

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

## UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Jummoo  
3 November 1897

Dear—<sup>1</sup>

Too much sentiment hurts work. ‘Hard as steel and soft as a flower’ is the motto.

I shall soon write to Sturdy. He is right to tell you that in case of trouble I will stand by you. You will have the whole of it, if I find a piece of bread in India—you may rest assured of that. I am going to write to Sturdy from Lahore, for which I start tomorrow. I have been here for 15 days to get some land in Kashmir from the Maharajah. I intend to go to Kashmir again next summer if I am here, and start some work there.

With everlasting love,

Yours

VIVEKANANDA

228 W. 39th Street,  
New York  
16 January 1896

Blessed and Beloved,<sup>2</sup>

Many many thanks for the books. The *Sankhya Karika* is a very good book, and the *Kurma Purana*, though I do not find in it all I expected, has a few verses on *yoga*. The words dropped in my last letter were *Yoga Sutra*, which I am translating, with notes from various authorities. I want to incorporate the Chapter on *Kurma Purana* in my notes. I have very enthusiastic accounts of your classes from Miss MacLeod. Mr. Galsworthy seems to be very much interested now.

I have begun my Sunday lectures here and also the classes. Both are very enthusiastically received. I make them all free and take up a collection to pay the hall etc. Last Sunday's lecture was very much appreciated and is in the press. I will send you a few copies next week. It was the outline of our work.

As my friends have a stenographer (Goodwin) engaged, all these class lessons and public lectures are taken down. I intend to send you a copy of each. They may suggest you some ideas.

My great want here is a strong man like you, possessing intellect and ability and love. In this nation of universal education, all seem to melt down into a mediocrity, and the few able are weighed down by the eternal money-making.

I have a chance of getting a piece of land in the country, and some buildings on it, plenty of trees and a river, to serve as a summer meditation resort. That of course requires a committee to look after it in my absence, also the handling of money and printing and other matters.

I have separated myself entirely from money questions, yet without it the movement cannot go on. So necessarily I have to make over everything executive to a committee, who will look after these things in my absence. Steady work is not in the line of the Americans. The only way they work is in a herd. So let them have it. As to the teaching part, my friends will go over this country from place to place, each one independent, and let them form independent circles. That is the easiest way to spread. Then, when there will be sufficient strength, we will have yearly gatherings to concentrate our energies.

The committee is entirely executive and it is confined to New York alone....

Ever yours with love and blessings,  
VIVEKANANDA

New York  
17 March 1896

....I pray you again to think about this publishing business....remembering 'Ours is the gospel of the oneness of all beings' and all national feelings are but wicked superstitions. Moreover I am sure that the person who is always ready to give way to others' opinions finds at last that his opinion has triumphed. Yielding always conquers at last.

V.

Kiel  
10 September 1896

I have at last seen Prof. Deussen....The whole of yesterday was spent very nicely with the Professor, sight-seeing and discussing about the Vedanta.

He is what I should call 'a warring Advaitist.' No compromise with anything else. *Ishwara* is his bugbear. He would have none of it if he could. He is very much delighted with the idea of your magazine, and wants to confer with you on these subjects in London, where he is shortly going.....

<sup>1</sup> Written to Sister Nivedita.

<sup>2</sup> Written to Mr E. T. Sturdy.

## THE END AND MEANS

BY THE EDITOR

*Dve vidye veditavye . . . para chaivapara cha.*

“Two sciences are to be known . . . , the science of the End and the science of means”—*Mundaka Upanishad*, I. 1. iv.

In the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, one of the few earlier and authentic among the *Upanishads* which form part of the *Brahmanas*, we come across the following story. Narada, well-versed in the vedic lore and all the sciences of the age, approached Sanatkumara for Knowledge. Sanatkumara asked the former: ‘Tell me first all that you have learnt, so that I may teach you what lies beyond.’

Narada replied: ‘Sir, I know all the *Vedas*, the *Rig-veda*, the *Yajur-veda*, the *Sama-veda*, and the *Atharva-veda*; history and mythology; rituals, mathematics, the science of omens, the science of Time; logic, ethics, politics, grammar, and etymology; philosophy, the material and the military sciences; astronomy, fine arts, and the science of snake-charming. I know all these.’ And he added: ‘But Sir, I am like one who knows mere words and am without knowledge of the Self. I have, however, heard from sages like you that one who knows the Self crosses beyond sorrow. I am, Sir, one who is in sorrow. Please take me beyond sorrow.’

To all these words of Narada, Sanatkumara replied: ‘Whatever you have learnt is mere name.’

The anecdote which we have quoted above is one of the most significant and instructive dialogues ever recorded in the whole history of literature. In a few telling words it embodies a metaphysics of the highest truth and of perennial value. Above all, it has an aptness to our time which is truly striking. If we take an integral view of man and survey the human situation as a whole obtaining today, we shall be impressed with the peculiar relevance of the lesson contained in it for the problems of our day.

Though the complexity of the social organization and the intellectual knowledge of man’s outer environment in the time when Narada lived were admittedly much less than what obtains at the present moment, yet the question which Narada propounds is being asked by the modern man. Nor is Narada’s list negligible. It looks impressive and formidable even across the gulf of thousands of years. In spite of any superficial differences in the external conditions, the problem remains essentially the same. Having mastered all the branches of learning and the arts, Narada discovered that he had so far acquainted himself with mere words and symbols. But the acquaintance with the shadow realm of symbols failed to satisfy the profound need of his soul. Stricken with sorrow, he approached Sanatkumara for Knowledge which could save.

The modern thinker too, like Narada, is in sorrow. He is burdened with the detailed knowledge of the different sciences. The separate sciences and the specialists who know more and more about less and less have presented man with a bewildering variety of information about matter. But still he finds that he is living on the edge of life and that nothing can give him the peace and knowledge for which his soul craves. In spite of the vast complexities and amenities of upto-date social life, in spite of the numerous points of impersonal contact where his life touches those of others, the modern man finds that he has built up round himself, by the assertion of his limited individuality and personal rights, a wall behind which he feels himself severely lonesome; he inhabits an unfriendly universe, and all his information

avails him nothing to give him a suitable programme of action consistent with his spiritual need.

The mood of futility which afflicted Narada and which afflicts the modern intellectual who recognizes the limits of sense-knowledge and the indifference of science to things which men prize and value is an ever-recurring phenomenon in human history. Civilization has so far been studied and interpreted in terms of ideas which are too limited for the purpose. The true concept which will provide the master key for unlocking the secrets of social movements, the rise and fall of institutions, is still beyond the grasp of professional historians. However that be, we can, for our present purpose, view the long course of human history as the record of a conflict between two attitudes ; one that emphasizes the purely human aspect of man's nature and the other which is inspired by the recognition that unless man lives in conformity with a higher purpose aiming at a goal beyond the merely human, his life becomes an evil and the world a nightmare. The inevitable result of all attempts to secure, by purely social and material means, human peace and prosperity on earth has been to let loose unknown demoniac forces in society. However exalted the human ideals or grand and perfect the plans and blueprints may be, man invariably turns into a devil by placing his reliance solely on matter. Humanism, like evil, is self-stultifying in the long run.

## II

The mood of frustration has infected recent philosophical thinking with a sense of meaninglessness of all action. This philosophy 'involved in the peculiar confusions that beset this generation in all aspects of its civilization, the private as well as the public,' this sense of pointlessness of all striving and feeling in 'a universe without purpose', is the result of the emphasizing of the purely human and material aspect of civilization by modern science.

The modern scientific age, which may be said to have begun early in the nineteenth century,

started with a number of startlingly crude assumptions. For example, it was inspired by the belief that the truth of material existence, the absolute truth of nature and natural laws, could be discovered by an effort of the intellect aided by scientific methods. And whatever did not lend itself to treatment according to the established scientific methods was devoid of reality and belonged to the realm of phantasy. It was also taken for granted that the inner perfection of man was a result of the outer, and it made the inner life of man fundamentally a phenomenon of matter. It therefore inspired the attempt to perfect humanity by outward means, by the perfection of a social machine which will train and oblige men to be what they ought to be.

The scientific mind and the general mind were untroubled by doubts regarding the validity of such uncritical assumptions ; for was not science daily vindicating itself by great technical successes which brought increasing material comforts to so many ? Such troublesome questions, even if they were raised, were drowned by the hallelujah sung in praise of material glory. This self-assurance of science has, however, proved to be very short-lived, viewed in the perspective of historical time. Today science recognizes that scientific knowledge is limited by its methods. It has abandoned the search for absolute truth, for the methods of physical science lead not to a concrete reality but to a shadow world of symbols, beneath which these methods are unadapted to penetrating. It realizes that what it has so long been studying are not real objects existing by their own right and possessing a validity of their own, but shadows cast by the observer himself upon a space-time canvas stretched by its own mind. It has come back to the point from where it started, namely, the human consciousness.

The present aim of science is the pursuit of what may be called 'technical' truth, which belongs to any theory that can be successfully employed in invention or in predicting the future. Technical truth thus becomes a matter of degree. A theory which is the source of more fruitful

inventions and leads to greater success is more true than one which gives rise to fewer results. Intellectual knowledge derived from the senses ceases to be an exact picture of the universe in the mirror of the human mind, but becomes a merely practical tool for the manipulation of matter. The mirror of mind not only distorts what it presents, but paints it in a strange way.

The other belief in the ability of technical progress and a perfected social machine to guarantee human welfare and happiness has also been shattered to pieces. The terrific shocks of the last two World Wars, the brutal and inhuman suppression of minorities by states deriving inspiration from the gospel of materialism, the threat to liberty, peace, and security of the individual, to human dignity and human values, which comes from the centralization of political and economic power and the development of society according to the inhuman demands of technocracy, have made it as clear as day light that the growth of organization and technocracy beyond a certain point dries up the very spiritual resources of man, and even dehumanizes them who are required to adjust themselves to such a situation. As life cannot exist under all conditions, even so human values cannot endure under certain complexities of organization, quite apart from the question of ideals which are put before us.

Long has it been the fashion to blame religion for a colossal amount of human misery in the past. Perhaps now the time has come to assess the untold harm that a superstitious science has done to mankind by its desecration of traditional belief and morality. When a true apportionment of blame will be made it will be found that human suffering and tragedy caused in the name of science and scientific theory have been incalculably more than that ever caused in the name of religions. Today men of science tell us that science gives us power, but does not say what is good and what is bad. But not so long ago science denied certain values which, because they could not be brought to sense-proof and sense-demonstration, were declared to be vain and illusory. Religion, it was complained, declared the sense world to be a vanity of

vanities. Science replied that the spirit world was an illusion of the mind.

Apart from this negative attitude, science also gave to man some kinds of pseudo-values. For example, orthodox biology by its concept of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest put a premium upon militarism and the predatory instincts of strong groups and led to the growth of contempt for physically weak and numerically small classes and racial hatred. It even led to the abandonment of the higher teachings of Christianity by powerful political organizations, which sacrificed individuals before the all-powerful Moloch of the State and the Race.

Powerful social and political movements for securing economic justice for the common man have based themselves upon a scientific materialism with disastrous consequences for mankind. It is impossible to discover by any stretch of imagination a logical relation between communism and the materialistic interpretation of history. But such interpretations have made easy the commission of the blackest crimes and the adoption of the vilest means for gaining the prescribed end. It has led to the liquidation of masses of human beings, as if they were so much frozen water. Class war and human greed are regarded as of fundamental reality in such an interpretation. And the obvious way to eliminate class war and greed is to liquidate the classes and the greedy men by whatever method one can employ. Scientific materialism preaches that the end justifies the means.

### III

If the prevalent bleakness of philosophical thought and the confusion in human affairs are due to man's emphasizing of material knowledge and development, what then is the way out? Is there anything which can give faith to the modern man, faith in his destiny and meaning in his striving for the good life? Can his sorrow be removed by a vision of Truth and the present confusion ended by a purposeful striving which will hold the forces of disharmony and disintegration in check?

Such an ideal of Truth which will give firm faith to man without any intellectual evasions and which will form the basis of a co-operative society has long been given to the world by the Vedanta. It is a knowledge of the End, wherein all our strivings reach fulfilment, that can give meaning to a universe otherwise without sense.

An assertion of the above kind is too often viewed with suspicion. Such a view springs from another false notion which science has propagated, the notion, namely, that mankind has been steadily advancing along a one-track gradient of progress from the earliest dawn of civilization, and that real progress dates from the time when the intellect of man began to understand the laws of nature and use them for his ends. Unfortunately, such a conception of progress cannot be regarded as true in the light of the knowledge we have. Progress is never steady, nor can it be equated with mere material and intellectual development. True progress of a community is to be judged by its growing awareness of spiritual values and by its attempt at shaping the lives of its members in accordance with the law of spiritual evolution. Progress is the increasing assertion of the freedom of the Spirit on the material plane. Material power over environment and intellectual knowledge are, to a certain extent, conditions for the spiritual evolution of man. But it is a mistake to suppose that a particular stage of material and intellectual development is an essential condition for a knowledge of Truth. Spiritual evolution may precede certain lines of material or intellectual development. The dominance of intellect inclines us to believe that spiritual life is also a matter of growth of ideas in the mind, that our concepts grow in universality and richness till we arrive at the highest idea of the True. This is far from being a fact, whatever point it may have in connection with the philosophical development in modern Europe. The course of human evolution has not proceeded smoothly and in a single line. Nor has it been without experiments of various kinds in different directions. There were epochs in the past when men were physically less informed but psychologi-

cally more wise. They were without a distracting knowledge of means, but had a clear conception of ends. Even today subtlest metaphysics can be taught by the simple folk in some lands to the highest intellectual.

Tradition, as recorded in literature, points to a high development of the intuitional faculty as an approach to Truth among individuals of certain cultures in the past. There seems to be a real, factual basis for the memory of the lost civilization of Atlantis. There were mystics in ancient Egypt, mystic clubs in Rome and Greece, which carefully guarded the secret, esoteric (*rahasyam*) knowledge from the profane gaze of the ignorant. This mystic tradition was misunderstood and afterwards completely lost by the ignorant multitude in different parts of the world.

In India, however, the mystic or the spiritual tradition continued without interruption. It was developed and given a marvellous intellectual formulation to square with the demands of the logical mind and the facts of common experience. The End of man and the quest for Truth having been realized in an integral vision of Reality through the method of spiritual discipline, all social planning and institutional development in India were governed by the idea of helping each and every member of the community with means suited to his nature to discover the meaning of existence. This subordination of all temporal interests to the spiritual ideal, the conscious grasp of the true meaning and purpose of social dynamics, is a feature peculiar to Indian history.

Blindness to this governing concept of Indian civilization has made sterile the efforts of historians who have approached the study of Indian culture with their handy social and political measuring rods. They have bewailed the lack of so-called historical materials and historical sense, for in their view history is primarily a record of the political facts of the state-life. The Indian mind however, never paid an undue attention to the superficial facts of political existence, the misdeeds of kings, the wars of greedy rulers, and the overthrow of kingdoms and empires. For, in the Indian eye, states and nations were no more than historical accidents

and stages in the evolution of society, the one constant fact of significance being the spiritual development of man. Outer circumstances were valued in so far they helped the process of inner growth.

Similarly, philosophical and scientific development in India followed the establishment of the reign of intuition. Philosophy was no mere child of intellectual wonder; it was not a speculative venture to arrive at the absolute truth of existence. It was on the contrary an attempt to systematize the spiritual truths and harmonize them with experiences at other levels in a consistent whole. Such formulations were bound, by the nature of logical development and information available at any moment, to be partial and temporary, but the fundamental principles and the facts of experience of the inner life were never doubted.

#### IV

In contrast to the specially spiritual character of Indian culture, 'the modern age has been essentially an experiment how far and whither the human consciousness would go through an intellectual and external control of Nature with physical and intellectual means only and without the intervention of any higher consciousness or knowledge.' But this development has not been without significance. Philosophically speaking, science, which previously sought to limit truth and reality to verifiable sense-phenomena, now confesses to its inability to pierce the veil which hides the shining face of Truth. It no longer seeks to bar other approaches to the heart of Reality. Materialism has become a simple uncritical faith with no longer any claim to found itself on a sort of infallible biblical authority of science. This is a negative gain, spiritually speaking—this deliverance from a cocksure intellectualism. Positively speaking, science has given man the power to transform society in such a way as to enable the mass of humanity to reach to the level of thought and experience which was previously the privilege of only a handful. It has provided means which, rightly employed,

would bring into being a new social order that will provide opportunities to all for an unprecedented spiritual growth. The 'technical' truth of science must be related to the integral truth of life for ushering in a new social order.

The present age, therefore, needs an integrated system of thought and feeling which will provide a sure foundation for a planned co-operative society. Vedanta proclaims that Truth is one and indivisible. The prevailing contradictions in science, religion, and politics must be removed. Today the modern man behaves in a most amazing way. He has divided life into a number of non-communicating compartments. He has a set of private values unrelated to his intellectual thinking; he has a disinterested mood in the laboratory; in religion he may or may not cling to certain creeds; but in politics and social action he remembers neither religion nor science. Civilization cannot long bear the weight of such hypocrisy. It is bound to give way under the pressure of such disharmony of thought, feeling, and action.

We cannot evade here the questions of credal religions, if we aspire to build up an integral pattern of thought and life. Religions must be viewed in the new light of the Truth of the Vedanta. Not to speak of the average mind, a large body of scientists and thinkers still identify religion with a creed and a Church. This attitude, when it is not due to genuine ignorance, is prompted by a most unscientific and perverse tendency to refuse to recognize anything which takes away from one's social value or self-importance. Scientists have so long enjoyed popular esteem and favour and been worshipped as some kinds of demi-gods that they are loth, deep down in their hearts, to look with favour upon any position, recognition of which would dislodge them from their tower of authority. When this is not the case, such misconception is due to a historical accident in the West—we mean the identification of religion with mere beliefs and the Church.

Such a misconception about religion never obtained in India. Long before religion and philosophy were born elsewhere Vedanta pro-

claimed that Truth is beyond all limitations of matter, life, and thought. Man must go beyond human limitations, must free himself from the illusion that he is a lump of flesh or a psychological process, before he could know Truth, i.e., realize the essential character of one's personality. The quest of Truth is the quest for self-realization. Such realization takes man beyond all sorrow and solves all his problems. It is this realization which is the one ultimate goal of life, and it is this quest which gives meaning to all efforts on the lower planes as means to this Supreme Realization.

Religious creeds are no more than intellectual formulations of spiritual verities. Such beliefs have only 'practical' truth in the realm of the Spirit, as scientific laws possess 'technical' truth in the realm of matter. Nor do genuflexions, mumblings, sacrifices, and mutterings make religion. 'They are only good if they stimulate us to the brave performance of beautiful and heroic deeds, and lift our thoughts to the apprehension of the divine perfection.' Narada, in the story given above, mastered both philosophy and religion including the Vedas, the holiest of the holy scriptures. But such mastery meant an acquisition of mere descriptive knowledge, which is a symbol of reality. It was no knowledge of Truth by acquaintance. The Real to be known or realized must be grasped in an integral sweep of intuition (*aparokshanubhuti*). Religious creeds, like scientific hypotheses, are resting-places in the march towards Truth. The only function of a religion is to enable one to proceed along the way to spiritual Realization with the help of certain assumptions which intellect can grasp. As a matter of fact all our actions, whatever their sphere be, are the working out of certain tendencies, which proceed on the basis of certain fixed and static concepts, which intellect discovers upon analysis to be merely a *vyavahara*, or a pragmatic notion, that is to say, a provisional notion of practical validity. Not much thought is needed to grasp the truth of this. Take for example this 'I', which is the presupposition of all human activity. What does this 'I' yield to a critical

search? It is no more than a fiction, an *ideal* unity, arbitrarily imposed upon a stream of experiences and a bundle of tendencies. Yet we take it for granted all the same, for no *intelligent* action is possible without such an assumption. Similar is the case with the other concepts and categories which are convenient notions having speech-value and practical truth only.

Vedanta proclaims that religious creeds and scientific theories embody the method of working hypothesis on different levels of experience. Truth is one; it is seen to be many and different on the human level. The approach to absolute Truth lies through the integral method of intuition and not through the partial and discriminative process of the intellect. It must be an integral grasp of Truth and not an intellectual fragmentation or categorization of Reality. Even when a devotee prays in India to the Deity, he prays with the knowledge that Truth is beyond all limitations. Millions of persons in India pray every day: 'Thy greatness is beyond the reach of mind and speech. Who can exhaust the list of Thy qualities, or praise, or know Thee whom even the *Vedas* refer to with trepidation in the negative way as "Not this, not this"? Yet whose mind and speech do not turn to Thy lower state of form?' (*Shivamahimnah Stotram*, Hymn on the Greatness of Shiva, 2).

Vyasa prays to the Lord in the *Bhagavata*: 'O Lord! Though Thou art without form, I have imagined Thee in meditation as having form; I have negated the inexpressibility of the Teacher of all by hymns; and I have denied the all-pervasiveness of God by going on pilgrimage to holy places.

'O Lord of the Universe! Please forgive these three faults of mine, born of my limitations.'

## V

Mere information about facts does not tell us anything about their value, whether such information relates to the material or the spiritual realm. But both science and religion can



tell us much about the way of realizing our values. No simple logic, divorced from a conception of ends, can tell us that the good life is preferable to a selfish existence. Life is a quest after values, immediate and final. There are certain things pursuit of which does not raise any question as to their truth or the wisdom of the endeavour. A man feels hungry and eats, desires for a friend and makes one. And no philosopher dreams of springing upon him a query of the kind whether hunger and friendship, food and friend, are real objects or mere chimeras. Even if scientists, for whom no such realities exist, were to fling a question of this kind in the face of Mr Everyman, Mr Everyman will hardly be troubled by such a proposition. Far from leading to a doubt about the validity of his endeavours, it will rather arouse grave suspicions in his mind as to the sanity of the questioner. But if an individual, who is fed up with the childish nonsense of living a life of pleasure and fun, and who finds no joy in the daily monotonous round of eating, drinking, and money-making, thrills and excitements, social nonsense and political absurdities, turns away from all these and seeks in a life of renunciation and service the satisfaction for which his heart craves, the vast majority of mankind will look upon him as a queer creature and inwardly regard him as a fool running after illusions. Has not religion been called an illusion by the high-priests of modern psychology? But the common man or the man at the mere biological and mental level does not realize what devastating consequences such a logical examination of his little self and its self-propelling impulses will have, not for the belief of the spiritual seeker, but for his own assumptions and glorification of animal life.

The conflict which is supposed to exist between religion and science is discovered upon examination and precise definition of terms to be not between two sets of contradictory beliefs, but between two orders of values, between *preyas* and *shreyas*, the immediately pleasant and the Good. The man in whom the vital urge is too strong and whose personality has not been sufficiently refined by experience does not feel a strong craving for the higher life. So his logic follows his longing; and he will find out any amount of plausible arguments to deny the reality of the Spirit, which threatens to cut down his life of sense-enjoyment. The real problem before men of vision and knowledge is, therefore, not *so much* the need for the propagation of a true intellectualistic philosophy (it has its need of course), but how to change the state of mind of the common man so that he may be enabled to rise to a plane higher than that of simple biological existence.

The need of the present world is, therefore, a harmonization of the *practical* truths of religion with the *technical* truths of science upon the basis of the Vedanta. The knowledge of means must be wedded to a vision of the End. The spiritual longing visible among thoughtful persons all over the world is awaiting for the assurance of a faith able to meet the challenges of modern thought. Vedanta has already given the solution, for the problem is not something absolutely novel in character. The future peace and progress of humanity rests upon a synthesis of Vedanta and science, a synthetic view of the End and means. The helplessness of the modern man and his gradual awakening to a need for spiritual light encourage us to believe that we are at the turn of a new cycle of history, a new *satya yuga*. Blessed will be the individuals and societies and nations who will work for this end.

## REALIZATION OF GOD

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

The highest goal of human life is to realize God. And for the reason that realization of God is possible in human life only, human life is the highest life. Enjoyment of sense-pleasures and the rest can be had in other existences also. But God can never be realized in any existence except the human.

In the language of the philosopher the end of human life is declared to be the cessation of all sorrow and attainment of the Supreme Bliss. Though the manner of expression is different, there is no difference whatever in point of fact. That which is understood by the word God in the language of the devotee is referred to as the *Paramatman*, the Supreme Self, by the *yogi*; and the Seer points to the same object by the word *Brahman*. Therefore attainment of God, of Knowledge, or of Liberation, means the same thing, and there is no doubt that this alone is the final end of every man. You are wise and intelligent, so it is very natural and proper that you will feel the urge to realize this.

The natural law is that, what one desires one finds. The desired object is gained as soon as a sincere longing for it is felt. You have all heard that He is seen as soon as intense longing is felt for Him—so intense that life becomes unbearable without Him. Now if you can only bring this to happen you will attain the end. You must be absolutely devoted to Him in the heart of your hearts. Master (Sri Ramakrishna) used to say, 'Be diluted.'

'O son of Pandu, He who does My work, knows Me to be the Highest End, is devoted

to Me, is without desire for sense-objects, and is without enmity towards all beings, comes to Me.'

*Japa* (repetition of God's name) and meditation are no doubt necessary. But there is no guarantee that He will be attained through these alone. His grace is the only way to realize Him; there is no other means. Swami Vivekananda used to say; 'Is God fish or vegetable that I pay a price and buy Him? Is there a price for God so that you can realize Him by doing so much *japa* and so much meditation?' He is attained through His grace. His grace can be had if one can patiently wait at His door. I do not say this to discourage you. What I mean is this: Do as much *japa* and meditation as you can, but these become fruitful only if you can whole-heartedly resign yourself to Him. Be perfectly resigned and without worry by surrendering everything to Him. Move forward towards Him as much as you can. He will get all the rest done by you afterwards....

He fulfils all desires in time, if one can patiently wait at His door. It, however, pleases Him more if one can so wait without any desire whatever. 'There remains only the desire to know Thee. Quench that too, O Lord!'—so has Swami Vivekananda prayed.

'He whom the Self chooses realizes the Self. This Self reveals Its nature to Him alone' (*Katha Upanishad*, I. 2. iii., and *Mundaka Upanishad*, III. 2. iii)

# BUDDHI AND BUDDHIYOGA

BY ANIRVAN

(Continued from the January issue)

## II

*Buddhi* as a specific category in an enumeration of the ultimate realities occurs twice in the *Gita*, occupying each time a significant position in the beginning of the second and third hexateuchs. In the first case, it is a cosmic principle, heading the eightfold division of the creative evolutionary Nature of the Lord (*apara prakṛiti*), which expresses herself in the moving pageant of the manifest universe (*idam jagat*), and is sustained by His supreme Nature (*para prakṛiti*)—the eternal and conscient life-principle emanating from Him and working dynamically upon and inside nature.<sup>1</sup> In the second case, it is a psychological principle forming one of the constituents of the fluxional embodiment of the psychic entity (*śarīra*), which serves as the field of experience (*kṣhetra*) for the *jīva* and which is illumined by the light of the divine immanence.<sup>2</sup>

In both the cases, an emphasis has been laid on the experiential knowledge of the world of objective reality starting from the basic material principles and culminating in the experience of the Spirit transcending and yet impregnating all manifestations. The exact technique of the pursuit has not been detailed, but only the stages in the spiritual ascent have been indicated by a serial enumeration of the principles of reality, according to the time-honoured method of the Sankhya philosophy. In this scheme, *buddhi* occupies as usual the place between the Ego or the pseudo-self and the Nature—the one forming the focus of the manifestation of the Many, and the other pointing to the boundless horizon of the great Beyond. This peculiar position of the *buddhi* (even if we take it as

*upalabdhi* or a simple factor of awareness in the psychical apparatus) enables it by virtue of its natural freedom from egoistic pre-occupations, at once to stamp our fluctuating experience of the concrete with the reassuring mark of the abstract reality and by a reverse movement to prepare us gradually for the direct perception of the universal. In the evolution of the soul, *buddhi* thus becomes an essential vehicle (*sattva*)<sup>3</sup> for the development of the inner being and for the transmission of its acquired characteristics through the cycles of embodied existence.<sup>4</sup> As the first evolute, it necessarily contains within itself the potentialities of all further evolved principles and becomes involved in the downward trend of the evolutionary process. In this way, at any stage of the psychic development, it appears as the secret guiding power that determines our outlook on life,<sup>5</sup> and through apparent anomalies adjusts it to the total plan of world-becoming.

In this lower hemisphere of *prakṛiti*, where everything is oscillating between the buoyancy of illumination and the inertia of darkness, *buddhi* with its concomitant of *dhṛiti* or the fostering energy of tenacity is deployed into three types of personalities according to the three classical *gunas*. The *sattvika* type<sup>6</sup> is sustained by an uninterrupted sense of perfect equanimity and easy abandonment, which controls all the activities of the mental and the vital energizings. This equipoise, guaranteeing a quiet mastery over the demands of our objective preoccupations, turns the mind inwards and opens before us a wide vision of the

<sup>1</sup> *Gita*, VIII. 4.5 : XV. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Gita*, XIII. 1, 5-6, 33, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Sattva* has been widely used as a psychic entity forming the core of personality.

<sup>4</sup> *Gita*, VI. 43.

<sup>5</sup> *Gita*, XVII. 3, where *sattva* is equated with *buddhi*.

<sup>6</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 30, 33, 36, 37.

subtle workings of the cosmic nature in us. The result is the dawning of a capacity of intense discernment, which can safely steer our course between the conflicts of our extrovertive and introvertive impulses and decide for us the problems of ethical conduct. Its best contribution towards our psychic development lies in creating a sense of inner liberation supported by a feeling of fearlessness which is not daunted by the prospective disturbance of one's *status quo* in any sphere of existence. This is attended with a chastening of the emotions, so that the heart's only response towards all stimuli is in a quiet enjoyment of the upward stream of inner felicity started by the impulse of habitual introspection (*abhyasa*). Although the re-orientation of the emotions is an irksome task at the beginning as it means a death-blow to one's cherished habits of stereotyped responses, yet its diligent pursuit will win back in the end our shining heritage of immortal bliss unmarred by any possible recurrence of the usual sense of frustration and pain. The process is helped<sup>7</sup> by the development of a characteristic transparency (*prasada*)<sup>8</sup> in the Soul-substance and the *buddhi* lightening them up with the light of the clear void.

The second type of personality is the *rajasa*,<sup>9</sup> in which the driving force is a deep attachment to earthly ends and a passion for attaining some definite objective dictated by a narrow vision of life. The aim of existence is determined by a hankering for accumulation of materials for the satisfaction of one's blind desires. The ethical sense is not entirely absent, but it is blurred by a confused perception of the ultimate values and so is content with an undiscerning compliance with the code of established morality. The outlook on life being essentially ex-

<sup>7</sup> *Gita*, II. 64, 65.

<sup>8</sup> The idea of *prasada* is applied in the Buddhist philosophy to explain the origination of the senses from matter (*Visuddhimagga*, 14, 73); cf. *dhatuprasada* in the *Katha Upanishad* leading to the experience of the illimitable resplendence of the Self (I. 2. xx); *samprasada* or the light of the clear void described in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* (VIII. 6. iii; VIII. 11. i) and the *Brih. Up.* (IV. 3. xv).

<sup>9</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 31, 34, 38.

troverted, the lack of the sense of inner liberation is never regretted. The emotional content of such a personality is derived from an easy-going pursuit of sensuous pleasures, regardless of its due consequences on one's inner growth.

The third type is the *tamasa*,<sup>10</sup> characterized by a dullness of perception which cannot penetrate beyond the surface-values of things and yet clings with the obstinate tenacity of an infatuated egoism to what might have otherwise been counted upon as a negation of all meaning in life—a nightmare existence of fear, grief, and gloom, from which the soul finds it hard to wake up. The intellectual horizon is narrowed down by the gathering darkness of self-complacent ignorance, and the ethical vision is warped by an incurable perversity of nature born of a blinding ego-centricism. The only delight that such a temperament knows is in leading a soporific existence of blundering indolence, oblivious throughout of any higher mission of the soul.

These three types, which are thus described in an ideal isolation, actually appear in the world in different degrees of intermingling and assortment, their specific labelling being determined by the preponderance of one or other of the *gunas* in the make-up of an organism. In nature, where external flux is the inherent law, the position is always a fluid one, because no organized being (*sattva*), whether it partakes of the earth-nature or the god-nature, is really immune from the undulating influence of the *gunas*.<sup>11</sup> To a superficial view, this scheme of things may appear entirely mechanical, lending no justification to the human aspirations after the sublime heights. This would have been the case if *apara prakriti* had been the sole power of the ultimate Reality; but to it is linked the principle of soul-becoming as Supernature, the pivot on which turns the whole cosmic movement and which in its turn is moved by the Prime Mover according to the law of His divine wisdom (*maya*).<sup>12</sup>

The above account of the *buddhi* in the *Gita*,

<sup>10</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 32, 35.

<sup>11</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 40.

<sup>12</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 61.

specially in its psychological aspect, is largely descriptive in character and shorn of all metaphysical implications. The why of the evolution of the *prakṛiti* has been left out as an inscrutable mystery, only an attempt has been made to introduce a broad classification into the motley confusion of its results, in accordance with the accepted principles of *guna*-movements. But this has served the very useful purpose of awakening the dormant analytic reason in us, which as a potent function of the *sattvikī-buddhi* releases the urge towards the practical realization of a theoretically sifted truth. This is the typical Sankhya method of discrimination which is an essential preliminary to all solutions of the problems of existence. The sharp contrast between the *sattvikā* and the other types of personalities is a silent pointer towards the ideal of the final culmination of the discipline of knowledge attainable by a purification of the *buddhi* together with the cult of self-control through *dhṛiti*.<sup>13</sup> The relation between the *buddhi* as a psychological content of the individual *ḷshetra* and the cosmic aspect of the *buddhi* as a factor of the *apara prakṛiti* of the Lord is however not apparent at the first sight, though stress has been laid on the knowledge of both as an indispensable condition of attaining the supreme goal of existence.<sup>14</sup> Evidently the knowledge of the cosmic *buddhi* cannot be gained by simply conceiving it as a mathematical sum of the units of its individual manifestations, because the matrix 'producing a host of its own replicas, by its intrinsic nature of spontaneous productivity, must always contain an intellectually irreducible element of indeterminate potentiality. How to gain a direct experience of this *buddhi* and instal oneself permanently on its plane, so that one may act in practical life from a poise beyond good and evil,<sup>15</sup> is one of the cardinal problems of existence that has been propounded and solved by the *Gita*.

<sup>13</sup> *Gita*, XVIII. 50, 51.

<sup>14</sup> *Gita*, VII. 12 ; XIII. 34.

<sup>15</sup> *Gita*, II. 50.

### III

The problem makes its appearance at a moment when a crisis is imminent both in the moral and the material sphere. Whether the crisis is a historical fact and the solution advanced by the teachings of the *Gita* in a spirit of such lofty idealism has subsequently found expression in an unimpeachable conduct of its hero, may still be the subject of a lively dispute. But the whole thing is to be judged not by its modern historical method preoccupied with the surface value of empirical facts alone, but by the old historical sense of the *rishis*, to whom the true function of history (*itihasa-purana*) is to amplify and illustrate the findings of the eternal spiritual truths (*vedārtha*). History according to them should be selective in its procedure, and one of its chief characteristics should be to depict the innovations of universal thought-cycles (*manvantara*) on the vast canvas of cataclysmic world-process (*sarga* and *pratisarga*). Facts of personal life in this context assume a symbolic significance suggestive of the denouement of another vaster drama behind the surface, into which the spiritual sympathy of the present age too can have a profitable usherance. This universalization of the personal factor done with the consummate art of a rare poetic genius has given the episode of the *Gita* a novel kind of historical veracity and transfigured the crudities of material events into a spiritual drama of all times.

The moral crisis of Arjuna, the solution of which is avowedly the theme of the Lord's song, appears in the background of a greater social crisis foreshadowed by the inevitability of a terrible fratricidal war. And an unexpected shock for the meekly pious is that the Lord himself sanctions the war : the Sermon on the Battlefield forms a strange contrast to the Sermon on the Mount ! An attempt has often been made to tone down the grimness of this realistic background of the *Gita* either by ignoring wholesale the motive of its origination, or by giving an allegorical interpretation of this unpalatable business of war-making. Of course, the suggestion that Kurukshetra is the symboli-

cal venue of a spiritual contest between the powers of light and darkness, cannot entirely be ruled out; firstly because there has been a long-standing vedic tradition to that effect,<sup>16</sup> and secondly because such an interpretation, as has already been said, does not outrage the historical sense specifically evolved in this land. But still, the exhortation to a righteous fight (*dharma sangrama*) is so consistently interspersed throughout the *Gita*, and the Mimamsa canons of 'setting forth (*upakrama*), repetition (*abhyasa*), and winding up (*upasamhara*)' fit in so aptly in this case, that any interpretation without a due regard to this vital point is bound to miss the integrity and the spiritual depth of the Lord's message. Political warfare has not hitherto been an everyday occurrence, and the average mind looks upon the *Gita* simply as a guide of spiritual liberation (*mokshashastra*), which it surely is and much more; hence it has been easy not to visualize the terrible agony through which the soul of an Arjuna has to pass when he is unwittingly going to be made the agent of a cataclysm of baffling significance. The demand that has been made on his unilluminated *buddhi* is really exorbitant and at the same time relentless in its insistence.<sup>17</sup> The ideal of *ahimsa* in all its implications has not been lost sight of in the *Gita*; it has indeed been put forward as one of the essential conditions of Knowledge.<sup>18</sup> Arjuna has been calmly assured that he is fortunate enough to be born with a bent towards the divine aptitude (*daivi sampad*), one of the chief contents of which is

<sup>16</sup> Kurukshetra has been variously described as 'the sacrificial ground of the gods' (*Shatapatha Brahmana*, XIV, 1. i-ii; *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, V. 11), 'the altar of the Lord of Creation co-extensive with Earth-nature' (*Tandya Br.*, XXV. 13. iii), the holy land where grew the mystic *nyagrodha* tree, the first of its kind (*Aitareya Br.*, VII. 30). The *Rig-veda* speaks of Indra 'killing the ninety-nine Vritras with the bones of the Horse's Head which had been stowed away in the mountains and was found by him at Sharyanavat' (I. 84. 13-14). The *Shatyayana Br.* in this context (quoted by Sayana) speaks mysteriously of this Sharyanavat as 'a lake quivering at the bottom-end of Kurukshetra.' In the vedic tradition Kurukshetra is thus the double source of the *brahma* and the *kshatra* spirit.

<sup>17</sup> *Gita*, III. 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Gita*, XIII. 7.

*ahimsa*; and for that very reason he is asked not to grieve (*ma shuchah*), because he has to fight to kill!<sup>19</sup> Surely this is a bewildering demand upon the common run of mental intelligence and we, who are seldom in the thick of a catastrophic convulsion, can conveniently ignore 'the inexorable logic of facts,' which a Savyasachi as the Lord's elect has to face. But in the modern world, with the vaunted annihilation of time and distance, the battle of Kurukshetra is going to be a normal affair for how long none can tell; and with the propagation of democratic ideologies, the call to fight unrighteousness is tending to become universal. All the more reason that we wake up to the ancient Aryan ideal of integrating the spirit of *brahma* with that of *kshatra* and come to grips with reality in a spirit of sacrifice, clearing our *buddhi* from the accumulated confusion of ages brought about by lending too ready an ear to sophisticated utterances.<sup>20</sup>

The moral conflict that appears in Arjuna at a moment when things were taking a critical turn is as sudden as, it is unwarranted by any antecedents. The storm has been brewing for a long time and when all efforts at 'persuasion' failed, 'coercion' had become inevitable for upholding what was deemed a right cause. It was a known fact that the successful issue of the struggle depended largely on the valour of Arjuna; and his backing out at a critical juncture might very well blast the expectation of a war-monger, though it can as well be hailed as a case of 'conversion' by a pietist. The only clue to his strange behaviour is perhaps to be found in the reading of his character by Sri Krishna as one who is born with a bent towards *daivi sampad*, which has been described in detail as an ideal of discipline leading to spiritual liberation (*vimoksha*). But the prescription of this ideal, as has already been noted, is specifically meant there as an incentive to the *kshatra*-spirit which should fearlessly and without nursing any personal sense of 'grief' accept the challenge thrown out by the *asura* forces of creation. In the long and graphic description

<sup>19</sup> *Gita*, XVI. 2, 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Gita*, II. 52, 53.

of the *asura* temperament that follows, desire, anger, and greed have been pointed out as its characteristic motives, and those who follow this demoniac bent have significantly been dubbed as persons of 'scant illumination' (*alpa-buddhi*),<sup>21</sup> possessing the *rajasa* type of *buddhi* mentioned later on. Kurukshetra is thus literally the eternal battleground of the two forces *daiva* and *asura*, *sattvika* and *rajasa*; and the hero of this fight is 'the fearless *sattvika* champion of truth burning with the fiery zeal' of a *kshatriya*.<sup>22</sup> A crisis may appear in his life, if the balance between the dynamisms of *brahma* and *kshatra* nature working in perfect unison in his character is disturbed either way. If the characteristic *kshatra* trait of *ishvarabhava* (spirit of self-assertive lordliness) devoid of

*dama* (self-control) gains the upper hand, the hero will be yielding to the temptations of *asura* forces 'ruthless in their workings and perniciously leading the world to havoc and ruin.'<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, if the spirit of *kshanti* (forbearance) unduly preponderates in him over *tejas* at a critical moment, it may place him in a worse predicament of *tamasa* nature, ultimately inviting the very dark forces which he had sought to defeat by his passivity. The irony of the situation is that, while in the former case the consequences, being too patent and familiar to the mental intelligence, are immediately censured by it as due to the screening of the moral judgement by 'delusion born of *avidya*,' in the latter case 'the delusion of *vidya*' becomes a denser darkness through which the limited mental vision cannot look beyond. It is this frustration of the mental intelligence groping in confusion at the dissolution of all its cherished values of life and crying for an illumination from a higher plane—the plane of *buddhi*—that is at the root of the moral and spiritual crisis of the hero of Kurukshetra.

(To be continued)

<sup>21</sup> *Gita*, XVI. 4, 7-19, 21. The passages read like an accurate and minute description of the hydra-headed fascist tendencies springing up at home and abroad.

<sup>22</sup> *Abhaya*, *sattvasamshuddhi*, *tejas*, and *dhriti* included in the *daivi sampad* (*Gita*, XVI. 1, 3). Cf. XVIII. 43, where intrepidity together with *tejas* and *dhriti* has been described as the natural expression of the dynamism of a *kshatra* temperament; *daivi sampad* combines in itself both the *brahma* and the *kshatra* ideals. Cf. XVIII. 43-44 with XVI. 1-3.

<sup>23</sup> *Gita*, XVI. 9.

## SOME ASPECTS OF INDIAN AND WESTERN MUSIC

BY DR. A. A. BAKE, M.A. (OXON.), D.LITT.

Water parted from the Sea  
May increase the rivers' tide  
To the babbling fount may flee  
Or through fertile valleys glide.

Though in search of lost repose  
Through the land 'tis free to roam  
Still it murmurs as it goes  
Panting for its native home.

I do not know in which context the words of this song occur in Arne's opera *Artaxerxes*, but

by themselves I am always tempted to take them in a symbolical sense in that the water is a symbol of the human soul in search of its native home, God, the Sea of the first line. The water's murmur, while panting for its native home, then suggests music to me, for in music I feel first and foremost man's longing for eternity. It is true that the water in its search for its native home, does happen to get to other places than fertile valleys, babbling fountains or rivers which carry it straight to the sea. Sometimes it gets into stinking marches where

it would be difficult to recognize the longing for its native home in its tricklings and gurglings. Still, even jazz, first and foremost an expression of the longing for fulfilment of sexual desires, can in a way be taken as the same longing on a different level.

But, breaking away from this imagery, music has in all times and climes been considered as a powerful means to establish contact with the other world. Hence it takes a prominent part in almost every form of religion, primitive or highly developed. Looking at India first, we see that this function of music has been very definitely recognized both in theory and in practice and that music is a powerful means to break the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

It is no more than natural that the sages of old were very well aware that not every kind of music can render this service. Music is divided by them into *marga* and *deshi*, and it is only *marga* music that is taken into consideration in this aspect. Personally I think that by denying all liberating powers to the second main division, the *deshi* music, the writers of old have committed a grave error and done a great injustice—as I hope to point out later. There is, however, no doubt that the obvious choice for spiritual values is the *marga* music, designated especially with the epithet, *vimuktida*—bestowing liberation. This quality of bestowing liberation can be taken away from specially music connotations and be considered philosophically, in which case it fits in very well in the general picture of Indian philosophy. There is the notion of *nada*, sound, which has two aspects : first (S. D. L. 12), *Gitam nadatmakam*—vocal music is pure sound, and then,

*Nadena vyajyate varnah padam varnat,  
padad vachah*

*Vachaso vyavaharo 'yam nadadhinam ato  
jagat* (S. D. I. 14).

By sound the letter is formed, by letters the syllable, by syllables the word, by words the law. Consequently the world is dependent on sound. By implication, since vocal music is pure sound we conclude that there must be a connection between the order of the world and music—especially vocal music—too.

But there is the more important metaphysical aspect as well. That is the double nature of sound, as *ahata* and *anahata*, struck and unstruck, and it is the unstruck or unmanifested sound which is the essence of this universe, Shiva in its transcendent and the syllable *om* in its immanent form.

*Tatranahatam nadam tu munayah samupasa*

*Guroopadishtamargena muktidam na tu  
ranjakam* (S. D. 16).

*Sa nadas tavahato loke ranjako bhava-  
bhanjakah* (S. D. 17).

There the unstruck sound is revered by the wise after the fashion prescribed by the guru, bestowing liberation, but not for enjoyment.

The sound which is struck, however, serves for enjoyment in this world and for breaking the cycle of birth.

Here we see the primordial sound—in essence indistinguishable from the Divine Creator of the Universe as an object for adoration only, whereas its manifestation can be used just for pleasure, but may also, if properly understood, be made an instrument of liberation.

It follows naturally that if one realized the connection and properly established the contact between the manifested and the unmanifested sound one put oneself into immediate contact with the very basis of existence and so opened the way to liberation, which means but the merging into the essence of creative power.

This contact can be established, according to later convictions, by instrumental music.

*Vinavadanatattvajnah shrutijativisharadah  
Talajnas cha prayasena mokshamargam sa  
gacchati* (S. D. I. 32).

He who thoroughly knows the art of *vina* playing and is an expert in the subject of *shrutis* and *jatis* and knows the times as well, that person is without effort on the way to deliverance.

But it is more in keeping with the nature of Indian music as such which is primarily vocal, and with the theory of sound I have just indicated, that the combination of *nada* in its aspect of letters and words with its aspect as vocal music, should be a much more powerful means



than instruments to establish the desired contact with the essence of creation. And that is actually what we find in the oldest times. The whole essence of the Vedic chants, the core of the sacrifices, is just this very combination of words and music, and its aim is precisely (as I have indicated above) the establishing of contact with the essence of creative power. Vedic chanting, whether *Rig*, *Yajus* or *Saman* is *always* the intoning of words and syllables with greater or lesser elaboration. By establishing this contact the order of this world and the Universe was maintained.

The simplest and most direct form of recitation is the *Rig*, where the text is intoned strictly in accordance with three accents, probably the crystallization of the actual melody of speech in those very ancient times. These accents, *udatta*, *anudatta* and *svarita*, have their counterparts in the accents of ancient Greek and Latin where, however, we have no continuous tradition up to our days, as in India, to give us an idea how they sounded. Seeing the extreme cosmic importance of correct recitation, the chances that the tradition in India has deviated but little from the original custom are very great. The *Rig-Veda* is chanted very widely all over India even now.

Whereas in the *Rig-Veda* it is the words themselves that dictate the melodic line, in the *Sama-Veda* the roles are reversed and it is the exigencies of the melody that rule the pronunciation of the words. Its sacrificial, or one might say liturgical, importance is correspondingly greater; its use in daily ceremonies correspondingly smaller. Hence the comparative rarity of *Sama-Veda*. The large sacrifices and offerings at which this *Veda* is indispensable occur but very seldom and only in places where the orthodox tradition has been kept purest and strongest, in our days in South India more than anywhere else.

It is true that in the use of the music of the *vedas* the direct aim of *vimukti* or *mokṣa* is not immediately in evidence. Its general aim seems more to be to uphold than to escape the order of existing things. But in any case it is the means to establish contact with the powers

of the Divinity in whichever form the Godhead be worshipped and to obtain powers which bring the individual in line with the gods, if not above them.

This aspect of music as a vehicle of power to work for good (or evil) is found in the religious systems beside and outside the Vedic sphere in India. The *mantra*—the intoned chant—is a terrifically powerful means also in Buddhism and especially in the different *tantrik* schools. To give an example of the former. No auspicious occasion in Ceylon can be celebrated without the *Jayamangala Stotra* in Pali. Also, or perhaps not just also but inevitably so, Tibetan Buddhism with its strongly magical tendencies makes an overwhelming use of chanted *mantras* in its ceremonies—with or without accompaniment of instruments. Even outsiders very often cannot escape feeling the influence of the strong atmosphere created by the deep voices chanting their incantations.

Of the *tantrik mantras* and their way of chanting I could give you an example, as I actually have been able to take a record of some instances. But I had to promise solemnly not to sing them myself or play the record except in front of one special scholar for whom the record was intended. The paramount importance of the chanting itself, as distinguished from the actual words, speaks clearly from this instance, because the words of the *mantras* in question are common property having been printed and published. About them there is consequently no special secrecy at all. Their real spiritual value and power lies in the intoning. The words by themselves, read or spoken, have no significance from the point of view of spiritual power.

Now all these instances from the vedic chanting onwards definitely belong to what the theoretical texts would call *marga*, but as I said at the beginning, the other division mentioned in the theoretical texts, *deshi*, has been done an injustice by the authors of old who define it as follows:

*Tattaddeshasthaya ritya yat syallokanuran-  
jakam*

*Deshe deshe tu sangitam, tat deshityabhi-*

*dhiyate* (S. D. I. 5—6).

That *sangita* which in the different countries serves for the enjoyment of the people according to the custom of the land is called *deshi*.

When looking at Indian music as a whole, we find that the term *vimuktidam* might be given to a great many forms of music, outside the circle of *marga* in so far as music is being used as a means to bring oneself nearer to the Divinity. From the earliest times onwards and in all parts of India, the South as well as the North, the great help of music in devotion has been realized by the common people themselves. Endless is the procession of Hindu and Muslim saints who have sung their message to their followers: Purandaradas, Tukaram, Tulsidas, Mira Bai, Guru Nanak, Kabir and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are some names that suggest themselves almost involuntarily. It is here that the orthodox theory has belittled the value of *deshi* music to which the entire musical output of these great saints and singers belongs. This kind of music cannot by any means be said to serve for the enjoyment of the people of the different provinces. The spiritual value of it is immeasurable and enduring, and certainly also able to bring people nearer to salvation in God, whether that can be called *moksa* in a technical sense or not.

A remarkable feature of this music of the people is the importance of the words in combination with the music, in which it differs widely from most well-known forms of classical music, where the words have practically no importance against the flood of musical ornamentation that constitutes the song. In the songs of the saints—with the possible exception of the way of presenting the compositions of Tyagaraja in the South—the words and melody are admirably balanced and the melody serves to intensify the meaning and message of the words. Even in the most elaborate development in this kind of music, the *lilakirtan* of Bengal, this intimate connection between words and melody has not been lost sight of. The whole interplay between the poem and the *akshars* is based upon the contrast between the words of the basic poem in their original and archaic form

and the commentary in everyday language. The linguistic contrast is reflected in a subtle and fascinating musical dialogue which opens the way for the expression of individual feeling without doing harm to the original contents. Altogether a remarkable development peculiar to the genius of Bengal.

In modern times no one has understood the intimate connection between words and music and the deeply spiritual value of the melody so well as Rabindranath Tagore. His lyrical poems are in reality all to be sung to melodies which he composed himself, as all the poet-singers did before him. It is really impossible to understand the deepest value of his poems without knowing the tune. As the poet himself expresses it: 'My poems without their melodies are like butterflies without wings,' which indicates that it is the melody which makes the words soar above the everyday world. Actually in more than one passage in his works he has explicitly said that it is in the melody of a song—'in an unheeded strain of melody,' as he calls it once, that the voice of the Divine power can be heard as by surprise. I shall give you one instance of a song of Tagore's which deals with this very aspect. The melody is inspired by the songs of the *Bauls*, wandering mystical singers of Eastern Bengal—another group of seekers after the ultimate Truth who sing their message.

The translation runs as follows:

Where is my real Self? I wander in search of it. Where is this Self of mine? He who wanders, ever wanders in the land of shadows, in different forms and guises. Will his manifestation in grief and joy ever be complete? Who can tell? Where is this Self of mine?

I have heard its voice in the deepest heart of my song. I have sought its dwelling but cannot find it.

Time passes, the light grows dim. What does that flute on the road, playing its evening time, tell me?

Where is this Self of mine?

In this connection one must naturally take into consideration the ultimate identity of the innermost Self with the sole Creator of the

Universe. So we see that in India from the earliest Vedic times right through the ages to our own contemporary Rabindranath Tagore, the spiritual power of music has been fully recognized in classical as well as in folk music.

Now let us see what the West has to compare with this strong and all-prevailing Indian conviction.

Parallel with the philosophical construction in which sound—*nada*—is really the basis of the Universe, which I mentioned at the beginning, we see the Pythagorean theory in Greece which influenced philosophic modes of thinking all through the ages up to the time of Schopenhauer.

I am quoting from Grey's *History of Music* (page 260) : "To a great extent the Pythagorean philosophy of nature was based upon the theory of the laws of sound. . . . Indeed the fundamental doctrine—that everything is in essence number—was most strikingly borne out by the mathematical basis and the numerical relation of musical intervals. Similarly the recognition of a prevailing system and order regulating the movements of and distance between the planets gave rise to the belief that 'what the eye sees in observing the stars, the ear perceives in concord of tones.' Plato indeed tells us that the Pythagoreans considered harmony and astrology as two sister sciences. To say that all things are a number was equivalent to saying that all things are a harmony, that the Universe is a harmony. The final stage in identification was the curious cosmogonical theory of the 'Harmony of the Spheres, which rested on the notion that as every body in rapid motion produces a musical tone, this must also be the case with the heavenly bodies. And so the Pythagorean philosophy arrived in the end at the conception of the seven planets—corresponding with the seven strings of the lyre—revolving in space and sounding the seven notes of the musical scale in the heavenly heptachord."

With regard to the function of music in upholding the established order—be it in a social rather than in a religious sense—we find Plato (Grey, page 262) 'attributing to music an even

greater subversive power than to any of the other arts. For while they are imitations of actual phenomena according to him, music is the imitation of mental and spiritual states. Any musical invention is dangerous to the state and ought to be prevented—when modes change, the fundamental laws of the state change with them.'

But to find the parallel to the spiritual importance of music in India we have to turn to the Christian era in which we find the fullest realization of this vital aspect of the art. In the first place, of course, there is the practice of plainsong or Gregorian chant, the original way of celebrating Holy Mass in the Christian Church, developed from features dating back long before the division into the Eastern, Orthodox Church and the Church of Rome. Its essence is the combination of words and tone, and its aim the establishing of contact with the very source of Divine Creative energy and spiritual life.

There is a remarkable parallelism between the Vedic practice and plainsong, where the chanting of the *Rig* and the singing of the *Sama-veda* corresponds with the reciting and singing of the Latin texts in 'accentus' and 'concentus' respectively. Also the *Stobhas* of the *Sama-veda* are closely comparable to the elaborate Jubilate in Gregorian chant. But above all, it is the extreme importance of the chant in the religious structure of the Catholic Church which compels the attention. This importance is summed up in the words of the French author, Huysmans, quoted by Grey (p. 24) : 'The real creator of plainsong, the unknown author who has sown the seed of plainsong in the human mind is the Holy Ghost.'

It is worthy of note that changes in plainsong are realized to be pernicious. For centuries it did continue unchanged but gradually new developments and changes did occur and the whole structure changed beyond recognition. The idea of the intoned word was pushed into the background by even more elaborate melodic and harmonic structures. Repeatedly the highest clerical authorities raised their voices in

admonition, and even in very modern times this tendency has been condemned most strongly again by the words of Pope Pius X: 'The more closely a composition approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour to the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple' (Grey p. 36-37).

There is indeed food for thought here, that two religions so widely apart in time and outlook as the ancient Vedic and the Roman Catholic should have realized the supreme spiritual value of a certain and very special use of the human voice unaided by musical instruments and should have developed a system that shows such striking similarities.

Comparable with the value attached to music in other religious spheres in India are the utterances we find all through the middle ages. To quote only a few, not immediately referring to plainchant: 'Rhabarus Maurus said that music was the key to divine wisdom, and Boethius that without the aid of music it was impossible to attain truth. St. Thomas Aquinas called it the first among the seven arts and the noblest of all sciences' (Grey p. 265).

After the Middle Ages we have but to look at two great musicians, William Byrd in England in the sixteenth century who says: 'The better the voice is, the better it is to honour and serve God therewith, and the voice of Man is chiefly employed to that end.' *Omnia Spiritus laudet Dominum.*

'Since singing is so good a thing

I wish all men would learn to sing';

and Bach in eighteenth century Germany with his pronouncement, 'Music is a harmonious euphony to the Glory of God.'

Also outside the sphere of religion people came to realize certain aspects of the combination of words and tone as a powerful means of creating the desired atmosphere. Early in the seventeenth century musicians, fondly believing that they recreated the mode of execution of the ancient Greek tragedies, evolved a form of music generally considered to be the origin of modern opera, called *Dramma per Musica*—

drama by means of music. In this form of art the sole aim of the music was to heighten the atmosphere of the words. The voice was used in an elaborate reciting style with the utmost regard for the sense and accentuation of the text.

They had no spiritual tradition to guide them but sometimes obtained remarkable results in that direction apart from the great, purely musical, beauty they created in many cases. There exists a testimony, written more than a hundred years after the inauguration of this new style, from the composer Tartini, himself known as a violin—not as a vocal—composer. (Oxford Camp. t. Music, p. v. 'recitatives'). He writes in 1714: 'In the fourteenth year of the present century in the Drama that was performed at Ancona, there was at the beginning of the third act a line of recitative accompanied by no instrument but the basses. By this passage both performers and listeners were thrown into such a state of commotion of spirit that they looked the one into the face of the other, struck by the change of colour they saw.

'The sense was not one of complaint. (I remember very well that the words were disdainful) but of a certain rigour and coldbloodedness that disturbed the very soul. Thirty times was that drama performed and always with the same universal effect.'

Still it was not the opera, inaugurated about 1600, that made the discovery in the West of the importance of music for the lifting of poetry above the sphere of everyday life, outside plainchant and the Mass. Perhaps it may be called a rediscovery at the most. Centuries before the creation of opera a leading troubadour had said, 'My poems without their music are like a mill without water.' Whose thoughts do not turn immediately to Tagore's saying, 'My poems without their melodies are like butterflies without wings'? So we see, examining India and the West, that both have recognized the immense spiritual value of music all through the course of history, and, what is even more remarkable, that in many instances they have discovered the same truths for themselves and have arrived at similar expressions.

This may go perhaps to strengthen the conviction found so strongly and so often here in India—a conviction of which Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was so great an adherent—that when things concern the very basis of spiritual life differences will tend to vanish and the utterances will assume a similarity which comforts the hearts of all earnest seekers.

## GREATER INDIA—ITS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

BY DR NANDALAL CHATTERJI

At the dawn of history, the peoples of India swept "the seven seas" from Australia and America in the east to Africa and Europe in the west, but, strangely enough, the fact is not generally known at the present day. It was only in recent times that research and excavation brought to light some of the forgotten aspects of India's racial migrations in the ancient world; and it is a pity that our knowledge of this subject is still far from complete.

In the pre-historic times, races such as the Negritos and the Proto-Australoids had drifted through India eastwards in the course of a vast racial dispersion, but India's foreign colonization did not begin until probably the latter part of the second millennium B. C., when the impact of Aryan culture on that of other racial groups like the Mediterraneans, the Alpo-Dinarics, and the Mongoloids had begun to shape what ultimately became the composite Hindu culture of Ancient India. This colonial activity is still only vaguely known, but there is no doubt about the fact that the progress of world civilization in that age was in no small measure due to the growth of the Greater India of the ancient times.

The character of this Hindu colonial enterprise was far different from that of the movement which has been seen in more recent times in connection with the growth of European colonial power. The Indian colonists settled and intermarried with the local peoples and did not maintain any colour or racial bar, nor did they aim at the expansion of the territorial or military power of the mother country.

Having migrated for reasons of trade or missionary zeal, they merged themselves into the local populations and became an integral part thereof. In this manner, they civilized and humanized the backward peoples of that age by spreading their culture wherever they went and settled. It was civilization, and not exploitation, which was the goal of the ancient Indian colonists.

About three thousand years ago, the Indians had begun to settle in East and South-East Asia where they set up independent Hindu colonies. The history of these colonies would read like a fable to-day, but the surviving inscriptions and monuments bear eloquent testimony to the achievements of the Indian colonists in those by-gone days. A few illustrations may now be cited. The Indians colonized Ceylon in about the fourth century B.C., and settled in Burma and Siam at about the same time. The celebrated Hindu colony of Champa is known to have existed in Annam in the first century A.D. Prior to this, the Indians had established a colony in Cambodia where magnificent relics of Indian art still survive. Java and *Suvarnadwipa* or Malay Peninsula and the islands of Sumatra, Bali, and Borneo were likewise colonized in the same period. Much earlier than this, far-off lands like Peru and Mexico are believed to have come under Aryan influence, where the Aryan settlers inspired the indigenous Inca, Aztec, and Maya cultures. So thorough was the colonization in at least South-East Asia that well-known Indian place-names were re-

introduced in the newly settled tracts hundreds of miles away from India, and so we come across new editions of Champa, Kamboja, Gandhara, Kalinga, Mathura, Ayodhya, Kausambi, Dwaravati, Vijaypur and Amara-vati.

The colonizing activity of the Indians was not confined to the east alone, for they founded settlements from Afghanistan and Central India to Western Asia up to the Mediterranean and the Caspian Seas, where Hindu gods and temples were well known several centuries before Christ. They went as far as the coasts of Africa and the North Sea in Europe. This colonial activity received an added impetus from the missionary zeal of Asoka and Kanishka, in whose times Buddhists from India settled in all parts of the ancient world. The archaeological explorations of Sir Aurel Stein in Central Asia have shown the existence of ancient Indian colonies in that region, for he found in the sands of the Central Asian deserts traces of cities which were peopled by Indians more than two thousand years ago. Texts in Indian script and language, coins with Indian legends, images of Hindu gods like *Ganesha* and *Kubera*, and relics of Indian sculpture and architecture discovered in Central Asia remind us of a Greater India that is scarcely even a memory to-day. Even during the centuries following the Christian era, we find Indian colonists carrying their civilization to Mongolia, Siberia, China and Japan on one side and to the whole of Western Asia and Africa on the other. This colonial enterprise continued unabated until the advent of Muslim rule.

Even after the coming of the Muslim conquerors, the old Hindu kingdoms in the Far East maintained their existence for several centuries onwards. Obviously, the cultural sway of Hindu civilization was deeper than mere political hegemony. This is borne out by the wonderful remains of Hindu art like the temples of Angkor-Vat in Cambodia and the famous Boro-Budur in Java, which may be reckoned among the finest monuments of the world. Hindu dynasties ruled in some of these

Far Eastern kingdoms as late as the middle of the 15th century A.D. And, despite their final disappearance, Hindu culture has continued to influence the life and culture of South-East Asia and Indonesia to this day. Hinduism and Buddhism are yet alive in some parts, and the Indian epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* still inspire the local songs and dances, plays and festivals.

That the fountain-head of Indian colonial enterprise slowly dried up in medieval times is hardly surprising, for a number of circumstances were responsible for this. First, the advent of Islam in South-East Asia weakened the former cultural links of the Indian colonies with India. Second, these colonies were bound to decline with the stoppage of support from the mother country. Third, the exits from India both on the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal were barred by Muslim rulers. Fourth, the old missionary zeal which had been the chief motive force of early colonial activity died out with the decline of Buddhism in India. The new Hindu faith which absorbed the gospel of the Buddha did not favour proselytism or foreign propaganda. Fifth, India's life became more and more rigid, and Hindus considered it a sin to cross the seas. Sixth, the Muslim rulers were too preoccupied with the tasks of defence and consolidation to find time for colonial expansion. Seventh, the competition of the Arabs and subsequently of the Portuguese in sea-borne trade also discouraged Indian sea-faring and colonial activity. Lastly, the neglect of sea power by the Indian rulers was another factor that retarded India's maritime progress.

After suspension for some centuries, Indian emigration to foreign lands was revived once again in the early part of the 19th century when the abolition of slavery in the British colonies created a demand for Indian labour. The emancipation of the negro slave forced the European planters of the West Indies and other colonies to turn to India as a handy recruiting ground for cheap labour. Mauritius led the way, and large-scale Indian emigration began there in 1834. Indian labourers similarly went to Trinidad in 1844, to Jamaica in 1845, to Natal

in 1860 and to islands like Granada, St Lucia, and St Vincent in about the same period.

This new phase of Indian emigration was at first neither uninterrupted, nor unopposed. The number of emigrants was comparatively small, and their influx was looked upon with disfavour by the champions of anti-slavery movement. Excessive mortality among the Indian labourers due to bad sanitary arrangements on the voyages or in the plantations discouraged the flow of emigration. Besides, the unsatisfactory conditions of labour as well the unsuitability of the immigrant for much of the work that was expected of him further interrupted large-scale emigration and even led to its suspension for a number of years in colonies like Natal, Jamaica, and Trinidad.

The principal characteristics of this emigration were that it was solely for the supply of labour and that it had official backing both in India and in the colonies concerned. The labourer had to give an undertaking to work for a fixed term in lieu of a fixed wage and the cost of his passage. After the expiry of this term, he had the option to sign a fresh contract, or stay on as a free settler, or claim a free return passage to India. This formed the basis of what was known as the *indenture* system of emigration. The system was on the whole oppressive, and was usually abused by the colonial employers who cared little for the welfare of the ignorant Indian labourer. And, beyond persuasion, the Government of India had no other means to safeguard Indian interests.

The problem of emigration became a live issue in India with the opening of the present century. The circumstances which made it so were, firstly, the complaints which the Indian industrialists made about the shortage of labour in India itself; secondly, the severity of the labour laws and the iniquities of the anti-Asiatic legislation in the colonies provoked natural resentment; thirdly, the growth of national consciousness made Indians resentful of any attitude of racial superiority towards them; fourthly, the manifold evils of the

*indenture* system roused public opinion in India and abroad; and, lastly, the ill-treatment of free Indians in foreign countries and in the self-governing dominions stiffened the public feeling against the whole emigration system which the well-known Indian leader, G. K. Gokhale, once described as 'monstrous', 'iniquitous', and 'opposed to modern sentiments of justice and humanity.' In short, public opinion in India looked upon the *indenture* as a badge of racial helotry, and the Government of India had ultimately to abolish it in 1916.

The history of Indians overseas thereafter has been mainly the history of a long and bitter struggle in America and in the British dominions like Canada, Australia, and South Africa for reciprocity and equality. Mahatma Gandhi's passive resistance against racial discrimination in Natal marked the beginning of an Indian protest movement which is still on foot, despite India's appeal to the U.N.O.

A number of factors have contributed to the growth of this anti-Indian feeling abroad. One is the exaggerated dread of an Asiatic invasion. Another is the pressure of economic competition of the Indian who, given equal opportunities, could beat the European both in trade and in farming. Still another is the fear that the influx of orientals would lower the economic standards of the white colonists. Again, the Indian settler's demand for municipal and political franchise is looked upon as a potential threat to white domination. Finally, the white man's antipathy to anything approaching equality with the coloured races heightens the hostility born of economic competition.

The problem of the Indian colonists abroad, who ask only for a fair field and no favour, is ultimately one of inter-racial fellowship. No greater calamity can menace the post-war world than any additional aggravation of its existing divisions upon the basis of colour and race. If India has raised her voice today against unjust racialism abroad, she has done so only to vindicate the principles which govern the charter of the United Nations Organization.

# ROUTES TO SURREALISM

BY YVES DUPLESSIS

## 1. HUMOUR

The poets and artists who wished to shake off the yoke of traditions rushed into the domain of imagination. Freed from the constraints of logic, they soared to the fairyland of dreams and fancies. Still, those alone who rebelled against human limitations could plunge into the marvellous.

The meanness and absurdities of the world revealed by existence could not but make it ridiculous and comic in the eyes of those who aspire to the infinite. Before tracing a new path it is necessary to demolish and destroy the old, and laughter is the best weapon to break the crust of hypocrisy. Is it not a privilege that power should manifest itself in a burst of laughter to free us from social constraints and limitations? It is thus that Satan conducts the ball and the surrealists delve in the depths of the subconscious.

Humour is characteristic of one who isolates himself from the mass of people and plays the role of a spectator. It implies a great self-control, and if it is a type of mind particularly British, it is due to the phlegm of the people, which gives them the resilience necessary to have a knowledge of how to dominate events. Humour, in this sense, is the standpoint of the man who looks at the agitations of the world from above. But to emphasize the ridiculous and caricature the conventional leads to the revolt against, and the destruction of, the established order. From the time of Freud, humour appears clearly as a metamorphosis of the spirit of insubordination, a refusal of the conventional forms of adaptation and participation, a comical expression of despair. Humour is not merely the mark of a mind which does not allow itself to be carried off and submerged by events, but it has also a positive side, because it expresses the will of the self which will not

submit to a wrong or suffer from causes emanating from reality. In making it invulnerable to the blows of the external world 'we should see that they become even occasions of pleasure.' Freud has given the example of the convict led to the gallows on a Monday morning exclaiming, 'Here is a week that has begun well.' We attribute to this sort of mild pleasure that saves us from the waste necessitated by sorrow a character of high value, and we feel that it is specially fitted to liberate and exalt us, though we do not quite well know the reason. That is why Father Ubu escapes from realities breaking through the totality of unknown, unconscious, and compressed forces in the subconscious, of which the conventional self is only an emanation. Humour, then, enables man to reveal vital and suppressed forces, sweeping everything in its path. Hence it is the attitude of revolt, the starting-point of the ways of access to surreality. 'To feel the vanity and the absurdity and the unreality of everything is to feel one's own uselessness. Then one should be either destroyed or transformed and transcended by a substantial negation. The creed of Vache has worn itself out and Dada has become surrealism. Surrealism goes, of right, to the interdicted zone.'

Rationalism would not admit that type of mind which overthrows and destroys order, law, classification, and conquest of the original chaos. Maldoror is the best representative of that type.

Poetry, which alone can 'represent the successive situations of life', does not contribute more to humour than painting. Meanwhile, this latter was conceived as a means of the expression of the internal life, giving birth to humourist works like those of M. Ernst, among which there is nothing more accomplished or exemplary than the three romances in pictures: the woman without head; the dream of a little



girl who desires to enter the Carmelite Order ; and a week of goodness of the seven principal elements.

But it is the cinema that has become the choice field of humour. The sprightly designs of the American comic films have had the effect of suggesting to spectators a new reality where the comic element and the most unexpected meetings of eccentric objects have triumphed.

A. Artand, who considers humour as a means of the liberation of the instinctive powers of the human being, was of opinion that *Animal Crackers*, the first film of the Marx Brothers, was a veritable revelation. It realized, by means of the screen, 'a special kind of magic which the customary relations of words and pictures do not usually reveal.' If it be admitted that a characteristic state, a distinct poetic height, of the mind can be called surrealism, the film, *Animal Crackers*, entirely belongs to it. To the humour of the film is added 'the notion' of something disquieting or tragic, a fatality (neither happy nor unhappy and hence difficult to define) which insinuates itself into it like the revelation of an odious disease on a profile of absolute beauty. Humour, then, is not only a negative attitude, corrosive of reality, but it also substitutes for it a novel universe where everything is new to the spirit which ventures therein. Thus in *Monkey Business*, it is only after a series of the frolics of clowns that 'all things and objects, animals, sounds, the master and his servants, the host and the guests, become complicated and exasperated, kick one another and revolt, under the ecstatic and lucid exposition of one of the Marx Brothers, created by the fancy which he has let loose, and of which he himself seems the stupefied and passing commentary.' Such films as those, in which there is the exercise of a sort of intellectual freedom where the unconscious element of each of the personages, constrained by conventions and usages, revenges itself and us, altogether belong to the category of humour. *Monkey Business* can be considered as a hymn to anarchy and full revolt.

Humour is thus indispensable to those who

wish to detach themselves from their limited horizon ; it is the characteristic of the world of the unexpected and the fantastic. It goes far beyond originality and caprice as well as beyond satire, caricature, and derision so as to become within its limits a veritable power to create a new world by paralogistic means, that is, by taking recourse to paradoxes and absurdities.

Humour destroys that which appears to us as the reality, it disconcerts the mind by the unforeseen and unexpected ; and in detaching it from its habitual horizon, it prepares the mind to catch a glimpse of another reality, that is, surreality. The surrealists are not content with merely destroying like the Dadas ; they want also to construct and be positive. Reason and logic should submit to imagination, which enables us to penetrate into a world rich in images and phantasies. Surrealism makes us leave this utilitarian world, where self-interest is the great motive, so as to land us in the world of the marvellous, a fairy land. That is why surrealism will be the function of our will to transport us completely from our accustomed world. A statue placed in a pit has another value than when it is placed on a pedestal ; in the same way as a hand separated from the shoulder changes its meaning, so by detaching objects from their current use, we give them another aspect. In imagination unforeseen relations of an anomalous reality appear.

To attribute to objects a fictitious and disconcerting significance is not a joke ; it implies a philosophic attitude. In the view of the generality of people, philosophy is but a special and strange view of the world. 'Common knowledge establishes itself according to a constant relation which accompanies a judgment that bears on the existence of the abstractions it handles. This judgment is the reality.' Now, 'this idea of the real is foreign to all true philosophy. As it denies the real, philosophic consciousness establishes from the very first a new relation, that of the unreal, among its materials. At first invention brings in the unreal. Then it denies in its turn the unreal, evading it ; and this double negation, far from leading to the affirmation of the real, repels it

along with the unreal, and goes beyond those two ideas, arriving at a middle term where they are at once denied and affirmed. This harmonizes and includes them. 'This is the surreal, which is one of the decisive characteristics of poetry.'

We see here clearly distinguished the two aspects of humour, the positive and the negative. We must first of all destroy the reality so that a new aspect may emerge, of which the first was but the superficial crest. Humour, by the criticism it exercises on the normal and logical relations of images, words, and objects, strikes at them transporting them into another universe, and it goes so far as to effect in them the principle of identity, making them regain the spirit in the original chaos, by the unexpected meeting with the images it itself raises.

The revolt of the individual against the conditions of his existence expresses itself in laughter, irony, and raillery, and leads him to another universe, that of the marvellous, the phantastic, and the surreal, whose relations with the reality he should then point out.

## II. THE MARVELLOUS

He who has reached that sphere, where all that would appear grotesque and mysterious to one who has surrendered himself to the real, loses the sense of strangeness, and he cannot regard, except with irony, the habitual order of the world. The word 'mystify' regains its etymological significance; it relates to things which are brusquely grouped according to laws that cannot be formulated, and which are due to external accident or the impulse of the unconscious, and which in fact violate their commonplace, everyday meaning and mystify; that is, things become free again and susceptible of assuming their irrational mysterious significance. The double sense of the word 'mystification' corresponds to the double sense of the image, namely, that which is mystifying, i.e., the current conception of the reality, the multiple, which a transcendent irony annihilates, and also, in the literal sense, the incalculable revelations of the unconscious and

the fugitive glimpses of the essential unity, testifying to its authentic presence.

Shocking humour, though it hurts our good sense, makes us discover the unity in which all the aspects of multiplicity revolve. This idea of universal harmony inter-penetrating the universe was dear to the German Romanticists and to Novalis. The world would thus become much more rich and profound. *Nadja*, a romance of A. Breton, describes 'the frequent conjunctures where the surreal seems to crop up, and which are to ordinary events what a surrealist test is to a deliberate one.' *Nadja* collects, under the aspect of the marvellous, the everyday phenomena that the illusion of our age diffuses and condenses through appearances. Surrealism places or replaces us on a level with the miracle, the modern miracle. In a former existence, *Nadja* could very well have been Novalis or the poet of magic idealism, to whom the most natural attitude was to see the marvellous everywhere, in the everyday and the habitual, and to hold the unfamiliar and the supernatural as familiar and within the reach of our hand. Our life is not a dream, but ought to become, and is perhaps going to become one. In the universe of the fantastic and the unreal, the most improbable events seem natural, all critical spirit is abolished, and all constraints disappear. It is the domain of the marvellous which is properly that of surreality. L. Ducasse and A. Rimbaud 'have already opened an entirely original path to poetry by systematically defying all customary modes of reacting to the spectacle of the world by plunging themselves headlong into the marvellous.'

L. Aragon writes, 'There are relations other than the real which the mind can seize, and they are also important such as chance, illusion, imagination, and dream. These different species are reconciled and reunited in the genus, the surreality.' In works such as *Le Paysan de Paris* (*The Peasant of Paris*) he forces on us incessantly the halo that surrounds the most ordinary objects and makes us penetrate into the fantastic. He stumbles therein into places with apparent locks which close ill on the Infinite. Therein is seen the mystery of certain

places which is like another aspect, the apparent being but a superficial view. We must keep the delicate and precious gift of feeling the marvellous in the everyday aspect of things, because it is lost to the individual who marches in life as in a more or less paved path and who progressively gets rid of the taste and the perception of the unusual.

Apparitions and phantoms that haunt castles pertain to the realm of surreality. According to A. Breton, 'It is only at the approach of the fantastic where human reason loses its control that there is every chance of translating the most profound emotions of the being.' He refers to the 'gloomy romances' of the 18th century which had a glorious success in England. There is no doubt that the haunted castles and the marvellous cannot be confounded with the real. Seduced by that constant intervention of magic and sorcery in real life, A. Artand translated *The Monk*, a work of Lewis, which shows the passion for eternity shared by the heroes thereof, who are free from all temporal constraint. According to A. Breton, this book exalts that attitude of the soul which aspired to quit the earth. The works that impress upon the imagination, exalt terror, anguish, and other sentiments, and draw us away from reality. That is why A. Breton frequently cites from the works of the Marquis de Sade, in whom the sombre taste had reached its zenith. He is the real precursor of Freud, and the very excess of his imagination proves that he has not been duped thereby and that he could sacrifice episodically to the gloomy temperament. In the words of P. Eluard, both Lautreamont and Sade 'have fought the toughest fight against the tricks and snares which lead us to the petty false reality that abases man.'

A. Breton goes so far as to say that there are favourable places where the human mind can give free vent to its imagination. 'Haunted castles may come in the category of such places from the surrealist standpoint.' It was after living a long time in an old manor that Lewis wrote *The Monk*. The incidents in the romance entitled *On the Road* by Huysmans take place in an abandoned castle. In his book

*Revolver a Cheveux Blancs (The Revolver at White Hair)*, A. Breton describes a castle of dreams.

Wherever imagination manifests itself freely, untrammelled by the critical spirit, surreality appears. At certain moments we see one aspect of the world. At other moments we perceive the depths thereof through the states of dream and frenzy, and it is these depths that surrealism wants to reach and express. We should get rid of everything that veils the surreal world from us.

The lustre of the Satanic laughter which makes us catch a glimpse of the mystery of the universe does not reveal to us the unity except by drawing us to hell by the exploration of the human being.

### III. THE DREAM

As a precursor of surrealism, supernaturalism denotes a state quite akin to it, so that A. Breton says that 'it has that spirit admirably well.' G. D. Nesval declares in all his writings that the 'world of the imagination is as real as the other.' He says that the dream is 'the means of discovering oneself and gives access to the knowledge of the ultimate reality.' He adds, 'I have never experienced that sleep was a repose. After an enervation for some minutes a new life begins—listening to the external and the internal worlds. At first we are thoughtful spectators of the revelation of the internal world; later we seek methodical conquests by a descent into ourselves, that leads us to hell.'

The search after another reality by bringing it into light and the subsequent analysis of all that the spontaneity of being expresses, will be useful to surrealism, because it also tends to the total recuperation of our psychic forces by a means which is the giddy descent into us, that is, by a systematic illumination of hidden places and the progressive obscuration of others.

Left to itself the mind moves in a world of phantasmagorias, where beings and things take a strange aspect and assume the lines of dreams.

Freud has profoundly influenced surrealism.

by the importance he has given to the revelations of the dream about the deeper self of the individual. The surrealists are aware of the bankruptcy of reason and intelligence which do not function except in the relative. They strive to develop all that is spontaneous in man, all that escapes logic and is purely disinterested. Bergson has truly remarked that in the practical world we are tied up and anchored by our immediate interest, and we do not let loose therein anything that is not useful to us. If we detach ourselves therefrom and close our eyes, we are transported to a universe of images, of repressed memories which drag us out of all logic and reason. According to Freud, this world is the symbol of unconscious desires and unacknowledged tendencies, and by deciphering it, man arrives at an integral knowledge of himself. We voluntarily throw into the shade and underestimate this wealth for the purpose of working in life, and nurse what is after all a mutilation of the human being, because the practical activity of waking brings a constant weakening of the vital substance in man, which cannot be partially counterbalanced except in sleep. The latter is really an act of reparation, which is its function, and does not deserve the disgrace associated with it, making of almost every man who is a sleeper ashamed of himself.<sup>1</sup>

The dream-life is as important, if not more, as that of waking, because we do not take into account the revelations it brings to us. 'My dreams of last night have followed that of the previous night. Will the dream of tonight be a continuation of that of last night with the same rigour?'<sup>2</sup>

The waking state is a phenomenon of interference. Memory can retrace only odd ends of the dream and not the dream in its totality. The dream can explain that which often appears to be the effect of chance, because the waking life is under the rule of the dream life. Why is one human being attracted by another? 'That which a person loves in the eye of that

woman is precisely what attaches to his dream and attracts him to the notions he has lost.'<sup>3</sup> S. Dali writes, 'During the day, we seek unconsciously for the images perceived in dreams; hence it is that, when we find an image which resembles what we have seen in a dream, we believe we have already known it, and we say that we should dream to see it.' The dream reveals to us a suppressed world, that is to say, the domain of surreality, and we can appeal to it to solve the fundamental problems of life.

In dreams, everything is easy and appears natural. 'The vexed question of possibilities does not arise at all therein. The mind is passive before the most extraordinary adventures, which appear as absolutely certain.' It is only when we wake up that we judge them to be contradictory according to our narrow, limited logic. We have to admit that what we call real is only a small part of the mystery in which we are plunged, and that we ought not voluntarily to reject one of these aspects, because the dream is as much a manifestation of that as waking.

We cannot, however, join Pascal when he says, 'Who knows if that other moiety of life where we think ourselves awake is but a sleep slightly different from the first where we are awake, while we think ourselves to be asleep?' This is the argument favoured by sceptics for denying any reality to the world where we live. To the surrealists, the dream and wakefulness are on the same plane. The argument of Pascal will not be valid, 'unless during sleep we feel ourselves to be awake and during wakefulness we feel ourselves to be asleep,'<sup>4</sup> which is rather an exceptional case. To the surrealist, life is infinitely vast, and the dream is one of its aspects, as fundamental as the waking state. The activities of waking and sleep constantly interpenetrate. 'Not only should we not give up any of the tested modes of intuitive knowledge, but we should also work to find out new methods for the purpose.'<sup>5</sup> Subjectivity is an

<sup>1</sup> A. Breton : *Les Vases Communicants*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> A. Breton : *Premier manifeste du Surrealisme*, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> A. Breton : *Premier manifeste du Surrealisme*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> A. Breton : *Les Vases Communicants*, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> A. Breton : *Les Vases Communicants*, p. 165.

immense world which we should explore. We should also try to make a synthesis of action and the dream. A. Breton writes, 'I believe in the resolution, in the future, of these two apparently contradictory states, *viz.* the dream and reality into a sort of absolute reality, the surreality, if one can say so. I am marching to this conquest.'

According to P. Reverdy, the dream is the particular form which the mind gives to reality. It is 'the liberation of the being from his body . . . the one and only truly noble existence of man, the most disinterested effusion of his feelings.' In his view the dream is the freest form of thought. 'The dream and

thought are different sides of the same thing, the obverse and the reverse. The dream is the side where the weft is richer, even though more loose, and thought the side where it is sparing, though more compact.'

Images constitute the language of dreams. The dream is as much a means of knowledge as thought, and we should make use of it to its fullest extent. The incoherences and contradictions of dreams are like the tales of mad men, and, in the opinion of A. Breton, their universe offers great resources for the knowledge of the integral human being.

(To be continued)

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## THE PRACTICE OF BHAKTI AND ITS NINE FORMS

BY AKSHAYAKUMAR BANERJEE

(Continued from the January issue)

### ARCHANA

*Archana* is the fifth step. It means ritualistic worship of God in accordance with the rules and injunctions laid down by the *Shastras*. There are various forms and modes of worship prescribed by the *Vedas*, sectarian scriptures, and other religious authorities for the guidance of particular classes of devotees. They all involve systematic discipline of the body and the senses, of thought and speech, of desires and emotions. However different in external forms and modes the sectarian rituals may appear to be, they are all intended for creating and developing a Godward tendency of the whole being of the devotee and for giving an outer expression to the spiritual urge of the human soul. They generally consist of muttering sacred *mantras*, saying prayers, contemplating and meditating on the Supreme Object of worship, offering to Him earthly objects which satisfy the desires and tastes of the devotee, observing fasts

and dedicating particular days exclusively to the worship and contemplation of God, making charities in the name of, and for the pleasure of God, taking purificatory baths, restraining the body, the senses, and the mind from running after worldly temptations, and devoting them to the service of the Lord, cultivating the religious emotions and sentiments etc. These are common to all forms of worship, to be practised by the devotees of all the sectarian schools. Every spiritual aspirant ought to obey faithfully and cheerfully the injunctions prescribed for him by the authoritative scriptures and the teachers of his school; but at the same time he should cherish a feeling of respect and sympathy for all the forms of religious discipline which are enjoined upon and pursued by the devotees of other sects. He should always bear in mind that though the outer forms of worship may be different in different sects, the essential spirit of worship is the same in all.

The external forms of *archana* are greatly

determined by the various particularized conceptions which are formed about the Absolute Spirit by the devotees of particular religious sects. For the purpose of the practice of devotion some conception or mental apprehension of God becomes inevitable, and every definite conception or imagination involves some sort of particularization. By some, God is conceived as a bodiless Spirit (*nirakara chaitanya swarupa*) and by others He is conceived as a Person (*sakara purushavishesha*). The supreme bodiless Spirit, again, is conceived by some as wholly transcendent, above and beyond the cosmic system, by others as wholly immanent in this phenomenal order, and by others still as transcendent as well as immanent. By some He is conceived as the Creator and Ruler of the universe, and by others as also the Soul of the universe as well as the Soul of all created beings. The *archana* of the infinite, eternal, omnipotent, and omniscient bodiless Spirit generally takes the form of the contemplation and narration of his glories, meditation of His all-pervading presence, offering prayer to Him, repeating some divine name within the mind, cultivating an attitude of dependence upon Him, cherishing the feelings of love and reverence towards Him. Attempt is made to put the mind and heart in tune with the Infinite and the Eternal, to be in spiritual touch with Him, to feel that what is experienced in the world belongs to and exists for God, and to live and work for His sake. It is predominantly a mental culture.

There are many devotees who hold that though God is not limited by any particular name or form, He assumes various names and forms perceivable by human beings and reveals Himself to them in those forms. His omnipotence and omniscience, love and mercy, beauty and sublimity, are always present in Him, whatever forms He may assume. A worshipper may choose for the practice of *archana* any one of these forms, as may suit his taste or as he may be instructed to accept by his *guru*. Though the Supreme Spirit has in Himself no particular sex-limitation, the forms in which He reveals Himself to the devotees may be male or female. They may be human, superhuman, or even sub-

human. Differences of forms make no difference in the divinity of the Spirit that is manifested in them. Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Kali, Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganapati, etc. are worshipped as superhuman divine forms, in which the same supreme Spirit manifests Himself to the devotees. Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Chaitanya, etc. are revered and worshipped as the same one divine personality appearing in this world in human forms and satisfying the spiritual needs of the diverse orders of devotees in such forms. *Matsya*, *Kurma*, *Varaha*, etc. are manifestations of the same Spirit in subhuman forms. In every such form God may be worshipped. The idea of the inner oneness of all these divine forms should never be forgotten at the time of offering ritualistic worship to any one of them. Attention of the devotee should be primarily concentrated upon the universal spiritual glories manifested through the forms, and only secondarily directed towards the special features of the forms. Though different methods are prescribed for the ritualistic worship of the different forms of God, a true spiritual aspirant must never allow these differences of the divine forms and the differences of the methods of worship to get the upper hand in his mind and heart. If the unity of Godhead is lost sight of in the plurality of the divine forms, it is a serious loss from the spiritual as well as from the social point of view. It should always be remembered that the forms, however sacred, are not God, but they are the modes of special self-manifestation of God. God is the soul of all these bodily forms, in which He appears and makes Himself perceptible to the devotees.

Again, though the Supreme Spirit is above all special relation, a devotee may for the sake of worship imagine some sort of special personal relationship between God and himself and offer his devotion to Him accordingly. God may be thought of as father or mother, Lord or *guru*, friend or playmate, brother or husband, as may suit the mental constitution of the devotee. God is really all in all, and all to all. A devotee may establish through suitable mental discipline all sorts of familiar relationship between God

and himself, and get rid of the sense of distance which stands in the way of their communion. We lay too much emphasis upon such ideas as God is infinite and eternal, while we are finite and shortlived, God is perfectly pure, while we are impure and sinful, God is omnipotent and omniscient while we are so poor in knowledge and power, and so on. Such ideas create a sense of despondency in us, and magnify the difficulties in the path of our approach to God. These should be driven away and God should be regarded as our own. Through *archana* we should have God very near to us.

As a means to the cultivation of the sense of the nearness of God, the devotees take the help of symbols representing the supreme object of worship. Various symbols are prescribed in religious literature. Fine arts play their part in the creation of symbols. Various kinds of divine images are designed and constructed. They are designed to give visible forms to the invisible, finite forms to the infinite, material forms to the spirit. Art seeks to bridge the gulf between spirit and matter, between the invisible and the visible, between the infinite and finite, between the eternal and the temporary. These creative arts play an important role in the religious culture of India. Image worship is the worship of the infinite, eternal, invisible spirit in a variety of finite, transitory, visible, material forms, which are the products of art. In these images the devotees perceive the presence of the Supreme Spirit and feel him so near to themselves. When the mind is sufficiently enlightened, it transcends the material images and perceives the all-pervading and all-transcending spiritual presence of God and the devotee feels himself as living and moving and having his being in God.

Offerings of valuable and useful articles are made by the devotee to the symbolical representations of the divine Spirit, with the belief that they are accepted by God Himself. This helps the cultivation of the spirit of love and sacrifice for the Lord. Purity of body and mind, feelings of admiration and reverence, impulses of charity and benevolence, and many other

noble virtues are developed through active *archana*.

#### VANDANA

It means bowing down, making homage and obeisance to the Supreme Lord. It essentially consists in the cultivation of the spirit of submission to the infinite and eternal Lord of the self and the world. The egoistic consciousness manifesting itself in the forms of pride, vanity, arrogance, selfishness, hatred, etc. is a stumbling block in the path of spiritual progress. It prevents the attunement of a man's life to the divine life and the divine light from illumining the human heart. This egoistic consciousness has to be humbled and placed at the mercy of the divine consciousness. The ego has to be put under the feet of the divine. The spirit of submission to the Lord has to be practised outwardly through prostration of the whole body before any visible representation of God, before any divine image or at the feet of the *guru* or any other holy person. The essence of *vandana* or *pranama*, or *pranipata* lies in the spirit of sincere humility and submission to the Lord. Unless the heart is humble and meek in the presence of the Lord, merely bending the head or prostrating oneself on the ground in the presence of any image is of little spiritual or moral value. It should be remembered that the Lord is not confined within any particular image or any particular person or any of His particular self-manifestations. He is omnipresent and His presence should be felt in all persons and things. With the development of this insight into the all-pervading nature of God, the head and the heart learn to bow down to everything, the egoistic consciousness progressively disappears, humility becomes the nature of the devotee and his life is put in harmony with the divine life manifested in the cosmic order. 'Ether, air, fire, water, earth, all celestial bodies, all creatures, all the directions, all trees and flowers and fruits, all rivers and seas, *i.e.*, whatever exist in the universe are the embodiments of God; the devotee should bow down to God in all.' This is the teaching of the *Bhagavata*.

## DASYA

It is a form of spiritual self-discipline consisting in the cultivation of the spirit of a humble servant in relation to the Supreme Lord of the universe. Whatever may be his station in the society, whatever may be his field of action, a devotee should form the habit of thinking that he is the servant of the one Lord of the whole cosmic order. Every creature, every force of nature, every power big or small, has necessarily to carry out the will of God and as such each is his servant. It is ignorance which makes man puffed up with haughtiness, arrogance, vanity, self-conceit, selfishness, and greed. He is not contented with the way in which the world is going on and with the position which has been allotted to him in the scheme of the world. As a result of his ignorance he cherishes and indulges various kinds of worldly desires and sensuous passions and gradually becomes their slave. His wants and ambitions entangle him in struggles and hostilities with the various forms of the world.

A devotee can get rid of this slavery to a plurality of changing masters by the development of the consciousness that he is the eternal servant of one eternal Master, that in every field of life he has to serve that one Master with devotion and love, that he is responsible to Him and Him alone for the faithful discharge of all the duties of his life. Recognition of God as his sole Master makes him free from all bondage and slavery in the world, liberates him from all fears of the so-called earthly masters, and gives him a delightful sense of liberty and independence in his worldly connections. He fears only to incur the displeasure of his eternal beloved Lord and fears none else and nothing else. In whatever position he may be placed in his mundane life and whatever apparently hostile forces may surround him, he always sees the almighty protecting hands of his all-loving and all-merciful Master. An enlightened sense of slavery to God is an eternal source of the sense of perfect liberty on earth. It is to be noted that a devotee who practises *dasya* does not think of God as his Lord and Master merely because

He is the absolute Lord of the universe—this would be an indirect relation between the devotee and the Lord. He tries to feel that God is his direct Master and he is God's direct servant, that his relation with God is direct and immediate, and that this relation is eternal and essential to his soul, mind, and body. He disciplines his mind and heart in such a way that he may feel himself in constant touch with the divine Master and as perfectly dependent upon and protected by Him.

## SAKHYA

*Sakhya* means union of hearts through intense love. The individual soul is eternally united with the universal soul, inasmuch as the former is an individualized self-expression of the latter. The devotee has to feel this union through the cultivation of the deepest love and friendship. The heart of the devotee should be united with the heart of the infinite eternal absolute Creator and Ruler of the universe. As the result of the practice of such intense friendly feeling, the sense of wide difference between the creator and the created, the ruler and the ruled progressively disappears. The devotee feels God as his sweetest and most beloved companion and friend, as his most dear playmate. To a devotee sincerely and earnestly practising *sakhya*, God reveals Himself not as the almighty, all-wise, magnificent creator and ruler of the universe but as the supreme player and artist eternally enjoying Himself in the company of his beloved creatures. The devotee participates in the beautiful sports of his divine friend on apparently equal terms. God is so near and dear to him that he forgets altogether that God is so great while he is so small, that God is the supreme Lord of the universe, while he is a humble creature. Intense love sweeps away all such differences. The heart of the devotee is saturated with divine beauty and sweetness.

## ATMA-NIVEDANA

*Atma-nivedana* or absolute self-offering to the supreme beloved is the final step in the practice of *bhakti*. The devotee in his deep love for



God offers himself and his all for the enjoyment of the beloved. He thinks and feels that his body and mind, his intellect and will, all belong to God, all are for the enjoyment of God. Concentrated love for the all-perfect consumes all his selfish desires and ambitions, dissolves all other feelings and sentiments, evaporates all his attachments to mundane objects. His whole being is purified and illumined by intense love for God and becomes an object for divine enjoyment. God is really the Self of his whole being. Man's psycho-physical organism is the most developed individualized embodiment of the divine spirit in the cosmic order and is the most suitable vehicle for His sportive self-expression and self-enjoyment. In man the ego becomes self-conscious, self-determining, and self-enjoying. He has the innermost urge for the perfection of his self-consciousness, self-determination, and self-enjoyment. This craving is realized when his self-consciousness is identified with divine consciousness, when his self-determina-

tion is identified with divine determination and when his self-enjoyment is identified with divine enjoyment, when he consciously and freely realizes God as his true self, and his individuality is completely merged into the divine. This is accomplished through the progressive intensification and deepening of love for God, the Self of selves and the Self of the universe. What outwardly appears as absolute self-surrender to God is really the perfect self-fulfilment of man in God. What is apparently the destruction of the ego is really the divinization of the ego. When the whole being of the devotee is offered voluntarily and joyfully to God, *i.e.*, the True Self, for His enjoyment, the whole being is spiritualized and becomes full of bliss. All difference between God and man vanishes. The two are united by love into one. The innermost eternal spiritual urge of the soul is then perfectly satisfied. The culture of *bhakti* attains its sweetest en

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## MAHATMA GANDHI

On Friday, 30 January 1948, at Delhi at five minutes past five in the evening Mahatma Gandhi was struck down by the hand of an assassin, as he was approaching the dais from where he used to address his daily prayer meetings. As he went near the dais, the assassin suddenly broke through the assembled crowd, which had lined on both the sides of the passage to the platform, and fired several point-blank shots hitting him in the abdomen and the chest. The frail old body fell on its back bleeding profusely.

As he fell, Mahatmaji clasped his hands as in prayer and twice muttered 'O Ram, O Ram' before outer sense left him. He was carried back into his room and laid on his *charpoy* (a woven cot), where he passed away twenty minutes afterwards. His face was calm and peaceful without any trace of pain or suffering.

Gandhiji was ever prepared to face death, and when it came suddenly and in a most violent form, he passed away like a hero, calm and self-possessed, and with the mind fixed on God, in keeping with the noblest traditions of the country. Mighty and great as he was in life, he proved himself even greater in death.

The grim act of the mad youth has stunned the world and plunged it in gloom. No words can properly express the grief felt by us and by millions all over India and abroad. The death so cruelly and blindly committed by an Indian and a Hindu, to India's everlasting shame, has cast its dark shadow upon all who stand for the things of the Spirit. The man who never even spoke a harsh word to anyone, who for the last three decades was the embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of millions

of Indians, and who has been hailed as the Father of the Nation, has died on the morrow of his great achievement, the winning of the country's political freedom, at the hands of one of his own countrymen, one of his own children, as it were, for whose welfare he had dedicated his all and courted a life of extreme asceticism. Some of the greatest among men have in the past been cruelly assassinated, but India had never recorded before such a foolish act in her long history. What becomes of India and her culture and what meaning can life hold, if brutal and foolish acts like this happen and the method of political assassination which strikes at its noblest and most beloved leader comes to have a hold on her people? It is difficult to believe, for the mind continually refused to accept it as a fact, that Gandhiji has met death in the way in which it came to him. Does it not make of this world a nightmare and mock all attempts to paint it in bright and wishful colours?

Yet, this nightmare, this ugly world, with its greed and lust, its cruelty and hatred, will not be transformed overnight. We have to face the brute fact of existence. It will not help if we sit and weep and allow our judgment to be warped by either grief or anger or despair. The world will not perhaps wear the same aspect again to sensitive and refined souls, but the hard fact of this life has to be accepted and tackled. This is no time for giving way to unmanliness. The celebrated words of Sri Krishna come to our mind. '*Klaibyam masma gamah Partha*': 'O son of Pritha, do not give way to unmanliness.' It is the hour for calm reflection and cool judgment and resolute action. The world waits and watches; so do the fathers of the race from their heavenly abodes. India has yet to honour her ancient past and fulfil her future promise, without being unnerved by the great calamity that has overtaken her at present.

In the glorious days of her culture, when India was ruled by the wisdom of the *rishis*, her children knew how to conduct themselves manfully in the face of differences which could not be resolved by argument or discussion. Sons

and grandsons, students and disciples, differed from fathers and grandfathers, teachers and *gurus*, and fought them; but they fought one another manfully in the field of battle, never yielding to false idealism or to weak sentimentality, and struck straight from the shoulder, without ever aiming a blow below the belt. Where is the old spirit of that *dharma* and of *dharma sangrama* gone? How could we sink so low as to adopt the mean and cowardly acts of political blackguardism, copied from outside? Let our politicians and leaders ponder and let them act in a manner worthy of our highest traditions. Let them wisely direct the energies of our misguided youths and bring them back to saner ways of life and action. The ugly fascist tendencies have to be rooted out and the foundation laid of a strong and virile and bold democracy.

Hard and perilous times confront the leaders, and the responsibility that sits on their shoulders is heavy. They have acted nobly in the crisis; but they need to look back to know how to tackle the future. They doubtless realize that it was the suppressed hatred and violence of individuals, suffering the bitterest agonies of heart and struggling for an outlet that led to this great tragedy. The government must inspire the people with faith in its firmness and in its ability to protect them against ruthless forces from any quarter. Our government needs the true *kshatra* spirit of *tejas* or strength, tempered by the *brahmanya* quality of *kshanti* or mercy. Only thus can the people have stable faith in it, and only so can the government lead it, strong and united, to that goal of peace, prosperity, and happiness which the great leader whom we mourn today desired to see.

It is not for us to offer praises to Mahatmaji. The world has already done its homage to him, and history will assign him his true place among the great leaders of mankind. But there cannot be any doubt that he has joined the immortals of history who will for ever illumine the corridor of time.

In his lifetime Mahatmaji made India attain to heights of sacrifice in the political field, which

have no parallel elsewhere. But he was no mere politician or nationalist. His politics and his social effort, in fact all his activities, sprang from his religious spirit. He called his life a series of **experiments with Truth**, and he preached what he practised. He said that his message was given by his life.

For the last thirty years Mahatma Gandhi was the voice of the millions of sunken Indians, struggling for political and social freedom. He transformed the Congress from a debating body of the politicians, drawn mainly from the upper middle classes, into a powerful and combative organization of the masses. He gave them faith and courage and infused new life into them and thus gradually led them to freedom.

His contributions in the social and economic fields are equally momentous. He dedicated his life to the removal of the poverty and the social stigma and bondage of the masses. He accepted the life of the poor and made himself one with them, the real children of India's soil.

He gave a new shape to India's politics and lifted it to a high level. The leaders of modern India, who are all his creation, came to love a life of simple dignity and were inspired to noble and heroic action, thanks to his influence and example. Gandhiji not only headed a political revolt of the Indian people against the foreign rule, but led also a crusade against the mechanistic and urban civilization of the West. He turned the gaze of Indian leaders to the villages of India, where one could feel the true heart-beat of the country. In his work of rousing the masses and of removing the disabilities of the untouchables, Mahatmaji took up the task left by Vivekananda to his countrymen as their most sacred duty and in fact as the highest worship of God. In Mahatmaji one finds a true and mighty worker for the uplift of the Indian masses exactly after the heart of the Swami.

Vivekananda thundered more than fifty years ago: 'You, upper classes of India, do you think you are alive? You are only mummies ten thousand years old. . . You are the void, the unsubstantial entities of the future. Fleshless and bodiless skeletons of the corpse of the Past

India, why do you not quickly reduce yourselves into dust and vanish into thin air. . . You depart into the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fishermen, the cobbler and the *bhangi*. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts, and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves of forests, from hills and mountains. . .

'No sooner you, the upper classes, will disappear than you will hear the inaugural shout of Renaissance India ringing with the voice of a million thunders and reverberating throughout the universe—"Wah Gurujiki fateh"—victory to the *Guru!*'

The masses of India have indeed emerged from their huts and hovels, from factories and farm-houses, grasping the plough and the hammer—may be a little frenzied and blood-covered by the delusive propaganda of the short-sighted politicians, but nonetheless vital and dynamic and powerful. And it will ever remain the imperishable glory of the Mahatma that he was beyond all comparison the most powerful instrument to have brought about this awakening.

To the world outside Gandhiji represented the method of peace and love, and all the oppressed peoples of the world derived inspiration from his life and experiments. He was a kind father and affectionate guide to thousands in their private and personal lives. And perhaps the highest and noblest tribute to his true greatness has been paid by those numerous individuals who have shaped their lives on the basis of his ideas and ideals, and who have dedicated themselves to the service of the poor. His purity, his nobility, and his sacrifice will always remain a source of inspiration to men of countless generations in future.

We believe the Lord in his mercy gave him to India and to humanity for the fulfilment of a particular mission, and He has taken him away again after the task has been gloriously accomplished.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### TO OUR READERS

The issue opens with some more *Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda*...

The present need of the world is an integration of thought, feeling, and action upon the basis of faith and a Reality-view which can stand without intellectual evasions of any kind. The *Editorial* dwells on this theme and emphasizes the fact that only a synthesis of Vedanta and Science can provide the firm basis of a new co-operative social order...

*Realization of God* is part of a letter written by Swami Turiyananda to a spiritual aspirant...

In this second instalment of his article on *Buddhi and Buddhiyoga* Srimat Anirvan points out the two senses in which *buddhi* is used in the *Gita*, namely, as a cosmic principle and as the psychological content of an individual. He then proceeds to show how the *Gita* shows the way to gain a direct experience of the cosmic *buddhi* and thus 'instal oneself permanently on its plane, so that one may act in practical life from a poise beyond good and evil.' It will be continued...

Dr A. A. Bake in his paper on *Some Aspects of Indian and Western Music*, which was originally read at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, refers to the fundamental similarity of aspirations and expressions in various forms of Indian and Western music...

Dr Nandalal Chatterji is an old contributor of our magazine and is well known for his researches in different branches of Indology. *Greater India* gives a short and authoritative account of Indian colonization in the past and refers to problems which face the Indian colonists today and their future...

*Routes to Surrealism* is the second article in Madame Yves Duplessis's serial on Surrealism. Some of the various approaches which had led to surrealism are dealt with by her in the present issue; the next will contain a treatment of the rest...

This issue concludes Prof. Akshayakumar Banerji's article on *Practice of Bhakti and Its Nine Forms*...

### PROGRESS OF MAN

'It is only those that never want to reconcile the man of flesh with the man of truth that make progress,' says Swami Vivekananda. Man reaches the height of progress when he discovers his real Self.

But today under the magic spell of science, the belief is still strong that happiness can be found in material development. They mean by progress evolutionary changes in the direction of control over outer environment.

But the Indian idea of progress is different; according to it progress is but an attempt at manifestation of the Perfection that is in all beings.

Today when man has reached a high degree of biological development and material progress he is still far from having gained happiness. Modern science boasts of its technological progress. But still earthquakes and epidemics, famines and floods destroy millions. The 'conquest of Nature' has turned out to be a defeat in the long run. By advanced technology, new fields are brought under the plough, insects and viruses are controlled by new chemicals, and artificial fertilizers produce bumper crops; but erosion is eating away a menacingly high proportion of cultivable land; mutation and natural selection produce resistant strains of insects; and the growth of plants and fertility of the soil have been undermined by artificial manures. 'It was assumed,' writes Aldous Huxley, 'that advance in man's control over his environment would invariably be accompanied by corresponding advance in individual happiness, in personal and social morality and in the quantity and quality of creative activity in art and science... Today after two world wars and three major revolu-

tions we know that there is no necessary correlation between advanced technology and advanced morality.' Many primitives with rudimentary control over nature are happy and virtuous; but the civilized societies with technological resources to control environments are often unhappy and cruel: advanced technology has given them efficient methods to destroy, to tyrannize, and enslave men on a larger scale.

Technological progress is helpful in so far as it can create conditions for man to cultivate his higher qualities. Technological progress is *not* human progress. People belonging to such progressive societies are not necessarily happy; only they have got a better chance to become so. Our aim should be, by taking full advantage of all these, to go beyond them. Politics and education are fields where man tries to find out happiness by such means. But here also the mistake is repeated—*i.e.* instead of taking it as a means and trying to go beyond it, he takes it as the end in itself.

Man is his own architect. Happiness and goodness depend on one's philosophy of life, and that depends, again, on what we have been taught. Hedonism, for example, teaches us that all happiness comes from without, from

advanced technology. Certain political philosophies teach that the State is the highest good and sanction even atrocious public wickedness. Bad means cannot bring good results—and hence the disappointment in achieving happiness through politics.

Thus, when man finds that external nature or its conquest cannot vouchsafe happiness, he turns inward and tries to transcend Nature. Where philosophy ends, religion begins. Only when man has grown to his full stature and manifested fully his inner Perfection, can he have real happiness. Spiritual progress is not the negation of the lower ones—biological or technological—but a fulfilment and culmination of them. The greatness of man lies in his power to subdue these lower natures and using them in achieving the higher one, where and where alone peace and happiness are possible. In the words of Aldous Huxley:

'Human progress in happiness, goodness, and creativity, and the psychological equivalent of biological progress in independence and control are best achieved by the pursuit of man's Final End. It is by aiming at the realization of the eternal that we are able to make the best—and the best is a continuing progress—of our life in time.'

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDIA, A SYNTHESIS OF CULTURES. BY KEWAL MOTWANI. *Published by Thacker & Co., Ltd., Bombay. Pp. 319. Price Rs. 7-14.*

The first impression that one gets from the book is that Dr Motwani is sincere to the core. He is extremely serious when he talks about the reorientation of our outlook on the present conflict of ideas. He fears that Indian culture is in the process of disruption and may be destroyed by the impact of foreign cultures, unless we take heed in proper time.

But with all his sincerity and strength of emotion and love for ancient Indian culture, we cannot help saying that his arguments lack the necessary force and conviction. We do feel, with the author, that for the survival of the Hindu culture, we have to be strong, aggressive, and dynamic—instead of being lazy, timid,

inactive, and jealous. But we do not feel that the way to do this is to go back to the old 'golden days' of the Guptas and Ashokas, shunning the modern scientific civilization. We have to face and conquer and assimilate even this machine civilization as we had done the 'sword and fire' civilization of the barbaric hordes of past.

In the first three chapters Dr Motwani summarizes the ancient cultural foundation of India—political, religious, and aesthetic. We are afraid, his elucidation lacks clear thinking and understanding of the underlying principles. The fourth chapter 'A Conflict of Cultures' is more emotional than factual. It is like the mourning of an orthodox old man at the doings of his modern educated son.

Dr Motwani misses the true nature of the problem—

the problem of rejuvenating India on *modern* lines and *not* on ancient lines. He draws a melancholy picture of the present-day India and shivers before his own imagination. No doubt, there are knotty problems to be solved but they are not as bad as he thinks. While admitting the terrible poverty, the mental degeneration, the economic ruin, and overpopulation, we do not feel that these problems cannot be solved by properly developing the natural resources of India. Dr Motwani does not support his view with facts when he says that 'all cultivable lands have been taken up for agriculture and there are no prospects of increasing the yield per acre.' In the *Hindu* it was reported that the Madras government have made 50,000 acres of arid land cultivable by minor irrigational developments. The same paper writes that more than two lakhs acres will be made arable by the Lower Bhavani Project; in the Constituent Assembly Sri Gadgil, Minister for Works, describing the 52-crore Damodar Valley Project, said: 'About nine lakhs of acres would be brought under cultivation, and a large area in which at present only a single crop was grown might be turned into a double-crop area, if not a triple-crop area.' Nobody doubts the vast potential resources, especially of rivers, of India to develop her agriculture and industries. The yield per acre in India is less than a fourth of the yield in Japan, for instance. By using better manure, scientific implements, collective farming, and large-scale industrialization, we do not think that 'our millions will continue to be undernourished.'

And yet the book is an eye-opener to the many evils that stare at our face. Bold thinking, and bolder action can certainly cope with such evils. And instead of looking at the depressing aspects of the situation and drawing sighs, let us work to make India a glorious and powerful nation.

**CULTURAL HISTORY FROM THE VAYU PURANA.** BY D. R. PATIL. *Published by the Deccan College Post-graduate and Research Institute, 10 Connaught Road, Poona. Pp. 336. Price Rs. 15.*

The *Puranas* contain the history of ancient India. Since the *Puranas* were 'written' principally for the popularization of the truths of religion, the historical facts are all scattered over. Scholars have attempted to reconstruct the political and religious history from the *Puranas* and many useful works have been published on the subject. But so far hardly any serious attempt has been made for reconstructing the cultural history of India from the vast storehouse of the *Puranas*. The present work makes a very able and successful attempt in that line and all credit goes to Dr Patil, whose erudition and insight make him eminently fit for the task.

The book is divided into two parts, the one presenting pure facts from the *Puranas*, and the other containing a critical interpretation of them. The

author has critically analyzed the various incidents with a full consciousness of the responsibility of one studying a subject which deals with the cultural heritage of the Hindus. He has ably performed his work.

While the quotations from the various historians are a help to the critical study of the subject, we feel the author himself should have digested the conflicting opinions and established his own conclusions to avoid confusion of thought in the minds of the reading public.

**THE GREAT BEYOND.** BY MAURICE MATERLINCK. *Published by the Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th St., New York 16, N.Y. Pp. 226. Price \$ 3.00.*

This book contains gems of thought collected from the literary notebook of the great Belgian author. These thoughts, one can easily see, are the outcome of profound thinking and deep experience. One must think deeply in order to unravel the mysteries of life. The author seems to be worried over the fact that the modern world lacks spiritual note. He very frankly says, 'Did all the recent discoveries raise the moral ceiling of man, i.e. his character, his sentiment, his general ideas, his everyday thoughts, his spiritual horizon?' One can very well be a great engineer, a great mathematician, and even a great astronomer and still remain an exploiter and scoundrel.'

The author believes in the immortality of the soul and in some of the Vedantic ideas. He advocates 'Vedism' as fit to be the future religion of the world. 'Since we are looking for a new religion, why not take Vedism which is not confused with Brahminism and Buddhism?' he asks. By Brahminism he means Vedism as corrupted by the priests.

These notes are not simply to be read, but are to be meditated upon if one wants to get the best out of them.

**SONGS FROM THE SOUL.** Pp. 187. *Price Rs. 2.*  
**THE WORLD CRISIS.** Pp. 156. BOTH BY ANILBARAN ROY. *Published by Amiya Library, 19, Bhupendra Basu Avenue, Shambazar, Calcutta.*

These soul-stirring songs, in prose and verse, are inspiring and elevating. It is indeed a meditation, a self-surrender at the feet of the Mother, with a yearning and passion that is a rare possession of self-abnegated souls. The reader will be greatly benefited by these meditative songs.

The second book gives helpful thoughts on the spiritual life of a man as visualized by Sri Aurobindo. The author has successfully tackled the problems of philosophy and life, though sometimes his statements look odd and perplexing. He asks us to 'prepare the ground and fulfil the conditions so that the divine supramental power may descend on the earth' (p. 150). It looks like magic or the Christian millennium.

The grace of the book would have been increased had the author confined to philosophy alone. His interpretation of the last war, the conditions of Germany etc., are all prejudiced, and it is bad indeed that in a treatise on philosophy political propaganda is tugged up. The author may profit if he understands that politics and religion do not go together.

ASIA IN THE MODERN WORLD. BY H. VENKATASUBBIAH. Pp. 118. Price Rs. 5.

ASIA. Pp. 80. Price Rs. 3. Both prepared for the Asian Relations Conference, Delhi.

The above two books are very informative and extremely useful for an average man as well as for men intent on studying inter-Asian questions. They give information on various interesting subjects—relating to all the Asiatic nations. We shall urge every Indian to read these, especially in these days of international relationship.

UPADESH. BY SRI SADGURU OMKAR. Published by The Bangalore Ptg. and Pubg. Co. Ltd., Mysore Road, Bangalore City. Pp. 173. Price Rs. 3-12.

This is a collection of hints given by the Sadguru, to guide the daily life of all people. We hope this will help suffering mankind to progress and peace.

#### BENGALI

ACHARYAVANI (IN TWO PARTS). BY PRAFULLA CHANDRA RAY. Published by the Book Corporation Ltd., 1/1, Gopal Bose Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 148 and 150. Price Rs. 3 each.

The younger generation may not fully realize how much influence Dr Ray wielded over the student community in particular, and the public in general, during his life time. The secret of this influence which is transforming many lives even now lay in his love for his country. The welfare of his motherland was the one persistent thought of his whole life. As such all his utterances were the outcome of his deep longing to see his country go forward in an all-round progress. These two volumes contain a collection of all the available Bengali writings and speeches of Dr Ray.

#### HINDI

BAUDDHA DARSHAN. BY BALDEV UPADHYAYA. Published by Sarada Mandir, 29/17, Ganesh Dixit, Benaras. Pp. 525. Price Rs. 6.

A complete history of Buddhist philosophy and religion has not yet come out in Hindi or in English. Prof. Radhakrishnan, in his *Indian Philosophy*, deals with certain aspects of Buddhist thought in a nutshell; and in *Monastic Buddhism*, Prof. Nalinaksha Dutt treats only of the monastic side of it, although with a great wealth of details.

Prof. Baldev Upadhyaya, who is a scholar of great critical acumen and wide study of Indian philosophy, has thus gone a step further. Many controversial points or doubtful passages of Buddhist philosophy are thrashed out in a clear and critical way, and these discussions may be regarded as the author's special contribution to the study of the Buddhist philosophy. By contrasting the Buddhist philosophy and religion with Vedanta, he interprets them in such a way as to bring out their real value.

In the third part, the development of Buddhist philosophy and its four schools of thought are separately and comprehensively dealt with on the basis of authoritative books. In the fourth the author narrates the Buddhist logic, the Buddhist *tantras*, and the Buddhist form of meditation. The book is undoubtedly a most authoritative and valuable contribution to the philosophical literature in Hindi.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA VACHANAMRITA (IN THREE VOLUMES). BY "M." TRANSLATED BY SURYAKANTA TRIPATHI NIRALA. Published by the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Dhantoli, Nagpur. Pp. 2111. Price Rs. 19-8.

This is the first translation of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* as recorded by his disciple "M." This document will rank for all time as one of the most important works in the entire religious literature of mankind. The Hindi public will therefore be thankful to the publishers for giving them in their own language the rare spiritual teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. We have no doubt that these will fill the spiritual need of hundreds of thousands of true seekers in the path of religion.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI SHANTASWARUPANANDA LEAVES FOR AMERICA

Swami Shantaswarupananda, till recently Manager of *Prabuddha Bharata* and of the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, left by a Pan American Airways plane for San Francisco on the 21st February, 1948. A large number of monks of the Order, as well as friends

and admirers, saw him off at the Dum Dum air station. He will assist Swami Ashokananda of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. He was Assistant Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* for some time. We are confident that he will rightly inspire and guide spiritually thirsty souls in America. We wish him all success in his future work.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA BANKURA

REPORT FOR 1946

The Sevashrama conducted three charitable dispensaries during the year. The total number of patients treated in these three dispensaries was 65,627, including 1,952 surgical cases; 2,115 cases were registered in the indoor department. To popularize its system of homœopathic treatment, the Sevashrama started a medical school where 10 students were carrying on their studies under qualified doctors.

The free primary school had 123 students on its roll during the year. An attempt is being made to turn it into a middle school, and in 1946 classes V and VI were opened. The Students' Home, intended for poor and meritorious boys, lodged 19 students during the year.

To mitigate the poverty of the villagers relief activities were also conducted by the Sevashrama. During the year under report, 13 mds., 29 srs. of rice, 438 cloths and 44 coats were distributed. 2 mds. of raw wool were spun by 170 weavers and an amount of Rs. 934-1-6 was distributed among them. Besides quinine, 12,307 vitamin tablets and 2 mds. 5 srs. of milk powder were also distributed among the needy.

The Sevashrama is in great need of a dormitory for medical students, a guest house, and of thorough repair of workers' quarters, for which help of the generous public is solicited.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, TRIVANDRUM

The following is the summary of the activities of the Ashrama for the year 1946.

*Preaching* : 117 congregational services, 36 scriptural classes, and 24 religious lectures were organized. A special *Harikatha* expounding the whole of *Ramayana* was also held. The magazine *Prabuddha Keralam* was conducted from here.

*Dispensary* : In the allopathic and *ayurvedic* dispensaries, a total of 36,015 patients were treated, of which 12,938 were new.

*Harijan welfare* : In both the dispensaries of the Ashrama, about a third of the patients treated were harijans. Besides, several harijans were helped to get themselves admitted into hospitals. A primary school was run for their benefit, where 60 children attended. They were provided with free books, cloth etc. 140 children of other schools were also helped likewise. Altogether an amount of Rs. 954-8-0 was spent

by way of educational help to harijans. Again Rs. 1,575-12-3 were spent on occasional relief to poor or distressed harijans.

250 pupils (of all classes) were given noon meals in the Ashrama, and 2 milk canteens were organized for children.

*Rural Reconstruction* : 34 looms worked by 70 girls produced 56,270 yds. of cloth. 200 families were engaged in coir spinning. Besides their wages, the workers were given a bonus of Rs. 937-6-9. 45 spinners were trained and provided with spinning appliances. Also occasional relief work was conducted by the Ashrama.

The Ashrama requires financial help for carrying on all the above-mentioned activities. The generous public is requested to contribute.

### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH, DEOGHAR

The Vidyapith is a residential high school run on the lines of the ancient *gurukula* system, suited to modern conditions.

In 1946 there were 169 students on the roll. Hindi was taught as a compulsory subject in classes VI and VII. Special care was taken to keep the boys healthy. Weight of the boys was recorded monthly, and incipient diseases tackled timely. In April there was an eye examination of all the boys and steps were taken to remedy the defects. Physical training consisted in regular drill and exercises, games and sports.

The Boys' Literary Society organized a number of meetings. Dramatic performances and musical entertainments and excursions to Nalanda, Benares etc. were organized. A winter camping was held for imparting semi-military training for boys. Practical training was also given in gardening, tailoring, music, spinning, drawing, and clay-modelling. Spirit of service was nurtured by organizing *sevak samitis* which undertook various beneficial activities. Nursing the sick brother during illness formed an important feature of the training. The ideals of purity, self-help, and service were sought to be placed before them through personal examples and weekly discourses.

The dispensary rendered medical relief to about 4000 patients, of which half the number came from poor communities of the neighbourhood.

The urgent needs of the Vidyapith are a prayer hall and a dormitory for boys, for which help is requested from the public.

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### SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY

The Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna falls on the 12th March 1948.