants that 'the foundation of an economic edifice must be through the co-operation of the millions of poor people whose condition must improve at the same time'. Neglect of the welfare of the masses, the poor, and the illiterate, has been one of the causes of India's degeneration. Hence the first thing necessary is to achieve material prosperity for and improve the lot of the masses steeped in ignorance and poverty. Therefore, he calls upon the well-wishers of the plan

to keep in mind that the burdens do not fall on that section of the population, which is suffering much now, and undue advantage is not taken by those classes, who can afford to make sacrifices.

None can minimize the importance of modern industrial methods to India. The authors of the economic plan have shown how backward India is in the matter of production though possessing enormous quantities of material wealth. But it cannot wholly be denied that industrialization after the manner of the West has overpowered some of

the finest handicrafts of the country. Mr. Subedar strikes a note of caution and says,

it is necessary to secure progress in such a way that artisans engaged in work do not lose their livelihood, and handicrafts are not uprooted.

He is of the opinion that while maintaining factories for the large or basic industries, encouragement should be given to cottage industries as well, thus ensuring a steady increment in the livelihood of millions of people many of whom might otherwise be thrown out of occupation.

Any future industrial plan for our country must look to the regeneration of the masses, and the rehabilitation of the villages. Besides, it must keep spirituality definitely in the forefront. A mechanical civilization believing in routine duty, factory legislation, strikes, lock-outs, class-struggle, and competition will do us no good. India is to be raised by making available to the masses greater means of living and more opportunities for betterment than they have at present. In order to be able to carry out this scheme the authors have estimated the total cost roughly at ten thousand crores of rupees. Any nation-building activity needs large sums of money. But money is not everything. Success depends to a great extent on the morale of the people and the right type of persons, organized and disciplined, and willing to sacrifice in the cause of the welfare of the nation. Mr. Subedar rightly hopes that such persons will not be wanting in India.

To those who are unduly imbued with Western and foreign thought, it may appear that, without high salaries, able men will not come forward; but the general population of India would have great faith and hope in progress in this matter through the example of good men, Sadhus, saints, and servants of the people.

The spirit is the essence of man, and in its realization lies permanent peace and satisfaction. Because of our national weakness the masses are

economically enslaved and poor. Too much machinery kills initiative, and regimentation makes of man a lifeless automaton. We want our masses to be self-integrated and free personalities who can manage their individual and family affairs independently of the requirements of the factory. It is necessary that they should have sufficient leisure to think of higher things in life as well, and their education should serve to enable them to spend this leisure usefully.

NATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Writing under the above title in the *Social Welfare*, Prof. H. D. Sethna makes some pertinent observations on the future possibilities of Indianizing education, and making it more realistic and true to national ideals.

To nationalize any field of work is not merely to place it in the hands of Indians. This is a platitude whose meaning we learn with pain in almost every sphere of national endeavour. And specially in education, where we attempt to forge character on the anvil of the highest ideals, we are bound to be stung with disillusionment.

Nationalization of education does not consist merely in taking over the leadership in education, or in having Indian teachers and educational institutions.

Even more than this, nationalization of education means the spirit of devotion to education. . . . Such devotion was a life of sacrifice and simple living so that the educationists could follow single-mindedly their ideal of teaching the people.

A stereotyped system of education, parochial and alien in outlook, cannot but fail to inspire national fervour or 'develop the best possible manhood' in the Indian youth. The professor is of the same opinion as many other Indian educationists that our present-day educational institutions are 'intrinsically undemocratic, against the very ethics of the fundamental rights of man which is the basis of all true education'. Teaching is often degraded into a profession, which makes it a mechanical routine. But the teacher who does his work with thoroughness, shoulders a

great responsibility in training the faculties of head and heart.

He interprets to the youth the highest ideals in relation to facts and creates new ideals and initiative which will help the young mind to assimilate the present and look forward to the future.

Swami Vivekananda, addressing his countrymen, said: 'It is man-making education that we want all round. We must have life-building, character-making, assimilation of ideas.' He was grieved to see that national weakness and lack of *shraddhâ* had devitalized the youth of the country, and urged them to devote themselves to the service of the motherland with faith and determination. Indianization of education is never complete without the spiritual background which is the innermost core of our national life. Religion and secular education will have to go hand in hand, and the teacher can best serve his pupils by setting before them his own living example of the highest knowledge. It is necessary that the imparting of education be done by men and women of renunciation and self-sacrifice. Or else education will prove no better than mere book-learning and accumulation of information.

Prof. Sethna visualizes a bright future

for Indian education in the coming years when the country may witness a renaissance of idea and life under more favourable conditions.

As organized by Indians, it (education) would not be merely to provide clerks for the machinery of Government, but to educate the people of the motherland in a better and healthier way. But even if this outlook is fashioned, there is still much to be done. The educationist has not yet felt the grip of the deeper vision that the nation has to be served, first and foremost, and hence education is only a means to this service. . . . So the activity of the educationists must be directed to enlarging the larger national consciousness and help it to grow and blossom rather than confine itself to teaching a certain set of ideas of one group or the other.

Many people assume that any advancement in the field of education is inevitably linked up with political freedom without the attainment of which, they feel, no national advancement is possible. There are difficulties under foreign rule, but these need not be exaggerated to serve as an excuse for not doing whatever can possibly be done. No doubt with political independence or more active Government support progress would have been quicker. What the country needs most are men of great sacrifice and fellow-feeling.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

STALINGRAD. BY CHETAN ANAND. *Published by Free India Publications, the Mall, Lahore. Pp. 49. Price As. 12.*

The most striking feature of the present war is the heroic struggle put up by the Russians in defence of their country against the German invaders. This booklet gives us an insight into the epic defence of Stalingrad. It is a play in two parts, the leading figures being a Russian captain and his wife. The first part depicts a typical 'action' scene between Germans and Russians in Stalingrad. The second part relates the story of a scene in a Russian emergency underground hospital, incidentally touching upon the undaunted bravery of Russian women and the readiness with which they

have come forward to assist in the defence of their motherland.

KALYANA KALPATARU. (SRI KRISHNA-LILA NUMBER II). *Published by The Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 196. Price Rs. 2-8 As.*

It gives us great pleasure to welcome this special number of the popular English monthly *Kalyana Kalpataru* on its re-appearance after a year's suspension. The present volume, devoted to 'Sri Krishna and His Lilâ', bears the mark of its rich tradition, and the publishers have spared no pains to bring it up to the high standard of the past. There are five well-written contributions. An excellent English rendering (from the Hindi translation) of Skan-

dha X, Part ii, chapters 50-90 of the *Bhâgavata* dealing with Shri Krishna's sports at Mathura and Dwaraka is also brought out in these pages. There are eight tri-coloured and many ordinary illustrations which have always been a special feature of these numbers.

PRACHYAVANI: Journal of the Prachyavani-Mandira, Vol. I. No. 1, January, 1944. Joint Editors: Roma Choudhuri and Jatin-dra Bimal Choudhury. Published from 3, Federation Street, Calcutta. Pp. ii+76. Price Rs. 2-8 As.

A steady increase in the number of genuine scholars in the vast and inexhaustible field of Indology can be unhesitatingly taken as an unmistakable sign of national regeneration in India, and the very many journals, books, leaflets, commemoration volumes, etc., have been representing for a long period this or that aspect of India's national culture. Here is a journal published for the first time, thanks to the sincere and untiring efforts of the editors who are in command of a type of no mean scholarship. It is their common object to further the cause of Indian literary study by publishing and translating texts from MSS. as well as by discussing along with others, various problems and topics related to the whole range of Vedic and classical literature. As such, this enterprise is calculated to shed columns of light on the difficulties of literary history of our country, specially by filling up the apparently unbridgeable hiatuses in the chain.

The present issue contains a good number of articles all of which come from very able and erudite pens. Dr. A. D. Pusalker, in

his *Phallus Worship in the Rigveda*, deserves special credit on account of his methodological improvement upon the attainments of Mm. Prof. V. Bhattacharya in his attempt at ascertainment of the true import of the Rigvedic word *Shishna-deva*. The philosophical articles are at once scholarly and readable. Some deal with the classical Sanskrit texts and authors whereunto the enthusiasm and services of scholars have been harnessed. Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri's almost single-handed enterprise in editing the text of *Româvati-shatakam* from a single MS. is really praiseworthy, though there is every possibility of failure in detecting some knotty problems attending upon textual criticism. Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, in his article *Dasharatha's Four Sons*, raises a problem quite enthusiastically at the outset, but his solution is far from convincing: we hear all through his faltering voice. A sad mistake marks Dr. U. N. Ghosal's article *Some Types of Constitutions in the Vedic Samhitâs and Brâhmanas* in that he writes the name of the well-known *Brâhmana* as *Panchavinsati Br.*, instead of *Panchavinsa Br.* (p. 11). Besides, there are some misapplications and omissions of diacritical marks. Another sentence we intend to add here for the editors' consideration is that the price of the volume, as fixed, seems to us to be very high.

In spite of these flaws the whole volume affords interesting reading and no lover of Indian culture can fail to offer sincere congratulations to the editors who have thus formally devoted their lives in such a scholarly pursuit. We hope to see their noble dream materialize on and on.

JAGADISH CHANDRA MITRA

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORTS PUBLISHED

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

Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School and Home, Belur	...	1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch), Port Louis, Mauritius	...	1943

Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Salem	...	...	1943
Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Karachi	...	...	1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission (Lahore Branch), Lahore	...	...	1939-43
Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar	...	...	1943