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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Swami Saradananda's last illness and death—His unique life—Asvini Kumar Datta of Barisal—Sri Ramakrishna's method of initiation—Harmony of religions as taught by the Master—How he is being accepted by many as a divine incarnation—Reference to some of his Mohammedan devotees.

(Place: Belur Monastery. Time: 3 September 1927)

It was only a few days ago that Swami Saradananda, who had been like a mother to the Order, passed away and was united with the Master. The Sadhus and devotees were all overwhelmed with grief at his death; Swami Shivananda was especially so.

Mahapurushji became unusually serious since he received the news of Swami Saradananda's apoplexy. He had great anxiety written on his face. He was restless all the time, and constantly made inquiries about Swami Saradananda's illness. If any one would approach him for initiation or in connection with other matters he would quietly say, 'Not now—I am not in a good mood because of Swami Saradananda's illness.' When he would speak he would do so mostly about Swami Saradananda.

Shortly before the cremation of Swami Saradananda's body, Mahapurushji once softly said: 'Swami Saradananda was fond of bathing in the Ganges. Bathe his body in the waters of the Ganges.'

It was Saturday. In the afternoon a crowd of devotees assembled in Swami Shivananda's room. Although the Swami was grief-stricken, he made inquiries about the well-being of every one. Very soon the conversation turned upon Swami Saradananda. Mahapurushji said: 'Alas, Swami Saradananda had visited the monastery at Belur about a week before he became ill on Saturday. There was a meeting of the Governing Body of the Mission the day he visited the monastery. He said to me: "See, my body is getting worse. I am afraid it will not last many days." I never thought then he would pass away so soon.

'He was indeed a blessed soul. The Holy Mother was unusually gracious to him. That is why he had such a glorious death. Just as throughout his life he did good to many—moulding the lives of some and bringing the light of the Spirit to others—so during the last few days of his illness he fulfilled the desires of many devotees by giving them an

opportunity to serve him. Ordinarily he would not allow any one to do any personal service for him, but think what service the boys rendered him when he was sick! They would not attain as much benefit by twelve years' spiritual discipline as they did by this service. He remained in that state only to fulfil the desires of the devotees to serve him. How many from how many places came to see him and had the opportunity of serving him! He did not leave any one disappointed.

'He was a great Yogi. Giving up the body in Samadhi, he went straight to the Master and the Holy Mother. It does not at all matter in what way the body dies. The scriptures say it does not in any way affect the inner consciousness of a knower of Brahman, even if he passes out of the body in coma or swoon, or in any other way. After the first attack of apoplexy he seemed for some days to have no external consciousness, but inwardly he was fully conscious. I went to see him only once. I did not go again because I could not stand the sight of his sickness.

'When Swami Akhandananda addressed him saying, "Brother, brother!" he opened his eyes and then again closed them. When Dr. Ghosh called him by name he looked at him. Dr. Ghosh said, "Sarat (Swami Saradananda), would you drink some tea?" He expressed his unwillingness by shaking his head. When asked if he would have Charanamrita (holy water), he showed consent by nodding his head. The holy water was given to him and he drank it.'

After a brief silence Mahapurushji continued: 'During the last few years of his life Swami Saradananda especially practised intensive meditation and spiritual discipline. After bathing in the Ganges he would sit for meditation and not move from his seat until one or half past one in the afternoon. He would have an interval during which he would drink a cup of tea, sitting right there in his meditation seat.

'He was unusually kind to the devotees. To women devotees especially he was a

haven of peace. A little after four in the afternoon they would start coming and he would give them advice untiringly until late in the evening. Later there would be a crowd of men devotees who would stay until late at night. The door of his compassionate heart was ever open. Ah, what a wonderful life he lived—serene, peaceful, patient, and profound! We never saw Swami Saradananda lose his temper. He had only love and compassion for all. Now that he is united with the Master and the Holy Mother he is enjoying supreme blessedness and from that realm is constantly helping the devotees.

'He and others like him were in Sri Ramakrishna always, but for some time, for the purpose of doing good to the world, they embodied themselves and lived here on this earth as men. As a matter of fact, they do not exist apart from the Master. Those who think about them are actually thinking about the Master himself. Many did not have the privilege of seeing Sri Ramakrishna. Perhaps they have seen Swamiji, Swami Brahmananda, and Swamis Premananda, Turiyananda, or Saradananda. Perhaps they have seen some one of the inner circle of the Master's disciples and are devoted to them. This love and devotion will surely reach the Master.'

It was about eight o'clock at night. Some devotees came to Swami Shivananda's room, and one of them was from Barisal. As the conversation turned on Asvini Babu¹ of Barisal, the Swami said, 'Asvini Babu was a man of great influence in Barisal—your part of the country. We saw his father Braja Mohan Datta visit the Master. He was a sub-judge. He came to the Master and begged for his blessings when he was planning to found a college. He was a fine man.'

A devotee: 'Maharaj, did the Master give his blessings in secular affairs like this?'

Swami: 'Of course, he did. He was a man of great compassion. He would certainly give his blessings to any one who sought them earnestly for a noble undertaking.'

Devotee: 'Did the Master initiate people?'

¹Asvini Kumar Datta.

Swami: 'Yes, of course he did, but in rare cases. However, his initiation was not of the ordinary type. He would rouse the spiritual consciousness of a disciple by a touch or by writing the sacred Mantra on his tongue, or perhaps he would transform the disciple's mind by mere will. Being a world teacher his ways of initiation were unusual. "A world teacher gives the Mantra in one's heart and an ordinary teacher gives the Mantra in one's ear." Sri Ramakrishna would quicken the spiritual impulse and awaken the divinity within by presenting different forms of spiritual disciplines to different aspirants. He was not one-sided. Whatever one's path might be, he would receive help from the Master.

'With the passing of days we realize why the Master practised various forms of spiritual discipline. All religions are true and through all of them people can realize God, the embodiment of Truth. He did not practise different religions in order just to discover and realize the harmony of religions. His spiritual practice had a deeper meaning. That is why men belonging to different sects of Hinduism have made him their ideal. He is also the ideal of many Christians. They worship him as Jesus and you must remember this was not the result of somebody's preaching. Tell me who can preach Sri Ramakrishna? Who can reveal the one who is Truth itself? The Lord says in the Gita, "Him the sun cannot reveal, nor the moon, nor the fire."

'You would be surprised to hear that many Mohammedan men and women in these days worship him as Mohammed, the messenger of God. One year I visited the Nilgiri hills. The devotees there arranged for my residence in a bungalow at Coonoor. Learning that I was there, a Mohammedan doctor and his family came all the way from Bombay to see me. After inquiry I found that he was a famous physician of Bombay who had been educated in England and had a very good practice. He was accompanied by his wife and also two sons, who were very handsome in appearance.

'In the course of conversation the doctor said to me, "We have come to see you, but my wife is especially eager to speak to you." Saying this, he moved to the adjoining room. His wife saluted me with great devotion and disclosed many intimate things related to her spiritual life. Since childhood she has been a devotee of Krishna. She worships Krishna as a child and occasionally has visions of Him. After reading the Master's life and teachings she has become very much devoted to him. It is her conviction that her Chosen Deity Krishna has been born again as Sri Ramakrishna.

'I noticed that she had profound love and devotion for the Master. She was quite intensive in her spiritual practices and the Master had blessed her in many ways. When taking leave of me, she knelt down and bowed to me, saying, "Please bless me by touching my head with your hand. You had the blessed privilege of associating with Sri Ramakrishna and you were blessed by him. Please touch my head with the hand that once touched Sri Ramakrishna!" And how she wept! I felt in my heart again and again: "Glory be unto the Lord! Blessed is Thy power! Who will understand Thee?" The hymn describing the greatness of Shiva came to my mind: "O Lord, I do not know Thy nature nor what Thou art. Whatever Thou art, Mahadeva (Great God), my salutations to Thee again and again."

'Actually, we have to say the same thing regarding the Master. Who will understand him? I have met several other Mohammedan devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. One I met in Cuddapah—he is highly esteemed and has received the title of Khan Bahadur from the British Government. He belongs to the Sufi sect of Islam, but is very devoted to the Master. In Cuddapah is a little Ashrama dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. The Khan Bahadur, the local collector (also a Mohammedan), and several others were responsible for the founding of this Ashrama. We stayed there for a few days. Almost every morning and evening I would find the Khan Bahadur seated in a corner of the

shrine in deep humility, intently looking at the picture of the Master on the altar. He is convinced that the prophet Mohammed was born as Sri Ramakrishna for the good of the world. It is beyond our comprehension how the Master is blessing people in different ways.'

A devotee: 'Maharaj, we are attached to the world. We can hardly think about him, let alone do spiritual practice. What will happen to us?'

Swami: 'My child, if you cannot perform spiritual practice, you can at least think of him and sing his glory. The world has not bound you day and night. If you cannot do even this much, how can you expect any result? In any event, one should feel drawn towards God; somehow or other one should be devoted to Him. Without some longing for God spiritual progress is impossible. As the Master used to say, "So long as the child is busy with his lollipop, he is forgetful of his mother and she attends to her duties; but the moment the child tries of the lollipop, throws it away, and begins crying for the mother, she drops everything, runs to the

child, and takes him in her arms." So long as you too remain attached to the lollipop of this world, you will not see Him. It will be most unfortunate if you do not avail yourself of the blessed privilege of being born a human being. In order to bring home this idea, the Master would often sing this song:

O my mind, you do not know cultivation. The field of the human mind remains untilled. If only cultivated, it would have yielded a golden harvest.

'In the song is this line:

A harvest that will not be forfeited today or even a century hence—

O my mind, gather the harvest to your heart's content by all means!

Devotee: 'We hardly comprehend the Master; rather, we like association with you. If we have not met you for some time, we feel a yearning—that is why we come. We often think about you and long to see you. That is as much as we can do.'

Swami: 'We do not know anything other than the Master. It is he who abides within and outside. He is all in all. Remember this, that we are his children, sheltered at his feet. By thinking about us you will be thinking of the Master.'

TRUE KNOWLEDGE

BY SAINT KABIR

True Knowledge (*jnana*) is the living experience of the Indwelling Spirit;
 naught else is it.
 Not clinging to things in all the four directions, one should remain happy within
 himself.
 Many a wiseacre has made a holocaust of his life in brooding over the riddle of
 existence;
 He (methinks) should be adjudged the true knower of Truth whom passions touch not.

—Translated by Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A.

SALVATION IN THE THEISTIC FORMS OF RELIGION

BY THE EDITOR

'Relinquishing the fruits of all righteous and unrighteous actions take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate you from all sins; grieve not.'—Gita, XVIII. 66.

I

In Advaita Vedanta we have seen that Mukti or salvation comes from the knowledge of the identity of the individual self with the universal Self. This knowledge, however brought about in the individual, is the *sine qua non* of freedom or salvation, and that all actions only help in clearing the obstacles that bar the path to the knowledge of the Self. Also the knowledge of the Self or Brahman is the only means of final and complete freedom; our individualities are all only apparent existences, and only when we sink our individualities in the Infinite do we really become free. Then only we reach the Abhaya, the Goal in which there is no more fear. But the non-Advaitins dread this extinction of personality and shrink from it as from death; they are 'Abhaye bhaya-darsinah,' people who see fear in the Fearless. To such persons, therefore, who cling to this personality or individuality or the idea of being Empirical Selves, and do not desire or would deny the possibility of any final merging with the Infinite, salvation or Mukti has a different meaning. We shall examine some of the ideas of salvation current among non-Advaitins.

At the outset it would be better if we begin with the ideas of salvation and the life after death in those religions which do not accept the Indian doctrine of reincarnation in any form whatsoever. To this class will belong all religions that do not accept the idea that the Empirical Self will again return to this earthly life and be born in a new body whether human or non-human.

The common conceptions of humanity that the virtuous should be duly rewarded and the wicked duly punished form the basis of the conceptions underlying the eschatology of all religions. But in religions which hold

to the belief that man comes to this earth but once and leaves it never to return, hell and heaven or similar conceptions must have a place in order to satisfy the demands of justice according to human standards. The idea of mercy also comes in as a corollary to the ideas of might and justice. So, while the Supreme God is an almighty and just ruler, and deals out a place in heaven or hell to all individual souls in accordance with the deserts of their virtuous and wicked deeds, His grace may step in any moment and save those whom His gracious eyes have happened to light on, irrespective of their good or bad deeds, and give them an honoured place in His heaven.

There is a bewildering variety of views of this future for the Empirical Selves. The conceptions of the nature and power of the God who rules this universe and metes out the rewards of the actions of the individual soul are also not uniform. The ideas of heaven and hell have also undergone changes with the lapse of time even among the same people professing one faith.

The Osiris-Religion of Egypt conceived the soul of the dead man ushered into the judgement hall of Osiris, where his deeds were weighed in a balance. Those who passed the test went to serve Osiris in the fields of Earn. In the pre-Hellenic period the Greeks believed in Elysium or the Islands of the Blessed. Orphism taught that the initiated were rewarded by a happy life in the Elysian fields, while the wicked were cast into Tartarus. In Homer (*Od.*, iv. 563) the Elysian plain is a land of perfect happiness ruled by Rhadamanthys, at the end of the earth on the banks of the river Oceanus. Only those specially favoured by the gods enter here. In Homer we read of such favourites of the gods being carried body and soul into

heaven and made immortal. In some quarters Mt. Olympus in Greece was also supposed to be the home of the Greek gods. The souls of men after death were supposed to live in Hades or hell, somewhere inside the earth under Pluto, the king of that region.

Zoroastrianism also believed in heaven and hell, and the ultimate victory of Ormuzd over Ahriman, that is, of good over evil. In the Avesta, Shraoshi, the guide of souls, is said to lead the virtuous over the heavenly bridge to the gate of Paradise. Jewish eschatology was also largely influenced by this Persian faith.

To the Jews, the god of Israel protected Israel from its enemies, and saved it from sin and destruction, even by occasional chastisement if necessary. Salvation, for the Jews, meant at first salvation of the nation. Salvation for the individual was not a normal conception. Israel, the chosen of the Lord, was alone to be saved, and 'the finality and eternity of this condition of salvation, that which constitutes the blessedness of the sacred people was the presence of God in the midst of them—this last point corresponding to the Christian idea of heaven.' At first, individuals were promised only long life, but afterwards this was extended to mean immortality also. 'The resurrection, which appears at first as a revival of the dead nation is afterwards promised for the pious individuals so that they too shall share in the national restoration.' In David, xii. 2, we find, however, promises of a retributive life; and after the universal judgement day there is resurrection of the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt as well as of the righteous to everlasting life. Salvation is possible only through miraculous divine acts and not by any effort of man.

II

In the New Testament we find the inter-mediating figure of Christ taking the place of the invisible God. 'He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father.' The teaching of Jesus centres in the idea of 'The

Kingdom of God,' which is already present in the teacher himself, but also has a future as regards its completion. The Jewish ideas of resurrection are continued but with slight variations. Christ is expected to come a second time, and the object of this second visit is the execution of judgement by Christ, both individual and universal. This judgement presupposes the resurrection confirmed by Christ according to the Fourth Gospel, not only as an individual and spiritual renovation (John, v. 25-26), but also as a universal physical resuscitation. On the intermediate state Jesus does not speak clearly. There is a future punishment for the wicked in Gehenna. He uses Hades, Paradise, and Gehenna in the current sense of the words. In John, xiv. 2, 3 and xvii. 24 hopes are entertained of an immediate entrance of the just into the Father's house and glory. A final reward for the righteous and final penalty for the wicked are assumed; and grades of reward and punishment are recognized. But salvation is made contingent upon faith in Jesus Christ (Matt. x. 32-33) and service of his brethren (Matt. xxv. 40). This faith in the redeeming power of Jesus Christ is the central doctrine in the faith of all schools of Christians. 'For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his father's and of the holy angels.' (Luke, ix. 26). 'I said therefore unto you that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am *he* ye shall die in your sins.' (John, viii. 24).

On the judgement day the Son of man will come in all his glory with all the holy angels. He will be seated on a glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations. But he will separate the sheep, i.e. the believers in Christ, from the goats, i.e. the unbelievers. He will say to the faithful, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' While to the unbelievers, he will say, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and

his angels.' Thus the wicked unbelievers 'shall go into everlasting punishment but the righteous unto life eternal.' The moral is obvious: believe in Christ or be doomed to eternal damnation.

In later times the inadequacy of Christ's teachings with regard to the future life became apparent to thoughtful men. The existence of Satan alongside with God was one difficulty. How could a righteous and all-powerful God allow 'the arch-fiend, aided by legions of minor devils, to go about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, with constant access to men, nay, their most inward minds, whispering evil thoughts, stimulating animal passions, and however often driven away by holy prayer, ever renewing his assaults on poor souls, up to the last moment of mortal agony?' Then again there was the question of the everlasting penalties of hell for the wicked irrespective of the gravity of their crimes and without any hope of final redemption—a doctrine repugnant to the moral sense of civilized man. Then there is the orthodox doctrine of the most perfect identity between the resurrection body and the material body—a doctrine which is belied by every fact that is known to modern science.

Roman Catholics while holding fast to eternal punishment allowed the possibility of mitigation. Besides, to the believer in Christ or the Virgin was given the opportunity of repentance and thereby earning complete remission of sins and a place in Paradise; by the unanimous consent of theologians of all schools of Christian thought, it is considered enough to convert a sinner from a bond-slave of Satan into a saint of God if but the sinner repents of his wickedness and believes in the redeeming power of Christ or the Virgin. 'Past sins, nay, a whole life of sin, if repented of before death, are a far less obstacle to entrance into Paradise than the most exemplary and virtuous life if unaccompanied by true faith in Christ.' The eighteenth article of the creed of the Established Church goes further, and says: 'They also are held accursed

that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law and the light of Nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.' According to this doctrine, true faith and repentance at the last moment, even in *articulo mortis*, are sufficient to blot out a life of sin. *Penitence is everything, morality is nothing.* As a corollary of this doctrine only Christians need fear no hell, which is reserved specially for non-Christians *before* and after the advent of Christ.

Roman Catholics also recognized different degrees of blessedness for saints; these were at first supposed to wait in Hades for Christ, but in later times they have been supposed to enter direct into Paradise. Protestants reject Purgatory. According to them souls passed at once into hell or heaven. Souls are created mortal and immortality is the gift of God bestowed only on believers in Christ—this is the view of some. There are others who anticipate such discipline after death as will restore *all* souls to God. The doctrine of the resurrection has also undergone modifications and it is suggested in some quarters that the Fourth Gospel interprets both judgement and resurrection spiritually. Accordingly the general resurrection and the last judgement are regarded as 'figurative ways of expressing the universal permanent truths that life survives death in the completeness of its necessary organs and essential functions and that the character of that continued life is determined by personal choice of submission or antagonism to God's purpose of Grace in Christ, the perfect realization of which is the Christian's hope for himself, mankind, and the world.'

III

Mohammedanism in its essentials is similar to Christianity. Only it emphasizes the Oneness of God and rejects the Christian doctrine of Trinity. It teaches that Mohammed is the latest and the true pro-

phet, and that salvation can be gained through following in his foot-steps. Mohammed is not God, but only an inspired man through whom God's will has been revealed. Along with the Persian and Christian religions Mohammedanism believes in the idea of a world-judgement and the final separation of the good and the wicked and also in the judgement of the individual. The destiny of the soul after death is thus described by a Mohammedan author: 'After the departure from the body, the soul is first questioned as to the existence of God, and the mission of life. This examination is conducted by two angels in the grave. The soul is there; if it could ever remain in the body it can also remain present with it, whenever required. If the examination is successful, that is, if the soul is a knowing soul, rest and peace are administered to it; if, on the contrary, the examination is unsuccessful, torture and punishment is the result.' The Koran says: This is a monition: and verily, the pious shall have a goodly retreat: Gardens of Eden, whose portals shall stand open to them: Therein reclining, they shall there call for many a fruit and drink. And with them shall be *virgins* of their own age, with modest retiring glances:

"This is what ye were promised at the day of reckoning."

"Yes, this is our provision: it shall never fail." Even so. But for the evil-doers is a wretched home—Hell—wherein they shall be burned: how wretched a bed!

Even so. Let them then taste it—boiling water and gore,

And other things of kindred sort!

To their leaders it shall be said, 'This company shall be thrown in headlong with you. No greetings shall await them, for they shall be burned in the fire.' (Sad, ll. 48 to 59—Everyman's Library Edn. pp. 127-28).

In the Koran in Al Araf we read, 'Verily, they who have charged our signs with falsehood and have turned away from them in their pride, Heaven's gates shall not be opened to them, nor shall they enter Paradise, until the camel passeth through the eye of the needle. After this sort will we

recompense the transgressors.

'They shall make their bed in Hell, and above them shall be coverings of fire! After this sort will we recompense the evil-doers.' (*Ibid*, p. 297).

About the Christian doctrine of Trinity the Koran says: 'Infidels now are they who say, "God is the Messiah, Son of Mary;" for the Messiah said, "O children of Israel! Worship God, my Lord and your Lord." Whoever shall join other gods with God, God shall forbid him the Garden, and his abode shall be the fire; and the wicked shall have no helpers.

'They surely are the infidels who say, "God is the third of three:" for there is no God but one God: and if they refrain not from what they say, a grievous chastisement shall light on such of them as are infidels.' (*Ibid*, p. 494).

IV

Similar ideas of heaven and hell were prevalent in India several centuries before the Christian era. Yama, the lord of death, was also conceived as the God of Righteousness and Justice. All souls went to him after death. He sent the virtuous to heaven where there is no fear of disease, old age, or death, no hunger and thirst, no sorrow, but all is unalloyed pleasure. (*Katha Up.* I. i. 12). The individual soul that has to its credit a major portion of *Punya* or virtue goes to heaven first; when its 'bank' balance of *Punya* is exhausted it goes to hell to atone for its sins; then it takes birth in this world again according to the nature of its inherent tendencies. The individual soul with a large amount of wickedness to its credit goes to hell first and after expiating its sins by suffering appropriate punishments goes to heaven to enjoy the fruits of its *Punya*; and when these are exhausted it comes back again to this world to work out its course of existence anew.

There are degrees of pleasure in various heavens and degrees of punishment in various hells. Reward or punishment is proportionate to the nature and amount of one's

Punya or Papa i.e. virtue or wickedness.

The Gita, in which the worship of Krishna as the Supreme God is enjoined, offers salvation to all those who follow the teachings of Krishna, and believe in his divinity. Thus Gita, III. 31-32: 'Those men who constantly practise this teaching of Mine, full of Shraddha, and without cavilling, they too are freed from the bondage of work. But those who, decrying this teaching of Mine do not practise it, deluded in all knowledge, and devoid of discrimination, know them to be ruined.' Again, 'If even a very wicked person worships *Me*, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon does he become righteous, and attain eternal peace, O son of Kunti; boldly canst thou proclaim that My devotee is never destroyed. For, taking refuge in *Me* they also, O son of Pritha, who might be of inferior birth, even they attain to the Supreme Goal.' (Gita, IX. 30-32). The Lord again Promises salvation in X. 3 thus: 'He who knows *Me* as birthless and beginningless, the great Lord of worlds—he, among mortals is undeluded, he is freed from all sins.' Again Krishna promises salvation to all who believe in his being an Incarnation of the Supreme God: 'He who thus knows, in true light, My divine birth and action, leaving the body is not born again: he attains to *Me*, O Arjuna.' (Gita, IV. 9). Many more such quotations can be given.

But Krishna's teachings are not narrow and exclusive. He does not consign to hell true devotees of God, whatever the form of God or His prophet or Incarnation which they worship. He says: 'In whatever manner men worship *Me*, in that same manner do I appear before my devotees; it is My path, O son of Pritha, that men tread in all ways.' (Gita, IV. 11). Again, Krishna makes it clear that worship of himself is the highest worship, though he does not condemn other forms of worship. He says: 'Whatever form any devotee seeks to worship with Shraddha—that Shraddha of his do I make unwavering. Endued with that Shraddha,

he engages in the worship of that, and from it, gains his desires,—these being verily dispensed by *Me* alone. But the fruit accruing to these men of little understanding is limited. The worshippers of other gods go to those gods; My devotees come to *Me*, the Supreme Goal.'

Wicked people, however, can never enter into the realm of Krishna, nor do they worship him. 'They do not devote themselves to *Me*,—the evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men, deprived of discrimination through attachment to the things of the world, and following the ways of the Asuras.' There are two types of beings in the world, the godly and the Asuric. The godly will be saved, but the Asuric type is doomed to destruction. (*Vide* Gita, XVI).

Religions, like all other departments of human thought, have to take for granted the apparent inequalities of the world. All that they claim to do is to point out a way out of this unsatisfactory state of affairs, and to lead their followers to a more satisfactory state, not in this world, for that seems impossible in the very nature of things, but in a future life in some other ideal region. The religious urge in man requires a satisfaction in some such way; at least this seems to be the case with the vast majority of mankind. Theistic or supernatural religions seem to supply this need in some measure.

In Hinduism, God has been worshipped not only as Krishna, but also as Shiva, Durga, Rama, etc. In the Hindu Puranas and in popular thought, worshippers of a special deity are supposed to go, through the special grace of the deity, to the happy region of the deity. Thus Vishnu or Krishna or Rama worshippers go to Vaikuntha, worshippers of Shiva or Durga go to Kailasa or Shiva Loka, and so on. Christ's idea of heaven, where he had promised thrones of glory for his apostles, seems to have been of the above type.

V

Alone of all religions, Buddhism in its purity, has never recognized the necessity

of a Redeeming Deity. It lays bare the causes that have led to this Samsara. It finds that 'desire' is the force which makes men move and act like automatons. It prescribes a way by which 'desire' can be conquered, and Nirvana or Peace or Salvation can be attained. It finds that the process of extinction of desire is a long one. It accepts transmigration or rebirth in other bodies in this earth in order to work out the conscious process of extinction of desires. Only each individual can work out his way. No outside grace can miraculously save a man from the effects of his own actions. The laws of Karma are inexorable. But even this austere religion of Buddhism came to accommodate in its later forms a doctrine of many hells and heavens into which, as into his births in this world, the individual was led by the moral resultant of his deeds.

It would seem from all this that all religions want man to be moral in the first instance, and in order to achieve this they hold up promises of happiness in another world, and also deterrent threats of misery. This is one view of the utility of heaven and hell. The other view is that human justice is imperfect, and so divine justice, which is infallible, will complement it by proper rewards and punishments in other worlds. Another salient factor that comes out is this: the human soul in its weakness and misery is unable to avoid evil or do good even with all its willingness. It often feels itself to be a creature of unforeseen circumstances in this world, whose mystery seems impenetrable to the human intellect. So out of the anguish of its heart it instinctively cries out to the Soul of the Universe, the God of gods, to save it from its agony and give it the peace and bliss it longs for. The theistic religions promise this salvation to the individual; even the worst of sinners is promised redemption in the other world if only he believes in the redeeming power of his God or Prophet; faith is believed to triumph over Karma. While the religions holding strictly to the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation emphasize that a man's

salvation lies entirely in his own hands, and thus are universal in their application, purely theistic religions restrict salvation only to the believers, and condemn all others to damnation. Indian theism, however, steers clear of the apparently unsatisfactory nature of millions of eternally unredeemed souls and strikes a *via media* between the unalloyed theism of Christianity or Mohammedanism and the extreme doctrines of Karma and transmigration of souls of early Buddhism. It accepts both self-effort as well as God's grace.

The fate of the individual soul after death is at bottom an empirical question; all religions claim to give a solution which they consider is based on facts, revealed or found to be in accordance with the nature of the world. Pure speculation cannot lead us to any valid conclusions on this matter. The accumulation of modern scientific knowledge shows how naive and untenable are many of the ideas about heaven and hell. The future life has been conceived to be a continuation of the present life in its essential features, although under conditions more or less favourable; it is sometimes a retributive state where the miserable are comforted and the prosperous laid low, or a state where reward or punishment is given for good or evil desert here; or it is conceived as the reward given by a Supernatural God to his devotees by admission to abodes of bliss, or as punishment to non-believers in abodes of torment. Others consider that the soul's life is a never-ending process of becoming here and, or, elsewhere, and the end of this process of becoming, whether brought about by extinction of desire, or self-knowledge, or by the grace of a Divine Being, is real salvation. Some hold that the individual soul is inherently immortal; others hold that it has only a contingent immortality. Again there are different ideas of the nature of this immortality. Agnostics would deny immortality, or a future life of the individual, or salvation. Like the Charvakas of old they hold: 'There is neither heaven nor hell,

no salvation, no soul, no other world. There is no evidence for any return or revival of the body when it has been burnt to ashes or has decayed to dust.' Consequently amidst the welter of unverifiable opinions about the nature of God and the soul, the earnest seeker after truth and salvation must, if he feels the necessity of it, choose to accept and believe that system of eschatology which appears plausible and most reasonable in the present state of human knowledge. A hungry man needs food to satisfy his hunger; he need not know all about the physiological process of digestion in order to be benefited by the food; nor need he wait till scientists weigh out exactly the amount

of proteins, fat, carbohydrates, and vitamins that are necessary for a balanced diet in their opinion. The 'illative' sense, as Newman called it, of each man must decide for him what will suit him best in this as in other matters. One has to go forward in the belief that the force governing the universe, whether it be material or spiritual, is, at bottom of the same nature as himself, and will not let him down. Knowledge that strengthens and comforts man and makes him lead a noble life is not likely to lead him astray. However irrational and hostile the world may appear, we cannot do better than to rest assured, in the words of the Gita, that 'no doer of good ever comes to grief.'

THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

'An eternal portion of Myself having become a living soul in the world of life, draws (to itself) the (five) senses with mind for the sixth, abiding in Prakriti' (Gita, XV. 7).

This is the nature of the individual soul declared by the Lord in the Gita. The individual soul is a part of Him, and dwelling in the body it experiences the world of sense. At the time of death it departs from the body along with the mind and the organs. And after undergoing experiences in accordance with its deeds and knowledge, it embodies itself again to reap the results of its actions. In this way birth, death, and experience follow one another until the attainment of Knowledge. The mind is the ruler of the organs; the organs are active because of it.

And the vital forces remain awake and sustain the body even while the mind sleeps. The vital force is the principal element in the body, in the absence of which the body is called dead. The individual soul, the mind, the vital force are not one; they are different. You will find this explained in the cosmology of the Sankhya philosophy and also in various places in the *Mahabharata*, to say nothing of Vedanta, the Upanishads, etc. It is also in the Gita; if you will look for it attentively you will find it. But the order of evolution is not the same for all. That is, however, of small consequence. All agree as regards the fundamentals. The *Yogavasishtha* contains all about it clearly in great detail.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S MESSAGE OF PEACE*

BY JOSEPH CAMPBELL

This evening, again, we have gathered to celebrate the birth, a little over a century ago, of the great Indian saint and sage, Sri Ramakrishna. Born in a rural Hindu community, brought up in a pastoral world hardly touched yet by the influences of the modern industrial, scientific, social, and political revolutions, Sri Ramakrishna was a model son of the ageless land and civilization of India. When, as a young man, he left that world, for a moment, to visit with his brother the somewhat westernized and modernized city of Calcutta, every fibre of his being rejected the life ideals that he then for the first time encountered. The young Ramakrishna withdrew totally from what he disdainfully termed a mere 'bread-winning' education, withdrew to the bosom of his ageless spiritual mother, Mother Kali, Mother India, and there dedicated himself with renewed and ever self-renewing zeal to the worship, the contemplation, and the immediate experience of those spiritual powers that for untold millenniums had been the support, consolation, inspiration, and glory of his race. That we, this evening, in the city of New York, in the most potent centre of that world of materialistic, mechanistic, self-pitying, and luxurious, imperialistic greed which he abominated, should be gathered in the present flower-decorated sanctuary to contemplate his picture and to consider the message that he left with the little circle of his devotees in the Kali temple of Dakshineswar; that we, the children of an aggressive, self-sufficient West, should this moment be paying our grateful and humble respects to that Sri Ramakrishna who spat from his mouth everything we have been taught to live and to fight for—is an almost unbelievable marvel!

The explanation, perhaps, is that all pairs of opposites are ultimately—quintessentially—one. Sri Ramakrishna, by his absolute

rejection of the ideals and practices of the world that we inhabit, placed himself at the opposite pole: his ruthless spirituality supplies the counterbalance to the ruthlessness of our native materialism. And like the two halves of a split pea, we are meant for each other. Most marvellously the words of Sri Ramakrishna seem not strange, but profoundly familiar to our hearts. And reciprocally, after the completion of his *sadhana*, Sri Ramakrishna was not only willing but even eager to perceive in the representatives of the materialistic West that very Brahman, those very revelations of God, which he had, during his whole lifetime, experienced as the ultimate bliss.

'Sir,' one of his devotees once said to him, 'I understand that nowadays the learned people of England do not believe in the existence of God.' Another of his followers contradicted: 'However they may talk, I don't believe that any of them is a real atheist at heart. Many of them have admitted that there is a great power behind the activities of the universe.' 'Well,' said Sri Ramakrishna, 'that is enough. They believe then in *Shakti*, don't they, the power of the Lord? Then why should they be called atheists?'

Another time, Sri Ramakrishna chanced to see a young English soldier standing in the *tri-bhanga* posture—the posture of the 'three bends', which is characteristic of many Hindu sacred images. Suddenly the saint beheld in this representative of everything he abominated the image of his dear Lord, the youthful Krishna. (For you and me to grasp the import of this moment, we should have to perceive the image of God in Hitler, the power of God in the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour!) 'Never imagine that it is you who have true understanding and that all others are fools,' Sri Ramakrishna said to his circle of devotees. 'You must love every one. No one is a stranger. It is God who dwells in all beings. Nothing exists without Him. . . . It is God alone who tortures us in the

* Opening address at the public celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday, 19th March 1945, at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York.

form of our persecutors, and if they suffer a punishment, it is God alone who really suffers'. Again: 'Do I look down on worldly people? Of course not. When I see them, I apply the knowledge of Brahman, the Oneness of Existence. Brahman Itself has become all. All are the Man-God Himself.... Just as God takes the form of holy men, so he also takes the form of cheats and rogues.'

There are many, many great lessons that we can learn from the teachings of the Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, but perhaps the most important for the modern day is this one of the omnipresence of the Image of God. The world is today riddled with armies of our Western creation; the very atmosphere enveloping the planet screams with our Christian propagandas of hate and of self-congratulation; every pulpit shakes with self-righteousness and vituperation. God is with us always, and the enemy is the agent of the devil. On the contrary, Sri Ramakrishna speaks of a divinity transcending national and even religious communities and boundaries. 'Dogmatism is not good', he declares. 'God has made different religions to suit different aspirants, times, and countries. All doctrines are so many paths.... One can reach God if one follows any of the paths with whole-hearted devotion.'

Sri Ramakrishna reached this realization by retiring from the cities of the struggle-for-power into the timelessness of the unchanging Self. There he immersed himself in the ageless Well of Wisdom that has been, from time

out of mind, the support of the Indian soul. The teaching that he announced was already known to the sages of the Vedas; we have it inscribed here on our altar: 'Truth is one; the sages call it by many names.' Ultimately, too, that wisdom is the wisdom of the Christ: where, however, can you hear it among the preachments of the Christian churches? Compromise with the ideals and ambitions of the world has so diluted, among us, the ancient teaching, that from peace it has transformed itself into a message of war, from love into a message of hate, from redemption into an endless tirade against the sinfulness of man. Sri Ramakrishna absolutely refused to compromise; and his absolutism transported him to a pole quite clean of partisanship, clean of our normal human passions of fear and desire, love and hate. From that vantage he now speaks to us: and what we hear is that even in our iniquities we are the vehicles of divinity, in our battle-lines we are the manifestations of the one and universal God, in our very agonies we are at peace in the bosom of God, and in our delights we are tasting the sweetness of God's table.

This is the message of that eternal philosophy which underlies the great religions of the world. Sri Ramakrishna has refreshed it. That is why we honour him today in this flower-decorated chapel, in a land and time remote from his own, and during the most horrible harvest of self-righteousness and greed that the world has ever seen. There is nothing to fear. There is nothing even to be ashamed of.

KNOWLEDGE AND THE ABSOLUTE

BY SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

What is knowledge we do not know generally, but we know a thing and say that 'I am knowing.' The function or the process of knowing is no doubt separate from the object we know, and this separateness or difference implies a relation which lies between the

knower and the known. They are called the subject and the object. The subject is the 'I' or the 'I-consciousness' which knows, thinks, intuits or contemplates. The process of knowing is that which is inter-related with the subject and the object and so it is under

The categories of time, space, and causation. We know an object in time which is nothing but a type of duration or the succession of accidents, and by knowing an object we limit the object by its form, size, and relative position, and thus we represent to ourselves the object as external or outside ourselves, and that is in space. Again, there must be a cause behind the subject-object relation, because there never happens an effect without a cause. The law of cause and sequence is acting behind this world of appearance. Every act, mental or material, is subject to this immutable law.

We do an act because we want to do it. All motives behind our work and activities are always guided by necessity or demand, and demand means the impulse which the mind sends forth to the senses in vibrations. These impulses or desires always expand and contract, and they catch whatever they get within their ever-dissatisfied clutches. The supply of everything is controlled by the demand we make and the co-relation between the demand and supply depends again upon the law of cause and sequence.

Our knowledge of the appearance is empirical and floating. Its apparent expressions are introspection, reflection, recollection, recognition, identification, intuition, imagination, and others. We introspect a thing within and within it happens and passes. It is the observation directed upon our personal experience. We reflect upon a fact which the mind takes in its own operation in the form of an understanding. We first see a thing and then recollect its sleeping image which lies buried in the core of the mind as an impression. We recognize a thing which we experienced before and know it again. So there happens in it a dual function of perceiving and knowing. We identify a known and perceived fact when we associate it inseparably with a similar different thing. We intuit an experience to get its immediate knowledge. Intuition is of two kinds, higher or transcendental and lower or empirical. The higher is the presentation of reason and the lower is nothing but direct sense-

experience. It becomes the perception *a priori*. We imagine a thing by the faculty of representation. It is associated with memory, and mind in imagination keeps before it an image of the visible forms. The objects are presented to the senses, and re-presented in imagination.

These are really the different phases of knowledge of the phenomenal objects. This knowledge can again be classified into two heads, direct and indirect. The direct knowledge comes straight without obstruction and we get it through the inner or outer senses coming in contact with the so-called real things already given to us. We know an object indirectly when the senses get in touch with it intermediating through a thing or process other than the object itself.

There is again knowledge false and real. False knowledge is illusive knowledge. We understand a thing as illusive and unreal when it has no existence of its own. We mistake a rope for a snake through wrong knowledge. The illusive knowledge is deceptive and it is not the thing-in-itself. We see a mirage in the desert. It is illusive, because it is the false representation of the real water seen somewhere. It has no real existence and worth of its own and yet it is seen. It is seen real, but its reality it borrows from its ground (*bimba*)—the real water seen before. It is the reflection (*pratibimba*) unreal and it gets appreciation only from the ignorant who know not its real nature. The wise are never deluded by the deceptive sight of the mirage. They have already corrected their errors and so they remain at ease unaffected.

A true and valid knowledge is uncontradicted (*Abadhitam*) as it has no other, no opposite. It is the ground of the false and dual knowledge. A false knowledge is always contradicted (*Badhitam*) and it runs parallel with its rival. But it cannot be denied that of these dual phases of knowledge one must be real and the other unreal as the latter stands upon the former as its substratum. The content is false as it changes and borrows its reality from the ground. It

is also true that the two things cannot be real at the same time. One will have to depend upon the other and therefore borrow its apparent reality from the other.

But from the transcendental point of view it can be proved that none of the two are real, because they are related to each other, as one stands in relation to the other. Relation means an awaiting something and it is subject to limitation. When we use the number two it will obviously be that two stands always in relation to the number one. Two cannot stand apart from its related one, and if it stands independent of one, it will no longer remain two. It will cease to remain as two and will transcend both the numbers two and one—no numerical limitation will be able to bind it. So it is an undeniable fact that related things are always dual or manifold in their nature and therefore they fall short of their reality and essence.

In this world of relation and opposites our experiences through the senses are always porous, and subject to limitations. Or in other words it can be said that experience connotes limitation. When we get an experience of a thing by the sense-affection, the thing is always the object and we the experiencers become the subject. The functioning intermediate process between the two is the third principle which connects the two and makes the whole thing conditioned and defective. We get an experience of a thing which is always different from us. So the object falls in the domain of duality. It cannot transcend the limit of manifoldness.

It will be noticed that the subject which thinks, knows or perceives is really the centre from which everything can be judged and ascertained. The subject knows both the object and the knowing principle. The subject knows, as it were, even itself. So it follows that behind there remains a real subject which knows the empirical subject or ego. It is the common transcending fourth principle or substance upon which the tripartite aspects, the subject, object and the process between them, have their being. All these aspects draw their reality and existence

from this fourth principle. It has been called the fourth principle only in comparison with the third and to indicate its transcending nature. It is really not a principle or a state at all. It is the Atman or the Absolute. It is the only real and only existent in the world of change and everything other than the Atman is phenomenal, frail, and floating.

Really speaking the change is the world. The one constancy is here broken up into fragments and these contingent and so-called fragments are again tied up into an unending series of a seeming permanency which looks like a line unbroken. Its reality is apparent and has no fixed point. It moves always from point to point.

First of all we know a thing by means of sensibility as given to us. Names and forms are not the projections or representations of the mind. This is the standpoint of the realists. Names and forms of things are real to them, not a copy. They support the perception which maintains the immediate knowledge of the external. The idealists do not agree with them. They look always through the glass of the Platonic Idea and take everything as the manifestation of the Idea or mind. The so-called external is the objectification of the subjective condition. The world is the shadow of the Idea, or, to be more precise, the mind-construction. The appearance is the construction by imagination of the designer, the mind. The reality of which we can intelligently speak is mind-dependent or ideal and the *essi* of all material things is *percipi*, say the idealists. Then come the monists who are transcendentalists. They say that mind is not the thing-in-itself, it is but a pale copy of the Absolute. It is subject to change and decay, and so unreal. The mind borrows its lustre from the light of the pure Intelligence, the Atman. The Atman is the only real essence, and its copy, the world, is unreal. The mind is other than the Atman, and so it cannot stand independent of the Atman.

The monists count the reality only of the Absolute. This Absolute is always transcen-

dent in its nature.¹ It is not a compound thing made up of two equal bifurcated halves and then polarized into a unique synthesis. It is pure, simple and undivided. It is self-subsistent, self-shining and one without a second.

We do everything through the mind as the medium. We conceive and perceive through this mind. Or it may be said that mind does everything in this world. The mind is a bundle of sensations or impressions. It is the substratum on which rest all the modifications. The modifications are the contents and mind the reservoir. The reservoir or the substratum is unique and one. It is static. It becomes dynamic with its activities, the modifications. It is like the ocean and its vast sheet of water is agitated by the wind of diverse desires. It creates ripples and gradually it rolls on furiously. This furious condition of the mind-ocean is called the passion or intense desire. The passion or desire is the cause of the world. It causes pangs and cares. It always demands and gets its supply. This demand and supply go on for ever and loom a series of eternal events and activities. This is the history of human life. This is the world. But when the mind is devoid of its modifications and is contentless and calm it will come back to its own essence. The essence is the real substratum (Adhīsthānam) or Brahman. The Brahman is the ground of the mind or the world.

The Absolute is really the groundless Ground. If it is not and is said to be the ground of the change or the world then it must face the limitations of the relation, related and the relator. The cause always presupposes the being of the effect whether it may be static or dynamic, potential or kinetic. The being always implies the becoming. In seed there remains the power of sprouting. So if the Brahman becomes the ground of the

change it must fall short of its wholeness and purity. So though it enters into the category of cause it must be taken as apparent. From the transcendental standpoint it cannot be said to be the cause at all. It is causeless Cause, the 'wholly other' and Blessedness. It is really the 'groundlessness' and the underlying unique Unity.

We the subjects of the world are imperfect though perfect in essence, and because of our imperfectness we create a perfect ideal for our guidance and consolation. It is God the all-powerful and all-merciful. It is always anthropomorphic and personal. The category of impersonality cannot qualify God as we mean Him generally, for if it does He will not remain as God but will be the Essence itself. God is therefore the topmost limit of human appreciation. From Him is everything projected and that is 'creation'.

God creates not, but projects the world. God projects the world from within. Projection means not creation, but emission of things which already existed before. Creation implies always the idea of separation and brings out things new and entirely foreign. In projection things are manifested (Vyaktam) which were already unmanifested (Avyaktam). God projects the world because the world is no other than God Himself. He projects the world and then enters into it—'Tat sristva tadevanupravishat.'

God of the realists again creates things other than Himself. The transcendentalists do not admit this position. To them there are no designer and no design in the truest sense. The web of Maya or the 'idea of the other' creates only the projector and the projected. They are not even the sportive whims or plays of the all-merciful God, and God is nothing but the mind-made thing of the man of the world. God plays not, but He appears to be playing. This playing is, in the final analysis, unreal and is merely an appearance.

The 'wholly other' is the Absolute. This otherness really expresses not the implication of the second, but it discloses the transcendental nature of the Absolute only. The

¹ James Hutchison Stirling differentiates the terms transcendent and transcendental following the interpretation of Kant in his *Text-Book to Kant* by saying: "Transcendent is an object beyond experience. Transcendental applies to an object that is in experience, but yet of a validity that is beyond experience."

Absolute surpasses not the world in its magnitude, quality, weight and immensity, but it transcends everything in its essence. The term 'surpassing' implies the existence of a rival and so posits always a notion of relation between the higher and the lower—superiority and inferiority. The supra-relational Absolute is never qualified by these opposites and deficiencies. The deficiency which may be apparently noticeable in the Absolute is due to the veil of Maya, Superimposition is the cause of this so-called defect. Fire is really separate from the iron-ball which becomes red-hot with its contact, but the ignorant think that the ball burns. It happens only for the superimposed ignorance of the appreciator. So through the web of nescience we always apply the priority and validity to the world which is really dead. The Absolute is the only reality and 'it transcends', that is, it shines within itself as one without a second.

Then what does the term knowledge mean? Does it imply a process or a series of happenings or the act of knowing? All knowledge which we get through the gates of sense-experiences is contingent and spatio-temporal in nature. It is the apparent cognition in contradistinction to the real knowledge of the Atman or the knowledge of the Self. But in our ordinary knowledge or consciousness we take shadows for realities, and realities for shadows. It has only the empirical validity whereas Self-knowledge is absolutely valid. The Self-knowledge really transcends the limit of time and space as there is no subject-object relation in it. It is also a fact that an apparent knowledge or consciousness cannot be imagined without its opposite idea—the real. Reality is always valid and it justifies itself by its uncontradicted nature. Moreover every piece of knowledge is luminous and self-sufficient. It removes the ignorance and then reveals the object. This revealing nature is inherent in every kind of knowledge. And from this standpoint common knowledge does not differ from the Self-knowledge. Or in other words common sense is the divine sense.

Every knowledge is confined to thought

which is nothing but the real structure of the subject-object relation. It cannot transcend the deceiving limit of duality. If it does, it will no longer remain as thought, it will then be the thing-in-itself or the ground of thought. The fate of the thought will be here like a salt-doll which goes to measure the depth of the ocean, and is then dissolved away. But in nature thought is always discursive and full of antinomies.

In a thought there must be a thinking principle. This principle is an act of vibration which is generated from the friction of the two positive and negative poles—the subject and object. Between these two poles there is a neutral zone and the thought commits suicide there. The neutral zone is the balancing point and when thought reaches there it becomes static and it stands there to justify for some time its status of structure and value. It then calms down and is transcended. It then becomes the thing-in-itself and loses the name and form with its causality in the blissful ocean of the Absolute. All the opposites, thesis and antithesis, are then synthesized for ever in the eternal harmony of the Absolute.

Knowledge or consciousness remains always the same. It is an ever-pure self-luminous common awareness. It appears different only by its contents. The knowledge of a table and the knowledge of the Brahman are always the same and one, but the distinction lies only in their objects—the table and the Brahman. The objects only qualify the substrata and thus give them names and forms which are nothing but the 'statement of facts'. These categories of names and forms cannot really affect the knowledge absolute.

A knowledge of the simplest and truest kind is not a process or a form. It generates not from the result of any action, but it is always self-shining and self-revealing.

The distinction between the empirical ego or the object-self and the real Self is absolutely clear. Both of them are the lights, but the latter is called the light of lights. All the phenomenal lights, sun, moon, stars and other

luminaries borrow their lights from it. It is the pure intelligence, bliss and knowledge. Thought and intellect are quite unable to fully fathom the Absolute, because imperfection is the abiding feature in them. They are unable to approach the altar of Perfection. But it is also a fact that a knowledge of noumenon is only possible for an intellect which is consciousness reflected. It is called the modalized consciousness (Vrittijnana). The Chit or pure consciousness remains in it in company with nescience. The Chit dispels the nescience and the self-luminous Brahman reveals itself. The dispelling of the ignorance means the revealing of the Brahman. The reflected consciousness then loses its separate entity and it gets transformed immediately. The revealing of the Chit or Brahman and transformation of the intellect into pure consciousness happen simultaneously. This transformation does not imply here a change entirely new but it means regaining its own essence and glory.

Nor is it the fact that intellect or pure thought is first negated and then transformed into the Chit. Intellect (or the world or Maya) can never be negated in the Absolute, because negation means to kill or remove an existence real. No negative principle can enter into the sphere of the all-existing Absolute. So it is true that intellect gets back to its own essence with the removal of nescience.

We cannot get behind the consciousness. It is the only fountain and quintessence of the world of phenomena. We live, move, and have our beings in consciousness. When we say we are conscious of a thing it means that we make our pure consciousness an object of our awareness or sense-apprehension. But it is also a fact that a subject cannot be an object and *vice versa*. From the monistic or rather transcendental viewpoint it is also true that there cannot be a subject or object other than the Chit or pure consciousness. The Brahman is the only one and real consciousness and as there cannot be room for a second or any other consciousness it can be concluded that the phenomenal appearances are nothing

but the manifold images of the one and the same Substance. It is the only fundamental principle of Unity in so-called variety. As the burning sparks are no other than the fire or as the reflection of a face in a mirror is no other than the face itself so the spatio-temporal and subject-object related world-process is not different from the pure and absolute consciousness or the Brahman. Finite knows the Infinite, that is to say, it recollects and so regains its own unparalleled throne of sublimity and uniqueness.

Knowledge or consciousness is the Absolute. The being and the becoming are one and the same. 'The attainment of God consciousness is nothing but the spiritual unfoldment. It is being and becoming God;' as has been said by Swami Abhedananda. In realization knowledge is not subordinate to the Absolute, being under its possession. It has rightly been said by Prof. Malkani also that possession is like the head of Rahu. Rahu is nothing but the head. The possessive preposition 'of' merely indicates equivalence. Really Knowledge and the Absolute never fall apart. They are one and the same, appear different or fall into gradations only through the unexplainable veil of Maya, and as it lies beyond sense, beyond imagination, and even beyond intelligence, it can only be realized in an ecstasy of unutterable feeling which is no other than the absolute Brahman itself. 'Spirit with spirit can meet, God can speak with man face to face,' so to get knowledge of the Absolute we should face the altar of the Absolute and we shall have to lose ourselves into the eternal ocean of the Absolute.

To know the Absolute does not mean the state of Trance, Ecstasy, Mystic union, Nirvana, Absorption, God-intoxication, Self-annihilation, Apprehension of unity in variety or Reconciliation between knowledge and being, but it means to be the Absolute—to become one with it—(Brahmaivid Brahmaiva bhavati.) In this unifying knowledge of the Absolute (Brahmajnana) there remains not any the least contradiction with the world, the Absolute becomes then the Ground of the

world. The world is then saturated with the inseparable essence of the Absolute.²

² Dr. Martineau also says in connection with the Transcendental of Plato that "the universe did not stand *opposite to the soul*, to be its object and antithetic

term; but came up in us *in the shape of soul*, and simply looked in its own glass and broke into its own soliloquy. Like only could know like, or anyhow act on like; so that things to be cognisable by thought, must be thoughts themselves; and thoughts, to hold good of things, must be of the essence of things themselves."

RAMKRISHNA AND HARMONY OF RELIGIONS

BY HARI NARAYAN CHATTERJEE, B.A., B.L.

Ramkrishna, the greatest teacher, the sage of the sage, the embodiment of Vedanta philosophy, appeared on the breast of Bengal at a time when conflicting religious forces were knocking at the door of Hindu religion. Queerly enough, whenever there had been any inroad of foreign civilization, a new religious preacher appeared to uphold the dignity of Hindu religion. Ramkrishna was a personality born to fulfil such a mission. His life was a blazing demonstration of the spiritual truth of the continuity between pre-existence and rebirth.

Ramkrishna's religion was neither the outcome of a vast study of different systems of religions of the world, nor was it begotten of foreign teachings apart from the teachings of the heart. 'Whatever religion was in him his doctrine was essentially creative and dynamic. He demonstrated that true knowledge consisted not in analysis and synthesis, not in the creation of fictitious logical reasonings, but in entering into the very heart of Reality by an innate love. His religion was a religion of life and spirit brought to the focus of self-consciousness.'

If the great systems of religion of the world were necessary for the salvation of mankind, Ramkrishna's religion was necessary for true love and sincere worship of the Deity.

His religion, being a religion of love, service, and prayer, was universal in character and outlook. 'In all his sayings we find appreciation and not criticism, a better understand-

ing not verbal jugglery, a closer sympathy with other systems of thought and religion.' He said: 'We are born to love Reality, serve Reality, and not to quarrel and wrangle about doctrines and principles.' Different religions of the world, to this all-embracing soul, were but 'expressions and interpretations of one and the same love of Reality.'

According to Ramkrishna's teachings, self-realization, which was the supreme end of life, involved the ascendancy of reason and the consequent systematization of impulses and desires. 'Resolve to be thyself; and know that he who finds himself loses his misery'—this formed the main theme of his teachings. Though originally a follower of Shakti, he had studied the doctrines of the Vaishnava, the Shakta, the Advaitavadin, and even Christian and Islamic ascetics. By practising each of these disciplines, he came to know the Truth as it revealed itself to the devotees of each of these schools of thought. He took into his religion all that was good and beneficial in the above teachings and made his doctrine a honeycomb of everything great and noble. Thus his religion was 'not the religion of a proud and dignified aristocracy but being a religion of the heart, was the religion of all, for all, irrespective of caste and creed, education, or illiteracy.'

Ramkrishna's contribution to the Brahmo society had manifested itself through the teachings of Keshab Chandra Sen and Bijoy Krishna Goswami, two of his most devout disciples.

The religions of India, nay, of the whole world, had found a common spring in the heart of Ramkrishna. All the doctrines of the world were but verbatim echoes of the sayings of the Great Master. 'I am not your lord. Call me Son of Man,' said the soul that groaned at the cross. The parallel saying we had from the wise lips of Ramkrishna—'Don't call me Guru. I am not one.'

As regards the greatness, the sublimity, and profundity of thought, Ramkrishna was no less than St. Francis of Assisi. He preached the great doctrine that all religions were true, not merely that there was truth in every religion, but all religions were true. Even the religion that appeared ethically unsound or unacceptable was to his mind 'a backdoor to God's holy presence.' One is spellbound and bewildered at his superhuman efforts to grasp the secrets of existence and the realization of truth, as a Shakta, a Vaishnava, a Sannyasi, a Christian, and a Moslem.

Ramkrishna was a vast measureless expansive ocean; the different religions were like various rivers that found their ways into his bosom.

'Come unto me, all ye sufferers' was the great call of the Son of Man. The rebellious agnostic Narendra Dutta heard the same divine call from Ramkrishna. Christianity and Hinduism had met together under the eye of Ramkrishna. Christ was a great soul. He gave himself up for the cause of suffering humanity; no less great was Ramkrishna who had spent his last drop of blood for the spiritual re-awakening of young India, for the purification of putrid minds and complete annihilation of disbelief in rebellious souls. Here was a harmony, a harmony of East and West, and at the root of it was the all-embracing soul of the Great Master, Ramkrishna.

Ramkrishna's teachings had common theme with the teachings of Mohammed. The Holy Quran came with a universal message. It revealed God, who was not the God of this or that nation, but who was 'Rabb-ul-Alamin,'

the Lord, the Sustainer, the Nourisher of all the nations and of all the worlds. The Quran never spoke of the 'Lord of the Arab' or the 'Lord of the Muslim,' but the god of the Quran was the lord of the world. 'I am commanded to do justice between you: God is our lord and your lord; we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds.' (Quran, 2. 139). Again in another place, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is one.' (*Ibid.* 29. 46). No more ennobling message could be given to humanity. Ramkrishna's teachings were based on the same principles. 'Men and nations may differ, even fight with each other, but they had only one Father, one Lord, one Saviour. No nation was the favourite nation because all were equal recipients of that greatest of divine favours, the blessing of divine revelation. And as God was one, so was humanity one. The whole of humanity was one nation.' Similar was the doctrine of Ramkrishna: 'There is but one God, but endless are his names and endless the aspects in which he may be regarded; call him by any name and worship him in any aspect that pleases you, you are sure to see him.'

A little reflection would enable us to perceive that the doctrine of Ramkrishna had within its bosom the main teachings of Islam. If there was any difference, it was only in the outward form; in the inner essence both revealed the same sort of pure love for the common deity, which was above any kind of sectarian squabble or religious fanaticism.

The connection between Ramkrishna's teachings and the teachings of Lord Buddha was perhaps the closest. Based on love, Ramkrishna's teachings had found the nearest ally in Buddhism with the doctrine of Ahimsa. Ever the meanest creature was to both Ramkrishna and Buddha, the imperfect representation of the Perfect Being, the miniature facsimile of the Ultimate Reality.

Buddhism was far above the petty distinctions of caste and creed. It was a religion for humanity at large. Ramkrishna's

teachings were also for all—rich or poor, educated or illiterate, Hindu or Moslem, Christian or Jew.

Buddha's Sangha and Ramkrishna's Ashramas were the brilliant specimens in which cosmopolitans were brought into the fold of unity with the force of faith. Ramkrishna very often had said to his disciples: 'Man is great not because of his riches, or outward appearances, but it is the purity of the inner soul that makes him supreme.' The identical sermon we had from Lord Buddha:

'Na jatahi na gottena na jacca hoti
bramhano

Yamhi saccañ ca dhammo ca so suci so
ca bramhano.'

Buddha cared little for earthly splendours or mundane attainments; money he abhorred with all his heart. One remembered in this connection the experiment that rebellious Naren Dutta carried out to test Ramkrishna by putting a coin under his bed. The Great Master could not sleep on that bed. Such was his intrinsic hatred for material riches.

The *Jātakas* tell us that Lord Buddha took birth times without number, even as a member of the lower species, to relieve the sufferings of humanity and to enlighten the pitiable souls that wallowed in the mud of ignorance. Ramkrishna's aim was similar. He said: 'Let me be condemned to be born over and over again, even in the form of a dog, if so I can be of help to a single soul. I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man.'

Ramkrishna and Lord Buddha were equal, or perhaps they were the different aspects of the same perfect Reality. What wonder that their teachings would be similar in many respects! Ramkrishna's doctrine had within it the doctrine of Buddha. Their teachings might be described as two different rivers, but the same undercurrent of Love and search after Reality flowed through both.

Thus we find that the teachings of Ramkrishna harmonized the main doctrine of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, the three foremost religions of the world, not to speak

of Jainism and Brahmoism. The great clarion call of the Master had reached the length and breadth of the world only because his teachings were universal in character—and had as their basis, all that was great and good in the religions of the world.

But these were not all. The doctrines of the Far East viz. Confucianism and Taoism had something in common with the teachings of Ramkrishna.

Ramkrishna had always laid emphasis on an all-pervading perfect Being, union with whom should be the ultimate aim of every moral being. The omnipotent deity of Confucianism was far above the phenomenal world possessing attributes purely spiritual. The core of Confucianism expressed the similar idea. Confucius regarded God 'more as an abstraction than as a personal being with the physical attributes of man.' God, to him, stood for moral order, both in nature and in the affairs of men. Both Ramkrishna and Confucius conceived God from the same angle.

To some extent, Taoism also stands cheek by jowl with the teachings of Ramkrishna. Idealist Ramkrishna saw in this world of ours a guiding and controlling hand of a great spiritual power. To him, it was the Divine Spirit that ruled the world. Similar sayings were also found in Taoism. Lao Tze, the advocate of Taoism, saw in nature and the phenomenal world the manifestations of a spiritual power. According to him: 'Man comes into harmony with it by self-effacement and suppression of desire.' (*Webster, Civilization of China*). Ramkrishna's doctrine was essentially eudemonistic in character. According to this theory, the highest good consisted in self-realization or the perfection of one's own nature, attained by one's voluntary efforts. In other words, it consisted in the full realization of the self by a harmonious development of our whole nature. Rightly interpreted, the doctrine of self-perfection or self-realization would reconcile all the conflicting theories. Ramkrishna's teachings, as such, harmonized the doctrines of Asceticism and Epicureanism, Rationalism

and Hedonism. It incorporated into itself all that was essential and true in them and thus in a way went beyond them.

To quote the immortal lines of Sri Aurobindo : 'Ramkrishna represents a synthesis in one person between all the leaders. He is the epitome of the whole. His was the greatest super-conscious life which alone can witness the infinitude of the current that bears us all oceanwards. He is the proof of the power behind us and the future before us.'

Let us end this up with another famous

saying of Sri Aurobindo, calling people who had gone astray to retrace their false and faltering steps and return into the fold of *Unity, Love, and Service*, which really formed the core of Ramkrishna's religion :

'God hath sounded for the trumpet
That shall never call retreat.
He is sifting out the hearts of men
Before His judgement seat ;
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him,
Be jubilant, my feet,
While God is marching on.'

THE CONCEPT OF BEAUTY IN RIG-VEDA

BY PROF. P. S. SHASTRI, M.A.

(Continued)

Beauty has also a formal aspect, like every work of art, though it cannot be separated from its content. It requires a sort of artistic polish and finish. The adornment and the finery are mostly brought forth by the verb '*shubh*,' as has already been shown by Oldenberg. Maruts are the first and foremost possessors of *shubha*. But the Ashvins are called *shubhaspati*.¹ *Valgu* is from '*valg*,' meaning 'springing or undulating motion of horses, monkeys, joyous people, the surging waves, the heaving bosom, etc.' Here is intended a sort of 'skilful and felicitous movement.'² *Chitra*, *darshata*, and *rupa* also have a bearing on the form of beauty. Material possessions also beautify the person as they often speak of *ashvapeshas* and *vajapeshas*. They are only additional refinements. But, when we come to *vishvapeshas* and *sahasrapsa*, there is a conscious hint about the varied decorations. And *hiranyapeshas* fall in this category.

There is again an abstract side of beauty

and its decorations, where beauty is inherent. The heroes come to the assemblies in beauty — *nripeshaso vidatheshu prajatah*.³ The song of the poet is pure thought (*dhiyam*), and it is *shuchipeshasam*.⁴ Here the decoration is pure, not in the sense that there is only ornamentation and polish, but in the sense that it partakes of the same pure features of thought. Thought is conceived as beautiful in itself and so are its refinements. It is *shukravarnam* or of lustrous colour.⁵ Agni makes the sacrifice assume varied beauties (*purupeshasam*) by thought.⁶

Indra brings beauty to that which has none (1. 6. 3), while Varuna himself is the beauty of the rivers (7. 34. 11). This Varuna is called *ritapeshas*,⁷ while Ashvins are *ritapsu*.⁸ Varuna is the central vital principle of the waters and of *rita* and when he is called *ritapeshas*, it does not mean that *rita* is a

³ *Rig-Veda*, 3. 4. 5.

⁴ *ibid.* 1. 144. 1.

⁵ *ibid.* 1. 143. 7.

⁶ *ibid.* 3. 3. 6.

⁷ *ibid.* 5. 66. 1.

⁸ *ibid.* 1. 180. 3.

¹ Oldenberg, p. 111.

² *vide Rig-Veda*, 4. 50. 7, etc.

decoration to him or he to *rita*, but it implies that he is the beauty of *rita*. And so are the Ashvins. These passages do not speak of the formal aspect of beauty as separate from the matter.

Some of the terms which are accepted by Oldenberg as referring to the appearance of beauty, have their reference in some of the following passages to the matter also. They suggest the indivisible unity and oneness of Beauty. The Maruts have decorated (*pipishre*) their bodies with their golden natures like young suitors, sons of wealthy people. They have set their splendours (*shriye shreyansas*) on their forms for glory.⁹ The look of Agni is the sweetest (*svadishtha*) and shines like gold in splendour (*shriye*).¹⁰ The splendours (*shriyo*) of Agni are fair (*sparta*) to see (7. 15. 5). In the pleasant (*sparta*) hues of Agni, splendours (*shriyah*) are visible (2. 1. 12). *Ritus* shine (*virajatah*) in great beauty (*shriya*) with beautiful decorations and jewels (*surukmehi supeshasa*).¹¹ With fair jewels, having radiant decorations (*shukrapisham*), the divine damsels are in beauty (*shriyam*).¹² Like the elevated horn of the bull for beauty (*shriyase*) and like horses the Maruts are beautiful (*charavah*), and show themselves like bridegrooms for beauty (*shriyase*).¹³ The bodies of Ashvins shine with delightful beauty (*sparhaya shriya*).¹⁴ A garment can make a man unlovely (*ashrira*).¹⁵ And beauty (*shriyah*) sits on every face (*akshikeshu*) of the Maruts.¹⁶ All kinds of beauty (*vishva shrih*) are decked (*pipishe*) on the bodies of the Maruts.¹⁷ The cows make even the unlovely (*ashrikam*) look beautiful (*supratikam*).¹⁸

In these passages the term '*shrih*' plays a prominent part. Though, in some other places, it signifies beauty in appearance, here

it is often distinguished from the formal decorations (*peshah*). Beauty is mainly conceived here as a splendour that can be seen and enjoyed. But it does not follow that this refers to the decorations. To be felt and experienced, beauty must exist in an object, and this is different from the ornamentations, for they talk of a beautiful ornament (4. 36. 7) that enriches beauty that is already inherent (1. 188. 6). Face reveals beauty.¹⁹ This beauty is of various types. Thus though they talk of the beauty in the decorations, they never left out of consideration, beauty in the actual object. It is already latent there.

The wife of Indra is Kalyani, and there is joy for him in his home (3. 53. 2). The ladies that visit the festive gathering are *kalyanyah* and smiling (4. 58. 8). Agni is *kalyana* (1. 31. 9) and so are the *soma* and the waters (10. 30. 5). This term '*kalyana*' has something to do with the personal charm and beauty which are inexplicable. They inhere in the individuals concerned and cannot be exhibited in terms of ornaments. There is some touch of delightful beauty here, and it is not the result of some external decorations.

Happiness and delight are the characteristics denoted by '*bhadra*' when it refers to beauty also. And beauty here includes a well constituted and decorated form, and a good matter. So Ushas is beautiful and exhibits her form like a bride decorated by her mother. As such she is delightful (*bhadra*).²⁰ 'The delighter (*bhadra*) has come following the delightful dame; the lover follows his sister.'²¹ In such a scene, we cannot associate beauty with the decorations alone. It must have the idea of the personal charm and beauty, already latent in the lady. It essentially belongs to the mind, and is a way of conceiving and feeling things. In a few cases, Oldenberg tries to

⁹ *ibid.* 5. 60. 4.

¹⁰ *ibid.* 4. 10. 5.

¹¹ *ibid.* 1. 188. 6.

¹² *ibid.* 10. 110. 6.

¹³ *ibid.* 5. 59. 3.

¹⁴ *ibid.* 7. 72. 1.

¹⁵ *ibid.* 10. 85. 30.

¹⁶ *ibid.* 8. 20. 12.

¹⁷ *ibid.* 5. 57. 6.

¹⁸ *ibid.* 6. 23. 6.

¹⁹ *ibid.* 8. 20. 12. Compare the famous dictum which maintains that poetic beauty shines like *tavanya—vibhati tavanyam ivanganasu*.

²⁰ *Rig-Veda*, 1. 123. 11.

²¹ *ibid.* 10. 3. 3.

take it as 'the indwelling spiritual force.'²² But throughout it has the idea of delight or happiness conceived subjectively and mentally. It is a sort of 'satisfying imaginative experience,'²³ the highest cannon of art, and of beauty. A poet wants a delightful and happy (*bhadram*) mind, mental power, and energy (10. 25. 1). It is the delightful or pleasing activity (*bhadram kratum*) that the poet longs for.²⁴ Agni is pleasing like an activity (*kratur na bhadrah*).²⁵ This can be a mental faculty alone.

The delightful wives tend Agni (1. 95. 6). The Maruts are the bridegrooms having a delightful beloved (*bhadra janayah*).²⁶ Opposite to men, the dawn, like a pleasing lady, bends her forehead downwards.²⁷ With beautiful decorations, were a lady to be pleasing (*bhadra*), she finds for herself, immediately, a friend among the people.²⁸

Just as '*bhadra*' gives the idea of delight and happiness to the person who looks upon a beautiful object, '*bhand*' refers to the luminous beauty of the object itself. It is a sort of radiance that is felt. Night and dawn shine (*a bhanda mane*) with beautiful decorations (*supeshasa*).²⁹ In different colours they come near, smiling and shining (3. 4. 6). The wise Agni is the beloved of many and shines (3. 3. 4). This shining feature is eternal and is a mark of beauty. As Magha observed: *Kshane kshane yan navatam upaiti tad eva rupam ramaniyatayah*.³⁰ By eternal shining the object becomes newer and newer and this is the definition of beauty. A sort of radiance emanates from the object and delights us. *Charu* is closely allied to *bhadra* and *bhand* and mostly denotes a pleasant object or state. The oblation is *charu priyatamam*.³¹ In a charming (*charu*) body, the soul of the

dead one becomes dear (*priya*) to the gods (10. 56. 1). Indra's might (1. 55. 4) and *soma* (6. 8. 1) are pleasant. Agni is both *bhadra* and *Charu* (4. 6. 6). The object is delightful, pleasing, and dear. It creates a similar happy state of mind in the on-looker. Again they speak of pleasant beauty (*shrayam charum*).³² This represents the synthesis of the sublime and the comic. Beauty is always pleasant and delightful. But, when we observe that the flowing drops of *soma* are beautiful like serpents (9. 77. 3), we lose the serene state of beauty, and enter the spheres of activity. Here is the 'serpentine beauty' of Indra's wife. The Vishvedevas change their shapes like serpents (*ehimayasah*).³³ Terms like '*svadu*' try to convey the meaning of aesthetic experience, the feelings which a perception or feeling of beauty evokes. It is sweetness, the prime characteristic of their poetry, as they often say. '*Ranva*' is closely allied to this and signifies 'delight,' and both refer to the experiences the reader or the on-looker undergoes while going through a work of art. The same idea of rejoicing is again evident in '*vama*.' This rejoicing does not belong to the empirical categories. It is a sort of transport to higher realms of thought and experience. It has its direct and immediate bearing on the object the poet experiences at that moment. And we hear lines like—*Idam shreshtham jyotisham jyotiragat, chittrak praketo ajanishta vibhva*. (1. 92. 1).

The object is near at hand, and the poet feels his new birth and its significance ~~at~~ too soon. This perception of beauty and truth is not the physical or sensual aspect. It is the inner life of things, the vital principle of the universe. The Vedic poet goes on writing what all he felt and saw, but he has in view the reader and the critic of a future age. As soon as one sees a work of art and goes through it, this piece of beauty must be able, by itself, to give him the same ex-

²² *Rupam*. p. 107.

²³ A. C. Bradley, *Poetry for Poetry's sake*.

²⁴ *Rig-Veda*, 1. 123. 13.

²⁵ *ibid.* 1. 67. 2.

²⁶ *ibid.* 5. 61. 4.

²⁷ *ibid.* 5. 80. 6.

²⁸ *ibid.* 10. 27. 2.

²⁹ *ibid.* 1. 142. 7.

³⁰ *Shishupalavadha*.

³¹ *Rig-Veda*, 9. 34. 5.

³² *ibid.* 72. 10.

³³ *ibid.* 1. 3. 9. See the interesting note of Hermann Oldenberg in his *Text-kritische und Exegetische Noten des Rigveda*.

perience, which the poet had. This is the ultimate objective of beauty in literature. And one Vedic poet observes: *Devanam nu vayam jana, pra vochama vipanyaya, uktheshu shashyamaneshu, yah pashyati uttare yuge* (10. 72. 1)—'With skill we proclaim the generation of the gods so that one may see it when this song is recited in a future day.' The science of aesthetics can go no further. The critic or the reader must be one with the poet to experience the same thing; and the poem must have this inherent worth in it to bring back such an experience to the critic. And finally it turns out to be that the poet, though starting from a subjective factor, gives his profound utterance and stamp of universality. And it is this that gives us a 'satisfying imaginative experience.'

The Gandharva in the *Rig-Veda* represents the splendour and majesty of the sun, and the reposing calmness and beauty of the moon. He is the guardian of *soma*, and next to the latter he is the husband of the virgins. We read in the text that the wise lick with their thoughts the waters that are in the firm place of the Gandharva (1. 22. 14). It is the heavenly *soma* that he protects. He is also identified with the moon, the sun, and the sunbeams. And going in spirit (*manasa*), the seer has beheld the Gandharvas moving with their *vayukeshas*.³⁴ Here they are evidently the sunbeams or the splendours of the sun that can be comprehended only by thought. It is the imaginative or mental apprehension that is stressed here. Again the Gandharva protects the dwelling place of *soma*, and the generations of the gods; he is marvellous (*adbhutam*).³⁵ Vishvavasu is the lover of maids (10. 85. 22, 40, 41). The moon is the divine Gandharva of the floods.³⁶ The path of Gandharva is *rita*.³⁷ He found out and showed *amrit* (10. 123. 4; 139. 6). This divine being inspires the thoughts so that we may distinguish truth from falsehood.³⁸ Moving across the paths of

the Apsarasas, Gandharvas, and Mrigas, the seer has become '*shaktasvadur madinatamah*.'³⁹ Here is the transport to higher realms, the true characteristic of all great art and beauty.

The Apsarasa is the ocean nymph (*samudriya apya yosha*) wedded to the Gandharva of the floods.⁴⁰ She represents, to a very great extent, the dawn. She smiles sweetly and supports her lover in the sublimest heaven.⁴¹ These damsels fly like red kine and low like milch cows.⁴² They fly in terror like scared snakes, and like chariot-horses when the car has touched them.⁴³ They exhibit the beauty of their bodies like swans, and like horses in play they bite and nibble.⁴⁴ Urvashi is, above all, the most famous damsel of beauty. She flies like the first of the dawn⁴⁵ and flashes brilliant like the falling lightning.⁴⁶ Though the references to the Apsarasas are very few, we can deduce from the preceding that they had the splendour and glory of all the morning sun, and the covetable beauty of the dawns, and there is in Ushas the origin of all beauty.

The human form was taken to be beautiful, and the woman was always represented as the perfection of beauty. The fingers that kindle the fire, and press the *soma* juice are treated as sisters and damsels. Agni cares for each one like a dame at home (1. 66. 3). He is the maiden's lover and the matron's lord (1. 66. 4), and is compared to an active matron (1. 79. 1). The preparation and the decking of altar is like a dame who dresses herself for her husband (4. 3. 2). A blameless dame is dear to her lord (1. 73. 3). The poet invites Indra like a bridegroom thinking of his consort (4. 20. 5). Agni kisses the youthful maiden (10. 4. 4). The young maid does not repel her lover (10. 178. 3). There are innumerable references to the ladies that

³⁴ *Rig-Veda*, 3. 38. 6.

³⁵ *ibid.* 9. 86. 3.

³⁶ *ibid.* 9. 86. 36.

³⁷ *ibid.* 10. 80. 6.

³⁸ *ibid.* 10. 139. 5.

³⁹ *ibid.* 10. 136. 6.

⁴⁰ *ibid.* 10. 10. 4, etc.

⁴¹ *ibid.* 10. 123. 5.

⁴² *ibid.* 10. 95. 6.

⁴³ *ibid.* 10. 95. 8.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* 10. 95. 9.

⁴⁵ *ibid.* 10. 95. 2.

⁴⁶ *ibid.* 10. 95. 10.

go to the festive gatherings with all the decorations and smiles to dance and attract lovers. The cows sing in joy to *soma* as woman to her lover (9. 32. 5); and songs are sung to *soma* as a lover to his beloved (9. 96. 23). Like a young man with pleasant and fair damsels, *soma* is delighted (10. 30. 5). These references speak of an inexplicable *lavanya* in the object of beauty.

Vayu is pre-eminently beautiful. He is not only beautiful (*darshata*—1. 2. 1), but is supreme in that—*uchathye vapusi yah svaraluta*.⁴⁷ His beauty has a white colour (*shveta*) (7. 90. 3; 91. 3). That is, the beauty here is a spotless one. Foremost of all the gods, he is *shuchipa*; he drinks the *soma* juice most neatly in an enviable way. The sun has beauty (1. 41. 6) and the golden *savitar* is a companion of Ushas in beauty. This beauty cannot be presented sensually.

Ushas is the prototype of all beauty, and her exhibition of her own body is the most famous characteristic feature. Her smile is a classic by itself. The picture of Ushas is the most vivid one, and Oldenberg has drawn it almost comprehensively.⁴⁸ These poets, in their treatment of the beauty of Nature, give us 'a general impression in which limitless expanse, brilliance, tumult, storm, activity, and victory flash and heave helter-skelter; all the separate phenomena of Nature unite to form the picture of a mighty, artistically constructed whole.'⁴⁹

The third advance in their conception of beauty is the beauty of art. They valued and praised their compositions as profound, delicious, sweetest, sincere, spontaneous, and the

like. There is, of course, a fondness for rich adornment, but it is the instinct of pleasure and beauty that made them pay much attention to the artistic polish and symmetry. The words of the poet have a splendour (*dyumatim*—10. 98. 2, 3). They are *jyotiragrah* (7. 101. 1) and even simple lights *jyotimshi*—3. 10. 5). They are variegated (*chitrah*), pure (*shuchi*), and lustrous (*shukra*). A well understood word is to them what a well dressed beloved is to her husband (10. 71. 4).

The hidden thoughts spontaneously advance and shine in effulgence (8. 6. 8), for thought comprehends everything (8. 57. 2). And another poet observes (10. 64. 2): *Kratu-yanti kratavo hritsu dhitayo, venanti venah patayanti a dishah. na mardita vidyate anya ebhyo, deveshu me adhi kama ayansata*—'The will and thoughts within my breast exert this power. They yearn with love and fly to all the regions round. None other comforter is found save only these; my desires are fixed upon the gods.' Advancement in wisdom is longed for by the poets (1. 138. 2). The poet utters wise secret speeches, and charming words of wisdom (4. 3. 4). He speaks out his thought, and thought is decked with beauty—*vishvapeshasamdhiyam* (1. 61. 16). Thus starting from Nature, in their quest of beauty, the Vedic poets have come to feel the beauty of poetry as the supreme thing. And gradually they found out that the speechless thought is Beauty. This thought is *shuchipeshasam* (1. 144. 1) and *shukra varnam* (1. 143. 7), and the words that translate it are—*pavaka varnah shuchayah* (8. 3. 3). The highest representation of beauty is speechless thought and poetry comes only next.

(Concluded)

⁴⁷ *ibid.* 8. 46. 28.

⁴⁸ In *Rupam*, No. 32, Oct. 1927, p. 116. See also his *Religion des Veda*, p. 237.

⁴⁹ *ibid.* p. 118.

VISION DIVINE

BY M RAJA RAO

It was the hour of night when Nature lay
Immersed in deep repose. So still it was
That you could hear the beatings of your
heart.

I closed my eyes, and lost all consciousness,
I felt a peace I never knew before.
My soul took wing, the body lay behind.
It seemed to me I speeded on a track
Self-luminous and endless. Far below,
The earth looked like a tiny star, and soon
Was lost to view. All, all alone I flew
In space, where few and far between, the stars
Flashed by me for a moment and were gone.
The distance was immeasurable and of Time
I lost all count. In fact the two were merged
Together into one unshapen mass
Of radiance, like a city's glowing lights
Seen through a fog. I floated on a cloud
Of whirling vapours, ever circling high,
And higher still like an eagle in its flight.
My speed was swifter than the glance of
mind ;

'Twas so immense I felt myself at rest
Though moving. Soon I reached the world of
gods.

I looked at Forms that myth and legend had
Made so familiar ; and they smiled at me
As I whirled past them, almost touching them.
Fain would I halt and speak to them, if but
My soul would drop its speed a tiny while.
There was a force that urged it, on and on.
No stop, no rest ; but motion perpetual
That would not brook control. On, on I
rushed

And left the world of gods behind, within
The twinkling of a mortal eye. No sun,
No moon, no stars. My soul was but a speck
In that vast glowing void—an electron
Within that cosmic atom, whirling round
In vain attempt to reach the central core.
How long I thus raced through space I
know not.

At last I found my journey neared its end ;
For, like an aeroplane that tries to land,
My circling slowed gradually, till I reached

What seemed a level spot of ground divine,
Begirt with gardens, watered by a stream
Of nectar sweet and radiant. From afar,
Borne on the breeze that gently fanned my
wings,

The sound of voices raised in solemn prayer,
Now loud, now low, but ever soft and sweet,
At times inaudible, now reached my ears—
A mere awareness, as if in a dream,
A tingling glow of genial warmth and peace.
The air was fragrant with the scent of flowers
Distilled perfumes pervaded all the place,
Like X-ray pulses shot from vacuum-tubes.
My grossness dropped from me, like slough of
snake

In winter time ; or like a tree that sheds
Its withered leaves at autumn's gusty breath.
My body then appeared a gossamer,
Etheréal essence frozen into shape,
Mere outline endowed with intelligence.
A feeling overspread my soul, of peace
Transcendental, of joy ineffable.

Rooted I stood in reverential awe,
Peering around me at the luminous haze
Until my eyes comported with the light.
Far at a distance I could then descry
What seemed to me like pillars seven of light
Of rainbow colours, green and blue and red,
Yellow and orange, violet and purple,
So many coloured vapours circling round
A core, divine exhalations pure,
Like youthful ivy twined around an elm.
And as my sight grew better I could pierce
Through the dim veil ; and soon I saw therein
A fully opened lotus, of a colour
Complementary to one that wrapped it.
Seated on it in meditative pose
Appeared a Form, bare-bodied, bright,
bedecked

With matted locks and flowing shaggy beard.
The lips were moving, but no sounds came
out,

Or else I could not hear. The eyes were
closed ;

But ever and anon he opened them

When lightning-flashes darted out from them.
Amazed and filled with awe, I gazed and
gazed

Till Memory woke ; I knew those seven to be
The Sages Seven, entrusted with the weal
Of all creation, Sadhyas famed of old—
Code-makers they of this Manvantara.

How long I stood revolving memories
I have no count ; my mind is all a blank.
My first experience of eternal bliss—
Divine Forgetfulness, the Blessed Trance,
Wherein the heart-strings moved in perfect
tune

To the rhythmic movement of the Infinite,
I woke to find a deep blue cloud in front
Advancing towards the spot, pregnant with
lightning.

Nearer as it came an effulgence
Emanated from it, divine light,
Mellow yet piercing ; like electric arc
That welds together stubborn earths and
metals.

The cloud stopped opposite a sage and roused
Him from his meditation deep. His eyes
Wide opened, and his lips began the string
Of Thousand Names to all devotees dear,
In tones sonorous and resounding
Like rolling thunder when the monsoon
breaks.

'O Thou Almighty, All-pervading Lord,
All-knowing Father, what has brought Thee
here

Unto Thy humble servant in such haste?
Is aught amiss or art Thou come to bless?
Or is it time that Thou shouldst incarnate
Again on earth to save a suffering race,
As Thou didst promise on the battle-field
Of yore? Or has the end of Kalpa come
That Thou should straight dissolve the
universe?

Or have I shirked the task assigned, deeply
Immersed in contemplation of Thy Bliss
Eternal? Speak, dear Lord, dispel my
fears.'

He ceased, his quivering body lay prostrate ;
As falls a tree the woodman's axe has felled.
Lo ! Suddenly the deep blue cloud parted
In two, revealing to my gaze the Form
Effulgent of a Baby six months old

Sucking in glee the toe of His right foot,
With laughter vibrant with a thousand notes
Of sweetest melody. I could not gaze
Upon that brilliance ; so I shut my eyes.
And listened to the talk that then ensued :
'Fear not, my friend, no blame is meant to
thee.

It is but right that with revolving years
Abuses creep and customs old outlive
Their usefulness, and work more harm than
good.

It is Mine own decree that it be so.
But when a people's voice in loud lament
Is wafted to My ears in Yogic sleep,
Brooding over the next creation, I rouse up
Myself and hasten to my comrades here,
To work reforms that changing times require,
To harmonize the several warring creeds
That ever divide the races of mankind.
The time is come for thee to go on earth
And work the changes that My Will decrees.
It is to wake thee up that I have come.
I go before you, follow me betimes.'
So spake the Lord, and ere the echoes died
The sage stood up and swift embraced the
Lord.

My eyes self-opened, well in time to see
The sturdy Infant seated in high glee
Upon the lap of that ecstatic sage—
Marvel of marvels ! gazing at His face
With looks of speechless love and tenderness.
Even as I looked the cloud enwrapped the
Child

And fast receded from my wondering view.
The sage's form benign I well could see,
That did imprint itself upon my mind.
My soul retraced its path and back returned
To earth. I sweated and woke up to find
Myself upon my humble bed again.
The vernal dawn was breaking in the east
With multitudinous colours gay arrayed,
The sure harbinger of the coming age,
When creeds no more shall war but live in
peace.

And ever since that day, awake, asleep,
In my mind's eye I see that saintly face
Persistent yet elusive. Whene'er I see
A new disciple come to me, I peer
Into his face to trace the sage's form.

So far I failed ; but now today I see
 Those very features in thy face with glee.
 O blest Narendra, thou art He and I
 That other commissioned to waken thee.

So spake the Master and with speechless love
 Enclosed his pupil in a warm embrace.
 That dormant spirit started into life ;
 That moment hailed Vivekananda's birth.

WAR IN ANCIENT INDIA

BY KAPILESWAR DAS, M.A., B.Ed.

The world is not free from the throes and trammels of the second world war, and yet plannings for the third are reported. And all this has happened in the course of three decades. True, San Francisco recently witnessed the signing of a charter for international security by forty-two nations. Nevertheless, there is a feeling of scepticism keen in all countries, specially the dependent ones, about its *bona fides*. Will it be any more effective than the Geneva Conference and the League of Nations? Can there be real peace on this earth with the *status quo* continuing, with its vested interests, its colonization and exploitation, its race theories and White Man's burdens? Are the Big Three earnest about the freedom, independence and equality of all peoples irrespective of caste, colour, or creed? Will their meetings from time to time give the correct lead? These are a few questions that come uppermost to the mind of the down-trodden, the under-dog, the rear-man of the day. With reference to such a context, war in its fundamental aspects presenting a contrast between ancient and modern times cannot but be an interesting study. The purpose of this brief article is to passingly observe a few points relating to it in Ancient India and the lessons for us to learn thereof.

War there is from the beginning of creation and will perhaps be till the dissolution. Constituted as human nature is, everlasting peace is perhaps impossible in this world. Perhaps it is not the wish of the Creative Spirit. True to this psychological concep-

tion of war, the Hindu Puranas delineate wars of all ages—Satya, Dwapara, and Treta. Evidently, that it will end in this Kali Yuga sounds like a pious platitude. The words of the Gita resound in this regard, 'to save the righteous and punish the wicked, to establish Dharma I shall be born from age to age.'

The formal expression of war is always the same. There was war on land, water, air, and underground in olden days as now. Regarding the advance of war forces we read in the *Manu Samhita* that they have to advance on land, water and air, their ways should be clearly mapped out and planned; on land chariots, elephants, horses, and infantry, on water battle-ships and on air planes shall advance. Again, we read in the eighth and tenth chapters of the *Arthashastra*, 'Digging pits underground and entrenching them with arms, fighting is to be carried on.' Before the last great war, air and trench warfare was regarded a wild conjecture by the present generation. Conjecture has now become a stark reality. Before our eyes is enacted the terrible tragedy of human destruction on the various stages of land, sea, air, and underground, intensified and made more poignant through the invention and use of newer and newer missiles of death.

Another common feature of all wars is the use of artifice, cunning, strategy, and planning. They appear to be indispensable to them. Efficient planning does not ordinarily fail to achieve the objective. In ancient Indian wars such instances are recorded. Indra,

Rama, or Krishna followed such means in killing Vritra, Ravana, and Taraka respectively. The great Bali, Hiranakshya and Hiranyakasipu met their fate through the same way. Vatapi, Ilvala, Trisira, Sunda, and Upasunda were also extirpated likewise. Of course it is obvious that such plannings vary in degree or kind in accordance with different times, climes, individuals, and circumstances.

Leaving these common features, we may now take up the study of contrast. There can be no two opinions that war is the most cruel and wanton act of self-destruction on the part of humanity. But, characteristic of Ancient India, how such an act too was sought to be regulated, disciplined, and modelled from a higher perspective by the universally sustaining power of Dharma is a thing to be pondered over specially at present. And, Kurukshetra affords the best instance of this aspect. On the eve of that classical war Arjuna, dejected and trembling at the thought of having to kill preceptors, relations, kinsmen and friends, turned to his Divine Companion for counsel and Krishna dispelled his doubts by explaining to him the necessity of righteous warfare. The explanation was mainly in three ways. Firstly, spirit is immortal; it is not destroyed along with the body. Like infancy, youth, or old age, death is a passing phase in the phenomena of life. Secondly, even if it is thought that the spirit is born and dies along with the body, crying for the dead is unwise for death is inevitable. The beginning and end of the living beings are unmanifest. If nobody cries for the unknown entrance, why should one cry for the unknown exit? Birth inheres in death and *vice versa*. Thirdly, the Kshatriya has to take part in righteous war for that is his Dharma. If he wins in such a war, he wins realm and renown: if he dies, he attains heaven. Really, a war based on such high principles is so rare today.

Ancient India sought to check and minimise the disastrous effects of war—an unavoidable contingency—through the healthy channels of established custom, tradition, and

social morality. A violation of the latter in the conduct of war drew the severest criticism and uproar from the body-politic. Individual or group conscience was then fully alive to such public demonstration of displeasure and strongly reacted to it. There was then the fear of blame and shame. Today such things are dismissed as figments of fancy; to abide by them is to be dubbed effeminate, to be the laughing-stock of the world. It is a pride and triumph now to shower the most deadly explosives on innocent defenceless citizens and rural folk. Woman is not exempt from it; the sweet-smiling babe too is not exempt. What can be a greater Dharma of the brave, the strong! Again, in those days war was a trial of real strength between equals. Today it is a trial of scientific ingenuity and ends in the most thoughtless and aimless raining of the most savage and inhuman slaughter from above!

In what ways Ancient India conducted war through Dharmic and honourable means is ascertainable from a searching reading of our scriptures. Evidently, such a reading will at the same time give us some idea of the excellence of Hindu civilization in opposition to the present-day civilization of the West typical in its exploitation and materialistic gratification.

But at the outset it may be asked, why should war observe Dharma? Why should it follow certain rules of honour? Will it not slacken and weaken itself then? Why should it not seize all opportunities and expedencies, irrespective of all humane considerations, of bringing the enemy to the ground which is its only aim? To these contentions Ancient India emphatically answers that war should be clean, just, honest, and honourable, for then only can we use this unavoidably evil thing to subserve the higher ends of man; the way lies through rising from the cut-throat warfare of savages to warfare under accepted rules befitting the dignity of civilized man.

The high standard of Ancient Indian war has now evoked wonder and admiration from many a modern European general. Its

formation of Vyuhās is said to be not a whit inferior, if not superior, to modern military strategy. Mention is made in the *Manu Samhita* of the different kinds of Vyuhās, such as Sakata, Varaha, Makara, Suchee, Padma, etc., and detailed instructions are given about fighting accordingly. The commander will present his strongest front where danger is most expected. But at the same time there should be the greatest agility for directing the forces in all the eight directions. The forces will keep their faces towards the side of attack. Nevertheless, they will be vigilant on the sides and the rear so that there may not be an unexpected attack. If the enemy is stronger and greater in number, a massive front is to be presented; but if necessary there should be a quick dispersal. If a city or fort is to be captured or a way is to be forced into the heart of the enemy army, then attack should be made in the shape of a double-edged sword forming the Vajra Vyūha. If attack is to be made in the face of artillery or machine guns, then the Sarpa Vyūha is to be formed, i.e., soldiers will go crawling on the ground and turn the enemy's arms on the latter; or old and crippled soldiers riding on horseback will be placed in the vanguard and young soldiers in the middle. Infantry, cavalry and chariots are to be used for fighting on flat land, navy on water, elephants in shallow waters, archers in forest lands, swords-and-shieldsmen in desert places respectively. Regarding the recruitment of military and commanding personnel also we come across many valuable suggestions in the same book. Soldiers are to be recruited irrespective of castes or classes and they are to be entertained with the best food and recreations and fittingly rewarded. Chanakya says in the *Arthashastra* that their standard qualifications ought to be inherited martial valour, obliging nature, contentment, willingness to serve overseas, invincibility, power of endurance, expert skill in all kinds of fighting, and steadfast loyalty to the state through thick and thin. Commanding posts are to be assigned to men who are well-

trained in fighting, experienced, skilful, just, fearless, emotionless, and firm as the tree. From this brief account it can be seen what height of excellence Ancient Indian war achieved even as a science or an art. History records how Alexander the Great carried this excellence from India to the West and how European countries are even now following it with alterations and adaptations to suit local conditions.

But the uniqueness of Ancient Indian war does not lie in this excellence. It lies in the fact that concomitant with this technical standard, it maintained even a higher standard of ethical purity and moral rectitude. The rules of honour followed by it as depicted in our books of wisdom clearly indicate this point. The following rules of honour were fixed for the Bharata war. There will be fighting between the same cadres. Competency, ardour, strength and inclination to fight are to be taken into consideration. There should be no attack without due notice. Confidential and fear-ridden persons will not be assaulted. When the opponent is rid of his arms or armour or is unwilling to fight, fighting should cease. Charioteers, trumpeteers, burden carriers, and such others are to be free from assault. The *Manu Samhita* lays down that the enemy should not be killed by means of secret weapons or those of fire, poison, etc. That enemy should not be killed who is placed on the ground, who is seated, who is seen with folded hands, who is imbecile, or naked, or asleep, or defenceless, whose hair is dishevelled, who has sought shelter, who is a mere spectator, or who has come along with others, who has fallen into danger, who is destitute, or struck with fear, or severely wounded, or fleeing from the battle field. The *Gautama Dharmasutras* lay down that war should be carried on in a spirit of disinterestedness. The element of hate in it should be checked as far as possible. That enemy should not be killed who is bereft of his horse, or charioteer, or weapons, who is with folded hands, or disordered hair, or unwilling to fight, who is seated on the earth or a tree, who is a

messenger, or Brahmin, or dialectician. The Bhishma and Drona Parvas of the *Mahabharata* lay down that the fallen and wounded of the enemy side also should be tenderly nursed. It was the earnest belief of the Ancient Hindus that greater success in war can be got by following truth, kindness, and Dharma than by mere physical prowess. Though people of all castes could participate in fighting, it was considered the Dharmic privilege of the Kshatriyas only. And again, bringing the enemy by mere fighting was considered as the lowest means (Adhama) of winning, while conquering him by the policy of *divide et impera* was the middle way (Madhyama) and by accepting peace offer from him and collecting tribute was the best (Uttama). In the Shanti Parva of the *Mahabharata* sovereigns are instructed to try their best to pacify strife by means of conciliation, gift, or division (Sama, Dana, Bheda) and only where all such means fail, fighting is to be taken recourse to as a last resort. The same advice is repeated in the *Manu Samhita*. When war came in spite of all, the ancient Indian kings used to select the battle field, lay the military basements and begin war on auspicious days. Fighting continued from sunrise to sunset. At sunrise kings, commanders, and soldiers performed their prayers and oblations, gifts and meditations, and then engaged themselves in fighting. At sunset the commanders used to order for rest. We read in the *Mahabharata* how on the Kurukshetra field at the end of every-day's fighting the Pandavas and Kauravas returned to their camps, accosted one another, bathed in fragrant waters, spent a short time in singing and other innocent merriments and then went to sleep. Between the two camps, emblazoned by bright torches, soldiers, horses and elephants wandered freely without the least trepidation or fear of molestation. There was no dream of faithless attack. They almost forgot their feelings of enmity at such times. One day's picture is heartening. The day when Jayadratha was slain, fighting was most fierce and terri-

fic and Arjuna, seeing his soldiers dead tired in the afternoon, heavily covered with dust and blind with sleeplessness, ordered them to sleep. Duryodhana followed suit. It was a unique sight to see both parties side by side in the sweet embrace of all-forgetting sleep in daytime on the battle field. They slept without interruption till the third quarter of the night. The moon shone and bathed the earth with her silvery beams. Then they rose and fought till the dawn. At nights the Brahmins recited their sacred hymns and except the kings and commanders none troubled himself about the morrow's fight. Again, the combatants prayed to their deities for success on the battle field; Arjuna, pure and serene, prayed to Durga. Another enchanting incident attracts our attention in Ancient Indian war. Youngsters showed their reverence to elders and preceptors even while fighting. In the battle fought in the *Matsya* country to recover the cattle-wealth of Virata from Duryodhana, Arjuna disguised as Vrihannala and with Uttara as his charioteer before beginning to fight shot his arrows so skilfully that at first two of them touched Drona's feet and another two passed swiftly almost touching his ears as if whispering into them his identity and veneration. He did the same to Bhishma, Asvatthama and Kripa. On the sea of Kurukshetra on which swayed the contending hosts like tempestuous billows Yudhistira laid aside his arms, got down from his chariot, and with folded hands and restrained speech facing the east went walking to the centre of the enemy where Bhishma was, and catching hold of his feet besought for his blessings and permission to fight. In succession he did the same with Drona, Kripa, and Salya.

Needless to say, all these sound like Utopian dreams on the lurid background of modern war. Today God and religion are totally banished from its confines. On its lap dictators pose as demi-gods. Secret weapons and poison gases have become its assets. It incites and gives a free vent to the most morbid passions of hate and greed, lust and carnality.

One more point. War in Ancient India or for the matter of that all ancient wars clearly demarcated the military from civilian population and they were kept within strict limits. Today war is all-consuming, all-extending, all-engulfing. There is no distinction for it between the fighting and non-fighting. In a glance of the eye it sweeps over the world and becomes international in its pernicious effects. In olden days the enemy did not commonly indulge in plunder or destroy the food-resources of a people. The battle field was situated far from the busy haunts of men. Today overcrowded cities, farms, factories, and production-centres are the first military targets in war, and crippling the agricultural and industrial

resources of a country or nation is the first aim of the enemy. Hence its unparalleled devastation.

To sum up: spirituality is ever the life-breath, the core, the throbbing-pulse of the Indian civilization. This is specially evident in the way how Dharma—the expression of the spiritual in the domain of practical conduct—attempted to illumine, refine, remould even the most ferocious expressions of human nature from a higher standpoint and synthesis. This is the contribution of Hindu thought to the history of human evolution—idealistic, profound, and original. In this context how to evaluate modern war, its significance, its repercussions and ramifications, the kind reader will judge.

THE LOCATIVE CAUSE

BY PROF. ASHOKANATH SHASTRI, M.A., P.R.S., VEDANTATIRTHA

In the *advaita* and the *vishishtadvaita* systems the Supreme Principle is regarded as the identity of the efficient and the material cause (*abhinnanimittopadana*). But while the *vishishtadvaitins* hold that Brahman is the substantive cause, because Its body (i.e. *prakriti*) is the primary material cause,—the *advaitins* assert that Brahman Itself is independently the illusory or apparent cause. The *dvaitins*, on the other hand, think that Brahman is only the efficient cause.

Vijnanabhikshu, the celebrated author of the *Vijnanamritabhashya* of the Brahma Sutras, and the *Sankhya-pravachanabhashya* of the Sankhya Sutras, strikes out a wonderfully original path in explaining the doctrine of causation. He calls Brahman—the *locative cause* (*adhara-karana*). In the capacity of a locus Brahman is the substantive cause of the world. As a necessary corollary to his original theory, he points out that practically there can exist no such system as would reasonably

admit Brahman to be the efficient cause alone.

Bhikshu observes that like the changing material cause even a particular type of locus may also be regarded as a cause producing the effect. Such a locus may be called the *locative cause*.

Now, what are the characteristics and functions of this locative cause? The answer is that the locus of the changing material is a locative cause, inasmuch as the changing material cause exists (before the process of differentiation commences) in an undifferentiated condition in the locus, and also because it is supported and grounded in it. The material cause can work only because it has its support in the locus. So, Brahman, being the locus of *prakriti* (primordial matter), is the locative cause of the world process, because It is the ground and support of *prakriti* all throughout, no matter whether It undergoes differentiation or exists in Its original undifferentiated state. Now, non-distinction or non-separation of *prakriti* from

Brahman is a relation *sui generis*,¹ like the relation that exists between a thing and its character of being a locus, etc. Such relations are practically one-termed. To take a concrete example—'a red rose' is a proposition in which the relation between the attribute and the substantive is one of inherence (*samavaya*). But the rose as a thing-in-itself and in its character as a substantive is not a self-identical concept, though the difference is not numerical. In such cases where numerical difference is lacking and still the concept of a relation arises, the relation is regarded as one of numerical identity. The rose in itself is not anything different from its being a substantive, so far as the question of numerical identity is concerned. But still the difference is discernible and so the relation is posited. The relation of Brahman and *prakriti* will ultimately transpire to be of this nature. It is of the nature of extreme non-differentiation due to an absolutely inseparable association of the two, and is responsible for the perception of unity between two distinct things (say, for example, milk and water). So though the effect can be affiliated to the locus as its cause, still the locus cannot properly be regarded as the changing material cause of the same. The material cause, properly speaking, is that in which the effect inheres. In other words, the inherent cause is the transforming material, and the locative cause is looked upon as a cause only by virtue of the peculiar relation existing between the locus and the inhering material.

The thing is this : when the non-differentiation of the product is due to the relation of inherence (*samavaya*) between the cause and the effect, we find a case of the formative cause (*parinamopadana*). A piece of cloth is perceived to be non-different from the mass of threads that make it up. Here the relation between the threads and the cloth is one of inherence. Hence the mass of threads is to

be regarded as the changing material cause or formative cause of the piece of cloth. But when the non-differentiation is due to the mere non-separation of the real material cause from the apparent cause at hand, we get an instance of the *locative cause*. Thus water is said to be the cause of the earth in this sense—according to Bhikshu.

Properly speaking, however, we cannot logically call water the real material cause of the earth in the same sense as clay is said to be the material cause of the jar. The question arises—then how can it be called an *upadana* at all ?

Bhikshu's reply is rather curious. Fine particles of the super-subtle element (*tanmatra*), constituting the earth, existed in an undivided form in water at the time of the creation of the earth. These fine particles of the *prithivi tanmatra* gradually transformed themselves into this gross element—earth. The relation that existed between these fine particles of subtle earth and water was not one of inherence, but one of mere non-separation. Hence we can easily justify the purport of the *upanishad* text—'out of water originated the earth'. Of course, water cannot be the immediate cause of the earth; since the *Shruti* states that the subtler elements are the causes of the grosser elements; and the argument that the heterogeneity of nature is detrimental to causal relation adds a greater force to this *Shruti* passage. In this way it is assumed that the elements sky etc., are the causes of the elements air etc., in the capacity of being locatives only. Vijnanabhikshu thinks that the *Vaisheshikas* are not justified in making a futile dispute with the *Sankhyas*, when unanimity can thus be very easily achieved regarding the doctrine of cosmogony. He points out that such a type of causality is forced upon the *Vaisheshikas* also ; but it is a case of perversity on their part to regard this locative cause as the efficient cause only.

Vijnanabhikshu would, therefore, admit a *fourth* kind of cause which is quite distinct from the inherent (*samavayi*), non-inherent (*asamavayi*) and the efficient (*nimitta*)

¹ 'Sambandhantarena vishishtapratitijananayogyatvam'—*Nyayakosha Svarupasambandha* (or the relation *sui generis*) has been defined as the relation which must be held to exist in a case where determinate knowledge or judgement (*vishishta jnana*) could not be effected by any other relation (*samavaya* or *samyoga*.)

causes. It is the *adhara karana* or the *locative cause*.

Thus Bhikshu rejects the views of the direct transformation or the appearance of Brahman as the world. He concludes that at the time

of creation, *prakriti* which was located in Brahman in an undivided form, transformed itself into this world; and thus Brahman comes to be regarded as the locative cause of the world.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In the *Conversations*, Mahapurushji's views and convictions regarding the nature and character of his Gurubhais are fully revealed when he speaks on Swami Saradananda; and he gives instances of how the Spiritual Power that was Ramakrishna is making itself felt in even Christian and Mohammedan men and women in distant places. . . . After the Editor's dissertation on the destiny of the individual soul, we get a brief but illuminating picture of the nature of the soul in Swami Turiyananda's *The Individual Soul*. . . . Mr. Joseph Campbell, a member of the Faculty of Sarah Lawrence College, America, brings out, with clearness and force, the essential features of what Ramakrishna's life and teachings can mean to the modern world, in *Sri Ramakrishna's Message of Peace*. . . . Swami Prajnananda has dealt very lucidly and in simple language with the theory of knowledge in *Knowledge and the Absolute*. His exposition of the Vedantic view is illuminating and authoritative. . . . Mr. Hari Narayan Chatterjee's article, *Ramakrishna and the Harmony of Religions*, was awarded a gold medal during the Ramakrishna Centenary celebrations in Rangoon; it deals succinctly with each of the major religions and shows how Ramakrishna was in tune with all. . . . Prof. P. S. Shastri's learned article, *The Concept of Beauty in Rig-Veda*, is concluded in this issue. . . . Mr. M. Raja Rao is depicting, with the imaginative eyes of a poet and devotee, a vision of Ramakrishna in *Vision Divine*. . . . In *War in Ancient India*, Prof.

Kapileswar Das shows how warriors kept strictly to the fundamental rules of morality during war, and points out the degeneration in this respect in modern warfare which tends to make brutal savages of peoples of all the belligerent countries.

FIFTY YEARS OF PRABUDDHA BHARATA —A RETROSPECT

In this number our readers will greatly miss the next instalment of the series 'A Backward Glance at Prabuddha Bharata's Fifty Volumes' by St. Nihal Singh. So far the writer has dealt with the story of the *Prabuddha Bharata* in his own inimitable way. For, as he himself wrote, he is one of those few who have known this magazine through its entire life. Beginning from the birth of the *Prabuddha Bharata* in far-away Madras, St. Nihal Singh has given us a most fascinating account of the conduct of the magazine under its first three editors—B. R. Rajam Iyer, Swami Swarupananda, and Swami Virajananda. 'The Himalayan power-house of culture' (as St. Nihal Singh names the home of the *Prabuddha Bharata*) continued to transmit the current of Hindu religious thought through the medium of the magazine (and numerous other publications) under accomplished editors in successive periods. One can hardly expect so magnificent a treat from the pen of any one other than St. Nihal Singh. We content ourselves with giving, for the benefit of our readers, a synoptic, though brief, retrospect of the years following the events last narrated by the writer, and thus conclude the story of

the 'backward glance at the *Prabuddha Bharata's* fifty volumes.'

When Swami Virajananda relinquished his office as editor, in 1913, it was taken over by Swami Prajnananda who also combined, in himself, the functions of editor and head of the Advaita Ashrama. At that time the political life of the country was greatly stirred, and even the activities of the Ramakrishna Order of monks were viewed with suspicion by the government. Swami Prajnananda, who possessed intellectual acumen of a high order, wrote in the columns of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, in his forceful and convincing manner, clearly restating the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement, and showing how the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda (which also were suspect to some of the powers that were) helped to inspire Indians with a type of nationalism higher than the political. After the passing away of Swami Prajnananda, in April 1918, Swami Raghavananda became the editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and conducted it till the end of 1921. After him came, in succession, Swami Yatiswarananda (1922-24), Swami Vividishananda (1925-26), and Swami Ashokananda (1927-30), all of whom did their best to maintain and improve on the high standard set by their predecessors. In the course of these years the *Prabuddha Bharata* underwent a major change in its general appearance. In order to effect improvement in its get-up, the printing and publishing work was transferred to Calcutta in 1924. Thus, after nearly twenty-five years of its physical production, in the hand-press, in the inner recesses of the Himalayas, the magazine started appearing from a modern printing establishment of the leading Indian city, augmented in dimensions and bulk, in which form, more or less, it has continued till today. (*Vide Prabuddha Bharata*, September 1945, p. 259). These distinct improvements brought the *Prabuddha Bharata* abreast the times, and greater space afforded more scope for achieving the objects of the magazine.

After Swami Ashokananda, the *Prabuddha Bharata* continued to flourish under a succession of able editors, every one of whom addressed himself to the task with steadfastness and devotion. In 1931, Swami Ashokananda was succeeded by Swami Pavitranaanda who also held office for four years like his predecessor. Then came Swami Maithilyananda (1935-37) and Swami Tejasananda (1938-39). They were followed by Swami Vipulananda (1940-41) and Swami Gambhirananda (1942-44). During all these years the *Prabuddha Bharata* was conducted with care and ability. In commemoration of the Centenary Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, a special issue of the magazine, enlarged and profusely illustrated, was brought out in February 1936. In February 1937, another special issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata* was published to mark the sittings of the 'Parliament of Religions' held in Calcutta in connection with the aforesaid Centenary celebrations. Thereafter it became the practice to bring out, occasionally, special illustrated issues of the magazine, which were helpful in making it more attractive and popular. Owing to the difficulties and restrictions of war time, the *Prabuddha Bharata* had to undergo a considerable reduction in bulk, during 1944-45; yet, in its reduced form, it continued to interest its numerous readers. But these difficulties are now fast diminishing.

The *Prabuddha Bharata* can proudly count many able and scholarly writers, from all walks of life—authors, professors, educationists, and religious and political leaders—men as well as women, Indian and foreign, among its contributors during these fifty years. Some of these distinguished persons have been referred to in the earlier instalments. The topics discussed were many and varied: science, education, history, art, mysticism, religion and philosophy, social and cultural problems, and so forth. Another feature (referred to in earlier instalments) of the *Prabuddha Bharata* has been to publish translations and annotations of important Sanskrit philosophical works with a

view to popularizing them.

In the words of Swami Vivekananda, India lives because she has a message of her own to deliver to the world. India has, once more, to 'awake' and become the spiritual teacher of the world. The 'Awakened India' endeavours to present this supreme message in the light of the lives and teachings of Sri Kamakrishna and Swami Vivekananda in particular, and the saints and scriptures of the world in general. It has addressed itself to the difficult task of reasserting the importance of *real* religion in human life. In carrying out its principles, without fear or favour, the *Prabuddha Bharata* has had to commend, differ from, or disapprove of the views and methods of many an individual or group. It is the purpose of the *Prabuddha Bharata* to work for the ushering in of an era of peace on earth and to advocate the practice of religious harmony, mutual toleration, and fellow-feeling. It has striven to form a sort of nucleus for harmonizing the *apparently contradictory* religions of the world. Today, when the *Prabuddha Bharata* completes fifty years of its useful career, the words of blessing addressed to it at the start by Swami Vivekananda bring us fresh hope and strength. The message of the Swami has been ever present before us as a source of unfailing inspiration during these fifty years and as a perpetual reminder of the ideas and ideals which the *Prabuddha Bharata* shall strive to make known to the world. How far it has succeeded in discharging its duty, our readers can say better. We are content with doing our best. The object of the *Prabuddha Bharata* has been and shall always be to serve the cause of Truth and to present the ideal fearlessly,—leaving every one free to seek his own path to the realization of the Highest Truth.

SCIENCE NOTES

All search for the reality of existence is prefaced with and stimulated by the wondrous nature of this universe in which man finds himself hurled by destiny. In trying to solve the mystery, both religion and science

have given birth to systems of philosophy which record the results of their investigations carried out in varied fields. Both are more or less speculative, and science which claims to measure everything by the rod of experimentation leaves experiments behind, when she adventures out into the higher planes of enquiry. In religion, psychology and ethics, which interpret and govern the action of mind, play an important part, while science takes mathematics as her handmaid, which determines for her what she should expect as the results of her experiments. Wave-mechanics has been responsible for arriving at conclusions which have been corroborated by experiments, and this branch of mathematics, after being discarded more than once, still holds the field. Professor Einstein, that king of mathematicians, has advanced the cause of science as no other individual has done, by inventing a method of representation of the phenomena of nature, with which we are familiar, by four dimensions of space and time, while before him nobody had gone beyond three dimensions. And this is a very simple matter, as all discoveries of science are simple matters after the discoveries are made, and we wonder why a particular phenomenon was not observed before, or a particular conclusion not arrived at. We wonder why our ancestors were satisfied with three dimensions, when four dimensions are the minimum requirements of an action, and when this is so obvious.

The universe exists in space, and space has three dimensions. So all phenomena of nature were represented as being governed by laws of solid geometry. But the universe does not only exist, it also moves; there is motion in it, and motion means change of position in space, which involves the time factor. Thus no representation can be complete which does not take into account the fourth dimension of time, while before Einstein three dimensions were all that were available to scientists for the purpose of interpretation of observed facts. This has given a clue to the possibility of phenomena

taking place in even more than four dimensions; meeting of two electrons is now considered to be an action which can only take place in seven dimensions. Consciousness is another factor which accompanies all observed phenomena, and which finds no place in the space-time representation of

four dimensions. This calls for a fifth dimension. This branch of science is, however, the highest plane reached by her, and we shall have to descend down several steps to be able to understand other achievements of science of which this is the culmination.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

JUDGE OR JUDAS? By N. G. Jog. Published by Thacker & Co., Ltd., Bombay. Price Rs. 7-14.

N. G. Jog is a captivating writer and a powerful journalist. Many uninteresting things like cats, kisses, shirts, babies, your onions and somebody else's opinions assume life in his hands. It is said of Robert Lynd, as was said of E. V. Lucas, that he can make little things interesting. I for one feel that Jog is capable of finding meaning and humour in ordinary things. Like Karaka he is a ceaseless writer: but he writes with more grace and less of artificiality. Karaka, in his every word and sentence, is at pains to reveal his sentiment and the influence of the West. This Jog has not to do: he writes with a definite sincerity and strength born of that sincerity. Jog has earned fame, at least this side of the seas, by his two books: *Onions & Opinions* and *Churchill's Blind-spot: India*. Now, in our hands, we have *Judge or Judas?*

Jog begins: 'In the year 1943 India was visited by Famine, Pestilence, and Beverley Nichols. The former two are proverbially known as the camp-followers of war. Though he long paraded as a pacifist and a sort of Christian evangelist, and wrote a couple of best-sellers on the stupidity and horror of organised mass murder, Nichols also can be included in the same category.' This beginning is sufficiently expressive of the purpose of the book. The book is going to be intimately connected with Beverley Nichols, who was, according to his earlier books, a pacifist, and who, during the last war, turned a 'propagandist' for some gold. The title of the book is thus clearly explained. Here is a story of a great betrayal under the influence of gold, and the betrayal is against himself, and I may add, against a country that under the leadership of a Mahatma is trying to build the structure of a lasting and divine peace on non-violence and truth.

Beverley Nichols is notorious for having written his book, *Verdict On India*, that mountain of lies and inaccuracies. It has made quite a big noise, and naturally a number of replies have appeared. Here is one by Jog. But it is something more. It is a reply against all anti-India propaganda. It is an honest record of what is happening in India. One fact about India is her mounting poverty. These are Jog's words: 'As a trained reporter, if not as an impartial observer he should have waited to see the ragged hamlet in which the Indian peasant lives before justifying the palatial setting from which the British Viceroy rules.' Jog has figures also to give: 'The Viceroy gets a salary higher than that of the President of the richest country in the world, its ratio to the average per

capita income in this country working out at something like 6,000:1.' Certainly it was not Nichols' duty to detail a large number of absurdities and inaccuracies about India. He could have reached the root of the problem in India. An impartial spectator in India will be struck by poverty and political slavery. But these things had no attraction for Nichols. He had come as a propagandist: his purpose was to write a best-seller for consumption in America. Jog has said about propaganda in America in his own characteristic fashion, matchless in wit and meaning: 'America is the main target for British propaganda. It seems as if India's battle for freedom had to be fought neither in Britain nor in India but in the United States! Books and pamphlets, background materials and guidance notes, topical contributions and spot news, most of it anti-Congress and anti-Gandhi—is being liberally mailed from the British Embassy in Washington which has an Indian propaganda branch attached to it.' Indeed, our battle for freedom will be fought with the help of world opinion. Propaganda will count, and it may ultimately take us face to face with freedom.

Jog has been exhaustive in his treatment: there is a chapter entitled 'Trial of Beverley Nichols,' and in it he has definitely proved him to be a liar and a propagandist. The trial seems to be quite genuine. One thing the trial has revealed is that Beverley Nichols had some other purpose also. That is clear in his chapter on 'Poet Laureate of Pakistan.' 'He has not a word of criticism to say against anything Muslim. Probably after having heaped all the words of abuse and opprobrium in his dictionary on everything Hindu, he had none left to spare for anybody. He has turned his searchlight on Hinduism but Islam remains unilluminated by the Nicholsian floodlight.' So rightly Nichols called Jinnah the 'Potential Emperor of Pakistan.'

Now it is pertinent to ask: Why did he come to India? Beverley Nichols had to carry on a propaganda against the Congress lest the British Empire should lose India, on which two out of every ten Englishmen depend for their food. Jog has shown this in crystal clear words in his book, which is at once a mine of information and amusement.

A word must be said about Jog as a writer of English. He has a style of his own. As a satirist he can compare with Swift minus his (Swift's) dryness. I am definite in my mind that Jog has a capacity to play with his theme. He can do more: he works out an atmosphere of brilliance and suggestion. He is never dull, even though he is in the midst of details.

This reply is a valuable contribution, and it will lead to an understanding that must precede a solution of the Indian problem. Two things are plain: the Congress is not a Hindu, much less a Brahmin, body; and communal organizations cannot lead to the easing of the present tension between India and England. I am sure Beverley Nichols will report a 'comeback' if he were to read this book, with his wits about him.

B. S. MATHUR

WORLD IN TRANCE. BY LEOPOLD SCHWARZSCHILD. *Translated from the German by Norbert Guterman. Published by Hamish Hamilton, London; Thacker & Co., Ltd., Bombay. Price Rs 9-12.*

Now that the war has ended by the invention of atomic bomb, we are faced with the main problem, the problem of peace. Exactly the same problem attracted thought and attention just after the close of World War I. Then hopes of world security and peace were high: but they did not materialize. Perhaps a similar fate awaits us, history repeating itself. Leopold Schwarzschild has tried to paint this problem in an extremely serious fashion. The period (1918-1948) is a period of intrigue and manipulations on an unprecedented scale in the history of the world. It may not sound extremely strange in this age of civilization and refinement, when mere courtesy and manners pass for sincerity and good intentions. Refinement is not solidity, so indispensable for perennially peaceful conditions in the world. According to Leopold Schwarzschild, 'The voice of twenty years warns us that tanks and guns can be directed against a land of milk and honey as against a land of stones and barren soil. No magic of prosperity and social justice is capable of checking the hungry lust for power. . . . The voice of twenty years warns us that in the business of enforcing peace and order there is no substitute for our own will and our own power.'

If these words are carefully examined in the light of our experience and hardships, we will readily understand his point. Apparently there can be no substitute for our own will and power if we want to make peace a permanent feature of the future. Here is a doctrine, which has emanated from an extremely practical thinker, who is growing up in an atmosphere of war and action. But this will be altogether unpalatable to us, Indians, who are on the threshold of a great and tremendous revolution under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, whose only weapons are truth and non-violence. I will certainly state that this doctrine of will and power as understood by the German author is a definite consummation of his disappointment and disillusionment. I have used 'as understood by the German author,' because in India will and power will be understood to convey the idea of inner strength which is a necessary concomitant of truth and non-violence. To Leopold Schwarzschild will and power signify brute force. In clear words he advocates the use of power, and so he writes that peace has to be enforced: it will not grow peacefully. Here the author has revealed his pure German mind. We may state that this is not going to be the solution. A victory won by arms will be defeated by arms; and if there is peace after the use of violence it will be peace of the grave.

The book under review is a painful and serious analysis of the contemporary political history. Everywhere there are signs of scholarship and intense reading. And then there is an unending fund of irony and satire. Of course a student of English literature is sometimes reminded of Jonathan Swift or of Rabindranath Tagore. But always there is some disappointment. When I

think of Swift I realize that the German author is not capable of the great capacity of amusing possessed by Swift along with his gift for satire. Take Tagore as a satirist in his *Parrot Training and Other Stories*. Tagore combines sublimity and grandeur with satire, a rare combination for a Westerner to achieve. All that the present author has done is that he has given us a critical analysis of contemporary political thoughts and events in a very painful fashion.

One thing I will commend: in the book ceaselessly there is an atmosphere of suggestion. Like Alphonso Daudet he does not like to draw conclusions for his readers. And there he is right. I can unhesitatingly say that he will never fetch ordinary readers, who lack intelligence and application, and the really intelligent will draw their own conclusions. Leopold writes: 'Was that all? Only that? The German army back across Germany's frontiers unhindered? To be permitted to rest from its exhaustion? To influence the peace negotiations by its very existence?' This has been suggested by him in connection with Wilson's orders for the withdrawal of the Germans before armistice could be signed during World War I. I think the author has revealed his ire against the Germans in these words. But everything is suggested, and suggested powerfully. One can be reminded of the orders of Napoleon to go on firing on the retreating Russians even after their defeat. This is certainly a note of utter disappointment and anger. This is hardly becoming a writer who is keen on the establishment of peace.

There is one passage which suggests prophetic wisdom in our author. 'For fourteen years they had been the dupes of their own fantastic and complacent ideas about the real nature of Germany. . . . The rise of Hitler in Germany was an opportunity for the Allies to realize their mistakes.' We can undoubtedly put the construction of a prophecy upon this statement. Leopold must be thinking of suppressing the Germans altogether. That should not happen. If peace is shared, both by the conqueror and by the vanquished, we will turn to days of constant happiness and comfort.

If we want to learn from our mistakes in the past, this book must be read. It is a necessary and painful reading, and in the gush of details and learning the truth has not been allowed to remain in hiding. At times in spite of him it has come out.

B. S. MATHUR.

BHAGAVAD GITA, THE SONG OF GOD. BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA AND CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD. (INDIAN EDITION). *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 260. Price Rs 2-12.*

To the ever growing literature in English on the Gita, this is a new and extremely welcome addition. The eternal message of the Gita has been rendered into simple language which is devoid of technicalities of dogma and doctrine and rises into suitable poetry where the sublimity of thought requires it. Swami Prabhavananda's name is a guarantee of the authoritative nature of the translation and its being faithful to the true spirit of the original; Christopher Isherwood's delightful literary style and the fresh outlook he has brought to bear on this ancient teaching hitherto couched in Oriental forms of thought in most translations, are also sufficient guarantees that the book will provide pleasant reading from beginning to end. We shall not be surprised, therefore, if this book supersedes as a vade-mecum all other books on the Gita in English.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION BOYS' HOME, RAHARA REPORT FOR 1944

The Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home (Ramachandra-Priti Memorial) was started in September 1944, in the village of Rahara (24 Parganas), about 12 miles north of Calcutta, with the object of training and educating indigent or parentless boys. Moved by the helpless condition of indigent and destitute boys, the late Satish Chandra Mukherjee of Basumati Sahitya Mandir left definite instructions in his will for handing over his Rahara property to the Ramakrishna Mission for the purposes of an orphanage in memory of his deceased son (Ramachandra) and daughter (Priti). This bequest was augmented by a munificent donation given by the widow of the donor. In addition to these, the Government of Bengal, on its own initiative, assured the Mission that it would defray the recurring expenses for some 150 to 250 boys of whom the Mission would take charge.

At the start there was accommodation for 70 boys only. It was by no means an easy task to find space for taking in more boys. Nevertheless, the Home accepted 107 boys from Government orphanages, and 21 were admitted directly. Out of this total of 128, 9 boys left during the year, thus leaving 119 boys on the roll at the end of the year under report. As Government help has been granted on a temporary basis, in order that the institution may be able to maintain (and increase) its present strength and thus help as many deserving boys as possible, it has to depend on future contributions from the generous public. In spirit it is a Brahmacharya Ashrama and the boys are kept in an environment conducive to their moral, cultural, and spiritual advancement. Technical education is imparted along with general education for properly equipping every student for the future. There is ample scope for games, social gatherings, religious functions, and other forms of recreation.

The senior students attend the Khardah School, and the rest belong to the Middle English School started by the Mission in the premises of the Home itself. A monthly manuscript magazine, debating society, music, and gardening are some of the other activities of the boys. While a detailed scheme of technical education is under consideration, tailoring, weaving, paper-making, type-writing, and painting classes have been started. During the period under report, the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with great *eclat*. Among the distinguished visitors may be mentioned H. E. Lady Wavell and Mrs. Casey, wife of H. E. The Governor of Bengal.

The total receipt during the year, in all departments came to Rs. 72,506-15-6 and the total expenditure amounted to Rs. 34,326-12-9. Some of the needs of the institution are: (1) The area of land belonging to the Home is far too small. There should be another 25 acres of land at its disposal so that adequate arrangements may be made for playgrounds, vegetable gardens, etc. (2) A temple with a spacious prayer-hall. (3) More dormitories for the boys. (4) A dining hall. (5) A workshop for vocational training. Contributions may be sent to the secretary of the institution, P.O. Rahara, 24-Parganas (Bengal).

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYALAYA, COIMBATORE DT.

REPORT FOR 1944-45

The fifteenth annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt., contains an account of the work of the institution during the period 1944-45. The activities fall under the following main heads:

High School: There were 127 boys of whom 38 were full-free and 53 half-free. All the 9 sent up for the S.S.L.C. Examination came out successful. With a view to improving the industrial section, smithery was added to the number of subjects taught. This section promises to become a regular Industrial School.

Training School: 10 students were admitted into the first year class. Out of the ten students who sat for the final examination, 7 were successful. A separate hostel has been constructed for the Training School Students.

Kala Nilayam: This is the model school for the above Training School. During the year there were 193 children of whom 93 were girls. There were seven classes, and there was a large and efficient staff. Spinning was taught to all.

Rural Service: The Vidyalaya seeks to serve the surrounding villages in various ways. The Ramakrishna Centenary Memorial Rural Sports were conducted as in the past years. The annual competitions in essay writing, painting, etc. were held. Attempts are being made to start a rural college in order to raise the standard of knowledge in the villages by giving instruction in higher education, and also a rural dispensary to give medical relief to the villagers.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was duly celebrated, as well as the birthday anniversaries of many saints and great men. The publication department was unable to bring out many new books owing to wartime difficulties. Nevertheless, one new book and two reprints were brought out. The co-operative stores worked successfully and proved very useful to the Vidyalaya, its workers, and even many neighbouring villages. The following are some of the needs of the Vidyalaya: A temple, a well-equipped industrial section, a good gymnasium, a good dispensary, residential quarters for workers, and hostels for the Training School.

VEDANTA SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO

The program of work for the months of November and December 1945, of the Vedanta Society of Northern California shows that the following were some of the subjects chosen by the Swami-in-charge for his bi-weekly lectures: 'The real man and the apparent man,' 'Ascetic practices, their place in spiritual life,' 'How can we see God?' 'Spiritual ignorance—unnatural and unnecessary,' 'Where faith and reason meet,' 'How to quiet the mind,' and 'Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven.' The birthday of Christ was duly celebrated on Christmas Day. The other activities of the Society, viz. classes for members and students, Sunday school for children, library and reading room, etc. were conducted as usual.