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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI SHIVANANDA

BELUR MATH, MAY 1920

Afternoon. S. J. Gangacharan Mukherjee, pleader, Monghyr, has come. With him are his daughter and a few other members of his family.

Bowing low to Mahapurush Maharaj Gangacharan Babu remarked: ‘Maharaj, you look so pulled down! You’re much worse than I saw when I came here last year.’

Maharaj: ‘Yes. The health is really very bad. And it’s going from bad to worse every day. Well, the body must pass through the six phases* of change. With my body, the final phase has begun. That’s inevitable. The very nature of the body makes it so. All bodies must perish some day or other.’

Gangacharan Babu: ‘Every letter I got (from the Math) kept saying your health has completely broken down. That’s why I’ve come to see you. I was ever so anxious to see you.’

Maharaj (smiling): ‘What’s there in this sort of meeting—meeting on the physical plane? The real meeting is inside, on the spiritual plane. And there’s the same indwelling God in everybody. This whole universe has emanated from Him. “From

Him have originated life, mind, sense-organs, ether, air, light, water, and the earth which is the support of all things. All created things have come from Him. And He’s their governor.” “For fear of Him shines the sun.” Again in Him do they merge when they are destroyed. This world originates from Him, functions in Him and goes back to Him when destroyed. Birth and death—these are inevitable. There’s no escape from them. Only God is beyond their pale. He’s free from disease, free from death. By nature He is pure—enlightened, free. The goal of life is to realize Him within. That’s the *summum bonum* of life. And when that’s achieved, it’s immaterial whether the body remains or goes. He’s within ourselves. Self of everything, abode of bliss, He’s in every being. Only we must realize that.’

Gangacharan Babu: ‘Maharaj, I’ve a question to ask. Must all of us pass into spiritual bodies after death?’

Maharaj: ‘Why should it be so? Those who are devotees of God, have real love for Him—why should they have spiritual bodies? They all become one with God, they become free.’

* Birth, existence, growth, tendency to decay, decay, and destruction.

Gangacharan Babu: 'But, then, what's the meaning of those rites that are enjoined to be performed after death? And why is it that they together with the rites to be performed yearly are prescribed in all cases irrespective of everything?'

Maharaj: 'Yes. That's right. But it's only a general rule. And as it happens, all observe it. But in special cases—in the case of your wife, for instance, there's no harm if those rites are not observed. Your wife was a rare devotee. Her case is very special. She has gone straight into Heaven after death. This has been revealed to me in a clear vision. She has attained to a high order of spiritual existence.'

Suddenly Gangacharan Babu burst into a loud wail. He fell at Mahapurush Maharaj's feet and with folded hands and tearful eyes, begged, 'Maharaj, you must grant me a prayer. See that I may have real love for, real faith in, the lotus feet of Mother (Holy Mother). See that I may find refuge in her feet.' Saying this he began to weep like a boy.

Mahapurushjee putting his hand on Gangacharan Babu's head said: 'Yes, my child. You shall have them. You've them already. Now they'll increase. I bless you with all my heart. I assure you, child, Mother's very kind to you.'

Gangacharan Babu: 'If only you plead for me, Mother'll surely listen to you. You're my support, my hope.'

Maharaj: 'Of course Mother'll listen to me. She'll listen to you, too. She listens to everyone who calls on her with a guileless heart and with real earnestness. Grace, grace. Without her grace there's no way. Glory unto the Lord, Glory unto Gracious Thakur.'

Gangacharan Babu felt comforted by his blessing. After a short discussion on other things he and his party got ready to leave. One by one they paid respects to Mahapurush Maharaj. Gangacharan Babu's daughter, too, paid her respects and then begged for his blessings.

Maharaj (in a voice full of sympathy): 'May you enjoy peace, my child! May your husband, your children and other relatives be happy. There's hardly any happiness in the world. Compared to sorrows and sufferings happiness is negligible. Still they who are

devotees of God are comparatively happy. However much they suffer, they're not moved. For they know everything is a gift from God. He who gives happiness gives also pain and sorrow. Knowing everything to be His blessing they suffer without complaint. They're not overjoyed with happiness nor upset with sorrow. As worldly happiness is transitory, only for a moment, so is also worldly sorrow. They come and go. They don't last. The only permanent thing, the only source of peace, is God. Stick to Him, mother; then only will you get peace.'

A small girl—a maiden, bowed to Maharaj. Touching her head he said, 'They all are Mother Herself. "All women are you, Mother, in different forms."'

A little before evening a lady-devotee paid her respects and asked, 'Maharaj, how's your health?'

Maharaj: 'Not good. The body's old; how can it be well again?'

Lady-devotee: 'And you can't eat much food, either?'

Maharaj: 'Only a plain soup and rice at noon, and a little milk at night. I can't eat more than this. And I don't feel like eating more, either. There's not the least desire to eat delicacies. Food is only for keeping up the body. A little food, therefore, is essential. So that I may have strength enough to think of God so long as the body's there. There's no other desire than that I may think of God. To see Thakur in the heart—that's all that matters. Father, mother, brother, friend, comrade—they all are short-lived. The world itself will be left where it is after your death. Only the in-dwelling God is and will be there always. He alone is eternal.'

Lady-devotee: 'What's our way, Maharaj? We're creatures caught in the meshes of *mâyâ*. By our attachment to this world we're bringing our own ruin. We simply can't give it up. We suffer so much; still it's there.'

Maharaj: 'God is the only way. Take refuge in Him. He's everything—father, mother, brother, or friend. Call on Him with sincere longing. He'll surely take pity. In this world of misery He's the only source of peace. Thakur used to say how to the camel happiness means eating thorny herbs. To worldly men also happiness

means something like that. His grace—that's the only way, mother.'

After a short pause he continued: 'Is it a joke to be convinced of the unreality of the world? Only His grace makes that

possible. Weep and pray intensely; then only His grace will come. He's there inside. He becomes known when the veil of *n* is removed. Grace, that's the way.'

THE LOWERING OF SPIRITUAL STANDARDS

BY THE EDITOR

I

Modern scientific achievements bid fair to make a new heaven of this earth of ours. Everyday we get news of fresh wonders being worked by scientists. Professor Haldane says that no limit can be set to human progress if science be permitted to take matters in hand. In the new millennium that science promises us, we shall have comforts undreamt of even in the heavens of the Hindus, or the paradise of the Muslims. The Christian paradise is a poor place in comparison, gloomy and nebulous, with little comforts except the singing of perpetual *Te Deums* or *Ave Marias* and occasional flights with the aid of bright and rustling wings as messengers of the Almighty to some favoured mortals on earth.

The applications of science we see all around us. Vegetables are raised chemically in the deserts of California; they are raised in hot-houses, fed with the water of hot springs in Iceland, a land of ice and snow. Scientific dairying has put into man's hand vast quantities of milk, butter, and cheese. Scientific breeding has given better beef, pork, and mutton. New varieties of wheat and rice have been discovered or raised, which will do away with all fear of starvation, because of their phenomenal yields. Science promises to produce synthetic fibres that will rival if not beat in fineness and finish Dacca muslins or Japanese silks or English wools. The harnessing of electric power promises to do away with the ordinary drudgery and dirt of cooking with coal or fire-wood, and to make of the kitchen a place of magic, where for the pushing of a button, palatable viands, undreamt of even in the *Arabian Nights*, are made ready to please the most fastidious palate. The elec-

tric light and the electric torch have destroyed the fears that darkness had for us as children. Electricity has given us the telegraph, the telephone, and the radio; and television is in the process of becoming an everyday affair. In the sphere of locomotion, railway trains were the first wonders; then came the motor-cars and electric trains, and steamships. Now it is the age of aeroplanes, mighty roaring monsters of the sky, flitting like meteors ever and anon. Ships have become out of date for passengers. Similarly great are the wonders in engineering, medicine, and other spheres into which the scientific spirit has entered. The world war is demonstrating what science can do when applied to the purpose of forging weapons of destruction.

II

Science, in its essence, represents a mastery of the forces of nature to be used for the personal purposes of man. The knowledge that science puts into man's hand can be used both for purposes of destruction as well as construction, for the destruction of one's enemies and the advancement of the interest of one's friends and oneself. As to whether our strength derived from the application of science ought to be used against those whom we consider, rightly or wrongly, our enemies, is a question which many scientists don't bother to think about. This is because in the first flush of success in scientific research, workers in scientific fields concentrated on the particular with a corresponding neglect of the general. Such an attitude was also considered to be a sign of wisdom. Specialization was carried to extremes and the typical scientific worker, though a master at his job, was completely ignorant of nearly all other related things. The result is 'the old

idea of comprehensiveness waned until today it is hidden by the inco-ordinated pile of specialized knowledge, one of the surest ways of acquiring intellectual short-sightedness'. Also the scientific spirit has not permeated seriously the fields of vital problems, and even where it has entered it is characterized by the evils of specialization, by 'intellectual short-sightedness'. The science of human conduct, collective and individual, the whither and wherefore of human endeavour, the problems posed by ethics and religion have been studiously avoided by scientists in general, where they have not been ignored as sentimental folly. This attitude has resulted in grave results to the morals of mankind.

III

The denial of God and the soul, and the future life as unproved figments of the imaginations of people suffering from the 'mental deconcentration which affects those within sight of the grave' has led to an undermining of faith in morality, goodness, justice, and mercy. The grim theories of racial superiority and ruthless struggles for national or racial survivals have gripped the minds of the leaders of nations with the result that mankind is threatened with extinction by internecine warfare.

Individuals also seem to have lost their moral bearings. Freudian psychology, by revealing the true nature of the unconscious in every human being, has left ordinary people with a vague idea that they are under the thumb of complexes like the Oedipus and others, and have therefore no moral responsibility for the operation of impulses that tend to lower them to the level of beasts. While admitting fresh air into the noxious drains of psycho-pathology, Freudian psychology has tended to vitiate at the same time the purer atmosphere of the conscious life. Far be it from us to condemn Freud or the later psychologists as responsible for this misapprehension and misapplication by the general public of the knowledge which they have so laboriously acquired and applied to the benefit of suffering humanity. But the tendency in human nature is to find a scapegoat for one's mistakes. The knowledge of the unconscious has been misapplied by inculcating in the minds of people, young and old, the idea that they are almost automatons swayed by impulses

which are beyond their control, and that efforts at controlling such impulses only lead to repressed complexes which may lead to mental and physical ailments. Therefore, it is argued, what one should do to ensure mental and physical health is to give full reins to one's inclinations and passions without caring to consider whether they are harmful to oneself in the long run or whether such a course is not ultimately anti-social. Moral and social standards of conduct are valid, it would seem, only so long as one is not thwarted in the fulfilment of one's personal desires.

Thus life today seems to move in a 'materialistic science and philosophy which cannot rise above the satisfactions of flesh in morals, and domination over the world in politics,'—the natural consequence of a philosophy of life that cannot see beyond the 'confines of sensuous and pragmatic experience'.

IV

All religions worth the name have, however, held up certain standards of conduct, certain 'oughts' and 'don'ts' based upon what they conceive to be the *sine qua non* for attaining the ends they consider as supremely good. Religious teachers of all ages, out of love for their fellowmen, have pondered deeply on the problems of life, and have placed before the world what seemed to them to be the greater ends which human beings individually and collectively ought to pursue in order to attain, in their lives, an ever-growing richness and satisfaction, increasing peace and happiness.

It is a significant fact that a great unanimity of views exists among most religious teachers as to what this aim should be. All of them emphasize that man's chief aim should be to aspire towards a perfection which, they say from their own experience, is possible for all men if only they make the necessary effort. They all testify to the reality of the conception that there *is* God who helps human beings to reach towards Him, if they sincerely pray to Him and endeavour earnestly to tread on the path that leads to Him.

It is true that conceptions of God vary in details in all religions. This is due to the fact that the conception of God in all its fullness is a very difficult one, and not to

be grasped easily by untrained minds. But the difficulty or the manifold complexity of an idea is no criterion of its want of pragmatic value or of its being not true to the real nature of things. To illustrate the matter from a familiar fact, we all believe in the existence of electricity by what we see of its effects. It has various effects: it gives us light; it has magnetic properties; it gives us heat without smoke; and it can send men to death in a second. We see its operations in the telegraph, the telephone, and the wireless. And yet even the best scientific brain can give us no clear idea of what it is in words which all can understand. Rather we find scientists tending to develop a language of their own, in mathematical symbols and equations of which the layman can make neither head nor tail. The layman is simply aghast at the wonders scientists are able to achieve; and just as in previous ages there developed great faith in religious leaders who were able to convince and convert large numbers of men to their views by their faith, works, and personality, so in modern times people tend to develop a great faith in whatever the scientists say, for they seem to produce the goods, seem to give tangible evidence which carries conviction. So the attack of science on religious belief seems to carry weight by the mere prestige of scientific achievements rather than on the merits. As a result religion commands little respect from the majority of modern men and women to whom science promises to do away with the necessity for any religion whatsoever. Hence without any belief in God to guide them, without any controlling aim in life except the one, which science proclaims, of living the physical life in all its fullness and drinking the cup of pleasures to the dregs, modern youths are practically bereft of idealism. Considering all ideas of good and bad, right and wrong, as traditional social taboos, elevated to unworthy heights of sacredness under the sanctimonious titles of morality and religion, they are taking to ways of conduct which are ultimately bound to lead to the decay of the individual as well as human society.

V

Purposive endeavour is the characteristic of all life, and purpose is as much a principle obtaining in the operations of Nature as the

principle of determinism to which alone hard-headed scientists would like to pin their faith. McDougall has exposed the short-sightedness which makes some scientists deny the purposiveness of all vital endeavour, and he has adequately recognized the great value of purposiveness in life's activities. In India this fact was recognized from time immemorial, and all civilization developed on the principle that human life *ought* to be guided by certain conscious aims. The forces contributing towards the realization of those desired and desirable aims were to be cultivated and strengthened, while all forces acting as barriers were to be avoided or destroyed. The greatest stress was put upon the value of inhibition as a method in the development of the individual as well as society. Inhibition of desires and activities that were antagonistic to the proclaimed and accepted aims for the individual and society was inculcated as the means to realizing the end.

The achievement of spiritual perfection or the realization of God was considered as the highest aim of human endeavour. To those who were not ready for accepting the highest aim of human life, to whom the objective world of senses was very intimately real, and the claims of which upon their attention were too imperious to be ignored, the aim was held up, not of the extinction of all desires, but of the proper choosing of right desires, desires not in conflict with *dharma* or righteousness, and of the avoidance of all desires and activities that lead to greater misery both for the individual and society. A man might have desires, both good and bad, for himself and for society. The good ones he should try to get fulfilled, the bad ones he ought to discard by discriminating on their baneful effects. No sane man willingly or consciously wants to ruin himself. Everybody desires what, according to his lights, is best for himself. It is only through ignorance, through a partial or complete misapprehension of the results or consequences that may follow a particular course of action that a man comes to grief. Hence the necessity for acquiring knowledge at all costs. For it is only knowledge that ultimately saves. 'Whatever is done with knowledge, with faith, and in the manner taught by the teacher becomes crowned with full success,' says the Vedic seer. And steadfastness in the pursuit of one's life-

aims is the *sine qua non* for integration of personality and for mental peace. Having once selected one's aim in life one should not deviate from it until one has reached what one had set out to achieve. Not in satisfaction of immediate ends without reference to the supreme aim in life, but in the subordination of immediate satisfactions to an all-absorbing ideal or aim lies the way of psychological integration of personality and spiritual progress.

But because of their own inability to strive for the highest, lesser minds have always tried to shelter their inferiority complex under the cloak of an ill-concealed denial of higher values in a life beyond the sensuous, beyond the throbbing, thrilling pleasures and joys of ordinary experience. All strivings for God and perfection are condemned by such as the inane efforts of individuals suffering from physical and psychological frustration. This is the great danger that is confronting modern minds lost in the mist of the materialistic philosophy, a mist that has risen out of the warmth of the morning sun of scientific knowledge and achievements. But, as we have said before, Western science has not yet addressed itself seriously and impartially to the sciences affecting man most closely such as psychology, sociology, and religion. The more it does so, the less it will be guilty of ignoring the fundamental values of human aims and of giving a false lead to individuals and nations.

VI

There should be a stop to this lowering of spiritual standards. Because one finds marriage necessary for oneself, one need not disparage the virtues of continence. Nor should the modern laxity in sexual matters be a handle in the hands of voluptuous hypocrisy for decrying the virtue of chastity and the sanctity of the unsullied home of happily married couples. Because one finds it impossible to lead a life of meditation and sustained thinking on spiritual matters on account of one's pre-occupation with the

things of ordinary life, one need not gratuitously decry the spiritually-minded contemplatives and dub them 'mistic'. To a gentleman who told Sri Ramakrishna that his visions and devotion to the Divine Mother were all due to a strain of madness in him, he answered, 'How does it stand to reason that I become mad because I have been constantly thinking and meditating on God, goodness, love, and other spiritual things, while you consider yourself sane even though your whole life is being spent in thinking of physical things like home, money, women, and wine?'

We would say thus to people engrossed in the enjoyments of this world, in accumulating wealth, and in exploiting other groups or nations: 'Earn money by all means, but don't say that mammon-worship is the only real thing in life. Indulge in companionate marriages, weekly or monthly divorces, and what not, but for decency's sake don't parade it as the way of the gods, and condemn those who lead a pure and virtuous life, to be exhibited in the show-cases of modern civilization as curiosities of an out-worn age. Let capitalists and imperialists suck the life-blood of other helpless groups, races, and nations, and wax fat like vampires gorging themselves with the blood of their victims, but let there be intellectual honesty and decency, and let them not delude others by saying that these are the fruits of Christian spirituality and Western democracy. Let there be no lowering of spiritual standards and values. President Roosevelt is reported to have said that the Atlantic Charter, like the Sermon on the Mount, was an ideal to be aimed at, though they may woefully fall far short of it in practice. In his endeavours to make America economically and politically supreme in the world he has not, at least, lowered spiritual standards by calling bad things by good names. Let all men, leaders as well as rank and file, be honest with themselves. For, in sincerity, in correspondence between one's thought, word, and action lies spiritual salvation.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN THE WEST

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

It is a curious fact that until about a century ago the West knew absolutely nothing about Vedanta, the greatest system of religion and philosophy the world has ever produced. A few scholars in Germany were the first to take up the study of Sanskrit. Charmed by the beauty of the language and the ideas expressed therein, they began to delve into the knowledge of the East. And they extracted from Hindu scriptures nuggets of wisdom which they presented to the world in their mother-tongue. Thus the West got her first knowledge of the religion of the Hindus. This knowledge, however, did not spread among the people. The Theosophists, much later, tried to popularize it in America and Europe, but the great push Hinduism received in the West came from Swami Vivekananda, the illumined prophet, who in 1893 at Chicago delivered his first Address on Hinduism. This, as we all know, was received with an outburst of enthusiasm from his astonished audience.

Among the great majority of that august assembly, Hinduism, or Vedanta, was unknown. They had a vague idea that all Hindus were idolators with strange superstitions and hideous forms of worship. The utterances of the Swami on that occasion came to them as a revelation. And from that moment the picturesque monk became the great attraction at the Congress. This was the beginning of the Swami's great and fruitful work in America. This was the real introduction of Vedanta among Western races.

To give in short the full story of the Swami's experiences and of his meteoric career in the West, is an utter impossibility. The four years he spent abroad were too full of events. And I shall give only the most significant of these confining myself to his sojourn in America only. I can only touch on his not less important and interesting adventures in England and the continent of Europe.

First of all let us examine the Swami's

state of mind before he finally decided to sail for the West. We must remember that in those days, that is, over fifty years ago, it was no simple matter for a Hindu Sannyâsin to go to the West. No other Sannyâsin had ever ventured to cross the ocean and live among Western people. Orthodox Hindus shook their heads. They did not find the act sanctioned in their *shâstras*.

Then there were personal considerations. Pioneer work is always beset with difficulties. Would the West accept him? Would he be provided for? Would he succeed? And then there was the one great question towering above all other considerations, Was it God's will?

The conquest of the Western thought-world by a young Sannyâsin from the East was a gigantic undertaking. The Swami, then only 28 years old, was fully aware of this. Still, this was the enormous task that faced him. And unless this was accomplished his attempt could not be called successful. No wonder a mighty tumult agitated the Swami's mind. Should he go to America or not go? That was then the question.

Sometimes for days his soul struggled for a definite conviction about his mission. Was it his own ambition that sometimes thrilled him with anticipation, or was it God's command—that made him so restless? Was it his duty to extend the scope of his work and to gather new experience in foreign lands, or was he influenced by the enthusiasm of his friends and admirers?

Intuitively the Swami felt that it was his duty to go, that he had a message not only for his own country but for the world. But he was not satisfied to trust to his own conviction. He wanted more tangible proof, a definite sign, a command from above.

And so the Swami spent days and weeks in prayer and contemplation. Then, at last, the command came. It came in an unexpected, mysterious way.

One night, when this all-important ques-

tion had kept him awake for hours, he at last fell into a slumber. And in this state of half sleep he had a dream and vision.

He saw a vast ocean. And on the seashore he saw a figure. The figure was pacing up and down evidently immersed in deep thought. Then suddenly it halted facing him. A shock of delight went through the Swami, for there stood before him Sri Ramakrishna, his own beloved Master. There was sadness in the Master's face. But this sadness made room for a smile so sweet, so gentle, so loving, that it thrilled the Swami to his deepest being. Then the Master beckoned him, and turning around walked away upon the waters of the ocean. The Swami wanted to jump up and follow him. But then he awoke.

It was enough! Sri Ramakrishna had called him, had beckoned him to follow across the ocean. There was the command from above! The Swami's doubts were laid. All fear and restlessness left him. And in an ecstasy of joy, in the night, he exclaimed, 'Where thou leadest I will follow, even if it be to the end of the earth.'

Thus reassured and strengthened in his purpose and conviction, the Swami prepared himself for the journey. And on May 31st, 1893, he sailed for America.

As the steamer was detached from the wharf at Bombay and slowly moved away, the Swami stood on the deck looking towards his friends who had come to bid him God-speed. With folded hands he blessed them and gave them his farewell benediction.

His eyes were filled with tears. His heart was overwhelmed with emotion. He thought of those whom he left behind; of the Holy Mother who had sent him her blessings; of his *gurubhâis* who were scattered over the land he was leaving; of India, his beloved motherland, once so great, now the land of suffering.

But as the ship steamed on and he found himself surrounded by the black waters of the ocean, alone with his thoughts and the vastness of sea and sky, his mind took a more cheerful turn. He realized the wisdom of his decision. He felt the guiding hand of a Power greater than his. Yes, he thought, we Indians must travel, we must go to foreign lands, we must see how society is organized in other countries, and we must

keep in touch with the minds of other nations. If we do this, India will rise again, and we will become a nation among nations.

The journey proved enjoyable and instructive. Fellow passengers were congenial. The Captain of the ship took an interest in the Swami and treated him with courtesy and respect.

From Bombay the steamer went to Colombo, thence to Hongkong and Japanese ports, halting at the different harbours for coaling or discharge of cargo. The passengers at these places went ashore, and the Swami was delighted to see the interesting sights.

At last the long journey was over and the ship anchored at Vancouver in British Columbia. Then came a three-days' trip by train to Chicago. Here, at last, the Swami stood on American soil! From the land of poverty transplanted as it were to the land of untold riches; from the land of deprivation to the land of luxury; from the land of renunciation to the land of worldly enjoyment!

But this was not the time for reflections. There he stood in one of the busiest railway stations in the world, alone, as stranger in a strange land. Where to go? What to do?

For those of us who have not been in the West it may be difficult to realize what Swami Vivekananda had to meet and overcome. He was not used to handling money, he had never travelled in foreign lands, (his baggage was a burden to him, his strange dress made him conspicuous, prices for everything were fabulous,) he met with customs with which he was unacquainted.

Now, at Chicago he found himself in the midst of a mass of restless hurrying humanity chiefly visitors from all over the world who had come to the great Fair. There he stood in the enormous railway station. Not knowing where to go he entered the waiting room, and then he contemplated his next move.

A hotel clerk approached him, and asked him to come to his hotel. The Swami followed him and in the hotel was shown a room. There he sat down, glad to be away from the noise and bustle of the street.

'Now I will have quiet', the Swami thought, 'but where have I come? What a rush, what a noise, what madness! Every-

one is running and hurrying hither and thither as if a demon was pursuing him. Is this America? Shall I have to live in this confusion? Oh, blessed India, land of leisure! Oh, blessed Himalayas, abode of peace!

The Swami wiped his perspiring brow. Then a knock came at the door. His baggage had arrived. The porters demanded exorbitant charges. 'Shiva, Shiva,' the Swami thought, 'where we pay with annas in India I have to pay with dollars here. Has money no value in this land? Where shall I get a new supply when my purse is empty? Dollars here vanish like air. Money flows like water.'

The Swami was weary and confused. Restless and nervous, he paced the floor. He tried to calm his mind but could not. Despondent, he sank into an easy chair. Then with great effort he withdrew his mind from his surroundings. He entered within himself. And as he did so, there flashed before his mental vision the scene of the battle-field of Kurukshetra. He seemed to hear the din and clatter of the contending armies. And above this noise Sri Krishna's voice roaring like thunder, 'Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha. Cast off this faintheartedness and arise! He who sees inaction in action he is wise, he is a Yogi, he is free!'

The Swami jumped to his feet. And shaking off all weakness he stood there like a lion ready for battle. The rest of the day he spent in his room. But early the following morning he set out to visit the World's Fair. What he saw there filled him with wonder and enthusiasm. Here the Western world was represented in all her riches and glory. He was amazed at the ingenuity of the human mind in the field of art, science, and invention. And with a bleeding heart he contemplated how backward his own dear motherland was in these directions.

Daily he visited the Fair. He learned all he could so that later he might be able to use his knowledge and experience for the good of his countrymen. He realized that in organization and united effort lay the strength of the West. India had to become a united whole before she would be able to hold her own among the nations of the world.

While visiting the Fair, Swami Viveka-

nanda enquired about the Parliament of Religions. To his utter dismay he found that the Religious Congress would not commence till September. Furthermore he could not be admitted as a delegate as he had no credentials. And it was too late to enlist anyhow.

What a blow! Had he come all this distance in vain? It was only July. His money had dwindled to almost nothing. What could be done? It was a serious dilemma.

Fortunately a gentleman from Madras had written about the Swami to an American friend in Chicago. This friend found him and invited him to his home. He was received with hospitality, and became an honoured guest. He soon won the love and respect of the entire household.

Here the Swami stayed twelve days. Then he decided to go to Boston, the centre of culture in America. On his way a strange thing happened. In the train an elderly lady was attracted by the Swami's appearance and dignified behaviour. Charmed by his personality and wisdom, after a long conversation, she invited the Swami to her home near Boston. The Swami accepted. When he had entered the train he had not known where to put up in Boston. Now he was taken to a beautiful home of culture where he was introduced to a large number of distinguished visitors.

Among these was Prof. Wright of Harvard University. The Professor, after many intimate talks with Swami Vivekananda, became greatly interested in him. He insisted that the Swami should represent Hinduism at the Religious Congress. 'This', he said, 'is the only way by which you can be introduced to the nation at large.' 'But I have no credentials', the Swami said. At this the Professor smiled and said. 'Swami, to ask you for credentials would be like questioning the sun his right to shine.' And he wrote a letter to the Chairman of the Committee for selecting delegates, in which he wrote: 'Swami Vivekananda is a man more learned than all our learned professors put together. We must have him as a speaker at the Fair.' Then he gave the Swami a letter of introduction to the Committee in-charge of Oriental delegates, and paying for his passage, sent him back to Chicago.

How wonderful! After all, the Swami's trip to the West would not be in vain.

But God's children often meet with great difficulties. They are tried again and again in the crucible of faith. And a new trial awaited the Swami. When he arrived at Chicago he found that he had lost the address of the President of the Committee.

With an almost empty purse the Swami went in search of a cheap hotel. But he could find none. In his search he had wandered into the German section of the City inhabited by emigrants of the labouring class. These people knew very little English. They could not understand what the Swami wanted. And taking him to be a Negro treated him with little respect.

It was almost night when the Swami came to a railway yard. Here he found an empty freight car. He entered it, and being utterly exhausted he lay down and fell asleep.

On the following morning he walked out, and soon found himself in the most fashionable part of Chicago. He was hungry, and began to beg his food at the palatial dwelling houses. But his shabby appearance aroused suspicion, and the servants slammed the doors in his face. At last, tired and disheartened, he sat down upon the roadside opposite a fashionable residence. Then, to his great surprise he saw a richly dressed lady come out of the house and approach him. In a sweet cultured voice she spoke, 'Sir, are you a delegate to the Parliament of Religions?'

The Swami told his story. After listening to it the lady invited him to her home. Here he was shown into a beautiful room, and after a bath and breakfast was taken to the headquarters of the Committee. He was accepted as a delegate, and lodging was given him with other orientals. Now all anxiety was removed. The Swami's heart melted with gratitude for the divine guidance. He felt that a divine power was protecting him.

And so, at last, the day arrived for the opening of the Parliament of Religions. It was September 11th, 1893. On that memor-

able morning there sat upon the platform of the great Hall of Columbus representatives of the religious beliefs of twelve hundred million of the human race. It was indeed impressive! And among these greatest divines of the world sat Swami Vivekananda, clad in orange robe and turban, his remarkably fine features and brilliant eyes distinguishing him in that great throng.

Cardinal Gibbons, highest prelate of the Roman Catholic Church, rose and opened the meeting with prayer. High dignitaries of the Christian Church delivered their orations followed by representatives of the East. At last, at the request of the Chairman, Swami Vivekananda rose.

His face glowed with fire, and in a vibrant voice addressing his audience of six thousand men and women he spoke, 'Sisters and Brothers of America'.

It was as if an electric shock passed through the audience. Their hearts were touched. A stranger from a strange land was the first to address them as 'Sisters and Brothers.' A storm of applause followed and when the Swami had finished his address the entire assembly was at his feet.

The Congress met for seventeen days. Over a thousand papers were read. The Swami gave several Addresses, and read several papers on Hinduism. He was the most popular speaker. The audience would sometimes wait for hours when other speakers held the platform, to hear a few words from the inspired lips of the Hindu monk.

From an obscure, wandering Sannyâsin, the Swami had become a world-figure. Life-size pictures of him were posted up everywhere in the streets of Chicago. The press rang with his fame. The newspapers proclaimed him as a prophet. All this the Swami accepted in a child-like spirit without a trace of conceit. In humility he bowed down to 'Him who makes the dumb eloquent, Him who makes the lame cross mountains'.

(To be concluded)

THE FUTURE OF HINDUISM

BY SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

From time immemorial India always stood for the highest spiritual values; and if we have to regain the sense of spiritual values, we must not only face the challenge of the alluring materialism of modern scientific thought, but also give a new shape to the ancient philosophic thought of India in order that it may appeal to the modern scientific intelligence in India and abroad. While there is so much confusion around us, an extraordinary phenomenon strikes us with a glimmer of hope: a widespread interest in the study of Hinduism is increasing by leaps and bounds. There is a reaction from the conservatism of the last century, and a large number of books on the Upanishads, the Gita, the *Smritis*, and other Vedantic works are being published without any break.

It is an admitted fact that Christian doctrines have withered in the psychological situation created by modern scientific discoveries and have been replaced by an utter agnosticism. Various causes have accelerated the drift from the churches; and Sunday outdoor trips are breaking up the solemn church-going party. One important reason for the alienation of the educated classes from the church is the pugnacious quarrels of bishops over questions of dogma. Moreover, intelligent people are finding it difficult to have faith in a religion which blesses war time and again, and in ministers of the gospel of love who exhort men to kill other men whom they have never seen. The part which science has played in demolishing the citadel of Christianity is indeed enormous. The scientific account of the universe has exploded the old theory of creation of the world in seven days. Finally, the view that all men are merely promoted anthropoid apes, having the small lemur-like creature for their primordial ancestor, has come as a severe shock stultifying the belief in the doctrine of the Fall which had taught Christians to believe that they were only degenerate angels.

The outcome of all this is a reaction of the present generation against the faiths and morals of the Victorian age, which has ended

in a flagrant repudiation of the values and standards of the Christian way of life. The attempt of some enlightened representatives of the Church, like Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes, to accept the conclusions of science and revise, and even reject certain jaded dogmas in the light of science, has not successfully checked the spirit of the age, namely, absolute disbelief in the old gods and angels. We have to regretfully realize that Christ's dream of bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to the earth is too transcendent for our petty minds that cannot grasp the fundamental truth of religion.

The impact of science on the credulity of people who burnt not less than three-quarters of a million women as witches in one single province of Europe is quite understandable. One can easily appreciate the rejection of outworn beliefs such as the Creation story and the Flood story of a people who cannot give up the idea of a fixed earth and a reinforced heaven even after Copernicus had destroyed the supremacy of man's planet and proved it to be an ordinary lump of matter gyrating round the sun. But it is rather intriguing to find how Hinduism, the rational religion of the Vedanta which has survived many a shock in the past, is menaced by the blitz of Western ideas. In spite of the non-contradiction of our metaphysics with any theory of evolution which may have to trace our ancestors to the jelly-fish and the amoeba, evidences are not wanting to indicate that a state of danger, like the Sword of Damocles, is hanging over the whole structure of Hinduism, the religion *par excellence*.

What is the state of religion in this country today? If an annual return is prepared showing the number of educated people attending temples, Maths, and other holy places with a view to benefit spiritually, we may discover, to our great surprise, a considerable drop in the number. In our schools and colleges millions of students are not receiving any sort of religious instruction in their class-rooms. If a questionnaire is cir-

culated among the students on the state of their religious belief, we may possibly expect to get replies of Himalayan ignorance. The great monasteries which were once the power-house of spirituality and theological learning are now quiet and vacant, and attract no pilgrims; the Maths are quite content to sleep in their present state without in any way trying to influence the practical ethics and morals of the society. The colossal monolithic temples which enshrine the symbols of the Deity are now infested with bats, rats, and other vermin; the court-yards and artistic Mandapams of the temples of Spirit are dirty, ill-kept, and uninviting. Besides, the secular, ignorant, and commercial-minded priest (of course, save the real servants of God) insults the spiritual feeling of any devotee with his repulsive attitude. The Upanayanam, marriage, obsequies, and other rites are performed in a most mechanical and meaningless manner. Both the teacher and the taught are equally ignorant of the meaning and significance of the *mantrams*. Where is that race which produced immortal works of art in stone and palm-leaf? The families, noted for thinkers and writers in Vedanta, Dharma-shastra, Jyotisha, and other departments of Sanskrit learning, are sending their children to English schools so that they may become successful clerks and eke out a livelihood. While the Vedantic spirit is fading away from our life, the doctors of philosophy are as keen as ever in their futile controversies which never touch the fundamental issues. The decline of spiritual convictions and irreverent attitude towards the achievements of the past are the two disintegrating elements which remind us of the spirit of the age; unbecoming dances and sensual music, the craze for pleasure and the twilight of nobler sentiments are some expressions of the above tendency.

Now, what are those factors which are mainly operative in reducing our national ideals to their present pass? Broadly speaking, they are as follows :

1. First among the factors that have brought about our degeneration is the present system of education which does not suit the soil of India. This system of education, in subordinating spirituality to Western

learning, has buried, as it were, the birth of future India. "But mark you," says Swami Vivekananda, 'if you give up spirituality or leave it aside to go after the materializing civilization of the West, the result will be that in three generations you will be an extinct race. Because the backbone of the nation will then be broken, the foundation upon which the edifice has been built will then be undermined, and the result will be a smash, an all-round annihilation.'

2. The second constituent that is eating into the vitals of our spiritual life is the blind superstitious orthodoxy. From the standpoint of social life no religion in the world is so capable of dynamic transformation as Hinduism. Still it is a pity that we have taken every local superstition and contradictory custom as essential to our spiritual life. Again, in the words of the Swami, 'the greatest mistake, therefore, is to think that in these local customs lies the essence of our religion'.
3. The third important factor that has damaged the fabric of Hinduism is the influence of modern science. If in the West modern science has alienated educated people from the Church, we also think without trying to know the A B C of Hinduism, that our religion also must be equally worthless and meaningless. So, the vainglorious Westernized mind endeavours to trace the origin of our religion in the emotions and fears of primeval man though it cannot explain the spiritual character which has emerged from the soul of a civilized people.

The conclusion is inevitable. Hinduism began and flourished,—not because primitive man wanted it, not because it rose from man's nature,—but because the gigantic minds of our forefathers considered that religion and spirituality were alone the backbone of our national life. They cared neither for politics, nor for social regeneration, nor for scientific genius as an end in itself, for

they were convinced that these things were of secondary importance. So if the rejection of all that is best in Hinduism is the spirit of our era, then the future must be one without any light and hope. Even those who hoped for a panacea from the West are disillusioned now after the breaking out of the second world conflagration.

The remedy has to be found out in the light of our ancient teachings, so that we may not forget our duty towards God and man. Even the atheistic thinkers of the West have begun to confess that without some system of morals to discipline the wild passions, some idealism to purify the profane fetishism, man's life would be meaningless. And the consequence would be a kind of Epicureanism which comes in the form of 'Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die'. Due to the preaching of Swami Vivekananda, our country has already awakened from its deep slumber, and his voice is still ringing in our ears. Our task in the wake of the Swami is to interpret Hinduism to the world, to capture the imagination of educated young men and women and to guide their energies to ends that are socially, politically, and spiritually good. Otherwise fascism, communism, and other isms will capture their imagination and direct their impulses to dangerous ends in a world which is already weary by the second world war.

As regards the origin and development of Hinduism one thing must be made clear. Psycho-analysts are fond of pointing out that religion is the sublimation of primitive lusts and fear. Religion, says Freud, is partly derivable from the *Oedipus complex*, and Prof. Leuba is anxious to conclude that religion is the rationalization of primitive sexual desires. We want to know how religious consciousness, springing from the fears of the savage, could transcend its lowly origin. To judge the root one must understand the fruit. There is something in religious mysticism which has eluded all the psycho-analysts. Here come the Rishis of the Vedas by pointing out that our religion did not originate from the dunghill of human emotions, not from mere reason and arguments, not from accepted truths of today, but from Vedic expressions of self-evident, eternal, and universal Truth. To the Vedic seers any attempt to trace the origin of religion to natural phenomena could not give

the least satisfaction. We can say that they intuited certain forces invisible and incomprehensible to the ordinary intellect of man; thus, the Vedic truths, realized by the direct experiences of sages like Vishvamitra, Bharadvaja, Vamadeva, and others are embodied in their hymns and give a faint idea of what they realized.

Vedanta, the crown of Hindu philosophy, is the quest of final truth; it cannot be at the mercy of psycho-analysts whose accepted conclusions of today may become the exploded fiction of tomorrow. The Reality has been revealed by the Supreme Deity to the Vedic seers who are wedded to truth dispassionately on the basis of their personal experience. Hence our faith in the source of Hinduism, in the Vedas.

Swami Vivekananda points out that there is not one system of Vedanta which does not hold the doctrine that God is within, that divinity resides in all forms. Vedanta is threefold,—dualism, qualified non-dualism, and absolute non-dualism. Every one of the Vedantic systems admits the purity and perfection of the soul. Though intellectual approach to reality admits degrees of realization, the central spiritual theme is the same everywhere. Vedanta, while admitting the evolutionary principle of the projection of the physical universe, body, mind, and sense-organs, avers that all the external phenomena are superimpositions on the Self; the Self which is unborn, eternal, and pure, owing to the mistaken identity with the non-Self suffers and enjoys the ephemeral fruits; the *âtman* forgets its blissful nature and imagines itself as if bound and subject to misery. Knowledge of one's own nature and non-identification with matter is freedom. Release is not something to be newly achieved but realization of what is already there.

What is the conception of God in the Vedantin's scheme of thought? Like the scientists and philosophers of the West, there is no need for any Hindu to rationalize his conception of God according to modern needs. The Vedantin's God is sexless, indicated by the neutral term 'Brahman'. It is personal when associated with certain relations and attributes, and impersonal when conceived as devoid of human values. The One and the Many are the same Brahman, perceived differently and at diverse times by

the human mind. To conceive of Brahman as the source of all creation is not to raise the insoluble problems associated with an imperfect Being who has taken the responsibility of deluding his creatures. For, unlike the Christian conception of the Deity It does not safely sit in the skies, keeping a dossier of each individual for purposes of espionage and vengeance. It is within, animating the universe, and without, transcending everything. It is non-different from the self of all and at the same time It is neither *jagat* nor the *jiva*. Hence there does not arise the defect of associating the Eternal and the Immutable with a world that is in a constant state of flux and hence imperfect. The Divine is aware of the aspiration and movement of Life towards It; otherwise the illumination of mystics in the unbroken joy of clear meditation would be meaningless. We cannot set aside the unanimous testimony of saints and mystics as idle babbling of half-wits. The communion with the Divine is the highest acme of religious consciousness which is not only a subjective feeling but also an awareness of an object which edifies and exalts the aspirant.

It is quite probable that India lags behind other nations in the development of science and other secular subjects. But no religion is yet as fully developed as Hinduism which culminates as the highest expression of the human spirit. The Vedantic consciousness contains an element of intuition, an intuition which transfigures the universe as a whole. This intuition involves the idea that the universe is no longer a fleeting bubble, but a reflexion of the Supreme Spirit which is at once the source and the sum of all values. This attitude evokes adoration and worship, because it is realized that everything is a mode or expression of the Reality, however distorted may be the vision to the non-enlightened. The future of Hinduism is one in which the highest values of the spirit will be broadcast while modern creeds and dogmas from the West are inspiring men with an inordinate craving for wealth, power, and other primitive needs. Hinduism of

the future will emphasize its two distinctive aspects, namely, strength and renunciation, in a world infested with the bacteria of weakness and attachment. Even a cursory glance of the basic scriptures of Hinduism will convince anyone that strength is the watchword of the Vedanta. If Hinduism preaches humility, love, kindness, unselfishness, and censures vices of pride and selfishness, it should not be assumed that the religion of the Vedanta is extolling the virtues of a slave. For, Hinduism glorifies the humility of the great, the meekness of the strong, the unselfishness of the rich and the mercy of one who has the power to strike the wicked ; but it never justifies the qualities of a slave who cannot rise above his servitude and weakness.

As regards the second aspect of Hinduism, viz renunciation, Swami Vivekananda says that India has survived by *tyāga* alone while other nations springing up from nothingness, making vicious play of their uncontrolled desires for sense-life for a few days, have grown and decayed like mushrooms almost every century. So the Vedantic religion of the Hindu stands on the bedrock of renunciation, annihilating the very idea of cold cruel competition and inordinate craving which have brought untold miseries to the individual and collective life of humanity.

Man is still clogged by the heritage of antiquated orthodoxies and superstitions, and cannot, therefore, emancipate himself from those vestigial relics which create in him false needs. In his moments of weakness and spiritual loneliness, he is carried away on an aimless journey with false hopes. It is from such an impasse that Vedantic Hinduism can restore us. And in the mystical intuition that comes, we perceive as the goal of a journey's end the One which appears as Many, the Impersonal which becomes Personal, the infinite glory of the Soul of man, and finally the knowledge of the relation between God and man, which, transcending the finite range of time, space, and causation, loses itself in the divine mystery.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEVOTION IN THE BHAGAVADGITA

BY PROF. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

The twelfth chapter of the Bhagavadgita is one on Bhakti-Yoga, the path of devotion; and herein we find within the short compass of twenty verses all the essentials of Sri Krishna's philosophy of devotion. Everything said here is from the standpoint and for the benefit of the aspirant after devotion. The whole discourse of the present chapter, as of the entire Bhagavadgita for the matter of that, has been given from the practical view-point, the view-point of the *sâdhaka*, and not from the view-point of settling questions of theoretical or metaphysical importance only. We shall consider Sri Krishna's exposition of the *bhakti-mârگا* under three heads: (1) the object of devotion, (2) the methods of devotion, and (3) the marks of the devotee.

The Object of Devotion

After having shown his *vishwa-roopa*, his cosmic form in manifestation to Arjuna, Sri Krishna thus explained to him the way of attaining the vision: 'By one-pointed devotion am I able to be thus known and seen in essence, and to be entered into, O Parantapa!' (XI.54). The path of devotion commends itself to Arjuna and he becomes earnest about attaining the vision of God through devotion. But he finds himself at pains in making a choice between the Formless, Unmanifest, and Impersonal (*avyakta, akshara*) aspect of Godhead about which he had heard from Sri Krishna, and the Manifest Personal Form whose vision had been bestowed on him. Which of these has to be made the object of devotion? Arjuna puts the question to Sri Krishna: 'Between those who, ever harmonized, worship Thee and those who are devoted to the Imperishable and the Unmanifest, whom dost thou consider wiser in Yoga?' (XII.1). Behind the cosmic splendours and immensities, behind the variegated manifestations, informing them without being *in* them, supporting them without itself resting in them, is the ever Unmanifest (*avyakta-moorti*) Supreme Spirit, the rootless Root of the universe. It contains all things and yet remains untouched by them,

even as the expansive space remains unaffected by the air moving everywhere within it. (IX. 4-6). Such is the grandeur and sublimity of the Unmanifest about which Arjuna had learnt even before his vision of the Manifest Divine. The question, therefore, cannot fail to arise in his mind: Should our devotion go to the Unmanifest God or the manifest God? Should we worship God 'without form' or God 'with form'? Which is the proper Object of devotion, the Impersonal God or the Personal God? This is a perennial question of the human heart. There have always been men who have thought it derogatory to God to conceive of Him with some 'form' in so far as such a conception is belittling His ultimate formlessness. On the other hand, the devotee's heart has always demanded a God with form and it is the testimony of ages that God has always revealed Himself to his devotees in some form or other.

Now, here is Sri Krishna's answer to the question of Arjuna: 'Best in Yoga are they who having fixed their minds on Me (meaning the Personal Form), endowed with supreme faith and ever harmonized, worship Me. They, on the other hand, who worship the Imperishable, the Unmanifested, Omnipresent, and Unthinkable, the Unchanging, Immutability, Eternal, restraining and subduing their senses, having the same regard for all beings and rejoicing in the welfare of all, *also come unto Me*. Greater, however, is the hardship of those whose minds are set on the Unmanifest; difficult, indeed, it is for the embodied to reach the realm of the Unmanifest Godhead.' (XII.1-5).

Sri Krishna's answer to the question of Arjuna is clear and decisive. Both pathways are equally valid and lead to the same goal; but the manifest God, 'God with form' is recommended as better suited to the demands of the devotee's heart (whatever be the position of philosophy or metaphysics) for the simple reason that the 'embodied' cannot outsoar the conception of an embodied God. 'So long as you are a man in this world of

man, your God is human, your ideas human, and your religion human' said Swami Vivekananda. What Sri Krishna means to say is that devotion to impersonal God, *though not impossible*, is a more arduous affair for the embodied. In the nature of things, 'God with the embodied form' offers the line of least resistance to the devotee in his path of devotion. They are wiser in the *practice* of Bhakti-Yoga who have from the outset realized the inexpugnable necessity of God with form for success in the path of devotion.

The Methods of Bhakti

After having settled the question about the form of the object of devotion, which obviously is a matter of prime consideration, Sri Krishna proceeds to speak on the methods or ways of *bhakti*. The best or ideal form of *bhakti*, as described in verses 6 and 8, is the spontaneous and unwavering meditation on God, with all one's heart and soul, ever attached to Him and performing all actions for His sake. Such unreserved and unwavering devotion is responded to and reciprocated by the Lord Himself who takes upon Himself the responsibility of the redemption of His devotee from the world of death and sorrow. Such devotees of the first order are those who can practise the Presence of God with ease and spontaneity.

Those, however, who are unable to practise the Presence of God, who are unable to fix their minds spontaneously in meditation on Him, should constantly aspire to reach Him. This mental practice of aspiring after the Divine is the second best thing to do when the spiritual practice of meditation on Him is found impossible or difficult. The former will eventually lead to the latter.

If the aspirant finds even this mental practice too difficult for him; there is yet another and easier path open to him. He can engage himself in the performance of God's works (*matkarma*), say, in some form of service of humanity which is God Himself in His myriad forms. For a vast majority of mankind the higher meditative practices are ever so difficult and many who willy-nilly struggle after them often recoil with a sense of utter futility and helplessness. Their lives could be redeemed from total spiritual emptiness if only they betook themselves to performing 'God's actions', actions not for

one's own selfish ends but for the larger ends of human welfare. Everyone could do some disinterested service to others according to his own talents and capacities. This is the only way of spiritual elevation for those to whom the higher quietistic disciplines of Yoga is an impossibility. One of the profoundest teachings of the Gita is to turn *action* which is natural to spiritual advantage and make the active life of man a stepping-stone to the meditative life.

Should even performing actions for God be found impossible, then one last course remains, the easiest of all—and that is the renunciation of the fruits of all actions (*sarva-karma-phala-tyâga*). Tranquillity follows immediately the relinquishment of the fruits of all actions. When tranquillity is gained, spiritual practices which were difficult in the beginning become easy to perform. Act, for action is inevitable, but be not attached to the consequences.

The Marks of the Devotee

After explaining the forms of devotion, Sri Krishna passes on to explain the differentiae of the life of a true devotee. Verses 13 to 20 mention the marks of the devotee beloved of God. It is significant to note that devotion, according to the Bhagavadgita, is not mere abandonment to excessive and uncontrolled emotionalism, but a steady and tranquil fixing of the mind on the Lord. *Karma-phala-tyâga* is so highly commended, because, besides being the easiest step in Bhakti-Yoga, it brings peace forthwith to the mind. The devotional spirit is a permanent and a pervasive quality of the devotee's life which expresses itself not only in his attitude towards God but also in his attitude towards his fellow-men. 'He prayeth best who loveth best. The true devotee of God, says Sri Krishna, is 'He who beareth no ill-will towards anybody, is kind and friendly towards all, is without attachment and egotism, evenly balanced in happiness and sorrow and forgiving. He is the Yogi of subdued self and firm resolve, ever contented, and has his mind and reason dedicated to Me. He is the devotee dear to Me. Him the world disturbs not; nor does he disturb the world. Free he is from the commotions of joy, fear, and anger. Such a devotee I love. He wants nothing from anyone, is unperturbed, pure, and passionless, and renouncing all

undertakings is attached to Me alone. Him I love. He is not elated (by worldly success) nor is he given to hatred; grieves not nor desires. Abandoning both good and evil, he is full of devotion to Me. Verily, he is dear to Me. Alike is he to friend and foe, to respect and disrespect, to the inclemencies of heat and cold, to happiness and to sorrow and unclinging to anything. He takes blame and reproach equally, is silent and content with whatever falls to his lot, is without a habitation, is steady-minded and full of devotion to Me. Such a man is dear to Me. Verily, those who follow this nectarine path

of devotion spoken of by Me, with supreme faith and attachment to Me, are my devotees whom I love beyond all measure.' (XII. 13-20).

Be it remembered, that *bhakti*, according to the Gita, does not consist in sporadic fits of emotional effervescence, but in a life of elemental calm, of 'malice toward none and charity for all', of love illimitable and service ungrudging, and of faith that never loosens its hold on the feet of God. Such a life alone is the high light of *bhakti*. In silence and serenity, in service and humility, we should seek our God.

THE SHRAUTA DIKSHA

BY PROF. JAGADISHCHANDRA MITRA

The long range of the Brâhmana literature closely following upon the Samhitâs is beset with the burden of sacrificial details of various types, and generally they presuppose a necessary course of discipline on the part of the intending sacrificer (*Yajamâna*) which is called the *dikshâ* or consecration. It serves as a good analogue, nay, an archetype too, we may incidentally add, of the *Grihya* conceptions of *upanayana* or initiation to some extent.

The word *dikshâ* finds mention singly in the Samhitâs like the *Vâjasaneyi* (IV. ii. V. vi, etc.) and also together with another significant word, *tapas*, ardour, in many places, e.g. *Atharvaveda*, (XIX, 41, 43). The constant association of the *dikshâ* with the Soma sacrifices leads to its personification as the consort of King Soma in the *Gopatha Brâhmana* (II. ii. 9 : सोमस्य राज्ञः पत्नी), while the *Taittiriya Samhitâ* (I. ii. 2) deifies it along with *tapas* and ordains the offering of libations unto them.

The *dikshâ* is a process for making one fit for the sacrifice, generally understood as a Soma sacrifice, and the sacrificer is ushered into a fresh spiritual, or rather, godly, existence. Let us attempt to describe here how this new birth is effected through the various processes subservient to the rite in point.

Of the three major accounts of the consecration as found in the *Taittiriya Samhitâ*

(in its Brâhmana portion), the *Aitareya* and the *Shatapatha Brâhmanas*, the former obviously precedes the latter in each case chronologically, so that we are in a position to trace the evolution in the conception of this ritual device.

The *Taittiriya Samhitâ* (VI. 1 f.) starts with the description of the *prâchina-vamsha*, or the hall having its pole turned towards the east, made especially to suit the requirement of the *dikshâ*. It must be covered over according to this Brâhmana passage. Why? Because man, it is stated, is to imitate what has been done by the gods. Now, as the world of gods lies hidden from the sight of men, this consecration-hall, which is *a priori* to be looked upon as such a world, is also to be hidden from the outsiders' gaze.

The whole rite of the *dikshâ* facilitates, as we have suggested above, the promotion of the sacrificer on to the heaven peopled by the gods; and he is required, as such, to be absolutely pure, pure in spirit and pure in form. He must shave his hair and beard and clip his nails which are all impure. Then 'sipping water' is ordained as water has been acknowledged on all hands to bear a purificatory property besides many others. Thereupon he is to put on a linen garment inasmuch as its presiding deity is Soma, and this fits in well with the consecration previous to a Soma sacrifice. The ideology behind the putting on of a garment

is, as assumed by the Brâhmanas, that all the gods share the different portions of it; and, as such, the constant contact with it keeps the sacrificer conscious of his divine birth and divine nature. The passage of the sacrificer to heaven where he is to be one of its occupants is not yet complete: he must pass through a series of gateways leading to that realm. By now he has been segregated from the earthly existence only. The priests, by way of supplementing, anoint him with butter and purify him with bunches of the *darbha* grass, which is nothing but metamorphosed water, pure and simple, according to the Brâhmanic theologians, both of which have been looked upon as purificatory in character. These processes complete, there is such a peculiar operation as the offering of the *audgrabhana* or elevating oblations in accompaniment with certain verses which are conceived of as being potential in this regard. The sacrificer is, in the fitness of things, to be consecrated then with a black antelope skin which has been stated to be the *brahma-varchasa* or spiritual splendour; and it is to be carefully borne in mind that the consecrated man turns to be a Brahmin by *varna* through the procedure of the *dikshâ*. The text in question points to the idea of the new birth in unvarnished terms and compares (or rather, identifies) the consecrated soul with a foetus and discovers in the garment the likeness of a caul. His leaving off the garment as soon as the Soma plants have been bought for the purpose of the sacrifice reminds the Brâhmana author of the actual birth of the consecrated; and it may be passingly observed that this idea of a fresh birth of the sacrificer at the *dikshâ* has been endorsed by the *Panchavimsha Brâhmana* also (X. iii. 10).

After this, the sacrificer is to be offered a broad and triply plaited girdle, which he is to wear in the middle of the body, and also a staff, the significance of both of which will be discussed later on.

The *Aitareya Brâhmana* account (II. iii) is decidedly an improvement over, and extension of, the quasi-biological dissertation of the *Taittiriya Samhitâ-Brâhmana*. It dwells at the outset on some of the embryological facts. The sprinkling of water over the consecrated man is as it were the pouring of the seed and, as such, represents the very beginning of the regeneration, though in a

spiritual sense, of the sacrificer. Thereupon follow the processes of the anointment of him from head to foot, the purification with twenty-one handfuls (*pinjulis*) of *darbha* grass, and the leading to the *prâchîna-vamsha* hall which is the spiritual womb of the consecrated. He shall generally be, in accordance with the imagery followed, within the hall for a steady organismic growth, and no communication with the outsiders is allowed. He should wear a garment (probably a linen one) and an upper garment made of the black antelope skin as reminiscent of the caul and placenta and should also remain with closed fists—all of which are expected of a foetus. Keeping the fists in such a posture serves a double purpose, namely, the imitation of an embryo as well as of a child just born, and the holding of the sacrifice itself in grip with the whole pantheon connected with it. He gives up the skin and takes the final bath called *ava-bhrîta*, a ceremonial custom which is traceable among some other nationalities like the Greek and the Hebrew.¹ At this point the process of the godly birth comes to a completion.

A significant point deserves notice in this connection which has been insisted on by the *Kaushitaki Brâhmana*. It (VII. ii) prohibits the uttering of the name of the consecrated because he is then, to all intents and purposes, an embryo which cannot have a name until it is born. The same Brâhmana (XIII. ii) speaks of the food for one thus born as simply milk, and conceives (XXV. xiii) the speech of such an one as the repetition of the syllable *O* (i.e., *nyunkha*), and his is a stumbling gait (cf. also XXV. viii). These are some of the graphic representations of the new-birth ideas at initiation which may be observed even among the primitive peoples all over the world.²

This time we are taking up the *Shatapatha Brâhmana* account (III. i. 1 f.) which represents one of the latest phases of development in this particular ritualistic conception, and we may reasonably expect to find some newer accretions thereto.

The very beginning of the section tends to enlighten us on the point why the pole of

¹ See Hubert and Mauss, *Année Sociol.*, II. 86 f.

² W. S. Routledge and K. Routledge, *With a Pre-historic People, the Akikuyu of Br. E. Africa*; Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*, vol. I, p. 250; Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami*, etc., etc.

the *prâchîna-vamsha* hall should be easternly pointed. It states as a ritualistic justification that the eastern direction belongs to the gods (III. i. 1. 2; also III. i. 1. 7), and, as such, it is proper that the hall should be constructed in that fashion. There is nothing here, however, as regards the length and breadth of the hall; but this we may gather from the commentary of the *Kâtyâyana Shrauta Sutra* (VII. i. 19 f.), a later source of information, in the opinion of which it requires to be twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad. As for the covering up of the hall completely, our Brâhmana opines almost in the same strain with the *Taittiriya Samhitâ* (see above) that as the consecrated man partakes of the nature of the heavenly host and as the gods in their turn remain concealed from the mortal sight, it should be furnished with an enclosure on all sides. He is generally permitted to hold communication only with a member of the three higher castes who are eligible for sacrifice unto the gods, as they have been conceived of being born after them. Now, he must shave his hair and beard and cut off his nails in order to be pure; for the Brâhmana argues, in its own way, that the part of the body where water fails to penetrate is to be viewed as unclean, and the hair, beard, and nails are such matters. It may as such be observed from the Brâhmanic angle of vision that the rite of tonsure (*çhâula*) is connected with the rite of *dikshâ*, as is the case with that of *upanayana*. The Brâhmana ordains by way of concession that he may take any food according to his inclination prior to the ceremonial shaving. This refers, of course, to the pre-*dikshâ* period which has got affinity with the *Grihya* conception of the pre-*upanayana* stage of life of the boy when he may take anything he likes, wander at his sweet will, and talk according to his inner promptings.

As soon as he is consecrated, it is enjoined by the Brâhmanas that he should live on milk only, which is the food *par excellence* for the consecrated. A process of purification is that he is required then to take a ritualistic bath and afterwards he wears a linen garment, the different parts of which are presided over by the gods Agni, Vâyû, and so on.³ One of the reasons here

advanced for the wearing is the same as the *Taittiriya Samhitâ* supplies, namely, that the consecrated soul will be thus in a position to enjoy an uninterrupted contact and communion with all the gods concerned. It states another reason: the garment is in reality his own skin, the putting on of which is tantamount to his being endowed with his complete form. This reminds us of a piece of legend which states that the skin of the cow originally belonged to man. The latter's skin was stripped off and was given to the former and a sore was thereby caused in the man's person, which is healed up by anointing (*Shat. Brâh.*, III. i. 3. 7 f.). This Brâhmana insists on the consecrated man's being properly clothed, for as a result of failing in this he turns to be of an imperfect constitution, which is undesirable. This queer exhortation is certainly reminiscent of the Iranian scriptural ordinance which states that to move improperly clothed entails a sin of no mean weight called *kushât dubârishnih* and the Evil Spirits in the persons of Druj, Indar, and the like rejoice at the sight of such a refractory soul (cf. *Mainog*, II. 35; *Artâ Virâf*, XXV. 6; *Patet*, 10).

The garment requires to be in the first alternative a new one (*a-hata*), for it signifies undiminished vigour. The Brâhmana makes provision, somewhat reluctantly, for an already washed cloth, but it should be borne in mind, says the Brâhmana, that it must not have been washed by a washerman. The relevant *mantras* are recited by him while putting on the garment, which is aptly designated as the 'covering of consecration and penance'.

This done, the priest *adhvaryu* leads him into the consecration hall and performs the pertinent rites for him such as anointing, applying collyrium to the eyes (*Shat. Brâh.*, III. i. 3. 15; cf. *Taitt. Sam.*, VI. i. 1. 5), and purifying by means of the *darbha* grass. He is to move between the two fires, *vz âhavaniya* and *gârhapatya*, in imitation of a foetus moving inside the womb. These are some of the ideas connected with the stages

The portions of the garment thought of as presided over by the different gods according to the *Taittiriya* and the *Shatapatha* vary. The *Taitt. Brâhmana* in clear terms states that the garment belongs to all the gods: सर्वदेवस्य वासः (I. iii. 7).

³ Cf. *Taitt. Sam.*, VI. i. 1 which, however, is not identical with the *Shatapatha* passage in point.

of the new birth of the sacrificer as we have already remarked heretofore.

As in the *Taittiriya*, the *audgrabhana* (elevatory) offering with the requisite formulas has been dealt with in this Brâhmana in some detail. The Brâhmana (III. i. 4. 1) maintains that all the *mantras* connected with the rite of consecration may be generally viewed upon as uplifting in character inasmuch as all of them *en bloc* tend to lift up the consecrated man to the world of the gods. This act of lifting up the man has been furnished with a spiritual *motif* in the Brâmanic sacerdotalism.

The next step in the *dikshâ* ceremony is the girding of the consecrated, an affair which admits of very much complexity in its detail. Among the Samhitâ sources, the famous *mekhalâ* hymn of the *Atharvaveda* happens to be first to deal with the attributes and efficacies of the girdle. The *Taittiriya Samhitâ* (vi. iii. 10) indulges in meticulous discussions touching the relevant problems, and the *Shatapatha Brâhmana*, in particular, continues the line of thought as promulgated by the *Taittiriya*, which explains why the girdle should be worn in the middle. In an *artha-vâda* manner, which is peculiar to the stock of the Brâhmana treatises, it has been advocated here that strength and vigour are preserved in the middle as an effect of wearing the girdle, which is made of *shara* grass, in that place. Moreover, the navel is the seat of breath. Another favourable argument has been thus advanced: as the navel is located midway between the upper (or pure) and the lower (or impure) parts of the body, the discriminating faculty of the man grows up as a result of so wearing.⁴ As for the question why the girdle should be three-stranded, the *Taittiriya* passage answers that a man should put his breath, which is threefold, intact in the middle. The why of its being broad is that the strands are distinguishable from one another when they are made.

The *Shatapatha* also imagines the girdle, which should be hempen according to it, as an indubitable source of strength (III. ii. 1. 10), and opines that it is worn in the middle for attaining this end. It puts forth an argument in support of its threefold form: as

⁴ Cf. for the prescription of wearing the girdle in the middle, the *Bodhâyana Shrauta Sutra* (XX. ii. 6).

food and cattle may be arranged under three heads, and as the father, the mother, and the issue of their union form into a trio, it is proper that it should be only threefold. It is palpable that, although at the first sight the second alternative seems simply to be a fantastic fabrication of imagination, there is something in it worthy of attention. We have noted that the ceremony in point facilitates the spiritual regeneration of the sacrificer, and from this point of view the Brâhmana speculation in point may stand justified.⁵

Now, it should be interlaced with the *munja* grass as the latter has the power to drive away the evil spirits as it is potential like the thunderbolt, and plaited in a special manner befitting the sacrificial need. While girding himself, he addresses it as the strength of the Angirasas, thus recalling to the mind the Brâhmana legend concerning the point. Thereupon the end of his undergarment is tied up with a formula. The next thing he has got to do is to cover his head, preferably with another piece of cloth (*ushnisha*), according to the same source of information referred to above, namely, the commentary on the *Kâtyâyana Shrauta Sutra*, VII. iii. 28. This head-dress symbolizes his embryonic stage of existence.

The act of handing over a staff to the consecrated has much interest in it. The *Taittiriya Samhitâ* (VI. i. 4) records a mythic account which runs on as follows: once it came to such a pass that *Vâk* (the goddess Speech) turned away from the gods being disinclined to serve for the cause of the sacrifice and concealed herself in the trees (cf. *Kâthaka Samhitâ*, XXIII. iv. 6; *Maitrâyani Samhitâ*, III. vi. 8-10, etc.). Now, the trees in question may be tacitly assumed to be the sacrificial ones. The staff, which has been specially mentioned here as being of the *udumbara* wood prepared from those trees, is offered unto the consecrated with a view to winning for himself the lost

⁵ Be it noted that the Brâhmana mode of argument is such that it will consider the slightest point of contact and then extend its argument on that little bit of substratum. At places the tenor of the reasoning becomes patent to even a casual observer, and at some places the extraction of the real import presupposes a very careful and laboured scrutinization. This mannerism of the Brâhmana has been properly called the *bhâkta* usage.

Vâk as well as strength as an additional possession as signified by the *udumbara*.

The *Shatapatha* (III. ii. 1. 32 f.), on the other hand, characterizes the staff of the consecrated as the thunderbolt, and this is efficacious as it repels away the malicious spirits. In this context we may look up to the Avestic word *vazra* denoting the staff which also has got the same purport in view. By a queer stretch of imagination the Brahmana states that the staff is to reach the height of the mouth because power is discernible and available thus far. It also ordains the *udumbara* staff for the possession of food and strength both of which are represented by the tree. In course of a *mantra*, which is recited while erecting the *udumbara* post, it is appealed to for protection from all possible harms till the whole procedure of the sacrifice is completed. Here also we find a good significance of holding the staff as it is conceived to be playing the role of a protective agency.⁶

Silence is observed by the consecrated; and as sacrifice has been identified with speech, speechlessness during the performance of the rite implies the winning over of the sacrifice. The *Shatapatha* (III. ii. 2. 6) categorically withholds its approval from the custom of breaking silence which runs counter to the principle of the sacrificial cult.

The Brâhmana deals with the incidental (*avântara*) *dikshâ* basing it on the pattern of the *diksha majora*, which, along with some minor details of the *dikshâ* itself, we may leave out here for brevity's sake.

The study of the rite of consecration as in the above-stated accounts reveals, in short, that it is purificatory like the *barashnum* ceremony of the Zoroastrians, that it paves the way to the sacrificer's ideally passing into the heavenly world after he has been spiritually regenerated and that the similitude of a foetus has been carried far in this context, and that the whole paraphernalia when anatomized is found to symbolize this or that aspect or attribute connected with

⁶ Cf. also the *Grihyas*, viz *Gobhila*, III. i, 14, 27; *Âshvalâyana*, III. viii. 20; *Pâraskara*, II. vi. 31, etc. The prescription is found in the *Taitt. Sam.*, VI. i. 4. 2 and in the *Âshvalâyana Shrauta*, III. i. 20, *inter alia*, that a minor priest called the *maitrâvaruna* should stand with his staff inclined forward as though in a posture of striking the evil spirits. The magic element attending the use of the staff in rituals, comes to the foreground in many cases.

the new-birth idea. In a word, what is aimed at throughout the procedure of the *dikshâ*, is to confer sacrificial fitness on the intending sacrificer who turns into a Brahmin for the time being. We find an announcement couched in an unequivocal language to the effect that the two other castes are also to be looked upon as the highest caste through the sacrifice.⁷

A *Taittiriya* passage (III. i. 1) holds Agni to be the deity of the consecrated because of the palpable notion of Agni's being the god *par excellence* of the Brahmin caste as well as of the other two castes during consecration, meaning thereby their Brahminization *ipso facto* at least for the period of the performance of the ritual in question. Also there is a hint at the identification of the two, the consecrated man and Agni, as the former attains godhood through the rite (cf. *Taitt. Sam.*, I. ii. 11).

The notion of this type of re-birth can be traced, not at all dimly, in the *Rigveda* itself (VII. xxxiii. 13), and it has been transmitted from a very old epoch of human civilization. That this conception of the new birth is attended with an ethical principle also, is sufficiently corroborated by a *mantra* portion of the *Taittiriya Samhitâ*, (namely, I. ii. 10), which is a prayer formula for the acquisition of truth, as also by the tradition of the *Rigveda Brâhmanas*—the *Aitareya* and the *Kaushitaki*. The *Aitareya* (I. vi) lays down the emphatic injunction that the consecrated must speak the truth; for it thinks, truth in all its possible forms is the form of the *dikshâ*. The *Kaushitaki* (VII. iii) refers to the authoritative statement that the *dikshâ* is an exclusive right of the truth-speaking man. If we push a little this vein of the conception of re-birth, we come across some *Jaiminiya-Upanishad-Brâhmana* passages (III. ii. 8 f., and III. iii. 1 f.) wherein is found a logical extension of the idea in that it postulates three births and correspondingly three deaths.⁸ The three births relate to the father, the mother, and the sacrifice. Before a man is re-born at the ceremony of *upanayana*, it may be reasonably argued that he must die. Thereupon as he acquires fitness for sacrificial performances, he is required to undergo a course of ceremony called the *dikshâ* at which he is said to be

⁷ *Taitt. Sam.*, VI. i. 4; compare *Shat. Brah.*, III. ii. 1. 39-40; XIII. iv. 1. 3.

त्रिहं वे पुरुषो त्रियते त्रि जायते —III. iii. 1.

born as a deity and homogeneity of species is thus effected, and it is his real birth (III. iii. 4). This time also he is conceived of as having given up his life without which act he cannot, on the score of propriety of judgment, be taken as a reborn soul. Thus at the *dikshâ* he is stated by this Brâhmana to have suffered his second death. In fact, the whole thing revolves round the idea that birth presupposes death in all cases. It carries this allegory to a great detail and compares the consecrated man with a dead one from many points of view and then concludes: मृतस्य वावेष तदा रूपम्भवति—His form then (i.e., at the *dikshâ*) becomes one of the dead as it were.' And it is thus not to be wondered at that the conception of the funeral rites partakes of the nature of initiation in some aspects, since the departed soul is thereby introduced into some unseen and inscrutable realm of existence.

The reading of the new-birth idea in the *dikshâ* performance, as we have sketched above, is not without its rival theories. Hillebrandt, relying on the notion that the word *dikshâ* is derivationally connected with the root *dah*, to burn, postulates that it implies 'voluntary death by fire'; but his view lacks in historical support (*Ved. Myth.*, I. 482; III. 354 f.). 'The production of religious ecstasy' might have been also an old idea, related to the *dikshâ* which is paralleled by the cult of Bacchus as prevalent in the old-day Greece.⁹ But the most obvious significance of the rite in point has been dwelt on throughout this sketch; and this is the Brâhmanic import, though there might have been some older motive-springs as pointed to above.

⁹ Vide *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. XXXI, pp. 300 f. where Keith does not fail to see also the new-birth idea in the *dikshâ*.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

BY A. DOROTHY BARRS

1. *What is My Chief Aim in Life?*

When I was young I often felt discontented as I had not then found my goal. Owing to family misfortunes I left school at an early age, and so was ill-equipped to face life's difficulties. Some of the most impressionable years were spent in housework, cooking and caring for children. At twenty I attracted the attention of a worker in the Women's Suffrage Movement and was invited to be an organizer. Feeling very frightened and forlorn, I set out for the first time alone into the big world, to do what I then thought was a big piece of work; to help to make women politically and socially equal with men. From now on my mind began to awaken and I took every opportunity that came to me for development.

One line of thought after another was presented to me in political, industrial, social, and religious activity. I soon found that one's aim in life changed as one obtained further knowledge and enlightenment. I accepted many unorthodox ideas. I joined numerous organizations. In the early days politics chiefly interested me. I was born of

orthodox parents and so was brought up to accept their conservative outlook and to attend church and Sunday school. It was to the left wing in politics that I chiefly gave my services.

During the last war I came in touch with a Spiritual Movement which greatly inspired me. From the study of its literature I found many new ideas, and ideals for a better way of life slowly but surely awakened within me.

From the time I realized how little I knew and how much there was to know. My chief aim was to be enlightened; but side by side with this was the strong desire for material pleasure. I understood more and more intellectually, the way to achieve spiritual understanding, but for many years it remained at the intellectual level. I could not put my whole thought and attention upon meditation and the life of service because I had not then become satiated with material enjoyment. I was full of energy and life and was so busy doing things that I had no time for the silence.

One organization after another was dis-

carded, the search for truth was begun in earnest. Occasionally a new group would compel my attention. I would study with its members for a year or so and drift away once more. I had not yet found what I was seeking.

I do not think I am different from many thousands of others when I say that it was through a particularly dark patch during the present war, that I became aware of the chief aim in my life. The dawning of this realization may have been sudden, but the awareness itself resulted from a slow, steady growth within, from years of experience and of probing into life's problems. Through meditation I found I could reach some hidden power greater than my conscious mind—a power that helped me definitely to get through difficulties with ease. I discovered, too, that I was able to understand the problems of life and its purpose with greater clarity. My goal became crystal clear. I determined to know what constituted that power. Was it outside myself, was it part of my mind, if so what part? All kinds of questions and doubts arose, which were all born of the questing, conscious mind. From my studies I saw that mind was threefold: sub-conscious, conscious and super-conscious. The first is stored memories of every experience that has occurred, the second is what the brain remembers of experiences, the third is the higher mentality, composed of abstract thought and spiritual concepts.

So, if one thinks seriously and keeps the word 'progress' always in the brain-consciousness, one's aim in life is constantly changing. Each step upon life's pathway brings new experiences, these give one a wider vision of the whence, how and whither of our journey, and afford one a more intelligent view of the purpose of life. The soul begins to come into greater harmony with the conscious mind, and the secker is ever finding new adventures bringing a clearer conception of this upward and mystical path. The frustration and limitation of early days give place to anticipation and achievement, when the goal of at-one-ment with the spiritual self within is realized. Therefore has the chief aim in life become for me 'to know myself and the powers latent in man'.

2. *These Latent Powers*

The mind of man is awakening from its long sleep. No longer are we content to

dwell in the past, or to live only for the present. Constantly we are asking ourselves 'What of the Future?' What are the methods which man might use in his quest in probing the mysteries of the unknown years ahead? The one who has developed the logic and reasoning power of concrete thought will seek along known scientific lines. He will observe facts, and from these facts he will postulate a hypothesis. Having seen his theories materialize, he will deduce by means of reason and logic that the world is governed by certain specified laws, and as he observes more and more those laws at work he will construct a plan of life. Furthermore, he will continue his investigation beyond the physical plane, having come to the conclusion that there are other worlds to study and conquer. He will find that the form through which life manifests in each world within this planetary scheme of evolution, now under discussion, is built up on the density of the atom, which is the basic substance of all forms of every plane of existence. The life permeating these worlds can function only through a body made up of atoms being of the density of matter to which these worlds vibrate. The more dense the matter the slower the rate of vibration of everything contained within its orbit. Hence the only point of difference in all planes of existence is the rate of vibration or the density of its atom.

In the world there have been and are scientists who have reached the limitations of the physical atom and have penetrated a more subtle grade of matter which they call etheric. We are realizing that it is but a step between the physicist and the metaphysician. The physicists deal with the physical atom and observed phenomena from which they deduce facts; they accept as fact only that which is observed through the senses. The metaphysicians deal with lesser known phenomena observed by the mind, and discuss subjects beyond the range of ordinary knowledge and perceive phenomena through senses beyond the five in normal use. They postulate a continuous progress through the law of evolution, with the development of organs for contacting the finer degrees of matter and finer rates of vibration of other planes of existence. The latter type of scientist calls these planes or worlds the etheric, the astral,

and the mental. Spirit and matter exist on all planes but with different rates of vibration because the law of opposites operates wherever life is expressed through form. At the present time many more persons are developing the power within themselves whereby they can investigate these facts advanced by thinkers such as Jeans, Eddington, Lodge, Crooks and others.

It is true that the development of senses other than the five we are accustomed to use lends itself to fraud and self-delusion unless care and thought are exercised in our use of them. There are many credulous people who will accept everything given them if it purports to come from a world other than the material one in which the majority function. This unscientific attitude on the part of some is no reason why all investigation on these lines should be ignored or treated with contempt.

If all observed phenomena of life and form are the result of a law of continuous progress—which law men call evolution—then mind is also part of this evolving process. There can be no limit to what the mind can achieve and the heights to which humanity can rise during its course of evolutionary progress as the ages roll on.

Mankind in the mass, it has been said, has now reached the stage of adolescence in its journey towards perfection. This means that we have developed the physical body to some extent but not to its full maturity; that the emotions are awake but not fully controlled; that the mind is able to function but in a very limited degree compared with the possibilities of the future; and that

whereas the spiritual consciousness is but embryonic for some of us, for others it begins to stir in its age-long sleep, and for a few enlightened souls it has become aware of the grandeur and beauty of life.

The only safe way for the individual to unfold the gifts of the spirit, which will enable him or her to look into the future as well as to scan the pages of the life history of humanity, is by slow development until spiritual awareness has been attained. This means hard and persistent effort in the laboratory of one's own mind and heart, through meditation and the religious way of life. When thought, emotion, desire, and action are controlled by the will and the soul can take command instead of the personality, the latter becomes blended with the spirit within and then only can it be said 'I am the captain of my soul'.

Through observation and analogy, and the understanding of and living in accordance with spiritual laws—which scientists designate natural law—man can awaken special powers within himself. This advance in evolution will enable him to function consciously in worlds other than the material and to respond to finer rates of vibration. These powers are known as clairvoyance, clairaudience, spiritual perception and inspiration. It is not the purpose of this article to discuss fully these gifts which can be psychic and spiritual, but I would point out that at the present stage of human development it is wiser to awaken the spiritual rather than the psychic powers, and to remember the injunction 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all other things shall be added unto you'.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Swami Atulananda's article gives a concise but vivid account of *Swami Vivekananda in the West*. In *The Future of Hinduism*, Swami Adidevananda discusses the principles we have to follow in order to keep up our distinct individuality. Prof. Shrivastava gives a brief but brilliant exposition of *The Philosophy of Devotion in the Bhagavadgita*. Prof. Jagadishchandra Mitra has given a learned

account of *The Shrauta Diksha*. *The Spiritual Life* is an account of the first stirrings of the true religious spirit that seems to be taking place in even the ordinary man and woman in the West.

RE-ORGANIZATION OF HINDU SOCIETY

A fervent call to all classes of Hindus to close up their ranks and work together, with

determination and faith, for the resuscitation of their social life was made by Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookherji, addressing the annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha. He boldly pointed out certain evils that beset our social and national life and for which Hindus themselves are responsible. It was no exaggeration when he observed,

It is no use our merely blaming the British or a section of aggressive Muslim party for attacking our rights or obstructing the liberty of our country. We have also to ask ourselves whether we, on our part, have contributed the best that we can for building up a complete national life, consistent with the highest ideals of Hinduism. Let it not be forgotten that it is our own weakness, our narrowness, our petty selfishness which strengthen our enemy; and it is our paramount duty to set our own house in order.

Some persons attribute the present deplorable state of Hindu society to purely extraneous causes, political and communal. But in these few words, the well-known Hindu leader sums up the problems of the Hindus today. There are other factors which impede the progress of the social and economic life of the Hindus. But these need not be disproportionately overstated, and the importance of our own duty minimized. Party spirit and want of organization, meaningless discussions and quarrels over little details—these have divided the Hindus and weakened Hindu society. There is a marked disparity between theory and practice, and self-sacrificing men and women are becoming fewer in number. In addition to these there are caste prejudices and the practice of untouchability.

Society is not restricted to the high caste educated upper classes. There are the masses who, though poor and uneducated, form the majority and are the mainstay of the social structure. Any scheme of social reconstruction will have to actively concern itself with the amelioration of the condition of the masses on whose labour and co-operation society depends. Untouchability, and the restriction in accepting converts back into Hindu society have done great harm to Hindu solidarity. These problems were not actively taken up so long by influential leaders who were pre-occupied more with political activities. As a consequence, more Hindus from the lower classes are being persuaded by their reactionary leaders to renounce Hinduism. We are glad to find

that Dr. Mookherji has unequivocally declared that the foremost social programme of the Hindus should be the removal of untouchability, in whatever form it may be found. He has rightly pointed out that no society can exist if it deliberately neglects particular sections and relegates them to positions of inferiority; hence, he said

Our first and foremost social programme must be the complete removal of untouchability and to regard every Hindu as enjoying equal social status....

And analysing the causes and consequences of this social evil, he continued,

But have we ever asked ourselves why it is that such a huge number of people left the Hindu faith and took to another religion? I shall exclude those who were forced to do so by the fear of sword, but surely not an inconsiderable number of our brethren also left because of the inequities and hardships that confronted them in their own society. Untrue to our highest traditions, we occupied ourselves with outward forms and practices and forgot the absorbing capacity of our own religion. This rigidity destroyed our strength and solidarity and contributed to our downfall. Not only must we widen our base but also unhesitatingly take back all who are prepared to return to our fold.

His sound and timely advice to Hindus was to reorganize society on the basis of equal rights to education, congregational worship, and other necessities of life for all irrespective of caste distinctions. Appealing for unity amongst all ranks, he strongly urged the Hindus to cultivate the true religious outlook, and reassert the principle of spiritual equality in the practical spheres of activity.

Let us frankly recognize that, if we are today in a confused and morbid condition, it is because we have not been socially loyal to our own religion which requires us to look upon every individual as a child of God.

Unity of purpose and readiness to sacrifice for the common weal are the source of strength of a well-knit social body. Resurgent Hindu society should seek to achieve energy and solidarity through co-ordination of will power and enhancement of efficiency of individual elements. As a healthy human body can withstand the attack of morbid bacilli, even so a well-organized social frame, rebuilt on a spiritual foundation and free from internal weakness or disorder, will be able to gather immense power of resistance to alien onslaught, and remain unconquerable.

THE PURPOSE OF PHILOSOPHY

That the dominant note of Indian philosophy today as of old is the synthesis of the theoretical and the practical sides of human nature was the theme of the presidential address by Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari to the Indian Philosophical Congress, reproduced in a recent number of the *Philosophical Quarterly*. He reiterated the fact that philosophy in India was not divorced from life, but permeated every phase of human thought and action, thus freeing men from superstition and fanaticism. Indian philosophy is

both speculative and spiritual, and is truly called a *darshana*. It seeks to re-interpret the philosophic heritage of India in terms of the Western methods of scientific and philosophic criticism, and thus makes its own specific contribution to philosophy as a whole.

Western science and Indian philosophy are coming closer to discover their common features and appreciate each other's standpoint. The synthetic and rational basis of Indian philosophy has served to create a better understanding between the thinkers of the East and West by demonstrating that the political ideals of the West can be spiritualized.

Modern civilization, with its immense material wealth and power, has yet failed to make man master of his passions. Brutal instincts hold their sway, and the higher values of life are neglected. The learned Professor diagnoses the malady of present-day civilization and remarks:

The social philosophy of today reveals the tragic fact that culture and civilization are on the very verge of collapse owing to the decadence of faith in the moral values of life and the dignity of per-

sonality. . . . Modern life suffers from racialism in social life, sectional thinking in science, rationalism in politics, and fanaticism in religion.

What is the remedy? The solution lies in cultivating the philosophical outlook

that will combine the seriousness of the thinker with the social virtues of the man of action.

Disarmament and what is said to be a 'complete victory' over the forces of evil are found to be ineffective while man's propensity to self-aggrandizement remains uneliminated, and so long as he is not spiritually awakened. This awakening can come from a philosophy of life which will urge him to strive for the permanent values and lead him on to something more than mere satisfaction of the senses.

He has briefly stated the ethical and religious foundations of Vedanta philosophy, thus refuting the charge that Indian philosophy is world-negating and encourages an attitude of indifference to the sufferings of others. In fact, the aim of philosophy is not to make man give up happiness but to let him know what true and eternal happiness is. The distinction between religion and philosophy is fast disappearing, yielding place to the philosophy of religion. Hinduism, unlike Western thought, has not exaggerated such distinction. The modern philosophy of religion, he says,

seeks to avoid the evils of dogmatism and fanaticism characteristic of institutional religion on the one hand, or agnosticism or free thought on the other by insisting on the authority of personal experience.

Religion without philosophy may result in a mass of superstition, and philosophy without the intuitive experience of religion may tend to become mere intellectual speculation.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDIA AND CHINA. BY S. RADHAKRISHNAN. Published by Hind Kitabs, 267, Hornby Road, Bombay. Pp. 168. Price Rs. 6.

At the invitation of the Chinese Government Sir S. Radhakrishnan visited China in May 1944 and delivered some illuminating lectures in and around Chungking on the religion and culture of China and Indo-Chinese cultural relations. This book is based on notes of these lectures. Most of us in India know more about the Western civilization than about the Chinese, though there

is much in common between India and China. It was most appropriate that a worthy scholar and well-known philosopher of our country, like Sir Radhakrishnan was invited to visit China as India's cultural ambassador in order to promote mutual understanding and friendly co-operation between the two countries. In these lectures Dr. Radhakrishnan spoke to the Chinese on their past greatness and achievements in the field of religion and education; and he has made it clear to them—and to the world—that whatever politi-

cal vicissitudes the two countries may have passed through, India and China have a common spiritual background. 'Our countries have been linked together from before the Christian era in matters of learning and culture. . . . They have similar ideals of human life and fellowship.' In his 'Introduction' to these lectures, Dr. Radhakrishnan acquaints the readers with the general life of the Chinese people, their educational institutions, their religious practices, and political ideologies.

The lectures appear under seven different headings. The first is 'China and India'. The second is devoted to a discussion of the 'Chinese ideals of education'. The principles of education introduced by Confucius have inspired the Chinese youth to strive to develop such human qualities as humility, sincerity, good manners, and tolerance for neighbours. Teaching and research are the two aims of Confucius. The following two sections are devoted to 'Religion in China', Confucianism and Taoism. Referring to the predominantly humanist and ethical teachings of Confucius, Dr. Radhakrishnan observed that Confucianism was uninspiring as a religion on account of its failing to satisfy the metaphysical needs and spiritual aspirations of man, which were partly fulfilled by Taoism and Buddhism. Taoism, which was similar to Indian thought in many respects, gave China a transcendental mysticism. But it neglected social well-being, and encouraged a sort of fatalism and indifference which were mistaken for renunciation. Buddhism and its influence on China form the subject-matter of the Lectures contained in the next two sections. Chinese thought, particularly Taoism, was greatly influenced by Buddhism, and China readily accepted the teachings of Buddha. The learned lecturer has given a greatly illuminating and clear exposition of the spread of Buddhism in China, and the growth of the different schools of Buddhism. He told his Chinese audience that they had to work for religious revival by truly following the methods of meditation and work as taught by Buddha. In China, as in India, he felt religion was becoming more mechanical and formal, which tendency ought to be checked. As the war continues in Europe and in Asia, Dr. Radhakrishnan has concluded these lectures with an appropriate subject for discussion, 'War and world security'. It is a fascinating survey of the complicated international situation which is becoming more complex week by week as the march of events shows. Addressing the Chinese people, who are themselves engaged in war, Dr. Radhakrishnan has presented a clear and correct picture of the unfortunate and regrettable attitude of the victors of the last War towards the vanquished and other causes which have led to the present war. He suggests the setting up of a commonwealth of nations with equality of opportunity for every one. A world-community of free nations, with no racial discrimination, alone can ensure world security and a just peace.

The Chinese are a great people with a rich and

ancient cultural heritage. Their morality is quite strict and refined. Dr. Radhakrishnan observed, during his visit, that though the force of ancient customs persisted in modern Chinese life, present-day China was gradually losing the distinctive trails of her ancient civilization owing to the penetration of Western culture. Foreseeing this Dr. Sun Yat-Sen had said, 'Ours might be revolt against the Eur-American civilization, but it will be the assertion of moral enlightenment against craftiness'. As a true well-wisher of the Chinese, Dr. Radhakrishnan has not hesitated to make it clear to them that in trying to imitate the West, if China abandons her essential spiritual values, inherited from the past, she will be restless and unhappy. China and India have many common problems. Both have important parts to play in the post-war world. These 'China lectures' will serve to strengthen our ties of friendship with the Chinese by each people getting to know more about the other. We recommend them to every Indian lover of China.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FOUR SCHOOLS OF VAIDIC PHILOSOPHY. BY A. S. IYENGAR. Published by V. S. Iyengar, Matunga, Bombay. Pp. 30. Price Re. 1.

The author, an official of the Bombay Secretariat, has done well in bringing out his excellent, though concise, exposition of the 'Fundamentals of the four schools of Vaidic philosophy' in a separate booklet. It was originally written as an 'introduction' to a philosophical work in Sanskrit by a well-known South Indian scholar. The Brahmasutras epitomize the teachings of the Upanishads, and the great *Āchāryas* have written commentaries on them, interpreting them in different ways in accordance with the fundamental principles of their own schools of philosophy. In this resume, the author states briefly the fundamental principles of the four well-known schools of Indian philosophy, viz, Advaita of Shankara, Vishishtādvaita of Ramanuja, Dvaita of Madhva, and Suddhādvaita of Vallabha. The last school is popular more in Western India than in other parts, and is akin, in many respects, to that of Chaitanya who was a contemporary of Vallabha. Of these schools, the author is of the opinion that Ramanuja's Vaishnavism is the best and appeals to him most; he tries to make out that Ramanuja excels over the others, including Shankara. It is true Ramanuja is the leading Vaishnava philosopher whom most other dualistic sects have followed, directly or indirectly. From this it does not follow that the other *Āchāryas* were either wrong or inferior. Each commentator has dealt with texts of the Shrutis in a way which some others think not justified or clear. As the writer observes these differences between the *Āchāryas* do not proceed from spite, and notwithstanding these there are many points common to all of them. Differences are not in essence but only in expression. In the life of Ramakrishna Paramahansa we find the working out of the harmony that is the background of the different systems of thought. Dvaita, Vishishtādvaita, and Advaita are but three stages through which individuals have to advance to Truth.

The Advaita philosophy does not suit the vast majority of people as it is difficult to understand and practise, and cannot appeal to all. A true seeker of truth will appreciate the author's attitude that it is unprofitable in these days to quarrel on the basis of hair-splitting arguments when we are aware of the agreement on most fundamental points of the different schools.

TEA INDUSTRY IN THE PUNJAB. By GURDIT CHAND. *Published by Rama Krishna and Sons, Lahore. Pp. 152. Price Rs. 3.*

It is rather an unusual book. Though tea is widely grown and commonly used in India and Ceylon, the majority of people know very little regarding the tea industry. The author, a research scholar in economics, has made a thorough study of the working of tea plantations in the Kangra Valley of the Punjab, with special reference to labour problems. It is a matter of common knowledge that the life of the labourers in tea gardens is strenuous, while their economic condition is far from satisfactory. The author

reveals in the book the sad plight of millions of these poor people who live in 'dirty hovellike buildings' and receive petty compensation for their hard work. In these pages is presented an accurate and brief account of the growth and expansion of the tea industry in India and the Punjab, the different processes of cultivation and manufacture of tea, and labour problems. His suggestions concerning wages, housing, general health, and regulated work will, we hope, be found useful by tea-planters in ameliorating the condition of their labourers. The author says he has had to conduct his enquiry under certain difficulties such as unwillingness of the tea-planters to co-operate and dearth of literature on the subject. But this has only enhanced the worth of his laudable attempt in furnishing so much information on the different aspects of the tea industry. We congratulate the author on his pioneering enterprise in endeavouring to collect the relevant statistical and other data in the preparation of this work.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (MAURITIUS BRANCH)

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1944

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch), Port Louis, Mauritius, on the working of the Branch for the year 1944 shows that the Mission work in that distant Centre continued to progress in spite of difficulties brought on by the war. Besides daily worship, the Ashrama held weekly religious classes and occasional discourses in English and Tamil. The Mission Sevashrama treated more than 3750 patients during the year. The Desai Anathalaya (Hindu orphanage) under the Mission gave shelter to 16 inmates of whom 11 were boys. The Library and Reading Room worked on a small scale; and the Institute of Culture held classes for teaching Indian languages. The Mission conducted two night schools, containing over a hundred students in each. We are glad to note that the public of Mauritius, both official and non-official, and His Excellency the Governor have sympathetically associated themselves with the Mission work that is being carried on in this Island.

CELEBRATION OF THE FOUNDATION DAY OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADA PITHA AND THE PRIZE DISTRIBUTION OF THE VIDYAMANDIRA (BELUR COLLEGE)

On the occasion of the celebration of the Foundation Day of the Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Pitha and the Annual Prize Distribution of the Vidyamandira (College) at Belur, a public meeting was held in the College premises on Saturday, the 10th February, 1945 at 4-30 p.m. with Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookherjee in the chair.

After the presentation of the Secretary's report about the progress of the institution in its College, Technical, and other departments during the last four years, Swami Sharvananda of the Ramakrishna Mission gave a brilliant exposition of the ideas and ideals for which the College stood. Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookherjee in his presidential address emphasized the need of religious instructions in educational institutions. He urged that unless education were based on religion, there was hardly any possibility of changing the present regrettable state of affairs of the world. He drew the pointed attention of the authorities of the institution to the responsibility that lay on their shoulders in running the Vidyamandira according to the noble ideals of Swami Vivekananda. He exhorted the students to fully utilize the opportunities they had got there for the formation of their life and character and wanted them to be the future heroes of the country. He further added that this residential College where there were adequate facilities for an all-round training of the students was the proper type of institution wanted in the country at the present day. In conclusion he remarked that no country could develop its own system of education until and unless it was free. He felt that if India was to get her rightful place in her own homeland, the people of the country should rebuild themselves according to the ideals laid down by Swami Vivekananda who was no doubt a great man of his times. Dr. Mookherjee asked the students to create and develop a burning resolve in their minds to serve the countrymen leaving aside all sorts of slogans. The Swami's message, he said, was 'to live and let live' and his was a message for the whole world.