

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

TO THE VASTS

Urau deva anivadhe syama

Sam ashvinor avasa nutanena mayobhuva supranito gamema

A no rayim vahatam ota viran a vishvan amrita saubhagani

—Atri : *Rig-veda*, V.42.xvii-xviii

For the resplendent Vast

Where nothing halts the victorious march of the Soul,

Our hearts are pining, O Powers of Light!

The Twin Rays leaping from the abysmal depth of the Unknown

And speeding through the trackless Night

To the shores of the rosy Dawn,—

Will they not encircle our Being

In the thrilling embrace of a new-found Joy,

And melting it into a stream of ineffable Beatitude

Lead it on to the Rhythm of the lucent immensities ?

Turn us into channels of your rushing Might,

O Twin Rays of Immortality,

And infuse in our souls the potency of a prowess divine

Making us participants of the plenitude of a universal harmony.

(Translated by Anirvan)

CONVERSATIONS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

BELURMATH ; 25 DECEMBER 1929

Last night *Xmas* eve was celebrated at the *Math* with great joy and solemnity. In the drawing room below the picture of the baby Christ in the lap of Mary was beautifully decorated with leaves, flowers, and garlands, and various kinds of fruits, sweets, and cakes etc. were offered before it. Apart from the *sadhus* and *brahmacharis* of the *Math* many devotees from outside had also joined in the celebration. After select portions from the life and teachings of Jesus had been read from the *Bible*, a few elderly *sanyasins* spoke interestingly on the holy life and message of Christ. Mahapurush Maharaj could not go down to attend the function, but he enquired into every detail of the celebration and expressed great delight at it.

As soon as the *sadhus* and *brahmacharis* of the *Math* collected in the room of Mahapurushji, he greeted them all smiling by saying, 'Happy Christmas', and apropos of the previous night's celebration of *Xmas* eve said, 'This celebration of ours dates from the time of the Baranagore monastery itself. A few months after the passing away of the Master, Baburam Maharaj's (Swami Premananda) mother invited us to visit their native place, Antpur, for a few days. Swamiji took all of us there. At that time we were all full of a great spirit of renunciation. All were pining in their hearts at the separation of the Master and were absorbed in hard spiritual practices. The only thought which filled our minds day and night was how to realize God and how to have peace in the heart. Even after going to Antpur we continued our spiritual practices with great zeal. After lighting a *dhuni* (a log-fire) we used to sit near it and pass whole nights in *japa* and meditation. Swamiji used to talk to us on renunciation and dispassion. Sometimes he would read the *Upanishads*, sometimes the

Gita, or the *Bhagavata*, to us and discuss them. A few days went by in this way. One night we were all meditating, sitting near the *dhuni*. After a long meditation Swamiji, seized by a sudden ecstatic mood as it were, began to speak on the life of Jesus, wholly absorbed in the subject. The rigorous *sadhana* of Jesus, his burning renunciation, his teachings and, above all, his feeling of oneness with God—all these and other things he began to describe with such force and clarity that we all became spell-bound. We felt at the time as if Jesus himself was telling us the story of his miraculous life through Swamiji's mouth. As we were listening to these a current of inexpressible delight flowed in our hearts; and the thought rose continually in the mind that somehow or other, before everything else, God must be realized and that we should become one with Him, and that everything else was vain. Whenever Swamiji spoke on a subject, he would deal with it as if it was of supreme importance. Later on we came to know that *Xmas* eve happened to fall on that particular day. But none had any idea of it before. We felt as if Jesus manifested himself through Swamiji and spoke to us about his own glorious life and teachings in order to deepen still further our spirit of renunciation and our desire to realize God. It was during this stay at Antpur that our resolve to form an order of monks by ourselves became still more firm. The Master had made us *sanyasins* before he passed away; that spirit was strengthened further at Antpur. Jesus was the king of *sanyasins*, a burning example of renunciation. It is very difficult to understand his very wonderful and superhuman life and extraordinary message, unless one becomes an ideal *sanyasin*. We have seen the Master and have lived with him; so we can understand a little. But how can common men understand him?

Even the followers of Christ have not understood him properly; especially the Christian missionaries of our times have utterly failed to understand him. They cannot grasp the true significance of his life. The reason is that among many of the preachers of the Christian religion today the same renunciation and *tapasya*, discrimination and detachment, and desire for liberation are lacking. Indians have a natural grasp of religion and know how to live a religious life. As a consequence, consider the results achieved by the preaching of the Christian religion during this last hundred and fifty years. Nothing at all. How many people have developed a truly spiritual life as a result of their preaching? Renunciation, dispassion, purity—these are the foundations of a life of religion. Jesus himself has said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' This 'seeing God' is the aim of a life of religion. If, instead of this, only a vast organization is built up and the books are filled with the names of tens of millions of members belonging to the sect, nothing of consequence is gained by these in the field of religion. These things may have value in politics, but not in the realm of religion. Swamiji said, 'I shall think that my work has been successful, if I have been able to give real spiritual life even to ten persons.' The significance of this remark of his is that it is extremely difficult to gain a spiritual life. Realization of God or the experience of Brahman is spiritual life. 'Religion is realization.' There are many highly intelligent men, among the Christian missionaries, who are widely read and great scholars. If they had along with these the renunciation and *tapasya* which Jesus had taught, then only it would count.

'You have joined this holy Order of the Master, the lord of renunciation, and have made him the ideal of your life and are shaping your character in accordance with that ideal. You will attain the Good (*kalyan*), and you will achieve the bliss of Brahman—there is not a shadow of doubt in that. As

long as this Order will hold on to the life of the Master, the embodiment of all divine ideals (*bhavas*), as the Ideal, keeping its gaze fixed on the realization of God, through renunciation, dispassion, and *tapasya*, as the principal aim of life, so long it is certain that the spiritual power of this Order will remain undiminished. It is very easy to spread your work and raise your prestige etc. But it is extremely difficult to pass the whole life by following a single idea, by devoting oneself to *tapasya* wholly for the realization of God. Swamiji has said that our motto should be: 'For the liberation of one's own self and for the good of the world.' First acquisition of Self-knowledge, and then the good of the world. Activities like the service of the sick etc. which Swamiji has started in this Organization should all be done along with daily spiritual practices as part of *bhajan* or devotional exercises. Then only will the activities be properly carried out. But if without doing so somebody abandons himself entirely in the tide of activities, it becomes difficult in the end to stand firm against the buffets of fortune. Often the great success achieved in work rouses enthusiasm for it. But that is not good; in the end it pushes into oblivion the aim of life and obliterates all distinction between ends and means. We never heard the Master talk to us anything except God. His one word and teaching was this, 'First of all realize God by whatever means you can.'

A *sanyasin*: Maharaj, The Master has said that occult powers are an hindrance to the realization of God; but the life of Jesus, it appears, is full of miracles. He brought the dead to life, healed the sick, and did various other kinds of miracles. After transmitting his power into his twelve disciples, he even asked them to do the same. This seems a little difficult for us to understand.

Mahapurushji: Yes, the Master has rightly said that if *sadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) pay attention to the attainment of occult powers, they can no longer advance

towards God ; their spiritual progress stops there. Mother also showed the Master that occult powers are to be discarded like filth. But the miraeles mentioned in the life of Jesus were not performed by him for the sake of exhibition at all ; he was only moved by the sufferings of the afflicted to remove them. It is said in the *Bible* itself that, after restoring sight to the blind, and making the leper whole by mere touch, he told them at the same time not to reveal those things to others. He never performed them for the sake of fame, or for gaining the esteem of men. It is also said in the scriptures that after attaining Self-knowledge the knowers of Brahman live in the world with the sole purpose of doing good to it. They have no other desires or aims. Apart from that Jesus was no ordinary person. He was an Incarnation of the Divine. His being was merged in that of the Divine Father, the Supreme Lord. Therefore it is in no way unnatural or reproachable for him to have done these things. The performances which common men regard as very wonderful and impossible are, like breathing, all very easy to Incarnations. They do not require effort to do these things. Their merest wish accomplishes the impossible. In some instances Jesus exhibited such miracles to enkindle faith in God in the hearts of unbelievers. It is often difficult to understand the deep secret of their work.

To cure physical sickness by mere touch is not a great miracle. It is all very easy. The Master has showed the greatest miracle of all ; He made individuals realize the Divine and plunge into *samadhi* by mere touch. To turn the tendency of the whole mind Godward by annihilating the heap of *samskaras* acquired in all the past lives is the greatest manifestation of supernatural power. Oh ! what tremendous things we have seen the Master perform ! Even to think of them raises the hairs on ends. He used to play ducks and drakes, as it were, with the minds

of men. He used to straighten the crookedness and angularities of mind by his mere wish. At his mere touch all the diseases of the mind would get healed. What a great reservoir of spiritual power was the Master ! Outwardly he looked like an ordinary person ; but the all-powerful God acted through his body....

A German lady devotee came and saluted Mahapurush Maharaj. And as soon as she stood up Mahapurushji greeted her smilingly, and wishing her a happy *Xmas* asked, 'How did you enjoy the Christmas eve yesterday ?'

The lady devotee : Ah ! I was very much delighted. I never found such delight before in life on Christmas eve. In the West it is mostly marked by gay rejoicings and festivities, food and drinks, fine dresses and appearances, song and music etc ; and the whole country is carried away by these. Whatever worship and service are done are mostly performed according to a fixed formal routine. Sincerity is greatly lacking in them. They spend millions in festivities. The heart is not satisfied by these outward shows. So last year on the Christmas night I prayed yearningly to Jesus at one o' clock in the night saying : 'O Lord, Grant me that I may feel the true joy of Christmas at least once in my life.' He listened to my prayer. This time I felt here the true joy of Christmas, my heart is filled with it.'

Mahapurushji : Our worship is *sattvika* worship. The Christmas celebration here is a *sattvika* celebration. Love, devotion, faith, sincere prayer are the chief elements of this celebration. This alone is true Christmas.

The lady devotee : Was the Lord a Jew in truth ?

Mahapurushji : He was neither a Jew nor a Gentile. He was on a level far above all these ; he was an Incarnation of the Divine Power. He descended on earth in human form for the salvation of humanity.

THE IDEAL AND IDOLS

BY THE EDITOR

Svam vinihanti asadgrahat—One destroys oneself by clinging to the relative—(Shankara).

From time immemorial India has clung to an integral conception of life and Reality. She has viewed them as whole and continuous. This conception forms the dominant note of her philosophy and the motor of her civilization; it outlines the pattern of existence which it has been her historical aim to achieve in universal practice. The divisions and oppositions which we are prone to make to-day, under the influence of Western thought, as between matter and spirit, between Church and State, between things sacred and things secular, between interests which pertain to Heaven and those that belong to the earth are alien to Indian thought. India has, of course, always emphasized the One as against the Many, the timeless as against the contingent, for without the support of the former, the latter becomes wholly illusory. 'Time is the moving image of Eternity;' and isolated from its immutable support and womb, the pageant of phenomena loses all significance and can enjoy no more than a purely illusory existence. This is the meaning of the so-called cult of negation or otherworldliness, which provides such a favourite and constant target of attack to persons given to shallow thinking, or addicted to romantic spirituality which fails to rise above idolatrous worship of Society and sensation. The cult of materialism often speaks a high moral language to seduce people. The Eternal is the source of all values and cannot be judged by the effect it may have on the five minutes of human existence. Forms emerge and vanish; they do so on a background. Even memory must lean on a support; take that away and everything melts into nothingness.

While Reality is One, It throws up myriads of forms without ever exhausting or even

partially losing Itself in the manifestation (... *ekamshena sthito jagat*). It is one at all the levels of existence, material, mental, and spiritual. It is a tapering sort of existence with matter forming the base, life and mind, the middle and spirit, the pinnacle, the apex and the inexhaustible womb of all manifestation. The manifested reality is the *sanatana brahmavriksha*, the perennial tree of the Vast, with its roots in the Unmanifest above, and trunk and branches spreading out below. The cosmic process is an eternal rhythm of the Spirit, projecting and withdrawing forms alternately, descending into matter and ascending again through a series to Its original status. The immutable Divine Factor behind is the integer that gives value to the series. Deny It and the series become mere zeroes without any value-giving member to their left. Yet, this is precisely what progressivists seek to do either in a simple, naive materialistic fashion, or in a highly sophisticated manner, talking in accents of specious rationalism and synthetic philosophy which but glorifies the insatiable urge of the ego for newer and more exquisite harmonies of sensation.

Not only is Reality one, but the process, the manifestation, the history of man and existence, is conceived as the Spirit in evolution. The 'divine event towards which the whole creation is moving' is the emergence of a humanity in possession of the complete and correct truth of existence. What is still superconscious for the vast masses of men will one day be the consciousness for all. 'In time to come Christs will be in numbers like bunches of grapes on a vine; then the play will be over and will pass out. As water in a kettle beginning to boil shows first one bubble, then another, and then more and more until

all is in ebullition and passes out as steam. Buddha and Christ are the two biggest "bubbles" the world has yet produced. Moses was a tiny bubble, greater ones came. Sometime, however, all will be bubbles and escape; but creation, ever new, will bring new water to go through the process all over again.' (Vivekananda). The individuals who manifest the highest possibilities of spiritual perfection are the *agnihotris* who keep up the sacrificial fire of the Spirit, the spearheads of spiritual evolution through which creation moves on to its final consummation. They are like the intermediary transitional forms, perhaps a million years in advance of evolution. They come amongst us from time to time to keep us from despair, to give us a sense of intelligent direction, and to prove to us that our efforts can and must succeed. 'No one is going to remain without food,' assures Sri Ramakrishna.

'In an ocean there are huge waves, like mountains, then smaller waves, and still smaller, down to little bubbles, but back of all these is the infinite ocean. The bubble is connected with the infinite ocean at one end, and the huge wave at the other end. So, one may be a gigantic man, and another a little bubble, but each is connected with that infinite ocean of energy, which is the common birth-right of every animal that exists. Wherever there is life, the storehouse of infinite energy is behind it. Starting as some fungus, some very minute, microscopic bubble, and all the time drawing from that infinite storehouse of energy, a form is changed slowly and steadily until in course of time it becomes a plant, then an animal, then man, ultimately God. This is attained through millions of aeons, but what is time? An increase of speed, an increase of struggle, is able to bridge the gulf of time. That which naturally takes a long time to accomplish can be shortened by the intensity of action, says the *yogi*....

'...The ideal of the *yogi*, the whole science of yoga, is directed to the end of teaching men how, by intensifying the power

of assimilation, to shorten the time for reaching perfection, instead of slowly advancing from point to point and waiting until the whole human race has become perfect. All great prophets, saints and seers of the world,— what did they do? In one span of life they lived the whole life of humanity, traversed the whole length of time that it takes ordinary humanity to come to perfection.' (Vivekananda).

The spiritual conception of evolution is an ancient Indian idea, which finds expression in philosophical and mythological language in the entire range of her religious literature. The conception is being dimly discerned even in the West, for the concepts of material, morphological, or anatomical evolution are proving wholly inadequate to explain the ascendant march of humanity to the higher values of civilization. Still a sort of dualism, which seems fundamental to Western mode of thinking with its overestimation of the limited human personality as the highest category of existence, is retained. Evolutionists like Dr Julian Huxley believe that a kind of automatic process, a purposeless mechanical movement, could still explain the whole course of evolution up to the human level, and that then and then only mental and moral directives come into operation. The opposition between mind and matter seems fundamental.

It is true that abstract intelligence, the sense of self-direction and choice, which are the instruments of evolution at the human level, do not manifest themselves on the plane of matter, or of the animal. But the movement is not aimless, and is mechanical only to a particular way of looking at it. There is no hiatus in the cosmic process; nor is it a relay race, run up to a point by Chance, which stops and relinquishes the directive after a while to new emergent factors. A secret aim motivates the entire process, an aim which remains hidden under *tamasik* envelopes at the material level. Even at the level of abstract intelligence, with the help of which man builds up a conceptual universe of

ideas and ideals behind the discernible facts of experience, the aim is not clearly understood. Reason moves in a limited circle and cannot explain facts which rush into its orbit now and then from beyond like comets swimming into the field of earth's gravitation from unknown outer spaces. These facts, the sudden flashes from the Beyond, and the propositions of value which we derive from feeling and not from perception, find their explanation and validity only in supersensory experience of the integral Truth realized by the seers. Ideals are thus the image of perfection that exists *in potentia* in every man. They are the intimations through feeling of the Truth beyond. The realm of the conceptual is a bridge between the two extreme terms of evolution. The whole process is 'all of a piece'—a story in many chapters. It is a continuous story without a break—a story which embodies, if we read it carefully, at different levels, the same values of truth, love, order, and the same methods of sacrifice and renunciation. Life is a fight against inertia, while conscience develops by waging a constant war against the ancestral memories of instincts and appetites, which were a tool of evolution at one stage, but bar the ascendant march of man at another. Thus the law of sacrifice, as the *Vedas* proclaim in magnificent imagery, is writ large on the entire cosmic process.

This, in short, is the root idea of Indian civilization, which is a perennial search, through ephemeral forms, after timeless values. It is for this reason that it still endures, for it has a divine mission to fulfil not only in India but in the world at large.

II

Shall India forget this lofty, integral truth of existence, the meaning and aim of her culture? Yet it seems easy to do so and lose ourselves, at the moment of our political freedom and consequent liberty of choice of the road we wish to travel, in the convulsive

and insignificant movements of a dying relativistic civilization.

It has become trite to say that civilization is on trial, that it may come to grief and that at bottom the crisis of our age is moral and spiritual. But are we sufficiently clear what the implications are and what is essential to ensure its survival, stability, and progress? In a word it is the loss of an absolute standard, of a fixed frame of reference, which lies at the root of our troubles. We live in a period of all-destructive relativism. Everything has been relativized from facts to ideals. No truth, no fact, no idea, no norm, nothing whatever, possesses an everlasting or immutable character. Truth is judged by its 'applicability,' and is defined by many anthropologists as a function of culture, as if culture determines truth and not *vice versa*. Marxism has developed the conception of 'the ideological superstructure', according to which moral, spiritual, and other ideas are the by-products of economic situations as any other part of culture. Psychologists declare that reason is a playball of instincts. Practical men view it as a tool of 'adjustment' to novel situations. Its product, the ideas, therefore, are no more than momentary useful implements. There is nothing which is of lasting significance and truth.

The doctrine of momentariness is an ancient myth, but is periodically reborn by the worship of idols peculiar to the age. No age is without its idols, least of all the present. An idol is a fetish that puts on the mask of an ideal. It not only claims to announce a truth, but seeks to impose a duty. An idol is not something totally lacking in worth or meaning. On the contrary it is a truth which derives its validity from some usefulness it serves. But its peculiar tendency is to make into an absolute what has only relative validity. In its creation, a limited truth is made to aspire for universality. Thus truth becomes falsehood, and good is turned into evil. Herein lies the paradox and the self-destructive character of relativization. In the very

attempt to reduce to relativity all ideas and ideals, man finds himself forced to adopt a relative value as an absolute and thus to negate himself. For example, despite its conception of "the ideological superstructure", Marxism presupposed the immutability of certain ideals. But wherefrom these ideals were to derive their everlasting validity, the author of Marxism left unanswered. In the same way the psychologists who declare reason to be a tool of the irrational are forced to assume certain unchanging valid principles of reasoning to substantiate their thesis. If it were not so, there would be no reason to suppose that the proponents of the 'playball theory' of reason were talking anything except nonsense.

The idols of the present age, which are responsible for this widespread vogue of relativism, can be enumerated, following Professor Aller of Catholic University, USA, as the idols of scientism and technology, of comfort, of activism, and of factualism. All these have an exclusive hold on the minds of all or nearly all of the present age. They all work against stability, continuity, or lastingness. Our age takes pride in calling itself scientific, but a future historian would characterize it not as the age of science but as the epoch of 'the idolatry of science.' There can be no question about the achievements of our times, about the rapid accumulation and wonderful fructification of natural knowledge. But the worth of science is overrated to such an extent that the idol of science dominates all minds or nearly all. Our life today is fashioned by and dependent on science. This is natural and not to be disliked. But the prevalence of technology renders man more and more insensible to the other aspects of existence. It has led to continuous shrinkage of the human existential sphere. It is for this reason, too, that the very dimensions of scientific achievements have thrown society out of balance, and that we find technical advance provocative of social chaos and anarchy. The search

for security through technology has ushered in the 'atomic age' which has only increased the total insecurity of mankind.

In the final analysis all that technology can do is to increase comfort. But because science and technology form the climate of our times, comfort (*kama*) which holds a definite place in the order of values (*purusharthas*) turns into an absolute, an end legitimate in itself. It becomes an idol. The idolatry of comfort equates good life with comfortable living. So also progress comes to mean technological advance. It becomes material, quantitative, and external, with no reference to the inner perfectibility of the individual. Human progress is conceived as a technological problem. Good life, it is assumed, will automatically flow from improved gadgets and material planning. There is a technique for everything, for the belief is widely held that the pattern of technology is applicable everywhere.

Faith in technology has developed the idea of 'social technique' and of planning human society for the achievement of good life. But as it has been very pertinently asked, who is going to 'plan the planners?' This problem is unsolvable within a conception based exclusively on the categories of science. We cannot plan for good life without a vision of a future desirable state. But since ends are alien to scientific thought, we cannot decide what is good and what is not by scientific principles.

The age also suffers from an overestimation of doing and of factualism, as contrasted with contemplation and idealism. The tendency to overrate activity influences the modern attitude to quiet, contemplative life dedicated to the search for universal principles and ideals. The essence of life is held to consist in doing something and attaining prestige and power in terms of money. The idolatry of factualism is closely related to the idolatry of activism and receives its theoretic formulation in all forms of positivism. Propositions which do

not refer to 'facts' which are public and can be observed and repeated are rejected as meaningless. But an ideal cannot be observed as a fact based on sense perceptions, and its validity cannot be proved by knowledge derived from the senses. Rationalism cannot proceed except upon certain premises. Premises about facts are derived from sense perception, but premises about ends must come from a different source.

All these idols work for momentariness and fragmentation of life. The past also loses its meaning. Science is always on the march, the truth of today is the error of tomorrow. Comfort requires incessant improvement, and this is also kept alive by the intrinsic necessities of technology. Activity is essentially related to present adjustment, while facts are contingent and lack stability. Novelty alone has value. Creeds and faiths change according to the intellectual fashions of the moment. The past is emptied of meaning. Life becomes a discontinuous series without a binding and fixed principle.

This prevailing temper has struck a severe blow against ideals whose essence it is to be independent of and untouched by the changes and vicissitudes of times. With the general relativization the ideals have lost their old status. The vision of the ideals may change with the ages and with men (*smriti*), but from the beginning of the vedic times upto the present day certain ideals have been believed in India to be exempt from all change (*sanatana*). No social upheaval or political catastrophe, no transition from one economic stage to another, no loss of political freedom or economic power, has so far been able to touch the ideals. But relativization seems to be at our doorstep today. There is a great emphasis on technology and planning, but do we find a sufficient concern for guarding the eternal verities enshrined in our tradition?

In a human situation like this when relativism reigns supreme and threatens to sweep India on its tide, what is *primarily* needed, and needed more than any change of

material conditions, any sort of planning, is a restitution of the true dignity of man. This, in turn, cannot be done unless the immutability of everlasting ideals be fully recognized, and the eternal moral and spiritual directives, termed *shruti*, be given the supreme importance they deserve in individual and social life. Today man the ephemeral part of the true human Person, has become the measure of all things. The only way in which the threat which arises from this dictum of the self-sufficient man can be met is to oppose it with an emphatical, 'God is the measure of all things.' Man is only a measurer and must measure according to a standard that is immutable and everlasting. Without an absolute standard of this kind all speculation loses meaning and existence becomes a nightmare.

This human dignity cannot be restored until we recognize that the everlasting core, the base, of human personality is an immutable Divine factor, the *para prakriti*, of the Supreme Unmanifest (*Purushottama*). This Divine factor in man and nature and beyond is the measure of all things. It is the real man, the Man in every man, and not the changing envelopes of Personality, which can inspire reverence for life and endow our activities and speculation with sense as endeavours to recover the lost dominion of the Self (*svarajyasiddhi*).

The task, therefore, devolves upon the quiet and the contemplative who realize that the eternal verities of the *sanatana dharma* are not obsolete relics but everlasting lights illuminating the horizon of human existence to demand that our education must transmit to the students and the people, fast being demoralized and weakened by the cheap values and disintegrating notions of a relativistic civilization, a complete and correct vision of man. In times of emergency the contemplative and quiet person has to become active and translate his ideas into practice in order to put before the eyes of men the ever luminous ideals which point the way beyond the present horizon of human existence and

make it possible for men to transcend themselves and their present limitations. The times impose on him, further, the grave duty to become an iconoclast in order to shatter the idols which pose as the whole truth and usurp

the peace ideals, thus contracting the human existential sphere and forbidding man the vision of truths and lights from which all great achievements in history have originated.

BUDDHI AND BUDDHIYOGA

BY ANIRVAN

(Continued from the November issue)

XIV

In evolving a standard of conduct in which life-activity will have a harmonious expression in a large rhythm of social well-being (*lokasamgraha*), the responsibility then primarily rests on the individual, the measure of the development of whose inner being will set the pace for the development of healthy social ideologies. Karma forms an integral part of total Being just as Buddhi; but to save the former from the banalities to which it may sink from an uncritical attitude towards the aim of existence, we must have recourse to a higher source of illumination than what is guaranteed by the social conscience, which, after all, is never free from the undiscerning murkiness of the crowd-mind. A clear perception of the Light is always an exclusive privilege of the individual; it is really his consciousness which forms the focus from which a 'private world' appears in normal course of things as a subjective-objective diffusion; and in social relations it is ultimately the interests of this private world which govern the individual's outlook on common life. The world of sensations and its reflection as the world of elemental passions are at present the only materials from which a real public world of general appeal can be built up; beyond this, the world of ideas and norms dealing with universal aspect

of things is a hazy affair, whose messages are imperfectly understood and tardily assimilated by the group-mind, which nevertheless exercises a profound influence in shaping the individual's philosophy of life. The liberation of the forces of the inner being and an uplifting of the social conscience by its imperceptible pressure is thus always a task imposed on the individual by the very nature of the evolution of the principle of consciousness in Nature. In this light, the message of the *Gita*, even if the occasion for its dispensation rose in a social context and its emphasis on the concrete realization and universal application of an abstract idea never lagged, gradually becomes, as it proceeds, preoccupied with a grappling with the problems of an individual self-development. The urge to activity thus assumes the character, not of an exhortation prompted by an acceptance of the common values of an undeveloped social conscience, but of a critical analysis of the deep impulses rooted in the individual's inner being.

Thus we see that the main problem of the individual in his attempt at realizing the poise of *yoga-buddhi* is the sublimation of his own karmic urge. Karma, as a rhythm of the Being in its functioning as a multipotent creative impulse (*visarga*) dominates the whole sphere of Life, whether its energizings are directed towards the creation of values in terms

of tangible actualities (*bhuta*), or nascent potentialities (*bhava*).¹ If the movement in the former is extrovert (*pravritti*), in the latter it is essentially introvert (*nivritti*); and the aim of life-consciousness will be a harmonization of the two, in which *nivritti* will of course preponderate as the inner dynamism supplying a right direction to the functions of *pravritti*. *Pravritti* has been described as natural to all beings;² and interpreted in terms of evolving consciousness, this means that its functions belong to the realm of cosmic Nature whose motivations have grown subconscious or unconscious in the individual in course of the evolutionary process and thus formed a soil of spiritually dead actualities from which the life of new potentialities has to sprout. The bearer of this new life-urge is the individual consciousness whose essential function lies in canalizing the diffused energies of the subconscious and in supplying them with a meaning or aim. As concentrating consciousness grows in purposiveness and becomes meaningful, it creates *values* of ever-widening content as directives of karmic energies. But this movement, which means as much in-gathering as widening the field of the forces of consciousness as it rises to greater heights, gradually loses its hold on the particular and the concrete, and in a final straining dissolves in the quiescence (*akarma*) of the abstract and the universal, whose lure is as much fundamental as the lure of spontaneous diffusion. The aspirant must find a *via media* between the two; he must strike a balance between the actual and the ideal in his attempt at the realization of a total Being. Quiescence, like the prospective fact of Death on physical plane, or the mysterious background of the Infinite Unmanifest in all intellectual adventures into the abstract, is perhaps the ultimate Reality, which is at once the basis (*pratishtha*) and transcendence (*atishtha*) of all movements, actual or conceptual: it is a

Substance in which 'Time must have a stop' and yet on which Time leans for its being and dissolution. But the abyss of quiescence should not be tempted in a self-willed headlong rush;³ rather its potency, enlivened by the illumination of *smriti*, should charge the being with a deepening sense of an imperturbable poise in *nityasattva*, whence the rhythm of the karmic energy will appear not as a *sturm und drang* of unregenerate vitalism, but as a spontaneity of the blossoming of an inner essence—a dreamlike figuration of an illumined existence, where the stress of the Ideal-Real will change the momentum of the most intense activity into the serenity of a vast quiescence, which in itself will be pregnant with the throbbing potentiality of a creative energism.⁴ This will be solving the mystery of karmic ways by entering into the total scheme of their energizings lightened up by the illumination of a consciousness poised beyond the mind.⁵

The first step towards this sublimation of the karmic urge lies in its rationalization. As pulsation of Life, the scope of Karma is of course commensurate with the totality of being; but its stress on consciousness gains, as a direction of will or purpose begins to assert itself in it. The purpose is sometimes imposed from without, dictated by the group-instinct or the social conscience, or sometimes it is derived from an inner urge of self-expression; and more often than not, it is an admixture of the two. In any case, the purposiveness of action, as commonsense will say, has a greater chance of achieving its end, if it follows a rational course. Reason, either from a sifting of past experiences, or from an analytic imagination of future probabilities, can hope to predict results; and this adds a zest to purposiveness. But the difficulty is that in normal consciousness, reason cannot view things dispassionately; the predictable result is often not a strict logical deduction arrived at from a computa-

¹ *Gita* VIII.3.

² Cp. *Manusamhita* V.56.

³ Cp. *Gita* XII.5.

⁴ *Gita* IV.18.

⁵ *Gita* IV.17-18.

tion of all the factors concerned, but rather a suggestion of imaginative passion compelling reason to serve its cherished end. Impartial reason will say that, as forces rise above the level of mechanical operation, the predictability of their specific results becomes uncertain; the motive (*hetu*) of activity should then lie not in some definite result (*phala*) aimed at,⁶ but rather in the deep-rooted creative urge sanctified by the spirit of sacrifice (*yajnartham karma*).⁷ Rationalization of Karma will then mean its universalization, depending evidently not on some communal pattern of ethical conduct, but on a perception of that luminous core of essentiality in being (*buddhi*), which truly universalizes the individual and secretly makes every one of his life-movements a vibrant note of the grand symphony of All-existence.

Speaking in terms of mental reason, the means of attaining to this high ideal lies in the cult of equanimity (*samatva*)—a perfectly balanced response to all forms of dualities whether they appear in the sphere of sensation (*shitoshna*), emotion (*sukha-duhkha*), or will (*siddhyasiddhi*), or even in the ethical judgments of right and wrong (*sukrita-dushkrita*), and the still subtler rational ideologies of action and quiescence (*karma* and *akarma*). The course is of course a graduated one and begins with the initial cult of *titiksha* and *kshanti*, which releases the power of conscious inhibition, going along with an introversion, concentration and deepening of consciousness. The subtle aim of all this will be to deaden the force of emotive associations (*sanga*) or attachment made instinctive by the hormic structure of normal consciousness and ultimately to do away with it, so that the external or internal stimuli coming from universal Nature evoke only a pattern of pure perception minus the habitual reaction of an extremely personal colouring rising from the dualities of feeling-tone. This will be the

poise of Yoga in its negative aspect,⁸ an intensification of whose forces by a rarefaction of the perceptual field will lead to the status of Quiescence, an indiscriminate predilection for which is expressly prohibited by the *Gita*.⁹ *Samatva* is to become a poise, a vantage-ground for the manipulation of prakritic forces;¹⁰ its force of inhibition or negation is to be utilized as a corrective of the irrational ventures of the life-urge; and this rational element in it can be maintained and developed, if it is always in touch with the universalized and illumined consciousness (*buddhi*) forming its positive background.

This illumination is the invariable result of the focussing of consciousness, which presupposes a habitual in-gathering of its forces leading to a vacuity of thought-processes.¹¹

⁸ *Gita* II.48. This is preliminary to Patanjali's *nirodha-yoga* initiated by *vairagya* (*Yogasutra* I.12; cp. *Gita* VI.35) which is essentially the same as *asangatva*. What Patanjali aims at is a complete liquidation of the disturbing forces of will and emotion (*vaitrishnya*) so that an exclusive concentration (*samadhi*) may lead to a status of selfhood (*svarupavasthana*) analogous to a status of the Void (*svarupashunyata*). If the rhythm of *vyutthana* (rising to the surface) spontaneously following this is not forcibly checked (as is done by some Buddhist cults), it will lead to what the *Gita* elsewhere speaks as 'the conquest of the forces of creation' (V.19). This becomes normal by following the method of *viveka* (analytic discrimination) suggested by Kapila, where the field of consciousness is allowed to widen and subtilize itself according to the laws of a higher Nature responsive to the intensification of the staticity of Purusha. Obviously the *Gita* does not stop at *nirodha-yoga* (whose essence it of course assimilates in its cult of *yogabuddhi*), but goes a step forward and speaks of the very same *yoga* as an art (*kaushalam*). Cp. *Gita* II.48 read with II.50.

⁹ *Gita* II.47. Consciousness must always be a free agent, not lending itself to any form of mechanization.

¹⁰ Even in normal consciousness this becomes evident in scientific investigation and artistic creation where a certain amount of *samatva* reflecting the impersonal Witness-consciousness is indispensable at all times.

¹¹ *Gita* VI.25; Patanjali will call this the creation of *nirodha-samskara* which may become a normal background of the phenomenal mind whose motivations will then rise not from below, i.e. from the vital plane, but from a higher source above the mind. Ordinarily we would call this the function of intuition or the flash of inspiration.

⁶ *Gita* II.47.

⁷ *Gita* III.9.

Just as in correcting the psychological fallacy of hedonism, we have to cease from the quest of pleasure in order to attain to it, so here too, it is the inhibition or in-gathering of thought and will that releases an unsuspected fount of clarity and width of vision together with an effectual force of creative dynamism. As the Illumination of the Void suffuses the horizons of the Being, a depth is touched and the whole secret of karmic energization is laid bare: an incisive discrimination (*viveka*) discerns two types of Karma,—one the lower (*avara*), belonging to the *apara prakriti* and so originating in the unregenerate vital urge of the Asura,¹² and the other the divine (*divya*), the dynamism of the Supreme's own Nature (*sva prakriti*) manifesting a cosmic purpose through the spirit of the age¹³ and demanding the joyful surrender of the individual soul awaking to the total sense of the workings of the divine Power,¹⁴ which have opened out to its spiritualized vision (*divyam chakshuh*) in their stunningly awful sublimities. Viewed from this height the pettiness of the karmic motive inspired by an ego-sponsored planning becomes only too apparent: what then becomes of paramount interest to the worker is not to be engrossed in the uncertain effectuation of some circumscribed vision, but to look up for guidance to a higher source of illumination beyond the gloaming of mental will and intelligence.¹⁵ The discrimination between right and wrong has then a higher sanction than that of the canons of standardized morality. It is not that all notions of

morality are scattered to the winds, but rather that they are referred to the calm judgment of *prajna* which is as distinct from the sophistications of mental reason (*prajnavada*) as fire from smoke, and which finds sanction for ethical conduct in the perception of the essentiality of things attained by a comprehensive concentration (*samadhi*). This *samadhi* or *yoga* connoting in the widest sense both a status and a dual rhythm of inward tension and outward projection, then becomes the sole determinant of Karma. In its inner staticity, plumbing the depths and reaching to the heights in a single self-gathered movement of supreme absorption and at the very instant bursting into an aurora of ideal creation illumining the farthest limits of conceptual extension, it is a representative of the Samkhya poise of *Buddhi* described earlier; and its dynamic counterpart is the force (*bala*) which is intrinsic in forms of consciousness, and which creates or real-izes the Ideal. As such, it is the supreme Art (*kaushalam*) of Life,¹⁶ which is itself nothing but an expression of 'the multipotent creative urge (*visarga*) of the Supreme.'

And far-reaching are the implications of this Yoga poise in practical life, in as much as it is a force of liberation bursting asunder all bondages—the bondage of *karma* as well as the bondage of *janma*.¹⁷ Karma binds, or in other words, it arrests the progress of spiritual evolution in man, when it does not follow the 'straight movement' (*rijuniti* or *adhvara-gati* of the *Vedas*) induced by the Law of Sacrifice:¹⁸ it either, for want of vision, starts a circular movement of mechanical existence, or egged on by a vital urge of 'scant illumination' describes a horizontal spiral of sharp ups and downs; its limitations become apparent in all sorts of karmic anomalies (*vikrama*), consisting in a criminal waste of energy due to blunders and detours, a haunting sense of

¹² *Gita* II. 49. This *avara karma*, even when it is dignified by the name of *yajna*, is denounced in the *Upanishad* too (*Mundaka* 1.2.vii), where it is said that though there is a Truth in 'mantra-inspired karma' (I.2.i) pointing to a sun-lit path leading to the One (I.2.v), yet men miss its significance by their blinding attachment and their dogmatic refusal to look beyond (1.2.viii-ix).

¹³ *Gita* IV.7-9.

¹⁴ *Gita* XI. 33.

¹⁵ *Gita* II.49.

¹⁶ *Gita* II.50.

¹⁷ *Gita* II.39,51.

¹⁸ *Gita* III.9.

frustration and a mass of confused thinking resulting from a clash of imperfectly conceived ideologies.¹⁹ And if these qualitative limitations are given an unlimited lease of temporal duration in the individual being by the very possibility of an imperishableness of its spiritual core, then birth itself becomes a form of bondage perpetuating in its succession the ills (*amaya*) following in the wake of an unregenerate karmic impulsion. But *yoga-buddhi*, taking its stand on the immutable essentiality of Being, and acting, not with the blind tenacity of a limited vision willing the effectuation of an egoistic motive, but from a spontaneity born of an impinging of the Powers of the Vast realizing through the instrumentation of a universal individuality the undistorted scheme of its seer-will, divinizes Karma and divinizes birth,—because it has known and imbibed the mystery of the Law of Divine Becoming.²⁰ As Karma then becomes to it the conscious rhythm of the creative urge moving in consonance with the cosmic Law of Sacrifice, so *janma* too becomes not an unconscious movement compelled by the lower prakritic forces, but an *willed* stress on the equipotential field of universal life ; and in both there is the consummation of the aim of existence in an assumption of the total nature of God.²¹

XV

The whole significance of *buddhiyoga* has thus been made clear : a vision rises of a calm and illuminating poise beyond the highest flights of mental reason, unperturbed by the dualities of sensation, emotion, and will,—a luminosity of Pure Intelligence in the depths of the being, stabilized in an equable status of comprehensive concentration, in which the spiritual adventure has found its home by a harmonization from a transcendent plane of the apparently conflicting findings of intuitive reason which now Self-light illumines into the

constellation of an integral whole ; and from this supreme poise, of the dynamism of an utter freedom pouring itself into the rhythm of the world-movement, and sustained by the perception of an immutable essentiality of things, creating from the raw activities of life a veritable piece of art. This is a picture suggested by pure reason, but the question remains : Can it not be made more definite to practical reason ? Are there not some expression, some movement, some explicit indications of the status that may serve the aspirant as helpful guides ?

The answer to this can only be found in a psychological analysis of the different stages starting from the normal consciousness and leading up to the high ideal envisaged. A course of action for the neophyte can come later on after he has got a clear mental picture of the path to be covered and thoroughly assimilated the inner meaning of the whole venture. An ideal portrayal of a *sthita-prajna* in whom *buddhiyoga* has achieved its end, can thus be made,—contrasting its poise to the movements of the normal consciousness to which these contrasts become pointers of the desired goal to be attained by a method of Katharsis or cult of negation. The scheme can be arranged logically for the purpose of a better comprehension, though in actual practice logical order is not always an indispensable necessity.

The crux of the matter of course lies in purging the mind of Desires (*Kama*)²²—those turbid impetuosities of the emotion and the will—which are but confused and tortuous expressions of Life's quest for self-delight—and training it by an introspective analysis

²² *Gita* II.55. The *Gita* speaks of three planes of Desire, the plane of sense-vitals, of mind and of *buddhi* (III.40). The intermediate plane of mind is here put first disregarding the logical order from considerations of practical necessity, since it best suits the aspirant to take up a middle position from which he can look above and have a better control of the lower forces. This is of course in accordance with the time-honoured practice of 'following the middle path.'

¹⁹ Cp *Gita* IV.17 ; II.40,52-53.

²⁰ Cp. *Gita* IV.6,9.

²¹ Cp. *Gita* IV.10,

and introvert movement to turn more and more to the things of the Spirit, and at last be poised in that status of Delight where the Self is both its substratum and instrumentation.²³ In normal being, 'where the apertures of senses have been bored outwards by one's self-being and so one looks away from and not into one's soul',²⁴ the function of the sense-vitals (*indriya*) is to contact and manipulate the objective world in a groping, toddling and hesitant manner. It is as yet Nature's first experiments with life in which vital energism has not yet attained to the determinateness of a secure aim, and mind, the first synthesizing principle above the threshold of consciousness, is not yet the

²³ *Gita* II.55. From Desire to Self-delight (*atmatushti*) the stages passed by the Soul have their counterparts in the stages of normal consciousness in awakening, dream, and sleep. If we take awakening as the standard for measuring consciousness, then in Desire we awaken to a world dominated by sensations, where Ideas, though they form the most powerful instrumentation for all kinds of progress, are nevertheless not there in their own rights; in Dream, we begin to awake to a world of Ideas, which is still dominated by the crudities of sensations, but where the stuff of consciousness can be so processed as to reflect the world of Pure Ideas; in sleep we awake to the plane variously called as the Matrix, the Cause, the Unmanifest—its psych counterpart being called Bliss. In our normal being rooted in sensation, there appears a gradual lessening of the stress of consciousness as we follow the inward track. But the reverse also can be the case. Attention is consciousness, says normal psychology; but then it is attention extrovert. What if it is attention introvert? With full awakening we shall then trace back the path which normal consciousness has mechanically trod before and pass on, as the Vedic seer has said, 'from Light to higher Light and on to the highest Light.' The reality of mystic experience is thus grounded in a process of normal consciousness to which sensationalism so fervently clings, and it is in its reprocessing that the secret of rational mysticism lies. The *Upanishads*, in numerous places, speak of the Dream and the Sleep state, whose mystical significance is often ignored and they are freely equated with states of normal consciousness. In fact, it is one of the major discoveries of the science of mysticism that India has made in the past and which has been one of the basic factors in her investigations in supernormal psychology. (Cp. *Yogasutra* I.38).

²⁴ *Kathopanishad* II.1.1.

master but is compelled to give a mechanical assent (*anuvadhana*) to the demands of the sense-vitals.²⁵ Life adds its flavour (*rasa*) to the whole and colours the habitual associations with a deep tinge of sensuous attachment answering to some secret purpose of Nature's evolutionary endeavour and on a higher level of being reinforced by mental energism, it bursts forth into the strong flame of Desire. The movement is still confused and the issues are not yet clear—even though the emerging ego-sense attempts to canalize energies and bring about a more compact synthesis,—since it is as yet the vital that rules the day. The results are obvious: in Life's grapple with the forces of objective realities, the inner structure is thrown into an imbalance by heterogeneous forces of a psycho-pathological character. Life in Mind is not so healthy as Life in Matter, since Nature's experimentation here are not yet complete and the adjustments are still a patchwork affair; even for the mentally-wise, it is an impossible task to curb the overbearing impetus of unregenerate vitalism which will carry away the deliberating mind along its own reckless rush.²⁶ A higher principle above the sense-dominated mind and ego—a principle large and deep enough to put the individual in right relations with the universe—must then be found that will harmonize the warring elements of the being and open up a new vista of the greater beyond.

According to a logical scheme, *sadhana*, of course, should begin with the practice of control over the sense-vitals. But, in order that the cult of intelligent control (*samyama*) does not degenerate into a cult of senseless repression (*karshana*), the poise must be taken, as has already been remarked, at least on the mental plane, where it is possible to tap the subtler powers of the psyche for a rationalization of the whole process. What is aimed at is a complete control over the sense-

²⁵ *Gita* II.67.

²⁶ *Gita* II.56,57,60.

vitals,²⁷ not simply by a mechanical cutting off of the objects from the field of consciousness, which after all will leave Life's zest for things untransmuted and only thrust it into the background of the mind,²⁸ but by letting in the power and light of a higher principle—either by opening oneself up to the Illumination of the depth or by entering into a communion with a supreme Personality,²⁹ which will mean a re-orientation of the aesthetics of the life-urge and its final absorption into the Self-delight of the Pure Being.³⁰

But this does not suggest a repudiation of the cult of negation which certainly is a most powerful means of attaining to the status of *nityasattva*, whence an enlightened and effective manipulation of prakritic forces is possible. The urge there will be in some souls to overstep the bounds, and as Jaigisharya says, 'to enter by a supreme concentration into the ineffability of Quiescence.'³¹ Of course it is idle to speculate what exact measure the momentum of spiritual urge should or would take once it has crossed the threshold of normal consciousness; but there is no gainsaying the fact that in an adventure into the Beyond, the Soul must be strung to the highest key and there must be a readiness to plunge into the abyss of Immortal Death without any mental reservation whatsoever. At the stage of reconnoitring the whole position, a predilection for Non-return may be censured as a mental bias and falling short of the ideal of integral realization; but its

²⁷ *Gita* II.61.

²⁸ *Gita* II.59; III.6.

²⁹ *Gita* II.61: *yukta asita matparah*. This is the first and apparently a casual mention of the Divinity as the aim of existence. Though a complete surrender to the Supreme Purusha is the goal towards which the evolution of *jivaprakriti* is moving, yet the emphasis is still on the principle of *buddhi* to enable the individual to attain to its full stature before a true surrender and the consequent attainment of *divyabhava* is possible.

³⁰ *Gita* II.59.

³¹ Quoted with approbation by the scholiast on *Yogasutra* II.55, where several other views are also discussed.

possibility, and even a sort of courting it in a spirit of calm nonchalance, can by no way be ruled out, since it will be initiated not by any mental predilection but by a pull of the Divine Will. So the ideal of Jaigishavya finds an echo in the *Gita* too in its simile of 'a tortoise drawing in its limbs into the shell';³² it guarantees 'an utmost control over the sense-vitals', as Patanjali would say;³³ in a poet's imagery, it is carrying the spirit of Death into the spring-tide of Life as the seal of Immortality. It is, as Patanjali's psychology explains, 'a complete detachment of the sense-vitals from their objects and *their simulation of the self-form of the originating consciousness*.'³⁴ Yet it may not abrogate the most intense life-activity; rather it will be there as the potency of Silence vibrating into the Word, the Void of Varuna irradiating into a multiform splendour by its divine Maya. To the mental reason it is a paradox; but this paradox is resolved as the Soul rises to the rarefied heights of Pure Intelligence where the artiste's poise on the Razor's Edge becomes a palpable fact of spiritual experience.³⁵

The extreme tension of *pratyahara* thus marks the inner poise whose potency spontaneously translates itself into that lucent transparency of the Soul-substance (*prasada*), which forms the very stuff of an integral experience rendered ineffable by the interpenetrating mutuality of subjective and objective existences (*samarasya*). The projection thus initiated is not the result of any blind vital urge, but just an opalescent irradiation of an inner Light. The movement of the sense-vitals now follows the rhythm of an inner law and is no longer swayed by the dualities of attraction and repulsion, since the constrictions of the ego-sense are absent there

³² *Gita* II.58.

³³ *Yogasutra* II. 55.

³⁴ *Yogasutra* II.56. This explains why and how *raso'pyasya param drishtva nivartate* (*Gita* II.59).

³⁵ It is well known how the simile of the tortoise, with all its implications of integral realization, came true in Sri Ramakrishna's life.

and the whole being has joyfully submitted to the guidance of a palpable Presence over-canopying it and charging its every grain with the secret sense of its seer-will.³⁶ The very characteristic of this *prasada* is a wide and deep sympathy capable of attuning itself with the self of things so that a true understanding of their workings secures for the illumined Intelligence a steady poise above the turbulent flow of life. And yet it is not a status of indifference keeping aloof from all life-contacts; but since it is in communion (*yuktah*) with the Integral Reality and has drunk deep at the fountain of the Void, (otherwise the Illumination consequent upon it will not have the certainty of an absolute manifestation) it has also been infused with the subtle potency of an ideational creativity (*bhavana*)—an inner movement initiated by the very contact of things, which probes into the depths of the Being and in lightning flashes goes on discovering to the inner vision the mysteries of the Ideal-Real which constitute the soul of the objective realities, till in a supreme gravitation towards the inmost core of existence, it is gathered and poised in the unfathomable peace and ineffable bliss of the Immutable.³⁷ And the force of vision is an act of creation in a double sense: subjectively, it brings about a supreme transformation of experiential values in the empirical Self, changing it, as the vedic seers would say, into a *madhvada* or *pippalada* for whom the chequered pattern of existence has but the unique meaning of an undying Beauty or unalloyed Bliss; while objectively, by soul-contacts it will release by the impact of its seer-will the dormant potentialities of a realizable Idea in a being.³⁸

³⁶ *Gita* II.64.

³⁷ *Gita* II.66.

³⁸ The former is specifically the *bhavana* of Jiva, his inward movement towards self-poise, and the latter is the *bhavana* of Shiva, the *bhutatma bhutabhavana* of the *Gita*, in which is expressed his effective dynamism of spiritual metamorphosis. In the realized soul as *Guru*, the two combine and their combined activity becomes most apparent in soul-contacts as Grace or transmission of Power.

With the onrush of the sense-vitals gathered in and the consequent dawning of a golden light bathing the whole being in an unruffled peace, there blossoms a simple joy when the assertive and the possessive clamours of the ego have been hushed into the quiescence of an all-pervading Void; and with a keen feeling of the subtle thrill of an inner dynamism imperceptibly projecting itself into the outer world, the self-poised Soul of a Yogi lives ever-wakeful in a world of undimmed illumination whose mystery descends as a pall of Night on the eyes of mundane beings, although through their nightmare existence the steadfast gaze of the silent Seer (*pashyan munih*) penetrates into the vision of a limitless Beyond.³⁹ His soul is like unto a vast ocean of Light serene and imperturbable in its ineffable self-poise, wherein shimmering dreams of Life's desires rising from the luminous depths of a far-off cosmic mist seem to float on, bubble and blissfully melt away into the profundity of a nameless Peace. No chasing of the phantoms of Desire, no clamour for possessive rights, no tyrannous self-assertion of purblind egotism—the Yogi moves along the path of Life poised in an inner calm which 'silently brings the glad message of a new spring to souls of men.'

Such is the brahmic status, the status of supreme all-pervading integral consciousness to which the cult of Buddhi-yoga leads, securing for the soul an inextinguishable Illumination which never allows one's footsteps falter on the walk of life and in its final movement crowns Life's endeavour with the supreme achievement of the Light of the deathless Void.⁴⁰

XVI

And so we come to our journey's end. The cult of Buddhi-yoga as we have seen, provides us with that rational procedure of self-exceeding which forms the keynote of all human aspirations, whether they point to above or to

³⁹ *Gita* II. 69.

⁴⁰ *Gita* II.72.

below. Its rationale is to be found in the logical scheme of Samkhyan principles, where (*buddhi*), which forms the core of his occupies a peculiar position which marks the farthest limit to which the concept of an upward march of evolutionary Nature can rise. Man takes his stand on the threshold of those synthesizing principles enumerated under the last pentad of Samkhyan categories, wherein a gradual deepening and organizing of the principle of consciousness becomes notably apparent. Below him are the world of concrete and abstract objective reals of materialized entities, and the world of affected and effective sense-vitals dominated by the vital urge; characteristically in him are the principles of Mind and Ego, imperfectly illumined by the principle of Intelligence (*buddhi*), which forms the core of his Personality and shines with the distant promise of a universalized individuality; and above him, overtopping the highest flights of his Pure Intelligence are the infinitudes of the Unmanifest and the Ineffable. What he can hope and attain to by a comprehensively rational manipulation of the forces of his being is to be poised in that Illumination which forms a connecting link between his worlds of the Real and the Ideal. Obviously what he must exceed are the blind lure of Matter born of mechanical association, the turbulent surging of the vital defeating its own purpose by a lack of illumination, the vacillations of the mental pulled in different ways by imperfectly organized forces of his nature, and the insistent demand of his ego bent on realizing the Ideal of its circumscribed vision. The first emphasis is always on the individual who must penetrate into the depths of his own being before he can hope to have a glimpse of the secrets of the world-being or an intuition of the Pure Being whose Void sets the stage for the drama of the world and the soul. The psychological method for this self-finding is in the cult of comprehensive concentration (*samadhi*) inaugurated by the discipline of *titiksha* and *samatva* and supported by an

inalienable sense of the all-pervading essentiality of Being which deepens into the status of brahmic consciousness integrating all movements of Life into a rhythmic expression of the Divine Will. It is an adventure beyond the mind and all its formulations, a diffusion of the ego-structure into the living sense of a universality, a suffusion by the Great Illumination (*mahas*) which commands at once the depth, the width, and the height of the potentialities of the Being in its triple status of the Soul, the World, and the Absolute.

But the question still remains: Is not Buddhi-yoga a supremely idealistic venture? Are its implications compatible with the actual workings of the grim forces of Nature (*ghora karma*), with the blood-bespotted realism of a battlefield? Religiosity seeks either to ignore the question or to tone down the rigour of its demands; intellectualism dismisses it with a smile of incredulity, and regards the whole settings of the Sermon as an ill-grafted foisting of over-zealous sectarianism. And this is not to be wondered at: Illumination and Action become incompatible when we artificially divide the total life-activities of man into spiritual and secular; but this is certainly against the true spirit of Indian culture. From times immemorial India has been seeking to harmonize into an integral experience the apparently diverse ideals of *brahma* and *kshatra*, of *samkhya* and *yoga*, of *mokshadharma* and *rajadharma*, or speaking in terms of mystical philosophy, of *akasha* and *prana*, of Spirit and Life. And with a true intuition, she has sought to make Spirit the guide of Life, since it is in Spirit in its widest sense that Life has its chance of progression and fulfilment. Even when as a realist we imagine 'thinking to some purpose' to be the directive of life-activities, we make thereby a concession to Spirit, since purposeful thinking cannot be really and ultimately fruitful unless there is an element of universalization in it; and this will of course mean a prelude to spiritualization. So, by laying an emphasis

on Spirit, what India aimed at was a direct hit on the solution of the problem of Life. She never denied the rights of economics (*varta*) and politics (*danda*) being considered as permanent factors of life; but she equally insisted upon rational thinking (*anvikshiki*) culminating in spiritual realization (*trayi*) also being regarded as things of everlasting value. Today the same eternal problem stares us in the face: As Life's clamours and demands have been growing bewildering, we are living under the persistent shadow of a Kurukshetra; and the old trick of escapism will not avail. What are we to do? That the

clumsy manipulations of *varta* and *danda* which have precipitated two world-wars will not save us, is crystal-clear. Is it not then high time that we look up to some greater source of illumination, not in a spirit of easy acquiescence but with the determined vigour of a hero who will see things for himself? 'Buddhau sharanam anvichcha—seek your refuge in *Buddhi*, the Illumination of the Beyond', rings the commandment of the Lord down the passage of time; and perhaps mankind has never been more in need of it than today.

(Concluded)

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

BY NRIPENDRA NATH SEN

To the educationist religion presents almost an insoluble enigma owing to a disappointing abundance of conflicting views about it. Total eradication of religion from society, and therefore from education, is advocated by those who find it to be merely a mass of dogmas and superstitions, of pre-scientific or pre-logical world-views, which have been constantly thwarting the onward movement of civilization and paralyzing the free activities of mankind by the spirit of docility and fatalism which are its invariable concomitants. To perpetuate religion in society, through its incorporation in education, says the antagonist of religion, would be tantamount to committing an egregious folly and a flagrant blunder. While others who advocate the inclusion of religion in education, find in the very depth of it an incentive for and an assurance of the educational aim and process. Religion to them is the highest consummation of all efforts that are characteristically human; and so an educational theory has to give weighty and sober consideration to it. The frequent lapses

of civilization into highly organized and 'legal' barbarisms, adds the protagonist of religion, result from the priority given to narrow nationalism. Religious sectarianism has been replaced by aggressive nationalism, but with no better result, perhaps even worse. There are yet others, who recognize the value of religion in upholding, together with other factors, a primitive social unit. But modern society, they add, has outgrown the need of religion with the discovery of the rational bonds of union, and hence there is no need of imparting it to the educant, and even if it be deemed necessary, the unscientific and undemocratic forms and aspects attending it must be eliminated.

There are still other views about religion, which show every variation from unmeasured devotion, through either stupid indifference or due deliberation, to bitter ridicule and downright contempt. The view which we are going to set forth in this paper is that it is only Religion, understood in its proper sense, which can furnish us with the highest educational aim,

and that the main tendencies of educational philosophy of the modern era fail to provide a satisfactory and sound basis of education.

AIM OF EDUCATION :

ITS RELATION TO PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

The ultimate aim of education depends on the interpretation we give to life. The ideal of life as a whole presupposes a consistent philosophy of life, dealing with its 'whence and why' and 'whither and how', its relation to the whole universe. Hence it seems that the determination of the educational ideal belongs ultimately to the domain of philosophy and religion. As a matter of fact philosophy may be regarded as the theoretical aspect of education. The vital connection of philosophy and education, though many fail to appreciate it, has never been overlooked by eminent educationists. The great philosophers have been the great educationists. But unfortunately there is such an overwhelming number of systems of philosophy that we may be easily led to think that since the ideals of life, as formulated by them, are eternally at variance, their conflict may be reflected in educational theories, and we may further conclude that there cannot be any universal aim of education. To overcome this difficulty, we should not, however, relinquish philosophy, but should seek a sounder and more adequate philosophy; and in case our attempts fail, we should seek the help of religion, which, if properly understood from the point of view of the new socio-cultural setting, will settle many academic quibbles and pseudo-problems of philosophy.

EDUCATIONAL AIM ACCORDING TO PRESENT PHILOSOPHICAL TENDENCIES

Broadly speaking, the main philosophical tendencies of today may be classified in three groups, Mechanistic, Pragmatic, and Idealistic, in accordance with the three typical views of life they represent.

The mechanistic view regards the

mechanical categories which natural science employs in comprehending the physical universe as fundamental and as adequate to explain life and consciousness, and, therefore, it leaves absolutely no provision for a mental or a spiritual principle in man. Life is nothing but an accidental product, or an 'emergent' ushered into existence from material collocations by Nature (which is not a whit more than a system in space and time bound by causality). Consciousness is explained away as the epiphenomenon of the bodily processes. Mechanism, understood in this way has clearly little to contribute to education. Education is distinctly a human process, and if humanity loses all meaning and content in the 'clutches of the inhuman doctrine' of mechanism, education becomes meaningless. If there be no freedom of will, and the so-called 'will' of man be an illusion which results from a by-the-way constellation of material factors, if man be completely immersed in the physico-chemical processes, where the law of causality has a paramount sway, education cannot have any meaning. It is Nature, dead and insentient, yet powerful and uncompromising, that would determine, absolutely and singly, the destiny of man and his education. So we find that mechanism in itself is totally unsuitable to our educative endeavour.

The pragmatic tendency which is greatly influenced by the evolutionary doctrine accepts 'the categories of life as fundamental'. The pragmatist views man as a dynamical creature, which interacts with a plastic and pliable environment. Whereas the mechanist with his mechanical concepts regards the environment as rigid, and all changes in the organism as the outcome of environmental influences, the pragmatist conceives the environment as changeable and formable by the organism while it is reacting to it. And so, from the pragmatic point of view education has a meaning, which in the broadest sense implies a life-building process, whereby the educant learns how to adapt himself effectively to the environment by changing it for his

purpose. But any ultimate aim or ideal of education is inconsistent with the general pragmatic position which repudiates vehemently all philosophies which talk about the Absolute, changeless immutable reality, truth, and values. Time is real, change is the universal law, so that values and truths always change as the interests and purposes change. Education from the pragmatic point of view does not mean inculcation of abstract and time-honoured principles, whereby a man is able to contemplate the deepest mysteries of life, but that which helps him to maintain himself in the stark struggle for existence.

If the mechanist holds that man is a product of matter, the pragmatist regards him as an animal endowed with intelligence and æsthetic feeling, which have value inasmuch as they are serviceable in life, here and now. But the pragmatist, by making all speculative endeavours and dispassionate enquiries, like science and religious quests, subservient to practical utility, draws an arbitrary limitation of human nature, and hence fails, if he consistently follows his doctrine, to justify education of the higher faculties of man, exclusively on their own intrinsic merit apart from practical serviceability.

It is idealism which seeks to do justice to the higher faculties of man. In the broadest sense idealism means acceptance of a mental or ideal or spiritual principle as fundamental, the apparently self-sufficient and independent Nature being its manifestation. Reality is out and out spiritual. Education is precisely the process which takes away hindrances in the path of the educant to realize his true self. The ultimate ideal of education is the self-conscious free individual. Civilized human society or the cultural environment is the evidence of the effort of humanity for self-realization. Education aims at preparing the educant for participating in the cultural environment. A man, in order to be truly and characteristically human, must enter into this heritage.

But though idealism gives the educant

ample scope of unfolding distinctively human potentialities, yet philosophical idealism suffers from a grave demerit. It lacks an experiential basis, so that it can neither meet adequately the frequent charge levelled against it, namely, 'it is *a priori*', 'good imagination', nor can it controvert the everyday or realistic intuitions, such as, 'Nature is independent of us', 'Matter is real,' 'Time is real' etc.

Thus we find that no philosophical system can provide an adequate and permanent basis of education, though each system has something to contribute to a comprehensive theory of education. Now the question is whether religion can mend the errors of the philosophical systems and thus provide a sounder basis of education. The answer depends on whether or not religion can, firstly, establish its need (to satisfy pragmatists), secondly, stand successfully against rational criticism (to satisfy intellectualists), thirdly, evaluate science (to satisfy scientists), fourthly, become democratic (to satisfy humanists and democrats). We shall separately but briefly dwell on these problems.

NEED OF RELIGION

The necessity of religion lies in human nature. 'Religious thought is in man's very constitution,' observes Swami Vivekananda, 'so much so that it is impossible for him to give up religion until he can give up his mind and body, until he can give up thought and life. As long as man thinks, this struggle must go on, and so long man must have a religion.' But what is this struggle more precisely? When the biological man fighting a stark struggle for existence feels a little better off and manages to look round and beyond, he emerges as the reasoning and the speculating man confronted with the enigma of his own existence. Why must man put up a struggle for existence, or adapt himself to the environment or cultivate virtues such as goodness, courage etc., when he knows that the bright hopes and aspirations he has cherished day by day, the mighty culture which he has built

up so assiduously, are all destined to be buried in the vast debris of death? It is this problem which religion seeks to solve, and it is this struggle of the enquiring man, which religion promises to crown with success. Hence, it should be the ultimate aim of education to stimulate the educants to ask sincerely the meaning of life, even if the educator be himself not in a position to answer the question. Animals do not ask this question, but men ask. And hence, the question is distinctively human. This question, so characteristically human, should not be suppressed by education on the plea of practical utility.

RELIGION AND REASON

But even if the vital need of religion be conceded, it has to stand and maintain itself against the onslaughts of reason. Man reasons, and therefore he is man. It cannot be given up or bypassed by simply saying that religion belongs to a super-sensuous plane, or is a matter of sincere belief of the resigned spirit. But the alternative, i.e. exclusive reliance on reason, brings home the realization of its limitation. Systems of philosophy that took reason as their sole guide found themselves in a hopeless maze of antinomies. Reason is not enough. It has got to be supplemented by immediate experience or intuition or inspiration. But how are we to know that an inspiration in question is not an hallucination or delusion, a chaotic rumbling of the brain cells, or simply fraud and hypocrisy? Two tests may be applied. Firstly, inspiration must not contradict reason, because it is a development of it. And secondly, inspiration must be perfectly unselfish and universally good. In a nutshell, a true religion, while it must be based on the bed-rock of inspiration, should conform to the established canons of logic and to the democratic criterion of universal welfare.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religion in its purest form, as it is taught by the great prophets, represents man's attempt

to conquer his inner nature, which in its naive form is a medley of inconsistent desires and wishes, of thoughtless actions and passions. Religion represents the will of man to follow consistently a path without being led astray by random passions. And science, in its purest form, is an attempt to know external nature by minutest analysis and to conquer it by mechanical devices. Though some scientists and their over-zealous followers make too much of their abilities and give themselves airs, yet science has nothing to do with the conquering of the inner man. It would be useless to have control over external nature, when man is a slave to his own nature. To accord science a supreme and absolute status would be tantamount to a consummate nonsense in view of its limitations, antinomies as revealed by modern scientists themselves, and also in view of the havoc which it has wrought in the last wars. Hence, science should go with religion, cheek by jowl. Since the meaning of life belongs to the sphere of religion, science must be made subservient to it. The synthesis of religion and science will also be beneficial to religion, for the danger of its degeneration into dogmatism and fanaticism will vanish.

RELIGION AND HUMANISM

It is true that institutional religion has hitherto given scant consideration and betrayed 'virtuous contempt' for the wails and woes of the underdogs of society in which they have been perennially submerged. It is true that priests had often played the men false, rode rough-shod over their 'carnal desires', and talked in words hardly comprehensible to them. But we have to remember that the great prophets were invariably the champions of common men. They recognized the inherent equality of men more than anyone else. The difference between modern democracy and the ancient is that while the former is economic, the latter is spiritualistic. We have yet to see whether economic democracy is itself a sufficient stimulus for progress and has a

promise of stability ; for, the spiritual hunger of men cannot be satisfied by economic projects and equitable monetary distribution. A democratic society must be based on religion, which alone can give a meaning to our effort. The equality and brotherhood

of men must be something more than economic contraction. Hence, education which aims at making pupils active participants in a democratic state must be re-evaluated from the standpoint of religion.

SANSKRIT DEVOTIONAL SONGS

BY DR K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

The glory of India's past which inspires us even to this day, the achievements of the ancients which have made even those that came to scoff at us remain to pray, should be sought primarily, of course, in the realm of religion and philosophy. But one of the popular notions is that religion or philosophy in India was the concern only of a few and that the people at large were never serious about them. The highly abstruse and technical treatises on the various systems of philosophy may no doubt incline one to such a view at first sight. But it does not bear any serious examination, for the great religious teachers of India were not only expert dialecticians and philosophers, but at the same time were also advanced souls striving for the uplift of humanity as a whole. In serious philosophical discourses they no doubt exhibited the heights of intellectual analysis to which they could rise, but in their numberless devotional songs, meant for the ordinary run of men, they exhibited not only a fullness of religious fervour and feeling, but a simplicity and sweetness of language so appealing as to carry conviction and solace to the mind of even a most confirmed sceptic.

A neglect of this vast branch of Sanskrit literature has also been responsible for many other loose criticisms. More often than not, Sanskrit poetry is equated with erotic extravagance, and even the greatest of poets,

like Kalidasa, have been popularly looked upon as libertines who cater to the baser instincts of humanity. Nothing can be farther from the truth. It is true that they were poetically alive to the most important emotional requirements of man, but it does not follow that they were out to vulgarize or corrupt them. The great Sanskrit poets always treated love as something profound, as something partaking of a divine aspect, but never as profane and clandestine.

A more serious charge, however, levelled against the bulk of Sanskrit poetry by reputed scholars is that it is artificial to a degree, blindly conforming to fixed and lifeless categories of rhetoric, so much so that the spirit of poetry itself evaporates in the mad craze for conceits, and we have only a *tour de force*, pedantic and repulsive. It is nothing surprising in an age which makes a god of simplicity and unadorned purity in the realm of poetry, which adopts the average intelligence of the common man as its touchstone, and which believes in a natural idiom of poetry, not amenable to any given set of principles, to find critics who talk lightly of all that is classical. No writer on Sanskrit poetics has committed the mistake of believing that the values to be sought in poetry are purely objective, to the exclusion of subjective considerations. The ancients never belittled the importance of genius in relation to poetry.

All the theorists are unanimous on the point that poetry owes its birth and its appeal only to imagination admitting of flashes of intuition. It is only after having established this conclusion in regard to the poet as well as the critic that they set out to explain the objective elements of poetry after the manner of Science. The poets, too, in practice, did bear these considerations in mind, and so long as poetry did not become a handmaid to flattery of kings, the poets did show genuine emotion and brilliant flashes of imagination. If the very richness and splendour of the Sanskrit language repel us today, for lack of sufficient interest in mastering its idiom, the fault cannot lie with the poets. No other language has been exploited by poets to so much profit, whether in colourful imagery or in verbal variety to denote subtle shades of differences, or in word-music. Indeed, it does demand years of careful and patient study on the part of the critic before he can appreciate these; but no one who has not undergone such a rigorous education is qualified to pass adverse judgements over the masterpieces of Sanskrit literature.

II

Even a casual perusal of the devotional songs in Sanskrit serves as a corrective against such and other mistakes that we usually commit when we think of Sanskrit poetry. For, unlike the philosophical literature which is addressed primarily to thinkers, these songs are meant for the uplift of the common man; and again, unlike pure didactic treatises, they impress one by their sincerity and genuineness of feeling; and what is more, unlike the *mahakavyas* they are so simple, direct, and transparent in their diction as well as content as to find a ready echo in the hearts of one and all. Nor should we think that these negative virtues exhaust their significance; for their positive value is boundless. If the true purpose of education consist not merely in injecting some amount of knowledge into an otherwise empty brain, but in the shaping of

life itself by forming right habits of mind and inculcating right attitudes, then whatever serves best in achieving these ends should be accorded the first and foremost importance. Thus liberal education always thinks of the humanities first, and even so the highest results are got only when the pupil's mind is given the strong and unshakable foundation of an ethical and religious faith. Men's instincts being what they are, they can never be refined or sublimated without the chastening aid of religion. Religion, here, should not be taken to mean sectarianism which is blind. In our traditional modes of study and in our traditional scheme of *varnashrama dharma* one always finds a happy and harmonious blending of a robust faith in the grace of Almighty God with other mundane matters. All the affairs of man, economic, biological, or spiritual, were ordered in view of this faith. And these elementary truths common to all religions were inculcated in the masses throughout the centuries by popular stories and myths. Now that our minds are averse to believe in them, the necessity arises for modelling our lives on a surer foundation than that of scepticism, and herein the value of the Sanskrit devotional songs is indeed inestimable.

III

To give a full picture of the scope of devotional literature in Sanskrit is well nigh impossible in such a short sketch as this. The devotional songs traditionally go by the name of *stotras*, and their number exceeds a thousand. We have *stotras* not only of professional poets like Kalidasa, Bana, Mayura, and Jayadeva, but of literary critics like Anandavardhana and Jagannatha; of great saints like Shankaracharya, Abhinavagupta, and Vallabhacharya; of kings like Kulashekara and Bhoja; and of sectarian leaders like Vedantadeshika and Appayyadikshita, not to speak of a hundred and one unknown spiritual seekers and devotees. In addition to these, we have our repositories of ancient knowledge, the *Puranas*, which

contain whole cantos of *stotras* addressed to different gods. Thus one is struck by the sheer extent of this class of poetry in Sanskrit. It is certainly one of the most fertile fields of Sanskrit literature, and it has given rich harvest of some of the best pieces in Sanskrit, which are memorable for all time.

Tradition ascribes magical efficacy to these *stotras* very categorically. Many of the *stotras* contain as an appendix verses known as *phala-shruti*. One can attain fame, health, wealth, and happiness, overcome diseases, and be blessed in matrimony and with sons in this world, not to mention eternal bliss in a life after death. Such categorical statements should not be interpreted too literally. They are only intended to hold out a bait for even those who would otherwise never think of God or religion. Once they become God-minded there is no fear of their losing faith, even if they fail to realize these material ends, because true religious experience always involves an intrinsic value. It becomes valuable for its own sake in the later stages of a man's Godward quest, though the ulterior motives may play a prominent part in the initial stages. But at the same time tradition provides us with so many historical instances wherein the high efficacy of *stotra* is illustrated strikingly. Whether or not we should place any credence in them is a matter for individual tastes and temperaments. Thus we have the story of Mayura who got himself cured of deadly leprosy by means of his *Suryashataka*, a hundred verses addressed to the Sun. We are told of a dumb man (*muka*) who was turned into a gifted poet by the grace of Kamakshi Devi, in whose praise he sang five hundred verses (*Panchashati*). It is also said that the great Shankaracharya got back his hands burnt to ashes in fire by the grace of Narasimha, who was propitiated by the *Karavalambana stotra*.

IV

We may give one or two specimens of these devotional songs before concluding. Shankara-

charya bursts out in praise of the Divine Mother's infinite mercy in the verse given below :

*Jaganmatarmatastava charanaseva na
rachita
Na va dattam devi dravinamapi
bhuyastava maya ;
Tathapi tvam sneham mayi nirupamam
yatprakurushe
Kuputro jayeta kvachidapi kumata na
bhavati.*

'O Mother, Mother of the Universe, I have not worshipped at Thy holy feet ; nor have I given away huge sums for Thy sake ; still Thy love for me is incomparable. Indeed, a son may prove bad, but a mother never.'

In the following he is seen imploring for the helping hand of Lord Narasimha, bewildered as he is by the buffets of ill-luck and ignorance :

*Andhasya me hritavivekamahadhanasya
Chauraih prabho balibhirindriyanama-
bhagbhik ;
Mohandhakupakuhare vinipatitasya
Lakshmi-nrisimha mama dehi karavalam-
bam.*

'Blinded am I and robbed of my treasure by powerful thieves posing as my senses ; I have been hurled into dizzy depths of the unlit chasm of ignorance. O Lord Narasimha ! I beseech Thee to extend unto me Thy helping hand.'

The hollow and evanescent nature of worldly ends is vividly brought out in these lines :

*Ayurnashyati pashyatam pratidinam
yati kshayam yauvanam
Pratyayanli gatah punarna divasah kalo
-jagadbhakshakah ;
Lakshmistoyatarangabhangachapala vi-
dyuchchalam jivitam
Tasmanmam sharanagatam sharanada
tvam raksha rakshadhuna.*

'Life ebbs away and youth decays, while we remain impotent spectators. Days once gone never come back, and Time is the Devour-

er of the world. Wealth is fickle like a bursting wave, and life is fleeting like a flash of lightning. Hence, O Lord, save me who has taken refuge in Thee !'

The bliss of devotion itself is characterized as the *summum bonum* in the following verse of Kulashekara :

*Nashta dharme na vasunichaye naiva
kamopabhoge
Yadbhavyam tadbhavatu bhagavan
purvakarmanurupam ;
Etatprarthyam mama bahumatam
janmajanmantarepi
Tvatpadambhoruhayugagata nischala
bhaktirastu.*

'To *dharma* I do not aspire, nor covet any wealth ; no craze I have for pleasures of the flesh. O Lord, my predestined lot pains me not ; and gladly would I suffer my *karma's*

decrees. But one boon I entreat of Thee, O God ! In my next and all the future births, let not my devotion to Thy lotus-feet flinch or diminish a whit.'

We may conclude with the poetic fancy of Pushpadanta :

*Asitagirisamam syatkajjalam sindhu-
patre*

*Surataruwarashakha lekhani patramurvi ;
Likhati yadi grihitva Sharada sarvakalam
Tadapi tava gunanamisha param na yati.*

'Even if the ocean be the inkpot and the dark mount the ink ; a *kalpataru* twig be the pen and the whole earth the paper to write upon ; and even if the goddess Saraswati herself should write, and write eternally with these ; even then, O Lord ! Your greatness will remain unexhausted.'

THE LEGACY OF INDIA : SPIRITUAL CONTRIBUTION

BY H. D. BHATTACHARYA

If one were to ask in what way the past civilization of India is to be distinguished from other ancient cultures, one can be at once told that the distinctive feature of Indian civilization is its emphasis upon the spiritual aspect of life. It is indeed true that no civilization has ever lived and thrived without a spiritual basis, for civilization has no meaning without the control of the baser elements of human nature and a considerateness towards the interests and well-being of one's fellow beings. But the welfare of society does not necessarily involve the recognition of human values : it may be sought with the ulterior motive of advancing self-interest, and this personal advancement may be not the progress of the spirit but the increased pleasure of the body. All material civilization has aimed primarily at increasing

creature comforts and followed the path of indulgence (*pravrittimarga*) and not that of abnegation of pleasure (*nivrittimarga*). Ceaseless striving after the attainment of animal satisfaction has served only to whet the appetite without bringing any sense of satiety and spurred men on to greater activity to maintain and improve the standard of living. The crown of wild olive has adorned the brow of the most successful competitor in the struggle for worldly possessions, and nations that have mastered the technique of material conquest and outstripped others in the race for more comfortable living have been acclaimed as the most civilized. The craze for power and material supremacy has brought inevitably in its train wars of conquest, exploitation and subjugation of backward races and mutual conflict among the advanced nations them-

selves, and though it has made men more keen-witted and equipped with better instruments for probing into the mysteries of the material universe, it has not made them more ethical and humane, or prompted them to judge properly the values of things in terms of their spiritual worth. Engrossed in the evanescent and the worldly, material civilization has ever set its face against the eternal and the transcendental.

Against this mode of looking at nature and man, may be set the Indian way of looking at life. Two remarkable utterances—one from the *Upanishad* and the other from the *Bhagavadgita*—practically sum up the Indian assessment of the values of worldly existence. In the famous Yajnavalkya-Maitreyi dialogue of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* occur the significant words, 'Lo, verily, not for love of all is all dear, but for love of the Self all is dear. Lo, verily, it is the Self that should be seen, that should be hearkened to, that should be reflected on and meditated upon, O Maitreyi. Lo, verily, the Self being seen through hearing, reflection and meditation all this world is known.' And the other is from the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavadgita*, where, in the opening verses, we are told that the evanescent world (*ashvattha*) is rooted in God above, and though it branches out in all directions for the embodiment of souls, it can be cut with the sharp weapon of dispassion, and thereby a return to the eternal source can be effected. No wonder the search for the Self should become an overmastering passion with seekers after truth and its destiny an object of profound spiritual interest! Again and again we are told that self-knowledge eclipses all other enlightenments and that the path of spiritual insight (*jnana*) is superior to that of moral action (*karma*). To seek heaven by virtuous deeds is an inferior quest, for heaven (*svarga*) is not an eternal abode but a temporary haven of rest from the troubles of earthly life, which is destined to pass away when merit would be exhausted. The proper objective of spiritual life is salvation

(*apavarga, mukti*) and this can be attained only when we learn the secrets of the Self and cultivate a spirit of detachment towards all worldly happenings.

From an exclusive preoccupation with the intellectualistic apprehension of reality India was partly saved by an early recognition of the diversity of human natures and their spiritual needs. Men get differentiated not only by nature but also by training; and if spiritual advancement could be achieved only in a specific way, then many would be deprived of the opportunity of making spiritual progress. Some do best in a life of action (*karmayoga*), others are devotionally inclined (*bhaktiyoga*), some others are meditative by temperament (*jnana-yoga*)—the way must be suited to the native equipment, or the effort to advance will fail. Bigotry ignores human diversity and insists on soulless repetition of devotional exercises. It not only lays down that God can be realized only in one way, but sees to it that there is no deviation from the prescribed procedure. Polytheism which permitted personal preference in the matter of choosing a deity developed an attitude of toleration towards those who preferred some other object of devotion. When high philosophy belittled the importance of the gods in an ultimate reference, even religious attitude was considered to be inferior to the quest of Brahman, the impersonal principle of all existence. Those who thrust both the gods and the Absolute aside and preached a godless search for the soul could still command an audience, because moral discipline and intense self-analysis were set above religious devotion and intellectual speculation. Jainism and Buddhism extolled moral earnestness and freedom from the trammels of religious belief, while the orthodox creed of the *Upanishads* preached Brahman, and Yoga a colourless *Isvara*; but all agreed that Self-knowledge was essential for salvation. Thus toleration was extended to the heterodox creeds also; and though social intercourse ceased and bitter philosophical disputes sprang

up, the estrangement did not proceed to the length of persecution, or personal violence. It is astonishing to think that in a large country like India religious quarrel and persecution should be so rare. But while differences were recognized, assimilations were not discouraged—that is why today there is no vestige of foreign cultures that successively entered the country. The absorption of the *Vratyas* in the sub-Vedic age found many parallels in later times with the effect that different culture-traits were fused together to form a homogeneous Brahmanic civilization, the exceptions being the revealed religions of Christianity, Islam, and Zoroastrianism, though even there Brahmanism managed to affect social customs and semi-religious practices. Toleration succeeded where persecution would have failed.

But while encouraging diversity and freedom of thinking, India discouraged sticking to a lower form of spiritual exercise when sufficient spiritual advance had been made. The *Gita* advises the wise not to shake the primitive beliefs of those who are not educated enough to follow an enlightened faith. It is prescribed elsewhere that men should rise on the stepping stones of their dead spiritual selves to higher things. Showy ceremonials in which the ignorant revel are useless to those who can practise austerities; and austerities are unnecessary to those who can practise the art of concentration and of immobilizing the mind; and this too is superseded by meditation on the eternal verities. Just as caste duties are determined by birth, so also each stage of life brings its own obligations in spiritual matters, and each superior insight serves to show the futility of lower practices. Nay, it is further laid down that spiritual advancement is an obligation which each soul must fulfil—no one has a right to hide his talent under the cover of ignorance and to refuse to beat his own spiritual record. As the body matures, so does the mind; if the mind needs extraneous help in the shape of a *guru*, or a spiritual

preceptor, to get a deeper insight into reality, it must be given that help so that spiritual stagnation may be avoided and the soul may advance towards its highest destiny. The call of the Infinite to each soul is irresistible, and it behoves each one to magnify his capacity of hearing that call. But the still small voice of the spirit is inaudible to those whose ears are filled with the roar of earthly tumults. Hence the necessity of moral discipline to train the mind to grasp the subtle essence that pervades the universe without being obtrusive. To the naked eye the sea is all water, but the salt is invisibly present in every part of it. The germinating principle of the *nyagrodha* (the sacred fig) fruit is not discovered by dissection, but is there all the same. So also in each soul slumbers the Infinite—you have to discover its presence by patient self-analysis and by removing all moral impediments. It will not do to dismiss the world as mere illusion—to know it as an illusion one has to clear one's spiritual gaze by removing the darkening elements of moral perversity and intellectual obliqueness. The endeavour of all Indian philosophies and religions is to discover and remove all those disturbing factors that cloud our spiritual vision. Too much preoccupation with self in total disregard of the interests of others and an excessive proneness to respond to the solicitations of sense are primarily responsible for all spiritual disaster.

The different religious philosophies undertook to analyse and classify the impediments to spiritual progress and suggest counteractives to the solicitations of the flesh. India still leads in this matter of spiritual discipline. The three jewels (*triratna*) of Jainism—right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct; the eight aids to concentration of Yoga—abstention from cruelty, untruth, theft, indulgence, and worldly leanings (*yama*), the cultivation of purity, contentment, austerity, scriptural study and religious meditation (*niyama*), assuming correct bodily posture (*asana*), regulation of breath (*pranayama*), withdrawal of the senses

(*pratyahara*), attention (*dharana*), contemplation (*dhyana*), and concentration (*samadhi*); the eightfold noble path of Buddhism—right view, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration; these and similar prescriptions were all designed to steady a man's moral and spiritual life. The ideal presented to the aspiring sage was the practice of the four great virtues (*brahmavihara-bhavana*) of joy at the happiness of others (*maitri*), pity at the distress of others (*karuna*), delight at the virtuous deeds of his fellowmen (*mudita*), and indifference towards the vicious (*upeksha*). But prescriptions of more active charity are not absent. Every householder was expected to practise the five great sacrifices of study (*brahmayajna*), oblation to the manes (*tarpana*), offering to the gods (*homa*), feeding of animals (*bali*), and entertainment of guests (*nriyajna*). The Mahayanist held up the ideal of wisdom (*prajna*) and charity (*karuna*) and directed the spiritual novice to aim at the salvation of others before saving himself and to accept all sorts of personal suffering, if thereby others could be saved: it is only thus that a Bodhisatva could be produced.

And what ideals of character were placed before the people! What devoted brothers did Rama, Yudhisthira and even Duryodhana have! What ideal wives were Sita, Savitri, Gandhari, Damayanti and others! What dutiful sons were Rama and Bhishma! What an ideal protector was Shibi! How charitable was Rantideva! What an ideal king was Rama! How religiously devoted were Dhruva and Prahlada! What an emblem of courage was Abhimanyu! That sages should renounce the world for bringing the message of salvation to the doors of suffering humanity is more understandable than that kings should retire

to the forest to meditate on God, and yet this was done on a fair scale.

India is justly proud of her scriptures—the *Vedas* and the *Puranas*, of her Epics—the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, of her *smritis* which regulated social conduct, of her *Brahmanas* and her priestly manuals which laid down the modes of worship, of her mystic literature—the *Upanishads* and the *bhakti* manuals, of her literary productions embracing many types of subjects, religious and secular. But she is mostly proud of the unbroken tradition of peaceful persuasion and toleration, of holy living and active charity, of renunciation of worldly motives and consecration of lives to the service of God. To a world distracted by competition and conflict, envy and distrust, oppression, and exploitation, lust and rapine, the message of India would be, 'There is no pleasure in the finite things of the universe—seek ye the immense. Know thyself and realize the divinity in thyself. Avoid selfish greed and lust and observe the duties of your station. Conquer anger with calmness, dishonesty with rectitude, miserliness with charity and untruth with veracity. Do your duty but leave the fruits of your action to God.' What lithic monuments India erected as testimonies of her devotion do not concern us here—they simply give a local habitation and a name to each inspiring thought and will decay like all material things in course of time. But the spiritual legacy is a more subtle possession living in the hearts of men, the traditions of society, and the prescriptions of sages and saints. It is to these regions that we must make our pilgrimage to cleanse our souls and breathe the air of heaven.*

*By courtesy of the Director, All India Radio, Calcutta Station.

J. Krishnamurti has published two volumes of poems: *The Immortal Friend* and *The Search*. His poems reveal him as one who has lived in the world with eyes open and mind alert. It is a big thing indeed. A poet is a spectator of all life and all existence. He is thus an emotional philosopher. And so we go to poets for ideas of eternity communicated in words of beauty unspeakable. The emphasis is on unspeakable beauty that has to combine sweetness. And so a poet's message is a divine and delicate song. He is a teacher and a legislator for the world. But he is not without his sweetness, not without his beautiful vision, transcending all pictorial appeal. What I have said in general about a poet is my picture of Krishnamurti himself as a poet. His poetic emotion runs so delicately, so beautifully, and yet so meaningfully:

Look where I may, Thou art there,
Calm, happy,
Filling my world—
The embodiment of Truth.

As one beholds a light
In the dark,
At a distance,
I saw Thee.

Is it not all sweetness of thought and sweetness of expression? The poet is all sweet emotion. There is a world of meaning in this divine simplicity. See this poet going away from ordinary things and ordinary expressions, needed for mere decoration. He has something to say and he says it.

Krishnamurti is definitely pointing to his 'Immortal Friend' who is to be found everywhere and at all time. This may be God or Truth or even Beauty. There the idea is not all. The world is all dark: there is ignorance, there is misery. The only hope is God or Truth or Beauty. This is the message. The manner of communicating the message is equally true, beautiful, and so divine. Let

us pray to get this feast of beauty, truth, and divinity from the poet in an ever-increasing intensity and measure.

II

My friend, P. Sama Rao, of Bellary (S. India) is a constant poet. He may have to his credit no poetical volumes but his poems, deep in delicacy and suggestions, are appearing ceaselessly in journals like *The New Democrat* (formerly *The Social Welfare*), *The Triveni*, *The Dawn Of India*, and *The Human Affairs*. His reading is wide and penetrating: he has been practising quite good art-criticism. But to my mind his poetical utterances are of considerable suggestions. He is all emotion in his poems and seldom cares to work out his emotions in detailed poems. There he is just indicating the modern tendency in literary productions of spinning out an atmosphere of suggestions. His poems are like arrows of emotions. They give us hints of brilliance; our duty is to visualize the complete picture. Verily he is a help in understanding life and letters. What more do we want? Our business is with life, and if he helps us there, declare him a great friend, guide, and a philosopher.

There is a wilderness,
A jungle of desires,
Where passion and craving
Like naughty babes
Orphaned of sanity
Hilarious and prim
Each other chase.

They kick up clouds
Of pearl-grey dust
To the tune of
Flagrant epilogues
Of bronze and crimson
Streaked across
The darkening skies....

Who are these kicking babes bereft of sanity? Passion and craving are the babes.

They have to be watched carefully like orphaned babes having no paternal vigilance. Watching implies their control and culture. Remember, they are not to be neglected totally; they have to be disciplined all right. What a sound philosophy of life? They give us joy and desire for work. They are necessary but they should not be allowed to raise clouds of dust and controversy. Sama Rao's outlook is that of a realist and it has to be recommended and commended.

Or read these lines on *Thy Face*.... from Sama Rao :

Flashy

Like the criss-cross flight
Of moths, gold-ribboning
The purple of night,.....

Tender

Like the rippling smile
Of moon, rocking himself
On water's breasts,.....

Distant

Like the song sung long ago
Nestling still in memory's nook,
Has been thy face
Amorphous,.....sweet.

Here the poet is so very happy in his choice of words, so full of delicacy and meaning, so suggestive of pictures that immediately you have an intense activity of heart and mind alike. None can say that the poet is sensuous, but he has allowed you to be sensuous. What a miracle? I have to state one thing. I cannot say why the poet has said 'rocking *himself*' instead of 'rocking *herself*'. This *herself* I say with reference to the Moon. I think Sama Rao will agree with me in this change. Else the poem is a magnificent effort. I am all praise for it.

P. Sama Rao is noted for his work of translation as well. His rendering into English of Sri Shankara's *Soundaryalahari* (The Wave Of Beauty) is quite happy and proclaims a

poet of insight and imagination. Sri Shankara was an ecstatic poet, and without nearing ecstasy the translator cannot be successful in his rendering. Sri Sama Rao seems to have usurped the ecstasy of the original in his own rendering. One example will do.

The Chakoras are drunk with the tender
Moon-shine of Thy face ;
So mad are they with its terrible sweetness
That they turn to the Moon every night
Little knowing there is
But sourness in his face.

Here the beauty of the original in Sanskrit is captured, and to the ecstatic and sensuous there is enough measure to satisfy him. This measure of sensuousness for the reader in English is due to the tremendous imagination possessed by Sama Rao, who has given us a *free* rendering of the original. That is as it should be. That is what is expected of a poet when he tries to render another poet in a new language, not the language of the poet himself—I mean the original poet, whose rendering is attempted by another poet.

Armando Menezes is a professor-poet. He is Professor of English at the Karnatak College, Dharwar. He has several volumes of verse to his credit : *The Emigrant*, *The Fund*, *Chords And Discords*, and *Chaos And Dancing Star*. There is nothing scholarly about his poetic productions. All is emotion of a poet vibrating with unshakable fervour. With fervour he combines art and design, belonging to art itself. But one thing is clear. He is not all plain in his meaning. That is no defect of poetry. Poetry in its essence is for moving and amusing, not for instructing or discoursing. If it is possible to pass your time happily by reading some poetry that is decidedly admirable. His *Ode to Beauty* is all emotion of this type. He has sung well :

O Mistress of my Vision, Loveliness!
Whom once upon a Himalayan peak
Of fiery life I felt, like some great dawn,
Bathing my soul's unstarry nakedness

With soothing benediction ! Still I seek
 Thy splendour that so momentary shone
 For me, irrevocable, waiting still
 For thine elusive glimmer on some hard-won
 hill.

Or follow these lines :

I have looked for thee in woman's tender
 eyes,
 Sounding if yet within those shadowy pools
 I caught the luminous lotus of thy Vision...
 I found a serpent in my paradise :
 Exiled from Eden by its rigid rules,
 I knew how bitter is the world's derision.
 Must thou, O Goddess, test thy worshippers
 Unalchemizing every blessing to a curse ?

The first reaction is nothing but that of emotion and of being moved to poetic agitation. There is some feeling of being lost to the world and living in a world quite new and quite pleasant. This experience is enough gift of poetry. After the passing of poetic emotion or fervour, identical with that which the poet himself must have passed through, when you try to recollect your emotions in tranquillity, you have the dawning of several ideas, not all connected with each other, but coming in succession with the impress of some chaotic emotions. That is again a happy experience in tranquillity and you are duty-bound to be grateful to Armando Menezes for this poetic agitation. If you think further, which you need not, as you have come to be bathed in emotions, the idea is clear and clinched in the last line where Beauty is supposed to be with a curse, Beauty is a momentary blessing and ultimately it is a curse. A good thing to enjoy but not a good thing to be made an eternal prop or support. This is sound philosophy. And this is life.

III

H. D. Sethna is also a professor-poet. At present he is working as Professor of Philosophy at the Wadia College, Poona. It is

strange to find a sufficiency of romantic yearning in this philosopher. His devotion to his subject, regarded as dull by so many of us, has not succeeded in stifling the poetic emotion and idealism. *Struggling Heights* is a specimen of his emotions, delivered in fine poetic utterances, communicating his patriotism and idea of his occupation with some ideal Beauty, neither of this world nor altogether strange. I regard his poetry as a happy blend, a synthesis of the common and the uncommon. Look at this poem entitled *The Sea*.

Great dancer ! With what winged grace
 You catch rhythms that no gesture
 In limb and form can ever trace
 Or clothe in any mortal form.
 The whole gamut of sound is at your call
 From the light whisper that awakes
 From its darkened sleep to the thunder's
 brawl
 Whose reverberations shake the earth.

Here you have an ideal picture of the sea, idealized by a poet and a philosopher. This picture is painted with art and design. And yet all is so beautiful except the last two lines where the choice of words, in my opinion, is rather harsh. There is music in lines preceding, but none in these two. What is the idea ? The poet is taken with the beauty of the sea because of its music and shape as created by waves, surging endlessly. There is a sympathetic surging of waves (call them emotions) in the poet's heart. It is difficult to draw in words the picture of the heart as thrown into ceaseless activity by emotions. Similarly it is difficult to paint the sea, when in agitation due to waves and music created by them. The poet is moved but he is not all emotion. He knows the difference between 'light whisper' and 'thunder's brawl'. So the sea is the great dancer, exhibiting the two sides of Nature, terrifying and pleasing, shaking the whole of the earth. One more idea I seem to catch aided by intenser reflection. This

music and this beauty—both are not mortal, and so they cannot be clothed in any mortal form. Here is established the superiority of Nature over anything created by man. The world is nothing but a doll in the hands of Nature. There is a Call from Nature, and man has but to act up to it to find eternal joy. A great idea undoubtedly and beautifully communicated!

Principal N. V. Thadani of Hindu College, Delhi, is a scholar of established fame. Recently he has been honoured by the University of Delhi by an honorary D.Litt. He is devoted to poetry, literature, and philosophy. The result is his writings (especially in verse) which exhibit a happy blending. In his poems you have thought, refinement, emotion, control of emotion, and design itself. What more is needed to proclaim him a gifted poet! You enjoy his poems and at the same time you add to your experiences, both mental and emotional. He cannot be considered a singer but he is an ideal poet, a philosopher might wish a poet to be, combining delight with instruction.

Mention must be made of his works: *Triumph of Delhi and other Poems* (1916), *Krishna's Flute and other Poems* (1919), *Asoka and other Poems* (1922), and *Garden of the East* (1932). A poet must have gifts of projection. Take Thadani. He can recapture (and also add to it his own beauty). Poems in *Garden of the East* are an attempt (and I think a very fine and successful attempt) at recapturing ancient beauty and rapture as exhibited by poets like Firdausi, Omar Khayyam, Sadi, Hafiz and Jami. Thadani has idealized the ancient atmosphere, and you have him in his true colours, blending poetry and philosophy together delicately.

What says the harp and tell me, what the
flute?

And what's the tune the aged Minstrel
plays?

'List to the voice, and let the tongue be
mute;—

List to the voice, list to the voice!'—he says.
Alas, we see and suffer, and in vain

The hungry beggar sighs to be a King,
And many thousand hearts are laid in dust:
The Pearl's a gift of Heaven; so pass again
The honied glass, bedewed with joy of
spring;

The memory of the Past, the Future's trust.

The Minstrel should not be supposed to communicate some precious wisdom directly. His one and chief aim is to sing. So listen to him, lost in admiration, lost in sweetness. The voice of sweetness will ultimately communicate the truth, the great truth that we suffer in vain. Life is a trial. If we are face to face with sufferings, let us suffer them with a smile. A great lesson in courage, indeed! Life must be spent in action and in joy; that is the memory of the Past and the Future's trust.

Thadani is profound in thought, simplicity, and emotion. I can think of no word inept in the lines quoted. Instead, every word is charged with extreme meaning and delicacy.

Subho Tagore, hardly thirty-six, *great* grand-nephew of Rabindranath Tagore, is a revolutionary poet. I call him *great* not because he is a *great* grand-nephew, but because he has already made his mark and is recognized as a singer of original ideas, like his grand uncle, world-famous Rabindranath Tagore. As I close this survey of contemporary Indian Poets writing in English, I feel it advisable to refer to Subho Tagore's new voice and new vision, as that new voice and vision might signify the aspiration of new and free India. And soon, too soon, this aspiration might take the colour of achievement!

People be damned—
Don't talk before me
About the people.
I despise them.

What is all this nonsense? Subho despises people. They cannot allow him to find his name that ought to be his due to his intrinsic merit and aspiration. But Subho is not a noisy singer signifying nothing. He continues:

Traitor to their Saviour
 From the very birth ;
 They are the ancient culprits
 Who once had crowned the Christ
 With the crown of thorns.

Here is the reason for his condemnation of people, the mob. The world sees saviours but they are not allowed to prosper with the world. They are killed ; the very progress of the world is killed. Is it not reasonable to despise such people, people who cannot see their own good, who are no better than animals, possessing no discrimination and no intelligence ? This was past history and this is present history as well. Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation, who marched to freedom with the whole country with him, is no more, not because of his natural death but because of the bloody hands of a mad assassin. Something is wrong ; there is some displacement of virtue, some removal of the human in us. We in India were never prepared for this banishment of light of virtue which allowed an assassin to take away from us our Mahatma, who fought (there is no other better word to signify his practice, covering his entire life and entire being) to lead all of us towards virtue non-violently and peacefully. And so Subho says :

Through ages they have stabbed
 Many a seeker of truth
 Who gave them solace,
 Many an innocent worshipper of Beauty
 Who brought boon to their broken hearts ;
 The people killed them
 And killed them outright
 Without food,
 Without sympathy,
 Without affection.

A combination of indignation and thought is evidenced so plentifully by the young poet, who is full of challenge and revolt. I can say this with reference to our entire poetry (I mean poems written by contemporary Indians). These poems are not mere worship of the

Goddess of poetry or of Beauty. They are documents in truth, in experience, in aspiration. They are an open challenge. Their aim is a revolution. Fortunately the political revolution is achieved and the foreign domination is over. Now is the moment for a greater and intenser revolution. The entire mob mind is to be changed. Or, to be precise we have to cease to exist as a mob. We have to be intelligent and keen. The entire outlook has to be changed. What has gone down into our roots has to be taken out and then only we shall be free of such an inhuman mind as that of the assassin who killed Mahatma Gandhi. A cultural revolution is the thing. It will indeed be a fine day when we turn to our poets to lead us to light and culture. Then the challenge of our living poets will be accepted, and there shall be the New Dawn sung by Sadhu T. L. Vaswani, a great living singer of India :

The DAWN is up ! New Sun awakes !
 God's love doth shine on hills and lakes !
 Awake ! Awake ! Ye youths awake !
 And India's waiting millions shake !

This is a lesson in love and in God—I add. Tolstoy wrote not poetically alone when he referred to love as God. 'Where love is there God is also.' God indicates His measureless love in hills and lakes and they are beautiful, sources of endless inspiration to poets, possessing unlimited powers of appreciation, of seeing beyond things and coming to the essence of things, the fundamental principle of love in all existence of God. This same measure of love will make all of us beautiful, sources of inspiration, and not things to be killed out of hatred or mere ideological opposition. This has to be the function of the present stream of Indian poetry in English. The stream is there ; it is full of love and culture. Let people drink at it and quench their hatred for ever, living in smile and achievement.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

To the Vasts, with which the present issue opens, is a free translation of the verses 17-18 of the forty-second hymn of the fifth *mandala* of the *Rig-veda*. The hymn is addressed to the *Aswins*, the Twin Rays and the Harbingers of Light Divine. The first verse expresses the yearning of the awakened heart for Transcendental Luminousness, while the second prays for Its manifestation in earthly life.....

Srimat Anirvanji concludes his illuminating article on *Buddhi and Buddhiyoga* in this issue. Without a complete and correct vision of the truth of Existence we tend to live random and discontinuous lives without a sense of purpose. India worked out an integral conception of life at the early dawn of her civilization, which finds a most appealing and forceful expression in the immortal song of the Lord, the *Gita*. Activity without knowledge is no more than a blind groping; but to be truly fruitful and purposive it must be based on more than sense-knowledge or 'mental reason.' This is the illumination of the *buddhi*, the universal factor in every man. It is only with this Knowledge, as the basis and aim of Existence, in our possession, that we truly become instruments of the Divine Process. The brilliant, deep, and rational exposition of this eternal central problem of existence on the lines of the *Gita* by Srimat Anirvanji is sure to be of great appeal and service to modern minds deeply concerned with the ultimate issues of individual and collective existence.....

Religion and Education by Nripendra Nath Sen points out that we cannot have true education without an adequate philosophy and that only religion, understood properly, can satisfy our demand for a principle on which it can securely rest.....

Sanskrit devotional songs, which form an important feature of Sanskrit literature and of Hindu culture, have not received the at-

tention they deserve, in any just assessment of the character of Sanskrit poetry, from the critical students of Sanskrit. They form a unique class, rich in poetic beauty, direct and simple, and remarkable for their sincerity of feeling, while their value in elevating character and transmitting a high moral and spiritual tradition among the common man is inestimable. Dr. K. R. Krishnamoorthy draws attention to all these in his *Sanskrit Devotional Songs* and also gives a few specimen verses from some famous hymns.

Contemporary Indian Poets Writing in English is the third and last instalment of the series on the subject by Prof. B. S. Mathur of D. A. V. College, Kanpur. The two previous instalments appeared in the September and October issues.

SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPTS : THE TEMPLES OF LEARNING

In its issue of 10 October last the *Free India Weekly* of Madras published an article by Sri K. Srinivasan entitled 'A Bastion of Oriental Knowledge'. The bastion here referred to is the Saraswati Mahal at Tanjore, in which is housed a library containing a wonderful collection of rare manuscripts, thanks to the literary interest, energy, and enthusiasm of Raja Sarfoji of Tanjore (died in 1832), about which 'Dr. Burnell, as early as 1873, had written to the Madras Government apprising them of the unrivalled nature of the library and the diversity of works it contained.' In 1880, after a large number of manuscripts had been either lost, lifted, or had perished due to lack of proper care, their number was estimated at 27,800, consisting of 25,000 Sanskrit, 2,000, Marathi and 800 Telugu books. 'They are old, and are giving way rapidly,' though of late 'the Madras Government have appointed a committee to look after the management and suggest improvements to the library.'

Sri K. Srinivasan has drawn attention to

a national question of the utmost importance. This is not the only place where large collections of manuscripts are to be found. It may be quite reasonably presumed, on the basis of available evidence, that such collections at different places will, if totalled, run into lakhs. There are numerous manuscripts either with individuals or private associations which have not been catalogued or collected and which are slowly perishing for want of proper care; for not only do their custodians or possessors rarely know their value, but they do not also always have sufficient means for preserving them. These constitute a national wealth, containing the learning, culture, and hard labour of thousands of scholars for centuries, and they cannot be allowed to be lost to the country due to negligence. It is urgently necessary that a proper machinery must be set in motion to undertake this huge task of collecting, preserving, and publishing these manuscripts for the benefit of the whole country.

Such a big task cannot be undertaken at present by the Government alone, preoccupied as it is with many other problems of urgency. It is the bounden duty of the people, who value our culture, to come forward and take initiative in such enterprises. A central

organization can be created, with branches all over the country, to find out and preserve this national heritage. This requires huge funds. There are many millionaires in the country who have shown their public spirit by helping many public causes with munificent donations and by building magnificent temples. They would, it is hoped, surely come forward, once they are impressed with the value and merit of the work, for the preservation of the priceless monuments of learning which are falling in ruins, and thus help to wide open the gateways of these temples of knowledge to the general public, for whom they now remain closed. Such service will make their names immortal in history, even as that of Raja Sarfoji, more than anything else that they may do. It will earn for them the eternal gratitude of the whole nation. The throwing open of these temples of learning to the general public, no less than the question of opening temples to the outcastes, deserves the serious attention of the Government and the people. Access to this vast treasure-house of her ancient knowledge is sure to accelerate the process of Indian Renaissance, by helping Indians to recover a true sense of the direction and aim of Indian cultural dynamics.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SOCIO-LITERARY MOVEMENT IN BENGALI AND FRENCH. BY INDIRA SARKAR. *Published by Calcutta Oriental Book Agency, 9 Panchanan Ghose Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 25. Price Re 1-8.*

The urge for growth and progress is inherent in man. As such, there is bound to be a certain amount of parallelism and affinity in the expression of this urge in the different sections of humanity: In this small study an attempt is made to point out a resemblance between the socio-literary movements in Bengali and French.

The lengthy catalogue of books covering nearly half of this little brochure no doubt reveals an extensive acquaintance on the part of the author regarding the socio-economic, socio-literary, and socio-cultural movements in Bengal, and this might be of value and

interest for a student of comparative literature. But the treatment of the subject in the book does not give the reader any clear information about the ideological and cultural development of these two great literatures, Bengali and French.

WHY RELIGION? BY S. P. TAYAL. *63D, Mahendra Road, Bhowanipur, Calcutta. Pp. 130.*

S. P. Tayal, a student of science, tries to harmonize the message of the *Gita* with the scientific thought of the West. He has selected verses from here and there and knit them succinctly in a garland to bring out the real meaning of the term 'Religion' with practical hints to help in developing deep religious character.

The *Gita* is not a sectarian book, but one which reconciles and synthesizes all diverse sects on one main

idea—realization. And this grand idea scattered all over the *Gita*, has been collected under certain topics to arrest the attention of the casual reader; and to the common reader this book will give an idea of religion and about *Gita* too.

HINDI

1. BHARAT ME VIVEKANANDA (Vivekanandaji ke Bharatiya Vyakhyan). Translated by Pt. Suryakant Tripathi. Pp. 599. Price Rs. 5.
2. MEREE SAMAR-NITI. Translated by Pt. Suryakant Tripathi. Pp. 36. Price As. 7.
3. DHARMAHASYA. Pp. 94. Price Re. 1.
4. KARMA YOG. Translated by Pt. Dr. Vidyabhaskar Shukla. Pp. 154. Price Re. 1-10.

All the four books are published by the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Dhantoli, Nagpur, C.P.

The above books are translations into Hindi of some of the writings and speeches of Swami Vivekananda in English which have been compiled and published in full by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, in the *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* in seven volumes. Vivekananda's writings need no introduction; they make their own irresistible appeal, wrote Mahatma Gandhi, in a letter to a compiler of Vivekananda's views on 'Education.' There is not a problem of national, religious, or cultural importance which Vivekananda has not dealt with effectively. He was a prophet with great vision and comprehension. He knew her glorious past, he realized her present virtues and weaknesses, and he also visualized her future greatness. His one passion was to awaken India to a consciousness of her glorious ancient heritage from her present degenerate self-oblivion, and to revivify the Indian nation in order that she might march forward with faith, energy, and enthusiasm towards the building up of a future India greater than ever she was. 'Up India, and conquer the world with your spirituality... nothing less than that,' was his clarion call to the nation. To this end his writings and speeches were directed. His writings impart his passion to the readers and inspire them to dedicate themselves to the cause he held dear. They have inspired many a national leader during the fight for the freedom of the country. But their scope does not end there. They have a perennial inspiration. As he himself put it he has given 'ideas for the country for the next fifteen hundred years' to work upon.

Now that the freedom of India has been achieved and the course of her life is being moulded, it is an urgent necessity that his ideas must reach every corner of the country. Up till now mostly the English-knowing public have benefited by his works. It is but meet that his works are recently being translated into many Indian languages and in some foreign languages too. The Hindi translations are coming into the field none too

soon. With the likelihood of Hindi being adopted as the national language and the growing importance it is already having, it is all the more necessary that the Hindi translations should come out quickly. The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, is doing a great service to the nation by having undertaken this task.

Bharat Me Vivekananda contains his lectures delivered in India from the time he touched Colombo, after his triumphant return from the West, until he reached Almora. These lectures are now famous as the 'Lectures from Colombo to Almora'. They are of particular interest to India. They are like thunder rousing the sleeping nation and his burning words fill the reader with energy and enthusiasm. Here are laid out his ideas and plans for the regeneration of the country and to make it a great nation. No Indian can read them without being inspired.

Meree Samar-Niti is one of the lectures from the above book published separately. It is a translation of the lecture 'My Plan of Campaign' delivered in Madras. Here Vivekananda is a general disclosing his plans for the regeneration of the country and the conquest of the world by Indian spirituality.

Dharmarashtra is a collection of three of his famous lectures—'What is Religion', 'The Ideal of a Universal Religion,' and 'The Way to the Realisation of a Universal Religion.' In these lectures, he defines religion in its broadest sense to embrace every effort, conscious or unconscious, which would make man divine or realize his divinity. He shows that the Universal Religion is not one which seeks to impose its cut and dry doctrines and dogmas on one and all, but one that would accommodate every type of mind and lead it on to the goal in its own way from where it stands.

Karmayog is one of the famous works of Vivekananda. In a masterly and lucid way he expounds the true spirit of Karmayoga and in a way that will be easily understood by modern minds. He also discusses the various relevant issues with illustrations from ancient texts and in modern contexts. He shows that the idea of duty entails compulsion and therefore is far inferior to Karmayoga which is 'acting as a master and not as a slave'. He points out that the ideal of Karmayoga is 'work for work's sake' without any motive; and that a man who is motiveless and level-headed alone works best and does immense good to humanity. He holds out Buddha as an ideal Karmayogin who worked for the good of humanity without any motive and depicts his character in all its grandeur and majesty. In Karmayoga it is character that counts and not belief.

The book is an excellent guide for life.

Considering the difficulty of translation from one language to another, the rendering is quite good. But we hope that the future translations will have a more flowing and vigorous style.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1947

The 39th Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at the Belur Math premises on the 24th October 1948. The following is a brief report of the work done by the Mission during the year 1947.

Centres: There were altogether 66 Mission centres and 8 sub-centres, which served all without distinction of caste, creed or colour and preached non-sectarian religious principles.

Relief Work: The Mission started Refugee Relief Work at Kurukshetra in November, and the work continued right into the middle of 1948. 5,626 utensils etc. and 15,401 blankets, clothings, etc. were distributed, the daily recipients at the Milk Canteen being 23,638 at its peak in March 1948. Medical Relief from its health centres was given, the daily average number of patients treated being 275. The work was financed by the Central Government; besides, the Mission got substantial help from the Lady Mountbatten Fund and from public contributions, the amount from the Government being Rs. 30,765/- and in the two latter cases Rs. 31,613/-.

The Riot Relief Work continued throughout the year in Noakhali and Tippera where the Mission ran two hostels for 26 riot-affected boys, and helped a large number of such people with rice doles and cash amounting to Rs. 95,000/-. The work will be closed in a couple of months. The Mission helped the riot-affected people in Habiganj and the Sadar sub-division in the Sylhet District with Rs. 8,500/- during September to November.

In the Flood Relief Work in Chittagong the Mission spent Rs. 10,449/- during October to December, the total number of persons helped at the highest being 6,157.

In addition to these the branch centres directly undertook some minor relief works.

Medical Work: The Mission conducted 5 general and 1 maternity Hospitals with a total of 407 beds, which treated in all 12,647 cases. The 45 outdoor Dispensaries including the T. B. Clinic at Delhi treated altogether 12,12,876 patients during the year.

Help to the Poor: Under this head 790 mds of rice and 1,082 blankets, dhotis, etc. were distributed among the poor and deserving people. Besides, a sum of Rs. 44,825-3-0 was spent for regular and occasional help to 1,036 individuals and families, more than 100 of whom were students.

Educational Work: Work under this head included two Colleges, 5 Residential High Schools, 7 Secondary Schools and 7 Orphanages, with a total of 5,728 boys and 1,821 girls; 59 Primary with 6,895 boys and 3,569 girls; 13 Night Schools with 507 students, 2 Industrial Schools with 304 students. The Mission had 40 Students' Homes, which accommodated 1,942 students. The Head-

quarters helped 9 Schools having 570 boys and girls with monthly grants, the total amount on this head being Rs. 432/-.

Work for Women: The Mission conducted under this head the Women's Department of the Benares Home of Service, the Maternity Hospital with its training section, the Women Invalids' Home at Benares, the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras, the Sister Nivedita Girls' School at Calcutta, etc.

Work outside India: In Mauritius, Singapore, Burma and Ceylon the Mission carried on its educational and cultural activities.

Finance: The total receipts of the Mission in India in 1947 were Rs. 44,77,864-7-6 and the total disbursements Rs. 45,37,921-1-8.

Belur Math
(Howrah)
28 October 1948.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
General Secretary,
Ramakrishna Mission

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, VILANGANS, TRICHUR

REPORT FOR 1947

From its humble beginnings in 1927, this institution has now grown into a huge one with various kinds of useful activities, of which a brief report for 1947 is given below.

Gurukul: Its two separate sections (for boys and girls) had 34 boys and 22 girls respectively both paying and non-paying. The Saradamandir, the girls' section, had no permanent house of its own before 1947 when it was housed in a newly constructed building for the purpose.

Vidyamandir (High School): This provides academic education for the Cochin SSLC course and has 3 departments primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary. There were 410 boys and 306 girls on the rolls at the end of the year. Fourteen students out of the 18 sent up for the school final came out successful, with six of them in the first class. There were 28 teachers on the staff. The extra-curricular activities of the Vidyamandir included regular literary meetings, running of a manuscript magazine *Vivekavijayam*, gardening, sports, boating, etc.

Industrial School: Weaving, spinning, carding and carpentry, were the subjects taught. It had a strength of 37 pupils, and there were 19 looms in 1947. A side-activity of this school was the Khadi Centre which had 25 spinners working on 4 looms and 25 charkhas. The School Co-operative Society, besides dealing in school requisites, undertook the sale of cloth to the villages around at controlled rates. The Co-operative Society for Harijans has been providing work for them all the year round.

Dispensary: The dispensary treated 5142 cases hailing from the surrounding villages.

