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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI SHIVANANDA

The purifying influence of holy places—Puri—Swamiji at Benares—Importance of Japa and meditation—His feeling of oneness with Sri Ramakrishna—Reminiscences of Balaram Bose.

In April 1926 after the Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Mahapurush Maharaj started for Madras in the company of Swami Sharvananda and Swami Yatiswarananda. On the way he halted at Bhubaneswar for a few days.

One day in the evening Mahapurushji was sitting on the south verandah of the Bhubaneswar Math. In the deep stillness of the evening it seemed as if even the plants and trees and creepers were in a state of calm meditation. Mahapurushji said to a Sadhu near by, 'See the greatness of the place ; the mind of itself tends to become indrawn.' The Sadhu said, 'Maharaj, it is said that Swami Brahmananda was of the opinion that a wave of spiritual force flows through this place at eight o'clock in the evening, at midnight in Brindaban, and at four o'clock in the morning at holy Kashi. Mahapurushji said, 'Quite true. Only those who are able to take the advantage of the special times in these holy places can understand the greatness inherent in such places.'

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The next day preparations were being made for catching the Puri Express to Madras. Mahapurushji, all ready for starting, came and sat on the south verandah. In the course of the talk that followed he said, 'The images of Jagannath, Subhadra, and Balaram in the Puri temple are all representative symbols of the Buddhistic age. Jagannath represents Buddha, Subhadra stands for the Sangha, and Balaram symbolizes Dharma. When Vaishnavism became predominant in the succeeding age, they gave the present representations to those images. For us also, Swami Vivekananda is Buddha, the Holy Mother is the Sangha, and Sri Ramakrishna stands for Dharma. "I take my refuge in the Buddha ! I take my refuge in the Sangha ; I take my refuge in the Dharma !" It will be a good thing if we have a Ramakrishna Math at Puri.'

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The Shastras say that the words of realized souls are not mere talk for the sake of talk but are prophetic. Even during his

lifetime we saw that these words of Mahapurushji came true and a centre was formed at Puri, overlooking the beautiful blue waves of the Bay of Bengal.

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In November 1927 Mahapurushji was staying at Madhupur. From there he went to the Advaita Ashrama, Benares. Acting on the wishes of Swami Vivekananda, Mahapurushji himself had started this Ashrama in 1902 and had spent seven years in hard Tapasya living here itself. The place was full of the memories of his hard earlier life. With his presence in the Ashrama there set in a new tide of joy. All the Sanyasis and Brahmacharis of the Ashrama as well as of the adjacent Sevashrama were all filled with new enthusiasm and energy. The lay devotees also were in great joy. Day after day thus passed in pure spiritual joy. At last came the birthday anniversary of the Holy Mother. It was the last week in December. On this occasion Mahapurushji initiated several young men into the vows of Brahmacharya, and a few into the still harder vows of Sanyasa. The new Sanyasis had gone to the Ganges, the fire of the Homa had not yet gone out. Mahapurushji was sitting absorbed in a deep inward mood.

At this time Mr Sundararaj Aiyangar, Assistant Commissioner in the service of the state of Mysore, came and saluted in the orthodox Hindu fashion by prostrating himself at the feet of Mahapurush Maharaj. Only a few days before, Mr Sundararaj Aiyangar had received spiritual initiation from Mahapurushji. Mahapurushji asked him 'Sundararaj, are you happy and well?' 'Yes, Maharaj, because you have so graciously taken up my burden.' Mahapurushji's eyes were closed and he said, 'Yes, Guru Maharaj (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) has taken up your burden through me.'

* * *

One night Mahapurushji was sitting in his room enjoying a smoke. At this time a Sanyasi came to see him and sat down and was having a talk with him. During the course of the conversation, the Sanyasi remarked, 'Maharaj, it seems to me that at the present time we should put more stress on Japa and meditation rather than on unselfish work.' To this Mahapurushji said, 'Japa and meditation had great importance in the past, they have all that importance now, and they will have the same importance in the future also. You are talking of work? Well, by omitting Japa and meditation work *can never be done* in accordance with the ideals of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Work and worship should go hand in hand, not merely work as worship.'

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Another night Mahapurushji was having a smoke after his meals. A Brahmachari now came and sat nearby and said, 'Maharaj, I could not understand your deep compassion for me on account of my narrowness of heart, and so I refused to act according to your directions the other day. But today I am realizing that all your advice and instructions are for my real welfare, and so I am ready to obey implicitly whatever you direct me to do.' With great affection Mahapurushji said to him, 'You have understood rightly. You all will be greatly benefited if you act according to the advice that comes from here (meaning himself). All the advice that now comes out from here (namely his body), know them all to be from Sri Ramakrishna. Now I feel that I am living always one with Sri Ramakrishna.'

* * *

During this time the stairs to the roof of the Advaita Ashrama were being repaired. So Mahapurushji was living for a few days in the same room in the Sevashrama in which revered Swami Turiyananda had lived. One day some Sanyasis and some devotees came and saluted him and took their seats. Mahapurushji said to them, 'This room seems to be a place for Tapasya. That is because Swami Turiyananda had realized Samadhi and he had lived here.'

In the course of the conversation the topic drifted to Balaram Bose the great householder devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. Mahapurushji said: 'When Balaram Babu was getting very bad during his last illness, one day he was asking again and again, "Where are my brothers? At this time I do not want anybody except my brothers." Getting this news we went to his house in Baghbazar. One day his condition was very painful, and the doctors had almost given up hope. We were sitting by his side. Inside the house were Golap Ma, Yogin Ma, Balaram Babu's wife, and other women waiting with an anxious heart. At this time Balaram Babu's wife saw in the clear sky of the bright day something like a white cloud. She soon saw the cloud to descend down slowly towards the earth. While descending it seemed to take the form of a chariot and it descended on the roof of her house. Sri Ramakrishna came out of the chariot and went down the stairs. Next she saw that Sri Ramakrishna was bringing Balaram Babu holding him by the hand. Both Sri Ramakrishna and Balaram Babu sat in the chariot which soon rose up into the sky and was lost to her view. As a result of this supernatural vision of Balaram Babu's wife the anguish of separation from her husband did not touch her mind. When the spell of the vision had passed away Balaram Babu's wife told Golap Ma of her vision. Golap Ma came and told us of this, and only just a few minutes before had Balaram Babu's soul left his body. Balaram Babu was a very great devotee, and equally so was his wife. That is why Sri Ramakrishna had raised her beyond all sorrow and delusion by vouchsafing this vision.'

THE QUEST FOR REALITY

By the Editor

When we treat any one part of Reality in isolation from the rest, or when we concentrate on the common features of things which also differ profoundly, it is certain that our results will not be the whole truth, and probable that they will not be wholly true.

—C. D. Broad

I

One of the most astonishing facts in an apparently *real* universe is the human search for reality which, unfortunately eludes us tantalizingly like the will-o'-the-wisp or like a phantom in the dark, until at last the human mind gives up the task concluding that reality itself is an illusion, like Jesting Pilate, who asked 'What is truth?' and would not wait for an answer.

To the ordinary man with his common sense point of view undisturbed by the scrupulous considerations of philosophical logic chopping, reality is what he has seen and understood; there is no nonsense about it, and that is that. Sense experience is for him the world of reality. Brute facts, he maintains, cannot be explained away by metaphysical speculations.

Getting down to brass tacks, as he would put it, the physical world,—the world of our bodies, our food, drink, houses, cattle, wealth, and all the rest of the tangible, visible, external world—is the reality we live in. To question the reality of this physical world in which we have to toil and sweat to earn the necessaries of life is itself a sign of lack of grip on realities and such people appear to him as dreamy philosophers who are to be pitied—this bright world, the big

mountains, the thickly wooded forests, the sweetly singing birds, the towns, the majestic buildings, the broad highways, the swift railways, the swifter motor-cars and aeroplanes —well, to doubt the reality of these things looks like an idiot doubting his own identity or a dog trying to catch and bite its own tail as if it belonged to another! Scientists may say that all the world is made up of mere energy, philosophers may, in their wisdom, proclaim that God alone is real, and all else illusory, but none of these can shake the conviction of the reality of what is real—the things we feel, see, and touch. We have yet to see scientists keeping their bodies alive on mere energy without eating food; we have yet to see saints *living on* God alone without sustaining their bodies on the alms given by the faithful. Thus argues the common man.

But this naive faith in the reality of our bodies and the external world is, not unoften, rudely shaken, and the common man then finds himself at sea. When things that we held so dear and real vanish like phantoms in a dream, then comes the unbearable shock, and the common man, the realist *par excellence,* asks himself, 'What have I been clinging to: the substance or its shadow?' The thousands, whether Hindus or Muslims, who saw their palaces or their cottages go up in smoke in the communal riots that swept the country like a cyclone, who lost their wives and children as well as their worldly wealth, or who saw their wives dishonoured or found themselves bewildered and at a loss to know whether it was the reality to which they had been clinging that had been swept away, or whether it was all a nightmare in a dream, must perhaps have felt that they would wake up again to find their fair homesteads, their dear one's and all other things as they were before this horrible nightmare of communal riots took place. The same feeling of the agonizing unreality of the world overpowers men and women in times of earthquake, floods, famine, pestilence, and devastating war. The naive feeling of the reality of the world gives way to doubt and enquiry. 'To what end all this? Are we running after the shadow or the substance? Wherein lies our *real* good?'—such questions crop up in the mind with an insistence and urgency that cannot be denied.

But it is possible to know and accept what is real and thus save ourselves from the evils of unreality? Somehow in the heart of man rises the hope that Reality can be understood and grasped and that only then can he reach the end of his quest for security and happiness.

Let us not suppose that the search for reality should be the exclusive work of philosophers or scientists. The quest for the real, the lasting, the eternal, the quest for that state without fear and without sorrow is a task that is laid upon us all by the very constitution of our being. The scientist carries out this quest in the realm of the physical; the economist in the realm of wealth; the statesman in the realm of politics; the psychologist in the realm of mind; the philosopher in the realm of the intellect; the saint in the realm of the spirit.

II

The scientist has now practically succeeded in proving that matter and energy are convertible terms in spite of all appearances to the contrary. Not only have scientists demonstrated that all matter is convertible into energy, but researches recently made into atomic physics have shown the possibility of the formation from radiant energy of what we understand as matter including within that term gases, liquids, and solids But the physicist has so far left what we call 'mind' severely alone as a factor too complicated to yield successful results if introduced within his realm. In this he was quite justified. For the problem of Reality is a terribly hard one, and only by piecemeal analysis and research into the different departments of Reality as it appears to the

human mind can any progress be made in understanding Reality as a whole.

But the danger comes when the scientific specialist forgets that he had violently cut a section of Reality like a section of a flower for examination under the microscope. He is apt to consider, with grave consequences for the rest of mankind, that 'the success which this abstraction has given him within a limited field justifies him in taking the principles which hold therein as the whole truth about the whole world.'[1] In his examination of the world the scientist has left out the consideration of man himself, (and to everybody including the scientist, it is but a poor aspect) of Reality that is revealed which leaves out the human element for which Reality has any meaning.

The economist, the politician, and the sociologist deal with Reality in the wider context of the physical and the living elements. Matter and energy, flora and fauna, all exist to subserve the ends of human beings who have come on top as a result of the apparent natural selection and variation of the species which seem to have gone on through the ages, if we are to believe in the usual theories of evolution.

III

The economist holds that man's happiness and aim in life lies in increasing the wealth that is available for distribution to all in society. Society grows more and more complicated economically with the inevitable growth of population. The old rural types of economy have given place to the capitalistic, and the capitalistic, in its turn will have to be replaced by the socialistic, or communistic. The economist thus lays stress on man as a producing and consuming being. The physical and external wants of man and their proper satisfaction are what he studies, and all other things like science, politics, philosophy, and religion are but subordinate to the urgent problem of food and living.

[1] C. D. Broad: *Mind and its Place in Nature.*

But the economist also abstracts a portion of Reality and gives it over-emphasis. Nor has he been able to achieve the success that the scientist has achieved in his realm of matter. For we find now different economic systems holding sway over the minds of rival groups of men. In India, and in other industrially undeveloped countries also perhaps, we have the Gandhian group supported by Dr J. C. Kumarappa fighting for the revival and strengthening of the village economy which has been the main characteristic of the life of the masses of this country. Then we have the capitalistic economy, seemingly so successful in America, which is up and doing to establish itself in India, China, Japan and other countries with the aid of the moneyed classes in those countries. Next we have the socialist economy in Britain under the labour government which wants to give a square deal to the common man and save him from the clutches of the ruthless capitalism in which the human element is sacrificed to the profit motive. Mr. Henry Wallace, former Vice-President of the United States of America, and a strong upholder of this section, in a broadcast from London to the British people on 13 April, demands for a 'New Deal for the world.' As his views deal fully with the socialist point in the context of present-day world affairs, we give some copious extracts from it here:

> The whole world needs a New Deal and there will be no peace till it has one. When I became Secretary of Agriculture in 1933, the abundance of the great livestock and grain-producing areas of the United States was being wasted because the people who needed food had not the money to pay for it. It seemed to me that this ludicrous and tragic situation was the world's root trouble. There were industrial workers of America out of work because people who grew food —including hundreds of millions of peasants in China and India, the Middle East and South America—lived in abysmal poverty, needed all the things we were able to make, but could not pay for them.
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> During the war America's vast industrial potential had enabled her not only to wage the war and assist the Allies but also actually to increase the standard of living and consuming power of the citizens of America.

When you realize this you understand what the late President Roosevelt meant by the Four Freedoms. America is the home of political liberty and we have tamed a continent by enterprise. But it was freedom from want which made the Roosevelt message a clarion call to the world; freedom from fear, of course, too. But does not war arise more from want and economic maladjustment than from any other cause? Is not the common man's security first and foremost the assurance of next week's bread and butter? And does not One World in which there can be security for anyone demand that men and nations share goods and services which we all need and which modern science enables us to produce?

I have said enough to show why I think that the death of Roosevelt was a disaster and why I left the government of the United States. For today it is only too clear that we are drifting towards two worlds and that the immense power and wealth of America is being used for strategic and military purposes rather than to raise the standard of living in countries which could become great markets for American exports.

By helping these countries with ploughs and tools rather than with guns we can blunt the edge of American depression, greatly enlarge world trade, and produce eventually that degree of prosperity which will make communism in the western world improbable instead of inevitable. A national awakening has occurred in Asia and in other parts of the world which we used to think of only as colonies. This new nationalism will turn to communism and look to the Soviet Union as their ally if the United States declare that this is the American century of power politics rather than the century of the common man.

You will tell me that Soviet Russia is expansionist as Britain was expansionist in the past and America is expansionist in the Pacific and is there today. I do not deny it. But I say that it is the task of the countries which have the atom bomb and which have not, like Russia, been devastated by war and boycotted in peace to try a new type of power politics. The one kind of power politics which will work in the modern world is to use power to create world prosperity and increase abundance.

I believe that together Britain and America, bringing an opportunity of constructive achievement with them, could solve the dangerous problem of the Middle East by the same kind of approach to the peoples of those impoverished countries whose oil fields are as rich as their peoples are destitute. I believe that quite new opportunities would arise of cooperation with the Soviet Union which would not want to be excluded if as I should like we applied the technique of the Tennessee Valley to the Valley of the Jordan and used the resources of modern science to transform the sandy desert that lies between the Tigris and the Euphrates once again into the Garden of Eden. According to archaeologists that area where there are now two and a half million people, once had a population of twenty-two millions. If we brought water and power to serve the peoples of these arid wastes, no one would grudge us what we need.

We would not be imperialists but technicians enabling these peoples to develop more peacefully and healthfully their own way of life, not in terms of graft for a few but with the aim of prosperity for all who are willing to work, study, and learn. The whole world needs a New Deal and there will be no peace till it has one, I believe that the British people who know the shortcomings of old-fashioned exploitation and imperialism would cooperate with enthusiasm on a thorough-going New Deal for the entire world. By necessity you understand the need for a New Deal for the world because your old deal has broken down.

Russian Communism goes a step further than Socialism. It proposes to provide salvation for mankind by complete nationalization of all the means of production, viz. land, labour, capital, and technical ability. It would also abolish private property to the extent that human nature in its present phase of development will allow.

To the economist's solution of the problem of the world's ills the politician and statesman will add the necessity of proper forms of government. For, without a strong government no stable society is possible, nor any economic progress. Before we can have good government there must be strong government. For, in a condition of anarchy all values are overturned and only the rule of the jungle will prevail. Whether the form of government should be autocratic or democratic will depend largely upon the nature and capacity of the people concerned. The political scientist will say that democratic form of government based upon an educated and cultured electorate is the proper solution. But national frustration and the absence of an educated electorate might lead to such phenomenon as the rise of Hitler and other dictators in various places. For humanity is, in the average, still in that state of development where it will prefer security real or supposed to the option of

freedom and a life of risks. But optimists have always conceived of a state when there will be no government whatever, except the self-government of the enlightened nonviolent individual. The wise will lead almost the very same lives they are leading even if all laws were abolished. The really free man is he who is controlled from within and not from without. Political freedom as we know it at present is at best a varnished form of slavery to outside control even though the consent of the governed for such control has been obtained not through force but by manipulation of the franchise and the ballot box. Here as in other fields humanity is still experimenting, discarding old forms and trying new ones. The real is still eluding our grasp.

According to the sociologist the real problem is the racial one. Nations and empires have risen and fallen and this is thought to have been due to race deterioration. So the sociologist especially recommends the study of the laws of eugenics and their application to society so that racial improvement may take place. The two steps recommended are the elimination of reproduction by the defective and unfit, and encouragement of greater reproduction of the fitter types. It is pointed out that poverty, crime, drunkenness, disease and other social problems are increased by defective inborn capacities. Those who are generously endowed both physically and mentally can be used to raise the average endowment of the race as a whole. If man is to control his destiny he must turn his attention to the control of the human material as well as human surroundings. The success attending the application of the laws of genetics to cattle points the way to their application in human society. Thus new races of supermen can be created and then we can hope to solve all the problems that beset us.

IV

The philosopher endeavours to unravel the mystery of the world and its Reality from a different angle. A little reflection shows him that the common sense view of the external world is untenable if we are to be guided by the light of reason, and without using his reason man would certainly sink to the level of beasts. Common sense holds the external world to consist of substances like wood and brick, iron and gold, each having its properties or qualities like lightness or the capacity to burn in the case of wood, or like heaviness and opacity in the case of brick and iron, or like yellowness and the property of not being easily affected by other elements, and hence its value as the basis of currency in the case of gold. These things exist 'out there' and are independent of the observer for their existence. Common sense holds that we see them with our minds and sense organs, and they are all useful to us in the world we live in. But many philosophers in their enquiries are unable to distinguish substances or qualities, nor are they sure that the external world can be proved to exist in the sense we see them. Other philosophers opine that we may see *something* outside but that the nature of that *something* is quite different from what common sense believes it to be.

Even scientists who are supposed to be dealing with Reality at first hand have shown that the external world is quite different from what common sense people take it to be. Take the common case of sight. When we look at the Pole Star we have got the idea that there it is always in the sky as we see it. But if we are to believe in the findings of science about the speed of light, the light from the Pole Star which reaches our eyes at the time of seeing left that star many years ago. So we are seeing the Pole Star, not as we suppose it as it is now, but as it was several years ago. If the Pole Star were to have burst and disappeared in a flash of radiation today, the information of the event will reach our eyes several years from now, and in the meantime we will be seeing a Pole Star that no longer exists. But this leads to

the absurd position that we see something that no longer exists. Again take the case of sound and hearing. Ordinarily the sources of sound are visible to us and we generally look for them in the direction of the sound. But in the case of an aeroplane moving at great speed we see that the sound comes from a place which the aeroplane has left behind several seconds ago and in the case of things moving faster than the speed of sound like V rockets we hear the ghostly roar of the rocket long after the rocket has done its deadly work. Our senses are no longer reliable guides.

So with touch. Persons whose arms have been amputated have pin pricks at the end of their non-existent fingers when the nerve terminates in the amputated arm have been stimulated.

With smell also it is difficult to assume that smell belongs to that substance from which it originates. The odoriferous particles passing through the air impinge upon the nerves of the nostrils and then the sensation of smell is produced in the brain. It is quite possible that the passage of the odoriferous particles through the air and the nostrils might have given them a 'smell' which the assumed sources of the smell might not have.

As regards taste it has been demonstrated by scientists that it does not remain the same. An American scientist recently touring India gave a piece of paper dipped in a solution to several persons to taste. The experiment proved that each one found a different taste in it. It is also a common experience that water tastes sweet when taken after chewing Amalaki; curds taste more sour after a dish of sweet pudding.

All these only go to show how unreliable is the reality of the external world which we build upon our sense experiences. Hence the philosopher tries to study first the nature of knowledge and how it arises, before he can find out what is really 'real' in our experience. Here also no two philosophers are agreed on any major conclusions. Some say that the external world exists and our minds also exist, and that our minds only register in various ways what is outside. Others deny that there is any mind apart from the body and that it is the physical body alone with mind as an epiphenomenon that is the experiencer and knower. The nature of 'Reality' has been made still more difficult of comprehension by the various theories about what constitutes true knowledge, and each philosopher believes that he has good reasons for believing that the views he holds are truly descriptive of Reality.

V

It may well be that it is impossible for the human mind as it is constituted to really understand the truth about the world. But if the philosophers cannot give us any convincing and conclusive picture of Reality. the religious consciousness of the saints of all races seems to have touched a point where they have the conviction of having come face to face with Reality in its totality. And this Reality they have recognized in the hearts of all things. This is because they have approached the problem from the standpoint of the Self, the Self of man to begin with. For no man can ever deny his Self; for even by that very denial he will only be affirming its existence. The Self is the first and most direct thing in our experience. But of course we have to understand that we are not the apparent Selves with which we identify ourselves as bodies or mind but the Self of all things, the Self from which originates all experiences, all worlds, external and internal. The empirical Self or the ordinary Self as we understand it is but a creation due to a projection of ourselves, by an inexplicable process into a world of externality and internality where all our experiences are real only with reference to our real Self of whose existence we are so intimately and intuitively aware, the Self which is eternal and free. The awareness of ourselves as the real Self and not the empirical Self is the goal of all true religion. 'Know thyself'

still stands as the only way to the city of Reality. This real Self is the ground of all our so-called knowledge and so no outside knowledge can ever reach it in its fullness. As Joad says :

If all the different accounts, the physiological, the chemical, the physical, the psychological, the behaviouristic, the psycho-analytic, the economic, the statistical, the biological, the anthropological, and the novelist's, were collated, supplemented with other accurate and complete but partial accounts and worked up into a comprehensive survey, they would still fail to constitute *the* truth about the Self. And they would fail to do this, not because some particular piece of information had been left out, or some particular point of view forgotten—for, it would be urged, no matter how complete the collection of scientific accounts might be, *the* truth would still elude them—but because they would remain only a set of separate accounts of different parts of aspects and a man's Self is more than the different parts or aspects which are ingredients of it. . . . True knowledge is, or at least includes, knowledge of the Self as a whole.[2]

The Upanishads also say 'How can one know the Knower?' 'The power of seeing of the Seer is never lost.' The nearest approach to indicate the Reality in words is as Satchidanandâ, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.

[2] *Guide to Philosophy*, P. 249.

THE VIRUS OF BIGOTRY

By An American

(Continued from the May issue)

II

Various sincere and careful thinkers have analysed bigotry, and though each has phrased his conclusions in his own language, all have more or less agreed on the chief characteristics of bigotry. It is, they say, compounded by certain ignoble qualities of the human mind, all of them essentially emotional in character. Ignorance is a fundamental characteristic, but bigotry is by no means confined to the illiterate. To be convinced of this one has only to consider the basic influences making possible the orgy of Ku Klux Klan terrorism. Underlying it is an enormous amount of controlled and directed ignorance which embraces large numbers of literate people. Ability to read does not insure breadth of mind and rationality, for the bigoted invariably choose to read books providing data that support and fortify their already established prejudices.

Prejudice or bias is another important characteristic of the bigoted. Possessing no analytical faculty they think in patterns. And the simile applied to the mind of the party politician applies as aptly to that of the bigot: 'Like the iris of the eye, the greater the light introduced from the outside the more the mind is closed against it.'

The blindness and prejudice of bigotry quite naturally are 'inherited' in the sense that the mental environment of the individual conditions him to think and act in certain ways : if he has been reared in an atmosphere of provincialism and ignorance, it is not likely that he will have much tolerance or breadth of vision ; narrowness is ingrained in him. It was because of this fact that old prejudices spread westward with the settlement of the frontier following the Revolution. Many westward moving pioneers having imbibed the intolerant ideas that had often been fixed in law as well as in belief and custom, adhered to these ideas and sought to perpetuate them. Though such settlers changed their locale, this by no means implied that

they rid their minds of inculcated religious bias, which, too often, they carried along with them and carefully nurtured.

These are further characteristics of bigotry. Prejudice does not remain passive but tends to find expression in violence against those whom the bigot dislikes. Indeed the 'method' of bigotry is persecution, and bigotry therefore implies a predisposition to be cruel. Moreover the bigot feels a compulsion to propagandize; he seeks to infect others with his biases and to inflame them with a desire to eliminate all dissenters. And unfortunately, since the actions of the bigot seem attended with strength and self-sacrifice, his prejudices often have the appearance of genuine and rational convictions and evoke the admiration, even respect, of the undiscriminating.

Why people are bigoted, why they tend to be biased against some particular religion, race or group of people, are questions not easy to answer. There are those who explain such tendencies by references to the past. For example, they say that the persecutions visited on Jews in the United States have behind them an old-world history; the prejudices against the Jews felt by European Christians migrated with them to this country.

By similar references to history they also seek to explain why the Catholics have often been persecuted here. In the past the Catholics in the old world as well as the new, inflicted untold suffering on innumerable men and women in the name of religion or Church dogma or Church interests. The Catholics it is said, by the very nature of their religious allegiance lay themselves open to suspicion and eventual hostility. Besides the Catholic Church organization tries to establish its own institutions, educational, charitable, and so on; and the Church admittedly has some influence on the political views of its members since the Vatican does not confine itself to purely spiritual interests but claims the privilege of both a political state and a religious institution. Those who favour historical explanations maintain that all these circumstances have undoubtedly been prejudicial to the American Catholics.

Even if we admit the cogency of historical explanations, such are scarcely adequate in the strange case of the Negroes. What historical past of the Negroes can justify the persecutions they have endured in America? They were brought here as slaves and by their heavy labour made possible the economic prosperity of the South. One would think that the sight of their sufferings would awaken only compassion and pity in others; but it has rather happened that their every fault has been made an excuse to harass and abuse them. They have always been at the mercy of the white Americans. When persecution is inflicted on them, they have not the economic, political, or judicial power to resist it. The notorious American institution of lynching so often the cause of anguish among the Negroes has been a constant puzzle to the citizens of other countries.

We are not convinced that historical reasons are adequate to explain the presence of bigotry and its continual outbursts. Such explanations are not real explanations but only statements of the continuation of a process. Ordinary people may be provoked to retaliate against those who inflict grievous wrongs upon them—such retaliation is human if not wise or excusable. But when provocations cease and yet persecution continues reference to the historical past does not offer a sufficient explanation.

What is it that perpetuates persecution even when there are no more occasions for it? Some have explained this psychologically. They maintain that when opportunity occurs a person who has often been persecuted is apt in his turn to become a persecutor, and that such has been the case with many Americans.

We concede that the psychological explanation has some measure of truth but even that in our opinion does not go deep enough. The cause of bigotry in America lies far deeper

than has yet been indicated. Bigotry and persecution have gone hand in hand with Christianity itself since its earliest days, now making Christians their victims and again motivating Christians to oppress the unbaptized.

Bigotry stems from the very foundations of the Christian faith. From its spiritual forebears, the ancient Hebrews, Christianity received an unfortunate heritage of religious intolerance. Because they were bigoted, because they looked upon themselves as God's chosen people, through the ages the Israelites brought down bitter retribution upon their heads. Muhammadanism, the third branch of the Semitic religious group (Judaism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism), has been fully as fanatical and intolerant of dissenters as have Judaism and Christianity.

The bigotry with which we are faced today is obviously part and parcel of all the Semitic faiths. This bigotry is the inevitable result of the great fault characterizing the adherents of all of them, namely, the belief that their own faith is the one path to God, the one means of salvation. Clinging to this idea, they have looked upon every other religion as mistaken and misguided, indeed as not religion at all; they have thought that far from being a path to God, every other faith is veritably a path to perdition; and therefore they have regarded the adherents of any path other than their own as sinners. To the children of Israel, the people of other tribes were idol-worshippers. To orthodox Christians, baptism in the name of the Trinity is the only means of escape from hell-fire. To the Muslims, there is no God but Allah and no other prophet like Muhammad.

Furthermore, the votaries of all the Semitic religions have asserted that their beliefs resulted from special revelations made by God directly to one or more prophets, who proclaimed them to the people as God's word, to be accepted and followed without question. This assertion has made the prophets the only authority for religious truth and has shut out the possibility of independent thought or rational discussion of religion. When Christ taught in the synagogues the elders repudiated him because he declared, 'Before Abraham was, I am'; yet the followers of him, who thus dared suggest that there might be other teachers than the ancient prophets, have maintained that Christ's word is final in all matters of spiritual truth.

For both the reasons mentioned, the Semitic religions have become dogmatic and rigid. While truth may be embodied in dogma, and certainly in these faiths it is, dogmatism gives rise to innumerable difficulties and hardships both for the adherents of the dogma and for those with whom they come in contact. And because these faiths with their credal rigidity have prevailed in the West, nationalistic and scientific thinking have here been lost to religion, though in every other phase of Western life they have been abundantly fruitful affording knowledge and understanding.

Yet it is religion which above all else should have been through the centuries the means of giving man complete and ultimate knowledge of truth and of the various ways to attain it. How far short the West has fallen in this regard is seen in the fact that even people benefited by years of training in rationalism and the precise methods of science lay aside the results when they turn to religion, and become fundamentalists, accepting everything on faith. Or, unable to do this, they repudiate religion entirely and thus the solace and inspiration of spiritual truth is lost to them because the only religions they know insist upon presenting it in the stiff garb of dogma.

It is because of the dogmatism and attendant bigotry of the Semitic religions that, despite the sound kernel of truth in them and their emphasis on social virtues such as charity, unselfishness, forbearance, and patience, these religions have invariably become intolerant and domineering in their relationships with other religions. So deeply

ingrained in them is the belief that their's alone is the way to salvation, that Christianity and Muhammadanism, the two missionary religions of the Semitic group, have not hesitated to use force to convert the 'heathen' and the 'infidel,' and all three of these religions have at one time or another put non-believers to death.

So pitifully limited is Western knowledge of religions other than those of Semitic origin that many Western people may wonder if a religion free of dogmatism and bigotry can exist. It can indeed. Before the time of Christ, Buddhism was a missionary religion; Buddhist monks travelled as far as the British Isles. But never did the Buddhists condemn the beliefs of others or attempt to force them to accept the Buddhist Law.

Nor is there any record of religious persecution on the part of Confucianism or Taoism, the great religions of China. And India, far from impugning foreign teachings, has been the haven of many persecuted foreign sects, including a large community of Jews who have lived in India unmolested for centuries. It should be added that Hinduism is the only religion in the world which declares that God can be realized or God-consciousness won by means prescribed by other religions as well as by its own.

The essential purpose of Christianity, as of every other religion, is to guide men to the blessed state of perfection which Christians call salvation. Persecution or even religious intolerance is not part of this purpose. But until all the Semitic religions give up intolerance we shall never be free of bigotry with its attendant evils. And this can be accomplished only by the adoption of scientific and rationalistic thinking in religion as in every important field of human thought and endeavour. The divine revelations of the saints and sages of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity being true they will not suffer nor will their glory be one whit diminished by having the searchlight of reason and analysis thrown upon them. Rather they will stand forth as the more inspiring because vindicated by the evidence of this highest mental faculty which man can bring to appreciating and understanding them.

When religion is approached from a rational viewpoint its truly essential elements such as purity, renunciation, discrimination, devotion, and knowledge are readily distinguished from its non-essentials, the ritualistic forms, creeds, dogmas, and the like, which are the elements that invariably give rise to dissension. Once these non-essentials take their proper place as optional elements to be adopted by those who find them congenial but put aside by those who do not, the occasions for dissension in religious matters will be removed and religious dogmatism, intolerance, and bigotry will vanish.

Moreover, when religious intolerance ceases racial and other forms of intolerance will also tend to cease. For it has been noted that peoples with a religious bias are predisposed to develop other biases that their religious bigotry is veritably the soil in which bigotry in general flourishes. If any people or nations consider themselves to be favourites of God, they soon begin to think that others are different from themselves, permanently and inherently inferior, intrinsically imperfect and evil. With that mental attitude it is easy to forget to show due consideration to others; and persecution and cruelty appear quite natural. The ways of the other peoples and nations, their modes of thought and action, their ways of life—all seem suspect, deserving to be eradicated even by force, and it is believed that if such eradication is impossible, these people and nations themselves could with justification be done away with.

Inquisition and *Jihad* are merely expressions of this attitude of mind in the religious field; intolerance and various forms of persecution are its expressions in other fields. Until this basic mental attitude is changed religious intolerance will continue and the assertion of the Fatherhood of

God and the brotherhood of man will be only a mockery. Why the Americans have not shown consideration and kindness to the Negroes, is thus understandable. Because of the attitude of mind we have been discussing, it has been hard for them to look upon the Negroes as basically the same as themselves and hence worthy of equal consideration. To them, the Negroes have seemed to belong to a different category of beings than themselves, and for that reason the persecution of the Negroes has not much troubled their conscience.

The non-recognition of the basic perfection of every man, then seems to us to be the original source of all misunderstanding, intolerance, bigotry, and persecution. And to rid ourselves of this terrible evil of bigotry we must all of us make the recognition of the innate perfection and greatness of every man a cardinal tenet of our faith whatever that faith may be.

A PAGE FROM THE LIFE OF SRI SURESHWARACHARYA

By P. Seshadri, B.A., M. L.

Sri Sureshwaracharya, the first in the line of the illustrious Jagatgurus (world-teachers) of the Sringeri Math, is an acknowledged authority on the Advaita Vedanta. The *Naishkarmya Siddhi*, an original treatise establishing the principles of Advaita and the masterly *Vartika on the Brihadaranyaka Bhashya*, besides other minor works, bear ample witness to his vast erudition, brilliant intellect, ripe experience, and earnest devotion. Tradition records that, in his earlier years, he was recognized as the foremost disciple of Kumarila Bhatta and had won renown as the greatest protagonist of the Purva Mimamsa school. It is said that Sri Shankara, in the course of his great Digvijaya (spiritual conquest) sought him and challenged him to a controversy with the condition that the defeated party should become the disciple of the victor. In this connection, we hear of Ubhaya-Bharati, the wife of Mandana Misra (as Sureshwara was then called), who was chosen by Sri Shankara himself to be the arbiter in the discussion. The selection was acclaimed by all, as Bharati had established her reputation as a deep scholar, unrivalled for her wit, genius, and impartial judgement so that she was regarded as the veritable goddess of learning. After a thorough and sustained debate of eighteen days Mandana Misra had to acknowledge defeat, which was ratified by the verdict of Bharati. But, when her husband was about to renounce and become a Sanyasi disciple of Sri Shankara, she interfered and remarked that his defeat was not complete, since she, his wife and his other half according to the Shastras, had not been discomfited. This position was accepted by all the parties and she plied Sri Shankara with questions, unfit to be answered by a Sanyasi. The story goes that he had to exercise his Yogic power of entering another body to solve the problems raised by her. Finally, she was satisfied and Mandana was free to become a Sanyasi disciple of Sri Shankara. But Bharati could not endure the separation and so gave up her body by the power of Yoga, after having entrusted her beloved husband to the care of Sri Shankara. It was then that Mandana renounced receiving the name of Sureshwara.

The traditional account, narrated above, appears to be borne out by a few passages from the Vartika of. Sureshwara on the Bhashya of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*,

Brahma IV, Chapter II. The Upanishadic text and the commentary of Sri Shankara merely say that Yajnavalkya told his wife Maitreyi of his intention to renounce after distributing his wealth to her and his other wife, Katyayani; and thereupon Maitreyi questions him as to whether wealth can confer immortality to which he replies that it cannot. Then, she discards that wealth and seeks the knowledge which makes one immortal. Sureshwara's Vartika weaves a long dialogue on this slender basis, which does not seem to be warranted by the passage he is commenting upon. An unconscious reflection of a page from his own happy married life with a worthy helpmate and their conversation when he sought to renounce appears to be portrayed in this portion of the Vartika which, usually, is restrained and impersonal and errs by brevity than by lengthy exposition.

A translation of these interesting verses is given below:

It is enjoined in the Shruti (Vedas) that one should become a Sanyasi only after getting the assent of his wife and others (relatives and friends). So, the Rishi (Yajnavalkya) addressed Maitreyi, his wife, for her approval.

'I wish to give up the Grihasta Ashrama, my present status as a householder, and take up Sanyasa. Please give your consent.'

Maitreyi replied: 'The desire you have expressed is worthy of you and appropriate in your circumstances. Kindly instruct me without delay as to my duty in the matter.'

Having thus obtained her assent, he said to her as follows: 'I shall partition my property between you and your co-wife Katyayani. Women have no wealth of their own. When I renounce, I shall have no property and so, you will have no means to fulfil the rites and obligations enjoined by the Shastras. Before I become a Sanyasi, I shall, therefore, distribute my wealth to both of you, as I retain my property till Sanyasa. The scriptures enjoin that one should renounce only after distributing all his wealth. Hence I shall partition my property.'

Maitreyi said: 'Your resolution is befitting. Only do not give me wealth. Bless me with that which will certainly be beneficial to me like your Sanyasa to you.

'The company of great-souled ones will uplift all. Even impure water becomes pure and holy when it mixes and unites with the sacred Ganges. By your association, I have realized that there is no other goal to be sought after by human beings than the gain of immortality. So, I ask you whether wealth can confer, or be a means for, immortality. If the whole earth is full of wealth and I own it, will I become immortal on that account?'

Yajnavalkya answered thus the query of his wife: 'By wealth, one cannot gain immortality.'

Then Maitreyi asked: 'If wealth will not confer immortality, why do you wish to give wealth to me.

Yajnavalkya replied thus, explaining the utility of wealth: 'The life of a man depends on many perishable things and wealth is one among them as it can purchase those things. But it does not conduce to immortality. Knowledge, which completely destroys ignorance, is the only means to immortality. It is vain to dream of immortality by wealth of anything depending on wealth (sacrifices etc. performed by means of wealth). Knowledge alone confers immortality. Work cannot be the cause of Mukti just as fire cannot destroy heat. Work results in birth and no cessation from rebirth is possible by that means.'

Maitreyi said: 'The nature of the good is to do good even to those who wrong them. Then, what will be the conduct of the good to those who are devoted to them. I must indeed have been guilty of some offence as you desire to do something injurious to me. Who else is there who will help me? How can a high-souled one like you renounce, by binding me, your devoted, beloved, and

virtuous wife, with wealth without breaking my worldly bonds of attachment? If you are kind and seek my welfare, give me that supreme knowledge you are master of. Give me that treasure by possessing which you abandon all wealth and all that can be procured by wealth, and desire to be the Supreme Sovereign. Give me that treasure, which has no beginning, middle, or end and which never decreases, however much it is enjoyed and used up. You are master of that infinite treasure. Why do you give me finite riches? The gift of illusory things is no gift at all. Deign, therefore, to give me the substantial and real wealth.'

Yajnavalkya replied: 'I cannot give that knowledge, the one and only means to Moksha, to one who has not risen above the desire for worldly goods. I had my doubts about your thirst for Moksha and so I offered you wealth. If you have got the real spirit of renunciation and the deep distaste for worldly goods, receive this invaluable and unsurpassable nectar of true knowledge. You have never spoken a word against my wishes, thus fulfilling the duties of a devoted wife. Now also, you follow my inclinations and are dearer to me than ever. Even his brothers desert the man who seeks Moksha. By your unsurpassed and intense devotion to me, you do not desire to leave me even now when I renounce, seeking Moksha. You cannot bear the idea of separation, as you are intensely devoted to me. You wish to follow me even in the path of Mukti, as you desire complete oneness with me. Uma (Parvati), on account of her deep devotion to her lord Shiva, sought and became half His body. But, you seek with your entire soul to become the whole of my soul.'

ART AND MEDITATION

By Brother Lawrence McNeil

The Hindu scriptures say 'Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram'—that which is the Truth is also the Beautiful. That is the real interpretation of art and meditation, and incidentally the real relation between them. Beauty and Truth are the expression of the same Absolute seen through the limitations of the mind. Meditation is one way to realize it and art is one way to express it. We read a book and we express our opinion on it. That means, nobody who has not read a book can express a view on it. The Absolute is a vast book, the mind or the supra-mind tries to read that book, and art is only an expression of the impressions of that reading. The more one is intently familiarized with it, the more is he able to review it. Thus meditation is only a necessary first step of art. The good and bad of it depends on the high and low state of his meditation, the powers of his concentration, and the actual advance he has made towards the realization of the Absolute.

Anagarika Govinda says, 'To enjoy works of art means to rediscover visions of our own soul.' Not only to enjoy, but also to create it one has to rediscover his own soul. A perfect art is the result of a perfect meditation. 'Meditation is,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'constant remembrance of the thing meditated upon, flowing like an unbroken stream of oil poured out from one vessel to another.' By such constant application of mind to the same object the mind-function becomes concentrated and pierces the intrinsic beauty underlying all

objects—the Bliss Absolute or Satchidananda. It is this discovery of the Bliss of the inner world that leads to creative art. When that Bliss felt in meditation is translated through language to the thought world—though it is more or less impossible to express the Inexpressible—still this attempt is called art. Art is thus only an attempt to describe the Absolute through meditation. And as Tagore says, 'In art man reveals himself and not his objects.' In the words of Anagarika Govinda, the hidden way that leads down to this source is the path of meditation and absorption, and the vessel in which the water of life is brought to the surface is art. The vessel may have many shapes: that of words, that of songs, that of colours, or that of material forms.

Everyone of us is an artist, since everyone of us is part of that Ananda, Bliss. Everyone of us could be creative, if we are a little more of the introspective type, if we think a little more of our inner Self—Pratyagatma, and close our eyes and ears to the vain thoughts of this ever-busy world. While walking through the busy, noisy streets, a man cannot even hear the talks of his friend who walks along with him. What to speak of the hearing of the inner voice when all our attention and energy is focussed towards the vain pursuits of name and fame? The voice of that silent inner Self is drowned in the tomtom noises of the world. The difference between man and man is that one has manifested, or better rediscovered, more of the Self, than the other. Even animals have that aesthetic sense. Art is intrinsic in every living being, only crudely, only faintly in lower creatures. Do we not hear the story of the cows dancing and gazing in silence at the Venugana of Krishna? Do we not see snakes dance at the music? We know the story of Tansen who had tamed a wild elephant by his soul-enchanting music. All these fine arts come under the category of meditative art. It is a flow from inside. When our heart is fully awakened in meditation, our personality is in its floodtide. Nobody can check it, nobody can manufacture it either. We call it inborn faculty—that faculty expressing itself through the awakening of the inner soul. As Tagore says, 'It cannot be doled out in regulated measures, nor administered through the academic machinery of education. It must come immediate from the burning flame of spiritual life.' In its finest form, in its state of conception, art is blended with meditation.

Just as perfect art is the result of meditation, so too meditation is caused by perfect art. Suppose one of your dear ones died a premature death. If you see at some other time the picture of that man, you will be at once carried to a world of past memories. This is everyday experience. The picture recalls the old memories to mind. That is, in finer forms the picture and the memories are one and the same. Since art and meditation are the same, the thought of one at once recalls the other too. By seeing a piece of perfect art one is at once lifted to the world of meditation—this is the law of association. As we have said, art and meditation unite in their source, and though they flow at a great distance, from each other, like the Ganges and the Indus, still they are the same in their conceptual form.

Sri Ramakrishna used to have meditation by simply seeing a picture of God or Goddess; or by hearing a piece of devotional music. He used to tremble and shake when there was a little mistake either in the tune or timing. Christ used to meditate on the beauties of the mountains and forests of Jerusalem. Why does every great saint have such a fascination for the Himalayas? Kuo-Hsi says regarding landscape painting: 'The artist must, above all, enter into spiritual relation with the hills and rivers which he wishes to paint.' The inner realization of the bliss is more important than the outer observations. After all, we are all imitators; the only consideration is who can imitate best. And since we have to imitate let us imitate

the original, instead of the copies. This whole outward nature which the artist imitates, is only a projection, a shadow of that Satchidananda, the inner Bliss. The more we can imitate *it*, the more true we become. It is in this way that the Indian or Western saints who meditate on the beauties of the hills and forests, become one with the landscape or waterfall and merging in the object realize the inner beauty. It is also for this reason that the Himalayas are the sublimest part of the world, that such rich and fertile art has grown in India, not the kind of mundane and ephemeral art that is common in Western lands, but that pure and perfect art which at once calls forth the heavenly beauty that underlies, and which lifts us far into the land of bliss and beauty. The greatest piece of such soul-elevating art is the discovery of the Universal Soul, for which the Eastern sages have sat in meditation and the Eastern artists have joined in artistic realization. True, India has not developed that art consciously. It was only a by-product of meditation, the twin-sister of art. That picture of meditative Shiva sitting on the top of the Himalayas, calm and serene, ash-clad, with demons dancing all around in the deep and high forests—where can we find such unique mingling of perfect art and perfect meditation, enriching the religious literature for ever and ever? It is the discovery of the Supreme Person in the whole universe, in the confluence of the rivers and the oceans, in the eternal snow-clad mountain peaks, in the lonely walks of the moonlit seaface with the tinkling lulls of the wavelets, that has led to the supreme artistic faculty of the Indian. And in every such nook and corner of India can be found this verse flowing in undercurrents: 'Ye children of Immortal Bliss, I have found that Supreme Person.' That restlessness of man in his search after the Eternal Peace is consoled and calmed by the myriad ways of Nature, which tries to express the Absolute in so many ways that we call natural beauty. In his characteristic way Tagore says, 'This world, whose soul seems to be aching for expression in its endless rhythm of lines and colours, music and movements, hints and whispers, and all the suggestions of the inexpressible, finds its harmony in the ceaseless longing of the human heart to make the Person manifest in its own creations.'

This leads us to the next problem. If art is as good as meditation, then appreciation of art is possible only to these meditative persons. To take an example: the Westerner sees only hills and rocks and trees in the Himalayas; but the Indian sees not barren rocks or trees, but the Viswanatha, the Lord of the Universe playing in his myriad forms and ways, that is, those expressions of the Inner Joy, which in their turn create further joy. What is the difference? The Indian is more meditative, more introspective than the European. Western culture is physical, outward; the Indian is religious, spiritual. The word 'religion' does not create any misgivings. It does not mean formal worship and rituals, churches, and temples. A Schopenhauer, a Beethoven, or a Madame Calve is as much religious as a Buddha, a Christ: only the ways of expression are different. A light covered by blue glass, gives blue light; covered by red glass gives red light: but does it make any difference in the real nature of light that is behind them both? As Goethe says, 'The highest works of art are those that process the highest truth, but no trace of (objective) reality.'

It will not be inappropriate if we just take a few extracts from the great philosophers of the East and West, and see how they stand in this realm of artistic meditation. Ibsen, the great Norwegian playwright, concludes one of his dramas with these words 'God is Love'. Robert Browning has been accepted as one of the greatest poet-philosophers of Europe. In one of his poems the *Fra Lippo Lippi*, a monk called Lippo goes after a girl, and when stopped by the

inmates says : 'I am a painter, and painted many saints and sages ; a fine way to paint a soul is to paint a body, and I am going after a fair body so that I may paint a fine soul!' Again in some other poem we see a lover strangles his sweetheart while she was sleeping so that the beauty of the girl may remain eternal, without being dimmed by age and clime. It is thus the physical beauty which the Western philosophers want to preserve eternally, even though they know that it is impossible. But it is India alone who has rightly understood the ephemeral nature of the earthly beauty, and gone beyond in search of the eternal. In East and in West there was this attempt at painting the sublime; but in the West it has always been the infinite in the muscles, the external world, the infinite of matter or of space. 'When Milton or Dante,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'or any other great European poet, either ancient or modern, wants to paint a picture of the Infinite, he tries to soar outside to make you feel the Infinite through the muscles.' The same attempt was made in India too ; but while the Westerner never advanced from their mundane existence, even after their failure to reach at a solution, the Indian mind fell back upon the shining soul of man and there the answer was found. It is this understanding that has enhanced the artistic value of Indian literature. 'From Great joy the world has come into being, through that Great joy the world lives, and into that Great joy the world enters in the end.' Whether it is music, painting or sculpture, all have the sustenance in this Self. And we read in the Upanishads : 'The husband loves the wife not for the wife's sake, but for the Self in the wife; the wife loves the husband not for the husband's sake, but for the Self in the husband; the mother's love of the child, or the child's love of the mother, or even the love of the robber for the gold, is not for any intrinsic value in the object, but for the Self in the object.'

To appreciate real art, one has to be as much meditative as the artist himself is. Mallinatha, the famous Tikakara of Kalidasa, says that a critic should be as great as a poet himself. To appreciate one must become one with the object. In the words of Dr A. K. Coomaraswami, 'the judgement of an image is a contemplation, and as such can only be consummated in an assimilation.' There should be, as he says, a real transformation of nature. It is for the same reason that Mencious says that a rectification of personality is more required in order to grasp the true import of things. Just as the mind becomes one with the object that we perceive, so too the critic should become one with the object of art. It is this principle that is portrayed in the words of the Upanishads, 'To worship God one should become God (Devo bhutwa devam bhajet). Without this union there can be no understanding, and understanding is the first step for appreciation. That is why we find the highest piece of art is not widely appreciated. The highest art can be appreciated only by a highly meditative mind, and as the common man is not meditative he cannot raise his mind to the level of the art, and he fails to appreciate it ; the same argument gives the reason for the rarity of highest art too.

This leads us to the standard of the present-day art. As we have just said, the absence of highly evolved minds, makes the art products of a low standard. It is more a degeneration of the pure art, since it is more of an imitation, than an original production. As Dante says, 'No painter can paint a figure if he have not first of all made himself such as the figure ought to be.' The present-day art is a mere archaistic procedure, which involves a simple servile copying than the drawing of a picture from the image that is reflected inside through meditation. Slowly the Indian art is being replaced by European art. In other words, sense impressions form the background of today's art. Sense objects are helpful to convey our thought, but it should not itself form the

subject of art. In the words of Ouspensky, 'Objective knowledge has to do with the unreal, with the reflected, the imaginary world; subjective knowledge has to do with the real world.'

It won't be, then, impertinent to ask the question: Why are not all the meditative minds (say, saints) artists? We cannot say they are *not* artists; only they are not expressing their artistic faculty. Suppose you see a wonderful thing, say, a very bright comet in the sky: you will at once run to your home or friends and tell them about it. Why? You want to share your joy. This is the nature of man. Even in animals we find the same thing: a crow or an ant when it finds a piece of food at once calls its friends; it never takes it alone. But in the case of a dog it is different: it wants to enjoy the food for itself and if another comes it drives it away. Now, there are crows and dogs in men also. A real saint who has realized the Truth, the Ananda (both being the same, Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram), will certainly share it with others. All great saints have done so. Jesus, Buddha, or Ramakrishna, after realizing the Bliss, instead of staying in that state for ever, which they could well have done, came down and preached the Truth to one and all. The story of Ramanuja, the great apostle of Vaishnavism, is illuminating: after giving the Mantra the Guru told Ramanuja not to tell it to anybody. Ramanuja then asked, 'What will happen if I divulge it?' The Guru said, 'It will harm you, though those who hear it will be benefited.' At once Ramanuja ran to the market pulpit, and proclaimed it to one and all! When rebuked by the Guru, he said, 'What if I suffer, all these poor people will become happy!' That is the real saint, the real artist. The Vedas of the Hindus strictly enjoin the Brahmins to distribute their knowledge to the disciples who are sincere and deserving. What is the use of squandering the corn in barren lands and on rocks, as Jesus says? That is why they mention the word 'sincere and deserving': that is, those who can understand, appreciate, and *follow on*. 'Great is that Teacher, great too is that disciple,' says the *Katha Upanishad*. As we have told above, highest art cannot be appreciated by all. Therefore it should be given to those who can understand it. The Vedas again and again say that a Brahmin will fall from his position if he will not properly distribute his knowledge, when he finds a deserving disciple. The story of Swami Vivekananda the great savant of neo-Hinduism, again illustrates our point. When after the first Nirvikalpa Samadhi he asked his Guru to allow him to stay in that state all his life, breaking only now and then for taking little food for preservation of the body, Ramakrishna admonished him saying: 'It is a shame that *you* say so. I thought that you belonged to the better stuff. It is a lower stage to live in Nirvikalpa Samadhi; the greatest of all meditation is to share that joy with all.'

But unfortunately, this 'better stuff' is very rare in India. Majority of the saints—we hear there are six lakhs of saints or Sadhakas in India—are of the lower stuff, belonging to the dog-class, selfish, and wanting to confine the inner joy to themselves. And is it not the cause for the degeneration of her art and religion? Those lofty traditions of the ancients have been almost forgotten, and the monk and the artist have become antipodes. It should be the duty of the young generation, if India is to rise again, to imbibe the spirit of the Upanishads and create a new type of men—men of the 'better stuff' as Ramakrishna says—and spread it through the length and breadth of India, nay of the whole world. As the *Isha Upanishad* says the monk is not to turn his face away from the world, but 'enjoy it through renunciation.' In the words of Shankara, he should renounce his household to make the 'three worlds his abode.' He should renounce his selfish I-ness to embrace the

whole humanity as his own self; and as Aurobindo says, he should 'individualize the universe.'

Thus and thus alone can art and religion be made a further impetus to kindle the light in others' hearts. Thus and thus alone art can be made inspiring for further art. Like a torch lighted from another, this knowledge of the Sundaram goes on spreading from the teacher to the disciple, till the whole world is lit up. 'For,' says Tagore, 'men are the children of light. Whenever they fully realize themselves they feel their immortality. And, as they feel it, they extend their realm of the immortal into every region of human life. This building of man's true world—the living world of truth and beauty—is the function of Art.'

THE VOICE OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

By Prof. B. S. Mathur, M.A., B.A. (Hons.)

The other day I took up for re-reading that illuminating and entertaining book, *Generally Speaking* by G. K. Chesterton, who is known to lovers of books as a writer of daring thought and originality. In his essay 'On the Young Idea', he writes:—

'What is the matter with the curious cultural atmosphere around us is that it abounds, not in trains of thought, but in tags of language; vast numbers know that a certain phrase should be used about a certain subject; but it never occurs to them even to wonder how it would apply to some other subject. There is such and such a set piece of argument against Pianos for the People, or whatever the question may be. But it is rare to find any individual, on any side, guilty of the intellectual restlessness of asking himself whether the argument about Pianos for the People would also apply to pianolas for the People, or wherein lies the difference of principle between pianos and bagpipes and guitars. To ask what an argument depends on; to consider where it leads; to speculate on whether there are other cases to which it applies; all this seems to be an unknown world to many who use the words of the debate glibly enough. The point is that they only use those words in connexion with that debate'.

I have drawn quite at length upon Chesterton: I have done so because he has successfully tried to indicate in his own fashion that there must be immediately an atmosphere of free thinking. A student of literature, who has seen some portion of life, while trying to prepare students for their degree examinations, clearly notes in the above passage a happy and instructive synthesis of the abstract and the concrete. And the result is the happy and instructive advice to 'forget these little tags of talk from the daily papers and the debating clubs, and start afresh, thinking for themselves'.

It has to be stated that today this advice for free and uncontrolled thinking is urgent considering the paucity of original thinking in India. We know we are in bondage, both mental and physical. To my mind the mental bondage is the root of the trouble. All-out efforts are to be made to lead to a really independent atmosphere where thought comes into its own, ever successful in fresh planning for our country's march from poverty to plenty, from political bondage to political liberation, and from intellectual bankruptcy to intellectual awakening and intensification.

Rich tributes are paid to the memory of our great poet, Rabindranath Tagore. The

richest tribute is that he made us conscious of the urgent need for free thinking in India. There is the soul of freedom permeating his vast productions. These lines, included in his *Gitanjali,* are of utmost meaning :

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high ;

Where knowledge is free ;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls ;

Where words come out from the depth of truth ;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection :

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit ;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Tagore has referred to several things that he wants his coutrymen to learn before they can think of an escape from the present misery and want.

First, Tagore wants us to be constant lovers of God and sacredness. There is fear so long as one is unholy and earthly. The moment one realizes that one is face to face with the divine presence through his acts and thoughts one is devoid of all manner of fear. In the company of divine thoughts and acts the mind is without fear and the head is held high. The awareness of no evil deed or thought is the best requisite for complete absence of bondage or slavery. Let us be one with God and all that He stands for.

Naturally what will follow will be a stage of no domestic walls. That is his second point. There must be an ocean of delight and concord, instead of a hell of misery and bickerings, dividing mankind into narrow domestic groups, ever perpetuating discord and competition.

Then words will definitely come out from the depth of truth. What is the truth ? To my mind, and to the mind of so many thinkers, the great truth is of God's immanence.

Pt Madan Mohan Malaviya writes in his small booklet entitled *The Immanence of God* :

This idea, which is common to the Vedas, the Smritis and the Puranas has been succinctly expressed by the immortal saint-poet Goswami Tulsidas :

'Brahma (God) is one, all-pervading, imperishable, all-existent, a mass of spirituality and an embodiment of Bliss ; no one has been able to find out His beginning or end. Even the Vedas have sung in praise of Him according to their limited capacity. He walks without feet, hears without ears and performs various actions, even though devoid of hands.'

The immanence of God has a very great significance today. It leads us, and I think justly, to the thought that throughout the universe there is one race, the human race, kept up by one blood, the human blood. We admit that God is everywhere and in all of us. It amounts to the thought that all of us are equal and have the same claims upon the world. As such there is no occasion for any amount of discrimination. This is the truth which Tagore wants us to learn. This is Tagore's third point. As a consequence of the dawning of this truth all will be running literally towards perfection. Perfection that we have to achieve can be achieved through our acts and thoughts. Our acts and thoughts are just an expression of our own self. What is that self ? The divinity that resides in us must be allowed to be expressed in our thoughts and deeds. That is the perfection we have to achieve. That is the truth.

But this truth cannot be realized if we are mentally slaves. This is the burden in the poem. This is his (Tagore's) message to the bleeding humanity. All round there is chaos : this has to be resolved into order. Rightly Tagore suggests a 'clear stream of reason (which) has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit'. In other writings of greater power and force we can observe that Tagore wants us to think for ourselves. He positively condemns the present fashion of indulging in the excesses of the flesh. There must be an immediate discipline of reason. An action that has just emerged from emotions is indi-

cative of the behaviour of the animals. If a civilized and cultured stage is visualized in the world the right place of honour must be given to reason, and not tc emotion.

One thing has to be observed. Tagore is emphasizing the importance of reason in spite of his being such a great artist who ever dealt with emotions. To give his own words: 'Man has a fund of emotional energy which is not all occupied with his self-preservation. This surplus seeks its outlet in the creation of Art, for man's civilization is built upon his surplus.'

It seems that Tagore is contradicting himself because in this utterance which is taken from his essay 'What Is Art?', occurring in his book entitled *Personality*, he gives considerable prominence to emotion as chiefly responsible for the creation of Art. In the first place it has to be admitted that while dwelling on the importance of emotions his main concern was with Art which is not entirely life. And then in the poem given in the beginning there is no banishing of emotion. The ultimate origin of all reason is emotion. What Tagore aims at is a *certain* ordering of our emotions. If our emotions are not ordered they are just the emotions of an animal. And that will amount to the first stage of society, the stage of animals and the forest. Fortunately that stage we hate, we condemn. Then why this blind belief?

Let us think: Let us have our own feelings, our own actions, indeed our own line of action. That is Tagore's message. Will it be too much to regard him as one of the greatest liberalizing forces in the world?

Never, never for a moment, Tagore preached unchartered liberty. Never, never for a moment, did he imagine that chaos should prevail. Admitted that he preached freedom from all manner of restrictions. But he preached freedom *to all*. Freedom to all is possible in an atmosphere of give-and-take. Where there is a race for more gains, more worldly delights which consist in the killing of delights for others, there is a constant sadness. His message is of happiness to all. Such a consummation is possible in an air of free thinking. The great beauty, the beauty of peace and freedom, is approachable, and will be approached by a free thinker. The mind must be released. It must be free to scale heights, thus far heights merely to look at in wonder and amazement. All will be even, nothing will appear mysterious and astounding, if we insist on more, ever more, thinking. The old channels must be given up. Let there be new thoughts, based on our experience. The struggle will continue to give us strength and ultimately the destination will approach us. This is the voice of Tagore. This is the voice of wisdom and illumination, which will ever be a source of strength and support to the innumerable walkers in this wilderness.

Two things are clear. He wanted freedom and clear thinking so that an early and constructive revolution might be possible to take the country from poverty to plenty. Lest I should appear to suggest what was never suggested by Rabindranath Tagore I refer to these powerful lines from *Gitanjali*: 'Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our Master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever.'

Tagore wanted certain restrictions to freedom lest it should corrupt mankind and so he, in these lines, suggests quite powerfully that even our Master is not completely free. He is bound to do certain things, else all creation will disappear and there will be limitless chaos. When God is not completely free man necessarily cannot be free without any restrictions. There must be certain limits to his liberty; but at the same time Tagore wants comprehensive freedom for man so that he may make his future according to his make-up, his natural talents and tendencies. Definitely he is thinking in terms of construction. God has the work of creation. So man must have the work of construction,

else there will be war and its companions. Man has to take to this work of *construction* joyfully. In other words our sage wants us to find rest in work. Indeed, blessed is he who has found his work. Without work there will be no deliverance and no joy. Hence it is necessary for men, especially the intellectuals, to be capable of free thinking. They have to be complete revolutionaries. Consider these words of Romian Rolland:

'But amongst those who clamour for independence of thought, how many have this faith, and above all, the sincere desire to realize it? How many are really the servants of truth, loyal, disinterested and determined to go to the very end of truth? I have not failed to know, I have known it since my youth (and I have denounced it, through the voice of my *Jean Christophe*) that the intellectuals, the great majority of them, were unfaithful to their duty, unequal to their task, and that the independence they professed was conditioned by their real servility to the masters of public opinion, the dispensers of honours and of benefits' (*I will not rest*, page 17).

These are, indeed, very effective words, emphasizing really free thinking on the part of the intellectuals to release mankind from dead habits and traditions. Tagore, too, wanted such a revolution in thought. And such a revolution is possible when there is sufficient freedom to think. Naturally our conclusion is that he was a great *revolutionary*, who was ever keen on progress and departure from dead habits and tradition. Positively he was against medievalism, a blind desire to recapture the past. He had drunk deep in the fountains of wisdom and illumination, gathered from both East and West.

To him stagnation had no meaning. Man must be freely active both mentally and physically. In the combination of mental and physical labour there is a perfect release from bondage and slavery. Naturally there should be thinking, more thinking and still more thinking. There is an urgent need for a revolution.' That is the voice of Tagore. Man's history is the record of his achievements as a consequence of his fighting against odds. Man must fight freely with the help of his mind. Here *fight* is not for exploitation, indeed, never for imperialism. It is a fight against odds that have made the lot of mankind unhappy. The fight is through construction. This fight may be considered an experiment today as we are accustomed to bloody fights on the battle-field. This fight is a great challenge to intellectuals. But the challenge has a double purpose. The intellectuals must be free and they should make others free and independent to express their personality in their deeds and thoughts.

To clinch the whole argument: Tagore stands for perfect freedom, both in thought and in action. This measure of freedom applies to all. But there is one restriction, of course a big restriction. Our free growth should not be an obstacle to the free growth of others. So Tagore is a *free* revolutionary, still working, through his writings, for the freedom of *all*.

It was by virtue of his self-exertion that somebody has become the best among men, even as he who bears the ensign of the eagle. . . . Know that energy joined with constant practice and supported by wisdom and some stimulating force, is able to break down the mount of Meru, and the demerits of acts in the former lives of men.

—*Yoga Vasishtha*

HOW INDORE MAINTAINS INDUSTRIAL PEACE

By K. S. Srikantan

The city of Indore, the capital of the Holkars and often known as 'the Queen of Central India,' is one of the biggest industrial centres in India with a great future. It has a population of more than three lakhs with seven big mills employing nearly 30,000 labourers. There are more than 2,00,000 of spindles and 6,000 looms. In regard to the textile industry it is easily the foremost in Indian states and comes only next to Bombay, Ahmedabad and Cawnpore in British India.

It is indeed a matter for gratification that even with such a large labour population, Indore should have fairly successfully maintained industrial peace in spite of the several 'atmospheric' disturbances. No doubt there have been and there are even now stray strikes. In short, labour in Indore is as conscious of its privileges and is as well or ill-organized as labour in other parts of India. Compared, however, to other industrial centres like Bombay, Mysore, or Gwalior, Indore has had a fairly peaceful time. The recent disturbances in Bombay, Mysore, and Gwalior show clearly the magnitude of the problem on the one hand and the amount of wisdom and tact that are required to handle matters connected with labour on the other. The city of Indore has been free from these troubles largely on account of a realistic approach made by the Government to these problems.

Wherein lies the secret of Indore's success? To a large extent the credit for securing industrial peace in Indore should go to His Highness himself. On more than one occasion he has expressed in clear terms his solicitude and deep concern for the welfare of the labourers. As early as 1937 His Highness observed:

'The most burning needs of the day are the amelioration of the cultivators and the improvement of the conditions of the industrial workers. For the cultivators we have decided to contribute one lakh of rupees every year from the privy purse to be spent towards rural uplift. For the workers we think it is imperative that they should be afforded opportunities of recreation in the open air so that their health may improve. In order that these workers may enjoy all the benefits of open air, the Maharani and I have decided that very soon they shall be provided with a really good recreation Park. I take this opportunity of impressing upon the millowners of my state that they must in conformity with the times provide good housing and other necessary amenities for their workers which will lead to their happiness and well-being.'

Recently when a fire broke out in one of the crowded parts of a labour colony His Highness almost immediately sent two of his aides-de-camp with basketfuls of coins to be distributed among the affected and needy labourers. To the struggling labourers this came as a welcome relief and their prayerful hands were spontaneously lifted towards God for giving them such a noble and generous ruler. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to maintain that with his democratic outlook, transparent sincerity and deep sympathy for the poor and needy, His Highness has been not a little responsible for the happy industrial atmosphere of the state.

His Highness's Government realized long back that laissez-faire in labour matters would be of no avail and might even prove harmful. Until labour became literate, conscious and well-organized, collective bargaining was not only impossible but even unthinkable and if the state did not offer its help, labour would be at the mercy of the employers and half-baked labour leaders. The academic economist, however, looks upon laissez-faire with disfavour and admits its need only as an exceptional feature in the normal world of a competitive market. In Indore, as things stand interference in favour of labour must remain a vital feature of industrial

politics for some time to come. Non-interference in certain states has already resulted in producing conditions bordering on chaos and disorder.

The crux of the labour problem is the wage question and there is no denying the fact that almost all labour disputes are directly or indirectly connected with wages. The following classification of industrial disputes according to causes might bring home to the readers what is said above :—

Year	Wage	Bonus	Personal.	Leave & hours of work	Others
1930	69	4	34	7	34
1931	69	2	39	20	36
1932	68	3	32	2	14
1933	95	2	20	5	25
1934	107	1	24	6	21
1935	91	2	21	10	21
1936	96	1	24	6	34
1937	234	4	73	12	60
1938	209	3	92	21	74
1939	232	2	74	12	86

An attempt to solve other problems like education, standard of living, unemployment, etc. without trying to solve the vital question of wages would be like placing the cart before the horse, and to the Holkar State goes the credit of being newly the first in the field in boldly handling the problem of wages and to a large extent this 'standardization of wages' as it is better known today, has been responsible for the present comparative peace that obtains in Indore.

Between a minimum wage and a standard wage, the State as early as 1943 preferred the latter. The essential difference between minimum and standard wages is that, while under minimum wage regulations it is open to an employer to vary the wages in the upward direction, the standard wage rate cannot be varied in either direction. The advantages of standardization are that it does away with even that measure of diversity which is permissible under minimum wage regulations, and, by bringing about a measure of fixity and determinateness in all wage payment, reduces still further the possibility of minor wage disputes. Even an authority like Prof. L. T. Hobhouse preferred standardization to a minimum wage. Wage regulations even in England according to Prof. Hobhouse could not be permanently confined to the fixation of minimum wages. Standardization is however difficult to achieve and can be brought about only under special circumstances. It can be introduced only in places where there is a concentration of industries. The city of Indore has had the necessary advantages and background. After a good deal of discussion between the Government member and the parties concerned, certain decisions were arrived at.

The wages of all the employees in the industry except weaving should be standardized by taking the present average in every occupation and adding one-fourth per cent to this average ; however, those getting more than this new average will not be affected adversely, i.e. they will receive the present higher scale in addition to one-fourth per cent. The standardization of weavers' wage rates should be fixed on the basis of Rs. 38/- per month of 26 working days, with 76% efficiency on the weighted average reed space of 46" on the basis of the weighted average reductions of looms in all the mills per minute. The dearness allowance should be so fixed as to allow a flat rate to all the employees in the industry irrespective of their earning. The allowance should be calculated on the sliding scale, according to variations in the cost of living index and the rate to be fixed every three months on the average earnings, obtained after the increase granted in accordance with the terms of settlement as above.

Although standardization and fixation of dearness allowance have been mainly responsible for the industrial peace obtaining in Indore, it cannot even for a moment be denied that in several other directions too the State has been pursuing an enlightened

labour policy. The Government has already taken up the revision of standardization with a view to remove certain alleged defects, and disparities. When the mills were closed for some time on account of shortage of coal, the Indore millowners were persuaded to give to the labourers a retention allowance—an allowance which has not been given by any other important textile centre up to now. Again the bonus given by the millowners in Indore has always been higher than the bonus declared in other centres as the following figures would indicate :—

Year		Bombay	Indore
1941	..	12.50%	10.00%
1942	..	16.66%	20.80%
1943	..	16.00%	25.00%
1944	..	16.00%	22.91%
1945	..	16.66%	20.80%

Again when recently the mills went down from 10 to 9 hours an increase in piece wages to the extent of ten per cent was given as a quantum of compensation to meet the fall in the earnings—an increase which was not given by any other centre. The Government order on this matter is self-explanatory.

Having considered the report of the Conciliation Officer appointed under Government Resolution No. 540 dated 7-5-46 to report on the dispute apprehended between the employers and the employees in the textile mills as regards the quantum of compensation that is payable in fairness to the workers for the fall in their earnings since the Government approved reduction in their daily working hours from 10 to 9 hours and the view points urged on behalf of the employers and employees and having carefully taken into consideration the opinion received in this connection from Mr. K. Desai, M.L.A. (Bombay) and taking the position generally into account, Government under their order dated the 2nd June 1946 have been pleased to order under section 10 (1) of the Indore Trade Disputes Act :—(i) that an increase shall be granted in the basic wages of piece workers in the textile industry at Indore to the extent of ten per cent with effect from 4 January 1946 from which date the hours of working in this centre were reduced from 10 to 9 per day ; and (2) that the payment of the amount due, in pursuance of the above order, for the month of May 1946 shall be made on 10 June 1946 and the arrears for the period commencing on 4 January 1946 and ending 30 April 1946 shall be paid in one lump sum on or before the 24 June 1946. Thereafter the amount due shall be paid monthly as usual. Government have further been pleased to direct, under Section 10(2) of the Indore Trade Disputes Act, that the Director of Labour and Information shall execute the order in this behalf.

To this industrial peace the millowners of Indore have made a considerable contribution. In fact in regard to certain matters the millowners in Indore have stolen a march over the rest of India. While even the Government of India is just planning to have a scheme of its own for purposes of housing the labourers, the millowners in Indore long ago set apart a substantial portion of their profits for the construction of houses suitable for the labourers. It is estimated that the amount so set apart comes to thirty-five lakhs of rupees at present.

Almost every aspect of labour welfare is receiving their considered attention. Realizing that education is the true basis of all progress, the Rajkumar and the Indore Malwa United Mills started schools of their own for the children of the labourers several years back. In the school run by the Rajkumar Mills students are given not only free education but are supplied with slates, pencils, and other necessary equipment which the children of the labourers cannot otherwise procure within the slender earnings of their parents. More than three thousand rupees per year are being spent by the Rajkumar Mills on these activities.

The Indore Malwa Mills opened its school as early as 1937. Here again books and clothes are supplied free by the management to boys

and girls. It is understood that today there are 400 students including 70 girls. The school has a fairly decent building and a spacious playground.

Next only in importance to education is the provision of medical aid. One of the mills (the Nandlal Bhandari Mills) is running a first class maternity home. It is understood that during the year 1945 there were as many as 54,937 out-patients as against 52,689 in the preceding year. Maternity cases treated in 1945 came to 736. All expenses on treatment, food and clothing for the patients are borne by the mill authorities themselves. The other mills also have well-equipped dispensaries where the workers and their relatives are given free medical assistance. On an average the total number of patients treated comes to about 2,000 per day.

Four out of the seven local mills, the Hukumchand, Rajkumar, Malwa, and Kalyanmal Mills have got creches for the infants of the working mothers and all these mills provide milk free to the infants while one mill (viz. the Malwa United) goes further and provides even clothes to the children of the workers. The mills also maintain suitable dining sheds. The Rajkumar Mills maintains also a boarding house for supply of fresh food at fairly cheap rates. Hotels are also being run by the Mills where the labourers are provided with sweets at comparatively cheaper rates.

Mention should also be made of the grain shops run by the mills for purposes of their employees. Grain is sold not only at cheaper rates but also at hours convenient to the labourers. Some of the Mills have got their own recreation clubs and extensive playgrounds. In fact the Kalyanmal Mills hockey team has attained international fame in recent months by their brilliant victory in several matches. The Swadeshi and the Nandlal Bhandari Mills have also laid out small gardens for recreation purposes while the Malwa Mills is having a club of its own for indoor games exclusively for the employees.

With a view to provide the necessary diversion to labourers all the mills celebrate some of the most important religious festivals on a grand scale by arranging music parties, Harikathas, Bhajans, lectures, etc. On these occasions ample opportunity is provided for the labourers to meet their employers and for the employers to meet their employees.

An interesting development in recent months is the starting of co-operative societies in the various mills. Five out of the seven mills are already running successfully these societies while the others are planning to start the same. The total membership of the societies comes to about 3,500.

Great credit is also due to the labourers themselves for this enviable position of Indore in regard to industrial disputes. They have often exercised considerable restraint and shown keen desire to adopt constitutional methods. No formality or red-tapism of any sort is allowed to stand between the labourers and government officers. Every one including the Minister is available to labour leaders and millowners at any time they desire. Thus while the Government of India has Tripartite Conference meetings once or twice a year, the Holkar State has a similar Tripartite Conference which perhaps meets almost every day without, however, the ambitious title and the intriguing formalities. Like other progressive states, the Holkar State is also having its own Department of Labour with the Director of Labour and Information functioning as Labour Commissioner and assisted by an Assistant Labour Commissioner generally known as Government Labour Officer. The Government have appointed a Labour Welfare Committee consisting of some of the leading members of the state to help the Labour Commissioner in regard to matters affecting labour welfare. In addition to this there is an Economic Development Board presided over by the Commerce Minister which is also charged with the task of looking after the welfare of labourers. At the instance of Government every mill has appointed a Labour Officer of its own to look

after the welfare of labourers, and act as a channel between the mill management and the labourers. The Labour Officer himself is always available both to the management and the labourers for solving their difficulties. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the timely intervention of the Labour Officer has prevented many a small issue becoming a major issue and thus leading to a strike. It is no wonder, therefore, that Indore is maintaining a comparatively peaceful atmosphere.

MAYA

By R. E. R. Lees

I watched the moon rise over
the edge of the tranquil sea,
And I steered my ship in the twinkling path
it made for me.
The air was almost ruffled
and the waves as a restless soul,
Rode like silver horsemen
under Heaven's inverted bowl.

The only sound was the water's sigh,
as my ship sailed on.
Enclosed in the peace of nature
I heard her soothing song,
Then bonds of the body loosened
as time called me no more,
And now would I see life's meaning
more clearly than before.

Vast is the store of knowledge
Mankind has acquired by toil,
Magnificent the buildings
that tower above the soil,
And merciless the huge complexity
of iron and steel
Which make us seem as princes
fit to rule this earth, we feel.

In what a mad delusion
do we live from day to day,
For are not our creations
doomed to ultimate decay?
Immense only in proportion
to the puniness of man,
For as many years must come
as have passed since life began.

The real we count for nothing,
the passing we believe,
So we cling to youth and beauty
and fear Death's last reprieve;
Forgetting that man's spirit
will be young whate'er his age,
As young as nature's spirit
on this earth's revolving stage.

It is life's great illusion
that the concrete is the goal,
And not things of the spirit,
heritage of the soul.
Rather would I have but one small bond
of kinship or of love,
Than all the joys material
not made by powers above.

I saw the moon sink lower
than the farthest dying waves,
Whilst to the east the dawn began
day's threshold there to pave.
And I grasped the helm securely
and knew the way was straight,
For truth, the course I chose,
and the name of my ship was Fate.

A JACKDAW IN PEACOCK'S FEATHERS *

By Shivaprasad Shastri, M.A.

René Guénon is a French intellectual of some contemporary renown and has chiefly made his mark by writing about the decadence of Western civilization and by prescribing his nostrum of 'traditionalism' for saving it. The remedy for arresting this retrogression in the West he seems to find in the Eastern 'metaphysical' doctrines and religions, so much so that he has himself turned, if reports are true, a Muslim, and seems to be devoting himself to a zealous pursuit of the mysteries of Eastern religions. He is, in his study of Eastern thought, not dissimilar to Ouspensky, the Russian writer, though the Russian's intellectual grasp and originality are far higher than that of this Frenchman. The Russian shows that he can enlarge and build upon the ideas he has assimilated; the Frenchman tries to understand and record what he has understood and aims at emphasizing, not 'popularizing', in the West the ideas he has gleaned from his researches in Eastern doctrines.

Having made some name as a thoughtful writer by his books *East and West*, and *The Crisis of the Modern World*, he has now ventured into deeper waters in introducing us to the study of Hindu doctrines which he himself could not grasp completely. M. Guenon has, on the whole, produced a fairly readable book on the subject he is dealing with. His conviction about the usefulness of Eastern ideas in the Western world seems to be genuine. He appears to have undergone great pains to understand 'as far as possible' (though not far enough) the doctrines he has attempted to deal with.

However, to an intelligent reader in the East, especially in India, it will become easily evident that he is not free from the very real difficulty which he is accusing other Western writers on Indian ideas to be guilty of, viz. the want of those 'mental qualifications for understanding the doctrines in question,' and the 'cardinal error of these orientalists to look at everything from their own Western standpoints and through their own mental prism whereas the first condition for their correct interpretation of any doctrine is to make an effort to assimilate it by placing oneself as far as possible at the viewpoint of those who conceived it.' Nor can he escape easily the charge of being in some respects like those very 'extravagant dreamers and enterprising charlatans who could be treated as a negligible quantity if they did not also exercise a deplorable influence in more respects than one.' In another way also he seems to be subjecting himself to the still graver charge of parading as almost the only true interpreter of Hindu doctrines when he goes on impugning in rather a pontifical fashion the *bona fides* of all other interpreters like the Orientalists, the Theosophists, the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, and even the world-famous Swami Vivekananda. There is a proverb current in Bengal: '*Hindu Mussalman h'le goru khabar jam*'—a Hindu converted to Islam takes beef with greater relish than Mussalmans themselves. This seems to be particularly true of M. Guenon, and perhaps accounts for the vehemence of his baseless attacks on the above groups, which makes one say with Shakespeare 'the lady doth protest too much.' It seems that the motive for his unwarranted effusions are partly based on a desire to pose before his readers as an indubitable authority on the subject he is dealing with; and partly to show that he is following 'tradition' while all others are

* *Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines* by Rene Guenon. Published by Luzac & Co., 46 Great Russel Street, London, W. C. 1. Price 12s. 6d. Pp. 351.

deviating from it. By his expressions he would make us believe that he understands Hindu doctrines more thoroughly than Hindus themselves do. See how he valiantly defends the traditionalists against the so-called 'reformers':

It is noticeable that here (the Arya Samaj) as in the Brahma Samaj, the anti-traditional tendency took as its pretext a return to primitive simplicity and to the pure Vedic doctrine... A certain cleverness in getting innovations accepted is not lacking in such an attitude especially in a society that is strongly attached to tradition with which it would be imprudent to make too open a break; but if the basic principles of that tradition were truly and sincerely accepted.... But the so-called 'reformers' did not accept this, and thus those who possess a sense of tradition can easily see that the real deviation is in no wise to be laid to the charge of those against whom the 'reformers' level the accusation.

Again look at his shallow understanding of Ram Mohan Roy:

Such an interpretation (that of Ram Mohan Roy) is in its spirit as far removed as possible from tradition and pure metaphysic; it represents nothing but a private theory devoid of the least authority and entirely ignores realization which is the sole object of the whole doctrine.

Now note his paternal concern for the prestige and well-being of the East:

Truly it is not for the East to approach the West through copying its mental derivations or by yielding to the insidious but vain persuasions of the propagandists of every hue [excepting M. Guénon, we presume] that Europe sends out to it; but it is, on the contrary, for the West to return, when it is able and willing, to the pure source of intellectuality which the East for its part has never deserted.

It is pure and unalloyed zeal for the truth alone that compels our redoubtable champion of the East to write blatantly that the Ramakrishna Mission also is 'a still more completely aberrant branch better known in the West, and founded by Vivekananda, the disciple of the illustrious Ramakrishna, though unfaithful to his teaching.' Readers of this magazine will be surprised to know that the Ramakrishna Mission runs 'missions' and 'temples' in America and Australia, that it is a 'sentimental and consoling religion,' with a strong dose of Protestant 'moralism'; that this 'pseudo-religion' has earned a certain success chiefly in Anglo-Saxon countries [because the Anglo-Saxons are a gullible and dull-headed race, while the Latins are intellectual giants with wits and tongues like rapiers!]; that 'its inherently sentimental character is well-attested by the ardour [a quality alien to the nature of M. Guenon] for propaganda animating its votaries'; and that 'as might be expected an altogether Western propensity for proselytism rages intensely in these organizations which are Eastern in nothing but the name, apart from a few merely outward signs calculated to interest the curious and to attract dilettantes by playing on their taste for an exoticism of the feeblest type.' Christian organizations who send thousands of preachers to India to convert the 'heathen' should be happy over the discovery of M. Guenon that we are no more Hindus but in name. He must be given credit for a wonderful imagination for supplying 'missing links' in facts and reasoning.

Not content with tilting against the windmills of the Ramakrishna Mission, the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophists, and the Orientalists, our knight-errant constant to his lady-love of 'tradition' has a try at America also. Read these indirect reflections on Americans to understand the patronizing tone and the hidden and perhaps malicious glee in the heart of the writer:

This so-called Vedanta which is a product of that queer American and characteristically Protestant creation called the 'Parliament of Religions,' and *which pleases the West* all the better, the more completely it is distorted has practically left nothing in common with the metaphysical doctrine the name of which it bears! (*italics ours*).

Finally he is tired of his tilting. He writes: 'No more time need be wasted on it' (the Ramakrishna Mission). But his heart is not satisfied. Under the guise of love for guiding the misguided he, like a clever suburban lawyer, subtly returns to the tilting thus:

'But it seemed best at least to mention its existence in order to put people who have heard of it on their

guard against possible false assimilations; for as for those who have not come across these movements it is best that they should be made aware of them since they are not nearly so harmless as might appear at first sight.'

Lest he should be confronted with the question of adducing evidence for his 'honest' criticism he makes certain 'additional remarks' to safeguard himself from counter-attacks. Like an experienced fencer he defends himself thus: 'There is no logical reason for supposing that a criminal is necessarily an idiot or an ignoramus or that a man cannot make use of his intelligence and his science for the injuring of his neighbours as on the contrary quite often happens.' For charity's sake let us hope M. Guénon is not one of that variety he condemns, and that he is really, to use his own words, 'a perfectly honourable individual (who) may have formulated and defended more or less foolish ideas.' Lest he should be accused of personal bias, he hastens to add that he has avoided 'raising personal matters,' and that he has adopted 'a strictly doctrinal point of view.' And to strengthen the impression that he is actuated by purely 'impersonal' motives he remarks facetiously: 'Nor can we see why the truth of a conception should depend on whether it was put forward by such and such a person.' He is conscious that 'certain critics might be tempted to blame us for an attitude which seemed to them too vague and lacking in precise "references" even though we have adopted such an attitude of set purpose and quite deliberately.' No wonder, for when you throw mud at another it is better to pretend that it showered from the sky. So M. Guénon, to quote his own words, has 'no mania for texts, origins, and bibliography,' and he is not worried if unworthy readers 'will suffer a sense of discomfort at meeting with anything of the sort here.' But his appeal is to the 'intellectual elect,' the saner public: 'It is not to these specialists, however, that our remarks are chiefly addressed but to a people of less narrow-minded outlook more free from prejudice and unaffected by the mental distortion that inevitably accompanies the practice of certain methods, a distortion which gives birth to the disease we have called "intellectual myopia." It would be a mistake to see in these remarks an appeal "to the public" for we put no trust in its competence to judge... but neither do we confuse the true intellectual elect with the professional men of learning.' So the would-be critics of M. Guénon's performances must first procure from him a certificate that they belonged to the 'true intellectual elect' before they dare to sit on judgement on him! And he caps this sop to his readers with the following bit of gracious condescension in which he gleefully has a dig at his would-be critics for their Anglo-Saxon torpidity of intellect (which must inevitably be their characteristic, since they are his critics):

Howbeit, we owed at least this amount of explanation to the analytically-minded inquirers, always eager for discussion—it is one of the rare concessions to their mental habits that we are prepared to make, as is demanded by that courtesy that should always be shown towards people of good faith; it is likewise prompted by a wish to forestall misunderstandings which bear only on points of secondary importance and on accessory questions and which do not immediately arise from the irreducible difference between the traditional and the metaphysical point of view here expounded and that of its possible critics; for the latter we can do nothing since there is unfortunately no means of supplying to them those powers of discernment which they lack.

Let us now turn to the real subject matter of the book to see if the author has to say anything at all so serious and important as he would have us believe.

Part I of the book is concerned with 'Preliminary questions' in which the West is compared with the East to the utter diparagement of the former, since it has broken away from 'tradition'. Part II shows how the East has kept up the 'tradition' and hence 'saved' itself. He defines his ideas of 'tradition' and 'pure metaphysics.' In Part III he attempts a running sketch of some of the fundamentals of the Hindu doctrines. The

whole of Part IV is, as we have already partly shown, an attack on other interpretations of the Vedanta and an apology for these attacks.

It is in Part II that the main theme of the author is developed. His pet theory of 'tradition' is elaborated here. Eastern civilizations have survived and are likely to survive because of their 'essentially traditional character' and the absence of an 'effective attachment to tradition' is the fundamental cause of Western deviation. This return to 'tradition' appears as the most essential of the objects to which the intellectual elect ought to devote its activities; for all, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and others the only way of salvation lies in sticking to their traditions. But in the words of the translator (who by the way has done the work splendidly) in the Foreword, 'the present situation of the West is rather to be compared to that of the foolish virgins who, through the wandering of their attention in other directions, had allowed their lamps to go out; in order to rekindle the sacred fire, which in its essence is always the same wherever it may be burning, they must have recourse to the lamps of tradition still kept burning by their wiser companions.' The lamp of tradition which has gone out in the West, has to be relighted from the lamp of the East. M. Guénon's study of oriental doctrines is meant only to serve the above purpose in the West, and in the East its aim is to save English speaking Orientals from the misconceptions they are suffering from the contamination of the West, and to render them immune from possible reinfection. The Orientalists have been too dull-headed to understand Sanskrit terms properly; the English-educated Indians have been unable with their superficial and faulty knowledge of the English language to convey oriental ideas properly and have, therefore, twisted their meanings either unconsciously or even with wilful dishonesty. So to save both East and West M. Guenon has undertaken this noble work (he dislikes the word 'mission') of true interpretation!

We get some idea of what he means by tradition in the following:

Social institutions to be considered traditional must be effectively attached in their principle to a doctrine that is itself traditional, whether it be metaphysical, religious, or of any other conceivable kind. In other words, those institutions are traditional which find their ultimate justification in their more or less direct but always intentional and conscious dependence upon a doctrine which as regards its fundamental nature, is in every case of an intellectual order; but this intellectuality may be found either in a pure state in case where one is dealing with an entirely metaphysical doctrine, or else it may be found commingled with other heterogenous elements, as in the case of the religions or other special modes which a traditional doctrine is capable of assuming.

Thus the whole organization of the Moslem world rests on a tradition that may be described as religious: it is not a case, as in present-day Europe, of religions being one of the elements of the social order, but on the contrary, the entire social order forms an integral part of religion from which all legislation is inseparable since it finds in these both its principle and its justification.

Hindu unity rests entirely on the acknowledgement of a certain tradition which also embraces the entire social order, but this time only as a simple application to a contingent realm; the latter reservation is called for because the tradition in question is in no wise a religious one as in Islam, but is a more purely intellectual and essentially metaphysical tradition. The Chinese civilization rests upon *jen* or 'solidarity of race,' which term implies 'both a perpetuity and a community of existence. . . that gives to Chinese institutions their exceptional stability.' But in the modern West civil institutions, robbed of all traditional import, but still carrying with them a few relics of the past that no one understands any longer

sometimes present the appearance of a regular parody of ritual, devoid of all real significance, so that their retention really amounts to nothing but a 'superstition' in the full force of the etymological meaning of that word.

And this tradition stems, according to him, from a metaphysic 'which is absolutely stable, permanent, and independent of all contingencies, and in particular of historical contingencies; that alone is metaphysical which does not change, and it is also this universality of metaphysic which constitutes its essential unity precluding the multiplicity of philosophical systems and religious dogmas, alike, and hence which confers on it profound immutability.' 'Metaphysical truths, in themselves, cannot in any way be contestable.' Again, 'metaphysical conceptions by reason of their universality can never be completely expressed, nor even imagined, since their essence is attainable by the pure and "formless" intelligence alone.' It is a 'type of knowledge which calls for the use of no specialized or external means of investigation.' It is 'supra-individual' and 'supra-national.' 'There is something peculiar to metaphysical doctrines which must always be esoteric and this is the inexpressible element which, as we have explained, all conceptions of a truly metaphysical order truly contain; it represents something which each person can only conceive for himself with the aid of words and symbols.... metaphysic affirms the fundamental identity of knowing and being which can only be questioned by those who are ignorant of the most elementary metaphysical principles.'

Vain and puerile imagining! This will-o'-the-wisp of a 'true metaphysic' which 'each person can only conceive for himself with the aid of words or symbols,' 'which can never be completely expressed or imagined' is to be the basis of tradition to which a society is to stick for ever in order to be saved—conceptions quite as entertaining as those in *Alice in Wonderland*.

From all M. Guénon's laboured elucidations of the Hindu doctrines one becomes painfully conscious of what the Vedanta Sutras supported by Shankara say in the Apashudradhikarana, that non-initiated men have no right to a knowledge of the Vedas and hence to Brahma Jnana, for they have no teaching according to the 'traditions'. M. Guénon being 'traditionalist' will easily concede that his exposition suffers from this fundamental difficulty; and whatever may be the literary and intellectual worth of his statements, this Mleccha (non-initiated according to Vedic rules) can never have a proper understanding of Brahma Jnana and Advaitavada until he is reborn in a Hindu body or initiated by Hindu spiritual teachers. For, M. Guénon, who is a 'traditionalist' could not have got a true knowledge of the doctrine from any true Brahmin, for that course is prohibited by the very Shastras whose champion he poses to be. Besides, as he himself says, 'as for the Orientals, we have already explained on several occasions how justifiable their contempt for the West appears in our eyes, all the more justifiable the oftener the European race insists on repeating its odious and absurd claims to a quite non-existent mental superiority....' We wholeheartedly endorse these remarks and respectfully request M. Guénon to apply them to himself. For, we find his pretensions to pose as a true interpreter of Hindu doctrines and especially Advaitavada are reprehensible and contemptible and one can only pity his temerity when he remarks that Swami Vivekananda, the 'illustrious Kshatriya disciple' of Ramakrishna—a disciple whom the Master himself considered as standing head and shoulders above all the rest of his disciples in his realization of Advaitavada, and who was especially trained by Ramakrishna to be his successor and destined to be the world teacher—that spiritual giant the Nityasiddha, was unfaithful to his own

Guru, and a perverter of Vedanta doctrine! Perhaps M. Guénon wanted us to believe that while he, a Mlecchа outside the pale of Hindu tradition, has understood Ramakrishna better, and has become a true interpreter of Advaita Vedanta, Vivekananda was an upstart, unqualified for the teachings of Vedanta, and too unintelligent for its apprehension. A jackdaw in peacock's feathers indeed!

A LESSON FROM NATURE

By Miss E. J. Cook

Among most Western people there is present nearly always the desire for action, which expresses itself in endeavouring to 'improve' those around them and to bring them into conformity with their own ideas. With some, it takes the form of trying to 'convert the heathen'; others again will even try to convert their own friends; in short most people and nations have not yet learned tolerance to live and let live; we are all suffering from the results of indiscriminate action!

Now, not everyone is a philosopher nor can everyone devote time to deduce from the abstract; so let us turn to what lies nearest at hand and advance step by step. Observe an old garden, left to itself for some time; this in the eyes of many would be termed 'abandoned', even 'god-forsaken'. The true facts are far otherwise. What happens there? During the first year or so, in a temperate climate or possibly a matter of months in the tropics, a dense growth of weeds of various kinds overruns the beds and paths which formerly were well defined. At the same time, a distinct change takes place in the plants, trees, and shrubs that flourish in the garden's heyday. The annuals have disappeared,shrubs are dead or dying, trees show loss of vigour. Why is this? For want of water, care, and cultivation? This cannot be the reason as neither were the weeds watered or cared for. Time will tell. Let us observe our garden a few years later again. It will at once be seen that young indigenous trees and shrubs are rearing their heads above the weeds all over the place, their leaves quivering and glistening in the sunlight. They have survived competition with the weeds and beneath each shrub and sapling there is a noticeable thinning of the weed growth. Apparently the garden is well on the way to becoming a forest indistinguishable from that which covered the area before cultivation, and contains a vegetation similar to that natural to the region. These taller indigenous trees and shrubs may be referred to as 'dominants', because they have survived and will produce the habitat necessary for the growth of smaller trees, herbs, etc., as certain species are constantly associated together in communities. Once conditions have become favourable for these taller trees, the habitat is drastically acted by their mere presence. Habitats may be said to be subject to change and are occupied by the tree and plant life best adapted to its present condition, for example, shrubs may invade what was formerly a reed swamp, as the depth of the water is reduced by silting and so the habitat may be said to be the basis determining the present community, whether such habitat be the result of outside agencies such as climate or scientific treatment or are brought about by the former plant or community life itself. The

creeping plants of a sand dune bind the sand, add humus to it, thereby making it a more favourable habitat. Shrubs can then invade the community of creepers and in turn provide shade and shelter from wind which conditions allow trees to germinate beneath the shrubs, such trees eventually arising and becoming the 'dominants' of the community which includes not only plant, but animal and human life also.

This process whereby one community improves the habitat and then gives way to another, which is in turn succeeded by a third when the habitat has been further changed is termed 'succession'. Succession continues until the habitat is incapable of any further change representing as it does the climax of a series of changes and the plant community then in occupation will remain indefinitely. Once the climax community characteristics of a given climate and soil is known the fate of all other communities in the area can be predicted; they must all give way to the climax.

The example of the garden serves to illustrate the principle that many of man's basic activities consist first in removing or modifying the climax vegetation, and then preventing it from re-establishing itself. In agriculture, this is very obvious as there is a constant struggle against weeds, which represent the first stage in the return to the indigenous vegetation. It is possible, however, by applying knowledge and technique to change vegetation too much, as it often results in the substitution of a sparse growth of relatively unpalatable cultivated plants in place of the denser cover of valuable indigenous forage and shelter. In any case the complete return to the natural climax is inevitable and there are strict limits to the possibilities of applying to local conditions what may have been perfectly suitable elsewhere.

That brings us back to our Western malady of indiscriminate action. It is agreed that man has a threefold nature, animal, mental, and spiritual. If the results of indiscriminate action or interference in the plant or material world are so obvious, what is one to say regarding those amateurs who have the boldness to attempt to make drastic and unevolutionary changes in the mental or spiritual individuality of another?

'Unity in variety' is the plan of creation, but only the Hindu has recognized this, and refrained from religious persecution. The long arm of Hinduism accepts and sustains any apparently 'new' religious experience that utters itself in any form whatever. As the Lord says to Arjuna in the celestial Gita, 'Whoever comes to me by whatsoever path I reach him; all men are struggling in the paths that lead to Me, the eternal Truth.'

'There is only one God,' screams the zealot.

'Ah, yes,' says the Hindu, 'but its manifestations are many. It is formless, but can take any form, and once it takes form, it takes name also.' 'As Rama it incarnated in male form to inculcate courage; again in female form, as Sita, to teach fidelity; as Krishna to teach wisdom. The Eternal Religion embraces all stages of development from the simplest to the highest flights of Vedanta philosophy. In its unconditioned state the spirit is neither male nor female; when it takes form, the male or female names are assumed.'

'When virtue is in decadence and vice in ascendance, to bring about the renaissance of righteousness' God incarnates again and again. It has happened many times before and shall do so again. In proclaiming the Master's message of the underlying harmony of all religions, Swami Vivekananda pleaded to headstrong humanity thus: 'Refuse not to welcome its divine recurrence. Shut not the door of the future in the face of new-born Truth.'

Ah! What a sad state humanity would be reduced to, if everyone were 'converted'

to one Procrustian school of thought and religion. How static, how unprogressive spiritually, how limited would we be, how out of harmony with the great progressive living plan underlying the whole universe!

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

Mahapurushji in his *Conversations* reveals the sanctity of holy places like Benares, and discusses the Buddhist doctrine of trinity as applicable to the Mission. . . . The *Editorial* tries to show that of all the sciences which are in search of the Reality of the universe, the science of the Self is the most successful in reaching to the nearest approach of it. . . . A learned American traces the growth of the *Virus of Bigotry* in the United States and analyses the nature of its sources suggesting certain valuable lines of thought to counteract this ever-present danger to civilization and decent social life. . . . Sri Sheshadri opens from the chequered career *A Page from the Life of Sureshwaracharya,* one of the greatest exponents of Advaita Vedanta and an illustrious disciple of Sri Shankara. . . . Brother Lawrence while developing a point of view which is often obscured when we talk of art or meditation only, shows that real *Art and Meditation* are but the obverse and reverse sides of the same truth, Satchidananda. . . . One aspect of Tagore's versatile genius is dealt with in the *Voice of Tagore* by Prof. B. S. Mathur. . . . Giving a first-hand information on *How Indore maintains Industrial Peace,* Sri Srikantan shows that all labour strikes and troubles and ill-wills can be averted by tactfully and sympathetically handling their problems. . . . Mr R. E. R. Lees brings out in beautiful verse the conception of *Maya*. . . . In *A Jackdaw in Peacock's Feathers* Mr Shastri who is a South Indian Brahmin belonging to the school of Shankaracharya gives a straight-forward review of a book by Rene Guenon and shows how difficult it is for foreigners, in spite of all their good intentions, to enter into the spirit of Hindu Shastras. . . . Miss Cook is an Australian who is deeply interested in the religions of India and in this article she pleads for a proper stress on the ideas of tolerance and universality which are the hall-marks of Hinduism.

Nullify Forcible Marriages and Conversions

The mass conversions and forcible marriages that form a regular feature of the communal riots taking place in different parts of India, especially in East Bengal and West Punjab, this sadistic lust and barbaric passions unleashed by the bigoted, have made even the dark ages of Europe look pale. It is incomprehensible what gain a religion can have in increasing its adherents by the sword. We do not for one moment consider that a religion, whose ambition is to increase its adherents by hook or crook, can any way claim to be a religion at all, whatever else it may be. The fundamental tenet or religion are love and goodwill; and whatever may be the professions of a religion, if it is found transgressing these two moral codes, it should be at once condemned as irreligious.

In all religions marriage is a sacred religious function. Neither in the uncivilized ages nor among the barbaric primitive races, can we find such immoral recourse to marriage in the name of religion. The real motive for these forcible marriages seems to

be bigotry and intolerance to other forms of worship—and as such doubly condemnable since such wickedness is done under the cloak of religion. As Swami Vivekananda says, all fanatics and bullys are cowards; and this cowardly immoral devilishness can be stopped only if the victims have the courage to defend themselves to death. As Tennyson says, a man of pure motives is equal to a thousand bullys.

Apart from all these it is imperative that the victims of these atrocities should be recovered. We had occasions to point out in these columns the views of our Shastras and ancient conventions which declare in clear terms, 'Whatever is given by force, whatever is enjoyed by force, and also whatever has been caused by force, and all transactions done by force are all void' (*Manusmriti*). Again, 'If a woman in spite of her complete unwillingness, is enjoyed by fraud, force, or stealth, that woman untainted by sin should not be renounced, for she had no intention in the act' (*Atrismriti*). In the words of Swami Madhavananda, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, 'forcible conversions cannot be a bar to the re-entry into their own fold. . . . and abducted women should be taken back into the society with all honour. Failure to do this would mean punishing the victim, instead of the aggressor, which is absurd.'

The governments also have a duty to perform. They should proclaim such marriages illegal either through special powers vested in the Governor to protect the interest of the minorities, or through special legislation. It is, therefore, a matter of great satisfaction to note that Sj Susilkumar Roychoudhury has given notice of a Bill to be introduced in the Council of State to declare by law all the forcible conversions and marriages which had taken place, null and void; and inheritance and succession to properties of persons so converted will be according to their real religious laws. It is our earnest hope that all members of the Council, as also the public, will support this timely act, which is but a small thing by way of atonement for the shameless atrocities committed on innocent men, women, and children. Here it is not a question of caste or creed, but the ordinary decencies of civilized life that are at stake. Every decent-minded man and woman, whether Hindu or Muslim, should support this measure. Terrible indeed will be the fate of that society which cannot rise to the occasion, and give succour to the oppressed victims of mob barbarism.

Resurgent Asia

While in Moscow the foreign ministers were wrangling for war spoils, while in London and Washington the bugles of war were already sounding and the Four Freedoms were buried under atom bombs, in the Old Fort of Delhi was held a Conference to lay foundations for building up the comity of Asian peoples, which is to serve as a vehicle to spread love and good wishes to all the nations of the world. The contrast is striking. Europe stands for domination and exploitation; while Asia for mutual help and understanding. The destiny of Asia is clear enough.

The different Asiatic nations, suffocating under external oppression and internal anarchy, were groping in the dark for a guidance. Though cultural brotherhood was an accomplished fact among the Asiatic nations even at the time of Ashoka, and even though Buddhist monks had helped in mutual understanding by spreading themselves throughout the length and breadth of Asia, still it was forgotten in the middle ages, and this is the first attempt to re-cement the bond, to rediscover the soul, and to plant that 'great tree of Asian unity out of which will again grow something even greater—world peace based on world freedom.'

In the words of Mrs Sarojini Naidu:

For centuries that message of the East had been almost forgotten and lost on narrow minds. We have

followed after strange gods. We have despised our own treasures and sought the imitations that come to us from outside. But today consciousness has returned to us, we are reborn in the crucibles of many sufferings and we have emerged pure gold, the gold of Asia. What other message have we received or could we receive from these brothers from far-off places. . . . They have realized that it is the place and function of India to rekindle the torches of the world.

Though we find in Asia apparently different cultures and races, still the underlying unity is obvious. Though the different cultures, the Hindu, the Chinese, and the Islamic, sometimes fight and quarrel through misunderstanding and political intrigues, still all of them have the same fundamental ideal behind. Writes Dr Sunitikumar Chatterji in the *Hindusthan Standard*:

There is no denying that Asia is far more diversified than Europe, in race and in culture; yet underlying all this diversity, presented by the Mongols and the Tartars, the Indo-Chinese and the Indonesians, the Indians and the Iranians and the semites, there is an underlying unity—the unity of common humanity that is more intensely realized than elsewhere. As Okakura himself has put it, 'Arab chivalry, Persian poetry, Chinese ethics, and Indian thought, all speak of a single Asiatic peace, in which there grew up a common life, bearing in different regions different characteristic blossoms, but nowhere capable of a hard and fast dividing line. Islam itself may be described as Confucianism on horseback, sword in hand. . . . Buddhism —that great ocean of idealism in which merge all the river systems of Eastern thought—is not coloured only with the pure water of the Ganges, for the Tartaric nations that joined it made their genius also tributary bringing new symbolism, new organization, new powers of devotion, to add to the treasures of the Faith.' Okakura sees the final synthesis of the entire culture and spiritual inheritance of Asia as a whole in the civilization of his own country, Japan; and no doubt, Okakura's contention was mainly right when we consider how Japan's highest development is based on two of the supreme things in the culture of Asia, viz. Chinese learning and Indian thought, Chinese artistic expression and Indian spirituality.

India is thus the soul of Asia. She is fitted by her geographical, political and cultural position to be the leader of all Asia. In the inspiring poem of Tagore, 'Awake gently, O my mind, in this holy sanctum—this ocean strand of all Man that is humanity,' the destiny and spiritual guidance of India has been definitely set forth; for has she not made the 'home of all races and cultures which has been synthesized into a people and a civilization of universal significance'? India, becoming herself the home of diverse cultures all falling and mixing into this ocean of spiritual idealism undisturbed by the superficial tides and waves, stands as the beacon light of freedom of body, mind, and soul—and the 'pivot of pan-Asian unity-in-diversity.' As the confluence of ancient wisdom, medieval idealism, and modern reasoning, India is the holy Prayag of all Asia and the world, and the new hope and message for the stricken humanity.

As Swami Vivekananda says, 'Once more the world must be conquered by India: this is the dream of my life. . . . We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative. *We must do or die.*' The realization of this great purpose demands that we should break with the old theory of political supremacy or economic exploitation, of privileged few and toiling millions. As against the European conception of political power, we should have a thorough reorientation of policy, keeping spiritual authority as the high priest, and philosophy as the most efficient weapon to conquer the world. Politics and economics are only passing phases, and no wise man will build his home on running sands. The *summum bonum* of life of an individual as well as a nation is not mere physical pleasures, but spiritual realization.

Whole of India should be converted into barracks of soldiers,—self-sacrificing, all-renouncing men and women—who could carry the torch of love and wisdom, even to the remotest corner of the world. If only India is ready to respond to the call of love and sympathy, of understanding and appreciation, then only she can hope to become once again the birthplace, as in Buddhist times, of a new humanism, richer, than the old humanism of

the West. In the words of Mrs Naidu, 'We of the immortal East, we who were when time was, we who will exist as long as eternity lasts, we have a lesson to teach to the world.' And as Tagore sings :

Keep watch, India.
Bring your offerings of worship for that sacred sunrise.
Let the first hymn of its welcome sound in your voice and sing
'Come, Peace thou daughter of God's own great suffering,
Come with thy treasure of contentment, the sword of fortitude,
And meekness crowning thy forehead.'

Equal Chances for All

It is a matter of great joy to observe the old walls of caste restrictions and prejudices falling down, thanks to the untiring works of Gandhiji, and the Congress Ministries. These social customs once so helpful to the preservation of the purity of the Vedic knowledge, have by now become stinking like a corpse. And it is a welcome sign that all temples and public institutions are being thrown open to all, in an attempt to purify Hinduism and raise the downtrodden to higher levels.

Even otherwise caste had fallen into disuse : the 'Brahmin' is no more confined to meditation and study; the 'Kshatriya' is not a fighter for righteousness today. All of us are vying with one another in amassing wealth—that is the caste of today, the caste of Mammon. The so-called, Mlecchas are today our warriors, the Kshatriyas. Thus we have to recast the caste according to its original functions—i. e. according to the natural aptitude and ability of a man. A man may be born of any family, but if he has an inclination for a special line—whether for study of fighting, for commerce or manual labour, he should be trained in that special line, developing his tendency which alone is true education, and which alone will give him real joy for work and real service to the State. This is the real work that lies before the authorities today. For, only pulling down an ancient mansion will not fulfil the national purpose ; we have to *build* another according to the modern needs.

This selection of the candidates for special lines according to their natural aptitudes can be done only through schools. Thus the most important thing that the government have to do is to inaugurate scientific education—education where the latent talents of the pupil are brought out by psychological tutoring, and then training them on that particular line; an education where character-building and concentration of the mental forces are considered more important than a mere passing of examinations, or a mere 'rice-earning education' as Sri Ramakrishna said.

It is by this way that India can hope to rise up and wash away all the sins that she committed in ostracizing a section of her people. And in this way alone the sanctity of work—whether of ruling the country, or of scavengery—can be established, with equal privileges to all irrespective of the type of work one does. All work is a service to the State, equally noble and equally sacred.

It is true that we cannot think of education while millions are rotting in grinding poverty. But it is equally true that without education the masses cannot be made to realize the ways and means for bettering there lives and look upon their work with pride and satisfaction. 'Education, education,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'that is the only way to raise up the masses, and the nation.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDI

SAMSKRITA SAHITYA KA ITIHAS. By Baldev Upadhyaya and Gourishankar Upadhyaya. *Published by Sharda Mandir, 29/17, Ganesh Dixit Lane, Benares. Pp. 391. Price Rs 4.*

BHARATEEYA DARSHAN. By Baldev Upadhyaya. *Published by idem. Pp. 614. Price Rs 6.*

From ancient times Hindus did not show any appreciative advance in history and chronicles. One of the evil effects of such mentality was that Europeans began to treat Indian philosophy and literature from their own point of view. Every traveller who had a flashing view of India, considered himself competent enough to write authoritative treatises on India and Indians. In the absence of any authoritative Indian works, these studies on Indian life and philosophy passed for studies even in universities. The result was that we began to hate ourselves, look with contempt at our glorious past and the unrivalled philosophies and literature.

It is a great relief to see in the modern times, scholars like the present author take up to such studies. The first book deals lucidly and appreciatively with the whole ancient literature of India, from the Vedic times to the very beginning of the Muslim invasion. Our only sorrow is that it is more a summary than an elucidation; but it will certainly be an eye-opener to the modern English-educated youths, who are taught to look to Shelley and Shakespeare, Dante and Goethe for inspiration and guidance; and it will show that in our own literature lie unnoticed (due to our own ignorance of our culture,) gems a hundred times more illuminating and inspiring than the Western lights.

With a thorough grasp of the various systems of Indian philosophy, Prof Upadhyaya was the best suited person to write a study on such a vast subject, in the Hindi language. Though many a treatise has appeared in English on Indian philosophy, it has been a matter of deep sorrow that none such serious studies has yet been tried in the various Indian languages. Baldev Upadhyaya with his masterly style and right perspection, in introducing the philosophical systems to the Hindi public, has put them under great debt.

With an introductory study of the whole field, refuting the various arguments and hypotheses of the Orientalists, and clearly presenting the age-old philosophies of India in its crystal colour, critically arranging the different systems, comparing and contrasting each one with the other, and with a historical study of the growth of each system, this treatise is a grand success.

We would have liked him, with his immense knowledge and critical outlook, to take up detailed studies on the subject, instead of compressing such vast field into six hundred pages. Of course, it serves the immediate purpose of introducing the Indian philosophies to the students. And we hope that a thorough detailed exposition of the various systems will be soon forthcoming. We would also urge the government and the university authorities to take steps to encourage such scholars to undertake serious literary and philosophical works in Indian languages to enrich the language as well as the universities, especially as English is slowly giving place to our own mother tongues.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

We have great pleasure to announce that Government of India have granted Rs 1,22,180 for the rehabilitation of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama Hospital, Rangoon. Part of the funds sanctioned will be given in the form of drugs and medicines from India.

It may be recalled that started in 1921 on an extensive plot of land on Merchant Street, East Rangoon, this biggest, efficiently managed hospital of the Mission—which was the second largest hospital in Burma—maintained till 1941 an indoor hospital with 200 beds divided into 12 wards and an outdoor dispensary with a daily average of over 1000. The Burma Government made a grant of the site to the Sevashrama in 1939, and the Corporation of Rangoon made a gift of the structures in 1940.

The bombing and machine-gunning of the Sevashrama by the Japanese in December 1941, and the subsequent events led to the closing of the work. The Hospital is now being reorganized.
