

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI SHIVANANDA

BELUR MATH, JULY 1927

Roughly five in the afternoon. Mahapurush Maharaj was sitting in his room. Some devotees also were there. The talk turned on a four-year old boy who was very clever with *tablas*.¹ Mahapurushji remarked, ‘This sort of phenomenon compels us to believe in the transmigration of the soul. How can you explain this skill at such an early age unless you admit that it is from the previous birth that he has got it? No one has taught him to play on *tablas*, still he can play so well, with perfect rhythm.’

After evening prayer followed the singing of *Rama-nam*. All the monks and many lay devotees were there. Mahapurush Maharaj also was there in his appointed seat, listening in an absorbed mood. In due course the singing came to a close. The lay devotees were served *prasad*² and they were preparing to go home. They went to Mahapurushji to pay their respects before leaving. Address-

ing them Mahapurushji said, ‘This *Rama-nam keertan* Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) first heard during his tour in South India. He liked it very much and taught it to the young monks of the Math (Belur Math). Now it is sung on every *Ekadashi*³ day. And in a short time it has spread all over the country. How many people derive peace and joy from it! It was Swamiji’s (Swami Vivekananda’s) heart’s desire that Mahavira should be worshipped in every home in India. Mahavira was a celibate right from his childhood. Self-consciousness will grow among our people if they take to the worship of Mahavira.’

Most of the devotees were gone. Mahapurush Maharaj was now to have his dinner. One devotee who had not yet left was discussing with him the question of caste. He said, ‘Maharaj, some people blame Swamiji because he has defied all caste rules by instituting the system that during anniver-

¹ Small musical drums.

² Food which has been offered to a deity and of which he is supposed to have partaken.

³ Eleventh day of any fortnight, dark or bright.

sary celebrations all, irrespective of caste, should eat together.'

Hearing this Mahapurushji said, 'Look at the perversity! During all celebrations here cooking is done by brahmins, and the food is offered to *Thakur*. No exception is done even when hundreds of maunds of food are involved. In such cases the whole thing is offered to God and then distributed among the devotees. And the devotees take the food of their own accord. We never insist that they eat together. Never. If, in spite of this, we are blamed, well, then we are helpless. Here is food cooked by brahmins on the bank of the Ganges and offered to God. Do you object even to this kind of food? If one so liked, one would know well enough what to say to these critics. Where is any caste at all nowadays? Serving under a shudra for twelve years turns you also into a shudra. I know a bit too much about these things. Nowadays brahmins serve under shudras not for twelve years but for twenty-four years. How can they still boast of caste? They hardly care for their own personal life or conduct. All they do is to fuss about the caste. Where are those holy duties enjoined upon brahmins—those sacrifices, those charities, those austerities? That is why Swamiji deplorably remarked, "Your religion now is in the cooking-pots, you caste-ridden fellows!"'

The next day was Sunday. There was quite a crowd in Mahapurushji's room. A few devotees of both sexes were there from Barisal. They were anxious to have a few words of instruction. One old man acted as their mouthpiece. He said, 'Maharaj, do please teach us a bit. We are pure worldlings. We are suffering so. Please bless us that we may have a little peace in life.' Touched by the old man's earnestness Mahapurushji said, 'What further advice shall I give you? We have only one advice to give: Don't forget Him. This is the chief thing. We ourselves try to do this. We ask others also to do the same. You are in the world; that is quite as well. Who is outside it? But don't forget Him. Do all your worldly duties;

at the same time pray to Him with all sincerity, at least once in the day. Worldly duties have to be done; I don't suggest you should give them up. I only suggest in the midst of them you will think of Him, pray to Him, repeat His name. In Vaishnava scriptures the advice is given that man should "work with the hand and at the same time repeat Hari's name with the lips". This is indeed a wonderful idea. In whatever we do we must not forget to repeat His name. As each work has its scheduled time and a distinct purpose to serve, so also prayer. Keep apart some particular time for it. Despite everything try to pray then. And no matter how long you pray, pray sincerely. He is the indweller; He watches the attitude of your mind. This is the secret. This is the way of getting some little peace in the world. If you forget this, everything will go wrong.'

A lady-devotee: 'But why do we forget God, Maharaj? Why does not our mind turn towards Him?'

Maharaj: 'Why you forget Him, mother? Well, that is what is called *maya*. You are caught in the meshes of *maya*. That is why you forget Him; that is why leaving aside God the mind is engrossed in transient things. Do you love God as much as you love material objects? Is it necessary to emphasize too much that this world is only for a short while, and your body, your near and dear ones—everything, in the centre of which is "I and mine" and to which you are so passionately attached now, is subject to decay? You see clear enough how shortlived material objects are. What you see today you don't see tomorrow; now it is here, next moment it is not; now it is born, next moment it is dead; now happiness, next moment sorrow. And yet you are quite content with this state of affairs.'

Lady-devotee: 'What is our way out? How can we escape from this? Please bless us a little.'

Maharaj: 'That this world is shortlived you never grasp fully except through His grace. There is no other way, mother, of

escaping from it except through His grace. The Lord Himself has said in the Gita, "This *maya*, which has bewitched the whole creation, stands like an impassable barrier. It is indeed difficult to overcome it. They only can overcome it who pray to me with single-minded devotion." There is no other way but that you must pray to Him with single-minded devotion. You are in the world, you have many duties to perform; you have no time for elaborate spiritual practices. It will do for you if you throw yourself completely on His mercy and weep. Weep and pray, "Lord, have mercy on us,

have mercy on us." Through weeping all the impurities of the mind will be washed away. Then He will unfold Himself in the splendour of a thousand suns. And you will see then He is always within yourself. Weep bitterly; also cultivate the power of discrimination. God alone does not decay; everything else is subject to decay—this world, life and death, joy and sorrow, everything. Continue with this kind of discrimination alongside of prayer. Eventually you will attain His grace. You will develop then dispassion for the world and your mind will then turn towards God.'

WHENCE PEACE ?

BY THE EDITOR

I

The usually successful men in the world belong to the aggressive, domineering type or group. This group depends on its own efforts for its improvement, is active, and is willing to undergo any amount of trouble and sacrifice in order to achieve its ends. Persons in this group generally derive their strength of action from the conviction that man is the architect of his own fate and can make his own hell or heaven, and are extremely self-centred. Napoleon, Hitler and others belong to this type. In Hindu mythology Ravana and Hiranyakashipu are the leading examples of this class. Such people believe sincerely in their own infinite capacity for achievement, are often gifted by nature with extraordinary physical or mental powers, and often combine with their supreme self-confidence a belief that they are the favourites of fortune or Providence. These are the classes which carve out a place for themselves in the world. They stop at no means to achieve their ends and seldom recognize any moral or spiritual law except

their own imperious wills and impulses. The glorification of the tribe or the nation with the leading individual as typical of the whole is but a moderated form of the inordinate thirst for self-aggrandizement and overlordship. As these belong to the *rajasic* group extra-mundane thoughts seldom gain ascendancy over their minds. To them the outside world is the real world. All that must be achieved and enjoyed lies *out there*. The basis of all their vital energies is the body, the mind, and the ego—all combined in one. Seldom does there arise any thought of the impermanence or unreality of all visible things in the minds of such people. As the Gita says, such people are predominantly possessed of greed, activity, the undertaking of actions, and unrest. In their view purity, good conduct, and truth are but social conventions developed by weak, superstitious people. They hold that the universe is without truth, morality, or God but uphold the principles of sexual lust and reproduction operating everywhere in the biological kingdom as the source of all life. Holding such views they stop at nothing cruel or immoral,

and engulf the world in destruction as a result of the pursuit of their horribly selfish desires. Filled with pride and arrogance, they are bent upon the extermination of all who stand in the way of their unholy and impure desires. Given to lust, wrath, and hypocrisy, they strive to acquire by all sorts of unjust and wicked means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyment. Ever impelled by greed they desire to conquer one nation after another, one group after another, one enemy after another. Self-conceited, haughty, filled with the pride and intoxication of worldly wealth and the power of deadly armaments, these malignant people try to impose their tyranny upon all who do not belong to their nation or group. They thus make a hell of this earth not only for themselves but also for all good people who wish to live in truth, peace, and love of God and fellow men. The whole of life in Europe culminating in the recent tragedy of Nazism under Hitler and Fascism under Mussolini is a blazing example of what Hindu wise men have termed as *asuric*. Such tyrants like Hitler and Mussolini are plenty not only in the political and economic fields, but even in the sacred field of religion many such wolves in sheep's clothing go on doing their marauder's work. These deluded tyrants believe that the outside world is the only reality, man's present life is the only one, and so strive insanely only after the pleasures of the senses. Without belief in God or a future life, these fools are born again and again as wicked human beings or as lower creatures. As the Gita says, 'These malicious and cruel evil-doers, most degraded of men, I hurl perpetually into the wombs of *asuras* only, in these worlds.'

II

But the *asuric* type of man is most miserable even in this life. The human mind requires a support, *alambana* as the *upani-shads* say, a belief that life is worth while and that there are higher values to be striven for and achieved. But in the twentieth century there has been a progressive disintegration of

belief, especially in Western countries. The traditional sources of authority have ceased to inspire faith, and the old institutions no longer command any homage. This is true of the whole social system whether in the political, economic, or religious fields. The last Great War and the present war as well as the Russian Revolution and its spectacular success in building up a stable body politic in the vast areas included in Russia have given the *coup de grace* to any belief that lingered in men's minds. As Bertrand Russell says :

'This old order is no longer capable of bringing happiness. It is not only its nominal victims who suffer, it is not only the defeated nations or proletarians who find that life has lost its meaning. Even the well-to-do classes of western Europe have no longer the sense of anything to live for. Having no purpose in life, they have plunged into a frantic pursuit of pleasure. But with every added pleasure comes added unhappiness ; while the senses are gratified the soul remains hungry—there is no inward sense of well-being, but only futility and despair.

'There is only one cure for this despair, and that is a faith which men can believe. No man can be happy unless he feels his life in some way important ; so long as his life remains a futile round of pleasures or pains leading to no end, realizing no purpose that he believes to be of value, so long it is impossible to escape despair. In most men at the present time the despair is dumb and unconscious, and because it is unconscious it cannot be avoided. It is like a spectre always looking over a man's shoulder and whispering acid words into his ear, but never seen, never looked at face to face. Once acknowledged, once faced, this despair can be coped with, but it can be coped with only by a new belief, by something which supersedes the search for pleasure. Although it may sound old-fashioned to say so, I do not believe that a tolerable existence is possible for an individual or a society without some sense of duty.' (*The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, pp. 156-7.)

The cure which Bertrand Russell suggests for the evils consequent upon the *asuric* policy followed by capitalistic oppressors all over the world is socialism of the Russian variety, purified of its crudities and its ruthlessness. According to him modern man has lost faith in such ideals as God, country, family, and that there is only one kind of duty that the modern man can acknowledge without superstition, and that is a duty to the community. He says, 'Socialism is, I believe, the only faith which can restore happiness to the world, which can cure it of the sickness left by war, which can give men the sense that their lives are capable of something better than pleasure, and can end the despair that drives men to frivolous cruelty.' (*ibid.* p. 158.)

And what are the advantages that socialism of the Russian variety offers? With a scientific socialistic organization it is expected that every man would have enough without long hours of work. There will be no commercialism, no competitive struggle for markets, no luxury of the very rich, but there will be sufficiency and leisure for all, freedom for the creative people, the men of science, and the artists, freedom for the pursuit of knowledge and in the beautifying of life not only for the few but for the many also. Class distinctions and economic exploitation will have gone. Labour will become so productive that men will work according to their abilities. Each will take from the store of produced goods only according to his needs. The new motto of society will be 'From each according to his powers; to each according to his needs.' The day of compulsion will have gone. Men will give freely of their best and receive equally freely the best in return.

III

With the growth of greater self-consciousness among the proletariat all over the world, exploiters and capitalists will find the poorer classes less and less willing to be contented and obedient tools without adequate reward. 'The patricians of ancient Rome had to keep

the plebeians contented with liberal doles. Modern capitalists try to keep labour contented with better wages, better houses, and increased amenities up to a limit. The unemployed and the pauper class are kept on unemployment doles, poor relief, and old age pensions. But the force of the appeal of socialism lies in this: it is a revolt against the inhuman nature of the whole capitalistic system based on greed, exploitation, and oppression. A faith, bordering on religious faith, has been observed by Russell and others in Russian socialism. The basis of this faith is the community of feeling of all the oppressed and sweated as belonging to one class as against their exploiters who have refused to respect, what they have felt to be their most sacred thing, their humanity, their right to be treated as fellow human beings. Its motive force is class hatred. Capitalists have become keenly aware of this rising danger to their interests. The following press message shows this clearly:

New York, June 18.—Rep. Claire Boothe Luce, (Rep.), Conn., said that Russian Communism employing terroristic techniques similar to that used in Nazism, was sweeping Europe.

Mrs. Luce urged the United States to use all its power to support anti-Communist governments in nations to which it has military or diplomatic access.

Speaking before the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University, she said that the world had nothing to fear from the Russian people. She said they themselves are victims of Communist techniques. But it is time, she added, that 'we drew a moral balance sheet on Communism'.

Russian policy in Europe, she said, has meant 'exile or death to everybody in every country occupied by the Soviet, regardless of that person's political beliefs, if he does not follow the Soviet program'.

'For the men of the Kremlin, truth is what Stalin says it is on Monday, and it may be something else again on Tuesday,' she said. Mrs. Luce recently returned from a tour of European battle-fronts.

'No bloody Nazi nonsense darkens our mind about the fact that what the Nazis did was murder,' she said. 'Nor should the Communists deceive us that such deeds are not murder too. And murder is evil.'

Mrs. Luce said 13 nations in Central Europe already were controlled by Communists. She warned that Italian Communists may be able to take over that nation by terrorization after the withdrawal of American and British forces.—U.P.A.

No wonder that capitalists all over the world are alarmed. Socialism is outbidding the capitalists as much by its promises to the proletariat as by its performances. The

policy of capitalists had been unscientific exploitation so far. They did not care if their exploitation produced misery and famine. But now in the face of the upsurge of socialism, they are coming to their senses and want to make their exploitation scientific. In the New Order planned by capitalists the exploited will be made to feel that they are better off than they would ever be if left to their own resources. Welfare schemes of all kinds will try to smoothen the difficulties and disabilities of the exploited, while propaganda by newspaper, cinema and radio will be manipulated to make them feel that they, in their own interests, ought to be willing partners with the capitalists. That is why we read in the press that freedom from want and economic rehabilitation are more important than the nineteenth century ideal of political freedom. Regionalism, both economic and military, is to be the new slogan. But unfortunately this regionalism is to run on racial lines. The white nations are to form a block by themselves. The hegemony of the whites under the economic and military leadership of England and America is to be the programme for the second half of the twentieth century. All enemies of white hegemony are to be crushed. Russia seems to be the greatest menace to the policy of Anglo-American supremacy because she stands not only for equality of races but also because she is the protagonist of Communism.

But the point we want to make here is that the forces, whether capitalistic or communistic, that now rule the world are all *asuric* in their intrinsic nature. Nazism, the most blatant *asuric* creed, based itself on might, and was indeed a greater danger to the world than the capitalistic imperialism of England and America or the communistic tyranny of the totalitarian state. These latter showed or have at least pretended to show some outward concern for spiritual and human values. Nazism with its cult of Nordic superiority and the reliance on mere might of armaments rightly deserved its doom. But the victors have not yet shown a better rule of life for nations and men.

The pernicious doctrines of racial superiority and justification of injustice on the principle of might is right have not lost any of their vitality. The Big Three appear, to put it bluntly, like three robbers dividing the spoils. One should not be surprised if they fall out, as almost always happens in such cases.

IV

The cure, to our mind, for the evils of modern civilization does not lie, therefore, in exchanging capitalism for socialism as has become the fashion nowadays to proclaim. Like capitalism, socialism indeed has many good points. But the fact that, like capitalism, it is also based on naked violence does not give any hope that in the ultimate result it will prove to be any better for all concerned. It may perhaps do away with some of the evils of capitalism, but what guarantee is there that it will not bring greater evils in its train? One may legitimately suspect whether any regime that is based on hate and fear and violence can give birth to an order rooted in fraternity. The spirit of man takes its revenge ultimately for degradation inflicted upon it even in the name of all that is good. Mahatma Gandhi said recently, perhaps ironically, that he would welcome communism if it were based on non-violence. But this is like saying that he would welcome imperialism if it were based on non-violence and truth! The truth of the matter is that it is the *asuric* nature of the leaders and consequently of their policies that is responsible for the mess that the world finds itself in.

This *asuric* nature must give way to the godly. The *asuric* conduct leads to further ignorance and bondage of all kinds. The godly nature leads to fuller knowledge and freedom in all directions. Men with the godly nature must combine and take the lead, and stop the rot in world affairs. The policy of the leaders should be *lokasangraha*, the good of all to the invidious exclusion of no class, nation, or race. But the leaders

themselves must be fearless, noble, steadfast in their views, self-controlled and upright. They must command the respect and obedience of the world for their policies by their justice, non-aggressive attitude, compassion, uncovetousness, purity, absence of hatred, and absence of pride. Individual and national unrighteousness in every form must be eschewed by them. They should lead their peoples to aim at the realization of nobler ideals rather than be led to serve the baser interests of the multitude in their efforts to win popular support. The attainment of the four freedoms nobly adumbrated by the late President Roosevelt must be for all and not for a few at the cost of the many. The competitive struggle between nations must give place to emulative co-operation. Intra-specific competition is good within the limits of intra-specific co-operation. Violence as the basis of society must be alienated and the goodwill and support of the many must become the basis of all government. The leaders by virtue of their valuable gifts of mind and body, should try to serve their fellow men, remove ignorance and poverty, and bring into the home of every man the treasures of knowledge and the calm security of an assured freedom from fear of want. The divinity of man must be recognized, and education must be such as to evoke the manifestation of the nobler qualities lying

dormant in him. While it is quite true that man's immediate duty lies in this world, that fact should not blind us to the reality of the spiritual nature of the whole universe. The materialistic conception of the universe must give place to the fuller realization of the conception of the spiritual order underlying all things. Men ought to be considered more important than the mere multiplication of material things. After all man is the measure of all things; and if we belittle his value, we belittle everything. The organization of men and materials towards mutual destruction by nations must give place to an organization for the combined use of all resources for the betterment of all mankind. Nor is this a Utopian proposal. Given the change of heart from the *asuric* to the *divine* view of things, one fails to see why the energies of the millions of people and the vast millions of dollars now wasted in mere destructive activity should not be turned to the admittedly nobler purpose of uplifting mankind. It is only stupidity, pride, and vested interests that stand in the way. Let us hope the horrors of war will bring wisdom to the nations and lead them to the upward path of peaceful spiritual evolution and turn them away from the hellish path of violence and mutual destruction. For that way alone lies the road to happiness and peace.

VEDANTA AND COMMUNISM

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA

Some fifty years ago Swami Vivekananda wrote in his Bengali book *Modern India* that four castes,—the brahmins, kshatriyas, vaishyas, and shudras,—have their turn in getting paramountcy over human society. In the early days of human history,—brahmins, had the supremacy in ruling the society. The headman of the clan was not only the ruling chief and law-giver but also

the chief priest of the clan. With the waning of the priestly influence there rose up the kshatriya power, the power of the martial people. That was the age of chivalry. The kings and chieftains, by force of their prowess and physical valour held sway over the society. Thereafter with the spread of industries and commerce and the development of powerful trade organizations, it was

the capitalists and industrial magnates who came to the forefront in the field of influence and the soldiers, the kshatriyas, had to take the back-bench, by becoming their hirelings. It is these capitalists and trade magnates, the vaishyas of all races, who are still holding sway in human society. But their days are numbered and there are signs to show that their influence and power would soon pass away into the hands of the shudras,—the labourers of the field, the workers of the factories, those of the lowest strata of the society who had hitherto formed the grist for the capitalists' mills. He further foretold that the shudras would rise with their ploughs and sickles and hammers and would hold the reins of society.

The victory of Bolshevik Russia over Germany prognosticates fairly well that in future communistic Russia is going to dominate over modern Europe, and her ideology is going to influence deeply the re-shaping of the social life of the next generation.

In India, too, we cannot escape the repercussion of this new movement. Already there are ample signs in the form of communistic movements, labour movements, kishan movements and such others, which go to show which way the wind is blowing. Swamiji even asserted that a new India should arise from the farms and market-places, from labourers' grovelling huts and coolies' miserable dens. And the classes must either give their full aid to the rising masses or disappear to the inane. It is going to be and none can check the onrush of the tidal wave. The British government, the master of modern India, is itself the product of vaishya mentality, the shop-keeper's brain. It shall have to yield place to the power which will be born of the new shudra movement.

But there is one danger inherent in this shudra movement. If the shudra rises as a shudra, devoid of the culture of the upper classes, then it would be quite likely that under his sway emphasis would be laid on the gross physical aspect of life and the old

spiritual culture of India would get buried under the debris of materialism; and in that case, old India will die and in its place would be born a new hybrid India. That would indeed be a great loss, not only to India proper but to the whole world also. India's great contribution to the larger humanity has ever been her spiritual culture. From pre-historic time India has been sending out from age to age, her messengers of spiritual culture to the outer world and thereby she raised the tone of life to a lofty strain. So naturally with her spiritual death, it is the world at large which would be poorer for the catastrophe.

Hence to save India from this terrible cataclysm there is but one alternative: The classes must hand down their spiritual culture to the shudras, the shudras must be enlightened and enlivened by the light of the spiritual culture of the Vedas. Even from now, if members of the upper classes begin to feel for the masses and make provision not only for their intellectual education and material prosperity, but also for their spiritual culture and proper religious understanding, then only we can hope for a glorious future.

The keynote of the spiritual culture of the Vedas as embodied in the Vedanta or the *upanishads*, can very well be expressed in a few words: The ultimate reality of this universe is a spiritual principle, Brahman; the phenomenal aspect of the universe may have a relative or pragmatic value but is not an absolute verity; each individual soul is in essence of that divine spiritual principle and the growth or evolution of life lies in the progressive realization of that potential divinity of man through his clear intellectual understanding and conscious ethical behaviour in the society. In short, the spiritual culture of the Vedas meant the awakening of the spiritual consciousness in man which would evaluate things in the new light and bring about the redemption of man from bondages of material nature through love and service.

This spirit of Vedanta is in full accord with

the spirit of modern communism or socialism. Vedanta also affirms with great emphasis that all men and women are essentially equal and possess the same inherent right for the enjoyment of life. Any distinction among men brought about by race, colour or sex is only superficial and, therefore, not real. All men being essentially of the same spiritual principle, *atman*, must get equal opportunities for self-expression and also for the enjoyment of the goods of the world. In that sense a government must truly be of the people and for the people, even as it is envisaged in Red Russia. No one part or group of men should ever try to dominate over the rest for self-aggrandizement. The members of the government should consider themselves truly as servants of the people and not as their masters, as they do in India.

But there is a great difference in the fundamentals between the Vedantic outlook of the human society and that of communism. Whereas the latter tries to base its principles on the physical aspects of life, the former bases itself on the eternal spiritual verity of the *atman*. If we say that all men are equal purely from the physical or intellectual standpoint, then certainly it is far from the truth. All men are *not* equal, either physically or mentally. We all know that men, both individually and racially, are of different physical calibre and intellectual capacities. And for that very reason the strong and the intelligent always rule over the weak and the dullard. This is the law of nature on her physical side, the law of the jungle. Moreover, if we do not accept any spiritual basis of life or of Nature no other view of life can alter this law, as that will be false and unreal. So communism or socialism of any complexion that denies the spiritual verities of life and tries to base its pseudo-philosophy on a purely economical, social, or political basis, is bound to fail in the long run.

The real equality of man, nay, of all life,

is in the spiritual plane. It is because all men are of the same *atman*, that all moral codes enjoin the practice of certain virtues like non-injury, love, charity, and self-restraint. All ethical philosophers believe that our sense of the good, like our sense of the beautiful, is innate and fundamental, and the moral development of man must lie in the line of the progressive realization of the good. Vedanta identifies the good with the true and the beautiful, *Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram*. And it constitutes the very soul of ourselves. Hence we intuit its existence. Therefore, evidently it will be a false philosophy, if we try to base our moral principles purely upon economical or utilitarian basis, as that can never ennoble our moral nature or improve our moral character. Can utility improve our aesthetic sense? Obviously not. So also the utilitarian attitude cannot really improve our moral nature or refine our ethical sense. The greatest moral men of the world were saints and sages, and not politicians or businessmen. Hence it is a plain fact that men can never be made truly moral or ethical, unless they are taught to base their lives on spiritual truth and are disciplined by spiritual principles. Further, a society that is loose in moral disciplines and is cut away from ethical moorings, is bound to lapse into barbarity in the long run. So it is highly important for all social leaders to have a clear understanding of the fundamental basis of human society and human life as well. It is Vedanta that can afford a rational and satisfactory explanation of their fundamental basis. Therefore, in India the would-be communist must cease to seek guidance or inspiration from Moscow; rather, he should go back to the Upanishads for light and lead, and show to the world a new type of communism or socialism, which alone can save humanity from lapsing back to barbarity. And thus our shudras also can be brahminized and saved.

A BACKWARD GLANCE AT PRABUDDHA BHARATA'S FIFTY VOLUMES

BY ST. NIBHAL SINGH

(Continued)

4. *The Power-house of Our Culture*

Not till a few years ago did I realize, with any degree of adequacy, the relationship that exists between Father Himalya and our culture. This dawning came to me while I was voyaging through the heavens arching over *Uttarakhanda*—the sacred region of the north. I was going about in an aeroplane lent me by an acquaintance. 'Pushpak' (floweret or flowerlike), I called it, in memory of the air-chariot that had brought Sri Ramachandra back home from Lanka after he had freed it from the tyranny of the blood-bibbing ogres.

During the three days I was up in the air (in, to me, a wholly new sense) the matted locks of the motherland's mighty guardsman and I were near as never before. If I were only to break the glass through which I peered seemingly simultaneously at sky and earth, and put out my hand, my finger-tips would, I felt, be purified for ever by touch, however fugitive, with one of his snow-strewn strands.

One look at the rock-ribbed springs and streams down, down below that finally emerge as *Ganga Mai* from Rama's last stop on earth—*Deoprayag* (originally *Devaprayaga*)—and I understood, in all their poetic imagery, a series of hoary traditions concerning the celestial river's first century (or, according to another version, first millennium) upon earth. This she spent going round and round Lord Shiva's dishevelled, ash-smeared locks. Why did the fabricator of that fancy proclaim that she ever quitted them? There she was, still

wandering among them. So, at least, it seemed to me flying up in the heavens.

Crag and crest, vale and down, tarn and lake, pine-clad shelf, ledge and rolling heights, lying a thousand or maybe five thousand and more feet above fields of all shapes and at all angles, had I seen in many parts of the world. The ever-changing prospect in the inner Himalyan region exerted, however, a tug at my heart that that heart never experienced elsewhere.

Here, to the physical beauty, was added spiritual splendour. This combination was matchless—magical.

In other parts of the world man had striven to steal power that Nature has concealed in water. This he had done to cater for creature comforts.

Here man had studied the life history of a drop of moisture. He became cognizant of its ascent heavenwards—*ascent real*, though invisible to the eye—even the eye illumined by science. He had perceived that same drop, divested of all pollution, falling upon the earth and fructifying it. That cycle had continued—*ceaselessly*.

So man, snuggled in one or another of Himalya's multitudinous laps, had applied to the superphysical the lesson he had learnt from the physical. Studying the arts and sciences of exalting the imperishable being within him, he had manufactured for that purpose an unending variety of hoists. Each of them was fitted with the power of propulsion that operated without external motivation or manipulation.

* * *

As the summer rains of 1898 were drench-

ing the heights known as Almora, the hillmen living on that Himalyan range were witnessing a sight such as had never before been vouchsafed them or their forbears. Up the cart-road, still primitive, were being borne, from the nearest railhead, numerous packing cases. Strapped to the back by ropes slung athwart his forehead, each of them was being conveyed by a short but sturdy carrier to an estate that had just come under the occupation of a Sahib and his mem (short for 'ma'am', itself diminutive for 'madam').

There, when opened, the case was yielding masses of tiny sticks of lead. One end of each was crested with a letter of the English alphabet, or some other mystic sign or symbol. Or mayhap the packing case was found to contain a roller that bore marks of having been used for inking type, or some part of a printing-press.

A person possessed of some experience of the use that civilized man makes of such objects would have shouted :

'What madness, this! Who but a lunatic would think (is "think" really the word?) of setting up a printing-press in this remote spot? Judging from the number of boxes and cases, it is, moreover, going to be an establishment of some size.

'What can be the object behind that endeavour? Hardly one in a hundred thousand persons or thereabouts could tell one English letter apart from another. Who, then, was to benefit from such activity? Who ever heard of such madness?'

* * *

Such a brain wave could have originated only with a man of the Swami Vivekananda's perceptions and daring. Who else could have found men with the material resources and spiritual enthusiasms to help him to establish a printing establishment in that remote place? This was to be, in fact, a small part of the equipment for a cultural power-house in the heart of the Himalyas.

Given the leader, a cycle is soon compressed in the East, slow-moving in alien sight, into a semester. Hardly had the ink

on the notice suspending the publication of the *Prabuddha Bharata* magazine *sine die* dried in Madras, in June 1898, when the press had been transported from the steaming plains of that presidency to these cool heights, nearly 1,500 miles distant, by rail and road; and work on the August number was in hand. Compositors were setting up 'copy' turned out mostly by men clad in the sanyasi's ochre-coloured robes. Soon, sticks and galleys were being proofed; proofs were being revised; the corrections were being made; pages were being locked into forms; forms were being made fast in the press and inked; hillmen were turning the handle; off were coming printed pages; the binders were stacking pages in correct sequence and sewing them; and each finished copy was being wrapped, addressed, and posted to some town in India, or maybe in the United States, or Canada, or Britain.

An almond-coloured slip inserted between the greeny cover and the first page expressed the publisher's regrets for the delay in getting out the first number of the (revivified) *Prabuddha Bharata* and the 'bad printing'. These, he explained, were 'the unavoidable' consequences 'of having to bring up the press and materials from the plains', mostly in far-away Madras, to 'a height of about 6,000 feet above the sea level and then' rushing 'inexperienced hands with the work'.

To me, with my schoolboy's toe already upon the journalistic ladder, this explanation seemed gratuitous. For that time (August 1898) the printing was not at all bad. Examining that issue (No. 1 of Vol. III) today, almost exactly forty-seven years later, I am of the opinion that the men who carried out the Swami's behest to produce the magazine from this newly established Himalyan power-house of culture performed almost a miracle.

* * *

I attribute this miracle to

- (1) Vivekananda's inspiring leadership, his burning enthusiasm, and sleepless vigil;

- (2) his unerring judgement of human values ;
- (3) his free recognition of Indian weaknesses ; and
- (4) his freedom from colour and race bias in choosing helpers to enable our people to become self-sufficing.

The two persons who, between them, bore the brunt of this transition, were an English-woman and her husband—Mrs. C. E. and Captain J. H. Sevier. Their beings had been cast in materialism bred in modern industrialism, but they felt within them an irresistible impulse towards spiritual development. Some one in their social circle had carried to them, in the spring of 1898, tidings of an 'Indian Yogi' who was discoursing, in faultless, fluent English, upon the ways conducive to self-realization, in a fashionable London drawing-room. Thither they speeded. As they were departing after the talk rather than lecture, the wife (women are often more intuitive than men) said, 'This is the guide for whom we have been searching ; his is the path—the path of monism (*advaita*)—that we have been seeking'. Assenting, the husband replied, in a tone of finality, 'Now the quest is over'.

In no time at all a strangely complex relationship was formed. In matters pertaining to the spirit, Vivekananda was the *gnosta*—the illuminated—the enlightened—therefore, the guide or guru, to borrow a term from the most ancient of all civilized speeches. In matters pertaining to physical welfare, he was, nevertheless, the Seviere's child, mature in years and wisdom, but utterly wanting in the rudiments of husbanding his physical resources. If some one did not intervene, he, through extravagance of the most bankrupting kind, would soon consume that grand body given him by Nature—a body that, strangely enough, he himself had sedulously cultivated by exercise during his boyhood and early manhood years.

Never before had a good woman been led by her maternal instincts to assume an obligation that called for such ceaseless vigilance and drew upon the art and science

of management, quite to the degree that Mrs. Sevier had been. In the purely personal sphere the Master could be—was often, in fact—unmanageable.

Captain Sevier was, however, always at hand—always, that is, till the call came to him in the inner recesses of the Himalyas to step across the threshold invisible to the unillumined eye leading into a world that to that eye is completely hidden. The father in him strove, in conjunction with his wife, to save the Swami's body as long as possible from premature destruction—to save him for the sake of India and of humanity as a whole.

* * *

Sevier it was who largely executed the Master's design to shift what I call the cultural power-house some fifty miles further into the Himalyan recesses. The elevation to be chosen was to be about 7,000 feet above the sea level. There even mortal frames conceived in cold latitudes could thrive. There bodies ushered into existence in our own India would, when acclimatized, function with vitality and vigour hardly possible upon the furnace-like plains.

Vivekananda's ideal was 'global'—universal. While he wished to uplift his own countrymen—to make them the equals of any and all nationals—he also desired to silence that miserable refrain :

Oh, East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet.

Himself a universalist, he was bent upon building up a brotherhood—a sisterhood—of the two, created as one by Providence but sundered by man's own perversity.

The Swami had himself searched the hills further to the north-west, at whose feet I was born, for a likely spot for locating this cultural centre. While on his way to Murree, he tarried, in fact, for a spell, at the garden-house of a distant kinsman of mine—Sardar Sujjan Singh, who used the wealth he had acquired to build institutions essential for the promotion of social welfare. Much to my regret, however, this quest in those particular Himalyan ranges, proved infructuous.

Far from well at the time, the Swami decided to leave that job to the Seviers. To them he gave, as a guide, one of his beloved and trusted disciples—the Swami Swarupananda.

Swarupananda had but recently been initiated into the Ramakrishna Order, founded by Vivekananda for the purpose of serving Mother India's sons and daughters in health, ailment, and epidemic, in conditions of poverty and plague—to them normal—and, on occasions, when the very forces of nature seemed to be leagued together to destroy them, their houses and their cattle. These sanyasis—neither 'monk', nor 'mendicant' is an apposite translation of this Sanskrit term—were also to labour for the good of humanity outside India, particularly by carrying to peoples in both hemispheres the spiritual heritage that is ours merely by birth in this land blessed by saints and sages from the beginning of time.

Swarupananda-to-be had at first taken to journalism. The *Dawn* that he edited from Calcutta indicated the direction in which his mind ran—the longing for a new material, social, and spiritual order. It was a fitting prelude to the service that was in store for him in Himalya. As we shall soon see, in his hand was placed the loose end of the rope with which was rung the tocsin designed by Vivekananda to awaken India.

Between them Captain and Mrs. Sevier and Swarupananda discovered a parcel of land at an elevation of 6,800 feet. Situated some fifty miles east of Almora—then the end of the cart-road and now the motor-road terminus—it was heavily wooded. Framed in trees were wide, uninterrupted views of Father Himalya's eternally ermine-clad head and shoulders.

The way to the estate lay through high forest. It went up the mountain side and down to the trough through which sped torrents during the rainy season.

Without waiting for the Swami's sanction, the Seviers bought the estate in March 1899, and executed the necessary deeds. Ratifying the choice, he named the place Mayavati

and appointed it the nerve-centre of the Advaita Ashrama.

Here is Vivekananda's own explanation of the aims this cultural power-house was meant to serve :

In Whom is the Universe, Who is in the Universe, Who is the Universe, In Whom is the Soul, Who is the Soul, Who is the Soul of man, knowing Him, and therefore the Universe, as our Self, alone extinguishes all fear, brings an end to misery, and leads to infinite freedom. Wherever there has been expansion in love or progress in well-being of individuals or numbers, it has been through the perception, realization and the practicalization of the Eternal Truth,—*the Oneness of All Beings*. 'Dependence is misery. Independence is happiness.' The Advaita is the only system which gives unto man complete possession of himself, takes off all dependence and its associated superstitions, thus making us brave to suffer, brave to do, and in the long run attain to Absolute Freedom.

Hitherto it has not been possible to preach this Noble Truth entirely free from the settings of dualistic weakness; this alone, we are convinced, explains why it has not been operative and useful to mankind at large.

To give this ONE TRUTH a freer and fuller scope in elevating the lives of individuals and leavening the mass of mankind, we start this Advaita Ashrama on the Himalayan heights, the land of its first expression.

Here it is hoped to keep Advaita free from all superstitions and weakening contaminations. Here will be taught and practised nothing but the Doctrine of Unity, pure and simple; and though in entire sympathy with all the other systems, this Ashrama is dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone.

To Mayavati were soon shifted the *Prabuddha Bharata* offices. The editor, since B. R. Rajam Iyer's departure, always a figure in ochre-hued robes, has had his eyrie there ever since. There his assistants have resided in summer coolness and winter frost. There the editorials and other notes, reviews, and notices of books have been written; and the articles commissioned or sent in from the outside have been examined and, wherever necessary, edited.

Till 1924 the printing was done there. While the circulation expanded, however, the communications remained primitive. In that year it was decided, therefore, to transfer the physical production of the magazine to Calcutta. Its intellectual, moral, and spiritual circuit has, nevertheless, continued to begin and to close in that cultural power-house in the inner Almora Himalya.

(To be continued)

ASIA AND EUROPE

BY DR. DHIRENDRA N. ROY, M.A., PH. D.

The attitude with which the European people used to deal with the people of Asia during the first millennium of the Christian era or before was, highly respectful and appreciative. The East was then not as large as the whole continent of Asia itself. It stood then only for that portion of south-western corner of Asia which was contiguous to southern Europe. Geographically it was quite appropriate as any world map will show, on the part of Europe, particularly southern Europe, to call this portion of land East. By East was meant, as the Old Testament tells us, the countries east of Canaan or modern Palestine. These were the ancient lands of Babylonia, Persia, Arabia, and India. The early Christians of Europe used to feel deeply inspired by the very thought of this East which, according to them, was inhabited by the magi or wise men of the time. Up to the period of the Middle Ages they always entertained a lofty view of everything associated with it. When the most devout of these Christians known as the Crusaders came successively in huge swarms to wage their holy wars against the Saracens and saw, with their own eyes, what formerly appeared to them like fairy-tales, which if true, would make any land as good as paradise, the incredible splendour and prosperity of the East, their old feeling of admiration and reverence was further intensified. Those Europeans who were living at home heard from the returning Crusaders of things about the East they could hardly imagine. It had almost a maddening effect upon the people of Europe, stimulating their adventurous spirit to the highest degree. All talked about the East. Many were fired with the zeal of visiting the wonderful land and seeing its splendour and prosperity. There was, however, at that time, no easy means of communication with the East. The

caravan traffic by way of the Syrian desert, which was the usual means, often involved great risks to travellers who might any time become victims of organized brigandage. Nevertheless, their zeal for travel did not suffer the least abatement. They came and saw the East, those who succeeded in braving the perils of the journey, and were convinced.

But one thing happened. They saw in the East not the proverbial magi of whose profound wisdom and erudition they had heard so much. The East was rightly next to the holy land of Canaan in its holiness as well as being sanctified as the birth-place of these Biblical wise men. But they forgot all about them, their eyes being literally dazzled by the immeasurable luxuries and splendour amidst which they saw the people live. They saw the East in the new light, and thought no more of its wisdom. Wealth of the East took its place and became a temptation. Greed came inevitably and they got busy to devise means of sharing something of it. Rapid rise of trade and commerce between them followed and they began to have the taste of the Orient's wealth. Naturally the appetite grew, being whetted by newer and finer importations. But the problem of traffic was too baffling for them to get it duly satisfied. The routes were often blocked by freebooters who exacted a heavy toll on the business or mercilessly attacked the traders. Sometimes these routes were closed altogether and new routes had to be searched for. They must have some routes anyhow to carry the precious goods to Europe, and be happy and prosperous. It was the only thing which completely obsessed their mind and soul. The East came to be known as an immense store-house of incomparably useful goods for material comfort and enjoyment. It was

not the wise people of the East but its rich possessions that evoked their strongest interest. Good-bye to the wisdom of the east and all hail to its wealth and splendour! This naturally involved a change in their attitude towards the people of the East whom their incipient greed required to treat differently to simplify the otherwise none too easy process of deprivation and satisfaction.

The East began to expand with the expansion of their trade and commerce. The trade that was more or less confined to the Mesopotamian hinterland and Arabia where, along with the local products, were also available multitudes of precious Indian goods of excellent quality, only provided fresh incentives to reach India for direct business contact. But the Arabs who had then the supreme control over both the caravan and the sea-going routes did not prove helpful to that end as it went contrary to their own business interest. They closed the routes to India against the European traders. So the latter began searching for new routes.

Meanwhile the Christian missionaries from Europe, in course of their wide travel for holy evangelical propagation, had seen and reported to their people at home the wealth of India,—the wealth before which what they had hitherto seen and admired in the Near East was but a pale and meagre side-show. Coupled with this the great Jesuit Father Marco Polo brought on a new stupendous thrill of joy to the West by his discovery of the glorious land of Cathay or China. His report about the wealth and splendour of this marvellous country was by no means less sensational to the West than what it had seen and heard of India. China, however, had hitherto been almost an unknown land to Europeans owing to the absence of any trade relation similar to what existed between India and Europe. The story of her immense wealth was no doubt very exciting to Europeans, but she was still a far too hazy land to the latter and hence comparatively less coveted than India. India remained their highest attraction. By the East was still meant chiefly India. How to reach that

blessed land was the most dominant idea that prevailed in the fifteenth century Europe. A series of explorations began for new routes to India. Some sought the north-west passage along the Arctic shores of Siberia, some by way of the Caspian Sea, and some again by way of the great Atlantic. They were prepared even to circumnavigate the world for a sea-route to India and thus to circumvent the clever Arabs who stood in their way. The great adventures of Dias, Covilhao, Columbus, Cabot, Vasco da Gama, Magellan, Jenkinson, Frobisher, and many others were undertaken with that one single object in view,—a new route to India. In course of their long perilous exploration, whenever some new land was discovered it was taken for India. That was how the group of islands in the Atlantic which Columbus first saw in course of his exploration got its name West Indies and how the inhabitants of America came to be known as Indians. Similarly, the inhabitants of the group of islands which Magellan discovered in the Pacific and which was given the name of the Philippines after the then Spanish king, Philip II, received the name of *Indios* or Indians. Columbus, of course, discovered, in course of his search for India, a new continent for Europe, but unfortunately, he died ignorant of the fact that he had done so. 'He believed', says H. G. Wells, 'to the day of his death, that he had sailed round the world to Asia'. Magellan was killed by an *Indio* before he could know that the Philippines did not form a part of India. Neither of them succeeded in reaching this most coveted land. But it was the great Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama who finally succeeded in discovering a sea-route to India by way of the South African coast and returned triumphantly after thirty-two months with a letter from a Hindu king, as a positive proof of his grand exploratory achievement,—a letter which was written on a golden leaf gladly welcoming the stranger. That was a great occasion, a red-letter day to the Portuguese people, nay the whole of Europe, for wild rejoicing. 'That night', says

Winwood Reade in his illustrious book *The Martyrdom of Man*, 'all the houses of Lisbon were illuminated; the gutters ran with wine; the skies for miles round were reddened with the light of bonfires'.

As direct and close contact with India became thus possible the boundaries of the East also began to recede. Formerly India was known only by her western region with which the Arabs had their trade relation, and to Europe by the East was meant more or less hazily as far as there. A fuller knowledge of the size of India through close contact made the East become larger in European conception. It became immensely larger still with the addition of the vast land of China which too gradually began to rouse the interest of the European adventurers as the missionary reports of her unlimited wealth and the easy opportunity to grab it reached Europe. Similarly the other countries of north-eastern and eastern Asia came one after another to be included in the East. Even the numerous large and small islands stretching southward like a sort of long disjoined chain of lands and forming the dividing line between the Indian Ocean and the great Pacific were included. Many more islands again lying in the vast space of the southern Pacific began to be mentioned in connection with the various peoples of Asia. Such peoples as the Polynesians and the Melanesians who inhabit these islands suggest by their very names their social kinship with Asia. Had not Australia, with the neighbouring South-sea islands under its sway, become a land of the whites it might have remained known along with the East, thereby making it appear more like a part of it than otherwise.

Thus the little East, which originally was rightly called so by its immediate West, a mere part of southern Europe, and which once stood for only such countries of Asia as Persia, Arabia, and India has been made to stand for the whole of Asia not excluding even its far-flung island stretches in the south and in the farther east. Its legitimate boundaries disappeared as more and more

beautiful and prosperous lands inhabited by yet stranger peoples, each possessing its own peculiar culture and civilization, were gradually revealed through it to the West, opening up greater and yet greater opportunities for exploitation. By the East was meant land of wealth and splendour, land of golden opportunities. Wherever these were found by the European adventurers, in course of their search for more and more, there was the East. Thus the East grew up to be identified with the whole of Asia.

The West had also undergone a similar, though perhaps not simultaneous, process of expansion. It originally meant that small portion of southern Europe which fostered a conglomerate tradition of Hebrew-Romanic influences. By this portion was meant chiefly such countries as Italy, Spain and Portugal. All the earliest historical personages who sought adventures into the blessed East belonged to these countries. They were first to penetrate into the East and press farther on and on while making their huge piles for home. Others on the north and north-east of Europe got scent of this highly profitable adventure much later. Before the Anglo-Saxon people of the north could reach the shores of southern Asia the adventurers from Spain and Portugal, especially the Catholic missionaries who were always their brave associates if not fore-runners, had already known and entered far beyond the limits of greater India and had engaged themselves in their favourite business. They had already known not only China but even as far as Korea and Japan where they were making rapid headway in fulfilling their mission. So while by the West was still meant the coastal Latin countries of southern Europe, more especially the Italian and the Iberian peninsulas, the East had acquired almost the full size of Asia. The Anglo-Saxons came to know of this great East a little later, and the other racial groups from the rest of Europe knew of it later still. As the various racial groups from the different parts of Europe gradually developed, more or less, a uniform interest in this East, as they all were moved

by the same intense desire for its wealth and power, there soon appeared some sort of unity of spirit among them to make the sharply divided Europe feel as one under the common name of the West. 'It is only by contact with the East', says J. H. Nicholson in his *Remaking of Nations*, 'that the West has come to feel itself in any sense a unity'. Something like the idea of brothers-in-exploitation made Europe become the one great West. Rightly or wrongly this West is thus Europe's own making. This would have been a credit, a great achievement on the part of the various nations of Europe, if this unity was caused by a healthy motive. That it was not so requires little explanation. The superficial unity of Europe cannot conceal for long the sharp underlying differences among its various nations. The repercussions of such negative unity have caused Europe to plunge in periodical blood-baths culminating in the present terrible Armageddon. This is, of course, a most painful way of bringing about disillusionment. But it appears to be inevitable.

Whatever that might be in the case of the West growing up to be identical with the whole of Europe, and even more, it is certain that the East was not Asia's own making. The West made it so. Asia did not understand it. All throughout her long and glorious history she had carefully and silently nurtured in her bosom a rich variety of peoples, each possessing its own peculiar culture and civilization and recognizing and tolerating other people's differences. She did not understand the West imposing upon her various peoples and their civilizations one single name to be treated and judged together. She did not understand it because she did not realize the motive of the West before it was too late,—the motive with which the latter came to meet her. It became clear to her only when she found herself robbed of her glorious position in wealth and power, when she had become weak and helpless before the aggressive West. Failing to assert herself Asia accepted the position imposed upon her. She became the

East. All her different parts of the Land in the north, east, south, and west, all her different peoples, all her different civilizations became the East. The West said it so and it was so. Asia has thus become the East even to the Australians, the South Africans, and the Americans of both north and south, as the Westerners from Europe have settled in these distant regions of Earth. Their land positions might be quite different from one another to show their different directional relations with Asia, but still to all of them Asia is the East. The geographical anomaly cannot stand before the sombre decree of the West. And Asia is now not only the East to the West but to all, that is, to the north, to the south, and even to the East itself.

This extravagant expansion of the little East, originally in the south-west corner of Asia, in total disregard of the geographical anomaly involved therein represented only the whim of self-consciousness that was fast overtaking the manhood of Europe through its sordid acquisition of Asia's wealth and its cruel usurpation of power over her various civilized peoples. The East has since then been simply a matter of attitude rather than latitude and longitude.

That attitude has mellowed the apparent inconsistency of the part becoming the whole merely through the popular usage of ages. Asia is the East now for all, whether rightly or wrongly, it does not matter. Time has set that question aside. The glory that is East is the glory of the West; the rest of the world moves round it in spell-bound acquiescence. Asia is not the problem because it is a fact of geography, but the East is because it is not a fact. The East is a dream of an excessive desire,—a dream that has become an established reality through its role as a satisfier. The West is the desire and the East its source of satisfaction. Until and unless the desire dissolves the dream continues its pose of reality. Asia will still take time to shed her inglorious garb of the East. Even if the West is now showing signs of disintegration and dissolution under the hard and relentless impact of the two great world-wars, there is

no immediate likelihood of the East shrinking back to its small and relative character. The world learns rather slowly to forget its long accustomed way. While it holds to that way one has to let Asia go by the name of the East, especially in her social, political, and cultural bearings. The problem of our international relations, therefore, has to be discussed still in terms of the East and the West, much as one may dislike the anomaly and the implications in which Kipling was pleased to use them.

FROM THE HIMALAYAS TO CAPE COMORIN

BY A WANDERER

To wander is to get education.—Goethe

Perched on an Ashrama in the Himalayas, I would very often be thinking wistfully of the Cape on the farthest corner of India. Cape Comorin—what a grand view does it command! Standing on this Land's End of India you can see the three seas meet—the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Bay of Bengal. You can see from here the glorious sunrise and the enchanting sunset. And the temple at Cape Comorin, it is superb! The image inside—the image of the Virgin Goddess—beggars all description! These words in praise of Cape Comorin I had often heard, and they fired my susceptible imagination. I must see the Cape! But many desires rise in our hearts, and they melt away automatically, for you cannot afford to run after the fulfilment of every desire. I thought this my desire to see the Cape also would subside as a law of nature. But nay, I was mistaken in this notion. For I found it was surging and swelling within myself, till it took a definite shape and was pressing me irresistibly for action. When your desires are strong, circumstances also come to your help. I found it particularly true in this case of mine. So, one day, I found myself moving from the north to the south—out on pilgrimage.

* * *

Going up and down the steep ascent and the deep descent for a few days, I found myself at a Railway Station at the foot of the Himalayas. Here you were amidst a

crowded medley of people—rushing, bustling, all in haste. And you met with so many persons in khaki uniform. Staying in the interior of the Himalayas, one did not exactly know how the world was going on. Here, for the first time, the thought forced itself on me what a great war had been raging in the world—its influence invading even the peace of the Himalayas! This gave me a mild shock. I was quite happy in my Himalayan abode, would I be the same man in the whirlpool of the present world? Some were telling me that travelling was very, very difficult nowadays and it was not wise for me to undertake the pilgrimage in these war times. I saw it advertised in many papers—'Travel only if you must'. Was my pilgrimage so urgent a necessity that I could justify myself in defying all these warnings? Yes, it was an absolute necessity with me. For it was a long-standing desire. An opportunity had opened up for its fulfilment. I must not falter. I must go.

* * *

I was in the holy city of Benares—Benares, as old as the Vedic period, the spiritual capital of India and the seat of great God Vishwanath. But this time I found that centre of gravity of Benares had shifted to Nagwa—four miles away from the city proper—where a big sacrificial ceremony was being performed. Hundreds of persons were going to that place, and the topic of conversation everywhere related to that. Some said that the rite had been undertaken to bring about

'world peace'. Some said it was a part of propaganda for this and that! In order to bring peace to the war-weary world to have recourse to a sacrificial rite! and that in the year of grace 1945!—it was hard to believe. So there was enough room for conjecture, guess, and speculation. Though the subject of talk was the same, it was amusing to hear how different persons looked at the thing from different standpoints. As I went by a boat over the Ganges, to the venue of the sacrifice, I found many fellow-passengers warmed up with conversation. Some were discussing as to how many lakhs of rupees were being spent for the whole show, some criticizing the management for various acts of commission and omission, while one—a Brahmin priest—enumerating the gifts and presents the Brahmin priests would get. A Bengali young man, assuming on himself the responsibility of the nation's welfare, enthusiastically said, 'It is a folly that so much money should be spent on a religious show, for burning ghee! This is the reason why our country is in such a miserable condition.' He went on talking, talking, and monopolizing the whole conversation. It was evening. The sound of bells from various temples was coming across the waters. Many devotees were seated on the bank in prayer or in a prayerful mood. I wanted to be in tune with the atmosphere—so I was silent. But this garrulous young man wanted to drag me into the conversation, little knowing that I had no interest in the topics of his discussion. This fellow had no religious feeling, (perhaps) no national spirit, not even any aesthetic sense. To indulge in frothy talks when the whole atmosphere was gravitating towards Deeper Reality! I asked him, 'What is your occupation in life? Have you ever found any opportunity to put your ideas into practice?' Poor man! He did not understand why I asked this question. He went on talking, till he spent himself.

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This sacrificial rite was a huge affair. A vast plot of ground was taken up and in it

were raised many pandals—big and small. In the day-time the vast ground looked like a sea of heads, at night it appeared like a fabled city. There were various functions. In one pandal, one hundred Brahmins were performing Vedic rites with scrupulous punctiliousness, in another one hundred Brahmins were reading the Gita. Similarly, there was arrangement for the reading of the Bhagavata, the Chandi, the Upanishads—in each function one hundred Brahmins took part. In some pandal one was reading and explaining the Ramayana of Tulsidas, and so on. There was arrangement also for lectures on different problems of Hinduism. Moving about the area, one could learn, if one would care, about Hinduism from the Vedic age right up to the present time when Hinduism has become synonymous with chaos, weakness, disorganization, and disintegration.

'I don't know.' I said to myself, 'if there is any causal connection between the performance of these rites and the descent of peace on earth, but this is true, the whole function will serve the purpose of a regular university to the visiting public. There is so much to learn and see here!'

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I was in Calcutta. But I regretfully found that to me this city had lost all its charm. At night there was black-out; and at day-time there was plenty of motor accidents. The streets were crowded, the tram-cars were packed with passengers standing up to the very door, and to get on board an omnibus, well, you had to risk your very limbs—there was so much rush. Why not sit indoors, and enjoy the sight of the crowds feverishly moving about? Well, to one accustomed to Himalayan silence, the noise all round was simply hellish. I longed to fly away as quickly as possible. But fate was against me; I fell ill. I passed my time in sick-bed, turning over the pages of the Guide and Time Table for different railways in South India.

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Desires are the cause of unhappiness in a man's life, but desires carry within them the

seeds of their fulfilment. So one day I found myself starting for Madras, and got on board the train at Howrah. But ah, at the very start I had to encounter an unpleasant difficulty. The berth reserved for me was occupied by men with khaki uniforms—seated with confidence that they were 'immovable'. The attention of the railway people was drawn to this, and I was given to understand that they would get down at the next station.

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My first halting station was Waltair. I expected that somebody would come to receive me at the station. But when I reached Waltair after about twenty-four hours' journey, I found there was none to welcome me! What a great joy it is to see a friend waiting at the station for you, when you are in a strange place! But when the situation is reverse the disappointment is proportionately much keener. Never mind! Here was an opportunity for adventure, which you could enjoy, if you took it in a right spirit. But my difficulty was, I did not know the full address of my host. So I was in a fix as to what to do. Even when your path is so much covered with mist that you see nothing but darkness in front, if you proceed, you find the track of the path and you can go on. Similar is the case in life. As you go on, some distance just in front becomes clear, though you cannot look far into the future. Hungry, weary, and jaded, I was out for an adventure to find the residence of my host.

As I started, I found no difficulty on my way. I reached my destination quite all right. My friend did not get my letter; hence he could not come to the station. But the warmth and affection with which I was received more than compensated the trouble I had to face, or I had imagined I would have to face.

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Waltair is a health resort. It has very nice scenery—situated on the shore of the Bay of Bengal and with a cluster of hillocks scattered round about. Formerly, it was a university

town. Now the university was removed to a safer zone.

As I went about in the evening, I found a large crowd thronging in a place. 'What is there?'—I asked. 'There is a temple near by, and people have assembled to offer worship', I was told. It sounded strange to me that so many people—and they belonging to a town—should be eager to worship in a temple. Who says religion is decaying, and people have no interest in religion!

When you are in a city or a town—specially in richer quarters—you do not feel what amount of penury there is in the country. At Waltair, as I went a little out of the town, at once the picture of India in its naked reality appeared before my eyes—dilapidated houses, thatched roofs which could hardly protect the rooms inside from the sun or rains, emaciated faces, hungry looks, rickety children, and so on. These pictures I had seen in the Himalayan regions, and they were to be seen even here? What a vast country India is, and what a colossal poverty reigns from one end of it to the other? With so much resources, with so great scope for agricultural and industrial development, with so much man-power, why is India in a state of chronic famine? Who will answer this question? Who is anxious to solve this problem? Because you are too familiar with the scenes of poverty, you do not often feel the depth of degradation you are in. You are accustomed to them! You take them as a matter of course! When you read from blue books the figures that describe the economic condition of India, you cannot fully realize the actual condition. But when you travel from place to place and see the tragic aspect of poverty in India with your own eyes, you feel greatly pained.

A few miles from Waltair is an ancient place of pilgrimage—Simhachalam. It is situated on the summit of a hill. A road with one thousand steps is there to reach the top. As you reach the peak, you feel you are far, far away from the world—beyond the reach of its sordid struggle for material gains. Just the place for spiritual contem-

plation! People from distant places come here to spend a few hours in joy and bliss. A man was asking me, (knowing that I was in the Himalayas), 'Is it a fact that the greater the altitude of the place you live in, the higher the thoughts that spring up in your mind?' I bluntly denied the existence of any causal relation between altitude and the quality of human thought. But what doubt is there that if you are in good surroundings, the level of your thought is higher. So in India, wherever there is good scenery, there is a temple.

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From Waltair to Rajahmundry I travelled with a Government officer, a Hindu religious preacher and some military men—a strange medley. The religious preacher was an aggressive type of person in conversation. He was ever ready to talk and eager to find out a listener. Within a few minutes of my meeting him I learnt how many lectures he had given, on which subjects and at which places. In his enthusiasm to talk he did not know where his limit was. He discussed the utility of cinema in the matter of religious preaching and talked about the characteristics of different cultures. Then the conversation turned on the problem of education. The religious preacher made some feeble attempt to justify the utility of the present system of education in India, but the Government officer was emphatic in his assertion that the system of education in vogue in our country had done nothing but harm to our people—physically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually, and he was quoting profuse facts and figures. A terrible statement and indeed poor compliments to our educationists for the past 150 years! But the crux of the problem is, if the system is so bad, what is the way out? Why not change it? In this respect everyone has got his own pet ideas, and the opinions of no two persons agree. So every system follows its own law of evolution.

One of the military men was a devout Christian and a very broad-minded one.

From education the topic turned to religion. Is the world growing more and more irreligious? What is the effect of war on religion? The military officer gave a new angle of vision. Because military people were every moment face to face with death, some of them at least thought of life in terms of high idealism. The man was sincere, it was a joy to talk with him. I felt sorry that such a nice man was harnessed to the machinery of killing people.

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I reached Rajahmundry in the evening. As I went from the railway station to the place of my lodging, I saw as many as three meetings attended by a pretty large number of eager people, and one of these meetings was specially for ladies and addressed by a woman speaker. I felt curious to know what they were, and learnt that they were weekly religious meetings—on the Gita, the Ramayana, etc. This is the ancient method of religious education handed down to the present times. But they are dying away, or have become rare,—people showing more interest in sports and cinemas. So I was astonished to see three religious meetings within a distance of one furlong. Rajahmundry is an ancient town, and even in these days of modernity has been able to preserve some of its old traditions and culture.

Rajahmundry is situated on the bank of the Godavary—the sacred river which attracts large numbers of pilgrims from far and near. The next morning I visited the river. I was afraid to take a dip in the river like the usual pilgrims because I was not quite well. But I dared not defy the old tradition. So I touched the water, with compunction in my heart that I could not take bath. One might say, 'What is there in the bath in a river supposed to be sacred? Many persons take their daily bath in these rivers, apparently one does not see any change in their life. Then what is the practical utility as far as the inner development is concerned?' A river is considered to be holy because it has got hoary associations. In India, on the

banks of many rivers, saints lived and performed spiritual practices. As you go to those rivers, the memory of their past associations arises in your mind, and you feel elevated. If the memory does not spring up in your mind, and you do not feel a stirring in your hearts, perhaps mere external baths have no value. But what doubt is there that at least some people, at least at some time, feel an uplifting influence at these holy associations? The Ganges, the Indus, the Godavary, the Kavery, bring up a host of associations in the mind of a Hindu from one corner to the other of India. They have become part and parcel of Hindu Culture, as it were. Would you call this a superstition?

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The next place I halted at was a village on the way to Madras. Here I found a residential school where experiment was going on to evolve a better system of education. The boys got up early, had their bath, then prayers and devotional chantings, and lived under the watchful care of the teachers who lived with them. Here there was no caste system of birth or wealth—the rich and the poor, the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins—all lived together in an atmosphere of love and freedom. Every attempt was made to make the boys self-reliant, self-confident, morally and physically strong and bold. I liked this small institution, the more so because in place of the usual denunciation of the present system of education, here was an attempt, however imperfect, to remedy the evil. That was a practical step.

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I arrived at Madras. I was in this city for a period about twenty years back. So many places of importance were known to me. As such they did not excite my interest very keenly, but tangibly did I feel the embrace of their welcome as an old friend. That street, how many times had I not passed by at hot summer noons or cool winter evenings! That part of the town, the buildings, houses, trees—all were, as it were, speaking to me

though in silent words! I felt so glad to be in their midst again, just as a man finds delight in unexpectedly meeting a friend whom there was no chance to see again. But of all places the welcome of the long, sandy beach was warmest to me. My memory was linked up with events of twenty years back when I would pass evening after evening, sitting on the sands alone or in company, looking at the roaring waves, seeing the distant ships losing themselves in the indistinct horizon, or the fishermen braving the sea with their funny little boats. I sat again on the sands. But I was now twenty years older. My thoughts and outlook were now quite different from what they were then. Vainly did I attempt to identify myself with them. They came to my memory—at least some of them, but I found they were no longer mine! They did not stir my heart, they did not create enthusiasm in me, as fervently as they did at that period of my life. Had I grown better or worse?

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I went to see a dispensary, a few miles off from the town, in a rural area. The dispensary had recently been started, and already it had become popular. The organizer had got great imagination in starting this noble work in a village where the need is naturally greater. I spent quite a long time in these quiet and beautiful surroundings. I watched the pale sun setting amongst the trees, beyond the vast stretch of open space. As I went about in the compound, an image under a tree in the distant corner attracted my attention. 'What is there? Why the image of a deity in such a place?' I was told that the ignorant village people would formerly commit nuisance in that place, and no amount of advice and persuasion was of any avail. So this image of Ganapati had been installed there, and now the villagers themselves kept this place clean and also offered incense before the deity every evening. I laughed and laughed at the clever stroke with which an irritating situation had been handled, and it brought home to me a great

lesson also : in India everything can easily be done through the help of religion !

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From Madras I gave a flying visit to Conjeeveram, the famous place of pilgrimage for Vaishnavas. The great *acharya* Ramanuja spent many years of his life here. The place had got many other sacred traditions. As you approached the temple through its long and broad road with the houses of Brahmins, priests, artisans on both sides, you could clearly see how a culture, a civilization grew round an important temple. Apart from their spiritual influence, temples in India had played a great part in building its civilization.

Unfortunately, I could not spend much time at this holy place, because I had to return that very day to Madras. Before I could absorb anything from this ancient place of civilization and culture, hoary with so many sacred traditions, I had to think of the return journey. This is one of the great disadvantages of speedy travel. In the past when there was no motor-car or railway, pilgrims would come on foot from a very, very long distance, all the way thinking of God. That itself was a great preparation for spiritual life. And when they would enter the temple, they would do so with great devotion chastened and intensified by the hardship on the way. Naturally they would reap great spiritual advantage by the pilgrimage. And now ?

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On the way to Bangalore from Madras I halted in a village for two nights. It was a refreshing experience to be in a village, after staying for some time in towns and cities. You can understand the people much better if you visit a village. In urban life everything is artificial and showy, in rural areas no barrier has been created between you and the people, so that you can see and study them with the utmost ease and joy. Unfortunately the curse of modern civilization has entered into many villages even and disturbed its innate peaceful atmosphere. Here in this

village through a road passed military traffic which was a constant reminder to the innocent villagers of what was going on in the outside world. What a great contrast was it between those people and the big leaders of the world who think of national life in terms of Nazism, Fascism, or even Democracy, and deluge the earth with human blood ! In this village there was an Ashrama, with two or three members, kept so neat and clean, symbolizing peace and beauty. As I went about I found a temple under construction—almost complete. ‘What is that ?’ I asked my companion. This temple was over the village deity whom the villagers loved and worshipped. The temple would cost a pretty large sum and the villagers had readily borne the expenses, money being collected through subscriptions. It was a beautiful temple with tastefully designed architecture. I was, at first, surprised to see that a temple like this could be designed and built in a village like this. But soon I could see that the villagers did not at all mind the cost because it satisfied one of their great needs—spiritual hunger.

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Bangalore is a beautiful city with its nice buildings and well-planned gardens, parks, and avenues. Of all the places and institutions I saw at Bangalore, the Indian Institute of Science appealed to me most. It is a big institution with several departments for carrying out researches. War had naturally put in many obstacles and handicaps, but still the work was going on. The Institute of Science is a unique thing in India. The founder, Sir Dorabji Tata, must have a great imagination and vision to start this at a time when there was hardly any scope for research work in India. He is entitled to the gratitude of generations of scientists. As one saw the institution, one asked oneself in sadness, why only this one institution in a vast sub-continent like India ? Could not there be several such institutions ? If India was to compete with the foreign nations, she

needed great development in science and industry.

We had a look round. In some departments we were given an explanation in detail of the nature of the researches that were being carried on. Great must be the joy of the scientist who discovers, one after another, the secrets of nature and expands the frontier of knowledge. There has been much discussion about antagonism between science and religion. It is true that the object and scope of the two are different. But is there not one thing common? Workers in both fields are overwhelmed by the thought of the mysteries of nature—internal or external. A scientist and a religious man—both are seized with a desire of arriving at truths, and start on a lonely journey—sometime defying all established and accustomed beliefs and traditions. And sometime it may be that a scientist, overwhelmed with the mysteries of external nature will turn to the thought of unravelling the deeper mysteries of internal nature and ultimately discover the Truth of which the material world is but a reflection. Thus the one path may lead to the other.

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As I approached Mysore from Bangalore by the evening train, I found on my left side, at a distance, a hill illumined with garlands of fire. I wondered what it was. On my inquiry, a fellow passenger said that it was the famous Chamundi Hill, crested with the temple of 'Chamundi', the Divine Mother and the adored deity of the royal household of Mysore. Those garlands of fire were the rows of electric lights with which the hillock holding the Mother's temple on its peak had been decorated.

Mysore is a city of profuse electric lights, good roads, and fine buildings. Electricity is very cheap here and has therefore played a great part in decorating the city. I heard that on Dusserah and other festive occasions the whole city became ablaze with lights. With its well-planned buildings, parks, gardens, and broad roads, Mysore is one of the most picturesque cities in India. Of

course 'Bangaloreans' will say that their city is as beautiful as Mysore, but I am afraid the verdict of a visitor will go in favour of the latter. As I admired the beauty of the city, my guide and companion said, 'Yes, it is beautiful, but at the expense of the poor tax-payers, and the money has been drained from the whole state to decorate a particular town.' 'Why should you look at everything from a socialistic standpoint?' I replied, 'Is there not a definite place for beauty in our life? If money has been spent on beautifying their capital, the people of Mysore have good reason to be proud of that.' As a matter of fact, it seemed to me that every citizen was co-operating with the scheme and trying his best to make Mysore the most beautiful place in the country.

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I visited the Chamundi Hill, which commands a kaleidoscopic view of the whole of Mysore as also of its neighbourhood, and saw the palace, art gallery, public library, university building, St. Philomela church, and some other places of interest. One evening I went to see the 'Kannambadi dam', about which I had heard so much. More than the dam, which attracts large numbers of visitors, is 'Brindaban', a spot near the dam. It is a beautifully laid out and well-kept garden with many fountains which spout forth water in different shapes which, in turn, are illuminated by gorgeous electric lights in various colours. At night the whole garden looks like a fairy place. One who conceived this plan surely had the imagination of a Mogul emperor combined with modern tastes. As far as human endeavour is concerned, it has become a highly admirable thing. But can anything conceived by human brains and carried out by mortal hands approach the spontaneous beauty of nature? I heard that an American visitor, on seeing this beauty spot, remarked, 'It is beautiful, but a second sunset would have been more welcome'. To her the beauty of a sunset far surpassed any artificial creation of the human mind! Yes, it is true, man cannot compete with his

Maker, but still there will always be the creative effort of a human being. Therein lies his joy and fulfilment of personality.

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In Mysore I met with an old professor, a deep student of Vedanta philosophy and a great lover of Hinduism. He is all admiration for Hindu philosophy. 'If Hindu philosophy is so lofty, why is the Hindu society in such a degraded condition?' I asked him—half seriously, half in fun. He quoted Gita and said that the Hindus had not followed their philosophy into action. According to him the main message of the Gita was action. But people tried to see in it the gospel of

devotion or the philosophy of knowledge, so they did not become vigorous in activity, and a degenerate society was the result.

There have been endless discussions as to whether the ultimate teaching of the Gita is action, or devotion, or knowledge, and no final decision has been arrived at. Perhaps there will always remain enough room for controversy in this vexed question. But there is no doubt about the fact that 'action' must at least be a means to a higher end. And few people have taken care of the means. The result is talk, talk, talk, and a barren philosophy.

(To be continued)

TECHNO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

BY PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

Every techno-economic system is being constantly transformed or revolutionized by doses or degrees. A *qualitative* industrial revolution is the permanent feature of every economy, ancient, medieval, or modern. It is the changes in the methods, processes, or materials of production and transportation that constitute the qualitative revolution in the techno-economic morphology. But not every qualitative revolution is a revolution quantitatively considered. It is only when these changes affect very large percentages of the population in a region that a revolution worth the name may be said to be consummated. It has then become a *quantitative revolution*. In order to be convinced of the phenomenon of an industrial revolution, strictly so called, we should have to be profoundly impressed by high economic indices per capita and per square mile of territory. The changes must be massive in quantity and variety.

So far as the U. K. is concerned, we may conclude the final stages of the first industrial

revolution about 1830-50. The year 1850 is arbitrarily chosen in order to get a convenient date for conspicuous transformations of large masses of English men and women. The revolution may be taken to have started about 1785 or, say, 1750-85. In questions of such dates arbitrariness may hardly be avoided.

1850 may be taken to be the starting point of a new series of transformations. Technocratic inventions and scientific discoveries on the one hand as well as legal, political, and social changes on the other have since then been acquiring a powerful momentum in British towns and villages. Perhaps c 1940 the British economy has arrived at such a stage that compared to 1850 it registers an almost complete and totalitarian revolution. The U. K. 1940 *vis-a-vis* the U. K. 1850 may be taken to represent the same doses, degrees or grades of transformation as the U.K. 1850 *vis-a-vis* the U.K. 1750. The convenient category, 'second industrial revolution' (Industrial Revolution II), is then being

employed while summing up in one word the totality of all changes since the middle of the nineteenth century.

Economic life is continuous. The continuity—although with breaks, deviations, and ups and downs—has to be traced back to the Palaeolithic and still older times. The British economy of the period 1750-1850 is, therefore, still perceptible in the period 1850-1940. The distinctive characteristics of the second industrial revolution have evolved and grown by doses and degrees. The slow, tentative, evolutionary processes in the building up of this revolution can never be lost sight of. It should not be reasonable to dogmatize about a particular invention or patent as the only mark of the revolution or a particular date as the greatest single landmark in the entire scheme. We have to visualize legion of inventions and discoveries—small, medium and large—in the life history of every economic enterprise as well as in the total *Gestalt* of every economy. The techno-economic and socio-political pattern or configuration of Industrial Revolution II may be taken to have been established in its main features on the somewhat general scale by the beginning of the present century, say, c. 1905.

It is only for England that we are fixing 1850 as the date of the total consummation of the first industrial revolution (Industrial Revolution I). For Germany, France, and other countries, other dates may be found. The transformations can be watched, enumerated, and analysed enterprise by enterprise. They belong to the history of inventions and discoveries.

It must be emphasized at the same time that no political situation, howsoever favourable or adverse, can ever eliminate, cut short, or do without the processes or methods of techno-economic change. No economic enterprise—agricultural, industrial or commercial—can possibly skip over the different stages in the transformation in order to proceed from the sphere of the first industrial revolution to that of the second. New regions like Australia, New Zealand, etc., may

start on a clean slate at the latest stage of world economy. But their subsequent developments cannot but repeat the stages manifesting themselves elsewhere.

The only thing that can be somewhat curtailed is the period of time required in the mastery of the processes. Once in a while,—taking an extreme case (e.g. Soviet Russia)—the work of a whole generation may perhaps be accomplished in three to five years provided a very large number of men are enabled to set themselves to work with the support of a huge organization. The processes may be hastened but cannot be dispensed with. To what extent the human material, i.e. the intelligence, morale, inventive faculty, discipline, and personality of men, women, and children can be genuinely transformed in three to five years is, however, an open question. The influence of warfares, political revolutions, freedom, democracy, socialism, communism, and so forth on techno-economic morphology is no doubt considerable. But it cannot be taken to be the sole determinant. A very large part of the industrial transformation or revolution is determined by the condition of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce at the given time as well as by the intellectual, moral, and social personality of the individuals or groups in question.

The Morphology of Industrial Revolution II

In the table of equations Germany was way behind England in 1850. But by 1905 the Anglo-German parity was established. Without attempting to analyse all the enterprises and all the inventions, discoveries, or patents, we may then point out some of the distinctive marks of Industrial Revolution II,—as widely established about 1905 both in England and Germany,—in the form of a table as follows:

I. Agricultural Economy

1. Land-legislation: the 'small holding' or family farm, replacing the large landed estate, *latifundia* or *zemindari*.

2. Fertilizers: the application of bio-chemistry to cultivation.

3. Mechanization (Tractors).

4. Fodder industry and animal husbandry acquiring prominence.

5. Co-operative credit. Land Mortgage Banks.

II. *Manufactural or Industrial Economy*

1. Coal: (a) increased use and improvement of safety devices; (b) mechanization ('rationalization').

2. Hydro-electric developments rendering industry independent of coal.

3. Oil as fuel.

4. Iron and Steel. The Bessemer and Thomas-Gilchrist processes introduce a new epoch in metallurgy. The elimination of phosphorus from iron ores.

5. Textiles: Automatic loom in the cotton industry.

6. Aluminium industry assuming a preponderant position.

7. Chemicals: Artificial products or synthetic substitutes (*Ersatzprodukte*). Indigo and dye-stuffs, rayon (silk), cotton, wool, rubber, petrol, etc. being created in the laboratory. 'Manufacture' of raw materials. 'Plastics.'

8. 'Rationalization.' Super-machinism. Intensive and extensive employment of important tools and machines economizing human labour on a phenomenal scale. The Age of 'Machine-Tools'.

9. *Productionsmittel* (instruments of manufacture), producers' goods, technical appliances, *biens d'investissement* (investment goods), etc. differentiating themselves from consumption-goods and acquiring the upper hand in the industrial economy.

III. *Commercial Economy*

1. Transportation: (a) The railway age in the ascendant; (b) Automobiles introducing the problem of roads versus railways; (c) Aeroplanes; (d) Steam replacing sails in shipping, in its turn being replaced by oil (Diesel motors).

2. Banks: Amalgamation, concentration, fusion, or merger or credit institutions serving to establish capitalistic uniformity and monopoly.

3. Insurance,—life, fire, marine, etc.—growing into a substantial factor of the capital market and the business world.

4. Currency: Note-banks centralized and statalized. Gold standard in its pure gold-exchange and gold-bullion varieties. Exchange Equalization Fund.

5. Business organization: (a) Limited liability principle helping forward the democratization and expansion of capitalism; (b) Cartellization in marketing, supply of raw materials, price-fixing, etc. (c) Trustification.

6. 'Rationalization' ('scientific management') in administration, finance, and other aspects of industry and trade.

7. World economy, 'Interdependence' of the two hemispheres through exports and imports. Emigration and immigration. International capital market.

IV. *Social Economy*

1. Labour protection and welfare legislation through Factory and Mining Acts (control of capitalists and employers).

2. Trade Unions: (a) Armed with legal privileges; (b) Fortified with collective bargaining.

3. Social Insurance (Security) in all its branches: sickness, maternity, accident, old age, invalidity, unemployment.

Redistribution of national income through compulsory state-organized insurance or state-directed charities and doles. Inequalities and iniquities of the wage system somewhat counteracted by such government activities with the support of taxes paid by richer classes. Neo-capitalism. Neo-socialism.

4. Public Health Act. Extirpation and control of diseases.

5. Decrease of death-rate. Diminution of infant mortality. Increase in the expectation of life.

6. Birth-control (international birth strike) being replaced by anti-birth-control (large family) movement. The menace of depopulation replacing the scare of over-population.

7. Increased consumption of wheat and

high-class cereals, meat, milk, fruits, sugar, etc. by poorer and lower classes.

8. Shorter hours, better conditions of work, healthier housing, higher real wages, recreation facilities for the masses.

9. Universal literacy. Vocational guidance. Adult education.

V. Political Economy

1. Etatism, socialization, state control, or socialism in every economic sphere (agricultural, industrial, commercial, and social).

2. Free trade being replaced and/or modified by fair trade, protection, preferential tariff, customs union, currency union, autarkism.

3. Public finance being dominated by progressive direct taxation (income-tax, death duties, super-taxes, excess profit taxes, etc.) and helping forward the redistribution of national income among diverse classes, i.e. the transfer of wealth from the richer to the poorer groups.

4. State regulation of output and prices by Marketing and other Acts.

5. Communism or abolition of private capital and wealth (partial or total) differentiating itself from socialism. (The only example, for the time being, is Soviet Russia.)

6. Socialism differentiating itself from communism and becoming an integral feature of traditional *bourgeois* capitalism. Neo-capitalism.

7. Economic planning in two forms: (a) Communistic; (b) Non-communistic, i.e. socialistic (or *bourgeois* capitalistic).

As regards the origins of these latest features of techno-economic morphology, it is worth while to observe that not all of them are as old as 1850 even for England. Some of them belong to the eighties of the last century. But most of them were well established and diffused among large sections of the English, German, and American peoples by 1905. The pattern of Industrial Revolution I must not be understood to be a simple structure of homogeneous, organic, and simul-

taneously introduced items. Between one invention and another there was, very often, an interval of decades, sometimes of a generation. The economic morphology of Industrial Revolution II today (1940-44) appears to exhibit features such as are mutually dependent and involve or imply one another as a matter of course in an economic ecology. These items—technocratic, financial, and organizational as well as socio-legal—function simultaneously and inevitably alongside of one another. And yet each item, mark, organ, or feature of this economy has been often introduced independently of the others and at diverse intervals. Thousands of new techno-economic patents and medico-surgical inventions are being utilized in daily life during the war of 1939. Their impacts on Industrial Revolution II will serve to transform the economic morphology in a manner incomprehensible to the situation at 1905.

Backward economics like those of India, China, the Balkan Complex, Latin America, etc. have indeed been touched by most of the marks of the second industrial revolution as indicated in the above schedule. And yet Industrial Revolution II cannot be said to be the distinguishing feature of these economics because *per head of population and per square mile of territory* India and her techno-economic peers cannot exhibit high indices of these marks.

There is no predestination or determinism in *arthik unnati* (economic progress). Only, the creative choice of ends and means will always have to orientate itself to the 'duties that lie nearest these'. The moral for backward economics is obvious.

The Role of Inventions and Discoveries

In the dose-by-dose and grade-by-grade evolution of every industrial revolution we have to look for a multiplicity of forces and conditions. But no force is more creative and no circumstances are more compelling than the force of inventions and discoveries and the milieu calculated to promote scientific research and technological investigations. For backwards as for go-aheads one of the

greatest problems today and tomorrow is in most essential particulars the problem of inventions and discoveries.

The socio-economic pattern of an industrial revolution does not give prominence to the mere ability of a people to consume or utilize machineries, tools, and implements, or the actual consumption and utilization of these goods. The chief feature of this pattern consists in the people's capacity for inventing, producing and manufacturing these *Productionsmittel*, *biens d'investissement*, investment goods or producers' goods. The spirituality involved in techno-scientific inventions and discoveries is the greatest single constituent of *l'elan vital* that ushers into existence the second industrial revolution as the first.

With imported inventions and discoveries and under the guidance of foreign inventors and discoverers a backward economy can rise

upto a certain level in industrialism, technocracy, culture, and socio-economic efficiency. But all this remains somewhat unacculturated and partially unassimilated to its own original and primitive conditions. It must be capable of producing and giving training to *Swadeshi*, indigenous or national scientists and technologists in order that it may leave an address in the world of economics, culture, and politics. Industrialism, technocracy, capitalism, or socialism cannot become its own spiritual goods until and unless these are created by its *Swadeshi* intellectuals and researchers, business organizers, and leaders of men. One of the greatest lags between a backward economy and a go-ahead economy during the epoch of Industrial Revolution II as that of Industrial Revolution I, is the lag relating to the quality, quantity, and variety of inventors and discoverers.

IDEALS AND METHODS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

BY SWAMI LOKESWARANANDA

I

In any plan of national reconstruction education must occupy the first place. For, more than anything else, it is education that can solve a nation's problems. Lenin knew this very well. So one of the first things he did after capturing power in Russia was to reorganize education. Stalin also is fully sensible of the vital part that education plays in a nation's life. He is ever watchful that the right kind of education is imparted in Soviet schools and colleges and that it never languishes for want of support and encouragement. Indeed nothing is so potent a factor in moulding a nation—its aims and aspirations, its outlook, its beliefs, its methods—as education. Today the mad fanaticism of the youthful Nazis is causing a headache to the allied leaders. And what is it that has bred this fanaticism in them? It is their peculiar brand of education.

In Russia the revolution has been successful, chiefly because through education people have been taught the socialist ideal and have been convinced that the order based on it is the best. If the leaders had neglected giving proper education to the people, it is doubtful if the revolution would have succeeded.

Again in Russia most costly experiments have been carried out since the revolution involving tremendous suffering and hardship to the people. But the people have not protested. They have patiently borne everything and, what is more, given most willing co-operation to ensure that the experiments may succeed. Their high sense of duty and loyalty to the state is indeed remarkable. But this, too, is the product of their education.

Every one knows that the Russian nation is composed of heterogeneous elements. There are different races with different backgrounds of culture and religion. In some cases even

languages are different. Ordinarily unity among such diverse elements is considered impossible. But in Soviet Russia unity has been accomplished. All the different elements have been so closely knit together that to the outside world they present the appearance of one solid unit. They are one in purpose, one in outlook, one in life's joys and sorrows. Nothing seems to be able to break their solidarity. Even the great impact of the present war has not been able to break it. They are fighting like one man, united in their common resolve to defeat the common enemy. There is no traitor, no Quisling among them. This is remarkable even for a country where such diversity does not exist. But what is the secret of this solidarity? Whatever else there may be, undoubtedly education is one of the main factors that have helped to forge this unity. It is education that has taught them to forget their narrow sectional interests and to keep in the forefront the larger interests of the country.

Few countries today can boast of such an alert, enlightened and disciplined people as Soviet Russia. Behind all her breath-taking successes in this war lies the voluntary contribution, in sacrifice and effort, of her men and women. The power behind the blow which halted the Nazi forces in their sweeping onrush and then, made them fall back, stunned and reeling, was the power that came from the simple common folks of Russia. Today the whole civilized world stands amazed at their performance. But, as is well known, they have not been like this always. Only thirty years ago they were weak, hungry, ignorant and helpless. They were in as wretched a condition as the Indians are today. But what is it that has brought about this change? Largely, education. Swami Vivekananda used to speak of man-making education. The Russians have had that kind of education. Through education they have been taught to feel that they are *men*. Through education they have been taught to respect themselves. Education has made them conscious of the dignity

of life, conscious of their strength, their rights, their duties. And by education they have acquired faith in themselves and in their destinies.

It is clear India, too, being akin to Russia in many respects, needs some such education: an education that will inspire her people, give them courage and strength, hope and joy, faith in themselves, and a readiness to face life with its many trials. And it is clear, too, that it is only national education, *i.e.*, education based on national ideals that can do that. At the moment so many plans are being advocated for her regeneration. Some concern her industries, some her agriculture, some her social life. There are plans concerning her education, too. There is the famous Wardha scheme, for instance. There is the Sargent scheme, also. None of these plans is perhaps completely satisfying. But each represents a new outlook, a new approach; each has many commendable features and marks a definite advance. So far no plan has been finally accepted. Discussions are still going on on the subject. The moment is, therefore, appropriate for a consideration of what may be regarded as the ideals of national education in India. It is good to be reminded of them again and again, lest in a hurry, in the confusion which controversies often create, we lose sight of those ideals and accept a wrong plan. More than a hundred years ago Macaulay devised a plan for the education of Indian youths. It was a plan far removed from the Indian ideals of education. It was a plan conceived in racial arrogance and in complete ignorance of Indian history. It is surprising that the plan was accepted at all. It is still more surprising that the plan has been allowed to continue for all these generations. The consequences that have followed from this have been, generally speaking, most pernicious. It has hindered the country's progress rather than help it. It has created new problems, new difficulties and has not solved the old ones. It has produced a new aristocracy of the educated and has widened the gulf between them and the uneducated

more than ever. The blunder was that the plan was not thoroughly examined before it was accepted. There was too much hurry, too much confusion. That it fell far short of the essential requirement, that it was divorced from the national ideals was not grasped. Such a blunder must not be committed again. No plan shall be accepted which is not in keeping with the national ideals, which is not informed with the best in the national traditions.

What are India's national ideals? From time immemorial India's national ideals have been not political or commercial but spiritual. It is in spirituality that her genius has excelled most. To her the highest thing has been, and is even now, the attainment of spiritual excellence. To realize God—that is the ambition of every one of her children. Life to them is not for grabbing sense-pleasures. It is for realizing God. And everyone must strive to that end. True, the ideal is very high and not many are able to live up to it. Still it is there. There can be no compromise about it. The ideal must not be lowered. Even for the weak, for the most despicable, that is the ideal. It is for all. And the surprising fact is no one disowns it. No one says he is not going to attain the ideal. Of course he will take time but ultimately he must attain it. He is not going to stop short of the final goal.

This is the fundamental ideal before India. For good or ill, it is there. It has been her cherished ideal for centuries. She lives for it and for it alone. It is the only thing that matters to her. She has suffered incredibly during the past ages. She has been plundered and robbed. She has been reviled and ridiculed. But through all the vicissitudes of life she has stuck to the ideal. She has not given it up because she cannot. It is her life-blood. To give it up will be fatal to her. It will be fatal to the rest of the world, too. Was it a mistake for her to choose such an ideal? Maybe, it was. But it is too late now to give it up. It must remain the central thing in her life and all her life must be ordered and governed by it. There is no

help for it. But was it a mistake for her to choose this ideal? There are people who will say, 'yes.' They think too much stress on spirituality has been India's undoing. For, according to them, it encourages men to run away from life, to neglect all its duties and to look upon all mundane affairs of life with contempt. But the ideal, if correctly understood, does not do anything of the kind. It never encourages men to run away from life, for, according to it, life is an opportunity which must be properly utilized for spiritual progress and its duties are the means by which that progress can be attained. To Indians, therefore, the importance of life and its duties is all the greater. There can be no question of neglecting or despising them. In India, in fact, there is nothing one can neglect or despise. One can only transcend. There is, therefore, nothing wrong with the ideal. The wrong is with the Indians themselves, for they have not lived up to it. Let them begin a vigorous practice of the ideal. Then, the apathy which has seized the nation and is responsible for all its miseries, will go and there will be, then, a happier, a rejuvenated India.

It may be asked: Is not this ideal of God-realization irrelevant in this age? The world is not as it used to be once. It has changed very much during the past one century. And it is daily changing. Now man has different needs, different aspirations. God-realization is an ideal of inaction, of idle dreams, of vain pursuits. This cannot suit him any longer. He believes in action now. And he wants realities—things he can possess and make use of. He cannot be content with dreams only. What use has he, therefore, for this sort of ideal? Is not the ideal altogether out of place in this age?

No, not at all. It is still relevant, still valid. It is more so now than ever before. It may be the world has changed. It may be, too, man has progressed in certain directions. But fundamentally he remains the same. The real art of life he has not yet learnt. And he is as unhappy as ever. His power, his knowledge, his material possessions

—all these have become a mockery to him. He does not know their right use. And they are often causes of terrific carnages which he cannot stop. He is indeed a very pathetic figure. The fact is spiritually he has not progressed at all. He remains the same brute swayed by passions as centuries ago. To rectify this he must make his spiritual progress square with his material progress. Herein comes the necessity for the ideal of God-realization. For it is only by increasing devotion to this ideal that man can evolve into a finer and nobler spiritual being. There can be, therefore, no question but that the ideal is relevant.

II

From the earliest times India has recognized two kinds of knowledge: *para* and *apara* (spiritual and secular). The former leads to God, to liberation; the latter to earthly enjoyments, to bondage. Obviously one is higher than the other. All are enjoined to pursue spiritual knowledge, if possible. The qualifying clause—if possible—is to be noted. It is not intended that all must pursue spiritual knowledge, for that is not possible. It is recognized that the vast majority hanker after earthly enjoyments and they must have them. So arrangements are made that they may have secular knowledge. In India the most pleasing fact is that there is no attempt to force all to follow one common track. Instead each man is allowed to have his way according to his inclinations. In fact he is specifically told to follow his inclinations. It is his dharma and he must not go against it. So most men and women receive secular knowledge. But they are told that sooner or later they must overcome their hankering after earthly enjoyments and seek God. For that is the ultimate ideal and they must not lose sight of it. Again and again they are reminded that earthly enjoyments give no real happiness, no peace. Only God-realization can do that. So even in the matter of secular knowledge the ideal is kept in the forefront. The idea underlying education—in fact, every type of activity—is

to lead man step by step towards God-realization.

But how can secular knowledge be any help towards God-realization? The answer is, by proper application. In India the highest use that can be made of anything, material or spiritual, is to employ it in the service of fellow-beings. But service implies renunciation also. So in India whatever man does, his object should be: service and renunciation. Here life has been from the beginning not competitive but co-operative. Each individual has deemed it his duty to serve his community and to sacrifice for its sake. Here the king rules not for his own selfish ends but for the good of his subjects. He must use his power, his wealth, his everything in their service. He must not consider these his property. They are the property of his subjects and he is merely a trustee. Similarly the subjects also should obey the king and respect and support him. Thus between one man and another, between one social group and another the relation is one of service and renunciation. The relation is not enforced by law or by the power of guns. It is not enforced at all. It is voluntarily entered into by all, for through such relationship only they are nearer their goal—the goal of God-realization.

In secular knowledge also the object is: service and renunciation. You learn history, science, literature or whatever else it may be, so that you may be able to serve better, renounce more. If you do not employ your knowledge for the good of your community but for your selfish gains only, then, you are not doing your duty and you are moving away from God. But if you use your knowledge in the service of others and do so selflessly, then you are going nearer towards God.

But the most important thing to know is what is education. The Indian view of it is that it is a training, a discipline: a training which helps to unfold the full man, that brings out 'the perfection that is already in man.' It is, therefore, a training of the whole personality of man—his body, mind and soul.

According to this view nothing is got from outside. Everything is inside and it has got to be brought out. Its contrast with the present-day meaning of education is obvious. Today education largely means book-learning. It means merely stuffing the mind with some third-rate information. It is a jumble of pickings from all manner of desirable and undesirable sources. There is no assimilation. There is no real change in the character. Almost no part of the human personality is affected by it except the intellect. Today a so-called educated man may be found to be a knave, a man without any morals. What can be a greater condemnation of present-day education than this? This just shows that it fails to do even what is regarded as the primary function of education, e.g. character-building. We have now more education than ever before. Our depth as well as extent of knowledge is far greater than at any time in the past. Nevertheless we have more dishonest men among us now than before. And if statistics are taken, it may turn out that their number is larger among the educated than among the uneducated. It is all because education is lop-sided. Today it is considered enough education if a man has learnt a few things. To know a little bit of everything—that seems the hallmark of education. But mere knowledge is nothing. It must be backed by character. Too much stress on the intellect is a mistake. Of course it is an important part of man. It must be nourished, must be strengthened. In the process of man's education surely it plays a vital part. But it is not the whole of man. There are other parts equally important. They must have attention, too. Their neglect has resulted in the paradox of education without character.

In India, however, education has always meant character-building. Scholarship by itself has little value to the Indian mind. Its value comes if only it helps to transform character. Character—that is the first and last thing in Indian education. If education does not evolve a sound and healthy

character, then it is no education. Because such a high premium is set on character in India, in the past the rule was that only men of exemplary character should be teachers. For it is through the influence of high characters that character is best formed. Today, however, any one who has obtained a few university degrees is qualified to teach. His character hardly counts. At the most it is a secondary matter. But in ancient India it was insisted that the teacher must be a man of God-realization or at least near about that. The rule that 'example is better than precept' was first practised in India. For most of the teaching in ancient India was done through the personal example of the teacher. His life, his habits—all these moulded the character of the student. The student was constantly with the teacher and his influence was the most decisive factor in shaping him. He learned mostly through living contact with the teacher and not through the mechanical reading of books as at present. Now there is hardly any contact between the teacher and the taught. And the little contact that there is is often marred by lack of sympathy, love and understanding on each side. Previously the teacher was like father to the student. He would not only look after the intellectual and spiritual needs of the student. He would also feed and clothe him. The student, in his turn, would render personal service to the teacher and love and respect him as a son. The relations between them were absolutely cordial. And they would last till to the end of their lives. Education can produce character where there are such teachers and their relations with their students are such.

As has already been said, India does not regard book-learning as education. She knows its limitations too well. Of course she does not despise it. Surely it has its use. For instance, it brings the mind in contact with new thoughts, new ideas. And these thoughts and ideas suggest new lines of development for the character. But they do not avail unless the will is properly trained. The head may be seething with ideas. What

good is it if there is no strength of will to translate them into practice? The will must play its part if the ideas are to become action, if they are to be assimilated to the character. So it is important to train the will. And in India it is considered the function of education to do that.

In ancient India great stress was laid on concentration of the mind, for by concentration the faculties of the mind are strengthened. And learning becomes easier when that happens. Like concentration several other practices were enjoined. The idea in each case was to discipline the body and the mind so that they could be used as helpful instruments. India believes there are infinite powers latent in man. These powers have to be awakened and made use of. And it is the business of education to help in their awakening. But education as it is now does quite the contrary. It definitely thwarts the awakening of a child's latent powers. This is because the system is such that the child is forced to depend upon its teachers and books and to keep its own powers in abeyance. The idea seems to be that the child's education is impossible without their help. But this was not the view in ancient India. Teachers and books were never considered the primary thing. The primary thing was the child and its powers. So from the beginning care was taken that the child had plenty of opportunity to use its powers. This made education not only easy but also pleasant to it. And this gave the child also self-confidence which is the first thing necessary in education as in life itself. The child never felt curbed and thwarted as it does now at every step. Now there are such fine hooks and such good teachers. There are such novel appliances also to facilitate education. Nevertheless the child learns mighty little. And how it hates to learn! Never did a child feel so bored and tired in learning as it does now. The reason is emphasis is put on the wrong thing. There is too much attention given to books and appliances whereas the child is almost ignored. This must be stopped. It is the

child that should have most of the attention. And that should be done not by checking it but giving it freedom and opportunity. It should be realized that the ideal condition is that in which the child educates itself, is its own teacher. That is what should be always aimed at. And that becomes possible where there is not too much interference with the child and it is left free to use its own powers.

Nowadays there is too much regimentation in education. A child has hardly any choice as to what it should learn or it should not. It is slave to a system which is unreasonable and cruel. It forces the child to learn things it hates to learn and does not allow it to learn what it longs to learn. But this is something foreign to the Indian idea of education. According to it, each individual should be given the option of his own subjects and allowed to concentrate on them. It does not believe in curbing his particular bent of mind. Instead it believes in encouraging it, giving it full play.

According to the Indian view true education must produce *shraddha*, faith in oneself—faith which would know no shaking despite a thousand failures. Such faith can do miracles. It can make a man do almost the impossible. At the root of all great achievements of man lies this faith. Backed by it man can show death-defying courage, superhuman endurance and an indomitable will. England has furnished an example of such faith in this war. Battered by enemy bombs night after night, suffering defeats in every theatre of war; subjected to incredible hardships for lack of amenities of life; distrusted and forsaken by friends and allies, she has stood alone facing the enemy, bold and determined, ready for further reverses of fortune but ready to strike back as well. Even in her darkest hour she did not lose faith in herself, did not doubt that she was going to win.

It is such faith that it should be the concern of education to produce. Judged by this standard present-day education in India must be considered a failure. Far from producing such faith it rather kills it, if there is any.

Scores of thousands of youths come out of schools and colleges every year with so-called education. And what are they like? They are the poorest specimens of humanity. They are weak both physically and mentally; they are full of pompous ideas borrowed at third-hand, which they do not understand and much less practise; they learn to talk glibly, for to them that is the byword of scholarship and intelligence; they are heroic in their declarations but are nowhere to be seen when action is called for; they are loud in their declamations against old values and old traditions but are the first to cling to them when the time comes for them to choose new ones. They do not dare to look life in the face. Appalled by its difficulties they run away from it and taking shelter under all kinds of high-sounding 'isms' try to conceal their ignominious retreat.

The fact is present-day education, in its methods as well as contents is too negative. It increases one's doubts and disbeliefs instead of helping to overcome them. Faith is possible when one is convinced of an ultimate which is permanent and unchangeable. And God is the only such ultimate. But now education is Godless, even anti-God. The result is man does not know what to hold on to. At various stages of his education he learns many new ideas and arguments. But man cannot be content with mere arguments and ideas. He wants a conviction. And conviction means a sense of reality, a grasp of the real. God who is the only reality being expelled from present-day education it cannot give this grasp of the real. The remedy is that God should be restored. Each student should be made conscious that there is a reality at the back of every phenomenon in this world and that reality is God Himself. Then only education will produce faith.

Another thing should be done: its methods should be improved. There is at present too much importance attached to text-books and examinations. The student dreads them like a nightmare. And in coping with them he makes himself a physical wreck and a moral coward. By all means this should be

stopped. The tyranny of text-books and examinations must end.

One other thing education should produce according to the Indian meaning of it: that is respect for man and everything concerning him. It will be seen how imperative this respect is for building up peace on sound lines. War and other anti-social activities will cease when there is this respect in every heart. In ancient India pupils were taught that man is essentially divine. This was not meant to be a matter for the mind to dwell upon in idle philosophical moments. This was a matter to be practised by everybody, every social group and in everyday life. But times have changed. Today the idea has become obscure and few believe in it and fewer still practise it. This is not a little responsible for all the conflicts and clashes that have crowded into the national life today.

It may be asked: Can all these ideals of education be practised today? In ancient India they were all right. But now conditions are different. For good or ill, the impact of the West has changed life altogether. Now life is much more complex than ever before. There are new problems, new duties, new demands. Can these be met by the old ideals and old methods of education? Does not the changed environment of the country require new ideals and new methods? Will it not be folly to cling to the old ones merely for the sake of sentiments? Moreover, there are many new ideas of education in the West. They have been tried and found very good. Why not adopt a few of them, too?

These are pertinent questions. But it is not true that the old ideals and methods have become useless. They all still hold good. However much the country may have changed, they still can be and must be applied. Of course it is conceivable that they will require readjustment here and there to be more suitable to modern needs. Perhaps in some cases the centre of emphasis will have to be shifted. In others, perhaps, some details will have to be rejected. But that

is all. Fundamentally they remain as good as ever. Further, they are a sort of corollary to the ideals to which the nation stands committed. So they cannot be changed. Also their soundness still remains unchallenged. As man's knowledge of psychology is progressing, many new theories and new methods of education are taking shape. Surprisingly enough, many of them bear a close resemblance to these old theories and methods of India. It is possible that with further knowledge of psychology and with more experience, more and more evidence will be available of the soundness of the Indian theories and methods.

But this is not to say that India has nothing to learn from the West or must not learn even if such learning is to her advantage. Whatever else may be her fault India is not conservative. So she shall

gladly adopt and assimilate whatever good there is in the West. Only she must be sure that it is not repugnant to the ideals for which she stands. At the moment the great need for her is to learn Western technology. By this her efficiency will increase—efficiency in production, in transport in everything. A synthesis of Western efficiency and Indian idealism—that is the ideal education for her or for any other country. One gives her prosperity, the other peace. Both are necessary and both must be obtained. Nowadays the tendency seems to be to overemphasize the second. True, India needs nothing so much now as relief from her poverty. But in the struggle to gain it let her not forget that peace is a higher thing and is indispensable. And to ensure that, she must stick to her national ideals and to her educational ideals, too.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In this number the *Conversations with Swami Shivananda* are continued, and, as usual, will deeply interest many readers.... *Vedanta and Communism* exposes the weaknesses of Communism and shows the way to avoid them.... *Asia and Europe* is the second part of the highly illuminating article which the learned writer contributed to the Golden Jubilee Number of *Prabuddha Bharata* published in June.... *From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin* records the impressions of travel left on 'A Wanderer'; we are confident our readers will find much in the account that is not only interesting but instructive, for the 'Wanderer' hides beneath his anonymity a wealth of learning, worldly wisdom, and sympathy with the ideals of Indian life, born of deep spiritual insight.... Dr. Sarkar's articles are always original, informative, and interesting. *Techno-Economic Transformations* is no exception.... Swami Lokeshwarananda discusses the trends that should

operate in Education in *Ideals and Methods of National Education*.

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE

Man has always felt an innate urge for understanding the deeper problems of life. The 'practical man' continues his search for unmixed happiness in this material world, and is seldom discouraged by his repeated failures. But to accept the world as it is, as most practical men would advise us to do, would mean undergoing a lot of misery too. This is inevitable, for evil is as tangible an experience in life as good. Religion asks us to give up this life of duality—the good has to be given up along with the evil as they are not independent of each other. But the spread of scientific knowledge has aroused in man the unfounded apprehension that the remedy suggested by religion is negative and other-worldly. That religion is not a spent force but a positive faith essential to life and existence was stressed by Sir S. Radhakrishnan in a lecture delivered at Colombo some time ago. He said :

So long as there was a dream of another world, so long as there was the dream of a higher life which was the gift of nature to man, so long as that yearning for that realization was there, it was impossible for them to abolish religion altogether in this world. Neopaganism would never satisfy the impulse of man. Questions of what were to hope for and live for formed the make-up of the human mind, and it was impossible for them to stifle that metaphysical curiosity. Questions of their relations with their neighbours, their mutual influence on one another, were aspects of life which they could not get rid of. The provision of material comfort alone did not accomplish victory over evil. The mere question of humanism might help them to get on well for some time, but would not last for long.

The preoccupations of modern life leave little scope for introspection or cultivation of religious faith. It is the fashion for educated persons to talk disparagingly of religion. Intellectuals flatter themselves on being able to overcome the risk of succumbing to 'idleness, idolatry, and superstition' which only, to them, constitute religion. Religious dogmatism and fanaticism are largely responsible for this deplorable state of affairs. Sir Radhakrishnan said it was unfortunate that theologians and religious leaders were not able to impress on the modern mind the importance of real religion, but, instead, they cared for the immediate material interests. He deplored:

that today God was being used merely to justify whatever suited their convenience. They built empires and thanked God for them. That was how people were attempting to employ religion. The world today would be a better place to live in, perhaps, if they did not talk about religion too much, but lived it.

The vitality of a religion lies in the practice and realization of its ideals by its adherents. Spiritual experiences can be subjected to test by the scientific method. Vedanta offers the rational basis for a universal religion. But the moderner sneers at the ideas of 'God' and 'soul'. As Aldous Huxley remarks, current education, while discouraging any preoccupation with spirituality and mysticism, makes men and women enthusiastic devotees of some form of political or social idealism. This 'belief in, and worship of, human creation as though it were God,' is surprisingly common among persons who call themselves rational. And they fall an easy prey to the vagaries of their own passions and prejudices. As Sir Radhakrishnan

rightly pointed out, unless men realize God and through Him reach the unity and universality of the soul, the lower instincts and tendencies of man will continue to jeopardize the harmony of human relationships. In this connection he observed:

Men would never be satisfied with the satisfaction of material needs. Cases of suicide came more from the rich than the poor. Then what was the solution? Would it be possible to realize a life of uprightness and honesty because they commanded the conveniences of life? Would not jealousy continue to pollute the human relationship? Those were problems which could not be solved by mere scientific enlightenment or social control. Their solution transcended both these stages of development. The answer had been given by one of the great thinkers of the world who, according to the *upanishads*, told them that the answer to those questions lay in the acquisition of wisdom, which, in the words of the Buddha was 'enlightenment', in the words of Jesus 'truth' which 'shall make you free'. They reached that stage in meditation, when, away from intellectual pursuits, away from the operations of the body and mind, they touched the apex of their soul, that supreme kind of awareness when they got glimpses into eternity. (*Ceylon Daily News*)

FREEDOM ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATION

The essential need of freedom, political and economic, for the success of any national scheme of education was emphasized by Dr. Radha Binod Pal in his illuminating address to the annual convocation of the Calcutta University.

Exhorting the graduates to prove themselves worthy of the education they have received by contributing their best towards the attainment of freedom, he observed:

No task is more sacred than to be able to help the motherland to come into her own, and I myself and your country expect that your education will make you pre-eminently fit for this task from which you will never flinch, however heavy the pressure of odds.... Your education will fail of its chief object if it has failed to train your intellect, emotion, and will to healthy and harmonious action.

It is common knowledge that the educated youth of today has a tendency to fall a victim to cheap imitation of alien political and economic shibboleths. We are glad to find that Dr. Pal has drawn the pointed attention of our educated boys and girls to 'the common frailty of being carried away by mouth-filling slogans of the moment'.

I hope the light that radiates from your Alma Mater will help you to discriminate the genuine from the spurious, that the education you have received at her

hand will instil into you an adequate knowledge of the forces which shape the destiny of your nation and will prevent you from being an easy prey, in crisis, of any loudly proclaimed nostrum, quick to fall upon any one individual or group, to whom you may be persuaded to attribute all your ills.

Referring to educational reorganization in our country, the learned Doctor said that 'equality of human worth demands equality of educational opportunity to develop potentialities'. He was of the opinion that the new spirit in education must ensure 'genuine equality', which, in other words, meant security of the child against economic pressure, ill health, malnutrition, emotional disturbance, and aggression. At the same time he deprecated any blind imitation or uncritical appreciation of the foreign system of education obtaining in our country.

Every educational system being a reflector of the society for which it is devised and the existence of differences between English society and Indian being an acknowledged fact, no educational system for India should be blindly imitative of what is deemed suitable for England. At the same time, the worth of India's

children to India is no less than that of the children of any other nation in the world to that nation.

These bold words, coming from the vice-chancellor of a leading university, hit the right nail on the head. He was equally critical of the snobbery and false vanity of the present-day educated youth who, on leaving the university, finds little in common between himself and the masses.

It is a notorious fact that the educational system of today has everywhere worked as a most efficient safeguard of social stratification. The demand has, therefore, gone forth that steps should be taken to see that post-war education does not play this ugly role. This demand is of special value here, in India, and the rarest courage will be needed even to raise it. Its fulfilment will not be cheaply secured here, and I would like to see that we do not fail in courage and persistence till we secure its fulfilment. (*Hindusthan Standard*)

The efforts of Indian educationists to better adapt the educational system to the needs of the country will meet with greater success if and when India is able to free herself from foreign political and economic servitude. Dr. Pal hopes that happy day is not far off.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

STUDIES IN SRI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY.
By S. K. MAITRA. Published by Benares Hindu University, Benares. Pp. 160. Price Rs. 3.

Dr. Maitra, Head of the Department of Philosophy of the Benares Hindu University, is a great student of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. In these essays he has probed deeper into the philosophy of the Pondichery saint.

'Sri Aurobindo and Bergson' is a penetrating study of the philosophy of the two thinkers. Dr. Maitra is of the opinion that Sri Aurobindo has made a greater contribution to philosophy than Bergson. Not only that, 'thanks to Sri Aurobindo, the leadership in philosophy which India had enjoyed in the past, and which she lost for some centuries, has come back to her.'

In the second essay, the learned professor has dealt exhaustively with the problem of the religion of the future. He discusses what he means by the religion of humanity, and makes this distinction clear by some pertinent remarks about the Ramakrishna Movement. He points out with penetrating insight that 'It would be a gross mistake to call the gospel of the service of man which was preached by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, a religion of humanity.

It is something far higher than this, for, the service of man, as preached by these great saints, is only a deduction from the more general principle of the immanence of God in the universe. It is because every human being (given by them the significant appellation *Naranarayana*) is, according to them, a visible manifestation of God, that service of man becomes synonymous for them with service of God. The whole fabric of the religion of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda rests upon an intense faith in the realization of God, and is as far removed from the religion of humanity as anything possibly could be.'

The author next discusses, in the same essay, what he calls the religion of mysticism or of individual realization as well as Tagore's 'Religion of Man'. Finally, he is of the opinion that the 'Religion of the Superman', as adumbrated by Sri Aurobindo, has a great future before it, nay, the future is only for it. The writer, in this essay 'Sri Aurobindo, the Superman', analyses Sri Aurobindo's conception of the 'Superman' and says much that will be difficult for the ordinary reader to grasp. Equally difficult, yet interesting, are the theories of cosmic evolution or ascent, the return of the spirit, as well as cosmic involution or

descent, 'the self-projection of the Spirit'. These theories predict that we are in the throes of another evolutionary leap due to the emergence of the 'Supermind'. '... for the Superman is the Being into whom the Supermind has descended, the Gnostic Being with the supramental consciousness. The descent of the Supermind, however, does not cause the emergence of an individual Superman, but a race of Supermen. And along with the emergence of a race of Supermen there is produced also a radical change in the whole nature of the universe, physical, vital, psychical, mental. In fact, the Superman cannot appear until matter, life, soul, and mind undergo a radical transformation.' In the *Yogasikha Upanishad* we get an idea of the Yogi changing his body into a divine body, and he is said to become master of his senses, mind, intellect, and *ahamkara* and enjoys the freedom to move about at will 'in all the three worlds.' (Vide *shlokas* 35 to 47). Sri Aurobindo, it would seem, envisages a cosmic evolutionary change, making possible the emergence of such Yogis, taking place sooner or later. '(The Superman) does not come merely as an individual but as a member of a higher race of beings.' Also 'each Superman would be different from the others, a unique formation of the Being, although one with all the rest in foundation of self and sense of oneness, and in the principle of his being.'

The difficulty with regard to all theories about God, the soul, and allied spiritual topics is that none of these are demonstrable by the ordinary processes of reason, and one has to take many things on a hypothetical basis until they are verified by personal experience. Swami Vivekananda says: 'There are much higher states of existence beyond reasoning. It is really beyond the intellect that the first state of religious life is to be found. When you step beyond thought and intellect and all reasoning, then you have made the first step towards God; and that is the beginning of life. What is ordinarily called life is but an embryo state.' (*Raja Yoga*). Sri Aurobindo also is a great believer in intuition and recognizes various grades in it. Dr. Maitra elucidates these points in 'Sri Aurobindo's Conception of Intuition'. He says, '... Sri Aurobindo, true to the traditions of our ancient systems of philosophy, has analysed intuition and classified the different kinds of it better than what most of the Western philosophers have done.'

In the same essay Dr. Maitra has tried ably to defend Sri Aurobindo's criticism of Shankara's Conception of *Maya*. Dr. Maitra says, 'It is true that he (Sri Aurobindo) has pointed out certain defects in Shankara's philosophy, the chief of which is, as he puts it, the refusal of the ascetic. But he has done so not for the

purpose of rejecting Advaita philosophy, but for the purpose of reconstructing it on lives.' Sri Aurobindo's standpoint is that of the *tantra* philosophy and it should be noted that Shankara in his *Brahma Sutra Bhashya* admits that he has no quarrel with the view that all is चित् or consciousness. Logically speaking, we are all aware of the antithesis between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, सत् and जड. Shankara's dialectical philosophy was based upon this natural contrast with which we are all familiar. As Sri Ramakrishna said, from the *jnani's* point of view the phenomenal world has no reality, but for the *bhakta* everything is real. But Shankara was not merely a dialectician, a mere *jnani*, he was also a great *bhakta*, and he recognized Brahman as equally true in its immanent aspect. We are constrained to remark that it would have been worthier of Sri Aurobindo if his criticism of the *Maya* theory had taken account of these facts, and if it had been couched in happier and less offensive language.

The essay on 'Sri Aurobindo and the Problem of Evil' shows Dr. Maitra at his best. He has thoroughly exposed the weaknesses of Western philosophers in this respect, and the almost stupid inconsistencies into which they are landed by their pointing of Satan, the All-Evil, as against God, the All-Good. It seems to us that it is the intellectual pride of Western scholars that stands in the way of their appreciating the Hindu solution of the problem of evil, and for pride there is no cure except what comes from repeated falls. We wish that Dr. Maitra instead of trying to placate the pride of Westerners had fearlessly stood his ground, as he himself says on p. 83. 'If history has taught us anything it is this, that if you want to win the respect of the world you must proclaim your views fearlessly.' For was it necessary or accurate to say that 'our own ancient view suffers from the defect that it does not take evil seriously'? What can be a more emphatic expression of the seriousness of evil and the necessity of overcoming it than what is contained in the *Gita* verse, 'for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of *dharma*, I come into being in every age'? *The ancient view never was that evil is unreal in the sense that it does not at all exist.* Only from the *jnani's* point of view can we say that evil is unreal, for the *jnani* recognizes only the नित्य, and not the लीला. But the *vijnani*, the *bhakta*, recognizes both the नित्य and the लीला. Evil is unreal only when you have risen above it into the region of Brahman; it is real enough at all other times; and the aim of all human endeavour is to go beyond all evil which leads to misery, for as Patanjali says, सर्वमेव दुःखं विवेकिनः ।

On the whole, these essays have eminently served

the purpose the author had in mind, and would certainly rouse in the mind of the readers a desire to learn Sri Aurobindo's philosophy at first hand by a perusal of his books.

A CORRECTION

The number of pages of *I cannot die*, reviewed in the August issue, is 52.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA,
ALLAHABAD

REPORT FOR 1941-44

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthiganj, Allahabad, for the years 1941-44 has reached us. The efforts of the Sevashrama are mainly directed towards serving the body, mind, and soul. Accordingly it conducts a charitable outdoor dispensary, has opened a library and reading-room, and holds religious classes and discourses.

The outdoor dispensary treated the following numbers of new and repeated cases as noted against the corresponding year in each case:

Year	New	Repeated
1941	5,867	29,713
1942	6,102	24,406
1943	7,190	29,659
1944	7,211	27,454

During the Kumbha Mela in 1942, the Mission Sevashrama opened a temporary charitable dispensary for serving the pilgrims, and treated 1,332 cases.

The library and reading-room containing valuable books and various periodicals fulfilled a great need of the locality. The average daily attendance was between 18 and 22.

Religious classes were held regularly. Lectures were organized on special occasions, such as Hindu festivals, Christmas Day, and Buddha Day. In addition to these, the birth anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and some others were duly observed each year.

The monk-in-charge makes an appeal to the generous public for a donation of Rs. 20,000/- needed to repair the dispensary building, improve the sanitary arrangements of the Sevashrama, and expand the library and reading-room.

VEDANTA SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO

We have received the programme of work of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, for the month of May 1945. Of the bi-weekly lectures delivered during the month by the Swami-in-charge, mention may be made of the following: 'The Philosophy of Reincarnation', 'The Foundations of Peace', 'Can Man control his Destiny?' and 'The Secret of Successful Action'.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF
SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Towards the close of the distress relief work conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission in the districts of Dacca and Faridpur (in Bengal), the monastic workers of the Mission organized celebrations of the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda at different places in the rural areas of these districts. Special celebrations were held from 6th to 31st May 1945 and at the following places: Radikhal, Kalma, Umedpur, Longsing, and Haldia. The birthday celebrations were organized on a grand scale at each place, and consisted of processions, *kirtan*, special puja, and illuminating lectures and discourses on the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Holy Mother. A number of monks of the Belur Math took a leading part, assisted by the local devotees and admirers who evinced keen interest in making the celebrations a complete success.

A GIFT TO THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Mrs. Himansu Bala Bhaduri, wife of Col. D. N. Bhaduri, I.M.S., has made a gift to the Ramakrishna Mission, of a large four-storied house, worth Rs. 1,50,000, situated at 111, Russa Road, Calcutta. This gift is made to perpetuate the memory of Devendranath Bhaduri, the only son of the donor, who died in England in 1943 when he was only 26 years of age. The gift will be called 'the Devendranath Bhaduri Memorial.'

In making this gift to the Ramakrishna Mission, Mrs. Bhaduri has stipulated that the memorial building shall be used solely for the purposes of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture which is at present situated at 4A, Wellington Square, Calcutta. The Institute of Culture stands for certain ideals which were very dear to the heart of Devendranath who was a keen student of Indian culture. It is therefore quite fitting that his memory should be honoured and perpetuated through the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. This Institute has for its object the promotion and propagation in India and abroad of Indian culture in all its aspects. It also stands for the assimilation of all that is worthy and elevating in other cultures, and establishing cultural contacts with the peoples of different lands forms an essential feature of the Institute. We offer our heartiest congratulations to Mrs. Bhaduri for the magnificent gift she has made for such a noble cause.