

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE PERENNIAL SOURCE

*Sanadeva tava rayo gabhastau na kshiyante nopadasyanti dasma Dyumen asi kratuman.
Indra dhirah shiksha shachivanstava nah shachibhih.*

—Rig-veda, I. 62. xii

From ages sempiternal

O Wondrous Devastation!

The torrential flow of Thy surging Life

Is coursing through our veins:

It never ebbs,

Nor is ever lost in the sands of inanity.

The Light Ethereal, the Creative Urge, Thou art,

And the still depths of Mentation, O Mighty One!

Thou, the Eternal Repository of Powers Divine,

Impinge them on us

And make our days virile!

(Translated by Anirvan)

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

Switzerland

5 August 1896

A letter came this morning from Prof. Max Muller telling me that the article on Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa has been published in the *Nineteenth Century* August number. Have you read it? He asked my opinion about it. I, not having yet seen it, can't write anything to him. If you have it, kindly send it to me. Also the *Brahmavadin*, if any have arrived. Max Muller wants to know about our plans . . . and again about the magazine. He promises a good deal of help and is ready to write a book on Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

I think it is better that you should directly correspond with him about the magazine etc. You will see from his letter, which I shall send you as soon as I have replied (after reading the *Nineteenth Century*), that he is very much pleased with our movement, and is ready to help it as much as he can.

* * *

PS. I hope you will consider well the plan for the big magazine. Some money can be raised in America, and we can keep the magazine all to ourselves at the same time. I intend to write to America on hearing about the plan you and Prof. Max Muller decide upon.

*Sevitavyah mahavrikshah phalachhayasamanvitah
Yadi kvachit phalam nasti chhaya kena nivaryate*

'A great tree is to be taken refuge in, when it has both fruits and shade. If, however, we do not get the fruit who prevents our enjoyment of the shade?' So ought great attempts to be made is the moral.

II

Undated

The work here is going on splendidly. I have been working incessantly at two classes a day since my arrival. Tomorrow I go out of town with Mr Legget for a week's holiday. Did you know Madame Antoinette Sterling, one of your great singers? She is very much interested in the work.

I have made over all the secular part of the work to a committee, and am free from all that botheration. I have no aptitude for organizing. It nearly breaks me to pieces.

What about the *Narada Sutra*? There will be a good sale of that book here, I am sure. I have now taken up the *Yoga Sutras*; I take them up one by one and go through all the commentators along with them. These are all taken down and when completed will form the complete annotated translation of Patanjali in English. Of course, it will be rather a big work.

At Trubner's I think there is an edition of the *Kurma Purana*. The commentator Vijnana Bhikshu is continually quoting from that book. I have never seen the book myself. Will you kindly find time to go and see if in it there are some chapters on *yoga*? If so, will you kindly send me a copy? Also of the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, *Shiva Samhita* and any other book on *yoga*? The originals, of course. I will send you the money for them as soon as they arrive. Also a copy of the *Sankhya Karika* of Ishvara Krishna by John Davies. Just now your letter reached along with the Indian letters. The one man who is ready is ill. The others say that they cannot come over on the spur of the moment. So far it seems unlucky. I am sorry they could not come. What can be done? Things go so slow in India!

ACTION AND AWARENESS

BY THE EDITOR

*Dva suparna sayuja sakhāya samanam vriksham parishasvajate
Tayoranyahpippaam svadvattyanashnannanyo abhichakashiti —Rig-veda, I. 164. xx*

Two birds of beautiful plumage, friends and close to each other, perch on the same tree; one of them eats the sweet fruit, the other without eating regards him.

*Paranchi khani vyatrinat svayambhustasmat paranpashyati nantaratanan
Kashchiddhirah pratyagatmanamaikshadavrittachakshuramritattvamichchan
—Katha Upanishad, II. 1. i*

The Self-Existent One has extroverted the senses; therefore one sees external objects and not the Self within. The rare, wise aspirant, desiring immortality, sees the Inner Self with introverted vision.

*Eshah sarveshu bhuteshu gudha atma na prakashate
Drishyate tvagryaya buddhya sukshmayā sukshmadarshibhih —Katha Upanishad, I. 3. xii*

This Self concealed in all beings is not apparent, but it is seen by means of the supreme, subtle reason by them who are of subtle vision.

The two aspects of the human situation of our time which mark it out from any preceding period of human history are (1) the prevalence of universal chaos in the affairs of men, and (2) the no less general desire for one world with one peace for all the members of mankind. The first half of the twentieth century will ever be regarded by posterity as a time of cataclysmic occurrences; of broken dreams and shattered illusions; of general destruction of values, material and moral; of gigantic upheavals, political and social. Confusion, which may be said to have started since 1917, today reigns supreme everywhere; it affects the life of the individual, it affects his society, and it is rampant in the international field. Thanks to the physical unity of mankind achieved by science, things today happen on a global scale. But a strange unity is this which has involved humanity in a common doom. The physical unity imposed by science has proved itself to be a unity in anarchy and disorder.

There is, however, no way of escape from this unity or return to the old days of splen-

did isolation. The tide of history cannot be turned back. We must learn to hang together, if we are to avoid the other inevitable alternative of hanging separately. We have to transform this physical, mechanical unity into a unity deeper and more real.

The desire for a world order is articulate everywhere, for it is realized that peace and prosperity are indivisible in the context of the modern world. Unless a world order, securing political, economic, and social justice to all the units of the family of nations, be built with its own instruments of government, mankind is sure to perish in the welter of a bloody conflict.

The brutal and stubborn fact of chaos is patent to all, and common also is the desire for peace and order. There is, however, something lacking from the discussions of the politicians and economists who rule the world today that can inspire and sustain the requisite effort for realizing such an end. For it is only a vision touching to the heart and persuasive to the mind which can initiate courage and full-hearted action to build up

the structure of a new civilized society, and which can sustain an order so built. But such a faith or even the awareness of the need for such a faith is entirely missing from the talks of men who today guide the destiny of nations. Despite repeated failures and shocks, despite the gathering clouds of distrust, suspicion, and war, they seem to go on thinking and assuming that by suitable political and economic manipulations they will be able to arrest the forces of disintegration and to secure for us durable peace and harmony. Is it surprising that hope has turned into despair, energies have waned, and international efforts look like tinkering at things.

Not only that, distrust and cynicism seem to be too deep-rooted to permit of a real cooperative enterprise. Politicians play at the game of international chess at the UNO. Beneath falsehood and hollow talks on the surface, preparations are briskly going on for perfecting deadlier weapons of destruction, more powerful atom bombs, cosmic rays, unmanned planes with supersonic speed, phials of easily incubated deadly bacteria. The very springs of human energy for great and noble efforts have almost dried up. Contemporary man is

‘Wandering between two worlds,
one dead,

The other powerless to be born.’

II

We have remarked at the outset that the crisis of our age is unique in history. Unless we and our politicians who wield the power to mould the collective life of humanity realize it as such and in its true significance, we shall never find out the real remedy for it. The seriousness and the true character of the chaos cannot be measured by mere geographical dimensions, vast as they are. It reaches far deeper. The outer destruction and disorder are a picture and

an expression of the dissociation and dissolution of the human soul within.

The most striking political phenomenon of the present half-century is the end of the Western supremacy in the world, which had an unchallenged life of nearly two hundred and fifty years up to 1917. The second world war has marked its definite end. This fact itself is sure to mark our time as the end of a historical cycle. What, however, makes this change epochal in its significance is not its political meaning, but its spiritual implication. It is the end of a civilization, a culture, a way of life; it is the overthrow of a set of values. Western supremacy in the world collapsed not so much because of blows delivered from outside as due to its inner stresses. It has collapsed because of its partial and narrow vision of Truth, or to put it in another way, it has perished by worshipping false gods. The commercial nations, thanks to their technological ability; were preying on the helpless peoples of the world. Proud of their culture and civilization, these mercantile groups never believed that spiritual commodities like charity, love, justice, and truth; in short, that *ne plus ultra* of their spiritual vision, namely, humanism, were suitable articles for export as the material goods produced by their factories were. Humanism was in fact group-love, self-love, and nationalism meant procuring increasing material enjoyment for the expanded ego.

The domination of the West in the material domain inevitably gave rise to a general notion that its culture, its way of life, and its picture of things, were essentially truer and superior to what obtained elsewhere. It is curious how short-sighted we in general are. We have a constant tendency to lapse into dreams, to become tied to our present preoccupations, so as to lack the necessary detachment to judge a thing in true perspective. We seem to need terrific shocks to restore to us far-sighted vision.

The break-down of the scheme of things,

accepted as true for nearly two hundred years, broadly speaking, is reflected in the intellectual temper of the age, both in the West as well as in the East. This temper is essentially negative, characterized as it is by a disbelief in the values and standards so long worshipped as true and efficacious. Man everywhere is pining for a new vision and awareness of a broader, deeper, and higher Reality as a basis for his creative effort, a rational programme of action for the achievement of justice in human relations and for the realization of the true purpose of existence on earth.

The need for a common outlook, radically different from what held sway so long over the minds of men, is a need which is also peculiar to our age. Science has brought about an encounter of civilizations with different view-points and values. There is an urgent need for a true understanding of the divergent beliefs and their synthesis in a grand symphony of global civilization. The age has also further witnessed a brilliant and austere development of the intellect and a wonderful expansion of natural knowledge. The stage is thus set, from whatever angle we look at the problem of the century, for the appearance of a philosophy comprehensive enough to accommodate every shade of thought and belief, and practical enough to meet the requirements of purposeful action in society and individual life.

III

It is often thought and remarked by persons otherwise intelligent that philosophy is never an essential necessity for an individual to live a good and useful life in society. This view is born of a misconception about the nature and scope of true philosophy. If by philosophy is understood, as it is understood in the West, an *empirical* philosophy, a descriptive generalization of experience, a rational construction of the bits of knowledge, supplied by the various sciences, into a logical

whole of inter-related facts, such as the systems of Kant, Hegel, and Whitehead claim to be, we think they are right, and perhaps justified in their views. For philosophy so defined and taken is a mere pastime of the intellect and is a preoccupation with issues which are remote from active human concerns. It is this narrowness of philosophy which has caused it to fall into disrepute among the men of the West. Truly, a philosophy like this does not affect life; an educated person holds such a philosophy as if it were a flower in his buttonhole. We shall say something more about philosophy later on, but for the present let us dwell a little more on the question whether we can individually and collectively do without a philosophy.

It is an evident fact that an average person is not bothered by ultimate questions or systematic views. But it far from indicates that he is not guided by an outlook. The outlook need not be one which he has himself formulated, or which is even clear to his mind. Nevertheless he is guided in his actions by a set of values which are supplied to him by the social conscience of his time and environment. All societies are governed and held together by definite outlooks furnished by the wisdom of individuals at the top, who have the detached vision to realize the purpose of social evolution and the destiny of the individual. This collective outlook may not be, and perhaps cannot be, definitely and precisely formulated in terms and words, but all the same it is ever there, guiding and shaping the lives of the members of a society. None can repudiate it, for society is the means through which an individual rises to the highest possibilities of development. It is a condition of growth for all its members. An individual born in a society unquestionably accepts the outlook of that society as his own. (He may, of course, try to change and alter it afterwards. This is, however, a question to which we shall presently return.) Individuals again vary in taste and temperament. So a society's outlook and structure

must be broad enough to provide scope for the legitimate development of all its units.

The philosophical basis of a society may not be clear to the individuals composing it. Yet, it is a fact that no society can change or progress without its creed being articulated from time to time and its implications brought out and applied in practice by gifted individuals. That is to say, society needs leadership. It needs a model to move and progress and to adapt itself to changing circumstances. Societies live and move by mimesis. The difference between a civilized, progressive society and a primitive, unprogressive one lies in the direction to which mimesis is turned. In a civilized society the face is turned towards the future, towards an ideal to be realized in some future time. Primitive and decadent societies have their faces turned towards the past. They go on marking time, as it were, and following and repeating in an endless and monotonous manner stereotyped actions and old customs. The model which inspires imitative endeavour in a civilized society is its leader. Such an individual or individuals embody in their lives the future growth and perfection to be realized by the rest of the members of the community. Such men formulate and exemplify from time to time, according to the needs of understanding and of the situation, the social creed and the meaning of social dynamics.

It is an exciting study how different types have been held up as models for imitation in different parts of the world at different periods by different civilizations. In India it has been the saint and the *brahmin* throughout the ages; in China it was the scholar till yesterday; at some period in ancient Greece it was the philosopher. In the middle ages in Europe the two most dominant types were the monk and the knight-errant. For some time in modern society in the West it was the gentleman. But now perhaps the politician, the business magnate, and the film star are the most

generally accepted ones over the greater part of the world. It is interesting to see how to-day men and women copy politicians' and film stars' dress and ornaments. We cannot, however, pursue the subject further here.

Intelligent and progressive movement is not possible without an ideal, without guidance and authority. The need for authority is a constant need of man. For, it is the need for principles that are both stable enough and flexible enough to give direction to the activities of life amid its vicissitudes and uncertainties. Indeed, the history of man is largely a history of blind groping for such a seat of authority. To satisfy this need for authoritative direction in his conduct man has turned blindly, because without knowing what he is after, to different places age after age, where he imagined he got what he had been seeking.

It is often assumed without questioning that ours is a libertarian age and that the modern man is guided solely by the light of private reason. It is an illusion. In his effort to rescue himself from the clutches of dogmatic beliefs and institutions of the past, he has delivered his intellectual conscience to the arms of a perhaps blinder authority, which is progressively dehumanizing him. For this outward prosperity and mental keenness of the modern man hides an inner poverty of spirit and a spiritual blindness. In the past the people, in spite of their narrow intellectual outlook and stupid notions and beliefs, were at least aware of a deeper mystery. But the mental light of science veils the mystery of existence with a pall of deeper gloom, because it is a partial affirmation, and therefore a negation, of the Real.

Let us elaborate the point and enquire into the nature of authority that holds sway over men's minds in the present age. The three dogmas which underlie the intellectual beliefs of our day and which condition the modern man's approach to life and its problems are those which relate to the nature of the universe, the nature of man, and the

capacity of human intelligence as an instrument of progress. They form, as it were, the mental context in which politicians and economists are trying to build up a new order.

Science teaches that nature is the blind march of an omnipotent and ruthless power. Life is a strange irrelevance appearing for a moment of time in an utterly insignificant planet, moving round a minor star in the vast, cold, almost limitless expanses of a spatio-temporal continuum. Nature is a meaningless 'hurrying and scurrying of material', a process without a purpose, a vast sentence without a meaning. Life is a 'mere flash in the pan.' Man with his hopes and aspirations is doomed to a brief, pointless existence, after which the cold silence of death will again reign supreme and undisturbed everywhere.

Modern psychology pictures man to be at bottom a devil. Dogmatic theology of old taught that man was a vessel of corruption and was born in sin. Its modern counterpart teaches that man is a sink of iniquity. The devil hides himself and rules in the subconscious depths of the human personality. We think and believe that we are reasonable and polite, generous and charitable, but these virtues are, we are told, merely the deceptive lines of a decorous mask which we wear to hide our irrationality and savagery, our lust and greed. Politics is a form of exhibitionism, generosity is the oblique eye for a chance, and friendship a subtle expression of the desire for gain. The poet of the Century of Hope sang that we came into this world trailing clouds of glory. No, we are authoritatively told by the priests of new demonology, we come with the impulses of the beast. In the subterranean vaults of the unconscious, the devil is in full control and is guiding our conscious activities in subtle and devious ways.

The nursery belief in human intelligence as an unfailing instrument of progress has been shattered by the last two world wars. People thought in the last century that

employment of reason would make progress automatic and cause freedom to move from precedent to precedent. Such a faith today appears ridiculous against the background of the mounting folly of man. We do not ignore or minimize the achievements of intelligence in the fields of medicine and engineering, of social and economic amelioration. But have we really come nearer to what we have been seeking? Have we ever before seen the enactment of human misery on a scale comparable to what the age of reason has witnessed? What is the use of conquering diseases of the body and prolonging life, if they mean the emergence of increasing psychic troubles and the extension of a pointless, lonesome existence, or the vicious round of desire-to-satisfaction and from satisfaction-to-more-desires again? Why do people increasingly talk of death as the birth-right of man? Why does melancholy invade the homes of the rich and prosperous and healthy, and make people eager to fling away life, despite all the amenities that money can command? We do not know if sleeping pills with which millions go to sleep and forget their worries for a while are reckoned among the desirable fruits of intelligence? Surely, intelligence is a blind tool, and must be wedded to a deeper awareness. Otherwise it can easily turn into a Frankenstein. Only the other day the scientists and the militarists of the warring nations came very near destroying the world by employing their intelligence.

We have given above an outline of modern orthodoxy, and we do not think there will be any dispute in regard to it. The insufficiency of such a creed to meet the deeper needs of man, his longing for the vast and the infinite (*bhuman*), is apparent in the intellectual temper of the recent times, which is anti-rationalistic and anti-realistic, taking real and rational in their current senses. It is a curious comment upon the long Western tradition of rational metaphysics.

Philosophy in the West has hardly any

role to play in human affairs. Ever since the time of Descartes who gave a new direction to it, Western philosophy has been dominated by the primacy of the logical. Descartes' aim was to devise a system of universal concepts 'from a consideration of certain, fundamental, logical, and mathematical relationships.' Kant is reported to have led philosophy to the safe road of science. Though he postulated an intelligible world as the foundation of ethical and religious consciousness, he regarded them as beyond the scope of philosophy. His followers dismissed them as irrelevant. For Hegel, the real was the rational. 'No fact,' says Caird, 'which is in its nature incapable of being explained or reduced to law can be admitted to exist in the intelligible universe.' The philosophical effort of nearly four centuries from Descartes to our own time has been spending itself in vain attempts to put together the pieces of the jig-saw puzzle of experience in a flawless logical whole. Recently philosophy has even ceased to be a search for wisdom, and has practically lost itself in the sands of an inane logical positivism. No wonder philosophy is defined as the search for a black cat in a dark room that is not there.

The modern outlook is at bottom a philosophy of unawareness. Its affirmation of the sense-universe, which becomes a mere shadow torn from its Divine context, as the sole Truth means in essence a self-negation. It cannot sustain human hopes nor inspire heroic action. We always need a lodestar of loyalty to act manfully with courage and enthusiasm and without wavering. A faith which does not make of man a devil or reduce him to insignificance—a faith which brings promise of a Divine perfection to man and so nourishes his spirit, is essential for the realization of any noble aim. Man feels in his bones that a life for material ends alone is unsatisfying, uninspiring, and in fact unbearable.

A new awareness, richer and more profound

and conscious of truths subtle and deep, must come to inspire humanity to intelligent action directed to the realization of a new epoch of world harmony. Awareness is vision, a term which we so often use, but whose implications we rarely pursue. Vision is *darshana*, the Indian name for what is usually translated as philosophy for want of a more appropriate expression. Here we come again to philosophy, but a philosophy which is richer and more profound in its meaning and insight; and which is above all practical. *Darshana* or philosophy in its original and true sense is a view of Reality, an immediate apprehension of Truth. Here 'view' is used in its radical sense of 'seeing', and not in its derivative meaning of idea or concept. It is *atma-darshana* or Self-realization, to be achieved by means of a superior type of awareness, the spiritual, *sattvika* intelligence of the highest order. The function of philosophy in its secondary sense is to point to this Reality, accepted on the authority of *aptavakya* (words of seers), by means of a rational analysis and synthesis of experience, and also to prescribe a method for the realization of Truth, which is the supreme end of man. In its logical and controversial aspect it also concerns itself with picking holes in a purely rational system of metaphysics which would identify Truth with an aspect of It determined by logic, or in a method which would lead not to the highest but to an inferior 'view' of Reality. Logic or mental reason which works on the basis of differences, contradictions, contraries, and relations, is never given the highest value, though it is agreed that Truth cannot be irrational, but is suprarational.

The classic statement on the limitations of *tarka* and *vitarka* or reason, has been made by Shankara in his commentary on the *Vedanta Sstras*. He says: 'We see how the arguments advanced by some skilful dialecticians with great care are proved to be fallacious by others still more ingenious. The arguments of the latter again are refuted in

their turn by other men. So it is not possible to accept mere reasoning as having a sure foundation or being final.' The truth of this has been demonstrated time and again in the fairly long history of metaphysical speculation.

This character of Indian philosophy has baffled the intelligence of Western students, who have generally turned away from it in high disdain, finding it a curious conglomeration of metaphysics, logic, theology, religion, and mysticism. It is, therefore, condemned as dogmatism, not by them alone, but also by their Indian followers, held in mental thralldom by a physically dominant culture. But as we have seen, philosophy cannot ignore the deliverances of a higher consciousness without detriment to the interests of man. In fact the materials with which philosophy starts are all dogmas and uncritical assumptions; and seen in the light of truth and of higher reason, the facts of common consciousness are greater dogmas than any. It is the true task of every philosophy to accept the infinite range of experience as its field of enquiry, and not to ignore certain facts simply because they are not the common possession of humanity. For, even if we strictly adhere to the conception that it is the business of philosophy to deal only with those facts and principles which are known to the average man, then we suppose philosophy will hardly have material enough to busy itself. For the findings of scientists and the perceptions of gifted minds are as remote from common experience as are the spiritual truths removed from their ken.

There is always awareness of a certain sort as the basis of human activity. But it is a *tamasika* awareness usually, awareness at its low level. Though we cannot be all at once aware of the higher truths, aware of them in its essential sense, we can be aware of our present insufficiency and have faith in higher values, which is awareness in an indirect sense, in the sense of a recognition

of the high truths of existence as the aim of our striving. All of us are knowingly or unknowingly striving for these higher truths, and all of us will reach one day the goal of our lives. But the essence of intelligent action lies in being conscious of the aim in front and the impulse behind.

To reach the highest Truth, Vedanta says, we must rise above the level of this mental intelligence, intelligence clouded by the fumes of *rajas* and *tamas*, to the plane of *bodhi*, *buddhi*, *prajna*, the highest principle of intelligence, the supreme reason (*agrya buddhi*). We are what we are aware of. Realization of Truth is only a question of shift of awareness. If we think we are matter, matter we are (*tamasika abhimana*), if we think we are devils, devils we are; but if we become aware of our Godhead, God do we become. Modern science and recent psychology are not wholly wrong. The error lies in regarding a partial truth as the whole truth. Truly, man, as a lump of matter, is of no consequence whatever in the vast cosmos. There can be no doubt that we are devils, if we look to our little selves only. But if we shift our awareness to a superior level, we realize we are God, and in the flash of illumination we discover that the ego and even this awe-inspiring nature of astronomical dimensions are freaks of Truth-Consciousness-Bliss, and that the pageant of almost limitless nature is supported on the point of consciousness.

Modern men do not take God and Satan seriously, because they regard them as entities existing objectively, external to their selves. But says Vedanta, the truth has to be faced that they are facts here and now, within us. Satan's most ingenious device, it has been said, is to persuade us about his non-existence. But Satan is in us, always whispering to us and guiding us in our isolated self-seeking. It is our ego. But neither Satan nor ego are real entities; they are only the provisional postulates for practical purposes in this *laukika*, empirical world.

This little self of appetites and impulses and thriving upon separatist notions and actions is a devil, every bit of it. But beneath this superficial reality of the separate and isolated ego lies the abiding Truth of our Divinity, the real nature of man and of everything. Vedanta therefore urges to give up all those wicked superstitions that make us small and weak, sinful and iniquitous, helpless and dependent, and to stand in our original and pristine glory.

Here we come to grips with the real issue confronting us, namely, how to bring this awareness to our lives. It is the root problem of all, and it is this which constitutes the drive and significance of evolution and history. Nature is not the blind march of inconscient forces. It is a drive towards unity and self-fulfilment. The essence of the problem lies in rescuing ourselves from the system of stereotyped responses which constitutes the ego.

Vedanta offers this solution and chalks out a programme of action applicable to all. It is only by forming a new complex of sentiments and responses and learning to act from a higher standpoint that we can slowly extricate ourselves from the tentacles of the ego and prepare for the vision of the Beyond. The way lies through disinterested performance of one's duty in life, through love and service of humanity. Our service is to be a worship of the embodied Divinity. It is a privilege; and we help none, in the ultimate analysis, but ourselves. The significance of ethical action consists in this, namely, that it tends to make us regard ourselves not as isolated and interesting individuals possessing private desires and rights, but as pieces of cosmos, parts of a universal Life, only important as expressions of the Divine

Will. Sunk as we are in *tamas*, aware of ourselves as individuals with private desires and impulses, we can lift ourselves to the *sattva* plane of intelligence only through *rajasika* activity under the guidance of spiritual intelligence. It is only then that the human life acquires significance as a focus of Divine light and the universe becomes a play of Divine Shakti, the evolvent aspect of Reality, of which the other aspect is Eternity.

Yet, perhaps, a last question remains. Is it not all poetry, a dream of the idealist? Is it authenticated by experience? Revelation granted to particular individuals in remote periods of history and recorded in literature which has been handed down for centuries and which might have suffered changes in transmission, cannot help humanity today torn with doubts and disbeliefs and blinded by the glaring light of 'education'? No, the experience is not the privilege of a particular individual. It is the birth-right of all. It has been authenticated by scores of seers in every country and every period, though certain countries do claim a unique, unbroken, and living tradition of such experience.

In this spring month of March when hope rises anew and life begins afresh, our thoughts turn to the second day of the crescent moon of the month of *Phalguna*, which falls this year on 12th March, and we invite the thoughtful to turn theirs also and ponder whether such a vision, authenticated by unchallengeable experience, and at once touching to the heart, persuasive to the intellect, and energizing to our being, has not been given to a distracted humanity groping for a faith in which his creative striving can strike root.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA—THE MIGHTY SPIRITUAL FORCE

BY SWAMI SARADANANDA

The flower has blossomed. Swarms of bees, maddened by the lure of honey, come racing from all directions, from countries far and beyond. Unfolding its heart wide open to the rays of the sun, the full-blown lotus satisfies them all without stint. Has the world ever tasted before the ambrosial sweetness of the honey of that spirituality which has today been given to it by Sri Ramakrishna, who was without the least trace of Western education, and whose life was moulded by the age-long spiritual tradition of India, derided as superstition? Has the world ever before witnessed the play of the mighty spiritual force which has been gathered and transmitted by him to his disciples, and thanks to the tremendous upsurge of which, people are recognizing religion as a stubborn fact of immediate experience, in spite of the glare of the twentieth century science, and are realizing that the unchanging and living stream of an Eternal Religion is flowing in the hearts of all faiths? Has this fearless message been uttered before in this world of ours, namely, that every man is gradually and steadily advancing from truth to truth, like wind gently moving from flower to flower, to one eternal Truth of Unity, and that he will, one day or other, reach the highest fulfilment of life by the firm realization of that Infinite, Boundless Truth, beyond the reach of speech and mind? The unlettered Brahmin boy achieved the impossible task of harmonizing the contradictory faiths by thoroughly rooting out in his life that parochial spirit in religion, which even previous prophets like Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja, and Sri Chaitanya in India, and, outside her, like Christ and Mohammad could not remove. Has anybody even witnessed a similar phenomenon before? O Man, point out, if you can, the high place that belongs to Sri Ramakrishna in the sphere of religion: we dare not do so. But this much we can say, namely, that by the touch of his feet lifeless India has awakened purer than ever, and has become the pride and hope of the world; that, thanks to his embodiment in human form, man has become an object of worship to gods even; and that the world has seen in Vivekananda only the beginning of an amazing and far-reaching manifestation of the power which he has released.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY GERALD HEARD

The particular importance of Ramakrishna for the West seems threefold, to me. First that he shows religion 'in its own right', secondly he himself is a contemporary saint, and thirdly that his message was and is contemporary. Whenever I read of him and his disciples I am reminded of a witty comment made by a famous nineteenth century English Canon. The witticism was apropos of an even more famous nineteenth century woman novelist's most successful novel—a novel which owed its success to being religious as the nineteenth century liked its religion—'morality tinged with emotion.' 'Don't you admire "Robert Elsmere"?' Canon Ainger was asked. 'Hasn't Mrs Humphrey Ward managed to make godliness very interesting?' 'I prefer' the Canon

replied, 'my theology "neat".' The 'raw spirit' of religion we like well watered with secularism. Even a Greek orthodox patriarch is reported to have said the other day, 'I see no great difference between St Mark and Karl Marx.' The refreshing fact about Indian religion is that it is 'neat'. It does not think of God, as William James is supposed to have said, as 'a useful ally of my social conscience.' It knows that He is Reality, and this world has such reality as a shadow may have cast by the sun. Ramakrishna had that as part of his inheritance.

He added to that the fact that he could keep that faith alight in a world which was increasingly denying such a fact. And thirdly he did not have to do so—as so many of the modern Catholic saints have had to do so—by becoming increasingly narrow as the world became increasingly 'educated'. Ramakrishna is an apostle to the world and not merely to India, because he was able to say that 'all roads lead to God', and that devotion to Him in whatever form will lead the devotee to enlightenment.

BUDDHI AND BUDDHIYOGA

(Continued from the previous issue)

BY ANIRVAN

IV

According to *Upanishadic* nomenclature, Arjuna may be described as the type of an aspirant on the mental level of consciousness (*mano-maya kosha*). In *Puranic* tradition, he is the typical Man (*nara*), the hero¹ journeying towards the predestined status of the Supreme Man (*narottama*), the eternal consort of Narayana, and, in an esoteric sense, the *paraprakriti* in the making, of the Gita.² He is essentially the mental man, or as the Vaishnava would call it, the eternal

energy of conscient individuation (*jiva shakti*) standing on the borderland (*tatastha*) of the externalizing agency of the cosmic *maya* and the internalizing pull of the pure *chit*.³ In his psycho-spiritual make-up, he is the true disciple, opening himself up to the Divine in complete self-surrender, in an agonizing hour of moral and spiritual conflict,⁴ which in all its forms is the conflict of the natural mind with a partial and distorted vision, doubting and arguing, and yet always pining for a solution to be vouchsafed by an illumination from a higher plane. This conflict, which has started in a highly sensitive mind from a casual preoccupation of the present moment, assumes the gigantic proportions of another Kurukshetra, in which the age-long accumulations of the unilluminated or imperfectly illuminated mind have been critically examined in the light of an impending revolution in the thought-cycle. And as a result the whole

¹ This is the accepted meaning of the vedic term, which has been applied both to Man and God; Yaska also explains it as connoting 'rhythmic activity' (*Nirukta*, V. 1. ii); *Nighantu* lists it also among the synonyms of *ashva*, the symbol of spiritual vigour.

² This is the eternal relation between the Divine Teacher and the human disciple. A very significant phrase occurs in the Gita, XI. 44. *priyam priyayah*, where the *madhurarati* of the Vaishnavas is foreshadowed.

³ *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, I. 2.

⁴ *Gita*, II. 7.

field of consciousness has quite unostentatiously been raised to another level, where the conversion or transmutation becomes an achievement of the depth, leaving the *apara prakriti* apparently to take her habitual course, though to the illumined vision, her total progression becomes charged with a new meaning. It is this spirit of a *manvantara* which has necessitated in the *Gita* the revision and enrichment of many old concepts: the individual spiritual achievements of the long past have been gleaned and assimilated, and by injecting a new life into the old forms, their total effect has been canalized into the momentum of a novel trend in universal evolution. This is the rationale of an Incarnation (*avatara*) which is a compelling process in the cosmic unfoldment, closely parallel to the familiar phenomenon of the descent of power from above (*shaktipata*) in the spiritual endeavour of the individual. In the spiritual history of mankind, this mighty gathering of forces, 'not for destruction but for fulfilment' has not been a solitary event. The spirit of the *Gita* in its entirety has been lived again and again generating a power of world-shaking intensity, an instance in the recent past being the unparalleled experimentation in the field of harmonic fusion of spiritual forces, carried out by the 'Man-Gods' of Dakshineswar.

The preparations for a Kurukshetra go on behind the scene long before its actual thundering occurrence, arranged by a mightier hand than we are ordinarily aware of. The immediate cause seems to lie in an attempt at vindicating some mentally conceived ideal of social justice, but in reality it is the pressure of a new idea to be born that works from behind, and its birth-throes assume the character of a cataclysm sweeping away everything before it. The circumscribed vision of the mental man sees in the avalanche a clash of worldly interests determined by a personal outlook, though often dignified by the name of a national, moral, or even a spiritual cause. The mind, unable

to penetrate behind the veil, cannot grasp the total plan of the divine providence, and in its characteristically one-sided view of things, finds it equally easy either to approve or to decry; like the Kantian antinomies, the arguments both for and against appear then to be logically valid. As long as this duality of mutual contradiction prevails, it is not possible for the mind to evolve an ethical ideal that will have any eternal value, unyielding to the challenge of temporal or environmental changes. In the last analysis, it may seem that the whole scheme of Nature is a-moral, because, as the orthodox Sankhyist would have it, Nature herself is inconscient and her only purposiveness (*pararthya*) lies in an indifferent provision of positive and negative experiences to the soul. But apart from this objective view of things, there is also possible an insight into a deeper subjective experience, which in the thick of the blind and maddening rush of events, reveals to the heart the unfolding of a secret purpose that can be measured only in the terms of the silent joy of the spiritual blooming of the individual to which the whole cosmic process is made subservient. This spiritual intuition of the good, variously called as *lila*, *anandam*, or the perfect self-poise of the liberated soul, is the ultimate basis of all ethical standards. But as is usually the case, this supernormal vision at one step farther becomes warped by the partial vision of the tendentious mind and gives rise to the current norms of morality which always contain a seed of violence to the real *svabhava* of the *jiva*. The mental limitation thus imposed on the integral perception of the spirit can be done away with only when we can live in the higher attitudes beyond mind in the stratosphere of the cosmic *buddhi*, where the conflict between the universal moral order (*rita*) and its perversions on the mental plane (*anrita*) can be so resolved as to secure for the action of the individual a sanction, not of the code of

traditional morality but of the direct vision of the divine purpose behind it. It is the vision which reveals to the discerning spirit the mysterious ways of the divine action (*divya karma*) which are evolving the eternal good through apparent evils, the abiding values through the vicissitudes of circumstances, firstly in the crystal-clear inner vision of the realized man, and ultimately in the totality of the world-movement which, however, always remains an enigma to the surface-mind.

This want of an integral vision, which finds such a seemingly rational expression in Arjuna's impassioned pleading against war, has been rebuked by the Lord as an ignominious failure of the nerves which, far from ennobling the spirit, drags it down to the abject level of the ignoble.⁵ His sentimental concern for the future weal of the social order He characterized as a cheap sample of faint-hearted impotence, his beautiful sermon on piety and renunciation He criticized as a travesty of wisdom (*prajnavada*), which is not even logically tenable.⁶ In his specious arguments against war, the very first reason advanced by Arjuna is: What pleasure or satisfaction (*sulcha, priti*) is there in killing one's own kith and kin?⁷ But to make the pleasure-principle, however refined or ennobled it may be, the guide in conduct of life, is the ideal of the vital man; and hedonism has never been a universally accepted ethical standard. When the question turns on the evaluation of the merits of so-called violence and non-violence, a subtle form of spiritually glossed pleasure-principle may very well lead astray the discerning intellect of the mentally wise. Of course, *priti* or the satisfaction of the heart is not in itself condemnable; but like all positive emotional contents of the mind, its value depends on the relative elevation of the

consciousness. In an unilluminated mind, *priti* may become an extremely dangerous incentive. Although in Arjuna, it did not appear in its lowest form of ego-centricism and had even the semblance of a self-abnegating altruism, yet its sphere was narrow. Expanding the ego, with which we are habitually associated, is but the first step towards an integral self-realization. It confers upon the soul the first measure of the power of *titiksha*⁸, which is the most potent lever in the process of soul-elevation; but the power to suffer and suffer blindly will not carry us very far unless behind suffering there is the sanction of a higher illumination. Like *priti*, *titiksha* as a powerful volitional content of the mind, depends on the guidance of the inner light for its fruitful functioning. Arjuna's solicitude for others and his willingness to suffer so that others may enjoy, have given him the vision of, if not a higher, then a wider aspect of the self—the self in the family (*kula*) and in the race (*jati*), whose accepted ideals he holds up as something having eternal values (*shashvata*).⁹ This naturally defines the limits of the vision of a mental man; and we in the modern age, who feel pride in having outgrown the primeval tribal instinct or *kula dharma*, are still on a par with him in clinging to the fantasy of racial superiority or *Jatidharma!* But the ego bound up with the family or, the race, though it finds a wider objective field, still moves hampered by a pre-occupation with a traditional past and a not-too-far-reaching vision of the future. Hence any code of conduct dictated by it can never have the self-poised catholicity of a universal outlook. If the individual soul cannot attain to the all-encompassing status of the universal soul, its perception of the ethical ideal will always be dogmatic. To counteract this, it is necessary to widen the horizon of

⁵ *Gita*, II. 2.

⁶ *Gita*, II. 11.

⁷ *Gita*, I. 35, 36.

⁸ Etymologically conveys the sense of 'a sharpening of the energy of consciousness'; cf. *Gita*, II. 14.

⁹ *Gita*, I. 42.

one's soul-being and make it coincide with the utmost limits of the world-being. Not the good of the *kula* or *jati* alone, but the good of the *loka*, *praja*, or *bhuta* must be the criterion by which to judge one's actions, says the Lord.¹⁰ And the concept of the universal good can find expression not in some mind-conceived planning, but in realizing in the individual being the total rhythm of the world-becoming by diving into the indiscernible depths of the spirit, 'by consciously surrendering all activities to the Lord, and in complete conformity with the ideal of *buddhi-yoga* by being always conscious of Him alone.'¹¹

V

This widening of the consciousness or the ideal of realizing the world in spirit is the objective aspect of the three-dimensional truth-realization,¹² and must be prefaced by its subjective aspect of realizing the self in spirit. This is the first step of the progressive cult of *budhiyoga* and in the *Gita* it has been introduced by raising the pertinent problem of Death, which in the human mind has always been the starting point of all spiritual enquiries. In philosophical analysis, the conceptive experience of Death has been described as the inborn psychological reaction of fear of the prospect of self-annihilation irrationally persisting in all organisms.¹³ It is the all-pervading phenomenon, 'the wide extended snare' as the *Upanishad* calls it, the root-cause of which lies in the ego's obdurate preoccupation with the moment or *abhinivesha*, otherwise called

andhatamisra or the blinding darkness of ignorance.¹⁴ From this is derived the negative life-impulse of shrinking at the prospect of the disturbance of one's *status quo*, which dogs at every step the march of the soul's progress, and even at the highest elevation of spiritual realization appears as the strange phenomenon of *mokshabhiti* before the last plunge into the abyss of the Supreme Unmanifest (*avyakta*) is taken.¹⁵

In Arjuna's *vishadayoga* (the *yoga* of dejection), the lowest level to which spiritual degeneration can sink before it can start on its upward march,¹⁶ his vicarious experience of the forces of death and devastation initiated the spiritual conflict. He himself was not afraid to die and even courted it to let others live; but he was afraid of inflicting death on others, though he had hitherto believed to have had moral justification for doing so. The problem, as it has already been remarked, introduces an antinomy of reason, and imitating Pilate, we may very well enquire 'What is death?' The answer comes significantly enough in the *Gita*, in at least three places, from three metaphysical standpoints—the analytic standpoint of Sankhya,¹⁷ the practical standpoint of Yoga,¹⁸ and the cosmological standpoint of what might generally be called the Vedanta.¹⁹ In the first two cases, the question has been dealt with as an incontrovertible and indispensable factor of subjective experience, which alone can prepare the *buddhi* for dispassionate and objective valuation of the great mystery and place one's conduct in a right location in the total scheme of things. The whole course of the teaching has again been so graduated in conformity with the progressive evolution of the consciousness as to enable it to become accustomed

¹⁰ *Loka*, *praja*, and *bhuta* are the three vedic words meaning in a general way the totality of creation. Etymologically *loka* would mean 'levels of consciousness' (derive from the root *luch* 'to shine'); *praja* would symbolize 'the dynamic march of life' and *bhuta* 'the final phase of Becoming' culminating in the materialization of the spirit. These shades of meaning have not been carefully preserved in the *Gita*, though in some passages, a distinction has been made between *loka* and *praja*.

¹¹ *Gita*, XVIII, 57

¹² *Shvetashvatara Upanishad*, I, 9, 12

¹³ *Yogasutrahashya*, II, 9

¹⁴ Vachaspati on *Sankhyakarika*, 48

¹⁵ *Mandukyakarika*, III, 39; also *Gita*, XII, 5

¹⁶ 'Vishada-yoga' seems to be a graphic and poetic version of the tenet of *duhkha* being the first *arya satya*.

¹⁷ *Gita*, II, 11-30

¹⁸ *Gita*, VIII, 5-25

¹⁹ *Gita*, XI, 25-32

to the 'logic of the infinite', loosely called by us 'the inexorable logic of facts.'

The discussion has begun by striking an intimately personal note. Apart from the haunting sense of *abhinivesha* mentioned above, death generally appears before us as the horror of actual or possible bereavement giving rise to what Arjuna calls 'an unquenchable grief, sapping away the vital forces.' The antidote for this grief (*shoka*) and the consequent delusion (*moha*)²⁰ is to be found neither in customary doses of consolation, nor in the normal healing property of time, which is only *moha* in another form; but the radical cure can come only when we ourselves have gone through the experience of Death and seen beyond it. The eternal question about which 'even the gods are of two minds'²¹ poses itself before us: Is there a positive Beyond after the last plunge has been taken, and can it be a concrete experience in life? The answer has always been an emphatic 'yes', and Death, the supreme negation, has freely been equated with the ultimate basis of experience in its pristine purity—the colourless radiance of the self. The question of violence and non-violence which is only a retroflexion of the problem of Death can finally be decided at this empyrean height alone, and the way in which it has been taken up by the *Gita* is a direct challenge to our *buddhi* to tempt the abysmal depths of our being and see things for ourselves in the incandescent light of self-experience. Otherwise, the sanction, 'You can kill because you kill the body and not the soul' can readily be dismissed as a transparent piece of sophistry, and the attempt to explain away allegorically the implications of a Kurukshetra as a palliation advanced by the impotent.

In applying *sankhya-buddhi* or the introspective and analytical process of illumi-

nation to the problem of Death,²² the very first requisite is to transcend the sense of temporal limitation born of an exclusive pre-occupation with the present, engendered by an accumulation of predetermined and habitual (*vyavasthita*) responses to one's environment.²³ This narrowing of the time-vision, though necessary in the process of the soul's growth as a means of utilization and ripening (*vipaka*) of past energies, is nevertheless a force of inertia which makes one insusceptible to the inmate rhythm of the universal life. The soul shrinks from the prospect of an abrupt change, though in its inmost being, the hankering for change has always been there; and this is not strange, because Change, whose another name is death, as the cardinal principle of universal manifestation combines in itself the dual process of dissolution and creation. The experience of Change reflected on an enduring subject creates the abstraction of Time concept which forms the substratum of our inwardly induced Becoming. To be in time and yet by a supreme effort of discrimination to live beyond it, enables us to catch the reflection of the Time-eternity, and this is the first step towards our realization of an unfettered Being. To the conceptive mind, the *sense* of the Time-eternity is a phenomenal creation of the speech-habit devoid of all reality; ²⁴ but to the *dhira* ²⁵ of discerning *budhi*, it is the *sensation* of an unfathomable intensity of supreme concentration,²⁶ in which the *moment* as the rock bottom of all direct perceptions, becomes without foregoing its unitary character at once the seed and the deployment of the totality of experiences. It is this moment-eternity, if we can use such a

22. *Gita*, II, 11-30

23. *Gita*, III, 34

24. *Yogasutra*, I, 5

25. *Dhi-ra* is the great vedic term for the highest type of aspirant, one who has ascended to the, *dyu-sthana* or the plane of the unitary *aditya*-consciousness.

26. Hence the common equation, Death=*Kala* or the Time-spirit.

20. *Shoka* and *moha* are the two *Upanishdic* terms typifying the *rajasa* and the *tamasa* temperament respectively.

21. *Katha Upanishad*, I, 1, xxii

term, which furnishes the wherewithal for realizing the focus of the Self-Light, the ultimate point of intensive experience, on whose conceptual extension are arranged the events of the cosmic and the psycho-physical order.²⁷ To this realization, Death appears as a natural phase in a series of physical changes which should be equated, not with the process of the dissolution of the body, but rather with the assumption of new vehicles by the spirit (*dehantarapṛapti*).²⁸

The above realization, in which death and life are felt as the systole and diastole of a universal Force-rhythm, presupposes a discipline of habitual concentration which has been detailed elsewhere while explaining the yogic cult of Death.²⁹ The pre-requisite of this discipline is the life-long practice of *titiksha*,³⁰ which significantly enough forms the first practical instruction for spiritual guidance in the *Gita*. The inherent limitations of sense-contacts (*matra-sparsha*), by which the mechanism of change is kept in perpetual activity in life, produce the fluctuating dualities of experience in the psycho-physical organism throwing it into a state of irksome imbalance. The result is a slow but sure lessening of the illumination of consciousness, a gradual engulfment of the spirit by the creeping forces of inconscient Matter ending in the too familiar phenomena of decay and death. To the unillumined mind, this is the inscrutable mystery of the Unmanifest (*avyakta*), forming the two dark and unfathomable bounds encompassing the temporal phenomenon of limited manifesta-

tion.³¹ Notwithstanding the assumption that the end and the beginning of things are shrouded in mystery, the soul is secretly aware of the fact that this dark *avyakta* of negative content can be turned into the luminous *avyakta* brooding over it, in which the alternation of the cosmic Day and Night is absorbed in the positive and yet transcendent Light of timeless Eternity (*paraḥ sanātano bhavaḥ*).³² It is this *avyakta* which is dimly felt in the soul as the perpetual urge of self-exceeding attended with the double movement of self-gathering and self-expansion; and this urge, although primarily expressing itself in a recoiling from pain, finally appears as a recoiling from the tedium of pleasure also. This is the genesis of the spiritual force of *titiksha*, which in its process of striking a balance of self-poise (*samatva*) in the tumult of the wavering experiences of dualities (*vyatha*) tends to reduce the consciousness to the naturalness of its pristine simplicity. Its last result is to make the time-sense homogeneous, where duration is measured not by the residuum left on the consciousness by the march of the objectively perceived event-series, but by the intensification of the subjective experience owing to the consciousness actively plumbing the depths of the self-absorbed Being, and on the empirical level, this is reflected in the ever-present *sense* of immortality (*amritatva*), which has been reclaimed as the goal of all spiritual realization.

The problem of Death is thus solved by what may analytically be called the linear experience of the Time-Real; and for an integral comprehension, it is to be supplemented by the extensional experience of the Space-Real, which has been symbolized by the vedantic conception of *akasha*.

(To be continued)

27. *Gita*, II, 12, 13

28. *Gita*, II, 13, The Buddhist philosophy, from the standpoint of eternal flux, has completely discarded the idea of Death and has substituted for it the notion of 'birth in another plane' (see the theory of *chuti*, *Visuddhimaggo*, XIV, 123-4),

29. *Gita*, VIII, 5-28

30. Also called the *vibhuti* of *kshama* in X, 34, where taken in the reverse order, it is the first of the series of spiritual powers developed in the aspirant.

31. *Gita*, II, 28

32. *Gita*, VIII, 18-21; cf. *Shvetashvatara Upanishad*, IV, 18

ROUTES TO SURREALISM

BY YVES DUPLESSIS

(Continued from the previous issue)

4. FRENZY

Thus, 'surrealism opens the portals of the dream to all those to whom night is niggardly. But being a cross-road of the enchantment of the dream and alcohol . . . , it is also the breaker of chains.' The incoherences and caprices of dreams are like the lucubrations of mad men. A. Breton has been struck by this resemblance and thinks that the universe of mad men offers rich possibilities to know us better.

In the world of the mad, imagination reigns supreme, and their mind moves with joy in the midst of that which appears contradictory and incoherent to the man of the street. They are ill-adapted to ordinary reality, but their universe has for them the same certitude as ours for us. The study of their strayings tangibly enlarges the domain of thought, and we move away from practical and limited reality. Thus, in the *Vampire*, a novel on their lucubrations, we catch a glimpse of 'the wrecks of the world of free will, the surreal, misrepresented as almost the only real.'¹

Their subjective life is developed to the maximum and enables us to investigate the manifestations thereof; it also helps the unconscious to function, that is, to make it free. The exaggeration of normal phenomena allows us to observe them in all their fullness, as through a magnifying lens. These beings, whom society rejects because of their non-adaptiveness, live in the world of dreams and phantasies, and open to us new vistas.

Among mental diseases, paranoia is

demonstrative of the end pursued by surrealism, which is the synthesis of the real and the imaginary. The patient, affected by the delirium of greatness or the madness of persecution, is not content to take refuge in an internal world. On the other hand, he interprets all the phenomena of the external world by relating them to his frantic fancy. Living in the same universe as a normal person, experiencing the same sensations and witnessing the same events, he, however, reacts in an entirely different manner, since they do not corroborate the notions of his subjectivity. If he conceives himself to be a prince of the blood-royal, he constructs genealogical tables to establish his relationship with surviving contemporaries of that family, interprets international events as homage to him or attacks against him, and believes that his actions and words are the causes of such and such politically important facts. If he has hallucinations, he tries to give scientific and puerile explanations such as a voice speaking to him and so on, means which serve to forestall or attack his enemies and which he alone was able to have on account of his superiority over the profane crowd. Such a delirium is coherent, and if we admit the starting point by placing ourselves in the position of the subject under its influence, all the conceptions he has of the world follow logically.

For the person suffering from paranoia, the world is a theatre where he is the principal actor, and nothing unfolds itself there in an objective manner. It seems to him, as with the primitive men, that everything in this world is animated with hidden intentions, which he tries to find. This attitude is not

¹ *Revolution Surrealiste*, No. 95.

so very different from that of the normal man; it is rather one slightly removed from and not absolutely opposed to the latter, since the lunatic passes through passion by which the world puts on the colours of love or hate till the moment when he denies the rigorous objectivity of the world as illusory. 'It is then that proud categories are made by which these people who cannot regulate themselves in conformity to human reason are classed apart, though we are ourselves daily denying that reason by our instructive methods of action.'²

Like frenzy, imagination reaches a supreme degree of liberty, and it works, then, seeking to reconstitute the state of profound detachment from the world of realities. That is why, in the wholly original book entitled, *L'Immaculee Conception* (The Immaculate Conception), A. Breton and P. Eluard try to reinterpret certain insanities like mental debility, acute mania, general paralysis, the madness of misinterpretation, and early dementia. These essays show the plasticity of the human mind and its power of 'yielding at will to ideas without suffering lasting trouble on its account, or losing equilibrium.'

As G. de Nerval has written, the point in question is to proceed like 'certain storytellers who cannot invent without identifying themselves with the characters they create.' But we should be able to return to ourselves after our exploration into unknown regions, so that we may be able to reap the fruits thereof. We only wish that this expansion of the domain of the human mind and 'the profound detachment' that mad men 'show with regard to the criticism we pass on them . . . will enable us to imagine that they derive great consolation from their imagination and sufficiently enjoy their frenzy to put up with the idea that it is valid only for them. It would seem that hallucinations and illusions

are not a source of trifling joy to them and a better regulated sensuality prevails there'³

One of the objectives of surrealism will be 'the creation of a state which will have nothing to wish from mental derangement.' 'Thought must yield in fine to the thinkable,' that is to say, the mind should be free from all prejudice and convention so as to let the psychic automatism, the vehicle of revelation, speak to him freely. A. Breton and P. Eluard even claim: 'that the attempt at simulation of diseases that one hides can replace with advantage the ballad, the sonnet, the epic, and the poem without harm to the brain.' Being observers of daily life as well as the life of dreams, the surrealists can also effectuate the synthesis of the two universes.

5. AUTOMATIC WRITING

Mental derangement can considerably extend the limits of human knowledge. It can also contribute to discredit the world of reality, and thus promote the impetus of the mind towards surreality. Far from yielding passively to the visions of his imagination, the victim of paranoia employs to interpret the objects of the external world by diverting them from their usual course to give them a sense in relation with his visions. This attitude is similar to that of the humourist who, by attributing a grotesque character to objects, separates the real and makes the mind soar to the surreal, with this difference, however, that the mad man identifies himself with his visions, while the surrealist returns to his normal demeanour after his excursion into the reserved zone.

By the relaxation of the activity of control in the states of the dream and insanity, the inconscient spontaneously manifests itself, and automatic writing enables us to transcribe its messages. We find ourselves then in an intermediate state between the dream and wakefulness, a state investi-

² A. Breton and P. Eluard: *L'Immaculee Conception*, p. 25.

³ A. Breton: *Premier Manifeste du Surrealisme*.

gated by Breton. In that state, phrases form by themselves in the mind and appear to the experiencers 'as poetic elements of the first order.' They carry conviction of exceptional certainty to the mind. In the *Premier Manifeste du Surrealisme* Breton relates that he was struck to hear one night before sleep a distinctly pronounced fantastic phrase that had no relation with his activity in the waking state, 'a phrase which appeared to me insistent, and, if I may dare to say so, striking.' There will also be a visual representation which will open the eyes with 'a very strong impression of the unseen.' All these personal experiences suggested to him the idea of putting himself voluntarily in a receptive state of immediately observing all that presents itself spontaneously to his mind. 'Fully occupied with Freud, I resolved to get for myself, as in the case of the sick, a monologue of utterance as rapid as possible on which the critical spirit of the subject will not form any judgment, and which it will not embarrass.' It should be the spoken thought as exactly as it could be expressed.

To plunge into this state, we should isolate ourselves from the demands of the external world and commune with ourselves. Along with P. Soupault, A. Breton tried to let his unconscious speak thus, and under its direction he wrote with him, *Les Champs Magnetiques* (The Magnetic Fields), which are the first application of that discovery. Each chapter has no other reason to end than the close of the day in which it was begun, and from chapter to chapter the change of rapidity alone manages to bring about different effects. The book is fertile with brilliant, unexpected, and humorous passages. We shall cite a few: 'Our prison is constructed of the books we love; but we cannot get out of ourselves because of the passionate odours that lull us. All the world can pass there in a bloody colour on which our sins hang, delicious pictures where the grey dominates.'

These images impose themselves on the

mind as if they were foreign to it, and it passively yields itself to their influence. 'To you who write, these elements are as foreign as to others, and you naturally defy them.'

In an issue of the *Revolution Surrealiste* (Surrealistic Revolution), a surrealist describes the impressions which the subject who gives himself up to automatic writing goes through. 'He is possessed by a sweet beatitude which isolates him from the external world.' 'If the writing is interrupted, the eyes do not adjust themselves to the surrounding objects and the legs stagger.' His mind traverses several successive stages: (a) 'Seized by the storm of passions, he produces astonishing plays with words natural to surrealism. Thought passes beyond words. (b) The mind pursues an abrupt course. The most desirable state will be blank of consciousness during automatic writing. The pure movement of thought will not be accompanied by any sensation foreign to its development. Thus we will have a direction of the mind, naturally accomplished with complete detachment.'

This method has already been employed in the eighteenth century, a fertile period of extravagant novels where the unreal and the real were incessantly mixed up. A. Breton quotes from a letter dated the 9 March 1765, written by Horace Walpole to William Cole, about the birth of his novel, the *Castle of Otranto*. 'One morning, in the beginning of the month of last June, I woke up from a dream and all that I could remember was that I found myself in an old castle (a very natural dream) with a mind filled, as mine was, with Gothic romance. On the highest step of a flight of stairs, I saw a gigantic hand arrayed with armour. That same evening, I sat to write without knowing in the least what I was to tell. I was so absorbed in my recital (finished in less than three months) that one night I began to write after tea at 6 and continued till 1-30 a.m. next morning. My fingers were then so fatigued that I could not hold the pen any longer.' This

work was written as in a dream, that is, in a quite spontaneous manner.

The mind shall detach itself from the external world, from all that is conscious, so that the unconscious may have its full freedom. Shrenck Notzing says in a passage cited by A. Breton in his *Point du Jour*: 'Automatic writing is an assured means of aiding the impetus of the psychic faculties, particularly of the artistic faculty, by concentrating the consciousness on the task of accomplishing a work and freeing the individual from the inhibitory factors which hinder and trouble him so far as sometimes absolutely to obstruct the exercise of his latent gifts.' The mind should be completely passive and should only transcribe that 'magic dictation' by abolishing all critical faculty. We need not try to understand; we have only to allow the words to succeed one another. It is in the dialogue that the forms of surrealist language fit themselves most, provided that each of the interlocutors simply pursues his soliloquy without seeking to derive a particular dialectic pleasure or imposing the rule of the world on his neighbour⁴. Each speaks for himself and thus was born the chapter entitled 'Barrieres' (Barriers) in the book *The Magnetic Fields*.

According to A. Breton, verbal inspirations are much richer than purely visual ones. He says that Lautreamont and Rimbaud first heard the voice of the inconscient and 'illumination came only later.' A. Breton also had visual representations which impose themselves on him and when he delineates them, the result obtained gives him the impression of his never having seen them before.

Pictures as well as words can express the inconscient. S. Dalí avowed that at the moment of painting, he did not preoccupy himself with the sense of his pictures. The public should not seek to comprehend that which he himself does not understand; it

should rather try to put up with that expression of the depths of the human mind. 'All my ambition on the pictorial plane,' he writes, 'is to materialize with great passion and to delineate the images of concrete irrationality.' Painting, being static, cannot exactly correspond to automatic writing, because 'picture and sculpture cannot be perceived except in space.'⁵ It is the cinema that can best express this manifestation of images in the mind, because surrealism views the mind above all its dynamic aspect.

The surrealist attitude approaches that of mediums who transcribe messages from the Beyond. Spiritualism, however, tends to dissociate personality, while surrealism would unify it. Further, surrealism works by hearing an internal voice and not the spirits external to the subject.

It seems that one 'finds oneself in the presence of a thought, an intelligence functioning and yet distant from all.'⁶ The strange visions in the *Chante de Maldoror* (Song of Maldoror) seems to come from the mysterious and unexplored depths of the human soul.

The surrealists favour inspiration in its primitive sense, as coming from the gods. We are far away from the precepts of Boileau who said, 'Revise your work a hundred times,' because what we are above all to avoid here is to correct or alter by even a little the spontaneous flood of inspiration. We should 'blindly draw from the subjective treasure' for the mere pleasure of throwing here and there a handful of frothy algae and emeralds on the shore.⁷

The route opened by revolt and destruction thus led to an enchanted fairy land where all frenzies are allowed and whose language will be automatic writing. From the vivid visions of images, a wonderful beauty

⁵ Morise: *Les Beaux Arts: Les Vieux Enchantés (Révolution Surréaliste)*.

⁶ A. Breton: *Point du Jour*.

⁷ A. Breton: *Point du Jour*.

⁴ A. Breton: *Premier Manifeste du Surréalisme*.

emerges which artists can scarcely portray. Are not the poets who are in possession of the 'knowledge of the soul' the masters to us, the common folk, because they draw from

the fountain still beyond the reach of science ?⁸

⁸ A. Breton : *Note dans Les Vases Communicants*, P. 170.

VIVEKANANDA, THE MAN AND HIS MISSION

BY JIBENDRA

Normally all our thoughts, perceptions, and experiences are limited to the present possibilities of our mental intelligence. All mental intelligence, however, is not one and uniform ; there are levels and gradations of understanding with it. Thus we have at the lowest end the physical mind which depends upon the senses for its perception and functioning, concerned only with the concrete, objective, and physical reality ; then there is the imaginative vital or desire-mind, and lastly the pure mind of the poet, thinker, philosopher, dreamer, idealist, and the visionary. Spirituality lies at the summit of the human mind at its highest and best. It has therefore been very justly said that religion begins where philosophy ends. When consciousness widens beyond the scope of our narrow, limited, and ignorant mentality, we have what is called the superconscient or supramental knowledge. It is invariably from this higher mental plane that most of our intuitions, inspirations, and revelations are delivered. Wherever there is any real inspiration, we may be sure its source must be some luminous overhead consciousness above and beyond the restricted range of our mind-intelligence. It is with this postulate that we must start when we study the character of a spiritual man. Otherwise it will be difficult for us to resolve the many seeming anomalies and contradictions in his life and activities. He is, to say the least, quite unlike ordinary men ; for having dis-

covered the spirit, living in it, and having the joy of it, in Vivekananda's own words, he speaks a strange language, as it were ; and the world will not understand him, because it does not know anything but the senses. The words of the Supreme Wisdom, as our ancient *rishis* held, are intelligible only to those who are already of the wise.

Now, Vivekananda belonged to the spiritual plane of existence, and it would therefore be the height of presumptuous folly to try to judge him by our own petty norms and standards. Justly has Rolland warned us against the danger of judging the Swami by stray passages of his lectures or writings and even by the whole, for 'so vast and complex a system of thought could not be swallowed whole at one gulp' by the human mind. Many well-meaning savants have foundered on the rock of inadequacy, because they have sought to further some exclusive or partisan points of view upon the basis of some isolated texts of the Swami's works. Each word, each line of his utterance has a special significance of its own, and the best of his sentences are always worth more than a whole life of consistently severe spiritual discipline and practice. To judge, therefore, the true worth of the great Swami, one must raise himself to the level of his consciousness, otherwise all our expressions, encomiums, appraisements and criticisms will fall short, far short, of the truth. With his characteristic insight and intuitive vision, Sri Aurobindo thus wrote

about this 'Great Vedantin', this evangel of Advaita, this pioneer prophet of modern India: 'Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work which he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something not yet formed, in something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of the Mother and in the souls of her children.'

The emergence of Vivekananda at a time when a triumphant tide of materialism, agnosticism, and atheism was sweeping over the world and religious spirit had sunk to its lowest ebb, is a striking occurrence in history. We search in vain for his parallel throughout the middle ages. We are forced to go back into the dim history of times to find his prototype in a St. Paul or a Shankara. He has also been very aptly referred to as 'the greatest single dynamic personality of the modern world'—a personality whose term of life and activity was summed up in less than forty years of mundane existence. He himself was fully conscious of this. 'I feel myself to be the man', he once quietly confided to his disciple Nivedita, 'I feel myself to be the man born after many centuries. I see that India is young.' The forum of Chicago where he first burst like a blazing meteor upon a mute and surprised world will no longer roar with the voice of Vivekananda, but the epoch-making messages of unity, freedom, and toleration that he delivered there will go on gathering added strength and momentum till the spiritual conscience of humanity is roused and linked to a better and happier state of life.

Let us describe the mission of his life, the mission with which he came into the world, in his own words, 'My ideal is to preach unto mankind their divinity and how to manifest

it in every movement of life.' Again, 'We must prove the truth of pure Advaitism (Monism) in practical life. Shankara left this Advaita philosophy in the hills and forests; while I have come to bring it out of these places and scatter it broadcast before the work-a-day world and society. The lion roar of Advaita must resound in every hearth and home, in meadows and groves, over hills and plains.' This is no escapism, no world-shunning asceticism, no seeking of a divine life in a distant heaven beyond the ken of mortal man. Here is our conception of integral union, integral perfection, integral manifestation of the divine here in life and matter. We make no apology in quoting Vivekananda at some length. 'Aye, this Advaita is said by some to be impracticable; that is to say, it is not yet manifesting itself on the material plane. To a certain extent that is true. One defect which lay in the Advaita was its being worked out so long on the spiritual plane only, and nowhere else; now the time has come when you have to make it practical. It shall no more be a *rahasya*, a secret, it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests, and in the Himalayas; it must come down to the daily, everyday life of the people; it shall be worked out in the palace of the king, in the cave of the recluse; it shall be worked out in the cottage of the poor, by the beggar in the street; everywhere, anywhere it can be worked out. The time has come when this Advaita is to be worked out practically. Let us bring it down from heaven unto the earth; this is the present dispensation.'

This is not all. He had the other mission also, the mission of pointing out the harmony and truth underlying all sects and religions and specially 'to show that the Vedantic schools are not contradictory, that they all necessitate each other; and one, as it were, is the stepping-stone to the other, until the goal, the *Tattvamasi*, is reached.' Again, 'I wish that every one of us had come to such a state that even in the vilest of human

beings we could see the Real Self within, and instead of condemning them, say, "Rise, thou effulgent one, rise thou who art always pure, rise thou birthless and deathless, rise almighty, and manifest thy true nature." Noble sentiments these; how nobler must be the man who could breathe, deliver, and live up to them in a world torn with sectarian spirit, fanaticism, bigotry, general religious intolerance, and fratricidal wars on all sides! He lived and worked himself to death for the sake of humanity, and if his own words are to be trusted, even after death he must have been incessantly working for the good of the world. Truly if the world is ever to rise from its present hopeless, chaotic, and degraded state, it must produce such selfless and disinterested lovers of humanity, nay of all life, nay of all existence, by the thousand. Otherwise, with its intensely selfish hosts of politicians, statesmen, and diplomats, and many others of the same ilk who trade in double-dealing, duplicity, and prevarication, and whose only object is to over reach one another for some narrow and petty national self-interest and some temporary political, strategic, military, or economic advantage or gain—with such people at the helm of affairs, the fate of the world will indeed be sealed for ever.

Let us repeat his classic and oft-quoted sentences uttered in the spirit of the ancient sages: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion.' Everything else is but secondary detail. He tapped all the hidden resources of man and discovered the divinity secret within him. Therefore urged he, 'Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform

character'. Again, 'It is said, "Habit is second nature"; it is first nature also, and the whole nature of man; everything that we are is the result of habit. That gives us consolation, because, if it is only habit, we can make and unmake it at any time'. 'Everything', he continues in one of his illuminating discourses, 'is in a state of flux; the whole universe is a mass of change. But there is One who never changes, and that is God; and the nearer we get to Him, the less will be the change for us; the less will nature be able to work on us; and when we reach Him, and stand with Him, we shall conquer nature, we shall be masters of these phenomena of nature and they will have no effect on us.'

Karma was, according to him, the eternal assertion of human freedom. If we have dragged ourselves down by some of our action, surely it lies in our power to raise ourselves up by others, by counter-action. Only, instead of idly repining, we should work in right earnest. Himself a living example, he never ceased to insist upon others the great need for work, selfless and unattached work, for it is always better to wear out than to rust out. His ideal man was one who 'in the midst of the greatest silence and solitude finds the intensest activity, and in the midst of intensest activity finds the silence and solitude of the desert.' This was perhaps an unconscious tribute to his own character—a tribute which has been subsequently paid to the Buddha in almost identical language in the following lines of Sri Aurobindo: 'Thus was it possible for the Buddha to attain the state of *nirvana* and yet act puissantly in the world, impersonal in his inner consciousness, in his action the-most powerful personality that we know of as having lived and produced results upon earth.'

He was intolerant of the prevailing idea of ascetic withdrawal from life for the purpose of personal salvation, and his ideal of a perfect man was one in whom, as in his

own case, 'all the elements of philosophy, mysticism, emotion, and work were equally present in their whole intensity.' 'He knew only too well that there is no form of detachment where selfishness cannot find means to enter and that there is no more repulsive form of it than the conscious or unconscious hypocrisy involved in a "liberation" sought only for self and not for others. He never ceased to repeat to his *Sannyasins* that they had taken two vows, and that although the first was "to realise truth", the second was to help the world' (*Prophets of New India*).

All kinds of weakness he condemned in scathing and unmeasured terms, for to him weakness was the only sin. 'It is weakness which is the cause of all misery in this world. Weakness is one cause of suffering. We suffer because we are weak. We lie, steal, kill, and commit other crimes because we are weak. We die because we are weak'. Well, the remedy? 'Strength, strength, therefore, is the one thing needful. Strength is the medicine for the world's disease. Strength is the medicine which the poor must have when tyrannized over by the rich. Strength is the medicine that the ignorant must have when oppressed by the learned; and it is the medicine that sinners must have when tyrannized over by other sinners, and nothing gives us such strength as this idea of Monism. Nothing makes us work so well at our best and highest as when all the responsibility is thrown upon ourselves.' But this was not the ordinary mental, vital, and physical strength which we understand by the term. It is the calm, self-poised, and self-possessed strength of the man who has controlled his mind and senses, who is seated in a happy and secure mastery over nature, who knows the secret of self-restraint and self-control. That man alone is strong who has become one with the omnipotent Lord of the universe. Strength was then the gospel which he preached unto all mankind, and he preached it with a vigour, warmth, and conviction that echo some of the soul-stirring prophecies of

Jeremiah. But there was no denunciation, no condemnation, no betrayal of any kind of impatience. True great men never condemn, never curse any one; they are all love. The Swami's messages, powerful and effective as they were, were always delivered with a softness, a wealth of love and sympathy that came like a welcome shower of rain upon a parched and thirsty earth. Never did man more justly and deservedly earn the title of being 'an orator by divine right'.

He was conscious that it was not possible to bring about in the course of the few years that he was destined to work in the world—and that was less than a decade—any epochal transformation upon the basis of existing things. He shook a complacent world plunged in the depths of self-oblivion to its very foundations and was content to leave the task of new creation to others, greater and mightier *rishis* than in the past who, he knew, were coming after him and upon whom his own mantle was to devolve. For his own part he felt it enough if he could only rouse the country, the sleeping leviathan that had lost all faith in its power and made no response. If he could wake it up to a sense of the Eternal Religion, then he would know that the advent of Sri Ramakrishna and his own birth were not unfruitful. In his own characteristic way Sri Aurobindo has thus summed up the whole significance of Vivekananda's life in a single, luminous sentence: 'The going forth of Vivekananda, marked out by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer.' Of such a man, then, to whom not only India but the whole world owes the deepest debt of gratitude for his short but significant contribution to its spiritual leverage, we can speak not only in terms of the greatest circumspection but also with the utmost reverence and respect. Although it is as yet too premature correctly to assess the value of

his many-sided contribution to the welfare of the world, it can be safely asserted without any fear of contradiction that he has already secured a place for himself in the heart of humanity which is only next to that of the Buddha and which is daily testified to by his wide, unique, and ever-growing popularity and the sincere and earnest homage done to him every day from far and near, from the elite all over the globe. There is hardly a spiritual leader today who has not felt his influence and who does not pay tribute directly or indirectly to him either by quoting him as an authority on spiritual matters—for he taught nothing but eternal verities realized in the highest personal experience—or by holding him up as an ideal to be followed by men.

Let us, for our own edification as well as for the edification of those who care, only casually and at random take up a few of his utterances and see how they have all the simplicity, charm, vigour, and instantaneous effect of *mantras*. 'Forget your self. This is the first lesson to be learnt. He conquers all who conquers self. Unto him comes everything who does not want anything. That man has reached immortality who is disturbed by nothing material. Renunciation, and renunciation alone, is the real secret, the *mulamantra* of all Realization. For men everything in life is infected with fear; it is *vairagyam* (renunciation) alone that constitutes fearlessness. Only to selfishness comes fear. He who has nothing to desire for himself, whom does he fear? and what can frighten him? . . . Be perfectly resigned, perfectly unconcerned. We have nothing to do but stand aside and let God work. The more we go away, the more God comes in. Get rid of the little "I". Neither seek nor avoid; take what comes. It is liberty to be affected by nothing; do not merely endure; be unattached. . . . It is only selfishness that causes the difference between good and evil. . . . The only true duty is to be unattached and to work as free beings. . . . The less different-

iation, the sooner God. This is the one sin, differentiation. . . . The calmer we are and less disturbed our nerves, the more we love and the better will our work be. . . . To laugh is better than to pray. Sing. Get rid of misery. Be the witness. Do not react. . . . What you have inside is what you see in others. . . . We get only that for which we are fitted. Let us give up our pride and understand this that never is misery underserved. There never has been a blow undeserved. . . . Be determined not to curse anything outside, not to lay the blame upon any one outside. . . . but be a man! Stand up! lay the blame upon yourself. You will find that is always true. Get hold of yourself. . . . Be strong and stand up and seek the God of Love. This is the highest strength. What power is higher than the power of purity? . . . He who has infinite patience and infinite energy at his back will alone succeed. . . . With the love of God will come, as a sure effect, the love of every one in the universe. . . . Let us perfect the means; the end will take care of itself. For the world can be good and pure, only if our lives are good and pure. . . . Be pure, be calm; the mind when ruffled cannot reflect the Lord. . . . And here is the test of truth—anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison; there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening, Truth is purity, Truth is all knowledge. . . . The world is just a playground and we are having a good fun. It is only when you forget that it is all play, and that you are also helping in the play, it is only then that misery and sorrows come. . . . Until we see nothing in the world but the Lord Himself, all these evils will beset us and we shall make all these distinctions; because it is only in the Lord, in the Spirit, that we are all one, and until we see God everywhere, this unity will not come. . . .'

And so on. Render them in your own language and see what a travesty they become, how they lose all at once all their *mantra-shalati*, degenerate, and become dull and

soulless platitudes. They cease to be inspired or inspiring the moment they are translated in terms of our intellectual knowledge. Great thoughts, it has been said, spring from the heart, and out of the fullness of heart the mouth speaketh too. One does not really know where to begin or where to end, what to choose or what to omit, once he begins to quote from Vivekananda. We have an ample and wonderfully rich and varied and inexhaustible heritage in the imperishable work he has left behind, and for ages to come, men and women in general and spiritual seekers in particular will resort to him as a perennial and living fountain of the highest hope, strength, courage, inspiration, and illumination.

On the eve of his death, he is reported to have soliloquized: 'If there were another Vivekananda here, he would know what this Vivekananda had done. However in time many Vivekanandas will be born.' He never tired of emphasizing that in times to come Christs will be in number like bunches of grapes on a vine, and that there would be no street in towns and cities but would have its own prophet. We read of the following prophecy of a similar conviction in his *Karma Yoga*, 'There have been omniscient men, and, I believe, there will be myriads

of them in the cycles to come'—a prophecy which has been strikingly echoed by Sir Aurobindo in his great work, *The Life Divine*, in the following remarkable words: 'As there has been established on earth a mental Consciousness and Power which shapes a race of mental beings and takes up into itself all of earthly nature that is ready for the change, so now there will be established on earth a gnostic Consciousness and Power which will shape a race of gnostic spiritual beings and take up into itself all of earthly nature that is ready for the new transformation'.

More than four decades have elapsed since the Swami passed out of existence, and though many of his other prophecies have been fulfilled, we yet see no fulfilment of this prophecy. It is perhaps as yet too early to expect that the evolutionary Nature has come to the end of her travail to deliver the gnostic race of mankind to a world now torn with strife and hatred and selfishness and violence. More than thirty years ago Sri Aurobindo wrote, 'The work that was begun at Dakshineswar is far from finished, it is not even understood. That which Vivekananda received and strove to develop, has not yet materialized'.

THE RAJASIKA AND THE SATTVIKA PRINCIPLES

BY SWAMI TURJYANANDA

. . . I could not quite understand your conclusion. You write: 'I find in the *Gita* that the work which requires a great effort is *rajasika* action, and the result of *rajasika* action is painful.' Having written only so much you ask, 'Please write if this conclusion, of mine is correct.' Should I understand from this that because

one has to undergo pain to visit the temple of Viswanath, one should not therefore go for *darshan* of Viswanath; it is a *rajasika* action and its result, therefore, is pain. Is this your conclusion?

What you have quoted from the *Gita* has been spoken by the Lord in the eighteenth chapter with a view to point out to Arjuna

that knowledge, agent, and action are of three kinds in accordance with the distinctions of the *gunas* (the three fundamental principles of the evolvent aspect of Reality). You have quoted only one half of the verse; this stands in the way of getting at the real implication. With a view to point out the nature of *rajasika* action after he had described the *sattvika* act, the Lord says: 'The act which is performed with a selfish desire or with egoism and is attended with great exertion is the *rajasika* act.' Great effort means a good deal of preparation with care and labour; such an act is a *rajasika* act. Otherwise, if it be your conclusion that spiritual practice is painful, and therefore it is a *rajasika* act and should not be performed, what shall I say? . . .

You further write: 'I have seen and heard so much for so many days, yet my mind does not incline to the Truth. What a pity!' How much could you have seen or heard? The old and decrepit king Yayati received from his son his youth and enjoyed the pleasures of the senses for ten thousand years; but finally he declared:

*'Na jatu kamah kamanamupabhogena shamyati
Havisha krishnavartmeva bhuya evabhiwardhate.'*

'Never is the appetite for sense-pleasures appeased by enjoyment; it only increases ever more like fire fed with butter.' etc.

Therefore, '*tasmāt trishnam parityajet,*' that is to say, renunciation of desire is best, and therein lies happiness. This is the conclusion according to the *shastras* (scriptures).

* * *

It is doubtless true that the *sattva* principle is without trouble and tranquil, but it is not everybody who is endowed with it. He who is in *tamas* will have to reach *sattva* through *rajas*, and the one who is of a *rajasika* temperament will also be able to reach *sattva* by overcoming *rajas*. It will not avail merely to know that *sattva* is tranquil, *rajas*, of the nature of activity, and *tamas*, delusive. Has not the *sattvika* principle to be manifested in one's life? True it is that

too much exertion even in connection with spiritual practices may do one harm instead of good. For this reason the *Gita* and other scriptures have given counsel as follows:

'Withdraw your senses slowly' (the *Gita*, VI. 25).

'Those who are moderate in eating and moving about, moderate in their efforts' etc. (the *Gita*, VI. 17).

But it is not to be thought that because too much exertion is bad, a shilly-shally attitude also is good. Rather the Master used to counsel us to have that kind of enthusiasm which inspired one to say, 'I shall attain liberation in this very life.' It is not proper to apply universally to all what the Master said in regard to a person of delicate health. Why Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) alone? It is the view of all that regular spiritual practices should be followed. What to say of the Buddha? It was he who vowed, 'Let my body shrivel up in this seat, and let my skin, flesh, and bone all dissolve. The body shall not move from this seat without my attaining that Enlightenment which is difficult to gain even in myriads of world-cycles.' Why say more about the austerities practised by the Buddha? It has been the same with many. That is to say, none of them who have achieved anything in life has ever done so without staking life in spiritual practices. Sri Chaitanyadeva said, 'Sanatan, can the Treasure that is Krishna be easily gained?' Do you know anything about the practising of the Divine name by Haridas and others? How the days and nights passed away without notice! Read about the care and regularity with which Sanatan Goswami did spiritual practices, and you will find what he had done for the sake of God. The body does not last for ever; it will go one day. O the blessedness of it, if it goes while doing spiritual practices! Only when one cannot do it, one says: 'Too much of everything is bad!' How can I run it down, simply because I cannot do it? I will repeat this a hundred times that there is nothing

worthier than to lay down one's life in the act of meditating on the Divine.

The chapter on *samadhi* in the *Yoga Sstras* of Patanjali contains the following. 'Disease, torpor, doubt, forgetfulness, indolence, attachment to sense-objects, false perception, non-attainment of the level of *samadhi*, and non-establishment on that plane, are distractions of the mind, which stand in the way.' (*Samadhipada*, 30.)

'*Syat Krishnanamacharitadisitavidya
Pittopadushtarasanasya na rochakaiva
Kintvadaradanudinam khalu-sevayaiva
Svadi punabhavati tadgatamulahantri.*'

'Persons whose taste has been vitiated by biliousness may not relish the sweetness of Krishna's name and life-story. But only by taking it daily with zeal does it become tasteful again; and the biliousness also is cured by the very process.'

THE WAY IN THE UPANISHADS

BY GOBINDAGOPAL MUKHOPADHYAYA

The *Upanishads* do not rest in an enunciation of theories about the ultimate nature of Reality or the goal, but carve out a very practical way for its attainment in life. They do not stop at mere speculation but move forward to find the means for the actualization of the shining truths they embody. Not only do they remind us of the heights to be attained, but the flights of steps are also provided here for reaching them. They forge the mighty *Upanishadic* weapon, *upanishadam mahastram*, which alone can pierce the goal and win for us the divine kingdom.

Here again in its usual cryptic way the *Upanishads* remark that this mighty weapon is the little syllable *OM*¹ and that the whole world and also that which is beyond it is contained in that little syllable.² To probe into the mystery of *OM* we must refine ourselves to the utmost, for it is the bow to which must be affixed the shaft of the soul, i.e., we must get attached to or rather identify ourselves with *OM*, and then with its help pierce the goal which is Brahman. The goal being most subtle, no blunt

or unsharpened shaft can pierce it. The shaft must be *upāsānīshītām*, sharpened through *upāsamā*. We must first apply ourselves to this supremely important business of sharpening the shaft, for it rests entirely with us, though the process of sharpening is indicated in the *Upanishads* in all its details. The bow is furnished ready and fit by the *Upanishads*, but the shaft must be forged and sharpened by our own endeavour.

The soul in us lies covered in a thick shell. The sheaths which cover up its true nature are many. In its ordinary nature, it is absolutely earth-bound, a creature groveling in the dust, looking outward³ and lamenting due to an absence of mastery⁴ over things and circumstances. To ask it to turn inward all at once is like asking the earth-worm to grow wings and take a flight to the supramundane spheres. The thick encrustation must, first of all, be removed from its back through a gradual process. The process has to be gradual because it involves struggle; for our soul is a battleground of two opposing and hostile forces,

¹ *Pranvo dhanuh—Mund. Up., II. 2. iv.*

² *Mandukya Up.*

³ *Paran pashyati, Katha Up. II. 1.*

⁴ *Anishaya shochati, Mund. Up. III. 1. ii.*

each trying to dominate the field by overpowering or eliminating the other. This is the classic struggle of the *devas* and *asuras*, the gods and the titans, of which we get the earliest references in the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*, and which we find repeated again and again in different settings in the later *Puranic* legends. It is the eternal struggle between the forces of light and darkness, which makes our life a valley of shadow and sunshine. We want to bathe in the stream of eternal sunshine, but the clouds of ignorance intervene. The forces of darkness or the *asuras* are ordinarily more powerful than the *devas* or the forces of light who are helpless before them. Though both the gods and the *asuras* happen to be the sons of *Prajapati*,⁵ their mothers are different, the *asuras* being born of Diti, and the *devas* of Aditi. The former are the children of division, the latter, the offspring of union or the integral whole. In our world of ignorance the reign of the *asuras* prevails. Division, discord, darkness, and death hold the world in iron grips. The flickering flame somehow survives; the soul constantly endeavours to keep the flame alive and make it grow steadily till it becomes an all-consuming fire, which burns out all impurities and dispels the darkness once for all. This tending of the fire is of the utmost importance, and it is stressed again and again in all the *Upanishads*, for without the transmutation of our present nature, without the purging of all the impurities that cling to our being, without the recasting of the whole of our psycho-physical make-up, nothing can be achieved or hoped for. It is a bitter warfare, of which the result remains dubious till the totality of the divine forces comes into play and exterminates the *asuras* root and branch. So long as the *devas* fight individually or in isolation, they are vanquished by the *asuras* again and again, but no sooner are they united or integrated in a common whole

than the *asuras* flee. This integral force or the totality of divine forces is Agni, which has to be kindled.

But before the kindling of the fire, we must raise an altar to it. This is taken up next. To return to the original imagery, the shaft has to be *upāsānīhitam*. The sharpening must be done through *upasana*; but how to do the *upasana*? The *Upanishad* answers: *shanta upasita*.⁶ To be fit to do the *upasana* one must be *shanta*, utterly calm and tranquil. None can enter the school of meditation without having earned this primary and essential qualification of inner tranquility. The door of *upasana* is closed to him, meditation is impossible for him whose heart is full of unrest and agitation. And why does the unrest persist? Simply because we do not desist from evil actions, i. e., actions which deflect us from the right track and force us to take the wrong way. So the *Upanishad* warns: 'None can attain this Atman unless he has ceased to revel in the evil ways of life, unless he is calm and concentrated and his mind tranquil.'⁷ Whichever way one may go, whether it be that of *jnana*, or *bhakti*, or *karma*, there is no escape from this first and foremost prerequisite, the attainment of the level of the *shanta*. Whether one wants to hear the all-pervasive sombre notes of *Om-kara*, or the ineffably sweet music of Krishna's flute, or the soul-stirring clarion call of the conch *panchajanya*, one must first put an end to the atmospheric disturbances; then only can one hope to tune in to the Infinite. The clear voice of the *rishis* peremptorily asks us again and again to leave the old track first before we take to the new road. So the *Upanishads* warn us again and again to beware of the danger of leaving the foundation insecure and trying to raise over it the fineries of the turret in a hurry. To leave our sensibilities unrefined and yet to hope for the highest realization,

⁵ *Br. Up.* I. 3. i.

⁶ *Chh. Up.* III. 14. i.

⁷ *Katha Up.* I. 2. xxiv.

to let or allow the animal in us to have full play and yet to presume to grow divine, is to indulge in a colossal self-deception.

All the *Upanishads* unfailingly stress the point mentioned above. Thus the *Kena Upanishad*, which devotes itself exclusively to the exposition of the nature of Brahman, does not forget to remind its readers while concluding its discourse that *tapas*, *dama*, and *karma* are the foundations (*pratistha*) of this Supreme Knowledge.⁸ Again in the *Katha*, while expounding the nature of Atman, Yama gives the warning that one who is devoid of reason (*avijnanavan*), and is of uncontrolled mind and ever impure (*amanaskah sada ashuchih*) can never hope to attain this status (*padam*), but only goes round and round in *samsara*. If one wants to reach the end of the way, Yama adds, one must have reason as his charioteer and a controlled mind as the bridle to check the senses, which are like wild horses.⁹ Reason must reign first, and following its directions the mind also easily controls the senses and makes them move along the right way. If reason is deposed from the seat of the charioteer, then there is utter chaos; there being nobody to hold the reins or the mind, it becomes the slave of the senses, and the whole chariot is left at the mercy of the wild horses, whose heedless and reckless movement finally brings about a crash.

The *Prashna Upanishad* also sings in the same strain, when it says that the stainless sphere of Brahman can be attained only by those who have practised *tapas* and *brahmacharya*, who are established in truth and free from all crookedness, falsehood, and deception.¹⁰ The *Mundaka* is emphatic on this point, namely that the Atman can be realized only through *tapas*, *brahmacharya*, *satya*, and right knowledge (*samyag jnanena*).¹¹ The

Taittiriya Upanishad begins with the *Shikshavalli* and devotes a whole section to this essential, basic training of the novice before it goes on to expound the nature of Brahman in the later *vallis*. The *Chhandogya* in the very beginning brings in the topic of the classic struggle between the *devas* and *asuras* and thereby reminds us that the way is not so smooth as we think, because we must first free ourselves from the clutches of the *asuras*, who are the incarnation of sin (*papma*). Lastly, the gem of all the *Upanishads*, the great *Brihadaranyaka*, though solely engaged in the exploration of the Atman, opens with the description of the *asvamedha*, the highest sacrifice, which literally means the purification of the animal or the *asva*. Thus we find the same note ringing through all the *Upanishads* about this primary task of purification. Everywhere in the *Upanishads* we find that the Supreme Knowledge is not imparted all at once, but the seeker is asked again and again to perform *tapas*, and thereby purify himself before he can hope the ultimate enlightenment. Thus in the *Prashna Upanishad* we are told that even the great *rishis* who went to Pippalada for further exploration about the nature of the Supreme had to wait for a year performing *tapas* and observing *brahmacharya*.^{11A} In the Indra-Virochana episode and in the case of Bhrigu we find the necessity of *tapas* repeated and stressed times without number.

Illumination and purification move in an exact ratio. The greater the purification, the brighter the illumination. As the process of purification advances, the sheaths or the *koshas* are removed one by one, revealing the smokeless flame (*jyotir adhumakah*) by and by, till it is seen in its utter nakedness, freed from all wrappings. But this purification comes only after a determined struggle. Our life must be loaded with a purpose, filled with a resolution, strong and decisive, if we want to achieve anything of importance and value. That is why the *Upanishads* harp again and again on the significance of

⁸ *Kena Up.*, IV. 8.

⁹ *Katha Up.*, I. 3. ix.

¹⁰ *Prashna Up.*, I. 15.

¹¹ *Mund. Up.*, III. 1. v.

^{11A} *Prashna Up.*, I. 2.

leratu or *samkalpa*. A man is made of *leratu*, says the *Upanishads*.¹² As he resolves, so he evolves or becomes. The first endeavour must be the disciplining of a life of impulse by proper regulations. To try to go beyond the reign of law, to try to break through the fetters of *vidhi* or *sadachara* (good conduct) without first forming good habits is only to drift in the current of *kamachara* or recklessness. *Kamachara* must be replaced by *sadachara* before we can hope to transcend all *acharas*. That is why in the stage of *brahmacharya* the rigours of discipline are the strongest, which are tested in the stage of *garhasthya*, then relaxed in the state of *vanaprastha*, and finally transcended in the supreme stage of *sanyasa*. The freedom of *sanyasa* can never come without a submission to the iron bonds and extreme rigours of *brahmacharya*. The supreme importance and value the *Upanishads* attach to this spirit of discipline is evident all through.

The *Upanishadic* way thus begins with this first step of preparation or purification. This purification is achieved through *yajna*, sacrifice, for the very life of man is conceived as a sacrifice by the *Upanishads*, in which the different periods of childhood, youth, and old age are called the three *savanas*, the morning, the midday, and the evening oblations, through which the sacrifice is completed.¹³ The sacrifice is to be continued all the year round, throughout the whole span of life, till the very last breath, unremittingly, unceasingly without any break or interruption. Everything is to be dedicated to the Lord of the sacrifice, every act of life should be done strictly according to the right standard or law of truth. It is *yajna* which distinguishes man from the animal, for the animal is guided by impulses alone, whereas man may rise above them if he so chooses and follow the guidance of reason instead. Here lies his freedom, in the choice between

impulse and reason, between passion and prudence, between *preya* and *sreya*. So *yajna* supplies us with the norm of reason, sets before us the ideal to which our actions must conform, if we are to grow and develop and attain the complete stature of man. Thus the function of *yajna* is twofold; it binds us with a *vidhi* and joins us with Vishnu. It limits the field of our activities and gives us an aim for the realization of which we must strive through all our actions.

Let us now look more closely into the preparatory stage as it happens to occupy so important a place in the *Upanishadic* approach to Reality. The preparation must cover all the parts of our beings, beginning from the very physical right upto the intellectual. Not a single part of our being, not a single limb of the organism should be left undeveloped, for otherwise the undeveloped part will prove, like the heel of Achilles, the vulnerable point through which the enemy will strike and kill. Hence growth must be entire and harmonious, complete and faultless. Throughout the *Upanishads* we hear this call to grow from strength to strength, to move from height to height, and to gather treasures after treasures. So before the beginning of the actual discourse on the Supreme Reality, the prayer is always sent to the gods to pour down all the powers, to fill the whole being with their strength and richness, to bathe each and every sense-organ with the luminous life-giving streams of the Spirit.¹⁴ Again, in another *Upanishad*, we find the prayer to make the eye fit for beholding the beneficent form, to make the ear fit for hearing only the beneficent sound, and to make all the limbs calm and collected so that the whole span of life may be dedicated to the service of the Lord.¹⁵ In the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, Indra, the lord of hymns (*Chhandasam rishabho*), is invoked to sprinkle or shower the *medha* or reason on

¹² *Chh. Up.*, III. 14. i.

¹³ *Chh. Up.*, III. 16.

¹⁴ *Kena Up.*, *Shantipatha*.

¹⁵ *Mund. Up.*, *Shantipatha*.

the novitiate. The prayer is made to make him fit for holding the immortal essence (*amritasya deva dharano bhuyasam*), to make his body invulnerable or immaculate (*shariram me vicharshanam*).¹⁶ 'May my tongue be made the sweetest (*jihva me madhumattama*), my ears fit for profuse hearing (of instructions) (*karnabhyam bhuri vishruvam*).'¹⁷

With these equipments should begin the *svadhyaya-pravachana*,¹⁸ study of the sacred lores. But the study must always be accompanied by *rita* and *satya*, the law of right conduct and Truth, *dama* and *shama* (outer and inner control). This is the true *tapas* (*taddhi tapastaddhi tapah*),¹⁹ which must be pursued scrupulously. The *acharya's* injunctions about right conduct are most emphatically worded with the object of bringing home to the novitiate their supreme importance. These are the vows he must take and fulfil in every act of his life as a student. First, he must speak the truth (*satyam vada*).²⁰ He must be truthful in his speech before he can hope to be truthful in spirit. It is truth alone which can reveal the Reality. By learning to speak the truth, we shall be able to think the truth and finally to live in it. Then, secondly, we must tread the path of *dharma*.²¹ *Dharma* is the norm or standard of Truth, and thus it means the right conduct or *rita*, i. e., the counterpart of *satya*. Our acts in life must reflect the truth we hold to. Our thinking and doing, *vichara* and *achara*, must harmonize and should not contradict each other. Our true thoughts must issue forth in right actions.

Along with these two, must go the unremitting study of the *Vedas*. There should be no slackness or negligence in this respect, for study is the very basic and indispensable

duty of the student, and as he cannot deny to himself food and drink for a day, so he cannot dispense with his studies for a single day, which sustain and nourish him like food and are almost the very breath of his life.

After enjoining these studies, the seer again warns the student not to falter or fail in scrupulously carrying out each of the above injunctions and so repeats them all over again with the warning attached separately to each of them (*ma pramada*). This shows how in this period of preparation one has to be constantly on his vigil and ever alert, lest a slip occurs and spoils the whole work. If there be even the slightest relaxation in properly following the rules set forth here, then the whole work is nullified.

In this realm of *dharma* there is a constant feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction due to the fever of tension and relentless struggle. Fulfilment and peace comes only with the birth of the spiritual element in us. Every touch of the Spirit, however fleeting it may be, brings with it a sense of satisfaction which is totally lacking while we are mere *moral* beings. In the moral sphere there is a constant endeavour to live up to the ideal, but it always remains elusive and recedes more and more as one approaches it. So we can hope for contentment and rest only in the spiritual sphere. Before we reach there, there is always a feeling of insecurity or instability arising from an apprehension of an attack from below. We have not yet reached such a height as to be safe and beyond the reach of the enemy, but are just in a mid-level; neither in the secure haven of the Spirit nor in the prison house of hell. We are just trying to snap the fetters that bind us down and take a flight upwards. The vision of the glorious kingdom has flashed on us, but the vision still remains a dream and is far from an actuality. Moral endeavour is only a means for the realization of the spiritual ideal. So he has to remain steadfast in his principles of right and truth and be ever vigilant. It has rightly been

¹⁶ *Tai. Up.*, I. 4. i.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Tai. Up.*, I. 9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Tai. Up.*, I. 11. i.

²¹ *Dharmam chara: Tai. Up.*, I. 11. i.

said: 'There are no holidays from virtue', i.e., the moral man can take no holiday. This is emphasized here by the repetition of the warnings, each and severally. This also shows how exacting the *rishis* were on this point, namely, the scrupulous conformity to the moral law or *dharma*, though the ultimate aim was to transcend the sphere of morality and pass beyond all *dharmas* whatsoever. This has puzzled many Westerners, who find in the ancient teaching of India no regard for morality, rather a deliberate flouting of all ethics, thereby insinuating that the ancient teaching of India is immoral, anti-ethical, whereas in fact it is amoral or supra-ethical.

From this sphere of *yajna* or ethical purity we next move on to the sphere of *yoga* or *upasana*. The different *vidyas* in the *Upanishads* are nothing but different methods of *upasana* or contemplation. Having been brought within the circle through *yajna*, we can now begin our movement towards the centre, which is *yoga*. As we move nearer and nearer towards the centre, the deeper grows our contemplation. This contemplation finally leads to our transformation. The transformation becomes possible only because through contemplation we are brought in direct touch with the Supreme Source of all our becoming. This Supreme Source is the *Ishvara*, who is the Lord of creation, sustenance, and destruction. He is in eternal union with *Prakriti* or *Shakti*, for without the instrumentation of *Prakriti* there cannot be any process of creation. So in *upasana*, we always worship the dual or *yugala* aspect of Reality. *Upasana* always involves an element of love or devotion, for without devotion or sincere attachment no contemplation is possible. *Upasana* has been defined by Shankara as the continuous flow of thought about a thing, without any interruption by other cross-currents of the mind.²² The

Upanishads call it the *dhruva smriti* or constant remembrance, and Ramanuja rightly puts all his emphasis on this *dhruva smriti* as the supreme means of *sadhana*. To constantly remember an object one must be bound to it by an indissoluble tie of attachment. Thus *upasana* or contemplation is no mere blind or mechanical process, but it is an act illumined by vision or wisdom. Hence in *upasana* there is a fusion between *jnana* and *karma*, a *samucchaya*, conjunction, of action and illumination. So the *Isha Upanishad* rightly stresses this point of togetherness or fusion (*ubhayam saha*) between *vidya* and *avidya*. *Upasana* is a bi-une process and makes us soar upward on the two wings of *jnana* and *karma*. To clip one of the wings is to cripple the whole movement upward. Here *jnana* without *karma* leads to idle speculation, and *karma* without *jnana* leads to mechanical repetition. They must join to make the act of contemplation really fruitful and beneficial.

It is not possible to go into the details of the *Upanishadic upasana* within the compass of a short article. So after delineating the general characteristics of *upasana*, we shall briefly refer to the last step in the *Upanishadic* approach to Reality. This last step is a trackless run straight into the heart of Reality. Here the injunction or *vidhi* is not *upasita*, to contemplate, but *drastavyah* to see. It is a single act of opening the eyes and beholding the Truth. Hence there is no process involved in it. The very hearing (*shrotavyah*) of the Great Dictum or *Mahavakya* brings back the lost consciousness and gets one established in the highest status. There is no effort on the part of the recipient of this Supreme Knowledge, which dawns of itself, spontaneously, from the inmost depths of the soul. The short and suggestive words of the teacher work a magic in him by revealing the true nature of Truth, which was his and yet not his all along the time he was plunged in ignorance. His eternal

²² See *Shankara Bhashya* (introductory portion) on the *Chhandogya Upanishad*.

purity, which was unsullied all through, even when he thought himself to be in the iron grips of ignorance of *samsara*, is gained back. Even the *nididhyasana* which is prescribed here is not a process like *dhyana* or meditation, as Sureshvara, the great *acharya* of Vedanta, rightly points out; and as Anandagiri in his commentary thereon makes explicitly clear. It is independent Knowledge which results in the final Liberation that is called *nididhyasana*.²³ This is the final step

²³ *Yanmuktimatraphalam Svatantram jnanam tadeva nididhyasanam smritam.* (Anandagiri on Sureshvara's *Vartika*. 2. 4. 234.)

of *sakshat aparokshat* (immediate apprehension) as indicated in the *Upanishads*.

Thus like the goal, the way is also three-fold, and there is an absolute correspondence between them. Through *yajna* or preparation we attain *vibhuti* or expansion of the self; through *yoga* or meditation we come in touch with the *mithuna* and thereby get illumination and fulfilment; and lastly through the immediate vision or *sakshat aparokshat*, we are taken straight to the bosom of the *Rasatama*, the Supreme Essence.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The Perennial Source, the poem with which the present issue opens, is a free translation of the last but one stanza of the sixty-second hymn in the first *mandala*, i. e. one of the ten usual divisions, of the *Rig-veda*. This hymn of thirteen stanzas is addressed to Indra, and in this *mantra* he has been given the significant epithet of *Shachivan*, the mighty source of spiritual vigour, eternally (*sanat*) suffusing our being with his inspiring life-force. . . .

Sri Ramakrishna—the Mighty Spiritual Force is a translation of the concluding paragraph from the volume of Swami Saradananda's monumental work in Bengali on the life and mission of Sri Ramakrishna, *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lilaprasanga* in five volumes. The paragraph in question was written in the second decade of the present century. . . .

Sri Ramakrishna by Gerald Heard is part of a letter to Swami Nikhilananda of New York in appreciation of the latter's recently

published book, *Ramakrishna: Prophet of New India*. . . .

Srimat Anirvan continues his learned and yet lucid exposition of *Buddhi and Buddhiyoga* of the *Gita*, which will be continued. . . .

Sj Jibendra of the Aurobindo Ashrama at Pondicherry, points out in *Vivekananda—the Man and his Mission* the true significance of the Swami's message to modern humanity. . . .

The Rajasika and the Sattvika Principles is taken from two unpublished letters of Swami Turiyananda. . . .

The *Upanishads* are the fundamental texts, the *Vedanta*, of the practical spiritual philosophy of India. But they not only give an intellectual presentation of the truth-perceptions of the Fathers of Indian culture, but also lay down the rules and disciplines for the realization of Truth. They are, in short, also a manual of *sadhana*. This practical aspect of the *Upanishads* is dealt with in *The Way in the Upanishads*.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

Man's purpose of life has been variously interpreted by different people. But all religions agree on this one point, namely, that the purpose of life is the attainment of Eternal Freedom. Hindus who have made a special study of this subject say that every action of man must converge to that one point, i. e. the realization of the Real Spirit in man. The *Upanishads* proclaim that It is the only Real Existence (*Vastu*) and that all other things are only apparent (*avastu*). In the words of Swami Vivekananda whatever leads to It is true and whatever leads away from It is false.

We are glad in this connection to note the sober views expressed by Sri Jairamdas Doulatram, the Governor of Bihar, in his convocation address of the Patna University. He says :

There are three attitudes towards knowledge. Some say that we want knowledge for knowledge's sake. Then others say that knowledge is to be attained for the service of man, and yet there is a third attitude towards knowledge; and that is peculiarly Indian. Europe has tried to progress in science. Europe has used that progress in science to serve the physical needs of man. But there is another use of knowledge, and it is this use of knowledge to which importance has always been given in our country; that use of knowledge is that it is made to subserve the spiritual progress of man. . . . In other countries men of science, men of literature, and men who are great adepts in other subjects are given honorary degrees. But in our country it is becoming more and more the practice to give degrees to men who have risen high in public life, men who have striven and struggled for great causes, men who have shown that they possess certain moral qualities which you admire. . . . I regard this as symbolic of India. India has got its own values for things. We do not estimate things in the same way as the world does. We somehow feel that things of the spirit count.

In this world where material values have well-nigh overshadowed the eternal values, the remarks, quoted above, from the Chancellor come as a welcome approach, among our political leaders, to the true understanding of the Real. India has never worshipped

political or material powers. From ancient times to this day the spirit of moral and spiritual laws reigns supreme. 'Do you not know,' asks the Governor, 'that kings before whom the people bowed, kings before whom the ministers bowed, kings before whom the commanders of their armies bowed, themselves bowed before the *rishis*? They realized that the true source of power in the administration of public affairs is not physical might or intellectual brilliance, but moral power.'

It is the appreciation of this moral ideal that has made Mahatma Gandhi such a power as he is today; and it is this ideal that has kept alive India through all her political and economic revolutions, and it will keep her vital and glorious if she holds on to it.

HISTORY IN TRUE PERSPECTIVE

History is not, as Prof. P. V. Kane said, a mere narration of incidents. Its real subject-matter is culture of a people as moulded by various influences from time to time; and the duty of historians is to make that culture a living presence so as to influence posterity and to enable it to proceed in an intelligent way to the desired goal.

Sadly enough, this is not the case today. Today historians are not those scholars of introspection who have understood and appreciated the true human aspirations; they have, like the scientists, lost their individuality and sold themselves to politicians, and hold narrow political views, spread suspicion and hatred, and humiliate others as much as possible. Thus history is lost as a fine art, and hence lost also is the moral support which sustains it and the nation at large.

In independent India the duty of historians should be clear. We note here with satisfaction the advice of Premier Kher to the Indian History Congress. Inaugurating its 10th session, he said :

I have not the least doubt in my mind that our scholars will eschew all parochial, communal, and even national bias in the writing of history. History based on preconceived notions degenerates into propaganda. A heavy responsibility therefore rests on the historians and teachers of history in India. They must not stay away from the right path. Wars are often created in the minds of men by the teaching of history on partisan lines. If the future of the human race is to be assured, history will have to be written and taught in a different manner.

Advocating the need for a balanced outlook on the part of historians, he said :

We are all painfully aware of the old tendencies on the part of foreign writers of Indian history to exhibit us to the world at large as ignorant, degraded, and dishonest, and to magnify our faults, and to gloss over our virtues. Our Indian historians know now that they have an opportunity to rewrite the history of their country in an atmosphere of complete political freedom, but they should not go into the other extreme and begin to whitewash all our blemishes for that would be a picture without shadows. It will be as unreal as the former picture was untrue. Historians should not lose sight of the abiding values, for, in the eyes of the world today and in generations to come, their work will rise or fall in accordance with the measure of success that they achieve in sticking to truth, and right and rational interpretation of facts.

British historians were always emphasizing the point that India was never united, peaceful, and prosperous, except under British rule.

They had encouraged partisanships, provincial rivalries, and communal discord. As such the responsibility of free India's historians is great. They have to find out, emphasize, and cultivate India's underlying unity and place before posterity that vision of oneness which alone can make India great and glorious. Emphasizing the point that, though apparently India was heterogeneous, her real spirit was harmony and concord and unity-in-diversity, Justice Sri M. C. Chagla said :

Our history, truly visualized, has been a history of unity. Nowhere else in the world has there been such a synthesis of different religions, cultures, and ideas as in our country. In varied and manifold diversities, there has run like a golden thread the oneness of India. Invaders have come, and India had absorbed them. New civilizations have come triumphant, and after the passage of time they have taken on an Indian pattern. Our greatest thinkers and our greatest statesmen have dreamt and taught about the unity of India; and if historians must find a rhythm in our history, that is the rhythm to which historical events have marched. . . . A country without standards and without traditions is like a ship without a rudder, sailing in stormy seas. The duty of the historians is to supply the rudder to the statesman so that he should know the direction he is taking, what are the dangers ahead, and how far the course he has decided upon is in keeping with the traditions of his country.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IQBAL THE POET AND HIS MESSAGE. BY DR SACHCHIDANANDA SINHA. *Published by Ram Narayan Lal, Allahabad. Pp. XLIII & 512.*

A certain great man prayed to be delivered out of the hands not of his enemies but of his friends. For the feeling of admiration or antagonism which an outstanding political, literary or religious personality excites in us is apt to break out into axiological exaggerations—into overevaluations and underevaluations—which equally fail to strike that just balance wherein consists truth. Every object we experience is bright with the colours of our own subjectivity. The simply human and historical personalities of the great are divinized or demonized by our love or hatred respectively out of all recognition. We see in them, and sometimes would force others also to see in them, only those things which we like to see, and nothing else. Whence arises the *Kurukshetra* of biographical exegesis.

India has produced, both in ancient and in modern times, very many great men. Most of them have been misunderstood. All, from Sri Krishna and Lord Buddha to Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, have been the subjects of fiercely conflicting and mutually exclusive verdicts. But the hope of humanity is that truth may somewhere, somehow be found. A pencil of light shoots sometimes through the dust of controversy which rises round a great name.

Contemporary India is the victim of chronic, perhaps fatal, internal discord. Inter-communal fear, hatred and suspicion hang over the land like a thick and poisonous vapour. Everything is contaminated by its ubiquitous touch. Commerce, industry, and agriculture, the public and private life of the nation, are polluted by it in their purest wells—the hearts of men. But a few there are who can overlook the dust and din of battle and calmly scrutinize the right and wrong of the

conflicting ideologies. A few there are who, without adhering to any sect or party, can sympathize with all, can enter into the spirit of all, and who therefore are qualified to sit and pass judgment on all. Iqbal is fortunate in finding such a man in his critic Dr Sachchidananda Sinha. Few of the notable personalities of modern India (perhaps I should say their admirers) stand so much in need of the healthy corrective of free, impartial criticism as Iqbal. His fanatical followers may not worship any material image or idol; but in him they worship an intellectual idol to an extreme which certainly would have drawn upon them the anathema of the Prophet (upon whom be peace). The exploitation of great personalities in petty political and religious interests is one of the most lamentable features of contemporary Indian national life. The most striking characteristic of true greatness is its ability to rise above parties in politics, schism in religion, and every other kind of national, social, racial or cultural barrier which the prejudice of man has erected. But to this kind of greatness Iqbal did not aspire. Islam was to him not a window through which something higher, wider, grander might be seen, but a picture on which the eye might rest satisfied for ever.

Dr Sinha has considered Iqbal both as a poet and as a messenger. In Iqbal the poetic and prophetic vocations are inseparable. What he said constitutes his philosophy, how he said it his poetry, why he said it his biography. Dr. Sinha has not seriously considered Iqbal's metaphysical position, but he has entered into the aesthetic and biographical or personal aspects of his life and work with a sweep and acumen which command the instantaneous admiration of the reader. His presentation of the subject is systematic his exposition scholarly, his digressions learned and delightful, his language dignified, his criticism unembittered by party feeling. We congratulate him on having produced this ripe fruit of a long life devoted to the service of the Muses and the public good.

Certain admirers of Iqbal have been at pains to demonstrate that their master's thought is of broad, progressive, liberal and even reformist, tendency. Dr Sachchidananda Sinha has demonstrated, however, that in comparison with such exponents of Islam as Sir Ameer Ali, the author of *The Spirit of Islam*, Iqbal is, even within the limits of the religion of the Prophet (upon whom be peace), narrow, dogmatic, and intolerant—not to speak of his limitations in comparison with the wider horizon of world thought and culture. Sufism, considered the finest flower of Islamic spirituality, by the most judicious is by Iqbal rejected with bitter contempt as a sickly graft into the primitive stock of Islam. His hatred of Plato knew no bounds. Of Hinduism he knew little, and sympathized with it less. Although claiming Jalaluddin Rumi for his

spiritual guide he catastrophically failed to exhibit that great spirit of love and tolerance which blazes on every page of the *Koran* of Persia. Iqbal undoubtedly was the victim of an exaggerated idea of his own importance to the world. He conceived of himself as the prophet of pan-Islamism. It is true that he conceived of humanity as one; but it was a potential oneness realizable only by Islamization. His ideal was not unity, but uniformity. He dreamed of a vast confederation of Islamic states which would revive all the glories, and more, of the ancient Caliphate. In order to achieve this objective he strove his utmost to dynamize Islam. He wanted to make it a force in world affairs. But his message fell on deaf ears. In almost every Islamic state the prevailing trend of political thought and feeling was intensely nationalist. No one was the least interested in Iqbal's pan-Islamism. Only in India did that baneful message fall on fruitful soil and bear its bitter fruit. So limited was Iqbal's knowledge of contemporary Islamic affairs that he utterly failed to realize that to Muslims outside India his dream of pan-Islamism seemed fanciful, even absurd. There was an absolute disparity between what the Islamic states wanted and what Iqbal offered them—between what they practised and what he preached. But this disparity Iqbal ignored, or perhaps did not even see. He had seen a vision, but the vision had made him blind.

The medium through which Iqbal propagated his ideas was verse. If he did not belong to the best, he at least belonged to the better class (poetically speaking) of didactic poets. But the language of his verse was Persian. His native Punjabi he never used, and *Urdu* only rarely. Iqbal imagined that he was blowing through some archangelic trumpet a blast whose reverberations would shake the world. But in fact he blew through an archaic silver flute notes which roused echoes only in India. His cause was lost before the fight for it began. He delivered to the Islamic peoples a message with which they did not sympathize in a language which they could not understand.

But in spite of all the faults of his character, the failure to achieve his objective, and the manifold errors of judgment, Iqbal remains a great man—one who may be relegated to the third order of genius. He comprised in himself the triple office of poet, mystic and philosopher—a sort of latter-day lesser Trismegistos. As such his is perhaps the dominant influence in modern Indian Islam. But final judgement on Iqbal cannot be delivered only ten years after his death. The scales in which posterity will weigh him will be more just than any of ours. In the meanwhile Dr Sinha is to be congratulated on attempting at this stage a task so difficult as the critical appraisal of the Poet and his message. Would that Indians of the

intellectual calibre of Dr Sinha treated in his footsteps and attempt critical estimates of all the great names which have illumined during the last few decades the slowly reddening horizon of modern Indian life.

Unfortunately the book is badly printed and the publishers would have shown better taste by omitting the prefatory list of the author's offices and honours and the long congratulatory epistles from his three distinguished friends, which occupy no less than XLII pages of the volume. But these are minor blemishes in a good book.

SRI DHAMMAPRIYA

HINDUISM AND MODERN SCIENCE. By M. A. KAMATH. *Published by the Author, Planter's Lane, Mangalore.*

A very large number of books deal with the interpretation of Hinduism, but few books have appeared which scientifically explain Hindu religious practices or social customs. Many Hindus, educated in the modern

sense, regard certain religious practices of the vast socio-religious complex of Hinduism as unscientific and meaningless. So Indian readers have reason to be thankful for the timely publication of a work which purports to give a scientific background for many customs and doctrines of Hinduism. After briefly stating his views on ancient Hindu civilization the author tries to vindicate the daily practices, the dietary and the social life of the Hindus from the medical standpoint. It cannot be said that the author has done ample justice to his theme. For, the treatment is often scrappy and incomplete and does not limit itself to any definite scheme. It is hoped that the present work will serve as a nucleus for further researches in Hinduism to present a comprehensive, scientific, and intelligible picture of the Hindu view of life. In a work of this type which overflows with Indian terms, the use of diacritical marks in the transliteration of Sanskrit words is absolutely necessary.

S. A.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

REPORT FOR 1946

The following are the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore, for the year 1946.

Relief work: One of the outstanding activities of the year was cloth distributed. Nntil February 1946, the relief work mainly consisted of occasional poor feeding and doles of rice and cash to the needy. From February onwards clothes were distributed to 11,058 person.

Orphanages: The Boys' Home came into being out of the unfortunate conditions caused by the war. At present the Home accommodates boys from 6 to 13 years of age. In the Girls' Home there are 56 girls ranging from 5 to 12 years of age. Young children receive primary education from their wardens, and others attend the Mission's School.

Schools: The Vivekananda Boys' School teaches upto fourth standard in Tamil. The total number of students is 119, 39 being free students. The Saradmani Girls' School, running on the above model, has 139 girls, 54 being free. For those boys and girls and adults who could not attend day schools, a night school is also being run, teaching Hindustani, English, and Tamil. There were 100 students during the year.

Cultural activities were revived with the inauguration of the cultural section in September 1946. It aimed at a coordinated programme of work through public

lectures, study circles, and maintaining an up to date library on cultural and religious subjects. The *Message of Vedanta* is the quarterly magazine published under the auspices of this section.

Appeal: The orphanage for boys has no kitchen, nor any school building or workshop. Accommodation being inadequate, a plan for a new building has been drawn up. This will cost \$20,000. This is the immediate need of the Centre.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, JALPAIGURI

REPORT FOR 1946

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

Free dispensary: Both homoeopathic and allopathic treatment are given. Patients come even from a distance of 12 miles. During the year a total of 18,516 persons took help from the dispensary.

Maternity Welfare Centre: The most important activity of the institution for the last 8 years has been the rendering of the antenatal care to expectant mothers. During the year, 85 expectant mothers were treated from early pregnancy to childbirth, and 52 were attended at their homes free of charges. Besides 327 children and 201 mothers visited the clinic for treatment. Milk was distributed daily to 52 children and 15 mothers.

The institution provides facilities for training of midwives also; and to educate the public on the importance of prenatal and post-natal care, lantern lectures were also given.

Harijan Vidyalaya has been started to remove the illiteracy from among the poor neglected children of the backward peoples, and to create self-reliance and character in them. There is a hostel too for boys.

Appeal: To complete a good hostel for boys a sum of Rs. 30,000 is immediately required. Help is also required to complete the construction of the buildings of the maternity welfare centre.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA KUTIR,
ALMORA, HIMALAYAS.

AN APPEAL

It was the earnest desire of Swami Vivekananda, the patriot monk of India, that there should be in the silent but sublime retreats of the hoary Himalayas some monasteries where Sanyasis and Brahmacharis of the Ramakrishna Order could stay during their periods of leave from active work in order to carry on their spiritual practices. This noble desire of the Swami was partially fulfilled in the year 1916 through the efforts of his brother disciples Swami Turiyananda and Swami Shivananda. This Branch Centre of the Ramakrishna Math has, for many years now, been the welcome resort of many monks of the Ramakrishna Order who have come and stayed here for long or short periods. It has proved an ideal place from the point of view both of rest and Tapasya, especially for those members of the Order who have completed a strenuous period of useful active service elsewhere.

The Ashrama is situated on the road leading to the famous and sacred places of pilgrimage in the interior of the Himalayas such as Kedarnath, Badrinarayan, Kailas, and Manas-sarovar. As such it serves as a convenient halting place for monks, even of other Orders, on their way to and from these places of pilgrimage. And, in addition to offering accommodation, it often becomes necessary to provide those pilgrim-monks who are needy with some sort of help—pecuniary, medical, or otherwise. Thus the usefulness of this Ashrama need hardly be over-emphasized.

The Ashrama is urgently in need of financial help in order to be able to carry out the objectives with which it was started. But as it is situated in a distant corner of India, it is little known to the public.

Besides the Ashrama has for a long time been experiencing great hardship owing to scarcity of drinking water, which has to be fetched from a long

distance. An estimated cost of Rs 2,500 is needed for laying out water-pipe connections in order to remove this long-left want.

The Ashrama Library which is made use of by the inmates and the public requires to be enriched with a fresh collection of standard books on religion and philosophy. For this also we need funds.

The generous public are requested to come forward and help this Ashrama in every possible way. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by the *Monk-in-charge*.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA,
KANKHAL

REPORT FOR 1946

The Sevashrama came into being to help to alleviate the sufferings and hardships of the pilgrims who visited the holy Hardwar. When pilgrims gather in millions from all parts, the Sevashrama is the only institution of its kind in the locality to nurse the suffering humanity.

The total number of cases treated during the year was 37,904 compared to 33,843 in 1945, (of which 1,064 were admitted in the indoor department) including 311 surgical operations, and 173 laboratory examinations. In the outdoor dispensary, there were 12,489 new and 24,351 repeated cases of admission. The patients include pilgrims from all parts of India as also the local inhabitants. Diet and medicine, nursing and treatment under qualified doctors are provided for the patients without any charges, and without any distinction of caste, creed, or community.

The Night School for the depressed class boys and adults functioned well during the year. There were 41 boys in 1946.

The receipts for the year under General Fund were Rs 29,561-6-2; and expenditure Rs 31,117-6-2 thus making a deficit of Rs 1,556. Over and above this deficit, the prices of all hospital requisites, food-stuffs, and clothing are very high. The Sevashrama provides free diet for the patients, and the present food crisis, and the presence of lakhs of refugees is causing undue strain. At least Rs 20,000 is required urgently to tide over the crisis. Moreover, the following needs are also awaiting the kind help of the public:

- (1) Land and building for the night school, Rs 15,000;
- (2) twenty-two unendowed beds of the hospital, each at Rs 6,000;
- (3) pantry, bedding and linen room for patients, Rs 4,000.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully accepted by the Secretary.